Islington Street Crime Survey

Peter Harper
Jayne Mooney
Edward Whelan
Jock Young
Middlesex University

Michael Pollak
Islington Council
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Jayne Mooney
Edward Whelan
Jock Young
Middlesex University

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*The Centre for Criminology, Middlesex University.*
Chapter 1

The Use of the Crime Survey

1.1 Introduction

The Islington Street Crime Survey focuses on the crimes of robbery, snatch and pick-pocketing/ 'dips'. The study was conducted in the Durham Road Neighbourhood in the Finsbury Park area of the north London borough of Islington and involved a random survey of 1,000 individuals randomly selected. One in two households were surveyed. Islington Council commissioned the research and the funding was provided by the Department of the Environment's Partnership Scheme. Full details of the sampling procedure are detailed in the technical discussion in Chapter Three.

1.2 Crime Surveys

The first crime surveys were commissioned by the United States President's Crime Commission in the mid 1960s. These included a national survey and several smaller surveys conducted in Washington, Boston and Chicago (Jupp, 1989). The success of these surveys led to the establishment in 1972 of the United States National Crime Survey. Since this time crime surveys have been carried out in many countries, including Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Israel, Sweden, Switzerland and Great Britain (Mayhew et al, 1989). The first crime survey in this country was conducted by Sparks, Genn and Dodd in 1977 in three areas of London. Crime surveys have proved to be of considerable value to those agencies concerned with the impact of victimization and police effectiveness and with respect to the development of crime prevention policy.

In essence, crime surveys involve the use of structured questionnaires and personal interviewing techniques to gather information from a sample of the population about crimes which have been committed against them in a specific period of time such as the proceeding year, and to ascertain whether they were reported to the police. The primary aim of the crime survey has, therefore, been to provide a more accurate estimate of the true extent of crime than that provided by the official statistics compiled by the police. It is well-known that the official statistics are beset with problems of accuracy caused by the non-reporting of crime to the police by members of the public and the failure of the police to record some of the crimes that are reported to them. These problems are referred to as the problem of the 'dark figure' of crime, which was first delineated in the 1830s by Adolphe Quetelet, the Belgian mathematician, astronomer and developer of social statistics. Crime surveys have, additionally, yielded information about various other factors related to criminal victimisation, for example, the characteristics of victims and, if known, offenders; the time and place of the incident and its impact.

In this country crime surveys fall into two broad types: the national crime surveys carried out by Home Office researchers (e.g. Hough and Mayhew, 1983; Chambers and Tombs, 1984; Hough and Mayhew, 1985; Mayhew et al, 1989; Kinsey and Anderson, 1992; Mayhew et al, 1993) and the local surveys of which the Islington Street Crime Survey is an example. The national crime surveys have been a key database for official policy making on crime and policing.

Local surveys have, generally, been associated with the work of the Centre for Criminology, Middlesex University (e.g. Jones et al, 1986; Lea et al, 1988; Painter et al, 1989; Crawford et al, 1990; Painter et al, 1990; Jones et al, 1990; Mooney, 1993). They developed in the mid-1980s in response to the growing recognition that crime is focused geographically in certain areas and socially amongst particular groups of people: a fact the national crime surveys are unable to deal with. Local surveys have proved successful in pin-pointing areas with a high crime rate and have enabled the impact of crime and policing to be broken down in terms of its social focus, that is on social groups based on the combination of age, gender, social class and ethnicity. The wide coverage of the national crime surveys prevents them from producing detailed information about the experience of crime in specific localities. Local crime surveys have, in addition, widened the scope of the crime survey to allow new areas to be investigated, for example, racial and sexual harassment, drug abuse and other forms of anti-social behaviour; the public's policing priorities with respect to particular types of crime; opinions on the control and accountability of police forces and penalty. In recognition of the move towards the development of multi-agency crime prevention policies, questions have been incorporated on the problems of service delivery and demands on other agencies beside the police, such as the local council and the role of victim support schemes (Crawford et al, 1990).

More recently there has been a move towards surveys, such as this present study, that concentrate on specific crime problems allowing the collection of more detailed information (see Woodhouse and Yaylali, 1990; Young, 1993).
1.3 Aim of the Project

A previous study carried out at the Centre for Criminology, utilizing police data, identified the Finsbury Park area as having particularly high levels of street robbery and snatch (see Mooney, 1992). It was the site of 12.3 per cent of all street robberies and snatchs reported to Holloway Police Division between May 1987 and June 1990; making it the riskiest area for that division. The purpose of the Islington Street Crime Survey is to investigate the extent, distribution and impact of 'street' robbery, snatch and pick-pocketing/ 'dips' in more detail. The victimization study allows us to uncover those crimes unreported to the police whilst the demographic data revealed by the survey allows us to carry out analysis by the social characteristic of the victim. But before we commence an analysis of the present that this survey has uncovered it is necessary to place this 'snapshot' in the context of the history and development of Finsbury Park since the mid-Victorian period. In particular we shall first detail the social and criminological history of the area.
Chapter 2

Finsbury Park: An Historical Perspective

2.1 The Development of Finsbury Park

Finsbury Park was first developed during the mid-Victorian speculative house building boom. At that time Holloway was a suburb, but within thirty years the area soon lost its 'edge of town' appeal and was absorbed into the rapidly expanding city, becoming just another place where working people lived.

One hundred years later, it had fallen into serious decline. Whilst in the late Nineteenth Century the character of the area has been described as: 'Campbell Road (later renamed Whadcoat Street/Haden Court) was built for artisans and clerks with sufficient means for its six rooms, scullery, outside WC and (in some cases) an attic for the skivvy. The street was wide enough to look comfortable; parapet walls hid the deep walls from sight and iron railings guarded a small slip of ground before each from window. Fonthill Road was more showily petty-bourgeois (with balconies, parapet balustrades, blowzy stucco to the window heads, arched doorways); it was able, at least for a time, to claim the tenants for whom it was designed, the smaller servant keeping class of higher clerks, lower professionals and shopkeepers' (White 1986, p12).

One street in this area, Campbell Road, declined dramatically, especially in contrast to the surrounding ones. Throughout the 1870s the poor condition of housing in Campbell Road prompted the middle class tenants to move into better housing elsewhere. By the 1890s, this road had become a resting place for the destitute wandering poor (White 1986, p15), the casual poor at the mercy of the competitive Victorian labour market (see Jones 1976). A bleak contrast with the considerably more respectable surrounding streets which earned Campbell Road the weighty honour, 'the worst street in North London' (White 1986).

A sanitary inspector's report of 1909 gives us some idea of the truth of this picture. Mixed with a good deal of imagination and even some humour, it reads:

'The road is the king of all roads. I have been in practically all the slums in London; Notting Hill, Chelsea, Battersea, Fulham, Nine Elms, and also the East End, but there is nothing so lively as this road. Thieves, Prostitutes, cripples, Blind People. Hawkers of all sorts of wares from boot laces to watches and chains are to be found in this road, Pugilists, Card Sharpers, Counter Jumpers, Purse Snatchers, street singers, and Gamblers of all kinds, and thing they call men who live off the earnings of women, some of whom I saw outside the Town Hall with the unemployed last week... Of course, there are a few people who get an honest living, but they want a lot of picking-out' (White 1986, p24-25).

2.1.1 Post-War Housing Policy

The Durham Road neighbourhood is an identifiable geographical area in North London bounded by four major roads, Seven Sisters Road to the south, Tollington Park to the north, Hornsey Road and Stroud Green Road to the east and west respectively. There are about 2500 households in the area, many of which live on four large post-war housing estates, Haden Court, Clifton Court, the Andover and Six Acres Estates.

Although a handful of blocks were built on the Andover Estate before the war, the majority of social housing in this area followed the establishment of the welfare state in the years after 1945. The basic social problem was the same as it had been for two centuries, overcrowding, sharing ill-equipped, insanitary housing and homelessness. Further, there was now an increasing demand for more household spaces from the growing proportion of young workers, families and retired people all of whom wanted to live alone (Donnison 1967, p45). There was a clear need for the introduction of clear planning proposals to combat the horrendous overcrowding in urban centres like London. The County of London Plan (Abercrombie 1943) proposed an equilibrium between inner urban flats and outer urban cottages.

Dunleavy (1981) writes how the architect's profession, the construction industry, and national government conspired to make comprehensive redevelopment the principle solution to the post-war housing problem right through to the mid-1970s. Despite the greater cost to the public purse, the construction costs greater and the process slower and more complex, despite its frequent unpopularity, local housing authorities were coerced into accepting this method of rehousing, because the net costs to the local housing authority and its tenants were far less.
By 1946, Campbell Road (or Whadcoat Street as it was now called) had declined into a notorious slum. The properties had decayed far too much for either the landlords or public housing authorities to consider rehabilitation. Despite Islington Council's generally poor record in the provision of public housing, the road was identified as in serious need for clearance. The Council made demolition orders on some houses in 1950 and the street was cleared in 1953-57 (White 1986, p235-36). A new estate, Haden Court, was opened on the site in 1957.

### 2.1.2 Housing Redevelopment in Finsbury Park

Following the construction of Haden Court in the 1950s, such was the poor condition of much of the remaining property in the neighbourhood, Islington Council and the Greater London Council began a programme that was all but to demolish the entire area. Islington Council built Clifton Court (87 units) in 1966-68. Here the construction of the 19 storey tower block was held up until the collapse of Ronan Point had reported. It has a reinforced concrete frame and walls with brick external and infill walls. The adjoining Six Acres Estate (9 blocks, 357 units) was opened in 1970 and built by John Laing from its jesperson concrete panels. The Andover Estate was built in two phases, the first by the London County Council in 1934 (6 blocks, 109 units) and the second by the Greater London Council in the late 1970s (66 blocks, 925 units plus various community facilities including sheltered housing), from reinforced concrete with brick walls.

