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FEAR, CRIME AND THE ELDERLY:

AN ANALYSIS

by

Kenneth R. Fuller.

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
of the University of Ottawa
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts degree in Criminology

October 1982



Kenneth R. Fuller, Ottawa, Canada, 1983.

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CHAPTER I CONCERN FOR THE ELDERLY

A) Preamble

It is generally the case that citizens of Canada are living longer and are healthier than at any other time in history with the result that senior citizens are increasingly making up a larger proportion of the total population.

In Ontario, for example, in 1962 there were 518,000 persons age 65 years or older representing 8.2% of the population. By 1979 this figure had increased to 813,000 or 9.6% of the population. In Frontenac County of which Kingston is the major urban center the 1979 figures for those age 65 and over closely parallel the provincial figures there being 10,986 seniors representing 9.5% of the population. If the definition of senior citizen is expanded to include those age 60 and over the figure rises to 15,410 or 13.5% of the population (Ontario 1980).

This trend to increased proportions of seniors in our communities is expected to continue. Most predictions are that by the year 2050 the typical demographic pyramid which has had a broad base of young people and a smaller peak of older people will have been reversed and that the large base will consist of senior citizens while the smaller peak will be made up of younger people, (Decker, 1980).

The trend in growth rate for numbers of senior citizens has coincided with a growth in concern for issues that affect

the elderly. For example, the provincial government has established, through the Ontario Secretariat for Social Development, an Advisory Council on Senior Citizens. This body reviews current government policies related to seniors such as health, education and housing. The Ontario Welfare Council, Section on Aging, has been established to provide information and conduct research into social welfare planning for senior citizens. At the local level the Senior Citizens Council of Kingston and Area is extremely active in promoting direct services to the elderly in the community. To date, however, there has been little local concern shown by such groups for the needs of the elderly with respect to the impact that crime may have on their lives.

B) Elderly and Crime

In recent years there have been attempts to point out the general social inequalities and needs experienced by the elderly in our society. Some writers (Young-Rifai, 1977; Bosanquet, 1978; Krepps, 1979) have effectively argued that senior citizens are in a general sense the victims of society. As an aspect of these concerns there has been an increased interest in the plight of the elderly as victims of crime.

Several factors can be outlined which have contributed to this interest. Cook (1976) has suggested that in the U.S. concern was raised by the 1971 White House Conference on Aging which heard many personal anecdotes from elderly crime victims.

and which was the precursor of the National Conference on Crimes Against the Elderly, held in Washington (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 1976). The anecdotal approach although emphasizing the personal seriousness of crime victimization for many elderly tended to be emotionally charged with the result that information about the crime related problems of the elderly become more speculative than concrete (Logan, 1979).

As a result a common belief is that the elderly are especially vulnerable to crime and are the preferred targets of criminals. Singer (1977) points out that the elderly have been perceived as more vulnerable because of such factors as 1) actual or assumed wealth; 2) being physically weaker or disabled; 3) being fearful of retaliation if crimes are reported; 4) being more susceptible or exposed to crime because of where you live and what you do as a senior; 5) being socially isolated with reduced community interaction. This combines with the fact that the elderly are frequently unable or unwilling to make use of such common social interaction strategies as: (1) generating remorse, (2) using sanctioning power, (3) using mutual contacts to intercede with the offender or (4) being able to anticipate or predict the offender's behaviour, in order to reduce their vulnerability.

The initial anecdotal and theoretical attempts to define the problem of crime for seniors have been reinforced by recent research findings. The major source of such information

has been the victim survey, a number of which have been employed as a means of measuring the nature and extent of criminal victimization which has not been reported to the police.

In the United States these surveys began with a national look at crime victims (Ennis, 1967; Biderman et al, 1967; Reiss, 1967) and have continued from 1973 as the National Crime Survey (NCS). Other studies have been more specific in focus in that they have concentrated on victims of specific crimes. These include the study of burglary victims (Repetto, 1979; Waller and Okihiro, 1978), rape victims (Baril, 1980; Curtis, 1976) and assault victims (Baril, 1980; Cohn, 1974).

Several recent victim surveys have concentrated on describing how the elderly are specifically affected by crime. Hochstedler (1981) reports that, in the United States, the elderly have a lower aggregate victimization rate than younger people but that some distinct patterns emerge. For example, it was found that the elderly had the lowest rates of robbery and assault but the highest rate of personal larceny with contact. When the robbery and personal larceny with contact victimization rates were combined it was found that this "theft" victimization rate of the elderly (3,367 per 100,000) was equal to the "theft" victimization of the younger population (3,470 per 100,000). The conclusion reached was that although the victimization rates were equivalent, the violent component of theft victimization occurred less frequently for

the elderly.

The N.C.S. data for the last eight years (U.S. Department of Justice, 1981) points out that the elderly continue to have generally lower rates of victimization than younger persons and that the belief that the elderly are disproportionately victimized may result from the types of crime committed against the elderly rather than the number. The data shows that from 1973-1980 the rates of robberies to assaults for the elderly was 92 to 100 compared to 24 to 100 for younger persons. This suggests that the elderly, despite generally low victimization rates may be particularly susceptible to personal crimes that are motivated by the opportunity for financial gain.

Gubrium (1974) has reported that there have also been indications that the elderly may be more highly victimized than other age groups for other specific crimes. Counterfeiting, forgery and malicious mischief are those that he referred to but it is usually assumed that other fraud type crimes are specifically targetted at the elderly.

The Canadian evidence is less clear in describing elderly victimization. A recent Canadian victimization survey (GVVS, 1982) pointed out that approximately 14% of the elderly surveyed or 1.8% of the total number surveyed were victims of at least one crime during 1978. A further breakdown of victimization rates was not available but one might reasonably

suspect a pattern similar to that reported in the U.S.

A major finding of many of the victim studies and victim surveys has lent credence to the argument. (Bard and Sangrey, 1978) that differing criminal victimization experiences can have similar profound emotional impacts on those involved. The emotional trauma of victimization which was once believed only possible for rape victims has been identified in burglary victims and victims of armed robberies. The natural extension of these general findings is to suggest that elderly crime victims must suffer emotional impacts to a greater extent because of their age, poorer health, reduced mobility and reduced social support systems.

There have been some attempts to assess the nature of the consequences of elderly criminal victimization. Cook et al (1978) conducted an examination of the 1973 and 1974 N.C.S. data in an attempt to determine the actual physical and economic consequences of criminal victimization of the elderly. Previous information (Goldsmith and Tomas, 1974; Conklin, 1976) had suggested that the loss of economic resources is greater for an elderly victim and that the elderly may more likely be injured when victimized. Cook et al (1978) reported that, related to personal injury the elderly (1) are attacked less often than others, (2) are among the more likely to be injured when they are attacked, (3) suffer wounds and broken bones and teeth less often than others, but (4) suffer internal

injuries more than others and (5) are more likely than others to need medical care in general or medical care costing more money or medical care costing larger sums of money and that (6) the costs of the medical care constitutes a considerably larger proportion of their income than is the case for other groups. A purse snatch, which may be a relatively rare and minor occurrence, for a senior is likely to result in a serious physical injury, such as a broken hip from a fall or push, and costly medical care.

In terms of the economic consequences of victimization, the data (Cook et al, 1978) suggests that the elderly (1) are less likely than others to be involved in crimes, (2) lose the same or less than other adults when absolute loss measures are employed and (3) lose less than young people, but the same or more than other adults when the dollar loss from crimes are adjusted for monthly incomes. The same purse snatch, which nets the perpetrator the minor sum of \$10.00, may have seriously depleted the scanty resources of a senior living on a fixed income.

The conclusion that might be reached from such research is that although the elderly may suffer less from crime victimization when compared to other groups the relative impact of injuries, dollar loss and emotional trauma, on a personal, individual basis, may be significantly higher.

In a further attempt to distinguish the effects of crime

on the elderly Cook (1976) conducted a detailed examination of the 1967 Ennis data and the 1973 N.C.S. data. She concluded that there was no justification for the early assumptions that the elderly are disproportionately victimized, but she did find that the elderly seemed to be more afraid of crime. This was determined on the basis of responses to the question, "Is there any area right around here -that is within one mile- where you would be afraid to walk alone at night?" The responses showed an increase in positive answers from 38% in 1965 to 56% in 1974 suggesting to her that fear of walking alone at night had increased for the elderly.

The contention that an emotional response to crime might distinguish the crime related experiences of the elderly from others is supported by several polls of the elderly which have pointed out that crime is considered to be the elderly's most pressing personal problem ahead of such issues as housing, income or health. These polls have also shown that those in the 65+ age group are the ones that experience the greatest personal concern or worry about crime (Yin, 1980; Sunderland, 1979).

The evidence therefore suggests that the elderly are somewhat unique in their position as crime victims. The data shows that in general they are proportionately less victimized than other age groups yet that they may also fear the possibility of being the victims of crime more than other groups do.

Du Bow, McKabe and Kaplan (1979) argue that this paradox is analogous to findings reported in research on auto accidents. In this case many people are aware of the overall danger of automobile use but do not believe that they are at risk because they perceive themselves as better drivers. Automobile drivers feel they are able to take the precautions necessary to avoid an accident.

It could be similarly argued that personal attributes such as age, sex and health may lead people to believe that they are more vulnerable or susceptible to crime victimization and thus sensitize them to the need for extra precautions. Cook (1976) contends that the fear of being victimized is the reason for the low victimization rates of the elderly since their behaviours are altered to reduce the potential for victimization. Other writers concur (Baumer, 1978; Riger and Skogan, 1978) arguing that this paradox is simply an indicator of self-preservation measures or coping strategies adopted by the elderly.

Jaycox (1978) has offered support for this view by studying the demographic variables in specific communities that could be linked to perceptions of the risk of victimization. Her conclusions were that the elderly have a very rational perception of their own specific living environment, that is where crime rates are high or how close-knit the community is, and that these perceptions play a major role in determining

the elderly's awareness of the risk of victimization.

C) Impact of Fear of Crime on the Quality of Life

There can be little doubt that some forms of behaviour that result from concerns, worries or the awareness of risk of crime can be viewed as useful coping strategies, such as when elderly citizens avoid high crime areas of the city. There is some concern however that such coping strategies as staying in the home or refusing to go anywhere alone may be so restrictive as to seriously hamper other aspects of the elderly citizens' quality of life (Sunderland, 1979).

Yin (1980) has pointed out that the problematic nature of fearing victimization for the elderly lies in the impact that this has on the life style of the individual. He refers specifically to the results of fear induced isolation and the effect on personal well-being. The literature is filled with assumptions about the connection between fearing criminal victimization and isolation (Lebowitz, 1975; Reynolds and Blyth, 1976; Lawton et al, 1976) yet no firm causal relationship has been established. One could argue that in fact isolation should reduce the risk of exposure to victimization and thus lower one's fear of victimization. People might still refer to concern or worry about crime as a personal problem, since it results in personal isolation, but feel that the risk is lower.

Yin, (1980) reports that he could find only one study

by Lawton and Jaffe which attempted to examine fear of crime and personal well-being although there was no mention of what was measured as fear of crime. The findings were that fear of crime could be related to such measures of psychological well-being as general level of morale and degree of satisfaction with housing.

Any attempt to measure "quality of life" or "well-being" is restricted, in large part, by the fact that the concept is in many ways intangible. How do we measure such things as "pleasure", which may be considered an aspect of quality of life? It may be possible to operationalize the term by referring to concrete qualities such as (1) an adequate income, (2) access to adequate and comprehensive housing or (3) other specific services for specific needs, but then the relationship between these concrete aspects and an emotional feeling such as fear become tenuous. What then can we describe as quality of life for the elderly?

In answer to this, Lebowitz (1975) has discussed what he believes to be the three most important correlates to the "quality of life" among the elderly. These are: (1) the ability to live one's life one's own way (autonomy), (2) acceptance by others and (3) security in one's place of residence. He argues that fear of being criminally victimized may play a significant role in reducing or impairing levels of these factors thus harming the quality of life.

Sundeen (1977) refers to this impaired quality of life as "indirect victimization" which applies to those elderly who suffer disrupted life styles through their fear of criminal victimization. For many elderly such indirect victimization might occur in areas where local conditions do not warrant fears or concerns yet such fears or concerns are nevertheless present (Goldsmith and Tomas, 1974). If the result is that a large percentage of elderly citizens are afraid to leave their homes because of the fear of criminal victimization then this has become a major social problem for the elderly (Clement and Kleiman, 1976).

D) Elderly Victimization in Kingston

The little information that is available suggests that the elderly in Kingston are not significantly more victimized than any other age group. This fact is difficult to pinpoint since crime victims are not identified according to age by the Kingston Police Department. The Crime Prevention Unit reports only one purse snatching in 1980 involving an elderly woman, no fraud attempts and none of the more serious offences such as assault, robbery, rape or murder. Since there has never been a victim survey in the community, which would serve to point out the nature of unreported crimes, the police data must serve as the only source of such victim data.

The most serious crimes in Kingston, in terms of numbers, tend to be property offences, yet there is no means of

determining if a substantial proportion of these victimizations are against the elderly. Certainly the Crime Prevention Unit (O'Connor, 1980) does not have the impression that a pattern of elderly victimization has occurred in any area of crime over the last few years.

An examination of the reported data for Kingston (Table I) compared with Peterborough, another eastern Ontario city of approximately the same size, shows that Kingston has a unique pattern of police reported crime. Table I also includes data from Ottawa and Toronto for purposes of general comparison. It can be seen that Kingston has maintained a consistent pattern of low reported violent crime rates (218 to 257 per 100,000) and yet high reported property crime rates (6850 to 7901 per 100,000). In fact of 21 selected police jurisdictions in Ontario (Ontario, 1978, 79, 80) Kingston has maintained the highest reported property crime rate and the lowest reported violent crime rate in the province. As a further comparison, the 1980 national figures for violent crime and property crime are 482 per 100,000 and 4,170 per 100,000 respectively (Canada, 1981).

These figures suggest that community perceptions of crime problems and the possible emotional responses to such problems are likely to be very different in Kingston than in other similar urban centres. Citizens of Kingston might justifiably be more concerned or fearful of being a property

TABLE I: COMPARISON OF VIOLENT CRIME RATES AND
PROPERTY CRIME RATES PER 100,000 POPULATION

	1976		1977		1978	
	Violent	Property	Violent	Property	Violent	Property
Kingston	218.4	6980.3	233.1	6850.5	257.7	7901.4
Peterborough	532.8	5684.0	447.0	6100.8	492.4	7094.1
Ottawa	550.5	7296.8	568.1	7197.1	642.2	7492.5
Toronto	571.8	4516.4	604.8	4459.6	617.2	4750.4

Source: SC Crime and Traffic Enforcement Statistics 1976, 1977, 1978

crime victim, based on the higher reported probability of those offences occurring, than of being the victim of a violent crime.

E) Summary

The fact that there are no obvious signs of direct criminal victimization of seniors in Kingston belies the fact that crime may still have a negative impact on their lives. The research data suggests that although the elderly are generally less victimized than other age groups, they may in fact be targetted more for such crimes as pocket picking, purse snatch and fraud. The national and local data in Canada can only be presumed to parallel that of the United States since similar extensive victim surveys have yet to be completed.

The literature has also suggested that the elderly may be unique victims or indeed indirect victims of crime. The impact of victimization might be more severe, on an individual basis, and the elderly might have a heightened sensitivity to the risk of victimization. If such is the case one might suspect that in the city of Kingston property crimes offer the most risk for seniors and possibly result in heightened sensitivity to the risk of victimization. The suggestion that the elderly may suffer as a result of their fear, concern or sensitivity to the threat of criminal victimization through impaired or hampered quality of life suggests that greater

attention need be paid to such possible hidden consequences.

The discussion that follows will attempt to address some of the issues that are related to the indirect victimization of the elderly that fear of criminal victimization creates. The first step and the topic of Chapter II will be to arrive at a suitable definition of what is meant by the term "fear of crime." Chapter III will be used to clarify a theoretical framework that can be used to explain how fear develops and how seniors respond to it once it has developed. In Chapter IV an attempt will be made to ground the theoretical model by exploring a number of relevant case studies. The conclusions and refinement of the theoretical model will be the goal of Chapter V while Chapter VI will be concerned with the discussion of practical suggestions which can serve to ameliorate the effects of indirect victimization for seniors.

CHAPTER II FEAR OF CRIME

A) Preamble

The literature on fear of crime among the elderly would seem to suggest that a crisis situation of sorts exists with the seniors in our communities living constantly in fear of being victimized. Yet the literature has been fragmented and difficult to place in perspective primarily because it does not stem from a theoretical base that would serve as a guide to interpretation of the research. There are, therefore, valid reasons for developing and testing a model or conceptual framework that can serve to explain the various research findings.

In addition such a model would tend to force us to look at the emotional responses to crime from a comprehensive perspective and would allow us to isolate factors or specific issues which may be relevant for study. A comprehensive model would allow policy and program developers to isolate variables which could be more effectively manipulated, to ameliorate the direct or indirect impacts of crime on the elderly.

It should be pointed out that some preliminary work along the lines of model development has been attempted by Du Bow et al (1979), Yin (1980) and Garofolo (1981), although there has not been an empirical test of their findings. Prior to discussing these models in more detail however, we should turn our attention to an equally important matter which is a

discussion of some of the problems that presently exist in defining fear of crime.

B) The Dependent Variable - Fear of Crime

In order to be able to assess the impact of fear of crime or describe a model to explain it, we must be able to recognize and accurately measure the phenomenon. In general, however, there has been a distinct lack of attention paid to a precise definition of fear of crime with the result that a variety of responses to questions about crime have been subsumed under the label "fear". Du Bow et al (1979) have pointed out that these have included responses to questions about potential danger or risk to oneself and others, as well as questions about fear, concern, worry and anxiety. The acceptance of such widely differing interpretations without an attempt to examine their relationships, has resulted in considerable confusion and contradiction in research findings.

For example, responses to the question "How likely do you think it is that someone will try to get into your house or apartment to steal something," which assess personal risk of victimization, differ from responses to the question, "Is breaking into people's homes or sneaking in to steal something a big problem, some problem or almost no problem for people in your neighbourhood," which assess general concern for crime as a public issue (Lewis and Maxfield, 1980). In many cases such dissimilar responses have been lumped together on the

assumption that they both measure a single entity which is fear of crime. The fact that they may signify different emotional or perceptual responses and thus be impossible to compare has not generally been considered.

A similar situation has existed for those behavioural responses that have been used as indicators of fear of crime. It has been the case that such widely divergent activities as avoiding certain areas of a city or purchasing new locks for a home, have been discussed as if they measure the same response to crime.

In part, the lack of a more useful operational definition of fear of crime has stemmed from the assumption that fear is an understood and identifiable phenomenon. This intuitive approach to defining fear of crime has resulted in some rather simplistic relationships being espoused according to which responses to a single questionnaire item have been accepted as indicative of fear of crime in general. Where attempts have been made to define the term fear of crime, the results often raise more questions than they answer.

For example, Sundeen and Mathieu (1976(b):55) define fear of crime as "the amount of anxiety or concern that persons have of being a victim." Although this definition may seem sufficient and in fact has been embraced by others (Yin, 1980) it merely substitutes the equally vague terms of "anxiety" and "concern" for that of "fear". The question

remains as to whether a difference between these three terms exists. Do they, in fact, represent the same emotional phenomenon?

Garofolo has attempted a more precise definition of fear of crime referring to it as "an emotional reaction characterized by a sense of danger and anxiety....produced by the threat of physical harm" (1981:840). He further points out that to constitute fear of crime "the fear must be elicited by perceived cues in the environment that relate to some aspect of crime for the person" (1981:840).

One obvious difficulty with this definition is that it suggests that fear of a break-in, for instance, must be described as something else (worry?) and that only when property crime consists of the threat of physical harm can actual fear occur.

There are a number of differences between rape and break and enter yet few studies have attempted to discuss how fear of victimization might be compared or differ for each. One exception is the provocative discussion by Baril (1980) in which she suggests that all victims of rape and other violent acts (including burglary) initially experience fear or terror. Such victims may later experience a variety of emotional reactions of which fear, shock, depression, anger and a sense of loss of control over one's life are predominant. Although the reactions to different crimes may

be similar it is still not clear that their occurrence is feared in the same ways.

The "lump" approach to defining "fear" has also failed to distinguish fear of crime from such other fears as being involved in a traffic accident. Statistically there would seem to be a greater risk for seniors of being involved in an accident with a car while walking or when driving, than being involved as a victim of crime. Why, then is it that elderly citizens are reported as being more afraid of criminal victimization than an automobile accident? Waller (1982 a) has pointed out that there may be rational arguments for assuming that fear of crime is intensified by the deliberate nature of the act while an automobile accident is considered just that, an accident, something that could have been avoided.

The research on fear of crime has failed to provide clarification of such issues in part because of the difficulty inherent in attempting to operationalize "fear" but also in part because there has been an overwhelming concern with obtaining accurate quantitative measures of fear rather than valid qualitative measures. There has been more interest in measuring than explaining fear of crime, more interest in "issues of sample size in relation to the standard error of the estimate" (Waller, 1982:168) than in whether adequate data has been collected to explain the phenomenon.

The concern for the search for common features associated

with fear of crime has also served to downplay response differences that may exist and which could serve as legitimate strategies or means of coping with fear. This has resulted from an assumption that "fear" is a negative or undesirable response to crime and that by finding and removing common causes such fear can be reduced or eliminated.

This latter aspect is reflected in the failure to include as a relevant factor in a theory of fear of crime, the role that the individual plays in making choices that will serve to decrease the amount or level of personal fear. In a great many cases the behaviour of individuals has been attributed to the causal variables rather than as the result of a rational choice or decision (Wolfgang, 1972). For some seniors it is reasonable to assume that such choices or decisions may be affected by a variety of practical limitations such as personal health or finances, lack of adequate information or other social factors.

C) What Is Fear?

Fear is an emotional phenomenon that has been extensively studied yet can only be inferred to exist as a hypothetical state of the brain or neuroendocrine system. Jeffrey Gray (1971), who has written one of the most definitive texts on the subject of the psychology of fear and stress, tends to use a behaviourist approach in defining fear. To Gray fear arises under certain specific conditions and eventuates in

certain forms of behaviour. Fear is thus an emotional response or reaction to certain stimulus events.

Rachman (1978 a), another leading figure in the study of the psychology of fear, further refines the concept by contending that fear is basically a feeling of apprehension about tangible realistic stimuli which tends to result in the three basic responses of fight, flight or freezing, each of which has physiological correlates. This is distinct from anxiety which is a feeling of apprehension that cannot be related to such tangible, realistic stimuli. Garofolo (1981) has made just such a distinction between "actual fear" of crime, that is an emotional reaction triggered by some cue and "anticipated fear" which presumably does not have such a cue.

