

Victimological Developments in the World During the Past Three Decades (I): A Study of Comparative Victimology

Hans Joachim Schneider

Abstract: During the past three decades, 10 international symposia on victimology have taken place at the following locations: Jerusalem (1973); Boston (1976); Muenster, Germany (1979); Tokyo and Kyoto (1982); Zagreb, Croatia (1985); Jerusalem (1988); Rio de Janeiro (1991); Adelaide, Australia (1994); Amsterdam (1997); and Montreal (2000). In the two parts of this article, a comprehensive overview of the discussion results of these symposia and of the most important literature contributions to criminological victimization research over the past three decades will be presented. In the first part of this article, empirical victim research, international risk of victimization, and national risk in Germany will be discussed. Four groups of victims, serving as examples, will be analyzed in more detail: foreigners, women (rape), children (sexual abuse), and older persons (physical abuse). The causes of victimization will be explored: These comprise socialstructural, cultural, and institutional victimization. The concept of victim precipitation, the lifestyle-routine-opportunity model, and the routine-activity theory will be described.

In the past, criminology was centered primarily on the offender. Within the frame of the social psychological interaction theory, over the past three decades interest has turned to the victim of crime (Geis, 1998). This interest was of course not restricted to criminological issues alone but included the fields of psychology, sociology, and social psychology in particular. The discipline of victimology (the science of the victim of crime), which constitutes a part of criminology, was well represented at the international criminological conferences in Vienna (1983), Hamburg (1988), Budapest (1993), and Seoul (1998). Moreover, impressive summary volumes covering the most important presentations of the international victimological symposia in Jerusalem (1973) (Drapkin & Viano, 1974/1975); in Muenster, Germany (1979) (Schneider, 1982); in Tokyo and Kyoto (1982) (Miyazawa & Ohya, 1986); and in Zagreb (1985) (Separovic, 1988/1989) have been published as well. The international symposia on victimology held at Jerusalem in 1988 (Ben David & Kirchhoff, 1992); in Rio de Janeiro in 1991 (Kirchhoff, Kosovski, & Schneider, 1994); in Adelaide, Australia in 1994 (Sumner, Israel, O'Connell, & Sarre, 1996); and in Amsterdam in 1997 (van Dijk, van Kaam, Wemmers, 1999) have carried criminological victimization research into the world and constituted effective platforms for victimological discussion (Joutsen, 1998).

The Max-Planck Institute for Foreign and International Law has had a substantial share in promoting victimological research (Kaiser, 1991). On the occasion of the international symposium on victimology in Rio de Janeiro (1991), the institute published a three-volume survey (Kaiser, Kury, & Albrecht, 1991) providing a valuable overview of many fruitful research studies. In 1993, the New Criminological Society organized a workshop meeting in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, in which discussion centered on the criminological issue of victimization research (Kaiser & Jehle, 1994, 1995). And finally, the German Federal Bureau of Investigation has placed key emphasis on criminological victimization research throughout the past two decades (Baurmann & Bernhardt, 1996). In 1995, it devoted its work-group conference to this theme (Bundeskriminalamt, 1996).

The interest in victimology is not restricted to the key countries of victimological activity. There are many other interested countries: countries in North America and Europe, including Poland (Holyst, 1997) and Hungary (Goergenyi, 1997), and in particular, Israel and Japan (Morosawa, 1992). A substantial amount of victimological literature has also developed in Middle and South America (Kosovski, 1994; Kosovski, Mayr, & Piedade, 1990; Neuman, 1994; Rodriguez Manzanera, 1998); in Asia, particularly in India (Rajan, 1995; Singh Makkar, 1995); in Africa, especially in South Africa (Snyman, 2000); and in Australia (Whitrod, 1986). Victimological periodicals have not only emerged on an international level (e.g., *International Review of Victimology, Violence and Victims*), but journals on victimology have also been published on a national level: Japan (*Japanese Journal of Victimology*), Argentina (*Victimologia*), and Australia (*Journal of the Australian Society of Victimology*). On an international scale, the World Society of Victimology was founded in Muenster, Germany in 1979. It encompasses more than 500 permanent members worldwide and has consultative status with the United Nations. Numerous national victimological societies have been formed as well: in Japan, Poland, Brazil, India, Australia, Greece, and South Korea.