In many ways the redevelopment of the Andover Estate exemplifies the approach to post war large scale house building. In order to create economical sites for the building contractors, along with unfit housing, large areas of perfectly sound properties were cleared. Under the 1957 Housing Act, perfectly sound adjacent housing could be included in the compulsory purchase order to create rational redevelopment areas. The Alsen Road site was compulsorily purchased by the GLC in 1968. Here, the vast majority (19.7 acres) of this 25.5 acre site was perfectly sound properties included in the categories of 'adjoining areas' (GLC Housing Committee minutes).

### 2.1.3 Housing Rehabilitation in Finsbury Park

This wasteful method for the provision of public housing was abandoned as the principal strategy for housing renewal in Islington in the early 1970s. Encouraged by the Housing Acts of the 1970s, the new Labour Council (elected in 1971), made the decision to mount a major programme for the acquisition and rehabilitation of 5-6000 properties over the next 10 years (NIHRP 1976, p7).

Following housing rights groups successfully arguing that the structure of houses in the Birnham and Moray Roads were sound enough for rehabilitation, the GLC declared its first housing action area (HAA) there. Local tenants formed a housing cooperative with a view to gaining control over the improvement of these houses and over the allocation of these improved homes. It was agreed that, in so far as it was possible, 50% of the nominations for tenancies would be drawn from members of the cooperative who qualified for GLC rehousing. This, it was believed, would give at least a chance of creating a new, self-confident community (NIHRP 1976, p18).

After a successful campaign to prevent the demolition of the Charteris Road area, another cooperative, a housing management cooperative, was set up to manage houses being rehabilitated by Islington Council there (NIHRP 1976).

### 2.2 The Rise of Crime in London

Post-war Britain has seen an extraordinary increase in crime, rates unprecedented since mid-Victorian England. As Young (1992) demonstrates, the national aggregate of recorded crimes in 1951 was merely the annual increase by the early 1990s.

The illiberal sociologist Patricia Morgan (1978) points out an interesting aspect of the rise in crime, when she writes of the East End of London in her childhood as relatively crime free:

'I was born and lived for thirty years in a very working-class neighbourhood. I know now children smashing bottles against windows and stealing abusively from shops are quite commonplace, but twenty years ago vandalism was virtually unknown and the theft of two shillings shocked my school to its foundations.' (1978, p21).

In the decade following the war we find the appearance of 'Teddy Boys', violence gangs of youths who roamed the streets. In an article on Finsbury Park, Islington, Dave Barnes (1981) describes the brutal murder of a policeman by gangs typical of this post war era:

'... particularly notorious during the 50's was the stretch of Seven Sisters Road which runs from Finsbury Park to the Nag's Head, which was know locally as the murder mile due to the activities of the various gangs who operated the area.

'The Finsbury Park gang dominated the stretch of the road operating from the numerous 'caffs' around the Fonthill area.

'The Holloway based themselves further along the road towards Nag's Head at an amusement arcade which was eventually fire bombed by a member of the Highbury who was refused entry.

'Almost opposite to where the amusement arcade was situated in Seven Sisters Road was the Grays dance hall which was the scene of the infamous Marwood Police killing, itself typical of the violence of the era.
'Shortly before Christmas 1958, Marwood, a 25-year-old building worker and a member of a gang known as the Budd mob, travelled to the Grays with other gang members looking for members of a rival gang who had insulted Budd.

'On hearing of the Budd gang's arrival, the others rushed outside and a brawl began on the pavement. A local beat policeman intervened and found himself surrounded and set upon by both gangs and during ensuing struggle was stabbed in the back and later died at the Royal Northern Hospital.

'Shortly afterwards, Budd was arrested for the killing. During the two weeks he was held in custody accused of capital murder, for which he could hang if convicted, he refused to inform on Marwood who was in hiding'.

Marwood surrendered and was eventually convicted and hanged.

We can begin to understand the truth of this statement when we examine the reported crime statistics for London (Metropolitan Police District) over the past forty years. We see how the break up of communities has precipitated, or at least has had a part in precipitating, a qualitative shift in the types of crimes being committed. Crime has not become more predatory, but more violent; vandalism and other profitless crime has also risen out of proportion with the dramatic rise in crime.

| TABLE 2.1: Reported Crime in Metropolitan Police District 1950-90 |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Homicide (incl death by dangerous driving) | 0.06 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.02 |
| Assault         | 1.0 | 1.3 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 4.5 |
| Sexual          | 1.4 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| Robbery         | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 2.1 |
| Burglary (incl going equipped) | 15.9 | 17.3 | 23.9 | 22.3 | 20.9 |
| Theft           | 75.7 | 74.2 | 59.1 | 57.9 | 49.7 |
| Fraud           | 4.3 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 5.3 | 4.3 |
| Criminal damage | - | - | - | 10.9 | 17.3 |
| Other           | 1.3 | 1.1 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 0.7 |
| Total           | 100,304 | 188,396 | 321,156 | 568,952 | 34,325 |

(From: Commissioner's for the Metropolitan Police Reports 1951-91)

| TABLE 2.2: Domestic Burglary and Robbery as Proportions of All Crime in Metropolitan Police District 1950-90 |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burglary        | 5.9 | 6.4 | 7.7 | 8.3 | 13.8 | - | 12.9 | 13.2 | 13.8 |
| Robbery         | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 |

(From: Commissioner's for the Metropolitan Police Reports 1951-91)

| TABLE 2.3: Domestic Burglary as a Proportion of All burglary (domestic plus commercial) in Metropolitan Police District 1950-90 |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burglary        | 39.5 | 43.5 | 43.9 | 47.6 | 59.0 | 56.8 | 59.7 | 63.1 | 66.4 |

(From: Commissioner's for the Metropolitan Police Reports 1951-91)
2.2.1 Proportion of Categories of Crime London 1950-1989

Table 2.1 shows there has been a general increase in crime over the last forty years. Certain categories of crime have been increasing at rates disproportionate to their relative frequency in the 1950s. This is especially the case for violent crime.

Caution should be taken when reading these tables, the manner in which crimes are recorded tends to alter over such a long period of time. Criminal damage, for example, was not recorded in the data until ten years or so ago. Indeed, as a category of crime and one which occurs in such large numbers, the greater proportion of instances of criminal damage are never reported to the police. However, because we are not carrying out a detailed analysis, these figures are comparable in the crude indicative way in which we wish to use them.

Table 2.1 illustrates how the crimes of robbery, burglary and assault have been increasing over the last four decades. Even with falling population, robbery has increased from 256 instances in 1950, to 2369 by 1970 and during the 1980s, from 7,585 instances in 1980 to 18,095 in 1990. An increase over four decades of 7000%. Whilst during the same period the aggregate number of all burglary, aggravated burglary rose between 1979 and 1989, when domestic burglary in the same period rose by about half.

Similarly, burglary has become increasingly frequent. Further to this, as a proportion of all burglary, domestic burglary has risen from 39.5% of all burglaries in 1950, to 66.4% of all burglaries in 1990 (Table 2.3). At the same time other thefts have remained relatively stable, even falling in some categories (pedal cycle theft, meter theft, theft by one person on another). Between the years 1979 and 1989, when domestic burglary rose from 75,214 to 115,119, the number of commercial burglaries rather less, from 50,730 to 58,128. This is perhaps a reflection of the slightly better security on commercial premises. On the other hand, the degree of under-reporting of commercial burglary is likely to be far lower than for domestic, where contents insurance is less likely to be held.

More than this, crime has become more violent: robbery is by definition a violent crime, so to an extent, is burglary. Aggravated burglary, has over the past 15 years become increasingly common. Where in 1975 it accounted for 0.2% of domestic burglaries, in 1990 it occurred in 0.6% of cases. I should add that this proportion remained fairly constant throughout the 1980s. As a total of all burglary, aggravated burglary rose between 1980 and 1990 from 194 to 664, a threefold increase; whilst burglary in the same period rose by about half.

2.2.2 Types of Crime

There seems to be a further distinction that we can draw between crimes committed by juveniles and others living within stable criminal communities. Suttles (1968) illustrates how qualitative distinctions can be made in the offending patterns of youths living in a mixed race slum (Addams) in an American city. Here, the youths committed different types of offences within and outside of their neighbourhoods. Though almost two thirds of all their offenses were committed less than a block from the home of the nearest offender, rarely did they victimise a local resident of the same ethnicity. Theft, burglary, purse-snatching and strong-armings were offences they were most likely to commit outside of the Addams area (37% of such offenses). Most of the victims (61% of all cases) were either persons who lived outside the area or large businesses, schools or public facilities. Certain other offenses seemed to presume a prior level of intimacy and occurred largely within the Addams area: 'malicious mischief, property damage, fighting, assault, affray, and sex offences most often (74% of the time) victimize a local resident, a high proportion (33%) being people from the same ethnic section and the same ethnicity as the offenders... In general the following pattern emerges: (1) instances of interpersonal conflict are concentrated within the area, (2)offenses for gain victimize outsiders, (3)the remaining offenses do not arouse local complaints’ (Suttles 1968, p210).

A similar pattern emerges in integrated criminal areas in Britain. The Glasgow villain Jimmy Boyle grew up in the Gorbals slum in the 1950s. He tells how his father and other adult villains were involved in relatively sophisticated crimes like safe-blowing (1978, p12). These older villains served as role models for young criminals like Jimmy himself, who served out their apprenticeships committing petty thefts from local shops and delivery men, soon graduating to larger thefts from shops and warehouses and adding gang fighting in his mid-teens.