A third form of fear reaction is that referred to as post traumatic stress disorder. This consists of the psychological reaction to intensely traumatic events such as rape or assault (Bootzin, 1980). Rachman (1979) contends that long after the event that might give rise to fear there may be a recurrence of fear reactions if the initial stress is not adequately resolved.

One means of distinguishing between types of fears can then be seen to be based on the nature of the stimulus event which gives rise to it. Another way of distinguishing types of fears is on the basis of the response to the fear-evoking

stimulus. The classic responses to such stimuli are fight, flight or freezing responses whereby the individual (1) prepares against harm, (2) attacks the source of harm, (3) avoids the source of harm or (4) resorts to inaction or apathy (Lazarus, 1969). The first set of responses tend to be primarily physiological in nature and are measured by such bodily changes as increased respiration and increased heart rate. The three remaining responses are behavioural in nature and require some action or inaction, on the part of the individual.

These classic responses have been primarily determined on the basis of responses by animals and humans to realistic, tangible, fear-evoking stimuli. For humans, fear may have other dimensions since many factors that cause fear may be less tangible or concrete giving rise to personal intrapsychic responses. We might begin the search for a clearer understanding of fear then by examining further the nature of events or activities that give rise to fear and the resulting human responses to such stimuli.

D) What Causes Fear?

The events, activities or things which produce fear in people are many and varied. Different people fear different things for different reasons. An important distinction can be made however between stimulus events which are concrete and realistic and stimulus events which may be undefined or

uncertain causes of fear.

Lazarus and Averill (1972) have used these differences to distinguish anxiety from two other forms of fear. They refer to anxiety as an emotional response based on the appraisal of threat, an appraisal which entails symbolic, anticipatory and uncertain elements. This is distinct from fright which is considered to be a response that is concrete and relatively stimulus bound, that is dictated by certain specific conditions. Fright is characterized by the physiological preparation for and the behavioural correlates of fight, flight or freezing that we have mentioned. These two extremes of fear are distinct from instrumental fear which lies somewhere between these extremes. It is characterized by deliberate behaviour, positively attuned to the demands of the situation with little or no physiological arousal. It is this notion of a useful form of fear which seems to be avoided in discussing the subject of fear of crime.

Plutchik (1980) has defined a similar three level hierarchical classification of fears beginning with terror as the response to immediate, concrete situations, moving to fear as the stimulus event becomes less defined in terms of time and space and finally having as the least stimulus bound apprehension. Plutchik's (1980) model further suggests that each level of fear may be transitory and evolve at some point in time into another lower level of fear. In order to avoid

confusion this paper will use the terms fright, instrumental fear and anxiety to describe the three possible levels of fear.

Fright is perhaps the easiest form of fear to distinguish since it tends to result in the intense arousal of the sympathetic nervous system. This produces a number of physiological changes such as faster heart beats, dilation of the pupils, increased adrenalin flow and faster, deeper breathing (Bootzin, 1980). A person who is frightened by some stimulus event can usually be readily distinguished from a person who is not frightened. Thus an elderly woman who must walk past a group of youths, whom she perceives as threatening, might experience a fright reaction characterized by a pounding heart and deeper faster breathing responses which might be readily recognized by the group of youths.

Anxiety is the most difficult classification to determine since it involves the most subjective state of fear and apprehension. It is expressed physiologically by the factors related to heightened arousal but also cognitively in that it interferes with the ability to think clearly, to solve problems and to handle environmental demands. This makes it a somewhat paradoxical condition since while gearing one-up for action it also tends to make responses confused, disorganized and ineffective. Anxiety in moderate degrees is a common and somewhat adaptive response but in the extremes anxiety can be a source of distress relieved only by strategies

that limit freedom and flexibility. It is precisely this type of negative, maladaptive response that is typically postulated as occurring for the elderly as the result of fear of crime.

Anxiety itself can be further classified according to the nature of the stimulus event and the response it produces. Bootzin (1980) discusses the latest classification of anxiety disorders according to the new edition of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III). The three basic patterns of anxiety disorders include 1) generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder, 2) phobic disorder and 3) obsessive-compulsive disorders. Generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder are characterized by anxiety that is unfocussed or unconnected to any special stimulus. People suffering from these disorders feel a persistent sense of dread or tension but do not know what they are afraid of. In phobic disorders fear is aroused by one particular object or situation and involves 1) an intense fear of some object or situation, which actually poses no threat and 2) avoidance of the phobic stimulus. A phobic person will show intense anxiety in the presence of the stimulus and will design their lives so that they avoid the thing they fear. An obsessive-compulsive disorder involves a recurring thought or repeated action that the individual feels has not been voluntarily produced but rather has forced its

way in and has taken over.

Post traumatic stress disorder although classified as an "anxiety" disorder is different from other anxiety disorders in that the source of stress is an external event of an overwhelming painful nature such that the reaction of an individual to the event seems to some degree justified and normal. Reactions might include re-experiencing the traumatic event, diminished responsiveness to present surroundings, difficulty in responding to affection and such physical symptoms as insomnia, decreased sex drive and heightened sensitivity to sound. In addition, they may show signs of depression, anxiety and intense irritability (Bootzin, 1980)

Although symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder generally appear shortly after the trauma, in some cases there is an incubation period. Rachman (1979) contends that such a return of fear is the result of incomplete emotional processing of the traumatic experience. Elderly people who lack the emotional and social support to help them cope with the experience of victimization or who feel that they lack control of events in their lives or lack self-confidence may be most likely to experience this form of anxiety long after criminal victimization has occurred.

Instrumental fear may be somewhat easier to classify than anxiety since it is more dependent upon concrete stimuli. It is most easily recognized however by the response that it

generates which is considered to be a useful means of coping with a potentially anxiety-evoking situation. An instrumental response to news of increased neighbourhood break-ins might include installing more secure locks and using such proxy tactics as cancelling the paper and having the mail held while on vacation. These responses would tend to reduce or head off individual anxiety reactions.

A key factor in determining the level of fear that an individual might exhibit can be seen to be the level of concreteness, or immediacy of the stimulus event. Rachman (1978 a) provides a means of classifying such events into four levels which are:

- (1) exposure to traumatic stimulation
- (2) repeated exposures to sub-traumatic sensitizing situations
- (3) observations (direct or indirect) of people exhibiting fear
- (4) transmission of fear inducing information.

Rachman (1978 a) also points out that increased or repeated exposure to fear-evoking stimuli may result in different outcomes for different people. In some cases habituation will occur and the individual will experience a decrease in fear. This is observed in burglary victims (Waller and Okihiro, 1978) who, having been victimized, do not seem to fear the event as much. On the other hand a person may become sensitized to stimulus events and each subsequent exposure

will produce fear. This is observed in other burglary victims (Waller and Okihiro, 1978) who fear entering the room or home that has been burglarized.

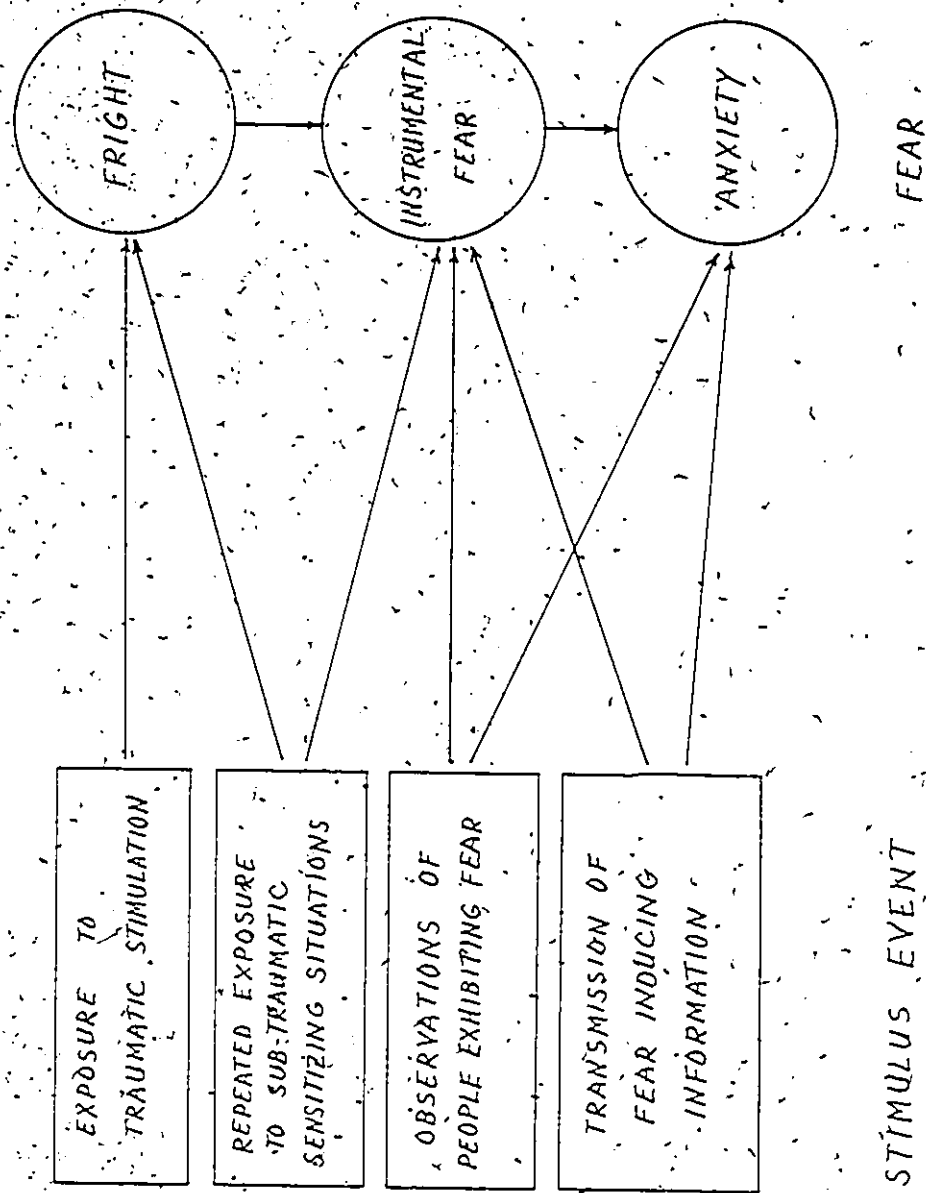
If we consider the levels of events that can produce fear and combine them with the three levels of fear that we have discussed, we are able to postulate several relationships. Figure I suggests that if the nature of the stimulus event can be determined, in terms of its immediacy and tangibility, then a more accurate prediction of the type of fear that might be expected should be possible.

The diagram indicates that traumatic and repeated sub-traumatic exposure should be the only activities giving rise to fright as an immediate reaction. For example, actual criminal victimization might be considered as sufficient to cause a fright reaction. This would be in agreement with Garofolo's (1981) definition of "actual fear" of crime.

Instrumental fear, however, might result from repeated exposure to sub-traumatic situations, observations of people exhibiting fear or transmission of fear-inducing information. Thus, awareness of criminal occurrences in the neighbourhood might provoke an instrumental reaction. Similarly, the observation that a neighbour or friend is afraid of some specific criminal event might persuade one to take precautions.

Anxiety, it is suggested, should only be the result of the latter two events, that is observations of people exhibiting

FIGURE 1 LEVEL OF STIMULUS EVENT
AND EXPECTED LEVEL OF FEAR



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fear and transmission of fear inducing information. The less precise the information is about the actual cause of the fear and the less the likelihood of positive coping responses, the more likely that anxiety will develop. This might have its parallel in Garofolo's (1981) term "anticipatory fear."

The model also suggests that fear at one level may evolve into fear at a lower level over time. Instrumental fear might therefore have evolved from a fright inducing experience whereas anxiety may have evolved from instrumental fear.

E) Fear as a Cognitive Response

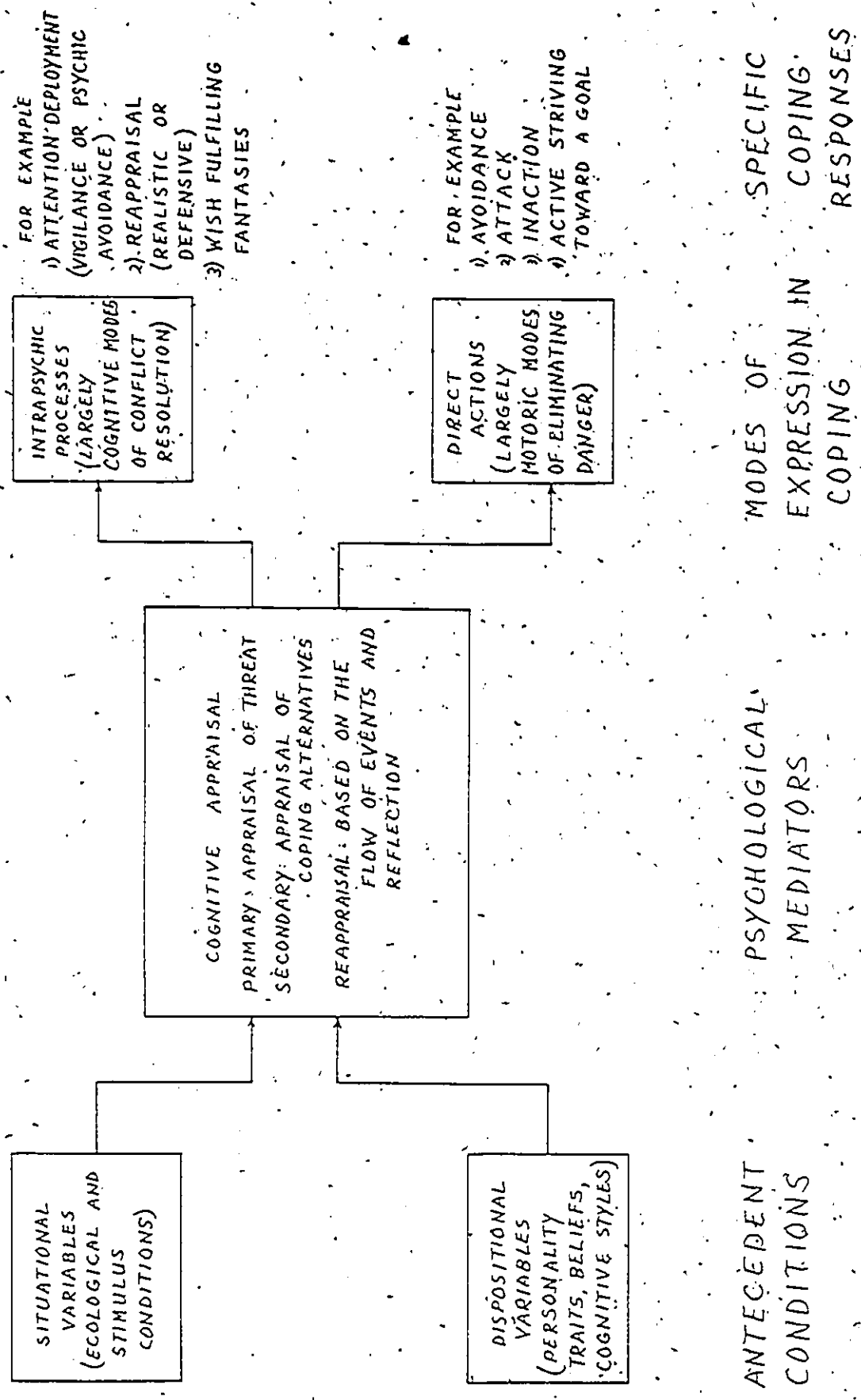
Most stimulus events do not automatically result in specific fear responses (or other emotional responses) without having first been assessed or weighed by the individual. In fact, all organisms continuously evaluate their environments and any emotional responses that result depend on such cognitive appraisals. Pultchik (1980) has discussed such cognitive appraisal with respect to a variety of emotions while Lazarus and Averill (1972) have tended to concentrate specifically on anxiety. The latter two authors have been primarily concerned with how individuals use the cognitive process to mediate between the environmental situation and the emotional reaction. They distinguish three formal kinds of appraisal, primary, secondary and reappraisal (1972:242).

- (1) primary appraisal refers to the judgement that a situation is relevant or irrelevant or that it will have either a beneficial or harmful outcome
- (2) secondary appraisal is a judgement about the forms of coping available for mastering anticipated harm, or for facilitating potential benefits
- (3) reappraisal involves changed evaluations based on new cues, feedback from one's response or the effect of the response, or further reflection about the evidence on which the original appraisals were based.

Figure II shows how a cognitive appraisal component can be viewed as a filter between variables that might give rise to anxiety or fear and the various means of responding that are available.

It is important to note that for the most part this paper discusses only situational variables, although we might include age and sex as dispositional variables. The elaboration of dispositional variables would seem extremely important, however, since a person's own personality traits are going to largely determine how that individual appraises the situation. Failing to take into account personality traits may also mask individual trait emotions. In other words, it is feasible to postulate that some people will be, by their nature, fearful individuals (Lazarus, 1969) and will exhibit different characteristics from those who are generally

FIGURE II: MODEL OF STRATEGIES FOR APPRAISING AND COPING WITH ANXIETY



SOURCE: LAZARUS RICHARD & AVERILL JAMES R. (1972)

non-fearful but who occasionally reach a fearful state through some specific stimulus event. Garofalo (1981) has considered this aspect with his discussion of a person's "position in space" in his model describing fear of crime. This set of variables comprise a variety of dispositional variables which he sees as influencing each successive component in the model.

In the case of the elderly there have only been a few attempts made to distinguish between state and trait emotional responses to crime or indeed other variables. Raskin and Jorvik (1979) and Stenback (1980) have provided information that suggests that many elderly citizens may exhibit generally heightened levels of fear, anxiety and depression due to the general life stresses and pressures that are unique to older persons. Myers et al (1974) examined a variety of social and interpersonal variables in a longitudinal study, although they did not include criminal victimization or the threat of such victimization. Their conclusions reinforced the idea that a build-up of stressful life events can result in a change in mental status, resulting in altered personal emotional traits. These findings suggest that the exclusion of personality traits, as variables, warrants caution in concluding that increased elderly fears are the direct result of crime.

Of further interest, with respect to fear as a cognitive response, is the suggestion put forward by Lazarus (1978 a) that fear, as a response to any stimulus, is positively related

to the feeling of control that one has over the stimulus situation. He contends that the expectation of uncontrollability produces fear for as long as the subject is uncertain of the uncontrollability of the outcome.

There are two specific conditions which can determine whether a fear response will occur. The first is a person's sense of whether or not he can control the situation. This is a more important determinant of fear than the second condition which is the actual likelihood of asserting or being unable to assert control. A person's actual absence of control is likely to lead to fear only when the outcome is expected to be adverse, whereas a sense of lack of control may in itself produce fear.

Lawton et al (1976), in one of the few discussions of the psychological aspects of crime and the fear of crime, describe research on the personality trait of "active mastery". This is related to the internal locus of control concept referring to the view that the individual is in control of the extent to which the environment can provide personal satisfactions. External locus of control is similar to passive mastery where one accepts stresses as dependent on fate and outside of one's control.

Lawton et al (1976) point out that research has shown that older people are less likely to show active mastery, suggesting that increased fear in general may be concomitant

with growing old. Fear of crime may be more heightened for some elderly since absence of control may be perceived as leading to an adverse outcome.

The argument about the appropriateness of being more anxious about crime victimization than anxious about the statistically more likely event of an automobile accident is discussed by Du Bow et al (1979). Two arguments are put forward which suggest that despite the increased objective risk of traffic accidents there is a cognitive decision which makes increased anxiety about crime an appropriate response. The first argument is that crime victimization weakens the trust of social order through its deliberateness and is thus more threatening than an "accident". People who do not act in the ways that we expect them to act but deliberately plan to cause harm to others are more likely to be feared than people who cause harm by accident. In fact a significant part of the law which defines acts as criminal is based not only on the physical element of a crime (actus reus) but on the mental state (mens reus) of the person accused of a crime. An act is perceived as more reprehensible if a person knew and intended that his actions would have a harmful outcome.

The second argument about the appropriateness of fearing crime more than an automobile accident relates to the perception of control one has over the event. A driver can choose

when and where to drive and in most cases under what conditions thus controlling the possible occurrence of an accident. Crime may be perceived however as being out of the control of the average person and thus potentially more harmful. Only within certain legal limits is it possible to control to a high degree the likelihood of a break-in or an assault.

It could be argued that most people, rather than being anxious about their possible involvement in an automobile accident, are exhibiting a form of instrumental fear which is positively attuned to the potential for harm. Thus, a potentially harmful situation which has a high probability of occurrence such as an automobile accident would not generate anxiety because (1) there is no intent to cause harm and (2) there is the perception of control over the event. On the other hand a potentially harmful situation which has a low probability of occurrence might generate anxiety because (1) there is an intent to cause harm and (2) there exists little perceived control over the event.

F) Fear Responses

From the above discussion it is apparent that the variety of emotional responses that may occur to similar events is dependent at least on the individual's cognitive appraisal of the immediacy of the situation and on the methods available to the individual to cope with the stimuli. Fright can be thought of as an appropriate coping response to

situations which pose an immediate threat to the individual.

At the other extreme anxiety may result where the source of the threat cannot be specified or when coping strategies are not available. This may result in intrapsychic coping responses. These might include the classic defensive adjustments of; displacement (fear directed to other channels), repression (fear blocked from expression), denial (that a threat exists), reaction formation (expressing the opposite), projection (attributing failures to someone else) or intellectualization (detachment of the emotional response) (Lazarus, 1969).

Instrumental fear has, as its rationale for definition, the fact that it involves a positive means for coping with some of the less tangible or threatening situations. In fact many of the responses that will be outlined in our models of fear of crime (avoidance behaviours, protective behaviours, insurance behaviours, communication behaviours and participation behaviours) are simply valid strategies for coping with the perceived threat of crime.

To illustrate the importance of this distinction Steinmetz and Von Dijk (1981) report on a nation wide media campaign to increase citizens' "precautionary preparedness" or the willingness to take crime precautionary measures. They argue that the willingness or preparedness to take action against crime is a function of cognitive judgements about

crime and the effects such actions might have within the relevant social norms. "Precautionary preparedness" seems to be strongly correlated with one's personal assessment of the chance of becoming a victim but it does not seem correlated with the more emotionally charged attitudes to crime such as fear of strangers in the street or being afraid while home alone at night. This suggests that the more a person is able to use a realistic assessment strategy in terms of risk the more likely the person is to react in a coping manner. When such an assessment is not possible or is inaccurate, an emotional reaction may take the place of a successful coping reaction.