The World Society of Victimology, which organizes the international victimology symposia and the national victimological societies, views itself primarily as an association of scholars. Its aim is to serve as a discussion forum for those scientists with critical opinions toward victimology. Apart from these scientific societies, victim support organizations and victim movements have been formed, which have, however—due to their partly one-sided, offender-hostile views on crime policy—not always gained the full approval of the scientific victimological societies. The interest in victims of crime shown by the scientific community and the general population stems from the civilization process (Elias, 1976) that the world is undergoing in the long term. People are becoming more aware of what it means to become a victim. Their awareness of the problems associated with violence, particularly of the everyday forms of violence in the close-range social environment, has developed at an increasing rate.

DIFFERENTIAL VICTIMIZATION: THE DISTRIBUTION OF VICTIMIZATION WITHIN THE POPULATION

EMPIRICAL VICTIMIZATION RESEARCH

Victimization surveys belong to the “most exciting developments in criminology” (Fattah, 1991, p. 30) and have turned out to be the “most substantive empirical research concepts of the last two decades” (Kaiser, 1993, p. 6). These victimization surveys, which were first initiated in the United States at the end of the 1960s, have in the meantime spread throughout the world. In these studies, representative samples of the population are asked if they have become victims of selected crimes within a certain period of time and if they reported these crimes to the police. There are four different types of victimization studies.

- International victimization studies (van Dijk, 1996; Zvekic, 1996) are based on representative random samples taken from the populations of numerous countries. They allow a comparison of the extent and structure of victimization in the different societies.
- National victimization surveys are based on a representative random sample taken from the population of a single country (Mirrlees-Black, Budd, Partridge, & Mayhew, 1998; U.S. Department of Justice, 1997a). Partly, these surveys are repeated annually and thus allow an analysis of the development of victimization caused by offenders (U.S. Department of Justice, 1997b).
- Local victimization studies are confined to the representative population sample of a region or a city (Schwarzenegger, 1991; Schwind, Ahlborn, & Weiss, 1989). Recently, these surveys have proven to be highly valuable supplements to international and national research endeavors, which indisputably provide large-scale overviews but lead to vague and distorted results in specific issues due to the limitations of the random samples. Here, local victimization surveys can furnish in-depth insights and more precise answers.
- Specialized victimization surveys focus on victimization in the close-range social environment, for example family violence (Straus, 1990; Straus & Gelles, 1990a, 1990b), school violence (Olweus, 1994), and victimization related to a specific offense, for example, rape (Koss, 1996) or sexual child abuse. Such specialized victimization surveys have yielded individual results that are much more precise than those obtained from international and national studies.

A second, important victimological method consists in interviewing victims of crime, whose victimization experience has already become known to the criminal courts, about their experiences with victimization, their response to having been victimized, and their personal needs. Since the mid-1980s, informative research results have been reported in Britain (Shapland, 1986a, 1986b; Shapland, Willmore, & Duff, 1985) that have been sequenced by a number of German investigations in the 1990s (Baurmann & Schaedler, 1996, 1999; Kilchling, 1995).

Empirical victimological research, victimization studies, and victimization surveys have derived a wealth of new information on the frequency of victimization, the extent of bodily and psychological injury, the extent of material loss, and the feeling of (in)security and fear of crime elicited in victims and nonvictims. This research has gained up-to-date insights into the risk of victimization, the experiences of the injured person in coping with victimization, and the reporting behavior of the population. These victimization studies are landmarks in the study of crime, but still, their limitations are clearly visible.

- They do not assess criminal reality. They merely report on the objective and subjective state of (in)security from the viewpoint of the crime victim and the potential crime victim; they fathom the experiences of the population with victimization.
- Their significance is limited by errors in remembering, memory deficits, a lack of willingness to report, and dubious credibility (exaggeration or withholding information) on the part of the respondents.
- The results of victimization studies are codetermined by the methodical framework of the survey instrument (the questionnaire) and by effects related to the person conducting the survey (e.g., lack of motivation of the interviewer).
- Many offenses, especially those involving violence and sexual abuse, remain in a double dark field: They are communicated neither to the police nor to the interviewer of the victimization study. This applies particularly to crime in the close-range social environment, that is, offenses involving family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances, and neighbors (Fattah, 1991, p. 51; Karmen, 2000, pp. 170-171; Zedner, 1997, p. 582).

