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Fear of Crime in Rural America: Fear Along Virginia's Eastern Shore

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FEAR OF CRIME IN RURAL AMERICA: FEAR ALONG VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE

by

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ABSTRACT

FEAR OF CRIME IN RURAL AMERICA:
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Using 1996 Survey data collected from residents along Virginia's Eastern Shore, this study addresses fear of crime in rural communities. Most prior research has focused on fear of crime in urban communities or has reported a relatively low fear of crime in rural communities. However, some recent analyses have indicated unusually high fear in small towns experiencing rapid population growth and economic changes. Heightened fear of crime has been observed even where there has been no apparent increase in criminal victimization experiences. This study addresses fear of crime and its relation to perceived risk of victimization, density of acquaintanceship, community origin, length of residence, prior victimization, and a number of control variables. Results indicate that cognitive measures of risk, unfamiliarity with neighbors, and prior criminal victimization influence fear of crime more than do individually attributable variables (i.e., gender, race, and age).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> *"...Violent crime and the fear it provokes are crippling our society, limiting personal freedom and fraying the ties that bond us"* (Clinton 1994).

Since the late 1970s, fear of crime has emerged as an important social problem. Surveys and polls such as the National Crime Survey (NCS), Harris poll, and Gallup poll report that a very high percentage of the American population fear crime and criminal victimization. According to part one of The Figgie Report on Fear of Crime (1980) entitled *America Afraid,* nearly two-fifths of Americans reported that they were "highly" fearful that they would become victims of crime. James Garofalo (1977) found that 45 percent of all respondents in his study were afraid to walk alone at night. Teske and Powell (1978) found that more than half of the people in their study feared becoming a victim of a serious crime (i.e., violent crime) within one year. In addition, a 1975 Harris poll found that 55 percent of all adults said they were "uneasy" about walking along their own streets, and a 1977 Gallup poll found that about 45 percent of all respondents limited their activities due to fear of crime. These polls and studies coupled with the consequences of fear of crime (e.g., anxiety, mistrust, alienation, and dissatisfaction with life) reveal the significance of fear of crime as an important social issue.

The format used for this thesis is the *American Sociological Review.*

Most contemporary studies attempt to link fear of crime to individual social and demographic variables such as sex, race, marital status, education, and income. The groups most fearful of crime (i.e., the elderly and women) are not the most victimized. Instead, the research indicates the complete opposite. Young men, who report the least amount of fear, are most often victimized (Clemente and Kleinman 1977; Erskine 1979; Lawton and Yaffee 1980).

Past victimization, once thought to be linked to higher levels of fear of crime, has been found to have only a limited impact on fear of crime levels. Those hearing about others' victimization are just as fearful as those who have actually been victimized (Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Taylor, Taub, and Peterson 1986; Greenburg, Rohe, and Williams 1985). When asked about things that frighten them, discussion of actual crime (e.g., robbery, rape, murder) is minuscule. More often signs of physical decay, vacant lots, dilapidated buildings, verbal harassment, and an array of incivilities are stronger correlates to fear of crime levels (Warr 1985; Warr 1990; Skogan 1990).

The association between victimization and fear has also been linked to residential location. Those who lived in areas with high crime rates, such as urban areas, were found to be more afraid and take more precautionary measures than those residing in areas with lower risk of victimization, such as rural areas (Clemente and Kleinman 1977; Lawton and Yaffee 1980; Saltiel, Gilchrist, and Harvie 1992).

Early studies on fear of crime (Boggs 1971; Conklin 1971; Erskine 1979) found significantly divergent levels of fear of crime between urban and rural residents, with those residing in urban areas experiencing the higher levels. As a

result, much of the research on fear of crime has focused on urban areas to the near exclusion of rural areas. Moreover, the extant research on fear of crime in rural areas has produced mixed results at best due to an array of conceptual, operational, and geographical considerations. Of the research done in rural contexts, much has focused either on fear of crime in rapidly growing rural communities or those spatially related to rural farmers and ranchers (i.e., vast expanses separating neighbor from neighbor and resident from formal mechanisms of assistance such as the police).

Using 1996 data from residents of Virginia's Eastern Shore, the present study contributes to the sociological literature on fear of crime in rural communities by addressing both conceptual and operational "sticking points" found in past research, by taking an integrated approach to the study of fear of crime in rural areas, and by tapping into areas as yet unstudied (e.g., rural communities experiencing temporary seasonal influxes of population, rural communities experiencing dramatic population losses, and rural communities in close proximity to urban centers). This study addresses the following research questions: Does residence history have an effect on one's fear of crime level? Do higher levels of perceived risk have an effect on one's fear of crime level? Does length of residence have an effect on fear of crime? Does past victimization have an effect on fear of crime? And, does density of acquaintanceship (i.e., familiarity with neighbors) have an effect on fear of crime levels?

The following chapter reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on fear of crime concluding with a list of hypotheses tested in this study. Chapter III describes the methodology and instruments used to survey residents of Virginia's

Eastern Shore and defines the variables and coding schemes used to process the data. Chapter IV describes the results of the data analysis and Chapter V offers a discussion of these results.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

While relatively few people are victims of criminal attack each year, many people fear personal crime and take safety precautions, which often limit their very existence. These precautions, this self-imposed relinquishing of opportunities to engage in and enjoy social activities, make the study of fear of crime an area of significant interest for social scientists. However, much of this research has lacked continuity from one study to another, and generally fails to build on any theoretical framework.

CONCEPTUALIZING AND MEASURING FEAR OF CRIME

Though one of the most common of human emotions, a clear definition of fear has become quite elusive. A wide variety of emotions, such as perceived risk, anxiety, and worry, have been assumed to be measurements of fear of crime. As a result, researchers purporting to study fear of crime have used these concepts interchangeably. Some have argued that these concepts are not all measuring fear of crime (Garafalo 1979; Ferraro and Lagrange 1987; Belyea and Zingraff 1988; Skogan and Maxfield 1981). Merry (1981) asserted utility in differentiating between attitudes toward the crime problem and attitudes toward the way crime encroaches on one's own life. She also indicated the importance of distinguishing between cognitive judgements made about crime, emotional reactions to those judgments, and the behavioral outcomes to those reactions.

The cognitive level is a judgement that a particular situation holds personal risks, or what Merry (1981) refers to as "danger." These judgements are reached on the basis of learned and shared environmental cues the individual has experienced regarding particular locations, time of day, and kinds of people. The second component is referred to as emotional and points to feelings concerning personal risk. Emotion is most commonly associated with fear. The final component, behavioral, are those strategies individuals employ to cope with the risks they perceive, for example, the willingness to venture out alone after dark. Merry (1981) argues that using perceived personal risk of victimization, perhaps the most common surrogate measure of fear of crime, only measures one, the cognitive, of the three components.

Clear and concise conceptualization is a priority to the development of any measurement regarding a concept. Unfortunately, this has not been the course taken with much of the research regarding fear of crime. Different surveys have used dissimilar questions to evaluate the concept, tapping a wide variety of related but distinct phenomena. As a result, fear of crime has developed into a quagmire of inherently different definitions (e.g., fear of victimization, perceived risk of victimization, perceived risk of crime, anxiety, risk assessment of community, and worry) making the utility of much of the fear of crime research questionable and comparisons between studies difficult if not impossible. Since its first report in 1972, the National Crime Survey (NCS) has devoted a section of its survey to measuring fear of crime. The standard measuring device has been: "How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood at night?" with four response categories of very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, and very unsafe (Garofalo 1979:81). Since that time many

studies of fear of crime have utilized this device as a global, single-item indicator of fear of crime.

Saltiel et al. (1992) along with others (Lee 1982; Yin 1980; Garofalo 1979) raised a number of issues challenging the validity of this measurement especially with regard to rural fear of crime research. The obvious criticism is that the question does not even mention crime. This could lead to confusion on the part of the respondent as to what the researcher is asking. They also suggested that the measurement is simply not a good gauge of the concern of crime in rural communities. They argued that fear of crime has a different context when asked to a farmer or rancher who is more vulnerable to vandalism and property crime than to personal victimization. Ferraro and Lagrange (1987) suggested that the question elicits responses regarding the likelihood of criminal victimization rather than any emotional reaction to crime. The question simply measures the risk to self of walking alone at night in one's neighborhood. According to them, the measure fails to differentiate between emotional reaction and personal judgments. The respondent is asked to make an assessment of his or her community rather than tapping into his or her measure of emotional fear.

This point was further supported by Belyea and Zingraff's (1988) modification of Lee's (1982) fear of crime scale. The traditional single item fear measure: "How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood at night?" is quite limited in scope and relates more to fear of personal attack, or more precisely, one's perceived risk of victimization outside the home than to a measurement regarding feelings of victimization or general anxiety and concern about being a victim (Skogan and Maxfield 1981). Instead, Belyea and Zingraff (1988) compiled a scale of fear of

crime constructed from eight items dealing with individual fears and anxieties about crime. Responses were scored on a four-point Likert-style format, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Garofalo (1979) pointed out that the frame of reference in the standard measure, neighborhood, is also problematic. This is primarily due to the meaning of the term neighborhood, which may vary from one respondent to the next. Some respondents, he suggested, may find it necessary, for a variety of reasons, to be in areas they may consider more dangerous than the place they actually reside. As a consequence, they may answer the question using those non-residing areas as their frame of reference for neighborhood. Also, some respondents may be experiencing high fear levels but report low levels because the question asks about a place they are familiar with and feel is safe--their neighborhood.

There are also the inherent problems which arise from lumping types of crimes into one measurement. This is particularly true for rural residents who are more typically affected by property rather than violent crime. This point is further illustrated when we consider the complexity of fear of crime. Warr (1985) intimated that for women, fear of rape is a salient fear not found among males. Higher levels of fear typically found among women are a reflection of their perception of the added danger of rape combined with being a victim of other crimes. For many women, rape is perceived to be a likely companion or outcome of a variety of other offenses (e.g., burglary, robbery, or murder). By emphasizing differences in types of crimes, Thompson, Bankston, and St. Pierre (1992) believe researchers are more able to make empirical observations concerning the relative values of fear produced by various types of crime.

Violent and property crimes evoke different reactions. One may view property crime as probable, where there is a high risk assessment (cognitive level), but not fear the consequences (emotional level) as they may a violent crime.

As there have been a variety of conceptualization and measuring debates within fear of crime research, finding a suitable theoretical framework with which to study the phenomenon is challenging. The following section presents a number of theoretical perspectives used in fear of crime research.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

As there are a veritable cornucopia of measurements for fear of crime, so too are there innumerable models utilized to frame research in this area. The most prevalent are the indirect-victimization model, the social control or disorder model, the ecological model, and the social-interactionist model.