The outcome of the strategies employed to cope with specific environmental stimuli can have a profound effect on the physical and mental health of the individual. This is especially true of older persons who may be already overwhelmed with the problems of attempting to cope with the biological, sociological and cultural change factors that accompany aging. It has been suggested by several writers that additions of life stress situations for the elderly may be sufficient to eventuate in physical ailments (Myers et al, 1974; Renner and Birren, 1980) or may result in such intrapsychic problems as anxiety and depression (Stenback, 1980; Raskin and Jarvik, 1979).

To add to this the use of any type of coping strategy of response does not necessarily ensure that it will work.

Lazarus (1969) suggests three outcomes which are possible, that is (1) the coping strategy may be successful and therefore reduce fear reactions, (2) the coping strategy may be successful and maladaptive or (3) the strategy employed may be unsuccessful. In particular the argument that has been put forward with respect to the elderly's anxiety about crime victimization is that, although the coping strategy of maintaining a "fortress mentality" is useful in reducing such anxiety, it is maladaptive in terms of the elderly's ability to lead a full and rich life.

In a similar vein Jarvik and Russell (1979) have argued that an increasing number of elderly people are responding to emergency situations using an inactive or apathetic approach. This, they contend, is inappropriate in that it tends to increase the individual level of anxiety.

The above distinctions in types of emotional responses to fear evoking stimuli are particularly important when attempting to assess the nature of impact of such stimuli on the elderly. Particular attention should be paid to intrapsychic responses, in the form of high levels of anxiety that might contribute to increased life stress and result in physical or mental health deterioration. It is also essential that direct action or behavioural responses that may be maladaptive or unsuccessful as coping strategies should be isolated. With this perspective in mind it may be possible

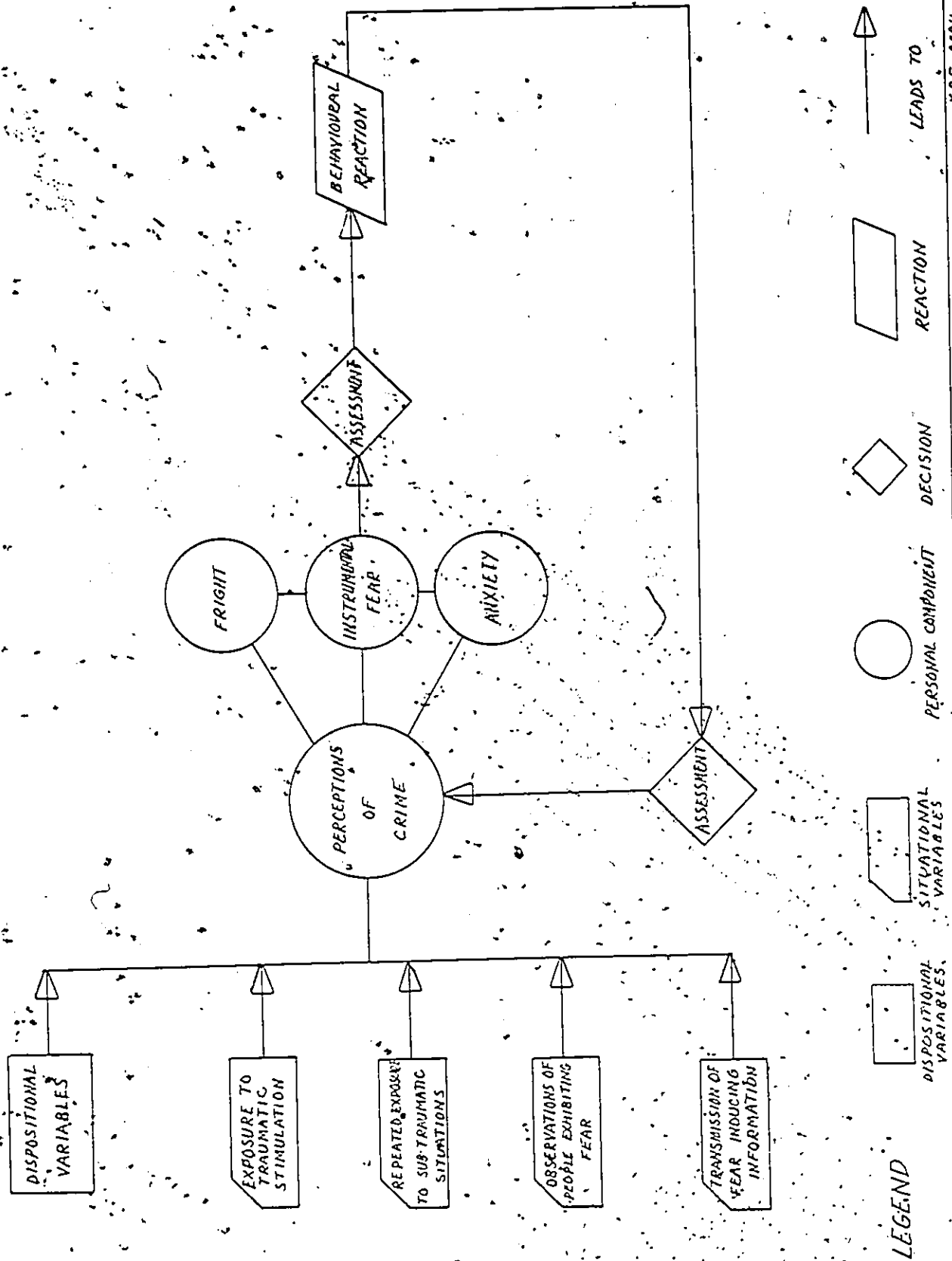
to distinguish fear responses to crime that for the elderly are valid and useful as distinct from those that are stress producing, maladaptive or not useful.

G) Summary

We are able to summarize to this point by offering a more complete definition of fear of crime. We can describe fear of crime as an emotional response to the threat or perceived threat of criminal victimization which varies in intensity from fright to anxiety depending on 1) the level of concreteness or realism of the threat or perceived threat and 2) the nature of the threat that is whether it is directed at the person or at a person's property. In addition, the level of fear which a person may experience, as a result of the threat or perceived threat of criminal victimization, may be dependent upon 1) a person's assessment of the strategies that can be used to cope with the event, 2) the actual use of these strategies with a subsequent appraisal of their effectiveness 3) the feeling of control over the situation that a person experiences and 4) the personality traits of the individual involved.

If we combine Figures I and II we can form a new model (Figure III) which takes into account these features. This model attempts to simplify the description of the various component parts by using symbols from a systems analysis perspective. This approach allows for a distinction between

FIGURE III: A PRELIMINARY MODEL TO DESCRIBE FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY



information or input factors, decision activities and action components. In addition, since systems analysis does not usually apply to human systems, we have added a fourth component which is the personal psychological component.

The model points out how, in a general sense, various dispositional and situational variables might contribute to individual perceptions of crime. These perceptions in turn result in a specific fear response. If that response is instrumental fear an appraisal or assessment of both the possible reactions and their results takes place. Previous models have failed to take into account the active human component of decision-making in relation to an individual's perception. As suggested by Lazarus and Averill (1972) the perception of threat is only the first cognitive step. The second step is the appraisal of coping alternatives while the third is a reappraisal of those alternatives as events transpire. The model reflects not only these two decision components but a feedback mechanism allowing for reappraisal of coping strategies.

This model provides a more dynamic explanation of the relationship between perception and fear of crime and the responses they engender. The next step will be to develop the model by examining each component in more detail.

CHAPTER III ELABORATING ON THE MODEL OF FEAR OF CRIME

A) Preamble

We have, to this point, been able to expand our definition of fear to include three possible levels and to suggest that fear of crime might be more properly described according to these levels. The model as presented is incomplete however in that we lack detail about the nature of individual perceptions of crime, the specific factors that influence those perceptions and the possible reactions to fear engendered by crime. We will begin this chapter by expanding that part of the model that deals with individual appraisal or perception of crime. We will continue with a discussion of factors that have been considered as affecting perceptions of crime and then discuss various reactions to crime that have been investigated. The immediate task will be to synthesize a comprehensive model that can then be tested against the reality of the experiences of several senior citizens acting as case samples.

B) Perceptions of Crime

A model proposed by Du Bow et al (1979) serves to describe the "perceptual realm" of individuals with respect to crime. The model (Figure IV) suggests a two axis structure for describing an individual's perception of crime. The horizontal axis provides a general 3-system categorization of reactions to crime consisting of values, judgements or

emotions. The vertical axis represents a continuum of perceptual references ranging from perceptions which are general in nature to those which are closer to a person's own personal experience.

The model also describes a variety of behavioural responses that can be seen to be dependent upon the nature of the perceptual referent, that is whether it is general or more personal in nature. The model suggests that a general emotional reaction such as fear for others will result in different behaviours than if the emotional reaction consists of fear for oneself.

Values are viewed as assessments of concern for crime and are typically measured on surveys by questions relating to the perceived seriousness of crime and other social problems. Cultural values may be of importance in determining such perceptions since research has shown differences among communities in terms of the forms of behaviour that are considered acceptable or will be tolerated. At the individual or personal level an evaluative perception is defined by one's personal tolerance of crime.

Judgements, on the other hand, are described as a type of perception related to the assessment of the amount or rates of crime. At the personal level are judgements about the probability of personal risk of victimization. Yin (1980) has hypothesized that the elderly may make additional

judgements about crime on the basis of 1) the seriousness of physical injury and property loss and 2) the ability to recuperate from a victimization experience.

Yin further hypothesizes that a high level of personal anxiety of or general concern for crime is produced for the elderly if any or all of the following conditions occur;

- 1) if subjects perceive that the probability of being victimized is high;
- 2) if subjects perceive that if they were victimized the physical and economic consequences incurred would be serious and
- 3) if subjects perceive that if victimized, regardless of item #2 their ability to recuperate would be low.

He contends that the fact that a senior's perceptions may not be congruent with reality is irrelevant since the perception may still result in an emotional fear response.

Du Bow et al (1979) report that three basic patterns of judgements have emerged in the literature. The first is that many people believe crime rates are continually rising. The second is that people judge there to be less crime in one's immediate environment or neighbourhood than in other locations. The third is that, at the personal level, people generally report that their chances of becoming a victim are increasing. The authors argue that assessment of personal risk provides the most direct indication of the impact of crime on an individual.

As the third component of an individual's "perceptual

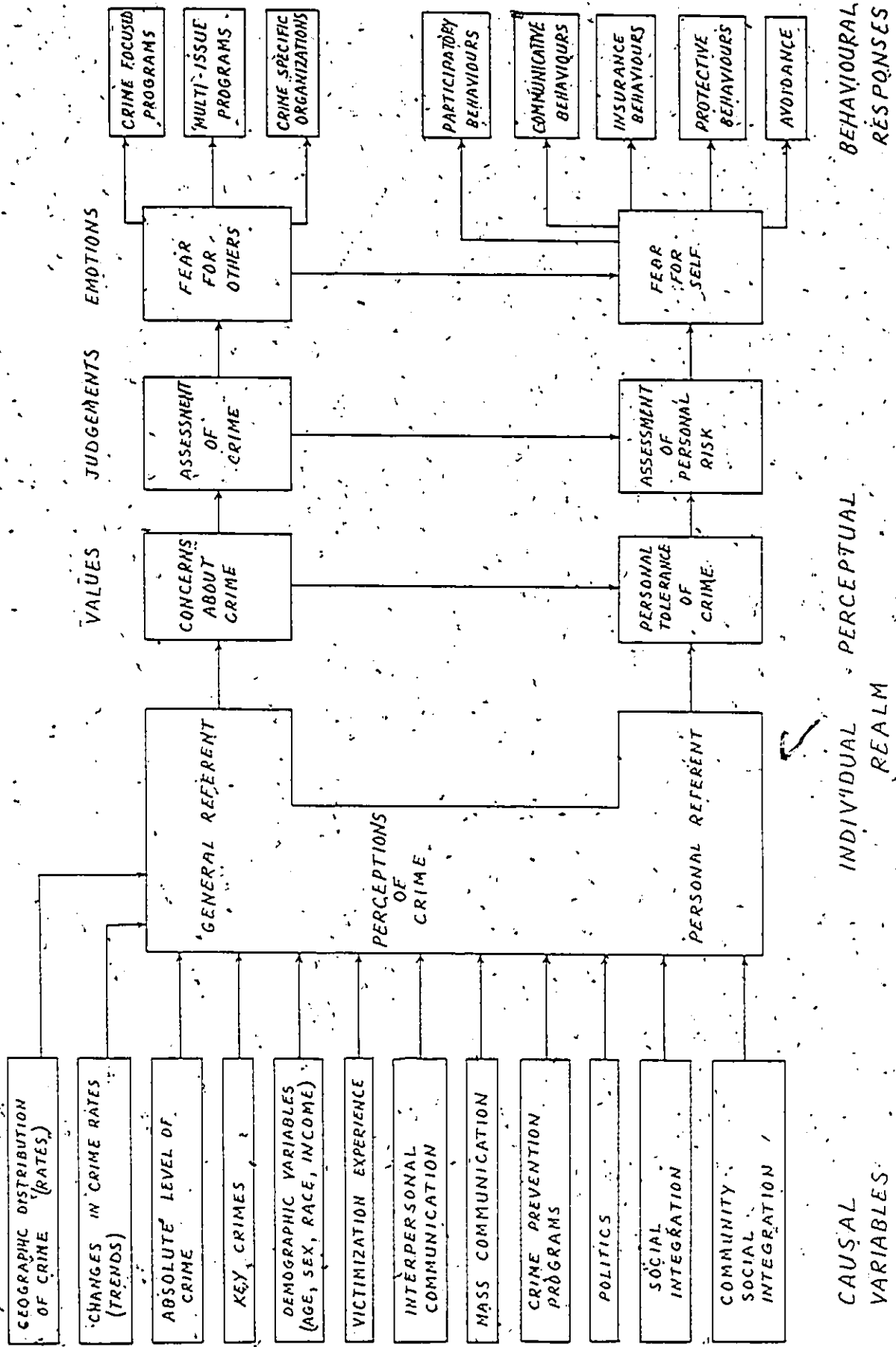
realm" Du Bow et al (1979) have included emotions. They do suggest however that emotions are distinct reactions to a perceived situation. This distinction is perhaps important enough to warrant clarification. Perception is defined as the act or faculty of apprehending or understanding by means of the senses or of the mind. Emotions, on the other hand, are considered as effective or caused states of consciousness as distinguished from cognitive or volitional states of consciousness (Random House, 1973).

A perception requires some exercise of will or thought on the part of the individual whereas an emotion is simply a reaction to the perception. Thus the values or judgements that a person places on a criminal victimization, or the threat of such an experience, will influence the type of emotional (fear) response.

Du Bow et al (1979) also make a distinction between types of fears that is (1) fear for others such as parents' fear for their children or a husband's fear for his wife and (2) fear for oneself. The authors note that most research has concentrated on fear for oneself related to street crimes, that is personal offences in public places. These offences are consistently found to be most personally frightening.

As previously suggested, the emotional reaction may be more dependent on the perception of a situation than on the reality of the situation. Both Yin (1980) and Du Bow et al

FIGURE IV: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF FEAR OF CRIME BASED ON DUBOW, MCKABE + KAPLAN



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(1979) have recognized the fact that though perceptions may not be congruent with reality, this may be irrelevant since such perceptions may still result in emotional (fear) responses.

Although the predominant emotion that seems to have been studied is the fear reaction related to crime, there have been other emotional responses mentioned in the literature. Feelings such as anger, outrage, frustration, feelings of violation and helplessness have been suggested as possible reactions to crime but have not received as much attention (Waller and Okihiro, 1978; Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Baril, 1980).

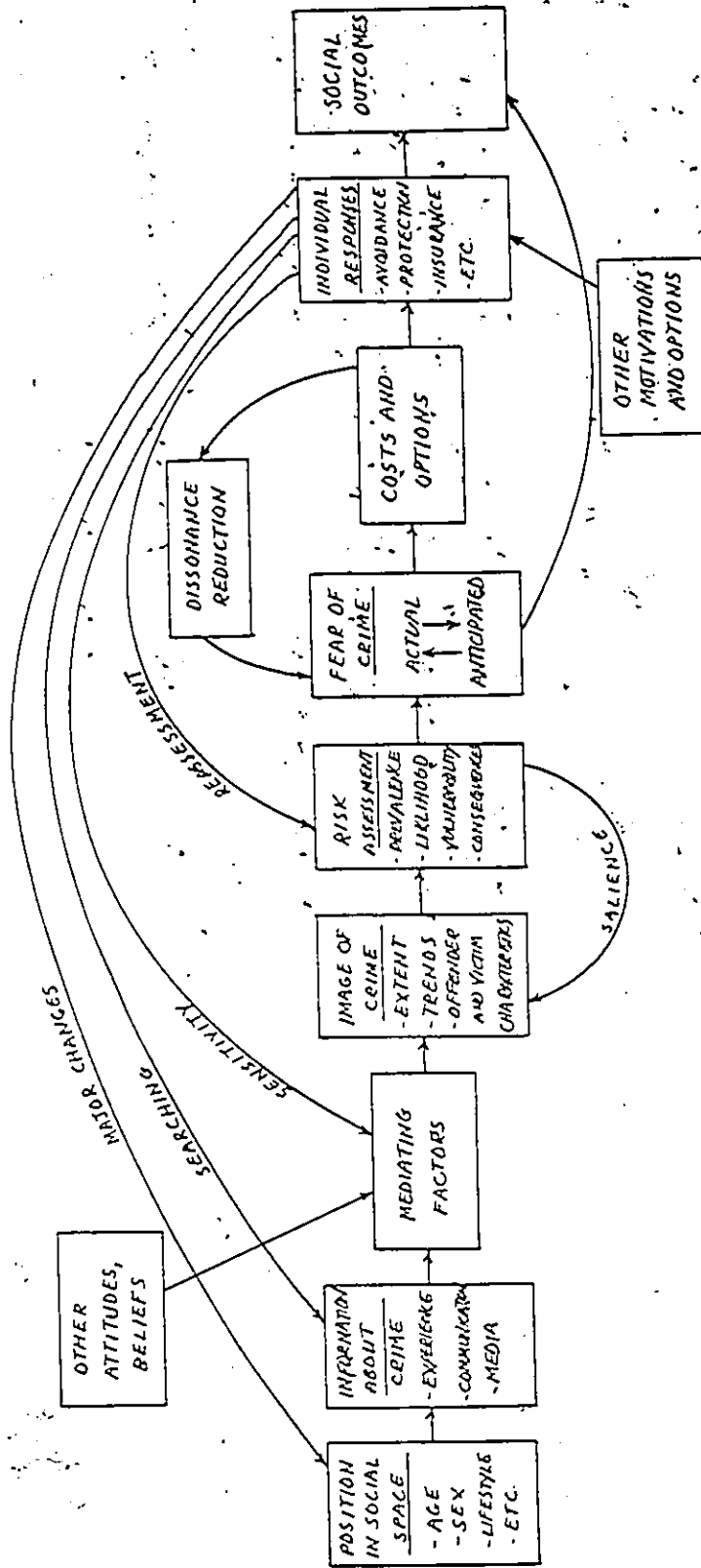
Garofolo (1981) has also attempted to develop a model that would serve to explain the various causes and consequences of the fear of crime. This model bears many similarities to that just described as well as Yin's (1980) model which we will presently discuss. The Garofolo model (Figure V) suggests that a person has an image of crime, which we might equate to a perception of crime, which is formed from a variety of sources and which serves to inform the individual about appropriate environmental cues from which the threat of crime can be inferred. The model also includes a personalization of that image of crime, in the form of an assessment of the risk of personal involvement. The author contends that assessments are made according to the prevalence of crime, the likelihood of involvement, the individual's vulnerability and the consequences if victimized. He modifies this slightly

by adding that such assessment often enters unconsciously or indirectly in the individual's perceptual realm. Garofolo places an emphasis on this risk assessment component since he contends that a feeling of invulnerability can serve to dampen or reduce the fear one has of potential physical harm.

The model also includes a feedback loop from the risk assessment component to the image of crime. This implies that continued risk assessment serves to keep the images of crime relevant and close to consciousness. The Du Bow et al (1979) model far from excluding such a feedback component, implies that since concerns, assessments, tolerance and risk are all part of the perceptual realm they are interrelated such that an alteration in one judgement about crime would lead to an alteration in all the others so that personal risk would also be reassessed.