The willingness of respondents to disclose information to the interviewer in the interview situation is low when it comes to delicate issues such as female abuse, rape involving marriage partners or acquaintances, bodily child abuse, or sexual abuse of children within the family. These offenses are often not viewed as crimes by the victims and their next of kin. This reflects the social stereotype notion, which is constantly being amplified by the mass media, that crime occurs only between strangers. Offenses in the close-range social environment are also not reported by victims in dark-figure investigations, because the victims are dependent on and in need of the offender, and because they feel obliged or forced to show consideration for his interests.

INTERNATIONAL VICTIMIZATION RISK

In 1989, 1992, and 1996, three international victimization studies were carried out in a total of 52 industrialized countries, countries in transition, and developing countries (del Frate, 1998; Mayhew & van Dijk, 1997; van Dijk, 1999a, 1999b; van Dijk, & Mayhew, 1992, 1993; van Dijk, Mayhew, & Killias, 1990; Zvekic, 1998; Zvekic, & del Frate, 1993, 1995). More than 133,821 inhabitants of differ-

ent countries and large cities were interviewed as to 11 offenses (property offenses, sexually motivated offenses, and crimes of violence).

The world was divided up into six geographic regions: the New World (North America, Australia, New Zealand), western Europe (15 countries), central and eastern Europe (16 countries), Asia (6 countries), Latin America (5 countries), and Africa (6 countries). On the basis of these studies on victimization by offenders, the international distribution of crime can be outlined as follows.

- Although the legal definitions and crime survey methods vary in the different countries, the basic understanding of the manifestations and the assessment of basic concepts like robbery, burglary, and rape is, on the whole, the same worldwide.
- The rates of victimization determined for the past five years are the highest in Latin America (74.5%) and Africa (74%). These values have reached an intermediate level in the New World (65.3%), eastern Europe (62.2%), and western Europe (61.2%). In Asia (51.4%), the victimization rate is the lowest.
- From the three studies on victimization, it can be concluded that offenses, including crimes of violence, are by no means seldom occurrences but rather, at least in urban centers, statistically normal events.
- In western countries (Europe and the New World), violence against women and men is fairly evenly distributed. The problem of violence in the developing countries of Africa and Latin America is nevertheless characterized mainly by sexual and nonsexual violence against women. Violence against women reaches the highest level in countries in which women hold a low social status (cf. also van Dijk, Block, & Ollus, 1998). The extent of violence in general is closely related to the frequency of possession of a weapon.
- In most industrialized countries, the number of property offenses is declining, a fact attributed to the improved protection of personal property in these countries. In contrast, property offenses are increasing in the developing countries.
- Victimization related to corruption of government officials is the highest in Latin America (21.3%), Africa (18.8%), and Asia (14.6%). In eastern Europe, its frequency is moderate (10.7%). The figures in countries of the New World (1%) and western Europe (0.7%) are the lowest.
- Reporting rates are symptoms of the perceived level of personal security and sensitivity toward crime within the population. They also reflect the efficiency of the criminal justice system. The figures are the highest for the countries of the New World (54%) and western Europe (52%). They decline significantly in the case of Africa (40%) and eastern Europe (35%) and are the lowest in Asia (31%) and Latin America (27%). Property offenses are reported at a higher rate than crimes of sexual abuse and violence. Crimes against women show the largest dark figure.
- Satisfaction with the performance of the police is higher in the Western countries than in the developing countries; satisfaction is higher in the case of property offenses than in the case of crimes of sexual abuse and violence. Victims complain that the police are not sufficiently active and show no interest. The victims want to be treated with due respect. Victims of sexual abuse and crimes of violence encounter a greater lack of respect than victims of property offenses. Female victims of crimes of

violence most frequently experience an impolite and disrespectful response. Satisfaction with police performance correlates directly with the reporting behavior of the population.

- There is a major gap between the needs of victims and the support they actually receive. Worldwide, only 4% of male victims and 10% of female victims of violent crimes receive assistance. This percentage is higher in the New World (29%) and in western Europe (22%). Two thirds of the victims of severe crimes who had reported the crime to the police need help, which they have failed to receive, however.