The picture seems to hold good elsewhere. Tony Lambrianou (1991), who was convicted of murder with the Krays, tells how he was involved in protection rackets of local shops and dance halls by the age of sixteen; a style of crime which became the backbone of his criminal career in later years. Though these apprentice villains do not report ever committing burglary, street robbery and other crimes which victimise the local community, the effects of protection rackets will be felt by the local communities in the shape of tuppence on a cup of tea in the local cafe. Similarly, when Boyle (1978) writes of loan shocking, money lending at usurious rates of interest, enforcing repayments by violence if necessary. He remarks that his service was more ‘user friendly’ than legal financial services and violence was no more than was deemed necessary to enforce order in the customers. But the point to be made is that for the most part this was organised professional crime and not disorganised unpredictable criminal acts like street robbery and simple street fighting.

The local community could be relied upon not to as witnesses of criminal acts they had observed in their street (White 1986). Here in Campbell Road, a criminal community in Finsbury Park between the wars, crime within the community revolved around illegal gambling, money lending, theft from local shops and prostitution. Whereas acts of theft from employers, shops and empty houses (totting) or from visitors to the ‘Bunk’ tended to involve victims living elsewhere.
Here then, the community was not victimised as such, most of the crime was directed at outsiders, rarely was a local the ‘innocent’ victim. Any desire to report crime to the police was minimised. Objectively the community was seen as safe from its criminal elements, the only people who suffered were strangers or fools who deserved it.

2.3 Community Disorganisation and Social Control

How can we explain the post-war rise in crime and increase in the relative violence of offences in recent decades? There is a picture we all have of ideal communities: pre-industrial villages and older small industrial communities; crime-free worlds, where everybody knows everyone else and many of the families are related to each other by marriage and kinship. It is in such places that we find high levels of social cohesion, which has a strong bearing on the relative levels of informal social control and the types of crimes that are committed by deviant people and communities.

Crime is a product of motivation and the weakness of informal and formal social controls. There are further causes of crime other than informal social control, one would cite individualism and lack of deferred gratification as obvious other causes. The discussion here, because we are interested in the relationship between social organisation and public policy, is about social cohesion and its bearing on criminality.

Elias (1965) study of a suburban development on the outskirts of a large industrial midlands town contrasts two neighbouring areas: an established community and a more recent wartime development, built to house people from London and elsewhere, migrating to work in the factories. By the time this study was carried out, the established community had been there about eighty years and the new estate about twenty years.

The study found the community structures in the established ‘village’ to be qualitatively different from those on the ‘estate’. In many ways, the village was similar to what we understand by our idealised conception of pre-industrial communities. At its core lay ‘a closely knit network of mother-centred family networks, some of which formed a kind of village elite and helped set the tone for others’ (Elias 1965, p35). A network of old families who spent their leisure time together with their families, neighbours or local associations, which tended to be centred around religious institutions. These families were by no means self-sufficient: ‘activities within individual families and activities within clusters of individual families merged into each other and appeared quite inseparable’ (p55).

Informal social control grows out of these community associations and structures. Phil Cohen (1974) writes of life in the East End of London during the first half of this century, how:

‘In these neighbourhoods the street forms a kind of “communal space” a mediation between the private space of the family, with its intimate involvements, and the totally public space e.g. parks, thoroughfares etc, where people relate to each other as strangers, and with indifference. The street, then, is a space where people can relate as neighbours, can express a degree of involvement with others, who are outside the family, but not strangers, it maintains an intricate social balance between rights and obligations distance and relation in the community. It also serves to generate an informal system of social controls. For where the street is played in, talked in, sat out in, constantly spectated as a source of neighbourly interest, it is also policed, and by the people themselves. Nothing much can happen -however trivial, ...without it becoming a focus of interest and intervention.’ (Cohen 1974, p11-12).

Informal social control is maintained by what we might call today, rather intrusive neighbour relations and interest:

‘almost everything that happened inside the home was within reach of neighbours’ ears and eyes; little could be hidden away; private and communal, “individual” and “social” aspects of life were less divided. News of any interest quickly spread through the gossip channels from house to house, street to street. Housewives appeared to be the main carriers. Those who “belonged”, who were at one with the communal standards of their neighbourhood, did not suffer from this relative lack of privacy. Those who did not “belong” often enough suffered’ (Elias 1965, p35).

2.4 Community Disorder and Delinquency

This neighbourhood structure contrasts strongly with the new estate where migration into the area had thrown together many small families who were previously unknown to each other. Here migratory mobility had thrown together many relatively small families who were strangers to each other. In the village where two thirds of the families had relatives living locally, only one third of families on the estate had similar local ties.

Of course, one cannot argue that such ties create a community: family feuds can run through a number of generations, often never to heal. But, it was in the village that all of the formal community organisations were to be found and, because of the appalling local representations of people from the new estate, they were usually deliberately excluded from participating in them. These popular representations were without doubt unfair, the two areas had similar socio-economic profiles. However these perceptions seem to have had historical roots: there were a number of rougher working class families who lived on the estate when it opened, but formed no more than a minority twenty years later. Though false, they did, however, have a negative effect on life on the estate.
Without doubt, a minority of families on the estate were 'disordered' (p85). Their children roamed the streets in rowdy, poorly dressed gangs. Where the reputation of the village was enhanced by a middle class minority, the small minority of notorious families on the estate cast a shadow over the whole neighbourhood, an impact quite out of proportion to its numbers and the image of an area where the majority were ordinary, respectable working class families.

Elias argues, had such disordered families settled in the village they would have come up against the 'solid power of a closely knit community... They would have been rejected, cold shouldered, ridiculed, slandered and, if necessary, brought to court. But where neighbours "keep themselves to themselves", a neighbourhood with little solidarity, cohesion and leadership was unable to bring effective pressure to bear upon its deviant minority' (p85-6). Isolated families on the estate found they could not draw on common standards of conduct reinforced by the community. Indeed the customs and norms of neighbouring families often contradicted each other. Where in the village neighbours would watch over and reprimand others' children, neighbours on the estate were relative strangers and felt no such obligation towards other people's offspring.

This difference is reflected in the dissimilar offending rates of the two areas. Far fewer juveniles in the village came before the courts than from families living on the estate. Furthermore, of the three juveniles from the village who were convicted during the study period, two were for 'technical' offenses. A considerably greater number from the estate were convicted during the same period and these tended to be for rather more serious offences, those against persons and property.

2.5 Crime and Close Knit Criminal Areas

There is no simple relationship between the relative levels of community disorganisation and the crime rates we find there. One cannot draw on community organisation as a simple indicator of relative criminality. Some subcultural theories of crime show how it is such organised communities which transmit certain forms of deviant subcultural values and practices most effectively. Shaw and MacKay (1942) argue that certain neighbourhoods maintain criminal subcultures because their stability enable deviant value systems to be transmitted. Criminal behaviour is learnt in interaction with others who hold such deviant value systems (Sutherland 1937).

For a successful criminal career something further is required, the opportunity for the potential criminal to perform the role. Access to such illegitimate means is variable, to be motivated to commit crime is not enough, criminality requires more than merit and motivation (Cloward and Ohlin 1960).

Cloward and Ohlin (1960) unite anomie, differential access to legitimate means and the Chicago tradition, where the concept of differentials in access to illegitimate means is implicit. If, in any one social location criminal means are not available, one would not expect a criminal subculture to develop among adolescents.

Although Shaw and MacKay regard illegitimate activities as organised, because the values transmitted are criminal, they tend to talk of slum areas as 'disorganised'. They further emphasise the disorganisation of slum areas when they discuss the conflict experienced by immigrant children caught between their parents 'foreign' culture and that in which they are growing up, American culture. These competing value systems result in conflicts at home and a disorganised family (Shaw and MacKay 1940). This seems inconsistent, indeed Sutherland talks more clearly of the relative organisation of slum areas when he tells how the criminal value system is supported by a patterned system of social relations (Cloward and Ohlin 1960, p155).

Importantly, what Cloward and Ohlin (1965) achieve is to find a link between social organisation and opportunity for criminal activities. Where Shaw and MacKay find only disorganisation, patterns of social relations not unlike Elias' (1965) 'estate', Cloward and Ohlin find other places which are surprisingly very organised.

Cloward and Ohlin develop this theory showing a relationship between particular forms of slum organisation and the differentiation between subcultural content. They argue that delinquent responses vary according to the articulation of two principal structures: the integration of different age levels of offenders and of carriers of conventional and deviant values (1965, p161). Thus, Cloward and Ohlin argue: 'given limited access to success-goals by legitimate means, the nature of delinquent response will vary according to the availability of illegitimate means' (1960, p152). They identify three distinct deviant subcultures: conflict, retreatist and criminal.

2.6 Criminal Subcultures

There is nothing particularly distinctive about criminal values, both criminals and non-criminals alike seek similar goals, that is wealth and success (Sutherland 1947).

Cloward and Ohlin (1960) describe how a criminal subculture has widely integrated age levels enabling youngsters to learn criminal values and techniques, as well as providing criminal role models for aspiring young villains'. Older criminals teach youngsters skilful criminal behaviour, for instance, identifying potential locations to burgle and where and how to dispose of stolen goods. Criminal activities become enmeshed in the activities of corrupt police officers, politicians, 'fixers' etc., all of whom provide the stability required for successful and profitable crime. As a young criminal's knowledge of this fringe world deepens and relationships with 'mature' criminals are formed, new skills are acquired and further opportunities to engage in new types of crime emerge (1960, p166).
Thus, a criminal area has an:

'age-graded criminal structure in which juvenile delinquents can become enmeshed, we suggest that the norms governing adult criminal-role performance filter down, becoming significant principals in the life-organisation of the young. The youngster who has come into contact with an age-graded structure and who has won initial acceptance by older and more sophisticated delinquents will be less likely to engage in malicious, destructive behaviour than in disciplined, instrumental, career orientated behaviour. In this way the adult criminal system exerts controls over the behaviour of delinquents' (1960, p171).