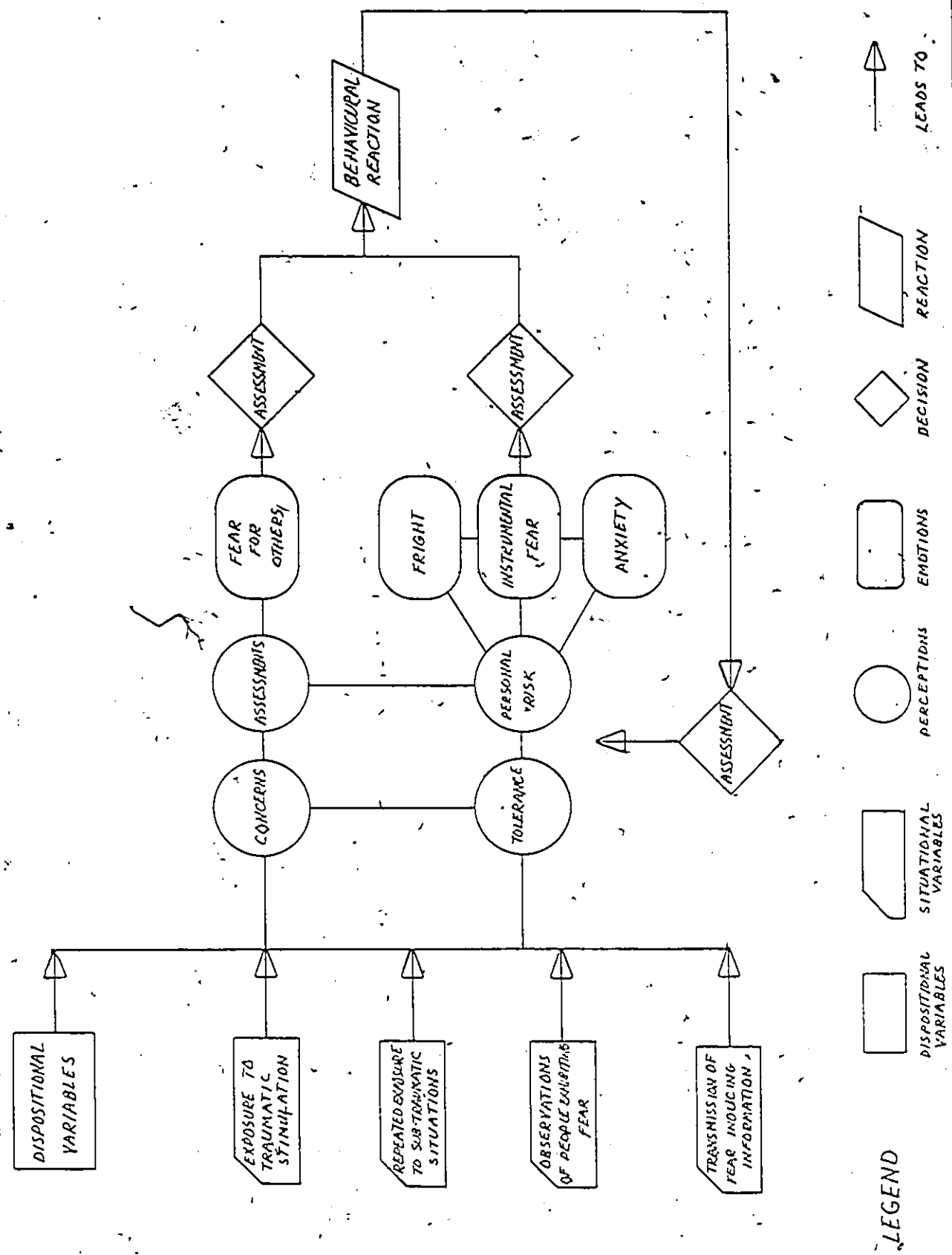
We might summarize to this point by altering that part of the proposed model that deals with individual perceptions of crime. Figure VI includes as perceptual components those values and judgements, as well as the fear components, that we have discussed. For the sake of simplicity we will continue to assume that our interests remain solely with the fear of crime as an emotion rather than with other possible emotional reactions to perceptions of crime. The model incorporates the suggestion that perceptual values and judgements can lead directly to emotional responses, and that

FIGURE V: GAROFOLO'S GENERAL MODEL OF THE FEAR OF CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES



SOURCE: GAROFOLO JAMES, THE FEAR OF CRIME: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.
THE JOURNAL OF CRIMINAL LAW + CRIMINOLOGY, VOL. 72, NO. 2, 1981

FIGURE VI: REVISION 1 OF THE PRELIMINARY MODEL
DESCRIBING FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY



they can be altered based on those behavioural responses that occur.

C) Factors Influencing the Perception of Crime

The variables that have been examined as possibly causal in explaining how perceptions of crime are formed are numerous.

Garofolo (1979) had previously attempted to outline some factors which might cause or shape fear of crime. This was done by an analysis of the 1975 N.C.S. data of the eight so-called "Impact Cities" in the United States (Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Newark, Portland and St. Louis).

The model that was subsequently suggested is strongly dependent on a measure of the perception of personal risk at night derived as responses to the question, "How safe do you feel or would you feel being alone in your neighbourhood at night?"

Garofolo's (1979) findings suggested that the effects of age and sex, which he combines to define a role socialization variable, are substantial and that these effects cannot be accounted for by the risk of personal victimization or actual experience with victimization. These findings support the argument that those who most feel at risk, the elderly and females, do so because their social position predisposes them to being fearful. Females, for example, may express more feelings of risk because of their traditionally submissive roles, that is through their reliance on males for protection, income etc. It might be hypothesized that those females who

have not been dependent on male support during their lives, would also be generally less fearful of criminal victimization. In a similar vein, many seniors may be placed in a socially dependent role, by such factors as income and health. Those who are not forced into such roles may be less inclined to experience feelings of fearing criminal victimization.

While Garofolo's (1979) work is an important first step in understanding an aspect of our model of fear of crime, it is limited in that it seeks to explain only one dimension of the human perceptual realm, that is the perception of risk at night. Further exploration is limited by the very general nature of the survey data used for analysis.

Du Bow, McKabe and Kaplan have included in their discussion (Figure IV) a variety of variables that have been considered as having an impact on an individual's perception of crime. These causal variables include (1) the geographic distribution of crime, (2) changes in victimization (or crime) rates over time, (3) the absolute level of crime, (4) key or sensational crimes, (5) victimization rates, (6) victimization experiences, (7) witnessing crimes, (8) interpersonal communications, (9) mass communication, (10) the police and other institutions, (11) individual social integration and (12) community social integration.

1). Geographic distribution of crime. Du Bow et al (1979:12) have summarized the existing findings by stating

that the "incidence of crime in specific areas, to the degree that existing measures of crime reflect them, is a salient factor influencing perceptions of crime." The effect is not so strong that it is safe to assume that all or even most of the residents of a 'high crime' area will be afraid of crime or conversely that the residents of 'low crime' areas are mostly unafraid."

For example, Lewis and Maxfield (1980) have argued that official crime rates and perceived risk are not related in any simple way nor are concerns of crime related to objective crime rates. It has been argued that one of the reasons that many elderly fear criminal victimization is because of the fact that they tend to live in high crime areas where the likelihood of victimization is increased. The relationship is not that clear since many elderly who live outside of high crime neighbourhoods also report high levels of fear. This supports the contention as put forward in the proposed model that perceived risk and concerns are perceptions distinct from the emotional response of fear. The model assumes that even those who live in a high crime area and perceive the risks as great, may not exhibit a fear response since they have acted to cope with these perceptions.

2) Changes in rates over time. These changes tend to produce differing fear and concern responses depending on the time frame within which the relationship between rates and

perceptions are examined. Du Bow et al (1979) discuss studies looking at relatively short periods of time which show a tendency for fears and concerns to rise with increases in crime rates rather than decline with decreases. When longer time spans are studied, at least in the United States and England, overall decreases in violent crimes have been associated with increases in intolerance and concern.

3) Absolute levels of crime. The argument is put forward by Du Bow et al (1979) that citizens may be more influenced by the absolute level or magnitude of crime problems than by crime rates in specific areas. The reason suggested is that lower crime rates can co-exist with high levels of citizen exposure to crime news or information.

4) Key or sensational crimes. Perceptions of crime may be highly influenced by a particular dramatic or well-publicised crime regardless of the existing levels, patterns or absolute amount of crime (Du Bow et al, 1979). Elderly persons may be more affected by the odd story of another elderly victim of assault or purse snatch than by stories involving the deaths of suspected drug dealers. Smaller communities or even neighbourhoods in larger communities may experience crimes that are less widely known or publicised but which nevertheless influence local residents. Elderly residents who may spend proportionately more time in the neighbourhood or community may be influenced more than others by such local occurrences.

5) Victimization rates. Du Bow et al (1979) point out that victim surveys have tended to show four distinct demographic characteristics that can account for differences in victimization rates and, presumably the resulting perceptions of crime. As previously mentioned, age and sex are the two most predominant such factors. The data consistently shows that males have higher rates of victimization for almost all crime categories, other than sexual assault, than do women. The data also shows that for personal violent crimes and thefts, young persons have consistently higher rates of victimization than do older people. It has been pointed out, however, that when specific crime categories, such as robbery with injury or larceny with contact, are examined, it is possible to find the elderly having a high or higher victimization rate than other age groups (Lawton et al, 1976; Hochstedler, 1981).

It would seem reasonable to argue that victimization rates can only affect perceptions of crime in a positive or useful sense when there is an awareness of these specific rates. Widespread dissemination of victim survey results has not been a common occurrence with the result that many perceptions of crime may be somewhat distorted as the result of being based more on interpersonal and mass communications about crime victim data.

6) Victimization experience. It would seem logical

to infer that those who have had the experience of being a crime victim might have altered perceptions of crime. The data available seems sketchy, however, and suggests that only some specific types of victimization may have a modest effect on perceptions and that no widespread effects are found for most victims of crime. Du Bow et al (1979) contend that the reason for the sketchy findings stem from two methodological problems in collecting survey data. The first relates to the fact that victim survey questions typically ask for victimization experiences only in the last year or two and classify negative responders as non-victims even though they may have been victims prior to the requested time period. This failure to include victimization experiences of a much earlier period may result in the false categorization of many seniors as non-victims when in fact a previous experience remains fresh and vivid.

The second problem relates to the fact that there is no longitudinal data available on which to soundly base the inference that the differences in perceptions between victims and non-victims are the result of the victimization experience. Yin (1980) concurs with the difficulties in data gathering and concludes that at best the data suggests that victimization experiences may either increase or decrease the level of fear, depending on the nature of the experience (Reis, 1967; Biderman, 1967; Reynolds and Blyth, 1976; Sundeen, 1977; Bishop and Klecka, 1978).

7) Witnessing crimes. Du Bow et al (1979) discuss the fact that information on the impact of witnessing a crime on an individual's perception of crime has not been systematically gathered possibly because being a witness is considered a less important factor than being a victim. The authors suggest that under some conditions being a witness may be a more powerful experience and that this variable should be taken more into consideration.

8) Interpersonal communication. Du Bow et al (1979) put forward the argument that interpersonal communications about crime are one form of vicarious crime experience that may have a stronger influence on personal perceptions of crime than does actual crime experience. It is suggested that interpersonal communications filter, alter and structure information made available by the media, institutional actors and direct experiences.

Some research (Lawton et al, 1976) has shown that the elderly may make greater use of interpersonal communications about crime in order to ventilate their personal concerns and worries. This serves to reduce personal anxiety by "talking it out." This is supported by findings (Gubrium, 1974) that greater social interaction was associated with greater concern about crime but lower fear. Gubrium viewed higher social interaction as resulting in more information about crime which led to more concern, but the accompanying supportive

relationships tended to help diffuse fears.

For many seniors interpersonal communication may prove to be the only known or viable means of reducing personal anxiety. On the other hand, seniors whose lifestyle, for whatever reason, results in isolation may not have access to such ventilation as a form of coping with their anxieties.

9) Mass communication. A second form of vicarious crime experience is based on the widespread belief that the media can be highly influential in shaping perceptions of crime. This has been supported by the inability of researchers to find consistent relationships between objective risks, personal experience and perceptions of crime. Du Bow et al (1979) conclude that what little information is available about how people obtain and interpret information about crime tends to support the belief that people who rely on the mass media for such information see crime as a serious problem. The findings that are most relevant to this discussion are those which consistently report finding that people tend to see crime as less of a problem in their own neighbourhoods where they can use personal experience and interpersonal communication to confirm or deny media reports (Hindelang et al, 1978).

It should be noted that Yin (1980) has combined the effects of both mass communication and interpersonal communication under the heading of interactions about crime and

argues that such interactions may exacerbate fear. It is not unreasonable to argue that continual discussion of anxiety or concerns about crime, rather than serving a ventilating function, could serve to increase levels of anxiety. A thorough analysis would seem to require an understanding of both the nature and extent of such communication at various points in time.

10) Police and other institutions. It is recognized that the police, through special crime prevention programs and in the course of daily interaction with the public, transmit a great variety of information and judgements on the nature of crime as well as what citizens can do to further protect themselves. A frequent premise underlying many crime prevention presentations is the need to teach people that crime is more extensive and serious than they think. A community crime prevention officer, in discussing his program presentation to senior citizens, has stated that his main approach is to "scare the hell out of them" (O'Connor, 1980) in the hopes that a little bit of fear will stimulate some positive activity. Du Bow et al (1979) question such strategies since it is not known whether they provide more realistic perceptions of crime or actually increase the level of unwarranted fear.

Du Bow et al also include real estate agents and appraisers as well as insurance agents and underwriters as

capable of providing information that characterizes particular locales in terms of crime and may therefore play a role in effecting perceptions of crime.

11) Individual social integration. This variable corresponds to Yin's (1980) category of "involvement in the neighbourhood network" and raises the question of whether individual social integration in the community is associated with perceptions of crime and level of fear.

The problem of social isolation is one of particular importance to the elderly. The research by Sundeen and Mathieu (1976) and Lebowitz (1975) lends support to the idea that older people living alone are generally more anxiety prone than those who are living with others in the household. It would seem that isolated seniors have fewer opportunities or limited access to social strategies to help cope with or reduce anxiety.

In contrast, Gubrium (1974) has hypothesized that elderly residents of age-concentrated housing have comparatively more extensive friendships than those living in age-heterogeneous housing and that anxiety in general is likely to be lower where these friendships result in more social interaction. Presumably greater social interaction would allow for more personal ventilation of concerns or worries as well as providing other supportive strategies.

Du Bow et al (1979) have suggested that concerns about

criminal victimization may be reduced if people feel that they can rely on their neighbours for support in the event of the threat of victimization. This type of support may however only relate to perceptions about crime and not necessarily extend to anxiety or other emotional responses.

12) Community social integration. One of the most complex analysis of the relationship between low community social integration, low social control and high levels of fear, has been developed by Conklin (1975) who argues that fear of crime may actually be fear of strangers. Even where high social interaction may exist, high volumes of street traffic composed of strangers is not likely to lead to social integration or decreased fear of crime (Du Bow et al, 1979).

Lewis and Maxfield (1980) have argued that people who are concerned about crime problems are also concerned about problems of incivility and social order. They contend that a combination of concern with crime and incivility affect neighbourhood perceptions of risk since they found the greatest levels of perceived risk where there was a combination of high concern about crime and incivility.

The framework developed by Yin (1980) has been a more specific attempt to explain the findings in the literature relating to the amount of anxiety and concern the elderly have about criminal victimization. The model, as shown in

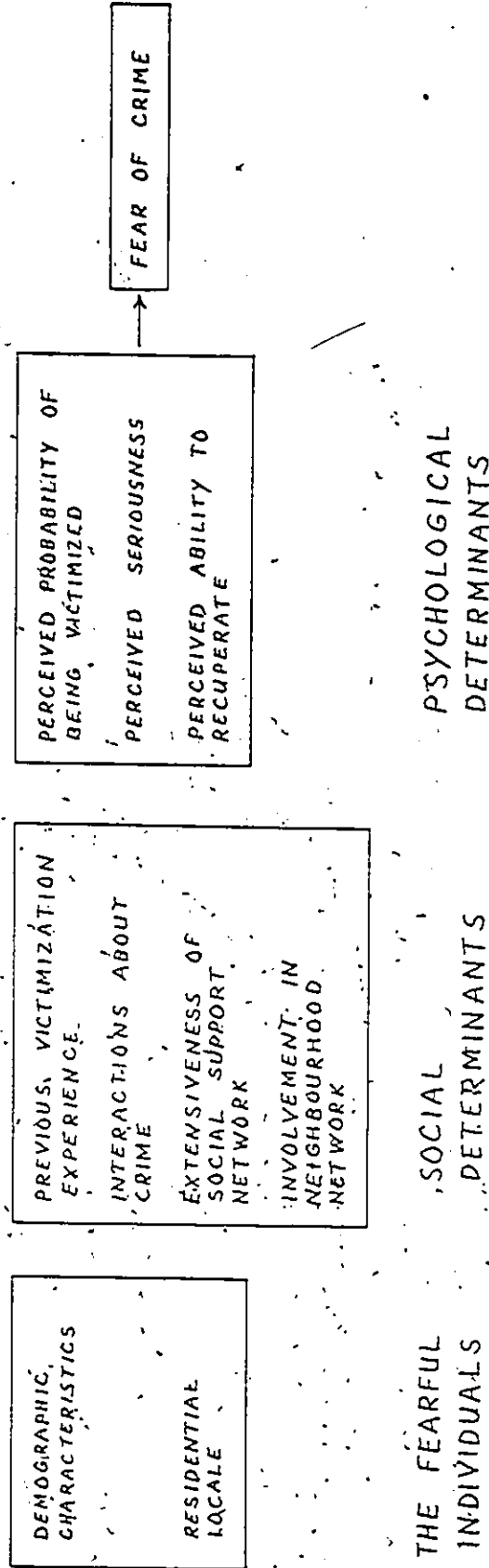
Figure VII consists of two basic categories of variables, (1) that describe the fearful individuals and (2) that outline the social determinants that give rise to fear of crime among the elderly.

The first category is an attempt to define who the fearful individuals are by isolating demographic variables and residential locale variables. As Yin points out, much of the existing research has been devoted to identifying the effects that these variables have on the perceptual and emotional responses to crime with the result that we know a great deal about who the anxious or concerned individuals are (primarily the elderly and women) but very little about why they are anxious or concerned. These demographic or dispositional variables include sex, age, race and social class while residential locale variables include type of housing, age composition of residents in the neighbourhood, location of the neighbourhood, physical structure of the neighbourhood and size of the city.

The second category of variables, we might describe as situational variables, consists of "social determinants" of anxieties or concerns about crime described as;

- (1) Previous victimization experience which includes number of previous victimizations, ease of recuperation after victimization and seriousness of the experience.

FIGURE VII: YIN'S CONCEPTUAL
FRAMEWORK EXPLAINING FEAR OF CRIME



SOURCE: YIN PETER, FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY: SOME ISSUES AND SUGGESTIONS, SOCIAL PROBLEMS, APRIL 1980 (493)

- (2) Interactions about crime, which refers to talking with other people about crime, the influence of the mass media and the impact of other information sources such as crime prevention programs.
- (3) Extensiveness of the social service network, which refers to the quantity and quality of social relationships the person has.
- (4) Involvement in the neighbourhood network consists of variables relating to the individual's familiarity with his/her neighbourhood.

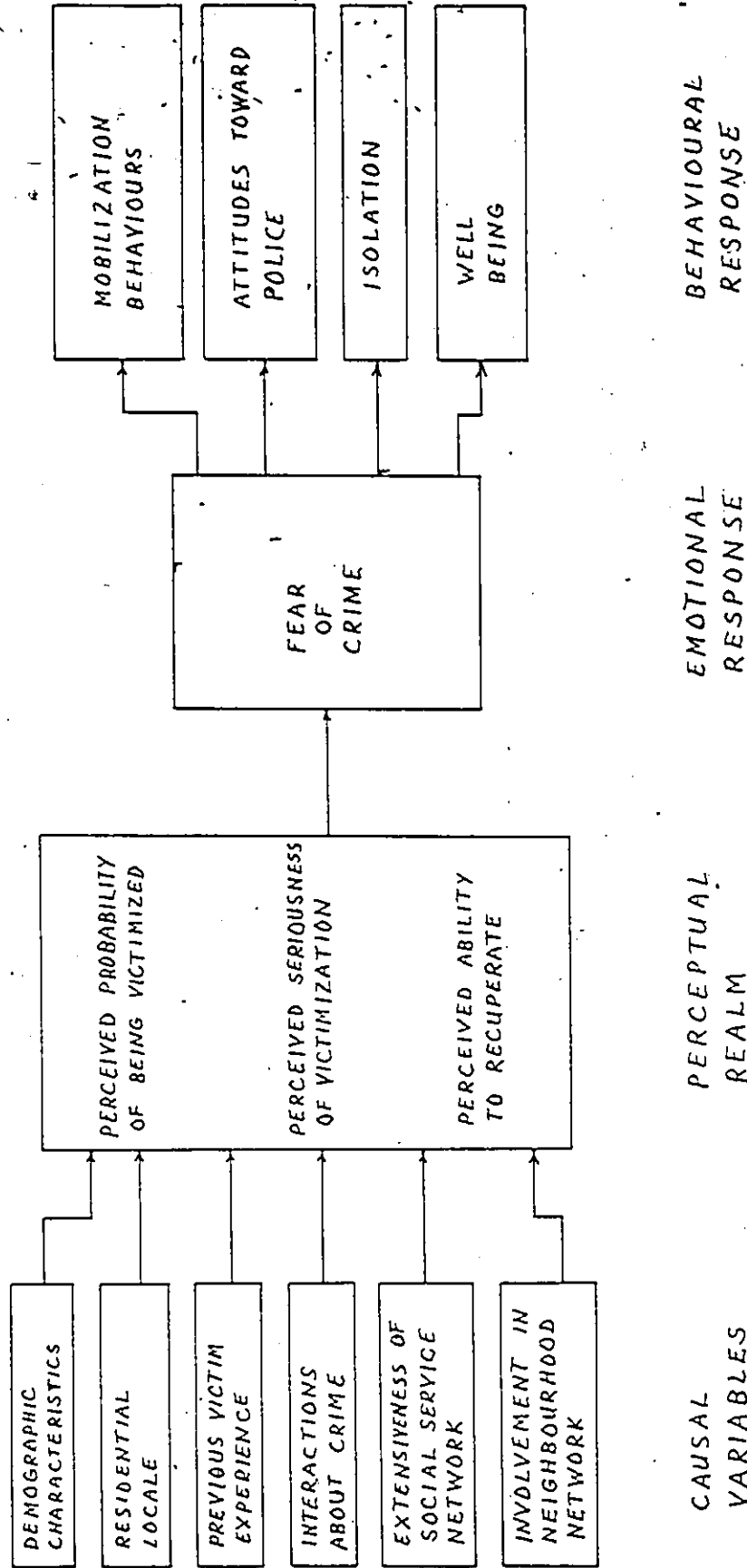
These variables are used in the literature to explain the variation in anxiety and concern generated as a result of the threat of criminal victimization among elderly people of similar demographic characteristics and residential locale.

A third category of variables has been hypothesized by Yin (1980) as acting as intervening variables between the factors that determine a level of fear and the actual development of that fear. They comprise the psychological determinants located in the individual's own "perceptual realm." Yin contends that most survey questions implicitly define fear of crime based on the perception of being victimized, yet for the elderly (1) the seriousness of physical injury and property loss and (2) the ability to recuperate from a victimization experience may be additional psychological factors of equal importance in determining the level of fear.

As well as discussing factors that may contribute to anxiety or concern as the result of crime among the elderly, Yin (1980) has included in his framework, four categories of possible consequences of such outcomes. These are (1) mobilization behaviours; (2) changed attitudes towards the police; (3) isolation and (4) changes in well-being. In order to incorporate these behavioural responses, Figure VIII has been provided which presents a revision of Yin's basic model. This model groups the causal variables and suggests that they relate directly to the individual's perception of crime. The emotional response of fear is mediated by these perceptions and results in specific behavioural responses. The model as refined can be seen to be similar in format to that of Du Bow et al (1979), and Garofolo (1981).