VICTIMIZATION RISK IN GERMANY

The risk of victimization in Germany is not evenly distributed. In a victimization study, which was conducted in the western and eastern parts of the German Federal Republic in 1990 (Kury, 1992; Kury, Doermann, Richter, & Wuerger, 1992), the following situation was established: Although 32.6% of respondents in the "old" federal *Laender* (West Germany) had become a victim of at least 1 of 11 queried offenses in the period dating from 1986 to 1990, the extent of the risk of victimization in the "new" federal *Laender* (East Germany) amounted to 28.6% of the population and was thus 4.4% lower. At the turn of the year 1991 to 1992, a victimization study was carried out in the Thuringian cities of Jena and Kahla (Kraeufl & Ludwig, 1993). At that time, the level of crime, of violent crimes in particular, was slightly less in the new federal *Laender* as compared with the old *Laender*. Subsequent to reunification, criminality increased in both parts of Germany, the increase in the eastern part being higher than in the western part. The police criminal statistics from 1999 (Bundeskriminalamt, 2000, p. 50) yielded an east-west gradient in the distribution of crime, which will be corroborated by a dark-figure investigation. The higher crime level in the new federal *Laender* must be viewed very differentially. The results applied in particular to theft and juvenile delinquency; drug-related offenses had not yet reached the same level as in the western part of Germany. The lower spending power coupled with the higher consumer pressure in East Germany as compared with the West is apparently a prime cause of the east-west crime gradient.

It has been established through victimization studies conducted in 1989 and 1990 (Kury, Obergfell-Fuchs, & Wuerger, 1996) that a north-south gradient exists for criminal victimization in Germany. The southern federal *Laender* show a lower victimization load than the northern one in both West and East Germany. The *Laender* of Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony has higher crime rates than the *Laender* of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria; in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern one finds a higher crime level than in Thuringia and Saxony. The disparities are explained in terms of socialstructural differences. In the *Laender* with a higher victimization rate, one also finds more traffic accidents, a higher suicide rate, higher divorce rates and unemployment figures, more social welfare recipients, and lower average earnings. It is not only the more unfavorable economic conditions that are decisive, although, it is also the more community-ori-

ented lifestyle in the southern federal Laender that strengthens informal social control by the social groups and facilitates formal social control through the criminal justice system.

FOUR EXAMPLES OF VICTIM GROUPS

Next to household accidents, accidents at the place of work, and traffic accidents, victimization by offenders represents the second most likely cause of bodily, financial, psychical, and social damage to a person (Karmen, 1996, pp. 93-94). Virtually every individual becomes a victim of theft or property damage during his lifetime. Almost all men suffer one incident of criminal bodily injury. Nevertheless, the risk of victimization is by no means distributed randomly, coincidentally, or evenly over space and time and within the population. Modern criminological victim research has not merely striven to determine the population groups with the highest victimization risk. This research also set forth to identify the population groups that, unnoticed, objectively and subjectively suffer the most under the threat of crime (victim vulnerability). These efforts have revealed entirely new insights. This applies for example to the objective risk of victimization: abuse of women (Crowell & Burgess, 1996), physical child abuse and neglect (National Research Council, 1993), and family violence (Chalk & King, 1998). But this also applies to the subjective threat of victimization: fear of crime and its consequences (Hale, 1996; Kury & Ferdinand, 1998). Due to spatial constraints, these victimological problems cannot be deliberated in greater detail here. In the following, only the victimization risk of four population groups will be illustrated more closely: foreigners, women (rape), children (sexual abuse), and older persons.

Foreigners as Victims

Hate crimes are acts of violence committed against a person or a thing exclusively or primarily because of race, religion, ethnic origin, sex, political or sexual orientation, age, or a mental or bodily disability of the target person or of the responsible owner of the thing in question (Berk, 1990; Garofalo, 1997; Hamm, 1994b; Levin & McDevitt, 1993). Hate crimes are aimed at domination by an insider group through degradation of an outsider group. Such acts are usually committed in the name of the majority of the population and are directed against a minority (victim group) (Schneider, 1995). By his or her membership in an identifiable group the victim, who from the viewpoint of the offender is interchangeable, obtains a symbolic status (Schneider, 1996a). Occasionally a minority hate group (e.g., skinheads, see Hamm, 1994a) opposes the majority of the population.

The bandwidth of the variety of manifestations of hate crimes is great and extends from everyday offenses, threat calls, and sprayed graffiti to extremely brutal major crime, arson, and serial and mass murder. Offenders resort to verbal insults. They smear swastikas on walls. They proliferate racist literature by mail.