The South London villain Charles Richardson gives us some clues as to how this disciplined structure was achieved: 'To outsiders it might have looked like a gang, but gangs are what kids have... I was a businessman who had to protect his interests... We reduced local crime to a dribble. I was pissed off with all the thefts from my yard and would be enraged when local people would tell me of burglaries to their houses... We would know within hours who had done the job, give them a smack and tell them to fuck off to the West End to steal from people who could afford an insurance policy. The sad little battered radios and half-crowns from the tin in the kitchen would be returned to the victim with our compliments. It might be a bit strong to say that we were loved and respected but we were certainly respected' (Richardson 1991, p110-111).

Reg Kray whose dreams of being a film style gangster were to an extent realised, describes something related but altogether more brutal (and perhaps more honest): 'Discipline in and outside the firm was enforced by Ron (Kray) and me by persuasion, reason, and by the fact that we were better at violence than the others were' (Kray 1990, p66).

Violence is instrumental, crime carefully considered with an eye to the 'bottom line' (profitability). 'Social controls over the conduct of the young are effectively exercised limiting expressive behaviour and constraining the discontented to adopt instrumental, if criminalistic, styles of life' (Cloward and Ohlin 1960, p171).

2.7 Conflict and Retreatist Subcultures

When the structures for a criminal subculture are not present (i.e. integrated age-levels and between the legitimate and illegitimate worlds) alternative success goals are not generated by the criminal opportunity structure and other less cohesive delinquent subcultures find root.

Thus some areas lack the unity and cohesion found in stable criminal areas and we can expect to find areas of social disorganisation. Such forces of instability may be high rates of vertical and geographic mobility, for instance large housing projects displace existing tenants and changing land use (commercial to residential or vice-versa), that transiency and instability become overriding features of social life. I will show later how hous-ing projects which displace tenants, housing blocks used for temporary accommodation, as well as areas of housing 'stress' and unpopular housing estates all contribute to extraordinary rates of transiency amongst residents.

When a disorganised community is unable to provide either access to legitimate goals, nor is it sufficiently integrated to provide access to stable criminal opportunities, a more variable and volatile delinquent response is possible. Thus, without access to illegitimate learning and opportunities, crimes tend to be individualistic, disorganised, petty, poorly paid and unprotected from the interested gaze of the criminal justice system. Here adult criminals are not in contact with younger offenders and we can imagine how informal social controls and access to illegitimate success goals tend to be weakened (1960, p173-4). In such situations, Cloward and Ohlin suggest the appearance of conflict subcultures, those which seek success through violence, the gaining of a 'reputation' through physical bravery in fights with other juvenile gangs.

Again in areas of social disorganisation, Cloward and Ohlin also suggest how those who fail to succeed by legitimate and illegitimate means to success, may withdraw into retreatist subcultures, those related to drug abuse. This solution may be chosen by those who, though previously delinquent, because of certain limits on those who can find success through violence or crime, duck out and retreat into a chemical haze. There are however fairly strict social conditions for successful drug abuse. Just like any other restricted activity, one needs to learn its lore and skills, for example how to purchase and abuse drugs.

These three deviant subcultures are by no means mutually exclusive. Criminal subcultures prey on retreatist ones, having the relationship of customer and supplier. Drug users themselves commit crimes like burglary, robbery and sometimes deal drugs to finance their habits. But the unpredictability of drug addicts makes it unlikely that they will ever be allowed entry into formal criminal subcultures.

Though Cloward and Ohlin are at pains to emphasise the instrumental nature of violence in criminal subcultures, biographies of British villains do not quite bear this out (Kray 1990, Pearson 1984, Richardson 1991, Lambrianou 1991). With hindsight, their crimes of violence can be explained by a need to establish a reputation or to muscle in on someone else's criminal operations. However Boyle (1977) mixes predatory crime with gang fighting to little other purpose than the desire to fight. Indeed the Krays descent into murder seems to be the least instrumental act they ever committed (Pearson 1984). Perhaps it was the lack of focus of these violent acts that led to their decline immediately afterwards and as the villains at the top of the tree, they were too 'senior' for the rest of the criminal community to exercise any control over their more asocial activities. Greater self-control seems to have the mark of longevity in a criminal career (Pearson 1984).
We can summarise by remarking how the relative levels of integration in slum neighbourhoods or other forms of criminal communities result in different forms of delinquent subculture. Criminal subcultures are the product of integrated areas, conflict subcultures of unintegrated ones. Indeed over time, subcultural change may result from changes in possibilities of legitimate and illegitimate opportunities: geographic and social mobility and the effectiveness with which a community is able to exercise control.

Cloward and Ohlin observe that crimes become increasingly aggressive and violent as a result of social disorganisation. As society changes so does crime. Racketeers become more organised as society becomes more organised. This increase in the degree of criminal sophistication makes it increasingly difficult for an aspiring criminal to acquire the skills necessary for graduation into mature adult world of organised crime. Illegal channels of ascent are cut off and pressure for conflict subcultures increase (1960, p204).

2.8 Housing Process and the Community

The population of Islington has altered markedly over the past 150 years. In 1851 the population of the Parish of Islington (slightly smaller than the present borough and minus the former borough of Finsbury) was as few as 10,212. This grew rapidly over the next three decades to 155,344 in 1861, to 216,000 in 1871 and 283,000 in 1887 (Hudson, undated). This reflected the movement of people out of the middle of London as public transport for working people was introduced, enabling people to live in the suburbs and commute to work.

As remarked above, suburbs like Holloway were quickly absorbed into the rapidly expanding city, until becoming overcrowded slums themselves. The population of inner London (the former County of London), peaked during this period at nearly 5 million just before the First World War; declining sharply, falling about 30% during the slum clearances of the 1930s. These slum clearances were accompanied by the London County Council building huge new estates in out of town sites and speculative building in the suburbs and beyond. A demographic shift encouraged by industry itself moving to cheaper sites in the midlands and elsewhere. These, of course, drew more and more people out of crowded urban areas hugely expanding small villages in the home counties into the dormitory towns we see today.

Mid-Victorian suburbs like Holloway had deteriorated into slums which were cleared in a piecemeal fashion by Islington Council and the LCC and GLC in the period roughly between 1950 and 1980. The population of the present borough of Islington fell during this period from 2.7 million in 1951, to 2.6 million in 1961 and 2 million in 1971. By 1981 the population of Islington was now about 1.6 million which seems have remained fairly steady ever since.

Morris (1957) describes how the provision of public housing and the public housing market affects the social and demographic composition of urban areas. It tends to concentrate people with social problems in the worst, least popular, housing. Bottoms (1991) argues how there is a form of competition within the allocations process of council housing which favours tenants already living in better properties or easier social circumstances. Simply put, when local housing authorities were still in a position to make a series of offers for rehousing to prospective tenants, those living in the most bearable housing were best placed to stay put until a desirable offer was made. For no reason, other than the dynamics of public housing, where tenancies on estates with high turnovers, the most unpopular estates, are most likely to be offered to people seeking rehousing. This bureaucratic procedure unavoidably discriminates against those most in need of rehousing. Further to this, it has the effect of concentrating social problem groups, those we might term criminogenic, on poor run down housing estates.

This has an identifiable effect on the level of social organisation, the strength of community and the types of crime and criminality in different areas within a city. Although the situation is very variable, unpopular estates tend to be those which are most poorly equipped or large estates built in the industrialised housing boom of the 1950s to 1970s. An estate’s offender and offence rates are likely to change over time, but we can make a number of associations between the structure of a community, its place in the public housing market and the types of crime committed there.

By way of illustration, we find in Bottoms studies of housing estates in Sheffield (1987, 1989, 1991) a fairly neat relationship between crime and social organisation. He identifies one estate (Skyhigh) with a high turnover of tenancies, with scarcely any community structure to speak of, as having high offense and offender rates. The crimes committed there tended to be of a particular type, the fabric of the estate was highly vandalised. Whereas another estate (south east Gardenia), with integrated kinship and neighbour networks, had an identifiable adult and juvenile criminal subculture. Here residents tended to be engage in predatory crime and though ragged, the estate was noticeably less vandalised.

2.9 Redevelopment, Rehabilitation and Community

Housing redevelopment in London caused massive community upheaval. Slum clearance necessitated the displacement of many hundreds of existing families; for the Andover Estate, nearly 850 families had to be moved before site clearance could begin. It would be disingenuous to claim that people living there had formed a stable integrated community until the bulldozers arrived. Once the decision to redevelop at least part of the site had been taken in the 1950s, uncertainty would have been added to the problems for people living in what were generally deteriorating properties. A decline accelerated by decades of poor maintenance, enhancing an
atmosphere of degeneration which would have encouraged those existing tenants who could to move out.

White’s (1986) description of Campbell Road between the wars of a ‘poor but loyal’ community cheerfully struggling to make the best of trying circumstances is, given the structure of the labour market by the 1970s, a very unlikely picture indeed. Rather, the local situation would have been one of people living in cramped, poorly equipped homes, frequently without basic services, constantly moving around looking for work in an unpredictable casual labour market. In such circumstances, the possibility of a stable community developing would have been remote, to say the least. Into this must be included the social disorganisation brought about by evacuation of families from London during the war. Huge movements of people to less urban areas caused further social upheaval and a (necessary) break up of communities.