At this point we should review the implications of the above three models as they relate to the theoretical model we are attempting to develop. To begin with, many of the situational variables that can be discussed as causally related to fear of crime may be arranged in a hierarchical order according to their immediacy or tangibility. If we apply the classification as discussed by Rachman (1978 a) we should be able to group the causal factors that have been discussed by Du Bow et al (1979), Yin (1980) and Garofolo (1981). We might therefore postulate that criminal victimization

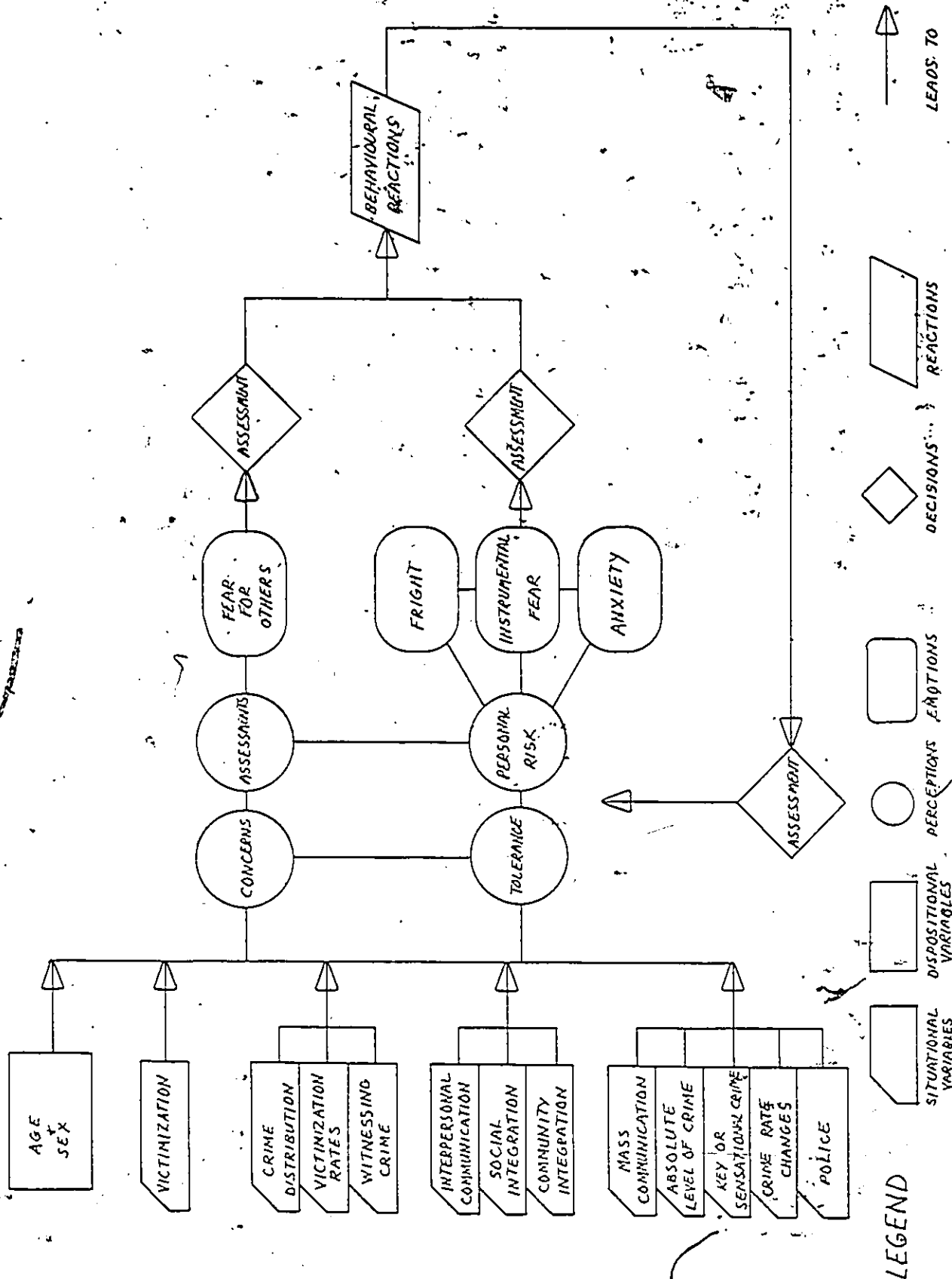
FIGURE VIII : YIN'S CONCEPTUAL
FRAMEWORK (REVISED)



experience or the immediate threat of victimization can be considered the only form of actual exposure to traumatic situations. Repeated exposure to sub-traumatic sensitizing situations might be said to occur as a result of (1) geographic distribution of crime, (2) victimization rates and (3) witnessing crimes. Observations (direct or indirect) of people exhibiting fear of crime might occur: (1) through interpersonal communication, (2) through lack of individual social integration or (3) through lack of community social integration. The transmission of fear inducing information might result from: (1) mass communication, (2) absolute levels of crime, (3) key or sensational crimes, (4) changes in crime rates over time and (5) the police or other institutions. The model implies that these situational variables have an equal likelihood of producing a given level of fear although as we have previously suggested (Figure I) it is reasonable to assume that the level of causal factors in part determines the level of fear.

Figure IX refines the model by arranging the factors thought to affect the perceptions of crime in such specific groupings and relates them in a very general sense to perceptions of crime. The model includes age and sex as factors influencing perceptions but groups these under the separate heading of dispositional variables. These are the only two dispositional variables that the model presumes to discuss.

FIGURE IX : REVISION 2 OF THE PRELIMINARY MODEL
DESCRIBING FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY



D) Reactions to Crime

Although the literature has contended that one of the primary reactions to crime especially for the elderly is an emotional fear response, this reaction has largely been inferred on the basis of individual behavioural reactions or more precisely verbal reports of individual behaviour reactions.

Yin (1980) discusses one of the problems in assessing the relationship between emotions and behaviour, that is whether to treat behaviours as indicators of fear or consequences of fear. For example, if purchasing a new lock for your home is viewed as a consequence then it would probably be related to high fear. If, on the other hand, it is viewed as simply an indicator then it might be related to low fear since buying a new lock can be thought of as reducing the reasons to fear home intrusion.

The implication is that some behaviours which have served to define high levels of fear might be redefined as positive strategies associated with keeping levels of fear low or within some tolerable range. We will return to the difficulty in inferring emotions from verbal reports of behaviours and also to the possibility of having to redefine the impact of some of these behaviours but for now we will concentrate on placing behavioural reactions to crime in some form of perspective.

Du Bow et al (1979) have contended that much confusion

has existed in pinpointing specific behavioural reactions to crime because many of the typical survey questions do not establish a causal link between crime and the form of behaviour in question. They attempt to resolve this dilemma by defining a behavioural reaction to crime as "an action or set of actions for which the presence of crime risks is believed to be a relevant consideration" (1979:30). An example might be the purchase of an expensive burglar alarm system for the home. One can think of few other reasons for such behaviour other than to reduce the risk of being burglarized. On the other hand, some behaviours such as buying a dog may be open to interpretation since the various reasons for such a purchase, that is as a pet, for protection, or both, require clarification.

In an attempt to review the various types of behavioural responses to crime, Du Bow et al (1979) have distinguished between two types of so-called "mobilization behaviours". Accordingly, they differentiate between avoidance behaviours and protective behaviours. Avoidance behaviours are "actions taken to decrease exposure to crime by removing oneself from or increasing the distance from situations in which the risk of criminal victimization is believed to be high" (Du Bow et al, 1979:31).

Protective behaviours are those which "do not entail physically removing oneself from exposure to people and places.

Instead a reduction in victimization is sought through actions which make victimization more difficult for the offender or which signal that the task will be more difficult if attempted" (Du Bow et al, 1973:31). This is an important distinction which Yin (1980) has failed to incorporate in his model, treating instead all such behaviours as simply mobilization behaviours.

1) Avoidance behaviours. According to the above definition, such behaviours would include avoiding certain areas, or at certain times, reducing encounters with strangers, youths in a group or people of a different race or ethnic origin. For many elderly citizens such reactions might include altering one's pattern of walking at specific times or never walking unaccompanied. Yin (1980) has discussed personal isolation, as a problematic reaction to crime for many seniors. He points out however that despite the insistence that this problem exists (Lawton et al, 1976) the research has not established a firm relationship between fear of crime and isolation.

2) Protective behaviours. These behaviours can be further sub-divided into, a) home protective and b) personal protective behaviours. Home protective behaviours include actions designed to make a home more secure such as installing new or better locks, alarms, bars on windows, obtaining a watchdog, etc. Personal protective behaviours are those

designed to reduce the vulnerability of those outside the home. They might include carrying a weapon, learning self-defense, etc.

For many seniors the concept of vulnerability is especially important since their age and possible physical infirmities make them look naturally vulnerable. If this is reflected in their personal perception of themselves they may have very few alternatives but to physically remove themselves from everyday potentially harmful situations.

Du Bow et al (1979) also describe three other distinctive forms of personal behavioural reactions to crime.

3) Insurance behaviours. These behaviours are designed to minimize the costs or the consequences of victimization. Examples would be not only the purchase of insurance for home protection or physical injury, but strategies such as carrying less cash, placing certain items in safety deposit boxes or engraving property to increase the likelihood of recovery.

4) Communication behaviours. Du Bow et al (1979) suggest that sharing information about personal victimization or ideas about causes or what to do about crime may be less obvious behavioural reactions but evidence exists to support the notion that people do more talking than doing about crime. People may verbally express their emotions or intentions but this may be the extent of their behavioural reaction.

5) Participation behaviours. This category would include actions in concert with other people, motivated by crime in general or a particular crime, and designed to impact on crime. Du Bow et al (1979) suggest that this may be as informal as calling the police.

It should be noted that Du Bow et al (1979) also discuss in detail collective behavioural responses to crime such as involvement in crime focussed programs, or crime specific organizations and involvement in multi-issue programs which have a crime concern component. This study does not attempt to deal with this area except to document such participation where it is evident in the responses of individuals.

Yin (1980) has provided another possible group of reactions to crime which have not been discussed by Du Bow et al (1979) but which have appeared in other writings (Lebowitz, 1975; Reynolds and Blyth, 1976; Lawton et al, 1976). These relate to the psychological or attitudinal reactions to crime. Yin isolates attitudes towards police and personal well-being as being of interest. He contends that very little has been said about seniors' attitudes towards the police and the relationship between anxiety and concerns about crime and satisfaction with police performance is tenuous at best. As previously mentioned Yin points out

that the relationship between anxieties, concerns and personal well-being has only been reported once. He discusses a study which showed fear of crime related to such measures of psychological well-being as general level of morale and degree of satisfaction with housing and with one's neighbourhood.

The ideas that a senior citizen's "well-being" may be negatively impacted by the fear of crime is a central argument in much of the research. As previously discussed this has assumed to occur as the result of seniors being afraid to walk the streets at night or remaining locked inside their homes. Certainly in extreme cases these actions or lack of action can be viewed as negatively impacting "well-being" but is this really the case if there is legitimate danger for an older person being alone on the street at night? Yin has attempted to distinguish between "well-being" and coping strategies that might be useful in maintaining that well-being.

In line with this concept of viewing specific behavioural reactions to crime as possible coping strategies is the work of Lazarus (1969). As previously mentioned he has argued that the use of any type of strategy to cope with fear or anxiety can have one of three outcomes, that is (1) it may be successful and therefore reduce fear reactions, (2) it may be successful and maladaptive and (3) it may be unsuccessful. In considering the impact of fear of crime on the well-being of the elderly we should be concerned with coping strategies,

that are successful but maladaptive or that may be unsuccessful. Those who have made use of specific behaviours to cope with crime and show no abnormal fear of crime or who have at least reduced it to a manageable level should not be considered adversely affected.

Although we will not attempt to define psychological well-being, a useful approximation for the study of the impact might be to consider that component defined as "quality of life" (Lebowitz, 1975). For our purposes "quality of life" for seniors can be defined as comprising three factors

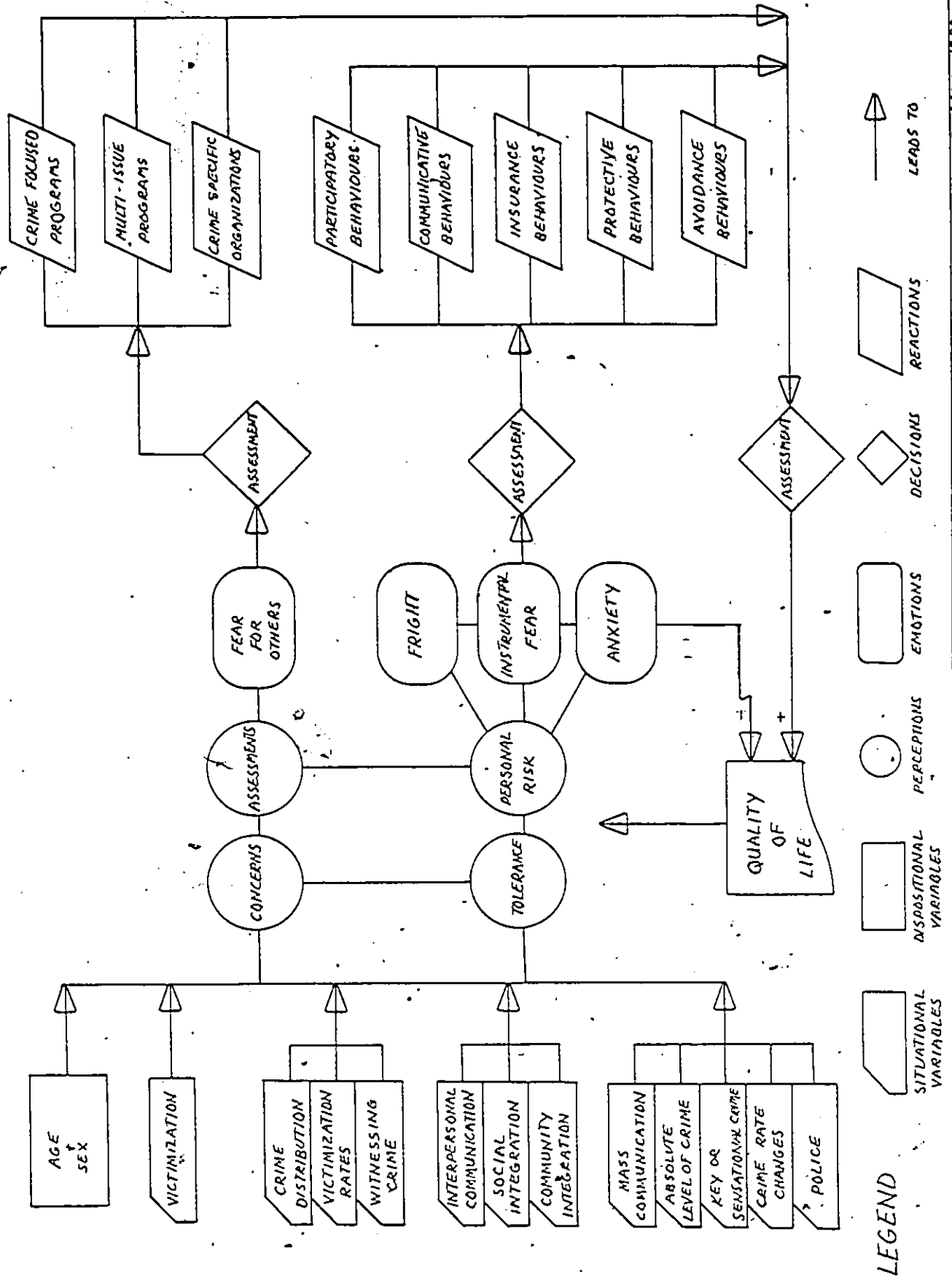
- 1) personal autonomy, 2) personal acceptance by others and
- 3) security in the home.

Where it can be shown that these factors are significantly affected by a concern or fear of crime we could argue that aspects of the "quality of life" have been impaired.

E) Summary

The discussion to this point has included a number of changes to the initial theoretical model. The addition of the findings with respect to reactions to crime will complete the development of the theoretical or working model. Figure X therefore includes two possible levels of reactions. The personal level constitutes avoidance, protective, insurance, communication and participation behaviours while collective behaviours include involvement in crime focussed programs, multi issue programs and crime specific organizations. The

FIGURE X: A WORKING MODEL DESCRIBING
FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY



model also proposes a personal component "quality of life" which is not so much a reaction to crime but is a state dependent upon the nature of the other reactions.

The model holds that both the perceptual and emotional responses will influence an individual's decision to assess the available coping strategies and select a behavioural response. The fear response that is most likely to result in a behavioural selection is instrumental fear. The choice to do nothing could also be considered as a possible outcome of the decision making process in which case the model suggests that anxiety may develop. Each coping strategy or decision is assessed for effectiveness and the assessment will determine whether quality of life is affected or whether the perceptual and emotional components become altered.

The model also assumes that a psychological response, rather than a behavioural response is possible. This would result, as shown, by the direct negative effect that anxiety can have on the quality of life. It is presumed that other emotional responses such as anger, hatred, revenge etc., could have behavioural responses or direct psychological implications for the quality of life of an individual.

The model is necessarily complex since it must provide a very general explanation of rather diverse individual human perceptual and emotional behaviour, as well as reflect and account for the dynamics of intrapersonal changes. In order

to assess the deductive power of this model it is necessary to examine and test the validity of specific cases. The next section will therefore attempt this through case studies of individual senior citizens.

CHAPTER IV TESTING THE MODEL

A) Preamble

The first practical problem that presents itself in the attempt to examine the deductive power of the theoretical model concerns an adequate measure of the various levels of the dependent variable fear that have been discussed. The typical research method of measuring fear of crime has been for the researcher to postulate responses that are thought to be correlated with fear, then using a survey or standardized questionnaire, ask subjects if he/she has experienced such a response. The difficulty has been that such an approach has relied on the researcher to derive the appropriate question and has assumed that responses to a variety of different questions, such as those which assess personal risk as compared to those questions which assess general concern, can be lumped together as a measure of a single entity known as fear of crime.

The model we have developed suggests that we must not only be sensitive to the differences between such values and judgements at the personal level as tolerance and risk, but at the general level we must be prepared to distinguish concerns from assessments. We must also be prepared to distinguish between such responses and those responses that would indicate the presence of any of the three levels of fear discussed.

The use of predetermined questions inhibits such sensitivity but may also limit the discussion to only one

type of crime. For example, questions related to "walking alone at night" can only elicit responses related to the fear of personal attack. Yin (1980) and Garofolo (1981) point out that at the very least it is necessary to distinguish between fear of personal crimes and fear of property crimes.

The measurement of fear in humans is a complex issue however, since fear responses can be either verbal, physiological or behavioural. Research has shown that these three measures can be somewhat independent and therefore difficult to interpret when combined. For instance, changes in overt behaviour do not necessarily correlate with verbal reports, verbal reports of fear do not necessarily compare with physiological measures while physiological and behavioural measures rarely coincide (Hughdahl, 1980).

The solution to this dilemma (Sarason, 1967; Gray, 1971; Lazarus, 1969) would require an examination of all three forms of responding for any given stimulus event. Rachman (1978b) has suggested a "Three Systems Model of Fear" which stresses the fact that fear can no longer be viewed as a single entity or "lump" which can be measured in a variety of ways. He postulates that the best way to measure fear is with a set of loosely coupled components which include "avoidance behaviour, physiological reactivity and verbal cognitive reports of subjective fear" (Rachman, 1978b : 239).

The actual measurement of physiological and behavioural reactions to specific stimuli presents such methodological

problems that verbal reports of such behaviour must suffice at this point. In fact verbal reports must be relied upon to provide evidence for the existence of each aspect of the model that we might consider.

B) Methodology

The above arguments strongly suggest that the wealth and depth of information required to empirically ground the model describing fear of crime could only be effectively tapped through in-depth interviews with individual subjects (Ss). With this in mind, pilot interviews were conducted with three elderly Ss. These interviews were extremely casual and open-ended. The attempt was to discuss general feelings about crime and the reasons for such feelings. These initial contacts confirmed that a case study approach using guided interviews with predominantly open-ended questions would be required to fully explore the model. The interviewer would also have to be prepared to probe each question since the pilot Ss seemed ill-disposed to spontaneously explore some areas.

The pilot interviews pointed out that the crimes most prevalent in the minds of these three Ss were 1) break and enter and 2) purse snatch. This provided some agreement with the statistics related to criminal activity in Kingston (Table I) and provided an easily understood means of defining two separate types of crime, namely property crime and personal

NEXT

FICHE

SUIVANTE

crime.

It was decided, on the basis of the above findings, to develop an instrument that would serve as a guide for the interviewer yet would allow for spontaneous responses on the part of each S. This open-ended approach required that each interview be tape recorded to ensure complete coverage. A limited number of Ss would be approached in order to emphasise the individual detail and differences of responses. The study would not be primarily concerned with attempting to search for commonalities in responses, but rather to empirically ground the model that has been developed.

1) Interview Schedules

The instrument used in the study (Appendix A) was designed to highlight aspects of the model that would be relevant to senior citizens. It required a preliminary general response to individual feelings about crime with a probe for differences between types of crime. Fear of crime was then specifically addressed with probes that would differentiate evaluative judgemental and emotional responses including verbal reports of physiological responses (Du Bow et al, 1979). Questions were also directed at describing (1) reasons for such feelings, (2) behavioural reactions to crime, including walking alone at night and (3) the reasons for these reactions.

In order to assess the importance of certain of the causal variables suggested by the model, questions were asked

about (1) victimization experiences, (2) being a witness to crime, (3) perception of the local neighbourhood, (4) sources of information about crime and (5) interactions with others about crime issues (Du Bow et al, 1979). In order to attempt to describe a "quality of life" component for seniors, questions were designed to assess (1) personal control of life, (2) acceptance by others, (3) security in the home and (4) perceived health (Yin, 1980).

Demographic information gathered included age, sex, marital status, living arrangements and accommodations. In addition to the verbal responses about home protection activity the researcher confirmed the presence of physical precautions by examining doors, locks, windows and the approach to the main entrance of the building.

2) Police Data

A further source of data consisted of police statistics on the actual location, by city block, of residential and commercial break and enters. This information was only available from January to July of 1981 but was used to assess Ss knowledge of such activity in the six month period prior to the interviews. In order to avoid experimenter bias during interviews, the actual confirmation of break and enters was not carried out until after all interviews were completed.

Two forms of data were generated from these statistics

for purposes of analysis. The first consisted of break and enters that occurred on the city block where each Ss home was located. This would serve as a measure of the distribution of a specific crime in a neighbourhood. The second consisted of the total break and enters that occurred on that block as well as the blocks behind and in front of the person's residence. This information was used as a weak measure of the objective risk of having one's home broken into on the basis of the number of reported break-ins in the area.

3) Subjects

The Senior Citizens Council of Kingston and District was contacted and requested to participate in the study by supplying a list of members who could be interviewed. The Council only agreed to do so after its Ethic Review Committee had approved the research design and interview schedule.

The Senior Citizens Council mailing list contained over 2,000 names, or roughly 1/5 of the estimated senior population in Kingston. In order to establish a sample with no apparent bias this list was systematically sampled in order to select a pool of 50 Ss for possible interviewing.