They damage property by spraying, scribbling, and pasting actions. Car paint is scratched, and car windows are smashed. Car, motorcycle, and bicycle tires are slashed. Windows are smashed by thrown rocks. Jewish cemeteries are ravaged. Foreigners are chased through the streets and rocks thrown at them. These crimes further include beating up foreigners (“nigger bashing”), homosexuals (“gay bashing”), and old people (“granny bashing”). Foreigners are thrown out of subways and commuter trains. Their premises are forcefully entered and the interior furnishings destroyed. Fire bombs and Molotov cocktails are hurled into dormitory quarters occupied by foreigners. Fire is set to synagogues, and Jewish memorials commemorating the Holocaust are destroyed. Letter bombs are sent to persons who are advocates of a multicultural society.

Hate crimes are particularly dangerous infringements of the law, because they undermine the pluralistic society and the democratic constitutional state. Damage is caused on three levels (Herek & Berrill, 1992; Jenness & Broad, 1997; Kelly, 1993): First, the immediate victim is injured physically, psychically, and socially. Next, harm is inflicted on the population group, for example, the racial minority, to which the victim belongs and which the offender intends to intimidate. Finally, the democratic constitutional state and the pluralistic societal order are strongly affected in that the constitutional and human rights of the victim are encroached on, and the cautiously established balance in the relations among the various population groups within the pluralistic society are severely disturbed (cf. also Cunneen, Fraser, & Tomsen, 1997; Jacobs & Potter, 1998).

Sexual Victimization of Women and Children

The notion that sexual offenses are very rarely occurring events is still very widespread. This opinion applies solely to the elucidated domain of reported and documented sexual criminality (Bundeskriminalamt, 2000, p. 131). The major part of sexually motivated crimes, however, remains concealed within the dark field of unreported and undisclosed crimes. Women and children do not report their sexual victimization to the police, because substantial social pressure is imposed on them to refrain from revealing and reporting such crimes. Female rape victims are socially stigmatized when they disclose having been raped (the stigma of a “damaged commodity”). They have to bear the main burden during the criminal proceedings (blaming the victim). The criminal justice system has proven to be largely unsuccessful in controlling rape. This is shown by the low indictment and sentencing rates (e.g., Statistisches Bundesamt, 2000, pp. 20-22). Less than half of the child victims of sexual abuse ever talk to anyone about their ordeal during the period of their abuse. Even if sexual child abuse is exposed, only 6% to 12% of cases are reported to the police (Berliner & Elliott, 1996, p. 54). If asked, almost three quarters of sexually abused children deny having been victimized. The child victims who feel helpless and trapped keep the abuse secret, because they fear, justifiably, the dramatic emotional reactions of the adults.

The true extent of sexually motivated crime can be derived from victimization studies on sexual violence against women and children. According to a representative oral and partly written survey on 5,832 women age 16 and older, which was conducted by the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony in Hanover, Germany, in 1992 (Wetzels & Pfeiffer, 1995) 8.6% of the female respondents reported having experienced sexual violence. In 66% of all cases of rape, the offense occurred in the close-range social environment. The reporting rate was only 18.9%. If these figures are compared with those from corresponding dark-figure studies in the United States (Koss, 1993; National Center for Victims of Crime, 1992), the German study attains rather moderate results: On average, 14% of interviewed women in the United States had become victims of rape throughout their lifetime. With a value of 16%, the reporting rate remained lower than in Germany. 61% of all incidents of rape involved intimate partners and acquaintances (Reiss & Roth, 1993, p. 79).

On the basis of 19 specialized victimization studies carried out in the United States, the rate of sexual victimization of children is at least 20% among the North American female population and 5% to 10% among the North American male population (Finkelhor, 1994a). Based on an international comparison of dark-figure studies on sexual abuse of children in 21 countries (Finkelhor, 1994b), doubt has been voiced whether the problem is particularly severe in the United States. Depending on concept definition and methodical procedure—for example, the length of the survey period, survey methodology, and evaluation—the rate of sexual abuse derived from the international comparison yielded values of sexual child victimization ranging from 7% to 36% in the case of women and from 3% to 29% in the case of men. For the German-speaking countries, a cautious assessment yields a victimization prevalence (referring to sexual abuse of children) of approximately 10% to 20% of women and approximately 5% to 10% of men (Bange & Deegener, 1996, p. 123; Ernst, 1998, p. 69). Here, the age limit (up to the age of 14) and the form of abuse (sexual action with bodily contact) have been taken into account.