Allocations to these new estates reflected the housing department’s need to have further empty properties for slum clearance. Thus, when the Council let the Six Acres and Clifton Court estates, tenants came from clearance areas throughout the borough. Though perhaps more people already living in Finsbury Park, insofar as they wanted to remain in the area — but only to the extent that their homes were themselves earmarked for clearance. For instance, a small proportion of the lettings on the new Six Acres went to the GLC for families displaced by the clearance of the adjacent Alsen Road site.

As a GLC estate, the Andover Estate was let rather differently. The GLC operated a nominations system, here the main nominating boroughs were Hackney, Camden and Islington. About half of the tenants on this vast estate were homeless families, probably living in temporary accommodation elsewhere - Bayswater was a popular option until recently. The remainder were mostly transfers from other GLC estates, a few sons and daughters whose parents lived in the neighbourhood and decants from clearance areas throughout Greater London. It should be said that some of these clearance families were locals from the Charteris Road housing development area (NIHRP 1976).

What redevelopment of this kind has palpably failed to do, is to revitalise or recreate communities. Though people were keen to move from rundown, poorly equipped housing into new purpose-built flats, communities were rarely moved en masse onto the same estate. There were more pressures on communities than the simple act of demolition of their homes. Other factors had been intervening for many decades, including complex geographical and social mobility, constantly, or at least frequently, changing the structure of many neighbourhoods. But even when communities were rehoused together on one estate -the old Popham estate was rehoused together on the Packington Estate in south Islington - the new physical geography altered social patterns and further relied on the individual nuclear family, insofar as it still existed, as the principal moment of primary socialisation.

In addition to the economic argument, one of the reasons for favouring rehabilitation over redevelopment was its sensitivity towards an area’s exiting residents. They would not be required to leave the area to be rehoused, merely down the street to their newly refurbished flat. In 1971, when the Council declared a housing development area around Charteris Road, most of the existing tenants were living in private rented housing.

This declaration did not bring any relief to the area’s residents, in fact, quite the reverse. In order to discourage squatting, properties in clearance areas, which this now was, were gutted immediately by the Council. In fact, such was the enthusiasm with which the Council’s contractors went about their task, on a number of occasions, Council tenants in flats in this area had their homes gutted whilst they were still in occupation! Thus, from early 1971, the 400 families in the 200 houses in the clearance area, were ‘condemned to years of slow decay, blight, vandalism and stress that are features of Islington’s long and painful redevelopment programme’ (NIHRP 1976, p24).

Since Finsbury Park stood at the heart of the North London Housing Stress Area, the area already suffered from general dereliction. This spreading neglect made living in the area increasingly intolerable. Throughout the planning process, proposals, inquiries and finally Ministerial approval, the residential population continually declined. By the time the compulsory purchase order received Ministerial approval in April 1974, those 400 families had fallen to 150 households (NIHRP 1976, p24). Indeed, when the Council reversed its decision in March 1975 and decided to rehabilitate the area instead, only 120 households left in the area were eligible for rehousing, a further 14 houses were squatted and 50 completely empty (NIHRP 1976, p27).

The continual uncertainty, together with years of continual neglect must have further encouraged residents to move elsewhere, especially when offered an immediate solution to their problems, a new flat on an estate. By the time the remaining tenants formed a housing cooperative in June 1976, only 16 tenants were present at the meeting which took that decision, though membership in time increased to 45 (1976, p32). This figure sits uneasily by the attendance at earlier tenants meetings a few years before which were attended by upwards of 150 residents (1976, p24). Squatters were deliberately excluded by the Housing Rights Project and residents from membership of the housing cooperative, eventually they were rehoused by co-op because of the huge surplus of rehabilitated stock being handed over by Islington Council for allocation.

We can say that the greater popularity of street properties amongst tenants, gives a greater likelihood for the establishment of relatively stable communities amongst these long term tenants than unpopular housing estates with high turnovers. This, though, has nothing whatsoever to do with the formation of housing cooperatives to control allocations and favour local people as they were originally conceived.
Problematically, in an area which is generally fragmented by unpopular housing and mobile populations, juvenile groups for association are much more likely to be drawn from amongst school friends than neighbouring children and their points for association on anonymous housing estates away from interested eyes of parents' and neighbours'. One of the problems of Elias' (1965) village community was that the associations which formed the backbone of the community were adult centred, younger people were expected to fit in as best they could. We can conclude that the failure of community is not solely due to the physical geography of system built housing estates (Coleman 1985, Newman 1973), but is as much a consequence of the processes of planning and development themselves.

2.10 Communities and Crime

We have argued that the increase in the crime rate in London, in particular the rise in vandalism, robbery and domestic burglary, is due in part, to increasingly disorganised communities being unable to exercise sufficient social control over their youth.

The argument is then not that social disorganisation leads to criminality per se, certain communities have always been criminal and, further, criminality requires the desire and wherewithal to commit crime in the first place. But that given crime, such social disorganisation causes a qualitative shift in the nature of crime. Though still predatory, crime becomes more violent.

Organised criminal communities can be described as disciplined, all activities directed towards maximising financial returns. Violence is then teleological, after all it always runs the risk of bringing illegal activities to the attention of the authorities. But such discipline seems to require the presence of adult role models and others who demonstrate restraint and who can ensure can ensure that juvenile crime is itself restrained.

The post-war decades were marked by huge demographic mobility and increasing social disorganisation. The post-war reconstruction of Britain led to enormous social upheaval, exacerbating processes started during the slum clearances of the 1930s and evacuation during the war itself. Overcrowding which had been a feature of urban life since the Industrial Revolution was eased by slum clearance, displacing people into the suburbs and beyond. Within the cities new estates were built to rehouse people moved by slum clearance, others simply moved because of planning blight and to search for work.

Finsbury Park has effectively been rebuilt over the past forty years and is just such an area where we would expect to find increasing social disorganisation and a rise in violent crime. Here we find the break up of communities, partly brought about by wartime measures to protect the population from the bombing of urban areas led to the rise of Teddy Boys and other violent juvenile gangs in Islington. We saw above how violent disputes between gangs in Finsbury Park led to the murder of a policeman who tried to break up a fight between two feuding gangs.

Other social policies have similarly had a destructive effect on communities. Housing renewal, particularly large scale comprehensive redevelopment have led to the displacement and break up of communities. However it would be foolish to ignore the role of the market in all of this. The private rented sector which these government inspired and funded public housing initiatives replaced was scarcely positive in the creation and maintenance of community. The casual labour market has scarcely been a steady employer, nor has the modern phenomenon of the gentrification of what were previously inner city slums been a positive factor. One might indeed be tempted to argue that the arrival of wealthy middle class residents in what were until recently vile and feared slums, has led to relative deprivation and its attendant vandalism can be expected to rise (Braithwaite 1979).

Though not all of the blame for social disorganisation can be laid at the door of social policies enacted with little regard for what was already there, what bits of the community worked and were effective in controlling the worst excesses of its youth. Nor would one pretend that there was not a great need for action over the slums. We have argued that there is a dialectic between social policy and crime which both has the effect of weakening informal social controls which exist in a 'naturally' ordered community and for concentrating certain social problem groups together in one, or more, places. This break down in social order leads not so much towards a rise in crime, but to an increase in violent crime and crimes where the destruction of property is done for its own sake and not for the 'legitimate' one of financial gain.

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1 From 1944, housing in London was planned in concentric rings of population density, with people living at 300ppa (persons per acre) in the centre, falling to 30ppa in the suburbs and 50ppa in satellite towns, which were yet to be built.

2 Excluding criminal damage which did not appear in the statistics until recently.

3 Damer (1974 and 1989) has a similar story to tell of an estate, Moorepark, in Glasgow. This is a better known study but post-dates Elias (1965) by almost a decade.

4 See Boyle (1977) below.

5 Eliza George, Islington Council lettings officer for that period estimates 10% (Conversation, April 1992).

Chapter 3
Problems of Researching Street Crime

There are a number of general problems to be encountered in researching this particular crime problem which need to be noted.

3.1 Definition
The greatest difficulty is that of definition. Many studies and surveys have employed different definitions which causes problems when attempting to compare the results. If we focus on street robbery, for example: what is actually meant by street robbery? There is a lack of clarity over what is meant by a ’robbery’ and what is meant by a ‘street’.

With respect to police definitions, a ‘robbery’ is usually said to involve the use of violence or the threat of violence. Almost every incident in which a weapon is involved, regardless of whether it is employed or not, is defined as a robbery. If there has been no violence or threat of violence then the offence is classed as ‘theft from the person’ which includes snatchings and pick-pockets/‘dips’. The Metropolitan Police publishes separate figures for street robbery, snatch and pick pocketing. Lea and Young (1984) have pointed out, however, that ‘robbery and violent theft’ is easily blended with that of ‘theft of personal property’ (particularly that of snatch) and that inflated figures can occur by allocating crimes from the latter to the former. Blom-Cooper and Drabble (1982) suggested this is what was behind the seemingly dramatic increase in violent street crime in Brixton in 1981: the police had recorded offences under ‘street robbery’ when they should have been categorised as theft from the person. The boundary between violence used and violence not used is always going to be a matter of interpretation. An even less precise measure is that of ‘threat of violence’ as this is dependent on the subjective impression of the person doing the defining or the police officer/ or researcher doing the classifying. Further, in terms of its impact on the victim, ‘robbery’ should not necessary be seen as a more serious crime than that of ‘snatch’, for as Barker et al (1993) note injury may occur in cases of snatch, for example, as a result of the victim being knocked over, whereas, in street robbery violence need only be threatened.