The 50 Ss were contacted by telephone by a volunteer from the Senior Citizens Council who outlined the research, indicated that it was approved by the Council and asked if the person would be willing to be interviewed. Twenty-one Ss initially agreed to be interviewed. Of these 21 Ss, four

subsequently refused to participate when the researcher telephoned to arrange an interview. The 17 interviews that were finally conducted ranged in duration from 45 to 75 minutes. Ss included four males and 13 females. All of the Ss interviewed were white, middle class of anglo-saxon descent.

4) Subject Bias

Of the 50 people contacted only 17 or 34% finally agreed to be interviewed. This response pattern would seem unusual given the fact that telephone contacts were initiated by well known Senior Citizen Council volunteers and that the project had been approved by their own Ethics Review Committee. This suggests that a possible response bias exists in that only Ss that were not worried or concerned about contact with a stranger were included while Ss who may have had such concerns may have been excluded. The following discussion of the interviews will therefore assume the existence of such a bias. The existence of a suspected subject bias warrants caution in the generalization of these findings since the results can in no way be interpreted as typifying responses of the elderly. The bias should not however impair the ability to make some preliminary empirical observations about the model's ability to describe the nature of fear of crime relative to this selective sample.

C) Results

1) Perceptions of Crime

In order to assess the implications of the model with respect to the elderly's perception of crime, each subject was asked to comment on how they felt about crime in general. They all expressed some negative feeling about crime such as that the situation was "just terrible" (S13) or that things had changed considerably from when they were younger (S8, S15). The majority of respondents expressed the opinion that crime was generally on the increase and was certainly worse than they could remember. With few exceptions, respondents laid the blame for increased crime directly on youths or juveniles or indirectly on them through lax parents or a general lack of respect and discipline. These responses tended to suggest a general evaluative concern or assessment of the local crime situation.

Respondents were specifically asked if they had any general concerns or worries about other seniors becoming a crime victim. Thirteen of the seventeen respondents (76%) indicated that they felt that seniors were more likely to be the victims of crime than any other age group. Each subject stated their reasons for such concerns which varied from a general concern about the inability of seniors to defend themselves or not being physically strong enough to resist, say a purse snatch, to specific concerns about offences that

might be directed only toward seniors. For example, S7 was concerned about elderly women who received monthly benefit cheques and who might be robbed of these regular payments.

Respondents were also asked to assess (1) the personal risk of becoming a victim of a break-in, or a robbery or a purse snatch, as well as (2) the risk of being injured as the victim of a criminal act, while driving in a car or while walking as a pedestrian. Table II outlines the number of responses in each of the three categories of high, average or low risk.

The majority of respondents felt that, with respect to property crime, such as a break-in or a personal violent crime such as a purse snatch or robbery, there was little risk for them personally or at worst the risk was certainly no more than for any other person in the community. There was no distinction, as might be expected on the basis of the ratio of police reported property crime to personal crime, in the assessed risk for these two categories of crime. The somewhat larger number of respondents who assessed the risk of injury during a criminal incident as high, is accounted for by those male respondents who indicated that they would probably resist an attempted robbery. There were also no indications that the risk of injury in an auto accident or as a pedestrian was lower than the risk of criminal victimization. In fact a number of the respondents (4/17) indicating

TABLE II

Subject's assessment of the personal risk
of the occurrence of certain events

	Low Risk	Average Risk	High Risk
Victim of a property crime	8/17 (47%)	8/17 (47%)	1/17 (6%)
Victim of a violent personal crime	8/17 (47%)	7/17 (41%)	2/17 (12%)
Injured during a criminal incident	5/17 (29%)	7/17 (41%)	5/17 (29%)
Injured in an auto accident	9/17 (52%)	7/17 (41%)	1/17 (6%)
Injured as a pedestrian	9/17 (52%)	4/17 (24%)	4/17 (24%)

some increased sensitivity to the risk of being injured as a pedestrian. These people had experienced a "close call" in the past.

Those who did feel there was a high personal risk of victimization or accident involvement seemed to base these assessments on specific personal experiences. S10 for example had always been afraid of the dark and this combined with her proximity to a local prison and mental institution served to make her feel more at risk in her home. This woman also had difficulty in moving about which might account for the feeling that there was a high personal risk of robbery or purse snatch or for being injured or victimized. On the other hand, since she did not drive or walk that much, this may account for the low risk of being injured in an auto accident or while a pedestrian.

S13, another woman, expressed the feeling that she was at high risk with respect to personal crime but did not feel that there was much risk of a burglary. The reason she gave for this response was that whenever she went out she had to pass in front of one of the more notorious local drinking establishments thus regularly exposing herself to potential personal victimization. Despite the proximity of her home to this hotel she assessed it as very secure and consequently did not feel at risk at home.

It would seem that the perceptual distinction between

concern for others or a general assessment about crime and the assessment of personal risk of victimization or injury as outlined in the model is an essential component. A consistent pattern of concern for others seems to be based on general assumptions about risk to others whereas individual risk seems to be assessed more on personal experiences and personal frame of reference.

These findings also support the notion that evaluative and judgemental responses may be distinct from emotional responses. Subjects very readily expressed such personal values or judgements but needed coaxing prior to expressing an emotional response.

2) Fear of the Perceived Threat of Criminal Victimization

In order to explore the possible existence of anxiety as the result of the threat of criminal victimization the subjects were asked to describe the things that they were most afraid of and the things that they were most concerned or anxious about happening to them. None of the respondents mentioned the possibility of criminal victimization in their replies. When asked if they specifically had a fear of becoming the victim of a crime, with the exception of three subjects, all respondents indicated that they did not personally worry about or fear becoming the victim of a property or personal crime.

The reason for the lack of anxiety would seem to be

that many of these people seem to have taken instrumental or precautionary steps, which they felt offered security either in the home or while away from the home. In other words, the people reacted according to the flow of events postulated in the model by choosing an appropriate strategy or response and subsequently assessing that as sufficient for their needs. The net result of this instrumental fear seems to have been to reduce or bring within control their personal anxiety.

For example, in terms of property protection, S10 had taken the most extreme precautions by purchasing and installing a sophisticated burglar alarm system. This was tied into a local home security company who monitored the signal and would call the police if the alarm sounded. The burglar alarm served as a means of allowing her to feel secure and sleep at night.

S13, on the other hand, had been concerned about one window in her bedroom that was accessed by the fire escape. Her solution was to use a piece of wood to prevent the screen and window from being opened from the outside. She was quite proud of her handiwork and felt safe even in the summer with the window open.

There were two respondents who suggested that despite having taken some precautions they still felt somewhat nervous or anxious about being alone at home. They were both female respondents, in each case widowed and living alone. S9 had

installed deadbolt locks on her home door and bars on the basement windows yet still felt nervous. S6 had installed deadbolt locks and a chain lock but also felt uneasy. Neither subject seemed content with their home security precautions but could not think of anything else to do to help reduce their anxiety.

A third S, who lived with her husband, had not taken any new precautions and she too felt anxious while at home alone. Her apartment had an old key in knob lock and the back door, which was easily accessed by a fire escape, had a similar lock. She said that she would feel more secure with a better lock but (1) felt that it was up to the owner of the building to do something and (2) didn't worry as much when her husband was home. This woman either seemed prepared to accept a certain level of anxiety about her safety from burglary or felt that precautionary steps were beyond her control.

Personal assessment of the usefulness of the instrumental or precautionary strategy thus can be illustrated by two different cases. One woman S6, had her apartment burglarized and as a result felt nervous and had trouble sleeping for several nights. She felt better when she bought a chain lock for her door but was told by the police that this type of lock only kept honest people out. She doesn't have the resources to buy a better lock and feels that the superintendent

should be more responsible. This S was the only respondent to state that she did not feel very secure in her home.

On the other hand S13, the woman who kept her window secure with a stick, had no other worries despite the fact that her apartment lock was old and could easily be slipped to gain entrance. She felt that the risk of burglary was fairly high in her area and that she would have some trouble economically if her possessions were stolen. She felt secure however, having found a solution to what she believed to be the weak chink in her home protection.

There were also some indications that precautionary measures were taken against the likelihood of personal victimization while on the street.

A rather large number of respondents (7/17)(41%) indicated, at an early stage in the interview, that they were afraid to go out alone at night. At a later stage in the interview when asked specifically about how safe they felt it was to walk alone during the day or night an additional five persons indicated that they too felt that it was not safe to go out alone at night.

Table III provides the specific responses to the question of "How safe do you feel it is to walk alone during the day or night." Nine of the thirteen females (52%) said that it was very unsafe to go out alone at night while an additional three (18%) said it was somewhat unsafe. On the other hand,

TABLE III

Subjects perceptions of how safe it is
to walk alone during the day or night

During The Day		During the Night
6/17 (35%)	Very Safe	2/17 (12%)
11/17 (65%)	Reasonably Safe	3/17 (18%)
-	Somewhat Unsafe	3/17 (18%)
-	Very Unsafe	9/17 (52%)

all of the respondents indicated that it was either very safe to walk alone during the day or that such action was reasonably safe.

In discussing the reasons for feeling that the streets were not safe to walk during the night it became apparent that many of the respondents were concerned about walking alone at night for reasons other than crime. For example, of the 12 who responded in this manner, three had limited mobility or other physical reasons for not venturing out alone. As examples are S15, a 95-year old woman who rarely left her apartment due to difficulties in walking and S4, who had limited visual acuity during the day and was nearly blind at night. It is reasonable to suspect that these conditions would lead to a heightened sense of vulnerability in general and that fear of walking alone at night might be related to fear that one would fall or be injured in some other way. These results certainly argue that a more detailed analysis of the reasons for certain verbal responses is warranted before the hypothesized relationship between anxiety about possible criminal victimization and walking alone at night, can be said to exist.

The Ss who indicated that they felt that the streets were very unsafe to walk at night were asked if this concern in any way hampered their life styles. While a few said that they did miss evening walks most people stated that walking

alone at night had never been an important part of their life and that if they needed to go out at night they would most likely make alternate arrangements. S13, for example, goes out twice a week, at night, but usually takes a cab or Dial-A-Bus. She recognizes the potential for problems living as she does downtown, across the street from a hotel with a poor reputation, yet she indicated that she felt that she was not in as much danger if dropped off in front of her home. Similarly, S19 goes out to Bingo once a week. She will walk to the bingo hall if it is light out, but always walks back with a friend, takes a taxi or has her husband pick her up.

3) Factors Influencing Perceptions and Fear of Crime

a) Traumatic Experiences

According to the model, this category consists solely of the effect that actual victimization experience has on individual perceptions of crime. There were 5 of the 17 people interviewed who indicated that they had been the victim of a crime, at some point in their lives. For each, the incidents were fresh in their minds and they were able to provide specific details.

S2, for example, recalled an incident that had occurred several years ago when she lived in Chicago. She was walking home from work when she was surrounded by a group of black youths. They called her rude names and one of them pushed her although she didn't fall or get hurt in any way. The

group then left and she ran home. She was extremely upset and nervous and did not venture out for several days. This woman never goes out at night and never carries a purse during the day. She also never answers her door at night unless she knows who it is. She indicated that she felt reasonably secure in her home because there was a young man living in the downstairs apartment whom she felt would help her if needed.

On the other hand S11, a 70-year old male, had his wallet stolen from his home, while he was working in the basement. He indicated that although somewhat upset that someone had entered his home he was more angry than frightened. He resolved his emotional feelings by taking very stringent home security precautions, including placing bars on basement windows and nailing shut the milkbox. These two examples support the contention that instances of fright can evolve into instrumental fear. In fact all five Ss who had been victims of a criminal offence outlined some form of precaution that they had taken following their victimization.

Victimization experiences may also provide more intense fright reactions when they involve face to face encounters. The experience of S18 serves to illustrate this. She is 78 years old and lives with her older sister (84). They have been broken into three times, each time resulting in their taking some precaution directed at the point of access. On a separate occasion two women came to their home on the

pretext of using the phone while S18 was at the store. These women pushed the older sister but got no further when S18 returned home. She was extremely frightened but also concerned for her older sister and proceeded to intervene. The women quickly left and it was some time (and a few brandy's) before the sisters were feeling composed enough to call the police. These two women who were able to deal coolly and rationally and in a detailed manner with several break-ins which involved no personal contact became extremely upset when a personal encounter occurred. They are both very cautious now about strangers entering their home.

b) Sensitizing Experiences

According to the model this category of variables includes crime distribution, victimization rates and witnessing crime. The police data that had been gathered in the six months prior to the interviews served as a measure of the distribution of a specific crime in a neighbourhood. This data indicated a total of 291 residential break and enters and 95 business break and enters in Kingston. In the sample of people interviewed there was only one break and enter on the block that a subject occupied and this subject (S4) knew that this break-in had occurred.

None of the other respondents knew of a break-in in their immediate area in the last six months despite the fact that the figures increased dramatically when the blocks in front and behind were added to form a weak measure of the

number of break-ins in any given area. S1 for example, had an idea that he lived in a high risk area from experience in previous years, although he did not know that there had been three break-ins in the immediate area in the last six months. S8 indicated a similar feeling that break-ins occurred regularly in her area but she also did not know that four had occurred in the last six months in her immediate area. In total for this small sample there were 24 residential break-ins (and nine business break-ins) recorded in the immediate vicinity of Subjects' homes in the six month period.

These findings would seem to support the contention that some senior citizens have a relatively good perception of the risk of specific crimes in their areas but that this information is not as accurate as it might be. Subjects indicated that although they did know about residential break-ins through reading the local paper, the majority of information came from informal communications with neighbours and friends.

None of the people interviewed actually had access to objective information such as crime distribution or victimization rates that might improve their ability to assess the risk of break-ins in the neighbourhood. For example, S14 indicated that she did not feel at risk in her home and took no precautions beyond locking her door at night. She did not know that three break-ins had occurred in her area in the last six months. The question that naturally arises is

whether S14 is in a more or less advantageous position in not knowing her potential risk and not having any fear or worry.

Although the model has suggested that witnessing crime might play an important role in the influence of personal perceptions of crime, none of the people interviewed could recall a time when they had witnessed a serious criminal offence. With the exception of minor traffic violations no one had actually been present during the commission of an offence. This in itself does not seem unusual and possibly expected given the relatively low crime rate and the tendency for such crimes as break and enter to be accomplished without witnesses. It remains dubious as to the importance this variable might play in affecting perceptions.

c) Observations of People Exhibiting Fear

This category of variables as outlined in the model consists of interpersonal communication, social integration and community integration. As a measure of interpersonal communication respondents were asked if they knew of someone who had been the victim of a crime. Twelve of the seventeen (71%) respondents interviewed knew of someone who had personally been the victim of a break-in or a purse snatch. For S15 the experience of her neighbour's burglary was frightening, possibly because she thought she lived in a very secure apartment building. As a result she installed new locks on

her door which she said increased her feeling of security. Similarly, S4, whom we have mentioned had changed her locks and began keeping a light on in the backyard, took these precautions primarily because the next door neighbour had had a break-in.

For many seniors the main source of information about crime would seem to be through such interpersonal communication with someone who had been victimized or who knew someone who had been victimized. This information source was typically the first mentioned when subjects were asked how they had become informed about crime problems in the community or their neighbourhood.

Although social integration was not directly assessed, a weak measure might consist of whether respondents lived alone or with someone. Thirteen of the respondents were female and of these, eight lived alone. Six of the people who lived alone were widowed. The two other Ss, S8 and S12 who lived alone had never been married. They both pointed out that they were probably more independent than most elderly women living alone and certainly did not have any worries or fears about crime. S8 continued to live her life without any changes, she never locked her doors and had even confronted a man sneaking through her yard. S12 felt reasonably safe in her apartment although she knew of at least one break-in last year. She indicated that she wasn't going to worry about

a break-in because she had nothing worth taking and more important things to worry about. On the other hand, two of the other six who lived alone indicated that despite taking precautionary measures they still felt worried about living alone.

These findings suggest that there may be a tendency for elderly women who live alone, yet who formerly had a support system (i.e. husband) to be more susceptible to feelings of apprehension or anxiety about crime. This might stem from the fact that when it comes to choosing alternative strategies for home protection they may feel uncomfortable or inadequate in making such decisions themselves. In contrast, the women who had lived independently seemed less hesitant or uncertain about their decisions, as did married women who still have someone to make those types of decisions.

Community social integration was again somewhat difficult to assess since a variety of indicators were used. These included communication with neighbours, perceived problems in the neighbourhood (including too many strangers) and attitude towards existing services to seniors. The responses did not fit any clear patterns.

For example, S9 who indicated some apprehension or anxiety about crime (1) had a number of friendly neighbours, (2) thought that there might be too much drinking by students in the area but otherwise saw no problems with strangers or

various crimes in the neighbourhood and (3) thought services for seniors were excellent. S10 who had installed an expensive alarm system (1) did not communicate that much with her neighbours, (2) felt that there were too many strangers in the neighbourhood, especially on day pass from the nearby penitentiary and psychiatric hospital and (3) felt that services for seniors were probably good but that she never used many of them.

There were some slight indications that the two respondents who had expressed high risk for crime victimization also had some concerns about problems in the neighbourhood suggesting that these two factors, perception of community and perception of crime, might be related. S10, whom we have mentioned as being concerned about strangers in the neighbourhood also thought that youths causing vandalism was a problem. She indicated that she thought that the risk of both burglary and personal violent crime were high for her. S13 who also thought that the risk of personal violence was high felt that there were a variety of problems in her neighbourhood. These included people drinking and using drugs too much, young people hanging about, vandalism and too many strangers in the neighbourhood.

d) Transmission of Fear Inducing Information

The variables in this category include mass communication, absolute level of crime, key or sensational crimes, crime rate changes and the police or other agencies as having an effect on perceptions of crime.

The mass media seemed to play a questionable role in affecting perceptions about crime. Many of the subjects (9 of 17) rely on the newspaper, radio and T.V. for objective information about crime, although none of them thought these sources provided any valuable information about crime prevention strategies. The Ss who watched crime dramas were relatively few and like S11 were somewhat skeptical about what to believe in these shows.

In order to assess the role of the police in affecting perceptions of crime, respondents were asked who they would be first to turn to for information or advice after having been victimized. All but two of the respondents indicated that they would first call the police for help. These two said they would call the police but only after seeking advice from a family member.

Only two of the respondents had ever attended a police lecture or display. S1, a 75 year old male, had heard the police talk at the Senior Citizens Council and was impressed by the number of things that he learned. Another male, S11, had seen a police display on crime prevention and felt that the information was useful for him.

In order to assess the possible effect of crime rate changes respondents were asked to state how they would feel if they heard that the Chief of Police had recently reported that break-ins had been on the increase. A surprising number

responded to this scenario with some scepticism. S5 voiced the concern of many when he said that this happened every year and after a while the information didn't mean anything to him.

As a measure of the influence other actors might have on the elderly's perception of crime the role of the insurance agent was explored. Twelve of the seventeen respondents indicated that they had insurance on their homes or possessions that would reduce the losses from burglary. Of those, eight had increased their insurance in the last year at the suggestion of their agent. There were no indications however that this could be seen as inducing fear. All of the Ss felt that this was a normal and reasonable thing to do in times of high inflation.

4) Reactions to Crime

The model suggests that there are a variety of means of reacting to the perceptions of crime both in an abstract way and in a personal way. We have discussed several of the home "protective" strategies already and it is clear that no consistent pattern of approaches is used. None of the respondents indicated that they had taken any steps to ensure protection such as carrying a weapon while out of the home, although two of the male respondents said that they would resist any attack on the street while one female said she would not let go of her purse. Despite these responses every respondent felt that the likelihood of injury would be increased

if they attempted to physically resist any criminal act.

In discussing, in particular, the installation of new locks, several subjects indicated that, at their age, protection from burglary was not their only concern. S4 for example, had just recently changed her locks because she felt that there had been an increased number of break-ins in her neighbourhood. She also kept all the windows locked and a light on in the backyard. The back door lock, despite being a dead bolt, could however be easily accessed by breaking the glass in the door and turning the knob. The subject pointed out that she had in fact purchased that type of lock because she was afraid of not being able to get out of the house in the event of fire and would rather take the chance of a burglary than be locked in. Two other Ss voiced similar concerns. S18 and S13 were primarily concerned that friends or a doctor could not get in if they suffered a heart attack or similar medical problem.

These findings suggest that the model should include as a component the influence that "other motivations and options" might have in determining individual behavioural responses.

The most obvious finding was that in terms of home security many of the seniors interviewed are not aware of the variety of simple and practical things that might be done to (1) increase their feelings of security and (2) reduce the

objective risk of burglary. Those who had taken what they perceived to be such sound security measures as installing burglar alarms, barring windows or using stronger locks, felt safer in their homes. There remains however some question as to whether such actions actually reduce the objective risk of burglary. Those who had not taken precautions seemed to be either anxious about the possibility of victimization or, if not so, certainly more objectively at risk.

"Avoidance" behaviours for the most part seem to relate directly to avoiding going out at night. One woman, S10, did say that if walking during the day she always avoided any groups of youths on the street. She said she had always done this when she lived in New York City but felt that it might not be necessary in Kingston, although she still did it.

As mentioned, several of the respondents (12 of 17) had increased their insurance in the last year and all of these people felt that this action would help lessen the economic consequences of a robbery or burglary. A large number of people voiced less concern about material value of possessions than about sentimental value. S15 voiced a common concern which was that failing to find anything of value burglars might destroy the momentos she had in her china cabinet. These could not be insured nor did she wish to lock them away.

Talking about crime concerns did not seem to be an important past-time, unless it was related to a key crime or

to problems of an immediate nature in the neighbourhood or with friends. There were several indications, as mentioned, that seniors, if concerned about crime, would attempt to take steps to reduce their personal concerns rather than simply voice complaints. On the other hand, although a good number of the respondents (15/17) felt that other seniors were more likely to become victims than any other group, there were no indications that anything beyond verbally expressing this feeling would occur. There were no indications that any group action was contemplated or that any organization would be approached with respect to this issue.

Although the police were recognized as the most obvious source of assistance in the event of victimization their role was described more as one of solving crimes than of crime prevention. Only two of the respondents had thought of calling the police to inspect their homes and provide crime prevention advice although such services are offered by the police. One woman requested an inspection of her home, which the crime prevention unit gladly did. She was pleased with their recommendations and has followed all but one, the installation of a front porch light. Another of the female respondents had participated in "Operation Identification", a police program to mark all valuable items. She too felt comfortable knowing that she was cooperating with the police.

5) Quality of Life

In order to assess the "quality of life" of Ss two broad categories; (1) feelings of acceptance and (2) general level of personal security, were established. In order to determine feelings of acceptance Ss were asked to rate their level of acceptance by neighbours and other seniors. Table IV shows the ratings of respondents to the question about their level of acceptance (1) by other seniors (2) by their neighbours. The response patterns were the same in both cases with 13 of 17 indicating total acceptance and 4 of 17 indicating that they almost always felt accepted.