Indirect-Victimization Model

Victimization and actual crime rates have been thought to be related to escalating fear of crime levels. However, the literature reveals not only being victimized, but also knowing someone who has been victimized (i.e., indirect victimization) have been linked to an increase in levels of fear of crime. Garofalo (1979) found the actual risk of being victimized by a criminal act and past experiences of victimization have small, but significant effects on individual levels of fear of crime.

Though it would seem a logical progression that those who have been victimized have higher levels of fear of crime, a positive relationship between the two appears

weak. Some studies assert that the relationship between prior victimization and higher fear of crime levels is non-existent (Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Taylor et al. 1986; Greenburg et al. 1985). In addition, Taylor and Hale (1986) and Skogan (1990) indicate that fear of crime is only a partial reflection of crime itself. Even if crime rates fall, fear is unlikely to decrease to the same degree.

These findings are based on the assumption that certain groups perceive themselves to be more open and susceptible to risk by virtue of certain individual characteristics (e.g., elderly, female). NCS victimization data reveal several personal characteristics which have been related to rates of victimization. While the characteristics most strongly related to fear of crime have been identified as age, sex, race, and income, those groups expressing the greatest fear of crime (elderly and females) are the very groups experiencing lower levels of victimization. In reality, males and youths experience greater levels of victimization and have lower levels of fear of crime.

Warr (1985:695) argued that some groups possess "differential sensitivity to risk." Certain groups (e.g., elderly, women), may possess higher levels of fear on an emotional level than others equally or more likely to become a victim of crime. As a result, increased age and being female are correlated with fear due to a perception of heightened physical vulnerability to crime.

A final component of this model focuses on the structural nature of residential locality as offering an explanation for fear of crime levels. Criminal events send out "shock waves" that spread throughout the community via social networks (e.g., local newscasts, local newspapers, gossip). People who hear about crime indirectly become

victims in that their levels of fear increase. Hence non-victims may be looked upon as vicarious victims to the crime event (Taylor and Hale 1986).

Disorder/Social Control Model

The indirect victimization model, though tapping into the community context of fear of crime, still seems to be only measuring the emotional response to the perceived likelihood of victimization based on the experiences of others. It neglects to consider that fear of crime might be a combined response to a variety of neighborhood conditions (e.g., graffiti, dilapidation of buildings), and more than merely a response to others' victimization.

The disorder model proposes that social disorganization and lack of public order within a community, characterized by a variety of physical incivilities (e.g., vandalism, graffiti, abandoned buildings), gives rise to heightened levels of fear among its residents. It is assumed that perceptions of breakdown within the community will lead to increases in crime, followed by an erosion of social order and cohesion leading directly to higher levels of fear of crime. Though these symbols of disorder in and of themselves may not be directly threatening to residents, they do symbolize potential threats (Warr 1985; Warr 1990; Skogan 1990).

Ecological Model

Early studies (Boggs 1971; Conklin 1971; Erskine 1979) found significant differences in fear of crime between urban and rural residents, with those residing in rural areas falling on the lower end of the fear of crime continuum, seemingly supporting

a positive relationship between fear of crime and community size. Other studies, borrowing from Parks, Burgess, and McKenzie's (1925) ecological theory, support the related notion that fear of crime increases with one's proximity to urban centers (Clemente and Kleinman 1977; Erskine 1979; Lawton and Yaffee 1980). Still, others (Lebowitz 1975; Warr 1985; Saltiel et al. 1992) have sought to refute such a relationship and contend that fear of crime depends more on individual characteristics (e.g., age, gender, race) than on urban or rural residence. This lack of continuity in findings, as some have suggested (Belyea and Zingraff 1988; Garofalo 1979; Lee 1982; Saltiel et al. 1992; Yin 1980), may be explained by how fear of crime is operationalized and measured.

Holding to the Parks et al. (1925) ecological approach, it has been argued that a linear relationship exists between fear of crime and residential location. Urbanites were found to possess a greater fear of crime than their rural counterparts. Wirth (1938) argued urban life with its increased population density and heterogeneity is more impersonalized and segmented than rural life. Accordingly, this leads to an erosion of primary ties and increases in isolation, loneliness, and crime. As a result, individuals surrounded by these phenomena become weary and fearful of strangers. Trust diminishes and fearfulness and suspicion encroach. Thus, from an ecological standpoint, this suggests a linear relationship between fear of crime and residential location.

Despite the fact that fear of crime consistently has been associated with a variety of socio-demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, race, and socio-economic status) the empirical findings on its relationship to residential location have been surprisingly inconsistent, especially with regard to urban-rural comparisons. Generally, previous

research has indicated that fear of crime increased with city size and was found to be positively associated with urban residence. Clemente and Kleinman (1977) along with Lawton and Yaffee (1980) suggested that fear of crime increased with proximity to urban centers. This was further supported by the findings of .Saltiel et al. (1992) who discovered that the closer residents came to urban centers the greater their fear of victimization.

Fischer (1976) maintained that in large cities normative conflict (i.e., discrepancies between established patterns of behavior and those deviating from the model) is prevalent. Individualism, breakdowns in both formal and informal systems of controls, breakdowns in or absence of community cohesion, feelings of alienation, powerlessness, and anxiety all link to greater fear of crime among urban residents. They argue that racial composition has a tremendous effect on fear of crime, especially for white residents. Liska, Lawrence, and Sanchirico (1982) demonstrated that for whites fear of crime is affected by property crime rates and the proportion of crime which is interracial. In addition, they found that racial composition indirectly affected fear by strongly influencing the proportion of crime which is interracial. Racial composition was also found to influence fear among nonwhites; however, crime rates or the proportion of crime that was interracial did not. Despite this, Hartnagel (1979) found no relationship between the perception of fear of crime and indicators of neighborhood cohesion and social activity (e.g., how familiar residents were with one another, knowing each other by name, how often they went out for entertainment, and how often they spent a social evening with friends who live outside the neighborhood).

Social Interactionist Model

In addition to the inconsistent empirical support for the ecological approach, others have criticized it for its simplicity of assumptions. Pahl (1966) argued that to rely merely on an ecological approach and to maintain that population density acts as a determinant of one's fearfulness are to grossly oversimplify the phenomena. Instead, he maintained that differences found in fear of crime are not merely a reflection of residential location, but instead a reflection of individuals' attitudes and behaviors which are shaped by people's position and interaction within their specific social structure.

Taking a social interactionist approach, Pahl (1966) concluded that a disproportionate amount of fear of crime was found to exist among the old, the poor, and women, despite the fact that those most often victimized are young and male. Pahl (1966) believed the increased levels of fear of crime among the elderly, the poor, and women were primarily due to their social status and increased perception of victimization. He also suggested that their individual traits (e.g., physical weakness, economic vulnerability to losses from crime, and the fact that the poor live in more dangerous neighborhoods) contribute to their greater levels of fear. If this is the case, an argument could be made that differences in fear of crime between urban and rural areas should be minuscule compared to differences between men and women, young and old, or rich and poor.

Though agreeing with Pahl (1966) in theory, Saltiel et al. (1992) found that the rural elderly, unlike their urban counterparts, were not disproportionately fearful of crime with regard to those in other socio-demographic statuses (e.g., young and rich). Holding somewhat to the social interactionist approach found in Pahl's (1966) study,

Saltiel et al. (1992) determined from their initial multivariate analysis that age did not appear to affect fear of crime for rural residents. Apparently, most of the farms and ranches in Montana, the site of the study, were owned and run by "elderly people," individuals over 55, who were more independent, less reliant on others, and perceived themselves not to be any more likely to be victimized than their youthful counterparts.

These findings seem to support those of Lebowitz (1975) in his study of age and fearfulness. He, too, found no relationship between age and fear of crime in rural farming areas. As was the case with Saltiel et al. (1992), older farm operators were actively involved in running a business, one of such a demanding physical nature that it would preclude and even reduce personal feelings of vulnerability. In addition, the types of crimes most prevalent in such regions are not the same personal attacks one would find in urban settings. Instead, the types of crimes that are of most concern in farm areas (theft, vandalism, and other types of property crime) do not seem to have any differences in the chances of victimization based on age.

This social interactionist approach was further investigated in Kennedy and Krahn's (1984) study of the rural-urban origins of fear of crime and in the phenomenon they refer to as "rural baggage." They asked whether or not one's socialization locale could affect one's present attitude and behavior. Those migrating from rural to urban areas may carry along with them expectations of others molded by experiences in areas where people are similar and where there are fewer strangers. As such, these individuals may have a greater tendency to trust others and be less likely to fear crime than those long residing in urban areas. According to Kennedy and Krahn (1984), due to the milieu found in the big cities, rural to urban migrants eventually would become socialized to

their new environment and fear of crime would increase to a level somewhat higher than those residents without a rural background. Then socialization would take place again as they overcame the initial shock and fear of crime would drop to levels more consistent with their non-rural background counterparts. Although Kennedy and Krahn (1984) studied rural to urban migration, in this study their concept of "baggage" will be modified to consider urban to rural migration.

FEAR OF CRIME IN RURAL AREAS

Despite the debate over the best mechanism for measuring fear of crime and which model to utilize, a number of studies have been conducted in an attempt to refute those assigning greater fear of crime to urban residents rather than rural residents. These include studies examining spatial arrangements and rapid community change.

Spatial Arrangements

Borrowing aspects of the ecological approach, Saltiel et al. (1992) focused on fear of crime among rural farmers and ranchers in the state of Montana. Instead of focusing on fear of crime in rapidly growing rural communities (Mayhew and Levinger 1976; England and Albrecht 1984; Krannich, Greider, and Little 1985; Wilkinson, Thompson, and Ostresh 1984; Krannich, Berry, and Greider 1989; Freudenburg and Jones 1991), Saltiel et al. (1992) chose to investigate the spatial arrangements unique to rural farmers and ranchers with a particular focus on the implications these arrangements have on the residents' fear of crime.

Despite the conception of rural areas as possessing "small town" qualities (e.g., close knit, well-integrated, familiar, relying on non-formal controls), Saltiel et al. (1992) painted a picture of rural residents as one of isolation not only from each other, but also from formal mechanisms of help (e.g., police, fire department, hospital). Living on a farm or ranch means having great expanses separating neighbor from neighbor and residents from mechanisms of assistance. Thus, this translates into little contact with others and little sense of reliance on others for assistance. This was further supported by Bankston, Jenkins, Doyle, and Thompson (1987), who discovered a higher sensitivity to risk among rural farm residents. Although a lower probability of victimization might be perceived, the risk factor could well interact with the isolation one finds oneself in to produce higher levels of fear in the rural farm category than in other localities with equal or even higher levels of perceived risk. Warr (1990) posited that due to the relative isolation of residents in such locales, individuals may view themselves as an attractive target to an offender, particularly if one's isolation diminishes the possibility of someone coming to one's aid. Some (Lee 1982; Bankston et al. 1987) have noted that rural residence may represent a form of social vulnerability. Being more isolated, especially from assistance in emergencies, rural residents may be more sensitive to the risks of crime.