Dark-figure research thus comes to the conclusion that rape and sexual child abuse are frequent, insufficiently reported, and poorly controlled offenses.

Victimization of Older Persons

Older persons are generally at a lower risk than young people of being victimized, because they avoid victimogenic situations in which they may easily become crime victims. Nonetheless, they represent a particularly threatened group of victims, as they are easily injured on account of their aging process (Doerner & Lab, 1998, pp. 209-210) and their victimization tends to stay concealed within a double dark field (Greve, Hosser, & Wetzels, 1996, p. 29). Older persons are fairly often abused or intentionally neglected in their families or in nursing homes (Ahlf, 1994; Kreuzer & Huerlimann, 1992). They are beaten. They are chastised and threatened by nursing staff. Their money is taken away from them, or the money

of older persons who are no longer mentally able to manage their own financial affairs is squandered. The extent of violence against 65 year olds is given as approximately 3% in the United States (Pillemer & Finkelhor, 1988). In Germany, a specialized survey on victimization yielded somewhat higher prevalence rates: in the old federal Laender, 3.7% for men older than 60 and 3.9% for women of the same age group and, in the new federal Laender, 2.6% for men older than 60 and 2.3% for women of the same age group. The victimization rates established for older persons were significantly lower than for persons younger than 60 (Wetzels, Greve, Mecklenburg, Bilsky, & Pfeiffer, 1995, p. 158; cf. also Pillemer & Sutor, 1988, pp. 251-252).

Abuse of older persons, which has increased over the past decades, occurs most frequently in the family (Brillon, 1987, p. 82; Carp, 2000; Fattah & Sacco, 1989; Wolf & McCarthy, 1991), because it is in the family that they are still cared for the most. A major part of violence against old people is partner-based violence. Three fifths of all offenders in the United States were partners and spouses, and only 28% were children (Pillemer & Finkelhor, 1988). In Germany, as many as four fifths of the offenders were partners (Wetzels et al., 1995, p. 167). Violence in the close-range social environment has a particularly hard impact on older persons because multiple victimization tends to be the rule rather than the exception. Social isolation of older persons increases with the process of aging. Their contacts to family members or to the staff of nursing homes gain in importance. If these relations are disturbed and burdened by violence, older persons often fall into inescapable situations in their families or homes (Pillemer & Moore, 1989). In general, they refrain from reporting and do not divulge their abuse in interviews on victimization. This is because they are often dependent on the nursing staff abusing them and are afraid of being "dumped" into old age institutions. They often feel shame for the conduct of the offenders, usually their partners and children, with whom they live in close personal relationships (Decalmer & Glendenning, 1997).

VICTIMOLOGICAL THEORIES

SOCIALSTRUCTURAL, CULTURAL, AND INSTITUTIONAL VICTIMIZATION

According to the socialstructural victimization theory, victimization reflects the economic and the power structures of a society. Marginalized, powerless minorities that have been pushed toward the edge of society are often forced into becoming victims. Structural violence (Galtung, 1975), social discrimination, turns into personal violence (Sessar, 1993, p. 114). The social pressure imposed on marginalized minorities leads to social disorganization and the decay of relations and communities, causing a propensity to become a victim (Miethe & McDowall, 1993). The Australian aborigines who have been deprived of their cul-

ture and identity and whose numbers have been decimated by one half can be given as an example here (Schneider, 1992). Another example of socialstructural victimization is the killing of female infants and dowry homicide in India (Chockalingam, 2000; Shurei, 1997; Umar, 1998). In India's rural as well as urban areas, the family of the bride owes the family of the groom a substantial dowry in the form of money, jewelry, and household possessions. From childhood, the young girl is neglected bodily and emotionally because she causes considerable dowry expenses to the family. Young boys are welcome because they furnish their family with a dowry. Many families even kill their female infants because they are unable to provide a suitable dowry or do not want to (Muthulakshmi, 1997; Venkatramani, 1992). If the firstborn is a girl, she is left to live. If, however, further children that are born turn out to be girls, they are killed. Even grown-up women are burned so that the husbands can remarry and receive a dowry. An accident is simulated. It is claimed that the garments of the woman caught fire while she was working at the kitchen hearth in her home (Kelkar, 1992). The neglect of and killing of girls as well as the burning of women are merely symptoms of a socialstructural discrimination of women in Indian society. The ideology of the subordination of the woman is based on the economic production structures (Ashraf, 1997; Kumar & Rani, 1996).