‘Street’ can be taken to mean a street, but it is also used by the Metropolitan Police to include incidents that occur in car-parks, walkways, underpasses, in shopping malls and on buses. ‘Street’ does not include incidents that take place in shops or inside underground or over-ground train stations. The latter are policed by the British Transport Police. The official criminal statistics for England and Wales do not include location and are restricted to the two categories of ‘robbery’ and ‘theft from the person’.

Previous local crime surveys have employed various definitions. The first Islington Crime Survey (Jones et al, 1986) made use of the Metropolitan Police’s definitions. The second Islington Crime Survey (Crawford et al, 1990) focused on the lesser category of theft from the person which was defined as, ‘Have you had anything you were carrying stolen-or has anyone attempted to steal-out of your hands of from your pockets or from a bag or case’. A further question was included which asked respondents whether they had ‘ever been robbed in a public place’. This, however, provides no information on the number of robberies that had occurred in the previous twelve months and public place could be interpreted as anywhere that is not home, thus offences that took place in the work-place or pub may well be included in the figures generated. Other surveys have employed ‘mugged and robbed in the street’, a much severer category than that of ‘theft from the person’ (Lea et al, 1988; Jones et al, 1990; Woodhouse and Yayali, 1990). The word ‘mugging’ should be avoided as it is said to conjure up a stereotypical image of the offender; it is also not a legal category, a person cannot be charged with a mugging. The use of different definitions prevents comparisons being drawn between the Borough surveys (Jones et al, 1986; Crawford et al, 1990) and the more focused surveys conducted on the Hilldrop Estate (Lea et al, 1988), in Mildmay (Jones et al, 1990), the Highbury Neighbourhood (Woodhouse and Yayali, 1990) and Miranda Estate (Mooney, 1993).

3.2 Measurement
It is frequently not made clear whether survey research is counting incidents (that is the number of incidents occurring) or prevalence (the number of people affected). Police data counts incidents. Moreover, many of the local surveys conducted in Islington do not reveal the numbers who have been victimised in the borough. Street robbery, snatch and pick-pocketing/‘dips’, unlike burglary or vandalism, can happen anywhere away from home. If survey data is to be compared to local police figures and policy developed for specific areas we need to know where these offences are occurring. Finally,
although this is not technically surmountable, local surveys do not pick up on the number of non-residents who are victimised whilst visiting the survey area, incidents which may end up in the local police division’s statistics.

In the light of the above difficulties involved in the defining and measuring of these forms of street crime, the questionnaires utilized in this survey were carefully formulated. We tried to be as specific as possible with respect to the nature of the offence and collected data on both incidence and prevalence.
Chapter 4
The Survey Method and Social Characteristics of the Respondents

4.1 Sample Design
The sample used was 50% of all households in the neighbourhood and of this a male or female was selected alternately. Thus on the doorstep the interviewer randomly selected, from all of the male or female people over 16 years old living in that household, one person to interview. A Kish Grid was used for this selection. The sample was thus evenly distributed between male and female and included all people living in the area over the age of sixteen.

Frequently surveys of this kind have used the electoral register to generate a sample. Although the method benefits from the interviewer knowing precisely who they wish to interview when they knock on the door, we felt for this survey its shortcomings would cause too many problems. Principal amongst these was that the electoral register tends to be out of date and following the introduction of the Poll Tax, it is even more incomplete than before. Thus it was important, if we were to have a sample of the whole population, to have as good an idea as possible of the number of households in the area.

The Post Office Address File is advertised by the Post Office as a complete list of addresses in the United Kingdom. It is especially useful because one can, with a deal of programming, generate address labels from the file. However, this is not a list of households, but of delivery points or letter boxes. If we assume that there is one household per owner-occupied or council or housing association flat/dwelling, the sample is unlikely to be particularly inaccurate. Several households do occupy such dwellings and this is an increasing social (and sampling) problem, but as yet not in such large number to corrupt such samples. So, for the purpose-built public housing estates in the sample, we used the Post Office file.

The Finsbury Park area has a large number of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), properties converted into a number of self-contained flats or bed sitting rooms. These usually share a common letter box and a single entry on the Post Office Address File. In order to improve the accuracy of the sample for street properties, a researcher with experience in research and work with private rented sector tenants, mapped the households in these buildings. From this varied information a sampling frame of all of the households in the area was constructed and a sample drawn.

4.2 Fieldwork
The fieldwork was conducted by a team of 12 interviewers who were all experienced with this kind of work. Five of the interviewers could speak some of the relevant community languages. All received training in interviewing techniques, the use of a Kish Grid and so on. Once the respondent was selected, the interview was either carried out or an appointment made and the interviewer returned at a later date. In general, at least four attempts were made to contact the household in the sample, at different times of the day and different days of the week. Interviews took between 20 and 30 minutes to complete. After the interview, respondents were given a ‘Helpline’ card listing useful telephone numbers: local police, Victim Support Scheme, local Council neighbourhood office, etc.

4.3 Response Rate
The Islington Street Crime Survey achieved a response rate of 74%.

4.4 Questionnaire Design
Two questionnaires were used. The first collected general demographic data and information on fear of crime and the type of street crime experienced. The second questionnaire - a victim sheet - was administered to those who had said they had been victimised to enable further, more in-depth, questions to be asked regarding the last incident that occurred (see Appendix I & II).

As noted above we tried to be as careful as possible in terms of defining the specific crimes under investigation. We opted for definitions that could be readily compared with those of the police and the first and second Islington Crime Surveys (Jones et al, 1986; Crawford et al, 1990) in order to yield comparative data. In terms of
measurement, we measured the incidence and prevalence of street robbery, snatch and pick-pocketing in the last twelve months and at some time in the respondents' lives, that is we also used 'have ever' questions. 'Have ever' questions are important as they estimate the percentage of individuals who have been affected at some time in their lives and it should be noted that fear and concern about street crime will relate to such life-time experiences. And, wherever possible, open-ended questions were included to let the respondents 'speak for themselves' about their experiences.

4.5 Social Characteristics of the Respondents

The sample has been broken down according to the gender, age, ethnicity, occupation and housing tenure to assist with the interpretation of the findings presented in the following chapters. As can be seen from Table 4.1 the Finsbury Park area has a mixed population ethnically and by class. There is a large Irish (14%) and African-Caribbean (14%) population and there is a significant Cypriot minority (8%). There is a wide class mixture by occupation and in terms of housing tenure, a predominant council tenancy (70%), yet with a substantial population of owner occupiers (17%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.1: Social Characteristics of the Respondents</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER:</strong></td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td><strong>AGE:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:</strong></td>
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<td>England, Scotland and Wales</td>
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<td>Europe</td>
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<td>Greek and Turkish Cypriot</td>
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<td>Asian</td>
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<td><strong>OCCUPATION:</strong></td>
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<td>Working class</td>
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<td><strong>HOUSING TENURE:</strong></td>
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<td>Council tenant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Landlord</td>
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</table>

7 Mooney (1992) argued with respect to street robbery and snatch we should try to bring our definitions in line with the police in order to develop correctives for police data depending on response rates for each social category. For,

'It is worth...bearing in mind that police data in general is readily available and collected at great cost, it is not possible to conduct social surveys everytime we want to work out the problems of an area. The aim should be to use social surveys as correctives in order to interpret police data, for example, crime surveys give us an idea of the differential reporting rates of different groups of people. Thus in an ideal situation crime surveys using matched categories would allow us to weight the latter.' (Ibid: p13).
Chapter 5

The Impact of Street Crime

5.1 Findings from Previous Local Surveys Conducted in Islington

Previous local surveys have shown fear of street crime to be high. In the first Islington Crime Survey (Jones et al., 1986) 46 per cent of respondents worried about being 'mugged and robbed'; in the first Hilldrop survey (Lea et al., 1986) 52 per cent worried 'quite a bit' or 'a lot' about being 'mugged and robbed'; in Mildmay (Jones et al., 1990) and Highbury (Woodhouse and Yaylali, 1990) neighbourhoods 66 per cent and 49 per cent respectively worried 'quite a bit' or 'a lot' about being 'robbed or attacked by strangers in the street', Highbury has a much lower crime rate overall than Mildmay.

In Mildmay women who worried about being 'mugged and robbed in the street' were much more likely than men to avoid going out at night: of those women who were worried 69 per cent avoided 'sometimes' or 'always' going out at night in comparison to 34 per cent of men. Women who worried about being 'mugged and robbed in the street' were, in addition, more likely to stay away from certain areas after dark than men: 64 per cent of women who were worried as opposed to 44 per cent of men.

These figures give an indication of the impact that street crime can have on a community.

5.2 Police Effectiveness

Despite the fact that people worry a great deal about such crime the majority of people interviewed for the Borough surveys believe the police to be 'fairly' or 'very' unsuccessful in dealing with street robbery: 62 per cent avoided 'sometimes' or 'always' going out at night in comparison to 34 per cent of men. Women who worried about being 'mugged and robbed in the street' were, in addition, more likely to stay away from certain areas after dark than men: 64 per cent of women who were worried as opposed to 44 per cent of men.

In the second Islington Crime Survey 89 per cent of those interviewed wanted the police to spend more time on street robbery, making it second in the list of public policing priorities - after sexual attacks on women.

5.3 The Islington Street Crime Survey: Avoidance Behaviour

Let us turn now to our present survey, respondents were asked whether they adopted any avoidance or precautionary tactics against crime. As can be seen from Table 5.1 avoidance behaviour is widespread especially at night and with respect to feared areas. This is true of both men and women although women consistently engage in avoidance behaviour to a greater extent than men. Two thirds of all women sometimes or always avoid going out after dark because of fear of crime and over 80% avoid certain areas after dark. This is not a phenomenon restricted to women: the corresponding figures for men are one quarter and 32% but the particularly strong impact on women make them especially reliant on male family or friends. As we can see in Table 5.2 such strategies are widespread.