In order to assess the general level of security of individuals they were asked to rate a) their ability to control the events in their lives, b) their feelings of security in the home and c) their own health compared to other seniors.

Table V shows the responses of the 17 Ss to the question of how they would rate their ability to control the events that occur in their lives. Thirteen of seventeen responded that they were totally in control of their lives while the remaining four said that they were for the most part in control of their lives.

Table VI shows responses to the question of feelings of security in the home. Nine of the seventeen felt totally secure, seven felt reasonably secure while only one felt not

TABLE IV

Subjects perceived acceptance

By Other Seniors

Totally Accepted	Almost Always Accepted	Somewhat Accepted	Not Very Accepted
13/17 (76%)	4/17 (24%)	-	-

N = 17 (100%)

By Neighbours

Totally Accepted	Almost Always Accepted	Somewhat Accepted	Not Very Accepted
13/17 (76%)	4/17 (24%)	-	-

N = 17 (100%)

TABLE V

Subjects perceived ability to control
the events in their lives

Total Control.	Mostly In Control	Somewhat In Control	Very Little Control
13/17 (76%)	4/17 (24%)	0	0

N = 17 (100%)

TABLE VI

Subjects perceived security in the home

Extremely Secure	Reasonably Secure	Not Very Secure
9/17 (53%)	7/17 (41%)	1/17 (6%)

N = 17 (100%)

very secure.

Table VII shows the ratings by Ss of their own health compared to other seniors. Twelve of seventeen rated their health as better than others while the remaining five rated their health as average or comparative to others.

The responses would tend to support the initial contention that this sample may be somewhat biased in that for the most part these Ss felt 1) a high degree of acceptance by their neighbours and other seniors and 2) general security in their lifestyle in that they felt in control of their lives, secure in their homes and as healthy or healthier than others their age.

D) Summary

Although we have only discussed the findings from 17 individual cases they have proven to be widely divergent not only from the point of view of the different perceptions of crime but with respect to the behaviour such perceptions have engendered. Despite this divergence the model that has been developed, with some minor alterations, seems capable of accounting for such differences.

The results suggest that any or all of the variables hypothesized as affecting elderly perceptions of crime can play a role in determining how an individual personalizes the threat of criminal victimization. The outcome can range from general concern for others to personal assessments of

TABLE VII

Subjects perceived health as compared
to others their age

Better	Average	Poorer
12/17 (71%)	5/17 (29%)	-

N = 17 (100%)

the risk of victimization. An emotional response in the form of fear is also likely to occur with, in these examples, the primary form being a useful, coping form of fear that eventuates in a strategy to reconcile the emotion. Those seniors who have not developed a coping strategy or who have perceived the strategy as faulty or inadequate may develop a deeper, more intrapsychic level of fear which we have chosen to label as anxiety.

There are a number of factors that seem to determine the nature of the coping strategy utilized. The most obvious is the extent of awareness of the strategies available. These results suggest that such awareness for seniors may be severely limited. Despite this, strategies are adopted that are perceived as being satisfactory. The extent to which some of these coping strategies actually reduce the objective risk of criminal victimization for the elderly remains unclear.

In the sample examined "quality of life" as measured by level of personal acceptance and general feelings of security did not seem impaired by an emotional response to the threat of criminal victimization. In only one case did an elderly respondent report feeling not very secure in the home. This feeling could be traced to her perception that her home security devices are not adequate (as assessed by the police) and that she does not have the resources to improve them. In such an example the model serves to pinpoint

the reason why such a result should occur, but more importantly where intervention might best occur.

The final chapters of this paper will attempt to more fully place these findings in the context of the model and attempt to draw some conclusions as well as offer a discussion of the practical implications of these results.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS

A) Preamble

The development of a model or theoretical framework to more closely describe the emotional response of the elderly to the perceived threat of criminal victimization was intended to accomplish three things. The first is that it would be comprehensive enough to explain the different individual experiences of elderly interviewees. The second is that it would serve as a guide to the interpretation of the research findings. The third purpose was to provide a means of determining key factors or issues that could be manipulated by policy and program developers to ameliorate the impact that the perceived threat of criminal victimization has on the elderly. The first two points will be addressed in the remainder of this chapter while the third point will be reserved for the next chapter.

It can be concluded from the results that the model does indeed seem comprehensive enough to explain 1) the variety of perceptual and emotional responses to the threat of criminal victimization that seniors might display, 2) the variety of factors that can be said to influence those perceptions and 3) the various behavioural responses that result. The results also verify the importance of the personal awareness of coping strategies, the decision to adopt a certain strategy and the assessment of that strategy as an adequate

coping device. Awareness and adoption of a strategy with the resulting assessment that it is adequate would seem to lead to a resolution of the emotional response to the perceived threat of victimization. Lack of awareness, failure to adopt a strategy or assessment that a strategy is inadequate might lead to further emotional distress with the result that elderly persons quality of life becomes less than it could be.

The model also serves to point out that continued attempts to assess the relative importance of factors thought to cause an elderly person to become anxious about the threat of criminal victimization may be somewhat futile. In order to show such a cause-effect relationship a degree of consistency is required. The model attempts to show that such consistency does not necessarily obtain since (1) sources of information about crime vary in intensity and level of objectiveness, (2) perceptions of the information available may vary from general to personal levels, and (3) the coping strategies adopted although limited can be both creative and varied. This suggests the need for a reassessment of the locus of concentration of research efforts. For example, more value might be gained from detailed examination of the coping strategies that are perceived by seniors to be successful in reducing anxiety about the perceived threat of criminal victimization.

The model would also support the view that a snap shot examination of individual perceptions, emotions and behavioural responses is not sufficient to warrant inferences about causal relationships. Until vigorous longitudinal research is carried out, causal relationships will continue to be difficult to determine.

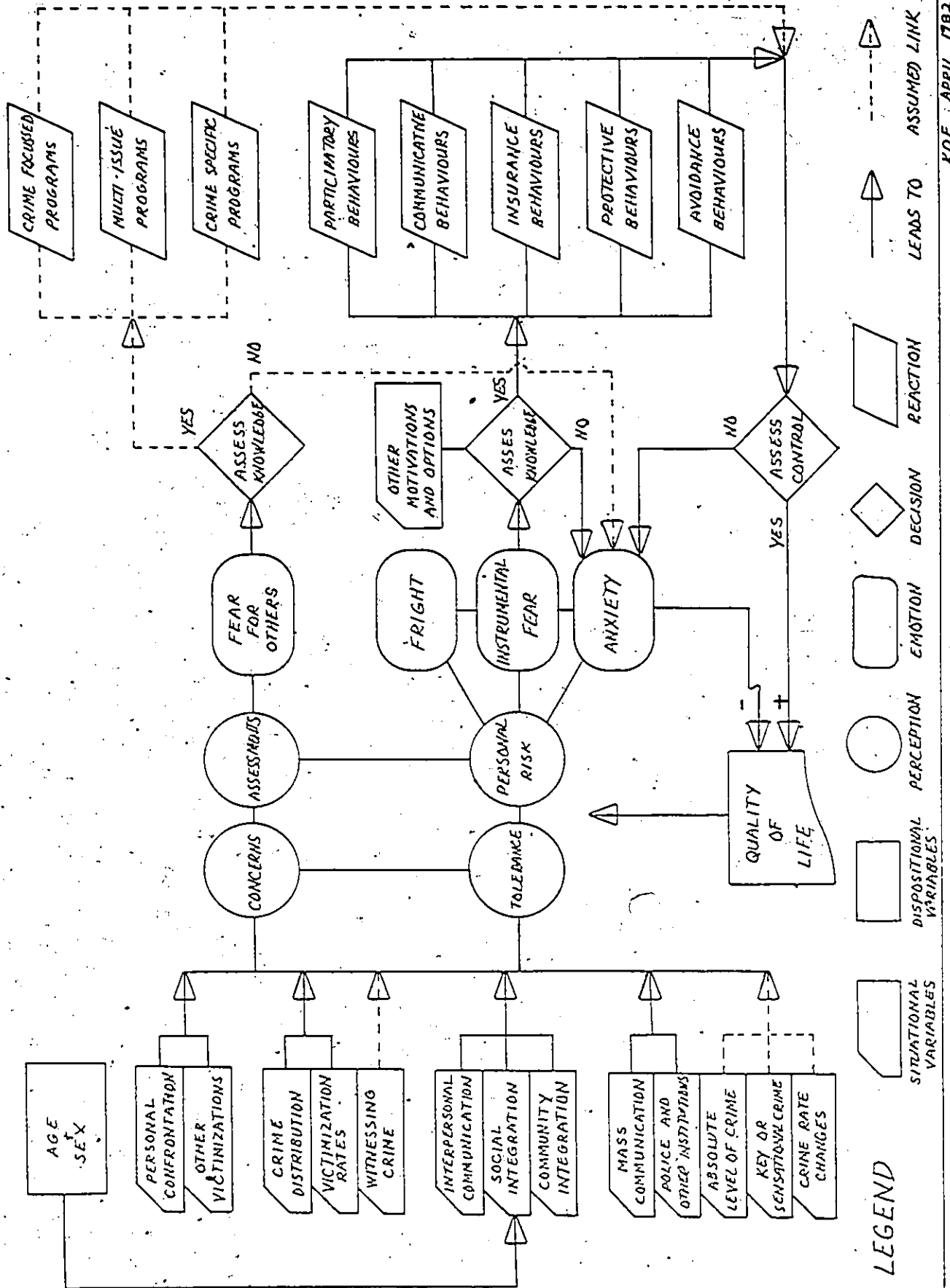
In order to facilitate the discussion that follows, a final revision of the model has been made (Figure XI) on the basis of the interview results. The detailed changes will be explored as we proceed.

B) Perceptions of Crime .

The fact that the crime situation, even in a city like Kingston, is considered to be on the increase is similar to other reported judgements about crime (Du Bow et al, 1979). For seniors these judgements would seem to be based on a strong historic contrast, that is every senior can recall a time or place when crime was not so bad. Fattah (ND) has argued that there seems to be a trend towards increased rigorism and decreased humanitarianism with advancing age which would account for the similar pattern of a more favourable attitude towards the death penalty that many elderly hold.

Crime for many seniors may translate roughly into a vandalism problem or a youth problem. Juveniles were considered by most of the people interviewed in the study as

FIGURE XI: EMPIRICAL MODEL DESCRIBING FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY



directly or indirectly responsible for increases in crime, especially break-ins and purse snatches. Almost half of the respondents (all female) indicated that their main personal concern was walking alone at night and many responded accordingly by staying at home.

These responses confirm that part of the model which distinguishes judgements or assessments about crime from values or concerns about crime. In turn we can distinguish between concerns about crime in a general sense from perceived personal risk of victimization. Fattah (ND) reports a Canadian study which showed similar results. Residents of Toronto (in 1969) were more concerned about the abstract crime problem than they were about being victims of crime themselves, either in the home or on the street.

The assessment of personal risk seems much more dependent upon other personal factors, such as what activities one will tolerate, than does the more general concern for other people. For example, the fact that seniors tend to view crime as a youth problem or as a discipline problem offers support for the argument of Lewis and Maxfield (1980) who contend that perceived risk is related to perceptions of neighbourhood concerns of incivility. They found that perceptions of high risk of victimization in a neighbourhood were more closely linked to perceptions of uncivil behaviour than to actual reports of criminal occurrences. Many of the perceived uncivil

behaviours are not, strictly speaking, criminal but are rather behaviours that are poorly tolerated. This suggests that efforts to reduce perceived risk and fear might be better directed to reducing such uncivil behaviour independent of reducing the incidence of crime.

The attempts to assess Yin's (1980) hypothesis that elderly perceptions of crime might be influenced by a combination of (1) perceptions of high risk, (2) perceptions of physical/economic consequences and (3) perceptions of ability to recuperate, were inconclusive. Only two SS perceived risk of victimization to be high, while most subjects had difficulty verbalizing either what they perceived the physical/economic consequences of specific crimes to be or how they could recuperate from victimization. The combined influence of these factors must remain unassessed until better operational measures of them have been developed.

C) Fear of the Perceived Threat of Criminal Victimization

The findings would seem to support the contention that fear of the perceived threat of criminal victimization can be subdivided into three levels, fright, instrumental fear and anxiety. The majority of people interviewed, although aware of the need for protection against personal crime and property crime, did not seem frightened of crime nor did they display unreasonable levels of anxiety. For the most part, these people had taken successful instrumental or precautionary

steps, which they felt offered security while outside or inside their home.

There were also some limited indications that one higher level of fear can evolve into another lower level of fear. Some people who had experienced some form of previous victimization were able to take precautionary steps while others exhibited somewhat deeper levels of anxiety. There were also some subjects who, despite having taken precautionary steps, still felt somewhat anxious, presumably because they assessed these steps as being not very useful as crime prevention strategies.

There still remains some question as to how to best measure each type of fear and ensure that its antecedent is related to crime. The distinction between fright and other fear reactions seems easy to determine but that between a healthy level of instrumental fear and the potentially more damaging anxiety is less easy to distinguish.

Instrumental fear has been presumed to exist where there is a rational link between the stimulus events presumed to produce fear and responses that might be related to fear yet have served as a means of coping with or reducing fear. Anxiety has presumed to exist where people have indicated that despite having taken precautions or in lieu of taking precautions, they still have some personal concerns or worries about being victimized. A stronger measure of the latter,

more abstract type of fear is needed, since, as previously suggested, it is anxiety that results in less obvious forms of impact through increased stress and psychic damage.

An example of the difficulty inherent in inferring that certain reported fears of concerns are causally related to crime is given by an examination of the responses to the question about how safe seniors perceived the streets to be during the day and night. These responses were similar to those reported in other studies (Du Bow et al 1979) in that a high percentage of respondents (71%) indicated that they felt it was not safe to walk the streets alone at night. Several of the respondents had however other physical reasons for being concerned about getting around alone at night while still others had taken some measure to cope with the problem. Such detailed examination serves to reduce the number of people who might legitimately be said to be anxious about walking alone at night as the result of the perceived threat of criminal victimization.

In addition, a number of the people who expressed the feeling that the streets were not safe to walk alone at night did not seem extremely bothered by this since it was not something they had been in the habit of doing.

For some senior women especially, the fear of walking alone at night and/or encountering strangers may display many of the qualities of a phobia. This is characterized by an

expressed fear of a situation which may actually pose no threat and which includes extreme avoidance of the stimulus (Bootzin, 1980). This avoidance behaviour may restrict some seniors' choices, forcing them into rigid and narrow channels of behaviour.

Bootzin (1980) has pointed out that continual avoidance behaviours can result in incubation whereby the fear intensifies over time. Rachman (1979) has argued that if an emotional disturbance such as fear is not absorbed or processed satisfactorily it can result in phobic reactions or a return of the fear at a later date. He discusses several factors that can be considered to promote or impede the emotional processing of incoming stimuli. Among the factors that can impede emotional processing are avoidance behaviour, silence, inadequate practice and immobility (Rachman, 1979).

A legitimate concern should exist that the traditional fear reactions to crime that some seniors may use such as avoidance, isolation or even inaction (Jarvik and Russell, 1979) may lead to more deep-seated anxiety disorders. Strategies useful in reducing such potential problems would include not only those that would increase the likelihood of complete emotional processing such as calm rehearsals, talking, habituation, extinction and repeated practice (Rachman, 1979) but those that would encourage the adoption of crime prevention strategies that can serve to help seniors cope with their fear

of victimization.

There were some indications that an emotional response to the threat of criminal victimization might be mediated by other factors. It would seem that other personal fears or concerns, such as being able to escape from a locked home in the event of a fire may serve to override the fear of being the victim of a break-in and result in a compromise between home security and ease of escape. This has been considered by Garofolo (1981) who has included in his model a general set of factors, referred to as "other motivations and options." These factors directly influence individual responses and consequently have been included in Figure XI as influencing the decision to adopt a coping strategy.

D) Factors Affecting Perceptions and Fear of Crime

According to Figure X, we had categorized the various factors thought to influence perception of crime into four distinct groups. These were (1) exposure to traumatic situations, (2) repeated exposure to sub-traumatic sensitizing situations, (3) observations of people exhibiting fear and (4) the transmission of fear inducing information. Although all of the factors postulated as belonging to each group were not examined, the findings do tend to support the argument that such arrangement seems logical.

1) Traumatic Experiences

Victimization experience as an obvious traumatic situation

certainly seems to have had more impact on those individuals' perception of crime than have any of the other factors. It also seems reasonable to assume that many more seniors, than might have been expected, can recall a significant victimization experience in their lifetime. The responses of those victimized tends to support the suggestion made in Figure I that victimization experiences lead first to a fright reaction which in turn can be transformed into the more utilitarian form of fear defined as instrumental fear.

Lewis and Maxfield (1980) and Smith (1976) have argued that personal crime involving confrontation and possibly violence between offender and victim is more likely than burglary to generate fear. For some female seniors this would especially seem to be the case since the events most feared were said to be purse snatch and walking alone at night, both involving potential contact with strangers. Even subjects who have been burglarized did not seem to fear this event as much as the possibility of personal confrontation in the home or on the street. The revisions to the model therefore suggest that a further subdivision of traumatic experiences into personal confrontation victimizations and other victimizations is warranted.

2) Sensitizing Experiences

We had suggested that the geographic distribution of crime victimization rates and witnessing crime might constitute

repeated exposure to sub-traumatic sensitizing situations. The finding that no one had witnessed a crime suggests that this may be a relatively rare occurrence for some seniors and therefore of questionable importance in affecting their perceptions.

There was support for the contention that both the distribution of crime and rates of victimization, in a general sense, might contribute to perceptions of crime. The interesting thing is that knowledge of this information was somewhat limited and not very accurate. An argument could be made that access to up to date accurate information of the crime situation in a neighbourhood could serve to heighten instrumental fear resulting in reactions that would ensure that seniors (and others) in the neighbourhood are less objectively at risk from victimization.

3) Observations of People Exhibiting Fear

The factors included in this grouping were interpersonal communication, individual social integration and community social integration. The findings clearly support the idea that interpersonal communications about crime may be one of the most important factors (excluding victimization) which affects seniors' perceptions of crime (Lawton et al, 1976; Gubrium, 1974). What is not clear is how such communication actually affects those perceptions. Instances were seen where such communication had served a positive fear reducing function

that is people "talked out" their concerns or worked together to find a means of coping. There were also indications however that some of the anxiety that existed was the result of talking with others who had been victimized or knew someone who had been victimized. In these cases incubation rather than ventilation seemed to have occurred. Since this factor seems to play such an important role in the lives of seniors and their perception of crime, more detailed study would seem warranted.

A weak measure of individual social integration was assumed to be whether respondents lived alone or with someone else. The findings suggested that older women who lived alone yet who formerly had the support of a husband were more susceptible to feelings of anxiety than were those women who had always lived independently or who still had a husband to make coping decisions. We might conclude that the dispositional variables of age and sex are related to the individual social integration factor through role socialization (Garofolo, 1979) and that in fact age and sex may not have as much to do with fear of crime as the intervening factor of level of social integration. Age and sex may only help to determine the level of social integration which in turn affect emotional reactions to crime as the result of (1) inexperience in making acceptable decisions or choosing strategies or (2) lack of access to personal support for the ventilation

of emotions.

Although several indicators were used to assess community social integration, such as communication with neighbours, perceived problems in the neighbourhood (including too many strangers) and attitudes towards existing services, there were no obvious relationships. It was not possible, for instance to assess Conklin's (1975) argument that fear of crime may in fact be fear of strangers.

Perhaps the most reasonable measures of community social integration might be considered the assessments of incivility in the neighbourhood. We have already discussed how this factor has been postulated (Lewis and Maxfield, 1980) as being related to concerns about crime and personal tolerance of crime. It would seem reasonable to argue that higher levels of community integration would be reflected in less group tolerance for uncivil behaviour and possibly less uncivil behaviour itself. An appropriate means of imposing control on levels of uncivil behaviour (and therefore fear) might be to increase levels of neighbourhood or community social integration.

It would seem reasonable to postulate that community social integration may play less of a role in affecting perceptions than more personal tangible things such as locks and alarms. Some of the responses suggested that well meaning neighbours or relatives and friends did little to help resolve

the worries or fears that occurred when people were alone. Rather, seniors could better rely on locks or lights or alarms to provide a feeling of security. It is possible to speculate that community integration only becomes of importance when other coping strategies have failed or when there is a high level of concern for others in the community.

4) Transmission of Fear Inducing Information

This group of factors thought to influence perceptions, consisted of mass communication, absolute levels of crime, key or sensational crimes, changes in crime rates and the police and other institutions. Of these only mass communication and the role of the police were discussed. The other factors are represented in the revised model as unassessed.

The media have often been thought to play an influential role in providing information that can affect individual perceptions (Du Bow et al, 1979). Pattah (ND) reports several studies which argue that for the majority of people information about crime, crime trends and perceptions of crime are largely derived from media coverage of crime. The communication of crime information through the media may not be as relevant for seniors however as for others in the population.

Kubey (1980) has pointed out that although elderly Canadians rely more on television than any other media source for information and entertainment, they tend to watch more variety, music and quiz programs as well as documentaries

and travelogues. Detective stories, love stories, commercials and civil disobedience stories are not well liked by seniors. Our data suggests that although seniors may pay attention to media coverage of crime they may rely more on anecdotal information from friends, neighbours or others.

In discussing attitudes towards the death penalty, Fattah (ND) has argued that there are reasons to be skeptical about the possibility of changing attitudes by means of information. Attempts to alter seniors' perceptions of crime by improving factual information in the media may be negated by their general resistance to change.

Our findings suggest that the police are viewed by some seniors as the primary source of aid in dealing with victimization but are not necessarily viewed as proactive agents. The police may in fact play an informal and unintentional role in exacerbating fear by offering frightening information about crime or prevention tactics without offering viable alternative solutions. It would seem that the police should be sensitive to these possible negative effects in their daily contact with senior citizens. They should be prepared not only to supply information but to ensure that viable optional coping alternatives are presented to those seniors they come in contact with.

Insurance agents seem to play a role in supporting the view that crime is increasing but the argument that this

results in an increase in fear is tenuous. The only clear connection is that some people do increase insurance coverage, thereby adopting the strategy that the agent expected. This may be a questionable method of selling insurance but does not seem to contribute significantly to the fear of crime.

Arranging the factors that may affect perceptions of crime in a hierarchical order suggests that those near the bottom may have less significant impact than those at the top. It is precisely the lower level factors however, of the fear inducing information sort, that we typically have most control over. It would seem necessary then to (1) attempt to maximize, in a positive sense, the control that is placed on fear inducing information by offering legitimate alternatives and (2) attempt to increase or improve the amount of control available over the other levels.