Cultural victimization, which is based on customs, tradition, religion, and the ideology of a society, is the subjective form of socialstructural victimization, as the structure of the economy and the system of power eminently influence views, value concepts, and the stereotypes of a society. Hate crimes that are characterized by the symbolic status of the crime victim constitute an example. The victim belongs to an outsider group symbolizing that which the insider group, to which the offender belongs, does not want to be. The offenses serve to affirm the solidarity and identity of the insider group and at the same time to strengthen the feeling of self-assurance of the group members. This is illustrated by the physical attacks on homosexual men and lesbian women. Homosexuals are beaten and even killed because of their sexual inclinations ("gay bashing") (Berrill, 1992; Hunter, 1992; von Schulthess, 1992). Heterosexism is an ideologic system that rejects and stigmatizes nonheterosexual forms of behavior, identity, relationships, and communities (Herek, 1992). One is dealing here with an ideology of suppression, which manifests itself in social customs, religious and legal institutions, individual views, and styles of conduct. Homosexuality is stigmatized as being illegal, sinful, and morbid. The heterosexual ideology defines what is to be viewed as masculinity and femininity. As the concepts associated with masculinity and femininity are learned at a very early age, they appear "natural" to an adult; homosexuality is felt to be abnormal (Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997).

Institutional victimization not only encompasses victimization within an institution but also victimization by the institution itself. Here, the term institution designates a facility that fulfills certain tasks according to certain rules that govern work procedures and the distribution of tasks among staff members who are working together. A subcategory of institutional victimization is victimization by an

enterprise (corporate victimization). Examples of institutional victimization include violence in nursing homes, in schools, and in prisons. The cause of violence can be found in the staff members of the institution and the inmates of the institution, but it can also lie in the structure of the institution (Schneider, 1996b). The institution can be socially isolated. Bureaucratic, formalistic impersonality can prevail within the institution; the persons within the institution can be without mutual relations. The inmates can become mere work objects, lifeless abstractions for which the staff feels no more personal responsibility. There is too great a gap between the low number of staff members and the large (in terms of numbers) group of inmates. Power is unilaterally distributed: The decision-making and control authority is completely on the side of the staff members who always feel superior and in the right. The group of inmates is powerless: The inmates are largely deprived of their sphere of privacy and their personal belongings (loss of identity-forming possessions). They are even excluded from decisions affecting their own personal destiny. This group has no more control over itself. Everything is regimented. Its role is ultimately a purely reactive one; it can no longer develop initiatives on its own.

Institutional violence can of course also have functional causes. Here, an authoritarian management style (extreme power orientation, intolerance, unconditional obedience) plays an essential role. If the position of power established between the staff side and the inmate side in an institution is unilaterally allocated to the staff group and if the power gradient is made socially visible by symbols of power and the individuality of people is restricted, social power becomes the main dimension of behavior through which everyone and everything is defined. The staff group, which is basically given unlimited power over the powerless inmate group, is inclined to misuse its superior status and to exert authoritarian and violent behavior. The powerless inmate group is dominated and subjected to virtually every kind of debasement. The latter falls into a process of psychosocial degradation. After initial resistance, it learns and accepts its own depreciation, its growing dependence and indulgence at an astonishing pace. It develops a tendency to feel defeated, inferior, weak, reproachable, and guilty (Seligman, 1975).

SITUATION-ORIENTED THEORIES

The concept of victim precipitation, which sees the origin of victimization in a misguided offender-victim interaction, was developed in the context of research on homicidal criminality (Wolfgang, 1958); 26% of cases of homicide have been coprecipitated by victims. This model is particularly controversial where the crime of rape is concerned. It is occasionally misinterpreted as victim coresponsibility, responsibility assignment, and blaming the victim (Krahé, 1989). The dynamic, interactionist perspective of victim precipitation does not, however, appraise victim behavior. In this kind of interpretation model, there is no room for normative or value judgments such as guilt or responsibility (Fattah, 1994, p. 96). The model ultimately describes only the misinterpretation of victim behavior by