Figures such as these, which have been replicated in very many studies of inner city areas, vividly highlight the real impact that crime has upon the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5.1: Avoidance and Precautions: All Sample Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEHAVIOUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids going out during the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids going out after dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stays away from certain areas in the Durham Road area during the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stays away from certain areas in the Durham Road area after dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goes out with someone rather than by one's self after dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5.2: Avoidance and Precautions: Women Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEHAVIOUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goes out with husband, boyfriend, other male family member or close male friend rather than by one’s self after dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met by husband, boyfriend, other male family member or male close friend when returning home after dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted data |
5.3.1 Particular Protective Behaviour Adopted and Areas Avoided

Particular protective behaviours adopted included: the carrying of a personal alarm or whistle to alert other people if attacked (5% of men, 9% of women), the carrying of weapons e.g knives (5% of men, 4% of women); scissors (2% of men, 3% of women), stick/umbrella (6% of men, 7% of women), hairspray, keys, pepper, screwdriver and so on for defence purposes.

Respondents were also asked to identify the area(s) they 'sometimes' or 'always' avoided and to specify, in their own words, their reason(s) for doing so. The areas most likely to be avoided were around Finsbury Park train and bus stations and certain walkways on the survey area. The most common reason given for avoiding certain areas was fear of street robbery - 'mugging' (52%). With respect to walkways on the Andover these were frequently described as badly lit and 'tunnely'.

5.3.2 Avoidance Behaviour on Public Transport

The two public areas in which avoidance behaviour because of crime is widespread are the street (as we have seen above) and public transport. Once again avoidance is substantial, is greater amongst women and involves particular locations. Finsbury Park station both overground and underground is especially avoided. What is of interest is that fear of crime has a considerable impact on the use of the car. Over half of respondents sometimes or always preferentially use cars or taxis because of fear of crime, rising to two thirds of women.

Respondents were specifically asked whether they avoided using public transport because of fear of robbery, physical assault, being insulted or bothered by stranger. Women were additionally asked if it was through fear of sexual assault or sexual harassment. The results are presented in the table below.

**TABLE 5.4: Reasons for Avoiding Public Transport**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASON</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>ALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEAR OF:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being insulted or bothered by strangers</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted data

**IMPACT OF STREET CRIME ON THE VICTIM**

5.4 Psychological and Behavioural Impact on the Victim

Respondents were asked what effect the incident(s) had on them. Their responses included 'devastated', 'depression', 'made more nervous', 'scared', 'shock', 'frustration' and 'anger'. Many reported being more careful about what they took out with them. Others limited their use of public space by, for example, avoiding the area where the incident took place, not going out after dark or, in some cases, avoiding going out in general. One elderly woman experienced a heart attack during a robbery and ended up in intensive care at the local hospital. For some, however, particularly those experiencing pickpocketing/ 'dips' or attempts, the incident had no effect. And one woman who managed to fight off the perpetrator reported the incident had 'made me feel stronger'.

As can be seen from Table 5.5 a small percentage of victims needed medical attention but a large proportion had considerable psychological difficulties in terms of anxiety and loss of self-confidence. This gave rise to quite extensive avoidance behaviour and even the carrying of weapons to defend themselves (see Table 5.6).

**TABLE 5.5: Avoidance of Public Transport as a Precaution Against Crime: All Sample Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOUR</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>ALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoids underground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids buses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids overground stations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids Finsbury Park underground station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids Finsbury Park overground station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travels by car or taxi rather than walk or use public transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted data

**TABLE 5.5: Impact on Victim of Street Crime**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See a doctor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to stay overnight in hospital</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have to take time off work</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have difficulty sleeping</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel worried, anxious or nervous</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel depressed, lose self-confidence</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statistics can never fully convey concern over or the experience of qualitative data. Let us conclude this chapter by just allowing the victims to speak of their experiences.

**TABLE 5.6: Precautions Taken As a Result of Experiencing Street Crime**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRECAUTIONS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carry something to defend self</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry something to alert other people</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid where the incident happened or places like it</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid particular kinds of people</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5 In Their Own Words: The Experience of Street Crime

Statistics can never fully convey concern over or the experience of street crime. Thus the questionnaires included open-ended questions to enable the gathering of qualitative data. Let us conclude this chapter by just allowing the victims to speak of their experiences.

‘Being mugged made me very angry. I don’t carry large amounts of money around with me any more. I also witnessed a mugging on the underground which has made me wary of using it. If I use the bus after dark, I sit on the bottom deck as near to the driver as possible.’ (woman)

‘For months I wouldn’t go out. It was only seven at night. I’m always looking over my shoulder.’ (woman)

‘I was robbed with my sister on the underground. We were steamed by members of a 30 strong gang. I was threatened with a knife and kicked in the head. My sister was jerked around before being thrown against the railings. I saw who took my bag though, a white girl. I was found collapsed in the street and taken to hospital.’ (woman)

‘I was punched in the back and I stumbled forward. He (the offender) came to my side and grabbed my handbag. It was very firmly clasped in my fist. As he tried to wrestle it free, I swung my case up (in the other hand) and caught him in a ‘vulnerable’ place. I was then able to get a way but it has made me feel worried when out on my own.’ (woman).

‘I was on a bus and a youth asked me the time. He was with several friends when I got off, they did and they surrounded me and took my jewellery and bag. It stopped me going out at night, I always try to take a cab.’ (woman).

‘I was carrying a bag of things for my sister in hospital. My path was blocked by a group of young boys on bikes who told me they were going to take my bag. I told them I knew them and would send my husband round to their homes if they touched me. They let me through. It has made me nervous of young kids and going out.’ (woman).

‘I was in the park with my baby this bloke ran up, grabbed my necklace and said give me the purse or I’ll stab you then he said he’d hit the baby with a brick. I don’t go out as much and don’t go to the park anymore.’ (woman).

‘I was returning home from the fish shop, about 11 pm. Two men came from behind both produced knives and asked me to handover my jewellery and leather jacket which I did. I felt very shaken and angry that they could get away with it so easily. The police offered victim support scheme to me, but I thought it would be a waste of time that I didn’t really need it.’ (man).

‘I was walking through the crowd at the tube station. I was jostled by a group of youths. It was only later I’d realised I’d been pick-pocketed. I lost my wallet. It didn’t really affect me, I’m just more careful.’ (man).

‘Two youths ran past me and grabbed my bag off my shoulder. It had my post office book in it, keys and cash, I’d just cashed my giro. I think they’d seen me leave the post office. I felt very angry, it was a real nuisance. It didn’t really affect me psychologically though’. (woman).

‘I was walking to the bank. Felt a tug. He (the offender) cut the straps and ran off. It has made me wary of what I’m carrying and I always look around, I’m more jumpy. I lost cash, my pension book and a pen which my husband had given me, it was of sentimental value as he’d just died. My hand bag was later found on the estate. (woman).

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Chapter 6
The incidence of street crime and profile of the victim

In this chapter we will detail the incidence and prevalence of street crime both in terms of an overall rate and in terms of rates per section of the population. This will allow us to examine the size of the problem, to indicate which parts of the population are most at threat and to make some comparisons about stereotypes of street crime. Important here is to distinguish prevalence rates from incidence rates. Prevalence rates are the number of individuals who have experienced the crime per 100 of the population in a particular time period, incidence rates are the number of such incidents that have occurred per 100 of the population in the same period. As some individuals will have been multiply victimized incidence rates are inevitably higher than prevalence rates.

6.1 Overall Incidence and Prevalence of Street Crime

The overall prevalence of street crime in our population is 6.8% in a twelve month period whilst the incidence rate is 11.2%. We have, therefore, a fairly frequent crime which directly affects one in fourteen individuals every year. Of course, the impact on the population in terms of fear and anxieties is more likely to relate to the actual number of incidents of which there are nine for every one hundred of the population - a not inconsiderable figure. And all of this occurs in the context of the public taking extensive precautions as to their behaviour in public space in order to avoid such crime. (See Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 above). Undoubtedly the rate of street crime would be significantly greater if such avoidance tactics did not occur. It is with this in mind that the extensive public worries with regards to street crime reported in Chapter Five must be situated and it is in such a context that it is difficult to understand those critics who talk of a moral panic with regards to street crime (See the discussion in Lea and Young, 1994).

6.2 Successful and Attempted Street Crime: 12 month and ‘have ever’

The true magnitude of the problem can be seen if we take into account unsuccessful street crime and whether people have ever been victims of street crime before the period of the last twelve months. As can be seen from Tables 6.1 and 6.2 the total successful and attempted street crime in the last 12 months has a prevalence rate of 12% and an incidence rate of 18%. These are extremely high figures. Furthermore, if we look at ‘have ever’ data before the twelve month period (Table 6.3) we can note the widespread nature of the phenomenon. Note that ‘have ever’ data are not a very good measure of the actual figure - people often forget but it gives a 'bottom line' index of prevalence. Both attempted street crime and that which occurred before the last year will obviously additionally fuel public anxiety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6.1: Actual Street Crime (i.e. successful) in the Last 12 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n) (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Crime - overall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick-pocket/ 'Dip'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n= 1,000 (not weighted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6.2: Attempted Street Crime (snatch and robbery) in the Last 12 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n) (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted street crime overall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n= 1,000 (not weighted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6.3: Actual Street Crime (i.e. successful) Before the Last 12 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n) (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street crime overall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick-pocket/ 'dip'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n= 1,000 (not weighted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, we illustrate in the last table of this section (6.4) the way in which the impact of street crime is likely to be shaped by the high frequency of the offence when inci-
dence rates, unsuccessful attempts and have ever figures are taken into consideration.