Rapid Community Change

A second area of heated debate among rural sociologists examining fear of crime has been in the study of rapid community change and the phenomenon of "boom towns." Despite the fact that fear of crime research has generally reported relatively low fear of

crime levels in rural communities, the altered social environment of a community undergoing rapid growth has been suggested to be associated with heightened levels of fear.

The typical boom town has been characterized as a community composed of a population no greater than 10,000, at least 100 miles from the nearest metropolitan area, and one with a stable, if not dissipating population, which is suddenly flooded with rapid population and economic growth (Freudenburg and Jones 1991). Moreover, these communities experience changes within a four-to-five year time frame compared to other communities where changes evolve over decades. Such a shock to the community, transforming seemingly overnight from a traditional rural context to more urban conditions, disrupts established social interactions and community cohesion. At the same time, community ties begin to decay both on a personal and social level.

This "boom town disruption" hypothesis, which adapts both aspects of the social-interactionist and social disorder approaches, is attributed to what Freudenburg (1986) refers to as a decline in the "density of acquaintanceship." As more and more outsiders pour into a community, the proportion of the community that associates with one another diminishes and leads to a breakdown in various aspects of community functioning.

Mayhew and Levinger (1976) argued that urbanization not only means a jump in the population, but affects the violent crime rate directly by influencing the probable number of social contacts and thus the probability of uncivil contacts. Some researchers (England and Albrecht 1984; Wilkinson et al. 1984) provide evidence suggesting that such a disruption may not occur. Wilkinson et al. (1984) discovered that rapid growth

from energy development had few, or only trivial, effects on the violent crime rate. They considered long standing problems, resulting from historical conditions prior to the energy boom, as better indicators of variation in the violent crime rates. Krannich et al. (1985) found that rapid community growth was associated with a higher level of fear of crime, but with small and statistically insignificant differences in reported criminal victimization.

Krannich et al. (1989) postulated that changes in community composition as a result of rapid population growth explain much of the relationship between fear and population change. Fear of crime can be considered symptomatic of the uncertainty about the future and coming into contact with divergent attitudes, ideas, lifestyles, and various races which occurs when a community, especially a small rural community, experiences an influx of outsiders. The growth process also creates shifts in long established conditions of social familiarity, support, and trust. This position is given further merit with Goffman's (1971) notion of "mastery of the environment." One's inability to "master", i.e., become attuned to one's surroundings, can produce fear. However, Goffman failed to make clear what may disturb one's mastery. Warr (1990) suggested that a major reason for this disturbance is simply a lack of prior experience with the environment. Accordingly, what he refers to as "novelty," or unfamiliar environments, provokes fear of criminal victimization. Novelty, according to Warr (1990) can prompt this fear in a number of ways. One way is the realization that taken-for-granted old sights and situations may have taken on new form and meaning, as is typical in communities experiencing rapid growth. Second, cues once relied on as signs of danger may have vanished and been replaced by new

ones (i.e., gang graffiti). Novelty may also reveal itself with the influx of strangers into the environment.

Krannich et al. (1989) examined fear of crime in four small rural towns each experiencing quite divergent growth patterns. Generally, fear of crime was found to be the highest in those communities experiencing recent or continuous rapid growth. Those experiencing a decline in population immediately following a growth in population exhibited a decline in fear of crime. In contrast, those experiencing demographic stability experienced little shifts in fear of crime levels. In all four of the studied communities, those respondents who reported more victimization also tended to experience higher levels of fear of crime. However, Krannich et al. (1989) found that the experiences a community goes through when undergoing rapid population growth may have a greater influence on fear of crime than increases or declines in victimization.

Some theoretical support for their findings can be found in Milovanovic (1994). Using Durkheim's concepts, Milovanovic suggests that the destruction of mechanical solidarity (a cohesive collective of mutual dependence and collective consciousness) and the emergence of organic solidarity (a differentiated society where individualism replaces collectivism and where the collective consciousness is weakened) in its place causes rifts or "cleavages" in the society (Milovanovic 1994:25), thereby reducing the mutual normative consensus of the society. As a result, residents are caught in a social milieu where distrust, suspicion, and fear settle in.

Overall, the analysis on the rapid growth phenomenon and its effects on fear of crime in relatively stable populations prior to a "boom" indicates that residents' fear of

crime rises with significant increases in criminal activity. Perhaps the best explanation to date for such findings are those perspectives focusing on community social structures. Returning to Freudenburg and Jones (1991), those perspectives emphasizing the "density of acquaintanceship" seem to be particularly salient.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF FEAR OF CRIME

This study examines fear of crime from an integrated theoretical approach. Incorporating aspects of both the social control and social-interactionist approach, aspects of Freudenburg's (1986) "density of acquaintanceship," and Kennedy and Krahn's (1984) "rural baggage" hypothesis, this study argues that fear of crime is more than simply a response to a particular victimization event. Rather, it argues that fear of crime is a direct consequence of the erosion of social control perceived by the individual, a reflection of the individual's attitudes and behaviors, a decrease in the "density of acquaintanceship," and/or "baggage" carried over from prior residence.

As has been pointed out throughout this review of the literature on fear of crime in the context of rural communities, several problems and gaps in research arise. Of these, the most important is the proper conceptualization and measurement of the dependent variable. For this study, fear of crime will be conceptualized as those emotional responses to one's feelings concerning personal risk. Perceived risk of victimization will be conceptualized as those cognitive judgements that a particular situation holds personal risk.

A second problem in this area is devising the most appropriate measuring tool for fear of crime. Those devices used in urban areas have been shown to be

inappropriate in rural settings and may account for much of the disparate findings (Garofalo 1979; Yin 1980; Lee 1982; Belyea and Zingraff 1988; Saltiel et al. 1992)

The literature also seems to indicate a number of gaps in the research. There is a need to examine rural areas experiencing gradual or temporary influxes of population growth due to tourism or interstate systems running through the region. Another area which warrants consideration are those rural communities experiencing dramatic population loss. Finally, more research needs to be done examining racial differences.

The literature examined suggests that with regard to Kennedy and Krahn's (1984) concept of "rural baggage," prior residence will have an impact on fear of crime levels. However, the literature on "urban baggage" (i.e., moving from an urban to a rural area) is unclear and merits investigation. The literature also suggests that communities witnessing rapid growth and changes in the social order will experience higher levels of fear. However, investigation into those communities experiencing only temporary influxes of population and overall population decline has yet to be undertaken. Finally, the literature indicates that the more heterogeneous a community becomes the higher the fear of crime levels experienced by residents. However, this area seems to be missing investigations of rural fear of crime.

HYPOTHESES

Using 1996 data from residents along Virginia's Eastern Shore, this study tested the following hypotheses:

1. The greater the perceived risk of victimization the greater the fear of crime.

2. Those residents either experiencing personal victimization or knowing someone who has been victimized will have a higher level of fear of crime than those residents who have had no experiences with criminal victimization.
3. The lower the density of acquaintance the higher the fear of crime level.
4. Those residents moving from an urban community to the Eastern Shore will have a higher fear of crime level than those long term rural residents or Eastern Shore natives.
5. The longer the residence on the Eastern Shore the lower the fear of crime level.

To further examine these hypotheses, a number of control variables including gender, age, education, race, income, county, and presence of children will be considered. Previous literature suggests differences in fear of crime and perceived risk based on gender, age, race, county, and income. Presence of children in a household may heighten concerns about victimization of family members because young people are more vulnerable (Lauritsen, Sampson, and Laub 1991). In addition, county is used as a control variable because of differences in population growth or decline in the two counties on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH SETTING: VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE

Virginia's Eastern Shore lies between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. This long, narrow southern end of the Delmarva Peninsula, stretches some 75 miles and represents probably the last unspoiled area along the Atlantic Coast. Separated by the Chesapeake Bay from the rest of the Tidewater Lands, the region exists in relative isolation, heavily reliant on farming and tourism. In 1964, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel was constructed. This 17.6 mile expanse of bridges and tunnels was to connect the region with the metropolitan area across the bay. However, due to high toll charges ($10 each way) the bridge has become an effective economic and psychological barrier to both residents and visitors. On the south end of the Bridge Tunnel is a metropolitan area of 1 million people, while on the north end are the 44,764 residents of Virginia's Eastern Shore (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990).

Comprised of both Accomack and Northampton counties, the Eastern Shore is one of Virginia's most sparsely populated areas representing only .7 percent of Virginia's total population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990). As illustrated in Table 1, these two counties, when compared to the neighboring Tidewater area (i.e., Norfolk and Virginia Beach), are vastly less populated. Comparisons between 1980 and 1990 Census data reveal that the two counties combined had a 2.5 percent drop in population compared to a 13.6 percent increase in population within the state during that same time frame.

Table 1. 1990 Population Characteristics

County	Population	Median Age	Percent Black	Percent White	Housing Units	Density Square Mile
Accomack	31,703	37.60	34.50	64.66	15,840	69.74
Northampton	13,061	37.40	46.21	52.69	6,183	62.98
Norfolk	261,229	36.60	39.05	56.74	98,762	4,859.25
Virginia Beach	393,069	32.60	13.91	80.50	147,037	1,582.89

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990.

Of the two counties, Northampton (population of 13,061) has experienced the greatest population losses. An estimated 12 percent of residents (1,500) left the region within a 10 year period. This, compared to a slight increase of 1.4 percent (440 residents) in Accomack County (population of 31,703), reveals that the region is rapidly losing its populace.

Out-migration has been heaviest among the 20-39 age group. Census data reveal that persons between the ages of 20 and 39 comprise only 20 percent of the region's total population compared to the 35 percent this group represents for the entire state (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990). If this trend continues, the Virginia Employment Commission indicates that by the end of the century the Eastern Shore will become the least populated planning district in the state (Holliday and Barnes 1990).

Compared to the overall state crime rate of 4,177 per 100,000 persons, Accomack and Northampton counties have crime rates of 1,344 and 2,198 per 100,000 persons respectively (U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation 1994). Table 2 provides a breakdown of the actual number of offenses for each city/county in 1993. These population, migration, and crime data indicate that it is the smallest of the two counties, Northampton, which is experiencing the greatest population decreases, highest out-migration, and highest crime rate on the Eastern Shore.