E) Reactions to Crime

The model suggests that there are a variety of reactions or coping strategies to crime that seniors can resort to. The findings clearly show however, that seniors may not be aware of all the crime prevention strategies that are available or could be available. In fact the number of reactions, that seniors are aware of, seem to be limited to a few avoidance behaviours, some protective behaviours and insurance behaviours. There were no indications, for example, that

concern for others would result in any of the behavioural reactions suggested by the model.

This lack of alternatives or choices may result in anxiety when the limited strategies known or used are assessed as being unsuccessful or possibly not satisfactory in reducing the risk of victimization. Without further alternatives these crime prevention strategies, if presented as the only option, or the best option, may serve to enhance the feeling of helplessness and vulnerability. It would seem reasonable to argue that by increasing the number of available options or strategies for seniors as well as awareness of such strategies, there would be an increased probability of such use and subsequent reduction in fear.

An important factor to consider in offering alternatives is that they may be perceived as most effective for seniors when the individual feels that he/she has some control over the process. For example, the Ss who had been victimized yet had exerted some control by taking sound precautionary steps exhibited strong satisfaction with home security. Other Ss who felt that someone else was responsible for security (e.g. superintendent or landlord) felt less comfortable with their security. For some seniors the choice of coping strategies may be limited by other factors. The fear of being trapped in the event of fire or locked in when medical help is needed may take precedence over the fear of burglary.

The sense a person has of being able to control the appropriate decision may nevertheless help to reduce the fear of victimization.

There remains some question as to whether the coping strategies known or used by seniors are the best or most adaptive and successful for actually reducing the objective risk of victimization. The interviews with subjects pointed out that some seniors have taken steps which they feel reduce the risk of burglary victimization but which in fact may be maladaptive since they do little to reduce the objective risk of a break-in. Waller (1982 b) refers to this as a "Security Illusion" since it gives the resident the illusion that they are safe when in fact their residences can still be entered relatively easily. To be truly effective, crime prevention strategies must not only make people feel secure but must actually reduce the objective risk of being victimized. For this reason programs should be employed which have been shown to have some likelihood of succeeding in reducing the risk of victimization (Waller, 1982 b).

Yin (1980) and others have discussed what might be the extreme of the avoidance behaviours which is isolation. This reaction has been postulated as being the most obvious reaction for many seniors and the one which most negatively affects their quality of life. Although there were no clear examples of isolated living and no responses reflecting crime as a

personal problem, it has been suggested that this group of Ss were somewhat biased in their willingness to participate in interviews about crime. A much higher percentage of people (33 out of 50 or 64%) were unwilling to participate in this study. It would be foolish to speculate that all of these people refused to participate because of fear or anxiety about criminal victimization, yet until we are able to assess their fears and whether isolation is a fact of life for them, we will be unable to assess the true amount of personal isolation that results from a fear of criminal victimization.

F) Quality of Life

Although it was possible to include a variety of measures that might be considered related to "quality of life" we chose to examine (1) level of personal acceptance in the community, (2) ability to control life events, (3) feelings of security in the home (Lebowitz, 1975) and (4) health compared to other seniors. These were grouped into two general areas consisting of personal acceptance and general level of security.

The subjects interviewed generally responded in a positive way to all of these variables except for "security in the home" which resulted in a variety of responses. It would be reasonable to expect this factor to be the most sensitive to emotional responses to crime amongst seniors since many seniors are limited in mobility or housebound by

economic or social factors thus spending proportionately more of their time dependent upon home security. This dependence would presumably be intensified if one of the reasons for remaining at home is as a strategy to avoid other possible problems with crime. Remaining at home per se may not necessarily be a negative aspect with respect to quality of life but it may become so if coupled with a concern or fear that the home may also not be a safe place to be.

An integral part of the home security aspect of "quality of life" would seem to be the sense of control that individuals have over their own security. Those who feel that they have some control seem to feel less fearful or at risk than those who do not feel that they have some control over their home security. This may be confounded by the fact that lack of information about sound home security strategies may lead to actions that provide a sense of security but do not increase the objective level of security. This false sense of security may lead to impaired quality of life in other areas (trust, confidence) if actual victimization occurs.

The inclusion of a question relating to personal health is a first step in exploring other areas of "quality of life" that may be impacted by fear of crime. It has been suggested that fear of crime can possibly lead to increased stress and anxiety and that for many seniors serious physical and emotional health problems might eventuate. Further research,

of a longitudinal nature, should consider stress and anxiety related impacts that may result from fearing criminal victimization.

CHAPTER VI IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A) Explanation vs Description

This research was commenced in part because there was a great deal of information describing who were those most likely to fear the threat of criminal victimization but relatively little to describe why they should be fearful. The model developed in this study has been an attempt to provide such an explanation. There is obviously much further work needed but a rather obvious implication for further research is that continued efforts need to be expended in looking for explanations of discrepancies between the elderly and other age groups rather than simply describing those differences.

A logical next step might be to compare the tentative findings of this study with similar interviews of younger people to determine if the model holds. This would confirm the generality of the model as well as provide descriptions of other coping strategies specifically employed by other age groups. Another approach to explain why some elderly are more anxious about the threat of criminal victimization than others would be to continue to explore the strategies employed by those least negatively impacted. In a sense, this study may have inadvertently begun the process.

B) Understanding the Elderly

Related to the above discussion is the need for a more thorough understanding of the ways in which aging can

affect the individual's perceptual and emotional processes. Explanations of differences in perceptual and emotional responses may, to a large extent, be found in the changes that occur in cognitive process as the result of aging. The development of perceptual and emotional base line data as well as data on elderly cognitive styles may offer some explanatory power.

In line with this is the general need for an awareness of the role that other situational variables might play in creating the different perceptual and emotional responses of the elderly. A comparison of differences in lifestyles might serve to explain why some people fear the threat of criminal victimization more than others.

C) The Development of Indicators

Perhaps the single most significant difficulty in studying perceptual and emotional processes related to the threat of criminal victimization stems from the lack of an adequate measure of the dependent variables. This study has relied heavily on verbal reports of the incidence of some rather complex phenomenon. The creation and use of more reliable and possibly more valid measures is badly needed.

As an example of an approach that might be useful in determining levels of fear is that described by Bourgue et al (1978). In this case the researchers were interested in

assessing the degree of crisis manifested by victims of crime. The victims were interviewed and their responses were examined in terms of bits of behaviour that might describe or reflect a crisis variable. Independent raters then rated the bits of behaviour (on a scale of 1-5) to reflect the degree to which they reflected the presence or absence of crisis. The cases were then reconstructed according to their bits and the overall case represented by a mean score of crisis. The approach seems to offer a reliable measure of the level of crisis present. A similar method could be applied to interviews with seniors to determine more accurately the nature and extent of personal fears of the threat of criminal victimization.

Other measures, such as a fear survey schedule (Wolpe and Lazarus, 1968) might be used to determine the nature of the fear of the threat of criminal victimization relative to other fears. This schedule simply requires the respondent to rate a number of items that might cause fear or unpleasant feelings on a five point Likert-like scale. Such a crime fear schedule could be constructed to determine differences between various criminal victimization threats as well as other potentially fear-inducing situations.

D) Points of Intervention

One of the purposes in developing a comprehensive base on which to build a study of the fear of crime victimization

among the elderly was the contention that such a base could point to the most effective points of intervention for social change agents. Without such a base much time and energy could be wasted in areas of relatively little significance. The model, as incomplete as it is, does suggest several key points where intervention might prove effective in reducing unwarranted and potential harmful levels of personal anxiety.

The model shows several important feedback loops which suggest that the development and changes in levels of fear is not a static process. The loops have important relevance since they suggest points of intervention that can prevent increased levels of fear or enhance the fear reduction process. On the basis of the feedback loops discussed in the model efforts should be directed specifically at 1) increasing the level of awareness of alternative crime prevention strategies, 2) increasing the sense of control that individuals have over these strategies and 3) improving the assessment of crime prevention strategies such that they will not only be perceived as viable but will actually reduce the risk of criminal victimization.

E) Program Implications

The experience of being the victim of crime need not be the type of experience that eventuates in a high level of personal anxiety and the negative impact on lifestyle that

such anxiety can generate. Seniors can and do learn to cope with such traumatic experiences. For some seniors however, the general lack of concern for crime victims may serve to exacerbate the initial trauma since they may have no other support systems to help them cope with the experience. It would seem imperative therefore that a victim service, geared to the needs of seniors, be established. Part of this service should be to provide the type of counselling that encourages emotional processing or ventilation of the experience. In addition, the service should provide information designed to increase the availability of coping strategies in an attempt to increase the likelihood that the initial fear reaction will be an instrumental one rather than one of anxiety.

Victim services, where they exist, tend to be geared to people who have actually been victimized. An important fact to keep in mind with respect to seniors is that unwarranted levels of anxiety may be considered a form of "indirect victimization." The hidden nature of this type of victimization suggests that seniors and social change agents dealing with seniors need to become sensitized to the possible existence of harmful levels of anxiety about crime. There is a need for increased dialogue about the problems related to crime for seniors and a willingness to approach these problems from a collective and positive approach.

Many seniors and possibly others in the community would seem to have limited access to information about crime. This is possibly due to the great reliance placed on the police to combat crime. Access to more reliable and up to date information might be directed towards decreasing levels of anxiety and increasing levels of instrumental fear. For example, seniors who had been appraised of the fact that neighbourhood burglaries had increased might be persuaded to increase home security. At the very least the provision of accurate information would provide seniors with a more realistic impression of the crime risks that face them. A first step in attempting to face the "crime problem" would be addressed by clearly defining the nature and scope of the problem for seniors.

Related to the provision of information about crime is the provision of information about crime prevention strategies. Seniors should be encouraged to take realistic precautions and should be provided with a number of options for each crime that they feel presents a risk. The cost of such precautions should be kept at a minimum since this alone might reduce the willingness to participate. As examples, volunteers could be arranged to accompany seniors on walks, downtown to the bank etc. The Senior Citizens Council might arrange to buy a quantity of household locks and sell those at cost to seniors. The literature discusses a variety of crime prevention strategies that already exist (Crime Prevention

Program, 1978; Waller, 1982; Law Enforcement and Older Persons, 1980) but certainly creative solutions to local problems should be encouraged. The important point to be kept in mind is that a variety of alternatives from each of the categories of possible reactions should be made available.

It should also be the case that seniors be encouraged to take control of their own safety. This should be encouraged at both the personal and group level. For example, the availability of crime control options and the development of a sense of control of these options is the premise on which the Crime Prevention Program (1978) is based. This program has been specifically developed for older persons by the National Retired Teachers Association and the American Association of Retired Persons. The program offers a concise package of information for seniors about various crimes and a variety of simple yet effective strategies for preventing these crimes. The entire package is designed to be implemented directly through the participation of seniors.

The fact that there were few indications of actual group or general reactions to crime suggests an area as yet unexplored in the Kingston community. Although such programs as Block Parents exist and have a preventative approach, there are no such general programs geared to elderly needs. The development of such a group or program might serve as another viable strategy for some seniors but more importantly would

foster a sense of general concern for and community solidarity against crime in the community. Such a group could encourage a positive, self control approach to crime prevention for seniors and, by keeping the issue in the open, might serve to encourage those who remain isolated to step forward.

The local police force should be encouraged to adopt a higher profile with respect to crime prevention for seniors. They should recognize the potential for increased anxiety as the result of victimization and be prepared to make community referrals. They should work in conjunction with the Senior Citizens Council to objectively assess individual crime prevention strategies and provide alternatives that would not only make seniors feel more secure but actually decrease the probability of victimization.

The police can also play a major role in collecting data on the nature and extent of criminal victimization of the elderly. The categorization of victims by age might be the first step in improving police awareness of potential problems for the elderly.

F) Summary

This paper has been an attempt to develop a theoretical understanding of how and why elderly citizens might come to develop an emotional reaction to the perceived threat of criminal victimization. In order to do this it was first necessary to explore the meaning of fear of crime and place

this reaction in perspective with respect to perceptions of crime. The model that evolved is envisioned as complex enough to explain why some elderly with very similar antecedent conditions might perceive crime differently and in turn respond in a different emotional manner.

The rather limited number of cases examined in this study served to ground the model on the basis of individual experiences but limits the ability to generalize to a large population of elderly. It is not possible, from the work, to say how many elderly citizens respond in a coping manner to the perceived threat of criminal victimization and how many develop a level of anxiety that interferes with what would otherwise be an anxiety free lifestyle. We are closer however to explaining why and how such different responses might come to be.

This paper has concluded with several tentative recommendations based on this alternative way of looking at the elderly's reaction to crime. It is hoped that this perspective can prove useful in the further exploration of the impact that the perceived threat of criminal victimization has on the senior citizens in our communities.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately one hour of your time. I would like to tape record your responses but I would point out that I plan to interview approximately 25 people and put all the information together without any names to ensure that all responses will be confidential.

1. Could you describe for me how you feel about crime in Kingston _____

PROBE: For differences between property crime and violent crime

2. Many senior citizens report that they have a fear of becoming the victim of a crime. How do you feel. _____

PROBE: For differences between property crime and violent crime

PROBE: For verbal responses that would be indicative of

- A) Concern/worry in a general sense
- B) apprehension, anxiety, distress, nervousness
- C) precautions or instrumental fear
- D) physiological feelings, heart beating - fright

3. Could you explain why you feel that way _____

PROBE: For causal factors

- A) perceptions of crime, levels etc.
- B) victimization or vicarious **GO TO 6**
- C) personal risk **GO TO 8**
- D) neighbourhood **GO TO 28**

- E) awareness of crime prevention strategies
- F) sources of information (newspapers, radio, T.V. talk with friends, key crimes)
- G) social service network GO TO 13 and 14

4. Could you describe anything that you have done as a result of the way that you feel about crime _____

PROBE: For behavioural responses that might be indicative of

- A) communication, participation
- B) physical symptoms
- C) avoidance, protective or insurance
- D) extremes of avoidance, protective and insurance

PROBE: For whether this is a change in behaviour

5. Could you explain what it was that made you do the specific things that you mentioned _____

PROBE: For categories of reasons

- A) perceptions of crime
- B) victimization or vicarious GO TO 6
- C) personal risk GO TO 8
- D) neighbourhood GO TO 28
- E) awareness of crime prevention strategies
- F) sources of information (newspapers, radio, T.V. talk with friends, key crimes)
- G) social service network GO TO 13 and 14

Now I would like to ask some questions about your experience with criminal occurrences.

6. Have you ever been the victim of a criminal offence.
Please describe, when, where, what _____

PROBE: For emotional feelings and behaviours that
may have followed.

7. Have you ever witnessed a criminal event or known someone who has been a crime victim. Please describe, where, when, what _____

PROBE: For emotional feelings and behaviours that
may have followed.

8. How would you rate the risk or chance of your becoming
(Use the scaled "Chance Thermometer" 0-100 ratings)
a) the victim of a property crime _____
b) the victim of a violent crime _____
c) injured during a criminal occurrence _____
d) injured while driving in a car _____
e) injured in an accident while walking
as a pedestrian _____

I would like to continue by getting your response to a few hypothetical situations.

Scenario 1

9. Please describe how you would personally feel about
the following:

You may have read in the newspaper about a year ago that the Chief of Police reported that the number of burglaries or break-ins of homes and apartments in Kingston had increased significantly over the last few years.

10. What would you be inclined to do as a result of this information _____

Scenario 2

11. Please describe how you would personally feel if
You discovered that a friend or neighbour
had been burglarized and that that person
was afraid to go out of the house because
he/she feels that it might happen again.

12. What would you be inclined to do as a result of this information _____

13. If you were to become a victim of a crime (specify or
give example) who would you turn to for advice or help.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

14. If you were to become the victim of a crime (specify
or give examples) how would you describe the

- a) physical consequences _____
b) economic consequences _____
that would be the result for you.

15. How would you describe your ability to recuperate
from this event

- a) physically _____
b) economically _____

Now I would like to ask some questions about how you feel about
Kingston and your neighbourhood.

16. How would you describe the services or resources that are available for senior citizens in Kingston _____

17. Could you rate each of the following as to whether they are a Big Problem, Some Problem or No Problem in your neighbourhood. (Use the card indicating categories)

	BIG	SOME	NO	DK/NA
A) Poor upkeep of homes	_____	_____	_____	_____
B) Dogs barking or loose	_____	_____	_____	_____
C) People drinking too much or using drugs	_____	_____	_____	_____
D) Young people hanging about	_____	_____	_____	_____
E) People leaving garbage around	_____	_____	_____	_____
F) Vandalism	_____	_____	_____	_____
G) Too many strangers in the neighbourhood	_____	_____	_____	_____
H) People breaking into or sneaking into apartments and homes to steal something	_____	_____	_____	_____
I) Neighbours who make too much noise	_____	_____	_____	_____
J) Streets not safe at night	_____	_____	_____	_____
K) Too little play ground or recreational space	_____	_____	_____	_____
L) People being robbed or having their purses taken	_____	_____	_____	_____
M) People not very friendly	_____	_____	_____	_____

19. How safe do you feel walking in your neighbourhood alone

A) AT NIGHT	B) DURING THE DAY
_____ Very Safe _____	
_____ Reasonably Safe _____	
_____ Somewhat Unsafe _____	
_____ Very Unsafe _____	
_____ DK _____	

20. Do you think that senior citizens are more likely to be victims of a criminal offence than others Probe for Type of Crime _____

21. Do you ever worry or have concern that other senior citizens might become crime victims _____

I would like to conclude this interview by asking a few questions about you.

22. Do you live alone or share your apartment/house with others _____

23. Are you married _____ single _____
separated _____ widowed _____
divorced _____ other _____

24. How old are you _____

25. How would you say your health compares to other people your age

Better _____

Average _____

Poorer _____

DK _____

26. How would you describe your ability to control the events that occur in your life

Not able
to control
events

somewhat able
to control
events

mostly able
to control
events

totally able
to control
events

27. How well accepted do you personally feel

	not at all	somewhat	almost always	totally
1) by other seniors	_____	_____	_____	_____
2) by others in the neighbourhood	_____	_____	_____	_____

28. How secure do you feel in your place of residence

not very secure	reasonably secure	extremely secure
_____	_____	_____

29. Could you describe for me the thing or things

A) that you are most afraid of

B) that you are most anxious or
concerned about happening to
you

Before we stop are there any questions you would like to ask me?

At this point I would like to thank you very much for your kind co-operation and for taking the time to let me interview you.

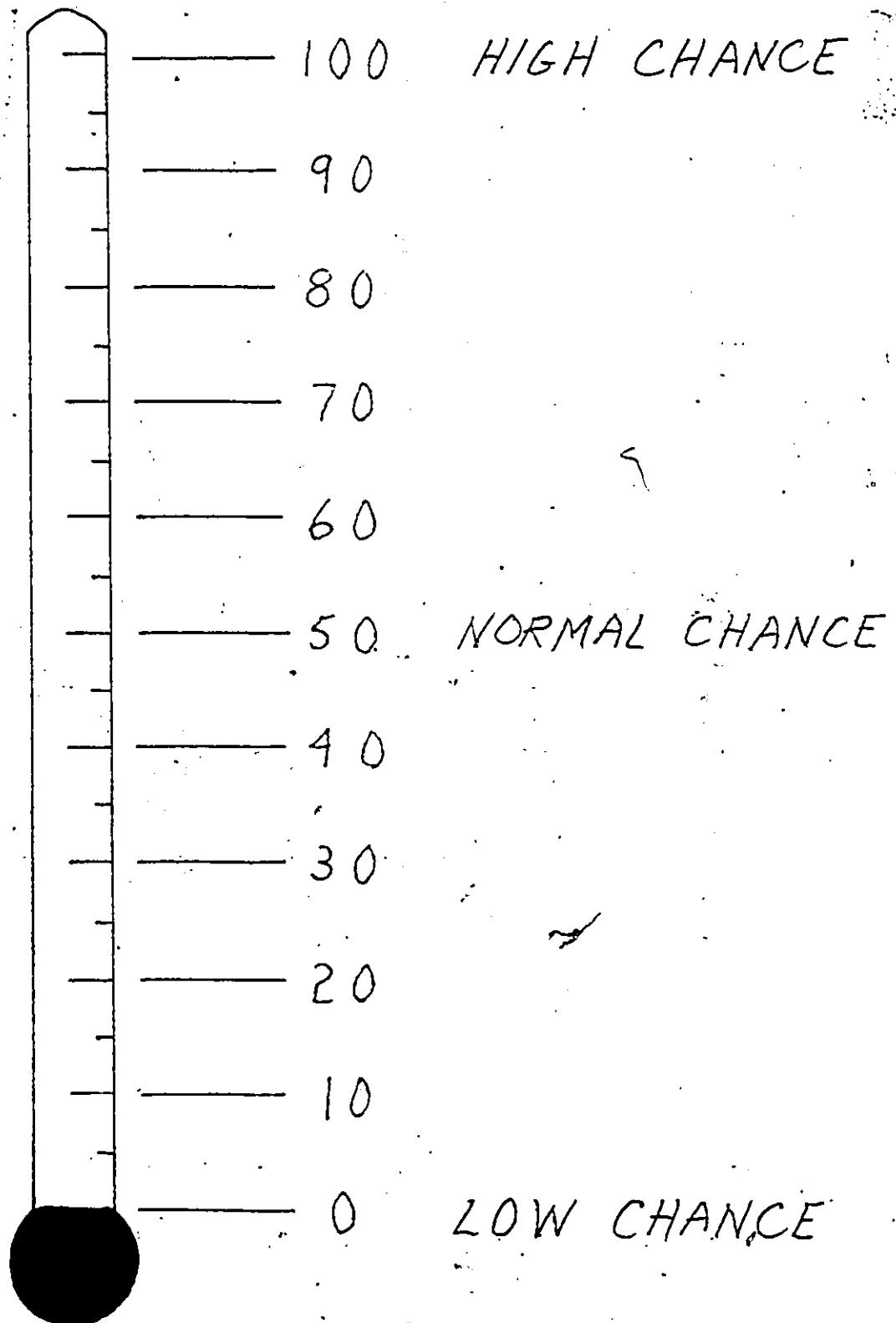
I expect that it will take until the end of September to put together the information from all of the interviews. If you would like some further idea about the nature or results of this work you would be most welcome to call Mr. Ken Fuller at 542-8137. I will be glad to talk with you on the phone or mail you a letter concerning the outcome of this study. (Hand S. card with information).

30. Describe type of residence _____

31. Sex of respondent _____

32. Date of interview _____

CHANCE THERMOMETER





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