the offender. The illusionary misinterpretation of the situation by the offender, which is evoked by the victim's behavior (Michaelis-Arntzen, 1994), is merely a substantiation of rape-supporting stereotypes in the rape situation. The concept of victim precipitation, which is based on the theory of symbolic interaction and which does not in any way dispense the offender of his exclusive responsibility, thus only marks the application of socialstructural theory and cognitive social-learning theory in the rape situation. The denial of an offender-victim relationship in the rape situation and of a potential victim precipitation reinforces the questionable proposition that rape is an uncontrollable event and that the victim cannot take any preventive action (Heath & Davidson, 1988). This promotes the learned helplessness of the potential rape victim who refrains from developing self-protection measures, because of their assumed futility, and succumbs to his or her fearful, self-defined, victim attitude.

One does not become a crime victim because one is born a victim. Rather, victimization is associated with a certain lifestyle, with a constantly recurring behavior in which one is exposed to situations bearing a high risk of victimization. As far as victimogenesis (cause of victimization) is concerned, the lifestyle-routine-opportunity model focuses on the probability with which individuals are found at certain locations at certain times and under certain circumstances to come into contact with certain people (Hindelang, Gottfredson, & Garafalo, 1978, p. 251; Meier & Miethe, 1993). The risk of becoming a victim strongly depends on the number of hours spent outside one's home, on the frequency of going out in the evening and coming back late at night, on the frequency of going to pubs and discos, and on the closeness of neighborhood contacts (Killias, 1989, p. 220).

The lifestyle-routine-opportunity model has been developed into the routine-activity theory. According to this theory, three elements are essential for victimization: the existence of motivated offenders, the presence of a suitable target object of criminal action (i.e., a person or a thing), and the absence of persons effectively able to protect the target object against a violation of the law (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Such an effective protector is rarely a policeman but is much more likely to be a housewife, a brother, a friend, or a passerby. Although routine-activity theory proceeds from the assumption of a universal presence of motivated offenders, it places primary emphasis on situational elements, that is to say, the opportunity of committing a crime and the lack of informal control by potential victims and their personal environment (Miethe & Meier, 1994). The rise in property offenses in the developed, Western, welfare societies is assessed as follows by routine-activity theory (Felson, 1998; Massey, Krohn, & Bonati, 1989). Many social changes, which have recently improved the quality of life and equality within the population—for example, increased employment, more advanced conditions of academic education, expanded recreational opportunities—form the same factors that have also brought about an increase in crime. Through their mass production, valuable goods have become socially more visible and attainable (e.g., cameras, radio and television sets, dictation equipment, video recorders, and computers). Informal control over them by the potential victims is

becoming increasingly more difficult, as these valuable goods are becoming increasingly lighter in weight and smaller in size. Thus, they are easier to remove and transport. At the same time, more people are working outside their homes at an increasing rate. Professional activities outside the home are steadily increasing in the case of women. Vacations are being taken by people outside the towns they live in at a growing rate as well (mass tourism). On working days and during vacation periods, their houses and apartments remain unsupervised and unguarded. Burglars thus find worthwhile targets. Numerous attempts have been undertaken to empirically prove the routine-activity theory. In this context, the proximity and accessibility of the desired target object of the criminal action and the attraction and shelteredness (protection) have been repeatedly emphasized (Miethe & Meier, 1990). The nature of professional activity is a determinant factor governing the degree of victimization (Lynch, 1987). More and more households with children and only one child-rearing parent are becoming victims of crime at an increasing rate (Maxfield, 1987). Recreational activities outside the home such as participation in sports events and going to movies, theaters, bars and night clubs, restaurants, and discos increase the victimization risk (Messner & Blau, 1987). Consumption of alcoholic beverages in bars and nightclubs can enhance the propensity to victimization (Lasley, 1989). Homeless persons (Fitzpatrick, LaGory, & Ritchey, 1993) and street children are particularly prone to becoming victims. A deviant lifestyle (e.g., alcoholism, drug consumption, prostitution, homosexuality) evokes a particularly high risk of victimization (Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990). Members of youth gangs lead a risk-burdened lifestyle that frequently offers the opportunity of becoming an offender and/or victim (Kennedy & Baron, 1993). Persons with delinquent and criminal conduct are frequently and continually prone to becoming crime victims (Jensen & Brownfield, 1986).

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Hans Joachim Schneider

University of Westphalia
Möserweg 7
48149 Münster
Germany