Virginia's Eastern Shore offers a unique opportunity in the study of fear of crime in a rural context. As noted in the review of the literature, most research in rural areas has focused on either rural communities experiencing a "boom" in growth (Freudenburg and Jones 1991; Krannich et al. 1985; Krannich et al. 1989) or those rural residents

Table 2. Violent and Property Crimes

	Type and Number of Offenses						
County	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Motor Vehicle Theft
Accomack	1	6	NR	11	56	92	13
Northampton	0	3	7	30	145	212	16
Norfolk	62	204	1,428	3,732	1,075	13,535	2,173
Virginia Beach	22	181	631	414	3,261	14,812	1,195

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (1994).

*NR: not reported

living in virtual isolation (Saltiel et al. 1992). To date, no research has tapped into the unique opportunity offered by Virginia's Eastern Shore.

Though not considered isolated in the sense that neighbors are miles away from each other or services, the Eastern Shore is in every sense a rural region, despite its close proximity to the greater Tidewater area. Also, the region experiences temporary seasonal influxes in population due to both the tourist industry and having a major highway (U.S. Route 13) that transverses its length. Consequently the Eastern Shore is not completely isolated from the many trappings associated with urban life (e.g., drugs and drug trafficking).

DATA COLLECTION

The data for this study were collected as part of a larger endeavor focusing on quality of life issues, environmental attitudes, community attitudes, and demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, race, etc.). Surveys were administered over a seven week period to 10 percent of the households on the Eastern Shore (approximately 2,200 addresses). Addresses were randomly drawn from mailing lists purchased from a direct mail corporation. One of two cover letters were sent to each address asking the oldest adult male or oldest adult female to complete the survey. If the household did not contain the requested person, instructions indicated that some other adult should complete the survey.

Surveys were administered in accordance with Dillman's (1978) Total Design Method for mail surveys. Dillman's technique involves three waves of mailing with an additional postcard follow-up. The first wave of mailing included a cover letter, the

questionnaire, and a stamped return envelope. This was followed one week later with a postcard thanking those who had responded and reminding those who had not. Three weeks following the original wave of mailing, a second wave with a new cover letter and replacement questionnaire was sent. Seven weeks following the original mailing, the final wave consisted of sending another cover letter and replacement questionnaire. The portion of these surveys allocated for this study have to do with fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization issues.

MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES

The dependent variable used in this study is fear of crime. Community origin (rural vs. urban socialization), length of residence, perceived risk, personal victimization, density of acquaintanceship comprise the independent variables. Gender, race, income, age, education, county, and children at home are included as control variables. The sections below describe how these variables were measured.

Fear of Crime

Fear of crime is defined as those emotional responses to one's feelings concerning personal risk. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the following: "I worry a great deal about the safety of those living in my household" and "I worry a great deal about my personal safety from crime." Responses were coded from 1 to 4, with 1 corresponding to "strongly disagree" and 4 corresponding to "strongly agree." The

highest score a respondent could obtain was 8. The higher the score the greater the fear of crime, the lower the score the lower the fear of crime.

Community Origin

Community origin focuses on Kennedy and Krahn's (1984) concept of "rural baggage." They were interested in the effects one's socialization locale had on present attitude and behavior; especially among persons recently migrating from rural to urban areas. The focus for this particular study was just the reverse, that is, those who had recently migrated from urban to rural regions. To measure this variable respondents were asked the following: "Did you move to Virginia's Eastern Shore from somewhere else?" If the respondent indicated no, responses were coded as a 1. If the respondent indicated yes, responses were coded as a 2, and respondents were asked to indicate the size of that community. Five possible choices were provided: A large metropolitan city (over 100,000 population)--coded as 1, a medium-sized city (25,000 to 100,000 population)--coded as 2, a smaller city (5,000 to 24,999 population)--coded as 3, a town or village (2,500 to 4,999 population)--coded as 4, and in the country or very small town (less than 2,500 population)--coded as 5.

Length of Residence

Length of residence was measured by asking respondents the following question: "How many years have you lived on Virginia's Eastern Shore?" Responses were coded as the number of years the respondent indicated they had lived on the Eastern Shore.

Perceived Risk of Victimization

Perceived risk of victimization is defined as those cognitive judgements that a particular situation holds personal risk. Respondents were asked whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the following statements:

In the next 12 months it is likely that:

I or someone in my household will have a car stolen.

Someone will break into my home when everyone is away.

I or someone in my household will have something vandalized or destroyed.

I or someone in my household will be physically assaulted.

I or someone in my household will be threatened with a weapon (for example, knife, gun, or club).

Someone will break into our home when someone is home.

Perceived risk of victimization was broken up into two separate risk assessment categories. The first, encompassing the first three statements above, focused on personal risk assessments toward property crime; the second, made up of the last three statements, were personal risk assessments toward violent crime. Agreeing with the above questions indicated high perceived risk. These questions were coded from 1 to 4 with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 4 indicating "strongly agree." Hence, the higher the score the higher the respondent's perceived risk of crime, and the lower the score the lower the respondent's perceived risk of crime. This is not to say that if individuals had a high perceived risk of violent crime that they would correspondingly have high perceived risk levels for property crime or vice versa. Each section was

scored separately. The highest score for perceived risk of property crime was 12, as was the highest score for perceived risk of violent crime.

Prior Victimization

Prior victimization was also broken up into violent and property crime categories. Respondents were asked to indicate "yes" or "no" to the following questions: "Have you or any member of your household been the victim of a property crime in the last 2 years on Virginia's Eastern Shore (for example, vandalism, burglary, auto theft)?" and "Have you or any member of your household been the victim of a violent crime in the last 2 years on Virginia's Eastern Shore (for example, assault, or robbery)?" Those responses indicating "no" were coded as 1 and those indicating "yes" were coded as 2.

Density of Acquaintanceship

Density of acquaintanceship focused on Freudenburg's (1986) general assumption that as more and more "outsiders" pour into a community the proportion of the community that associates with one another diminishes and leads to a breakdown in most aspects of community functioning. The fact that segments of the Eastern Shore of Virginia are experiencing dramatic population losses does not exclude the impact this variable may have on the population, particularly with regard to the area experiencing seasonal influxes of "outsiders" (i.e., tourists). Out-migration also may have an impact on established social contacts; neighbors are leaving, hence the number of people a resident may know diminishes.

In order to measure density of acquaintanceship, respondents were asked to indicate whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the following statements: "Very few of my neighbors know me" and "I can recognize most of the people who live in this community."

Agreeing with question 1 indicated a low density of acquaintanceship. Coding for this question was reversed, so that the highest possible score a respondent could obtain was 4. After recoding this question, responses ranged from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 4 indicating "strongly agree." Agreeing with question 2 indicated a high density of acquaintanceship. Coding for this question ranged from 1 corresponding to "strongly disagree" to 4 corresponding to "strongly agree." The higher the score the higher the density of acquaintanceship.

Control Variables

The control variables for analysis included gender, race, age, education, county, children at home, and income.

Respondents were asked to identify their gender. Women were coded as 0 and males were coded as 1.

Respondents where asked to identify their race and were provided with six possible responses which were preceded by the statement "Do you consider yourself to be mainly...." Possible responses were: American Indian--coded as 1, Asian/Pacific Islander--coded as 2, Black/African American--coded as 3, Hispanic Origin--coded as 4, White/Caucasian--coded as 5, and Other--coded as 6.

Education was measured by asking respondents to select from nine possible responses which were preceded by the statement "Please check the highest level of education you have completed." Possible responses provided were: Did not complete high school--coded as 1, High School diploma or GED--coded as 2, Vocational-technical certificate--coded as 3, One or more semesters of college--coded as 4, Associate's Degree--coded as 5, Bachelor's Degree--coded as 6, and Master's Degree--coded as 7, Doctoral Degree--coded 8.

Age was coded as the response provided following the statement "How old are you?"

In order to measure county, respondents were asked to indicate where they lived. Respondents were asked the following question: "What town or city do you live in, or live closest to?" Towns were categorized as located in Northampton County which was coded as a 1 or Accomack county which was coded as a 2.

For the variable children at home, children were defined as those under the age of 18. In order to measure this variable, respondents were asked to respond to the following question: "Are there any children under the age of 18 who live with you?" Responses were coded as "no" 1 and "yes" 2.

The final variable examined was income. Following the statement "Please indicate your total household income for 1995," respondents were given seven choices to select from: Less than $15,000--coded as 1, $15,000 to $24,999--coded as 2, $25,000 to $34,999--coded as 3, $35,000 to $49,999--coded as 4, $50,000 to $74,999--coded as 5, and $75,000 or more--coded as 6.

The survey data were coded using the STATA statistical package. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were used to describe the sample. Analysis of variance was used to test the bivariate relationships between fear of crime and the independent variables discussed. Ordinary Least Squares was used to test the multivariate relationships between fear of crime and the independent variables with controls.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

SURVEY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Surveys were mailed to 2,224 addresses on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Of these 498 were undeliverable by the post office. They were returned marked box vacant or closed, no forwarding address, address unknown, or deceased. Of the 1,726 surveys delivered to Eastern Shore residents, 789 (45.7 percent) were returned at the time this analysis was conducted. After initial examination of returned surveys 19 were deemed not useable because the surveys were incomplete or the individuals refused to participate leaving 770 (44.6 percent) for analysis. Most respondents were women (61 percent female and 39 percent male). The mean age of respondents was 51. Sixty-three percent of those responding indicated that children under the age of 18 were living within the home. Eighteen percent of those responding indicated that they had not completed high school. Thirty-two percent finished a high school diploma or GED. Fifty-one percent indicated having some kind of postsecondary education. However, only 12 percent stated they had a Bachelor's degree and eight percent had some graduate level work. Twenty-five percent reported a household income less than $15,000, 22 percent between $15,000 and $24,999, 18 percent between $25,000 and $34,999, 15 percent between $35,000 and $49,999, 11 percent between $50,000 and $74,999, and 8 percent reported a household income of more than $75,000. Twenty-one percent of the respondents were African-American, 75 percent were white, and 4 percent were neither African-American nor white. Due to

the small percentage of those respondents who were not white or African-American, race was recoded into two groups -- white (75 percent) and non-white (25 percent). Thirty percent of the respondents were from Northampton county and 70 percent were from Accomack county.

The respondent characteristics look similar to the census data presented in Table 1, suggesting representativeness of those responding with one notable exception. Both counties have a mean age of 37, while the survey respondents have a mean age of 51. This can be explained by the fact that only those individuals over the age of 18 were targeted for this study and census data include children.

SCALING OF VARIABLES

The first step in the analysis of the data for this study involved creating the variables for fear of crime, perceived risk of violent crime, and perceived risk of property crime. Each variable was measured according to the survey questions previously outlined in the methodology section. A principal component factor analysis measuring each of the items assumed to measure fear of crime, perceived risk of violent crime, and perceived risk of property crime revealed that each item loaded separately, as expected, on one of three factors. As a result, three reliable scales were created: fear of crime (Chronbach alpha = .93), perceived risk of violent crime (Chronbach alpha = .90), and perceived risk of property crime (Chronbach alpha = .86). Despite the results of the factor analysis, perceived risk of violent crime and perceived risk of property crime were found to be highly correlated (Chronbach alpha = .77); thus, they were combined into

one scale called perceived risk. For theoretical purposes, the fear of crime scale was left as a separate item including both fear of violent crime and fear of property crime.

In addition, the two items used to measure density of acquaintanceship, "I can recognize most of the people who live in this community" and "Very few of my neighbors know me," were combined into a single item called density of acquaintanceship (Chronbach alpha = .52). Those items used to measure prior victimization, "I have been a victim of property crime in the last two years" and "I have been a victim of violent crime in the last two years," were combined (Chronbach alpha = .63) into a single item called personal victimization.

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

This thesis hypothesizes a number of independent correlates of fear of crime (i.e., community origin, length of residence on the Eastern Shore, prior victimization, and density of acquaintanceship). In addition, a number of control variables (i.e., age, race, gender, children at home, county, education, and income) are hypothesized to be significant in both the bivariate and multivariate analysis. Though utilized as controls in this study, previous research has examined the independent effects these variables have on fear of crime. For this reason, before testing these hypotheses a description of the relationship between fear of crime and each of the control variables included in the multivariate analysis is provided.

In order to see the individual effects each control variable had on fear of crime, a number of bivariate correlations were run. The results presented in the Pearson's r column on Table 3 indicate that the strongest correlation exists between

Table 3. Fear of Crime and Control Variables

		Bivariate Correlation Between Fear of Crime and Controls	Ordinary Least Squares Between Fear of Crime and Controls Excluding Income
Variable	N	Pearson's r	Beta***
Gender (male)	733	-.067	-.008
Race (white)	739	-.243	-.193**
Children at home	739	.116	.062
County (Northampton)	746	-.012	-.040
Age	730	-.122	-.078
Education	729	-.236	-.209**
Income	655	-.231	(excluded)

*p < .05 **p < .01 *** N = 699

R-squared = .1181

Adjusted R-squared = .1104

race and fear of crime (Pearson's r = -.243). Whites have a lower fear of crime than non-whites. Education, having the second strongest correlation (Pearson's r = -.236), indicates that as education increases fear of crime decreases. Inverse relations are also witnessed for income (as income increases fear of crime decreases), age (as age increases fear decreases), and gender (males are less fearful than females). Fear of crime is higher among those with children at home (Pearson's r = .116). The weakest correlation is observed between county and fear of crime (Pearson's r = -.012). This is an interesting feature considering the varying crime rates and population characteristics attributed to Northampton and Accomack counties. Referring back to Table 1 and Table 2, it is quite apparent that although Northampton is losing population, it has a higher crime rate compared to Accomack county, which is experiencing population growth.

The Ns reported in Table 3 indicates that a significant number of those responding to the questionnaire failed to provide a response for the question inquiring about income. Out of the 770 respondents completing the survey, only 655 responded to this question. This is significant because it means that 115 surveys will be dropped from the multivariate analysis, excluding 15 percent of the respondents from analysis. In an attempt to avert such a problem possible proxies for income were sought. The two most likely candidates were race and income, however, neither were highly correlated with income (Pearson's r = .3166 and .5038 respectively). Despite this, cross tabulations were conducted for income and race, race and education, and income and education. The results of this indicated that non-whites possessed the lowest levels of income. Forty-seven percent of non-whites

reported household incomes of less than $15,000 a year. Twenty-six percent reported household incomes of $15,000 to $24,999. Whites were more likely than non-whites to report higher household incomes. Sixty-two percent of whites, but only 28 percent of non-whites reported incomes of $25,000 or more. Ten percent of whites compared to only 1 percent of non-whites had household incomes greater than $75,000.

Similar results were found when comparing race and highest level of educational achieved. Thirty-four percent of non-whites reported achieving less than a high school education. By comparison only 12 percent of whites reported not achieving a high school diploma or GED. Thirty-one percent of non-whites reported earning a high school diploma compared to 32 percent of whites. Fifty-six percent of whites reported at least some postsecondary education compared to 36 percent of non-whites. Thirteen percent of whites indicated having a Bachelor's degree while the figure for non-whites was 9 percent. Ten percent of whites indicated graduate level work compared to 5 percent of non-whites.

Comparisons between income and education revealed that as educational level increased so too did income. Those with higher levels of education occupied the higher salary ranges. This fact is important when making inferences about race, education, and income. The results of the comparisons reveal that non-whites on Virginia's Eastern Shore are achieving less academically compared to their white counterparts. Non-whites are also making lower salaries. It would make sense then, in light of the relationship between income and education, that both race and educational achievement are good predictors of income. The results of this analysis

provided sufficient support to remove income from inclusion in further analysis and to retain the 115 cases that would otherwise be lost.

With income excluded as a control variable, multivariate level analysis on the remaining control variables and fear of crime was conducted using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). This multivariate technique allows for several independent/control variables to be jointly regressed on the same dependent variable. The results presented in the Beta column of Table 3 indicate that with the exception of race and education, the remaining control variables were not significantly associated with fear. Beta coefficients were included in order to provide a standardized regression coefficient reflecting net change in standard deviation units of the dependent variable for an independent variable change of one standard deviation.

Whites were found to be less fearful than non-whites (beta = -.193). As education level increased fear of crime decreased (beta = -.209). Though the relationship between age and fear of crime was not found to be significant, as age increased fear of crime decreased contradicting much of the literature reporting that the elderly having higher levels of fear of crime. Older respondents on the Eastern Shore tended to be less fearful of crime than younger residents (beta = -.078). Education was found to be inversely related to fear (beta = -.209). As education increased the less fearful of crime residents become, suggesting that the less educated have a higher fear of crime than their well-educated counterparts.

The Ordinary Least Square technique estimated a baseline model including the control variables in order to assess their effects on fear of crime. Following this, the measures of the independent variables were included in order to assess the independent

effects of these variables, the improvement in the overall fit of the model, and any mediating effects the independent variables would have on the demographic (i.e., baseline) variables considered.

FEAR OF CRIME AND PERCEIVED RISK OF VICTIMIZATION

Hypothesis 1 stated that the greater the perceived risk of victimization the greater the fear of crime. Table 4 provides the bivariate correlation between fear of crime and perceived risk. At the bivariate level fear of crime and the perceived risk of victimization were found to be significantly related (Pearson's r = .694) supporting the hypothesis. Support for the hypothesis was also found at the multivariate level. The additional OLS regression results reported in Table 5 similarly support a significant relationship between fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization controlling for other relevant variables (beta = .670). Perceived risk is clearly the strongest predictor of fear accounting for 40 percent variation in fear of crime (change in R squared = .4091). Change in R-squared is the calculated difference between the model (reported in Table 3) including the independent variable and controls and the model including only the controls (i.e., .5272 - .1181 = .4091 change in r-squared).

FEAR OF CRIME AND PRIOR VICTIMIZATION

Hypothesis 2 stated that those residents either experiencing personal victimization or knowing someone who has been victimized will have a higher level of fear of crime than those residents who have had no experiences with criminal

Table 4. Correlation of Fear and Perceived Risk

Variable	Fear	Perceived Risk
Fear	1.000	
Perceived Risk	.694	1.000

ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F
Model	1051.628	18	58.423	41.65	.000
Perceived Risk	1051.628	18	58.423	41.65	.000
Residual	1007.196	718	1.402		
Total	2058.816	736	2.797		

N = 737

R-squared = .5108

Adjusted R-squared = .4985

Table 5. OLS of Perceived Risk of Victimization and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta
Perceived Risk	.316**	.013	.670
Gender (male)	-.032	.091	-.009
Race (white)	-.365**	.091	-.093
Children at home	.282**	.108	.082
County (Northampton)	-.085	.096	-.023
Age	-.010**	.003	-.094
Education	-.048*	.023	-.057

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 689

R-squared = .5272

Adjusted R-squared = .5224

victimization. The bivariate results presented in Table 6 indicate that those residents having either experienced personal crime or knowing someone who had been victimized within the household had a mean score of 5.27 and those who did not had a mean score of 4.43. The differences are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

In addition to the bivariate analysis, a multivariate model, presented in Table 7, was estimated controlling for those variables previously outlined. Prior victimization remained a significant predictor of fear (beta = .173). The variable explained about 3 percent of the variance in fear of crime (change in R squared = .0281).

FEAR OF CRIME AND DENSITY OF ACQUAINTANCESHIP

Hypothesis 3 stated that the lower the density of acquaintanceship the higher the fear of crime. The bivariate correlation between fear of crime and density of acquaintanceship, presented in Table 8, revealed that lower density of acquaintanceship was associated with higher fear of crime (Pearsons's r = -.152, $p < .01$).

The multivariate analysis showed that the relationship holds when controls were added to the model (beta = -.127). Density of acquaintanceship, however, accounted for just over 1 percent of the variation in fear of crime (change in R-squared = .0164) . The results of the Ordinary Least Squares analysis are reported in Table 9.

Table 6. Mean Fear of Crime Score on Prior Victimization

Prior Victimization	Mean	Std. Dev.	Frequency
Victim	5.272	1.654	120
Non-Victim	4.433	1.654	623
Total	4.566	1.673	743

ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F
Model	71.814	1	71.814	26.52	0.000
Prior Victimization	71.814	1	71.814	26.52	0.000
Residual	2006.452	741	2.801		
Total	2078.452	742	2.801		

N = 743

R-squared = 0.0346

Adjusted R-squared = 0.0332

Table 7. OLS of Prior Victimization and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta
Prior Victimization	.789**	.162	.173
Gender (male)	-.060	.123	-.017
Race (white)	-.774**	.143	-.199
Children at home	.228	.143	.066
County (Northampton)	-.144	.129	-.039
Age	-.004	.004	-.043
Education	-.172**	.030	-.205

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 694

R-squared = .1462

Adjusted R-squared = .1375

Table 8. Correlation of Fear of Crime and Density of Acquaintanceship

Variables	Fear	Density of Acquaintanceship
Fear	1.000	
Density of Acquaintanceship	- 0.152	1.000

ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F
Model	91.866	6	15.311	5.72	.000
Density of Acquaintanceship	91.866	6	15.311	5.72	.000
Residual	1940.366	725	2.676		
Total	2032.233	731	2.784		

N = 732

R-squared = .0452

Adjusted R-squared = .0373

Table 9. OLS of Density of Acquaintanceship and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta
Density of Acquaintanceship	-.167**	.047	-.127
Gender (male)	-.034	.124	-.010
Race (white)	-.703**	.145	-.181
Children at home	.217	.144	.063
County (Northampton)	-.105	.130	-.029
Age	-.009*	.004	-.086
Education	-.172**	.031	-.205

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 685

R-squared = .1345

Adjusted R-squared = .1255

FEAR OF CRIME AND COMMUNITY ORIGIN

Hypothesis 4 stated that residents moving from urban communities will have a higher fear of crime than either those moving from other rural areas or Eastern Shore natives. As shown in Table 10, the data do not support the hypothesis. Those respondents reporting an urban origin prior to moving to the Eastern Shore had a mean fear of crime of 4.34, those moving to the Eastern Shore from another rural location had a mean fear of crime score of 4.42, and those reporting they were natives a mean score of 4.77.

To further investigate the effects of community origin on fear of crime it was decided to create two dummy variables, residents coming from an urban area and residents coming from a non-Eastern Shore rural area, keeping Eastern Shore natives as the reference group. Controlling for gender, race, children at home, county, age, and education, the OLS shown in Table 11 revealed no significant relationship between fear of crime and community origin. Despite prior urban origin and non-Eastern Shore rural origin residents being less fearful than Eastern Shore natives the calculated betas (-.026 and 1.230 respectively) are not significant.

FEAR OF CRIME AND LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

Hypothesis 5 stated that the longer the respondent lived on the Eastern Shore the lower the fear of crime. The correlation between fear of crime and length of residence of Virginia's Eastern Shore was found not to be significant (Pearson's r = .053). To further explore the hypothesis that time on the eastern shore was related to

Table 10. Mean Fear of Crime Scores by Community Origin

Community Origin	Mean	Std. Dev.	Frequency
Urban	4.346	1.576	303
Rural	4.423	1.657	85
Eastern Shore	4.771	1.724	363
Total	4.560	1.668	751

ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F
Model	31.604	2	15.802	5.75	.003
Community Origin (urban)	29.804	1	29.804	10.84	.001
Community Origin (non-Eastern Shore rural)	8.332	1	8.332	3.03	.082
Residual	2057.388	748	2.751		
Total	2088.993	750	2.785		

N = 751

R-squared = .0151

Adjusted R-squared = .0125

Table 11. OLS of Community Origin and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta
Community Origin (urban)	-.088	.133	-.026
Community Origin (non-Eastern Shore rural)	6.450	.201	1.230
Gender (male)	-.021	.124	-.006
Race (white)	-.741**	.146	-.191
Children at home	.217	.144	.063
County (Northampton)	-.147	.130	-.040
Age	-.008	.004	-.075
Education	-.171**	.031	-.204

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 699

R-squared = .1187

Adjusted R-squared = .1085

fear the variable was recoded into two categories. Residents who lived on the Eastern Shore for six years or more were coded 0 and those residents who have lived on the Eastern Shore less than or equal to five years were coded 1. The results presented in Table 12 indicate that those respondents living on the Eastern Shore six years or more were slightly more fearful than those living five years or fewer on the Eastern Shore (mean scores of 4.58 and 4.32 respectively), however, the differences, as revealed by the ANOVA, were not significant ($p = .1884$).

The results remained consistent at the multivariate level. The results presented in Table 13 reveal no significance in the relationship between length of residence on the Eastern Shore and fear of crime (beta = -.048) and accounted for less than 1 percent of variance in fear of crime (change in R-squared = .0027).

In an attempt to further explore the "urban baggage" hypothesis it was decided to examine the effects of length of residence and urban origin together on fear of crime. Those individuals reporting an urban origin (303 respondents) were divided into 3 distinct categories. Those with prior urban origin reporting living on Virginia's Eastern Shore for two years or less were coded as 1, those reporting living on Virginia's Eastern Shore for more than two years and less than or equal to five years were coded as 2, and those respondents reporting an urban origin with a length of residency of six years or more were coded as a 3.

The assumption that those individuals with an urban origin who had recently moved to the Eastern Shore would have a higher fear of crime level was not supported. The results, reported in Table 14, illustrate that those prior urban origin respondents with two years or less on the Eastern Shore had a mean fear of crime

Table 12. Mean Fear of Crime Score by Length of Residence

Time on Eastern Shore	Mean	Std. Dev.	Frequency
Six years or more	4.587	1.642	676
Five years or less	4.320	1.882	75
Total	4.560	1.668	751

ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F
Model	4.882	1	4.822	1.73	0.1884
Length of Residency	4.822	1	4.822	1.73	0.1884
Residual	2084.170	749	2.782		
Total	2088.993	750	2.785		

N = 751

R-squared = .0023

Adjusted R-squared = .0010

Table 13. OLS of Time on Eastern Shore and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	Beta
Length of Residence	- .003	.003	-.048
Gender (male)	- .012	.125	-.003
Race (white)	-.733**	.146	-.188
Children at home	.210	.144	.061
County (Northampton)	-.165	.131	-.045
Age	-.006	.004	-.059
Education	-.167**	.032	-.198

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 697

R-squared = .1208

Adjusted R-squared = .1118

Table 14. Mean Fear of Crime by Urban Origin/Length of Residence

Time on Eastern Shore (respondent reporting prior urban origin)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Frequency
≤ 2 years	4.176	1.991	34
2 years ≤ 5 years	4.056	1.536	53
≥ 6 years	4.444	1.508	216
Total	4.346	1.576	303

ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob > F
Model	7.5091	2	3.754	81.52	.2213
Time on Shore (urban origin)	7.5091	2	3.754	51.52	.2213
Residual	743.1046	300	2.477		
Total	750.6138	302	2.477		

N = 303

R-squared = .0100

Adjusted R-squared = .0034

score of 4.176. Those respondents reporting prior urban origin and having lived on the Eastern Shore for greater than 2 years and less than or equal to 5 years had a mean fear of crime of 4.056. Finally, those individuals having lived on the Eastern Shore six years or more and reporting an urban origin had a mean fear of crime of 4.44. The results of the bivariate analysis show that those individuals living on the Eastern Shore six years or more had the highest fear of crime. Those individuals living on the Eastern Shore more than two years and up to five years had the least amount of fear of crime, and those residents living on the Shore two years or less ranked second in fear of crime. The results of the analysis of variance, also reported in Table 14, do not indicate a significant relationship between fear of crime and length of residence for those with urban origin ($p = .2213$). However, if people who have lived on the Eastern Shore six years or more are excluded there is some support, though not significant, for the "urban baggage" hypothesis. Those recent migrants (i.e., two years or less) when compared to those living on the Shore less than five years and more than two years do have a higher fear of crime.

In order to examine the effects of the length of residence/urban origin variable on fear, a multivariate analysis was done, including the control variables. The OLS reported in Table 15 did not reveal a significant relationship between length of residence/urban origin and fear of crime (beta = .020).

EXTENDED ANALYSIS

Previous analyses have shown that perceived risk is a very strong predictor of fear. Those individuals thinking they are likely to be victimized have cause for concern.

Table 15. OLS of Length of Residence/Urban Origin and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient.	Std. Error	Beta
Time on Shore (urban origin)	.066	.117	.020
Gender (male)	-.023	.124	-.006
Race (white)	-.744**	.144	-.191
Children at home	.211	.144	.061
County (Northampton)	-.149	.130	-.040
Age	-.008	.004	-.080
Education	-.173**	.031	-.205

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 699

R-squared = .1185

Adjusted R-squared = .1095

It also seems likely that some of the other variables examined may indirectly affect fear by increasing perceptions of risk. For instance, those individuals experiencing personal victimization or knowing someone who has been victimized may have a greater perception of risk. However, victimization may decrease one's perceptions of risk due to life-style changes they may have made as a result of the incident (e.g., avoiding certain areas, installing home security). These precautionary measures may reduce the level of perception of risk. Similarly, density of acquaintanceship may also affect one's perception of risk. If one knows most everyone in one's community the chance that he or she will perceive great risk of victimization is lessened.

To test this, the influence of those control and independent variables significant at the bivariate and multivariate levels along with fear of crime was examined. The model was run both with and without perceived risk to allow observation of the direct and indirect influence of the variables with and without the influence of perceived risk.

The results presented on the left side of Table 16 revealed a significant inverse relationship between density of acquaintanceship and fear of crime. In addition, prior victimization, race, and education all were found to have a significant relationship with fear of crime if perceived risk is excluded from the model. Age and children at home were the only two variables included in the model that were not significant (beta = -.046 and .064 respectively).

Referring to the right side of Table 16 we can see that when perceived risk is included in the model the significance of density of acquaintanceship and prior victimization vanished. Education remained significant at the .05 level; as education increased fear of crime decreased. Race remained significant at the .01 level; whites

Table 16. OLS of Selected Independent and Control Variables on Fear of Crime

Variable	Coefficient without Perceived Risk and (Standard Error)	Beta	Coefficient with Perceived Risk and (Standard Error)	Beta
Perceived risk	.....	.....	.314** (.013)	.668
Density of Acquaintanceship	-.175** (.046)	-.135	-.007 (.035)	-.005
Prior Victimization	.811** (.161)	.178	-.004 (.127)	-.001
Race (white)	-.747** (.142)	-.192	-.396** (.109)	-.101
Children at home	.221 (.141)	.064	.260* (.106)	.076
Age	-.005 (.004)	.046	-.010** (.003)	-.095
Education	-.168** (.030)	-.201	-.049 (.023)	-.058

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 689

R-squared = .1611

Adjusted R-squared = .1537

*p < .05 **p < .01

N = 598

R-squared = .5249

Adjusted R-squared = .5200

were less fearful than blacks (beta = -.101). The variables children at home and age were significant, but the relationships were relatively weak (betas = .076 and -.095 respectively).

The results of this analysis demonstrate that perceived risk plays a major role in the variance in fear of crime. When excluded from the model, those independent and control variables significant at the bivariate and multivariate levels lose significance. What the model shown here suggests is that prior victimization and density of acquaintanceship are operating indirectly through perceived risk which accounted for 36 percent of the variance in fear of crime (R-squared for the model = .5249, change in R-squared perceived risk included = .3638).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the bivariate and multivariate relationships between fear of crime as the dependent variable, prior community origin, perceived risk of victimization, length of residence, density of acquaintanceship, and prior victimization as the independent variables, and gender, race, children at home, county, age, and education as control variables. Using 1996 survey data from residents of Virginia's Eastern Shore, it was hypothesized that: (1) the greater the perceived risk of victimization the greater the fear of crime; (2) those residents either experiencing personal victimization or knowing someone who has been victimized would have a higher level of fear of crime than those residents who had no prior experiences with criminal victimization; (3) the lower the density of acquaintanceship, i.e., how familiar one is with one's neighbors, the higher the fear of crime; (4) residents moving from urban communities would have a higher fear of crime level than those moving from other rural areas or Eastern Shore natives; (5) the longer the respondent lived on the Eastern Shore the lower the fear of crime.

Results of the bivariate and multivariate analyses supported the hypothesis that the greater the perception of risk of victimization the greater the fear of crime. In comparison to all other variables included in the analysis, perceived risk of victimization was found to be the strongest predictor of fear of crime. As noted in Chapter II, three conceptually distinct dimensions have often been used interchangeably to study the fear of crime: values pertaining to the behavioral

outcomes towards crime, judgments concerning the risk of victimization, and emotional responses to this risk. It was the intent of this study to distinguish between risk of victimization and the emotional response to that risk (fear of crime).

The results suggested that fear of crime is primarily an emotional response to the perceived likelihood of victimization, based on the combined experiences of oneself and others in one's community. Such an assertion is important due to a great deal of the literature using the two concepts (fear and perceived risk) interchangeably. This study finds support in distinguishing between the two phenomena and supports the contention that one's cognitive reasonings (perceptions of risk) leads to one's emotional feelings (fear of crime).

Victimization and actual crime rates have been thought to be related to escalating fear of crime levels. Garofalo (1979) found that although the actual risk of being victimized by a criminal act and past experiences of victimization have small consequences on the likelihood of victimization, they do have a small but significant effect on the individual's level of fear of crime. The findings of this study seem to support this hypothesis. Residents of the Eastern Shore experiencing personal victimization have a significantly higher level of fear of crime than those residents who have had no experiences with criminal victimization.

The results of this study are also in opposition to a number of previous studies. A great deal of past research disagrees with a prior victimization/fear of crime connection. Some studies assert that the relationship between prior victimization and higher fear of crime levels is non-existent (Skogan and Maxfield 1981; Greenburg et al. 1985; Taylor et al. 1986). In addition, Taylor and Hale (1986) and Skogan (1990)

indicated that fear of crime was only a partial reflection of crime itself. Though it would seem a logical progression that those who have been victimized have higher levels of fear of crime, a positive relationship between the two appears weak.

The absence of any meaningful differences in victimization experience certainly raises questions regarding some assertions that have contributed to the social disruption/disorder hypothesis in the boom town literature. However, it is equally important to note that even in the absence of differences in victimization, perceptions of crime and associated differences in personal fear of crime merit careful attention. Subjective perceptions of increased crime and threats to personal safety are important social phenomena that may more accurately reflect the degree of social disruption in a community than more objective data.

The results of these findings may be accounted for by the characteristics of those responding. As indicated in Chapter IV the mean age of the respondents was 51. Out of the 770 respondents used in the analysis 61 percent were female. These two characteristics alone may explain the weak association between prior victimization and fear of crime. Both age and gender have a connection with higher fear of crime due to women and the elderly perceiving themselves as more open and susceptible to risk. Warr (1985:695) maintained that some groups possess "differential sensitivity to risk." Certain groups (e.g., elderly and women), may possess higher levels of fear on an emotional level than others equally or more likely to become victims of crime. As a result, increased age and gender are not correlated with fear of crime.

As indicated previously, these two groups, though reporting higher fear of crime, are also least likely to be victimized. These two characteristics alone may explain the

weak association between prior victimization and fear of crime in the analysis. However, it strengthens the argument that prior victimization is related to fear of crime. If these two groups are the least likely to be victimized and the data indicate a weak, but significant, relationship between prior victimization and fear of crime, it follows that prior victimization may be even more strongly related to fear of crime than indicated in the analysis.

The findings support Freudenburg's (1986) hypothesis that the lower the density of acquaintanceship the higher the fear of crime. Eastern Shore respondents who know their neighbors reported significantly lower levels of fear of crime.

The results reported here provide the basis for several observations. As noted previously, most of the contemporary boom town literature (Krannich et al. 1989; Fruedenburg 1986; Krannich et al. 1985; Wilkinson et al. 1984) asserted that a wide range of social disruptions, including heightened crime and fear of crime, may be anticipated as a result of rapid population growth in small rural towns. Recalling Freudenburg's (1986) "boom town disruption" hypothesis, which attributes diminishing community associations or "density of acquaintanceship" to breakdowns in community functioning, this study is the first to test "density of acquaintanceship" on fear of crime in a non-boom town context.

The research presented here was based on primary data obtained from representative residential samples in two counties (i.e., Northampton and Accomack) that have experienced relatively divergent levels of population growth and population decline. Of the two counties, Northampton has experienced the greatest losses; this compared to a slight increase in Accomack County.

Because of Virginia's Eastern Shore tourist industry, the fact that some residents live on the Shore only seasonally, and the presence of a major interstate running through its center, residents may come in contact with many strangers. In addition, a large portion of the population of Northampton County is leaving the Shore, and residents may become more and more unfamiliar with their neighbors, thus decreasing the density of acquaintanceship and increasing fear of crime levels.

These results do not support the hypothesis that those residents coming from an urban origin would be more fearful of crime than their rural-to-rural and Eastern Shore native counterparts at either the bivariate or multivariate level. The relationship between prior community origin and fear of crime was not significant.

In addition, these results do not support the hypothesis that stated the longer respondents lived on the Eastern Shore the lower their fear of crime. Results indicated at both the bivariate and multivariate level that the relationship between fear of crime and length of residence was not significant. Attempts to expand the results of Kennedy and Krahn's (1984) study of "rural baggage" were not successful.

Kennedy and Krahn (1984) examined the effects of "rural baggage," arguing that those migrating from rural to urban areas may carry along with them expectations of others molded by experiences in areas where people are similar and where there are fewer strangers. As such, these individuals may have a greater tendency to trust others and be less likely to fear crime than those long time residents of urban areas.

According to Kennedy and Krahn (1984), rural to urban migrants eventually would become socialized to their new environment and fear of crime would increase to a level somewhat higher than those residents without a rural background due to the milieu

found in the big cities. Socialization then would take place again as they overcame the initial shock and fear of crime would drop to levels more consistent with their non-rural background counterparts. The similar process was hypothesized in this study, examining the concept of the "urban baggage," that is, perceptions and attitudes towards crime instilled in the individual while living in an urban community. It was argued that those individuals migrating to Virginia's Eastern Shore would carry along with them a general distrust of others, an instilled wariness towards crime, and the perceived risk of victimization. It was maintained that as the socialization process took place they would overcome their experiences and expectations (their urban baggage) instilled while living in the city, and drop to levels comparable with their new neighbors.

However, results of this study do not support this hypothesis. Instead it was found that those individuals living on the Eastern Shore six years or more and having an urban origin were the most fearful. However, as discussed in Chapter IV, when excluding the third category (six years or more on the shore) there is some face validity to support the "urban baggage" hypothesis. Those individuals migrating from urban communities who have lived on the Eastern Shore two years or less do have a higher mean fear of crime than those living on the Eastern Shore longer than two years and up to five years. However, the results are not significant.

The results may be explained by the failure of this study to investigate the respondents' residential history more thoroughly. Unlike Kennedy and Krahn (1984), who focused on the residence where the individual grew up, community origin was measured through a fixed categorical response concerning where the respondent lived

prior to moving to Virginia's Eastern Shore. The lack of significance between the two variables may very well be accounted for by the absence of sufficient data to thoroughly investigate the community origin background of each respondent. Respondents were simply asked what size community they came from prior to moving to Virginia's Eastern Shore. This left unaccounted the possibility of several different types of communities the respondent may have lived in leading up to his or her move to Virginia's Eastern Shore. The effects of this oversight also surfaced when examining length of residence on the Eastern Shore/urban origin on fear of crime. Because the measuring device only requested residence prior to moving to Virginia's Eastern Shore, a thorough residential background of each respondent was neglected. Someone reporting an urban origin could have lived in such a community anywhere from one to 60 years or may have lived in a rural community prior to moving to an urban one. The socialization effects for this potential prior community origin continuum would vary greatly. The effects of living in an urban community for only one or two years would vary greatly when compared to someone living in an urban community for 10, 20, or 30 years. Therefore, the results may be a bit misleading. Further research should examine residential history more closely.

DISCUSSION OF THE EXTENDED ANALYSIS

Because previous analysis indicated that perceived risk was a very strong predictor of fear of crime, accounting for nearly 40 percent of the variation in the model, it was decided to further investigate its effect on fear of crime. To do so, those independent variables (i.e., prior victimization and density of acquaintanceship) and

those control variables (i.e., race, children at home, age, and education) which were significant at both the bivariate and multivariate levels were included in a expanded model along with perceived risk. The results, outlined in Chapter IV, indicate some interesting effects. It appears that both prior victimization and density of acquaintanceship are working indirectly on fear of crime through perceived risk. Controlling for perceived risk of victimization, neither of the variables significantly added to the explained variance of fear of crime. All significance found when excluding perceived risk from the model is lost upon its inclusion.

Also interesting are some of the effects on the control variables. While race and education were significant in both models, the significance of education was lost when perceived risk was included in the model. Also, two variables, age and children at home, which were not significant when perceived risk was excluded from the model, were significant when perceived risk was included in the model, suggesting that as people get older or have young children in the home their perception of risk increases, thereby increasing their fear of crime. This point refers back to Warr's (1985:695) "differential sensitivity of risk;" that is, certain groups (e.g., elderly and women) possess higher levels of fear on an emotional level than others equally or more likely to become victims of crime.

LIMITATIONS

While support for the hypothesis that the greater the perceived risk of victimization the greater the fear of crime is found in this study, neglected is the possibility that the fear of crime may represent in part a symbolic response to a wide

range of community conditions that are not intrinsically crime-related. A second important approach has emphasized the tendency for residents to associate the likelihood of criminal victimization (perceived risk) with certain community characteristics that are perceived to be related to a lack of local control in the area. This approach, discussed in Chapter II, is generally referred to as the social control or disorder model. To recap, the disorder model argues that fear is a response to the perception of residents that the area is becoming characterized by a growing number of signs of disorder and incivility (e.g., vandalism, graffiti, public drug and alcohol use, abandoned buildings, etc.) that indicate that the social order of the neighborhood is eroding. These signs may not be necessarily frightening, however, they symbolize potential threats to many people (Warr 1990). This study failed to address issues of community dynamics and symbols of disorder that have a place in further research.

Alluded to throughout this discussion, a number of limitations to this study exist. There is a need to devise a more thorough measure of residential history. There is also a need to include some measure of community conditions and community dynamics and examine their effects on fear of crime. These aside, the greatest drawback to this study was its inability to capture the complete data. Due to time constraints, data collection for this thesis stopped at the 45 percent response rate, just short of the final wave of mailing. Respondents were only sampled through the second wave of mailing and only those surveys received up to that point were utilized for analysis.

SUMMARY

As previously noted, these data come from a larger project examining social vitality along Virginia's Eastern Shore. Surveys were administered to a 10 percent sample of households in Northampton and Accomack counties. The research for this thesis was conducted to examine fear of crime and how it related to community origin, perceived risk, prior victimization, density of acquaintanceship, and length of residence along with a number of control variables.

The analysis presented here indicates a clear pattern of heightened fear of crime as perceptions of risk increase and as density of acquaintanceship decreases. Prior victimization did exhibit a weak association with fear of crime. Surprisingly, little of the variation in fear of crime levels was accounted for by prior community origin and length of residence. Virtually no association was observed between gender, children at home, county, or age. Race was the only control variable to be significantly related to fear of crime (non-whites were found to be more fearful than whites).

Another interesting outcome centers on actual crime rates and fear of crime. Despite the notion that those communities experiencing higher crime rates would have higher fear of crime, the analysis in this thesis revealed no variation when comparing the two counties. Northampton county, which is experiencing higher crime rates was not found to have higher fear of crime levels when compared to Accomack county. In this instance actual crime rates are not a determinant of fear of crime levels.

The data also assert the importance of distinguishing between fear of crime and perceived risk of crime. As discussed in Chapter II a variety of concepts (i.e., perceived risk, anxiety, and worry) have been utilized as measurements of fear of crime. As a

result, these concepts have been used by researchers interchangeably to measure fear of crime. This study, however, asserts utility in distinguishing these concepts, particularly perceived risk of crime and fear of crime. The analysis in this study demonstrated a clear distinction between the two concepts. Perceived risk was found to play a major role in the variance in fear of crime, suggesting a need to treat the two concepts as separate and unique.

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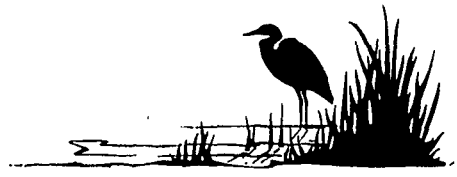
APPENDIX

Life on Virginia's Eastern Shore
A Survey of Residents



PART 1. YOUR COUNTY

We are interested in the quality of the following items IN YOUR COUNTY. Please check your rating (excellent, good, fair, or poor) for each item.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Medical care	☐	☐	☐	☐
Job opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐
Law enforcement	☐	☐	☐	☐
Programs and services to help the poor	☐	☐	☐	☐
Local government	☐	☐	☐	☐
Court services	☐	☐	☐	☐
Entertainment/Cultural programs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grocery stores	☐	☐	☐	☐
Schools	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public parks and recreation	☐	☐	☐	☐
Streets and roads	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality of drinking water	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trash pick-up	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sewage systems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Affordable housing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Utilities	☐	☐	☐	☐
Youth programs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shopping	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fire fighting	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 2. ABOUT YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Next, we want to know what you think about the TOWN OR COMMUNITY WHERE YOU LIVE. For each statement below, check the answer that best describes your feelings. Please tell us whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the statements.

	strongly disagree	**disagree**	**agree**	**strongly agree**
I think that my community is a good place for me to live.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Very few of my neighbors know me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My neighbors and I want the same things from this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
People in my community do not share the same values.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel at home in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I care about what my neighbors think of my actions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have no influence over what this community is like.	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is very important to me to live in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
People in my community generally don't get along with each other.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I expect to live in this community for a long time.	☐	☐	☐	☐
If there is a problem in this community people who live here can get it solved.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can recognize most of the people who live in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders in my community are effective.	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is too much drug and alcohol use in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree
Racism is a problem here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Noticeable improvements have been made in this community in the past few years.	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is too much family violence in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Citizens in my community do not participate in local government.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The future of this community is not really my responsibility.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have been a victim of racial discrimination in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The longer I live in this community, the more I feel I belong here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel most comfortable around long-time residents in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teen pregnancy is a serious problem in this community.	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 3. ABOUT DEVELOPMENT

We are interested in your attitudes regarding economic development on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Please check whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the following statements.

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree
Economic growth on the Eastern Shore should be limited.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tourism is important for the Eastern Shore's economic future.	☐	☐	☐	☐
We need more public parks here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
We need more jobs on the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a need to attract new industries to the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Northampton and Accomack counties need to cooperate more.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree
There is too little development here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preserving our rural life-style should be our primary goal.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aquaculture/fish farming can help provide needed jobs on Virginia's Eastern Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The best way to improve the Shore is to invest in education.	☐	☐	☐	☐
We should develop the businesses we already have here rather than bring in new ones.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The state sponsored space port at NASA Wallops Space Facility will create more problems than benefits.	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are plenty of jobs on the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Shore should invest in river boat gambling.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Constructing a "heritage trail" is a good idea.	☐	☐	☐	☐
We don't need a Wal-Mart here.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The time required to get state permits for businesses and towns should be shortened.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jobs in farming are disappearing on the Eastern Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expanding the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel will benefit the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preserving the environment should be our primary goal.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The quality of life is improving on Virginia's Eastern Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Young adults have to leave the Shore to make a decent living.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Eastern Shore development plans take residents' opinions into account.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The NASA Wallops Space Facility will increase tourism.	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 4. ABOUT CRIME

In recent years, crime has become an important public issue. We are interested in your attitudes and feelings about crime in your COMMUNITY. Please check whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the following statements.

In the next 12 months it is likely that:	**strongly disagree**	**disagree**	**agree**	**strongly agree**
I or someone in my household will have their car stolen.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Someone will break into my home when everyone is away.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I or someone in my household will have something vandalized or destroyed.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I or someone in my household will be physically assaulted.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I or someone in my household will be threatened with a weapon (for example, knife, gun, or club).	☐	☐	☐	☐
Someone will break into our home when someone is home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worry a great deal about the safety of those living in my household.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worry a great deal about my personal safety from crime.	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART. 5 ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

Below is a list of statements about the environment on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Please check whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the following statements.

	strongly disagree	**disagree**	**agree**	**strongly agree**
Regulations that restrict harvesting amounts in the ocean and bay are necessary.	☐	☐	☐	☐
We should protect the environment of the Eastern Shore no matter what the cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal property rights should be more important than ecological concerns.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Beach erosion is a problem on the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree
The Bobtown Landfill should be closed.	☐	☐	☐	☐
As badly as we need new industry and jobs, we cannot afford to sacrifice our clean air and beautiful scenery to obtain them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chicken processing plants contribute to our environmental problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Agriculture creates fewer environmental problems on the Eastern Shore than tourism.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My family participates in recycling.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am concerned about the availability of water in my community.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pollution is a problem on the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
We need alternative land-fill sites.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commercial fishing should be given priority over sport fishing on the Shore.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The younger generation cannot count on commercial fishing as a career.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The preservation of the Barrier islands and federal wetlands is very important.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water quality on the Shore is declining.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Virginia's Eastern Shore is no place for big industry.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The five year septic pumpout requirement is a good idea.	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 6. ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Are you:

☐ male ☐ female

How old are you? _____

How many years have you lived on Virginia's Eastern Shore? _____

Do you consider yourself to be mainly:

☐ American Indian ☐ Black/African American ☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander ☐ Hispanic Origin ☐ Other (explain___)

Where were you born?

- ☐ where I live now
- ☐ somewhere else on the Eastern Shore
- ☐ somewhere else in Virginia
- ☐ somewhere else in the United States
- ☐ another country

Please describe the kind of work you do: Your job title? Your occupation? What activities do you perform? Are you employed full or part-time?

Please check the highest level of education you have completed:

- ☐ Did not complete high school
- ☐ High school diploma or GED
- ☐ Vocational certificate
- ☐ One or more semesters of college
- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctoral

Which best describes the place you live in?

- ☐ a house
- ☐ a mobile home or trailer
- ☐ an apartment
- ☐ other (explain_____)

Do you or anyone in your household own land on the Eastern Shore?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (if yes, about how many acres _____)

Do you think you will move away from Virginia's Eastern Shore within the next 3 years?

- ☐ Definitely will not move
- ☐ Probably will not move
- ☐ Probably will move
- ☐ Definitely will move
- ☐ Don't know

What town or city do you live in, or live closest to? _____

How long have you lived there? _____

Did you move to Virginia's Eastern Shore from somewhere else?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes **(If yes, how big was that community?)**
  - ☐ A large metropolitan city (over 100,000 population).
  - ☐ A medium-sized city (25,000 to 100,000 population).
  - ☐ A smaller city (5,000 to 24,999 population).
  - ☐ A town or village (2,500 to 4,999 population).
  - ☐ In the country or very small town (under 2,500 population).

  How long did you live there? _____

Are you a registered voter?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

Have you or any member of your household been the victim of a property crime in the last 2 years on Virginia's Eastern Shore (for example, vandalism, burglary, auto-theft)?

☐ No ☐ Yes

Have you or any member of your household been the victim of a violent crime in the last 2 years on Virginia's Eastern Shore (for example, assault or robbery)?

☐ No ☐ Yes

How many children do you have? _____

Are there any children under the age of 18 who live with you?

☐ No ☐ Yes

How many people (including yourself) live in your household at the present time?_____

What community organizations/activities are you involved in (for example, PTA, scouting organizations, political organizations, civic groups, church groups, etc.)?

What is your present marital status?

☐ Never married ☐ Widowed ☐ Married
☐ Separated ☐ Divorced

Please indicate your total household income for 1995:

☐ Less than $15,000 ☐ $25,000 - $34,999 ☐ $50,000 - $74,999

☐ $15,000 - $24,999 ☐ $35,000 - $49,999 ☐ $75,000 or more

What do you like best about living on the Eastern Shore?

What do you like least about living on the Eastern Shore?

Would you be willing to be interviewed at a later date? If so, please provide the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

Thank You!

VITA

David Steven Simon

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M.A. Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, August 1996.
Master's Candidate in Applied Sociology with a Certificate in Criminal Justice.

B.A. Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, December 1993.
Criminal Justice Major, Sociology Minor.

APPLIED RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Research Assistant, Old Dominion University, 1994-1996. Projects: "Social Vitality and Ecological Planning on Virginia's Eastern Shore," "Occupational, Educational, and Residential Choices of Arctic Youth." Dr. Carole L. Seyfrit, Principal Investigator.

PRESENTATION:

Seyfrit, C. L., M. J. E. Danner, C. R. Crossland, P. C. Embry, M. K. Lee, and D. S. Simon. 1995. "Perceptions and Plans of Rural Youth: Preliminary Results From Virginia's Eastern Shore." *Rural Sociological Society*, Washington, DC.

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Alpha Kappa Delta, International Sociological Honor Society 1995
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Alpha Phi Omega, National Service Fraternity 1994.

Old Dominion University President's Fellowship 1994.