**TABLE 6.4: The Overall Prevalence and Incidence of Street Crime: Percentages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successful Street Crime 12m</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful and Attempted Street Crime 12m</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Street Crime Have Ever</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n= 1,000 (not weighted) Rounded Up Percentages

6.3 The Varieties and Seriousness of Street Crime

As can be seen from Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 the more violent the street crime the less its frequency. However, robbery where actual or threatened violence occurs is not a rare event: one in thirty five people having experienced such intimidation in the last twelve months and at least one in ten in the period before then.

6.4 Comparative Rates

It is difficult because of definitional differences to make an exact comparison with previous studies but these findings indicate a rate of street crime which is double the national rate (Mayhew et al, 1993).

6.5 Victimization by Age and Gender

In this section we will look at the rates of victimization by age and gender. As we can see from Table 6.5 victimization rates are highest in the lowest age range and lowest amongst the over 45 year olds. This is in line with the literature although the comparatively high rates in the 25 to 44 years age group is perhaps not sufficiently realized.

In Table 6.6 we can see that the rates for women are greater than for men in terms of prevalence although the incidence rates are greater for men suggesting that although fewer men are targeted they have a higher rate of multiple victimization.

**TABLE 6.6: Street Crime by Gender in the Last Twelve Months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence (%)</th>
<th>Incidence (%)</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the next two tables we analyse victimization rates by the combination of age and gender (Tables 6.7a and 6.7b). The high rate in the lowest age category and the lower rate in the highest occurs with both sexes. What is different however is the low rate of victimization of men in the 25 to 34 age group. Whether or not this is a product of them being the least physically vulnerable to victimization, is a matter for speculation but the finding is very pronounced.

**TABLE 6.7a: Street Crime by Age in the Last Twelve Month: Males Over 16, Prevalence and Incidence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Prevalence (%)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>Incidence (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers do not add up to 429 because 56 no age given.

**TABLE 6.7b: Street Crime by Age in the Last Twelve Month: Females Over 16, Prevalence and Incidence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Prevalence (%)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
<th>Incidence (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers do not add up to 571 because 75 no age given.
6.6 Victimization by Ethnic Group

### TABLE 6.8: Street Crime by Ethnicity in the Last 12 Months: Prevalence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>Prevalence (%)</th>
<th>(n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English, Scottish and Welsh</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-Caribbean</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see there is a wide variation between the victimization rates of the three ethnic groups compared above. Unfortunately we were unable to compare with Asian groups because of low response rates. The extremely high street crime victimization of the Irish is a finding which should be noted. Additionally it should be stressed that street theft cannot be seen as something which is directed overwhelmingly at white victims, Africans have the second highest victimization rate. Nor, conversely, that blacks, in general, have a high victimization rate, it is high for Africans and very low for African Caribbeans. Although, the numbers are relatively small it is interesting to break this down by combination of ethnicity and gender.

### TABLE 6.9: Street Crime by Ethnicity and Gender in the Last Twelve Months: Prevalence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
<th>All (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English, Scottish, Welsh</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-Caribbean</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here we see that female victimization is greater than that of males in all ethnic groups but African-Caribbean with the African rates equal. The prevalence rates against Irish females is extremely high - almost 80% over the average for women.

6.7 Rates of Victimization Compared by Group Compared to Proportion of Total Victims by Group

The analysis above has been carried out in terms of the rates of street crime occurring by each ethnic group. The victim survey allows us to do this because it provides victimization rates and the proportion of each ethnic group in the population. This is an accurate picture of the differential impact of street robbery on each ethnic group. It is a contrast with an analysis of the proportion of total victims by ethnic group (eg. what proportion of all victims were English, Irish, African Caribbean etc.). This type of analysis often portrays itself as giving a breakdown of who is the average victim (eg. Pratt, 1980).

It, of course, does this but curiously and unintentionally it, in fact, does so from the perspective of the offender (who he is likely to rob) rather than from that of the victim (who is likely to be robbed). These two figures will only be identical if there is an equal number of each ethnic group in the population (or age group, class composition etc.) - an extremely unlikely event only usually encountered in terms of gender.

The fashion in which an analysis of the proportion of total victims distorts the degree of victimization of particular groups can be seen from the following tables (Tables 6.10, 6.11).

### TABLE 6.10: Division of Victims by Ethnicity, percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY OF VICTIMS</th>
<th>% of Victims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English, Scottish, Welsh</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other European</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypriot</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Caribbean</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 6.11: Ethnic Division of Victims of Street Robbery or Snatch Cross-tabulated by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>Male Victims (%)</th>
<th>Female Victims (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English, Scottish, Welsh</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other European</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypriot</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Caribbean</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This would suggest that the order of victimization in these tables is English, Scottish, Welsh (1); Irish (2); African Caribbean (3); African (4) when in fact allowing for the different proportions of each ethnic group it is Irish (1); African (2); English, Scottish, Welsh (3) and African Caribbean (4). That is a totally different ordering.

6.8 Scene of Street Crime

Information was collected as to geographical location, that is, whether the incidents happened within or outside of their neighbourhood. It appears that 42% of incidents occurred within the Durham Road boundaries and a further 30% occurred in the surrounding Finsbury Park area. Therefore 72% of residents were close to home when they were victimised.
6.9 Time of Incident

It appears, with reference to Table 6.12, that whilst snatch occurs predominantly during the day or dusk, street robbery may occur more randomly during either night or day. The peak time, however, for street robbery occurs between 8 o'clock in the evening and midnight (58.7% of cases occurring here).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>Street Robbery (%)</th>
<th>Snatch (%)</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>Street Robbery (%)</th>
<th>Snatch (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1100</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2300</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>2400</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.10 Summary: Likelihood of Adult Victimization

Although generalisations can be misleading, or misused, the following table (Table 6.13) gives an indication of the factors which appear to increase the likelihood of victimisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Street Robbery</th>
<th>Snatch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Young-mid aged</td>
<td>Young-mid aged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Group</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Class</td>
<td>Working Class</td>
<td>Working class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>8pm-12am</td>
<td>Day/Dusk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.11 School Children and Street Crime

Lastly let us examine the incidence and impact of street crime on children. Mooney's (1992) analysis of Islington police data showed school children to constitute a significant proportion of the victims of reported street robbery and snatch, particularly male children. Of the total number reported cases in Holloway Police Division, 51 (22%) involved a child under 16 years. 41 (80%) were school boys in comparison to ten (20%) girls.

In this present study in order to gain an insight into children's experiences, respondents with children under 16 years were asked whether any of them had been the victim of street crime. This is clearly not the optimum method, it would be better to ask the children themselves but this was beyond the scope of the project. Many children do not tell their parents -Anderson et al’s (1990) survey of children and crime showed there was a reluctance to tell parents. However, this approach at least gives us a base line, it enables us to say that at least this number have been victimized.

6.11.1 Incidence and Prevalence of Street Crime Against Children: The Edinburgh Study

Anderson et al's (1990) survey of young people and crime in Edinburgh found 17 per cent of their sample had experienced theft from the person (defined as having occurred when something had been stolen directly with or without violence). Of these only 14 per cent of boys and 23 per cent of girls reported the incident to the police. Whether the incident was reported to the police appeared to depend on the impact of the experience: 53 per cent of victims of theft from the person who had been 'very frightened' reported the incident to the police, in comparison to 14 per cent who had been 'quite frightened'.

6.11.2 The Present Study

Profile of Respondents - 356 respondents had children under 16 years. 260 respondents had male children (actual no = 343), 217 had female children (actual no = 293).

Extent of Actual Street Crime (i.e successful) - 33 respondents had children who had experienced street crime in the last 12 months (total of 58 incidents). 20 (34%) incidents had been reported to the police. The number of respondents whose children had experienced robbery (def. 'threatened with violence or had violence or force or a weapon used against them') was 16 (also 16 incidents).

Gender of victim - 18 had male children who were victimised (23 incidents), 7 had female children (20 incidents).

Location - the most usual location was school. When the incident took place outside of the school respondents' said their children were frequently on the way to school or returning from school. Mooney (1992) study showed many of the incidents occurred near to schools.
Most children had small amounts of money taken, occasionally sports wear and watches and in the case of girls necklaces were frequently stolen. Offenders were frequently known to the victim (i.e. was another school child).

Extent of Attempted Street Crime (i.e nothing taken) - 9 had children who had experienced attempted street crime (11 incidents). 5 had children who were 'threatened with violence or had violence or force or a weapon used against them' - attempted robbery (5 incidents). 3 male victims (3 incidents), 3 female (4 incidents) 3 D/k. Again the most usual location was school.

Overall Location for Actual and Attempted Street Crime - The majority of incidents occurred in the Durham Road neighbourhood.

Impact - Many parents reported their children as being 'upset', 'shaken', 'frightened to go out' and has having difficulty in sleeping. Here are three typical quotations from our qualitative data.

'Near to his school, he was on his way to school. He was jumped on and beaten-up badly by a group of five youths. They went through his pockets and school bag, but they found nothing of value, just some change. He was very shaken and had difficulty in sleeping for some time.'

'He (aged 12) had been given a necklace for her birthday. Some older kids in the playground said if she didn't hand it over they'd beat her up, so she did. They pushed her around a bit. She was very frightened and scared to go to school. It wasn't as though the necklace was expensive. I wouldn't have let her go to school with anything valuable.'

'He (aged 12) had been given a necklace for her birthday. Some older kids in the playground said if she didn't hand it over they'd beat her up, so she did. They pushed her around a bit. She was very frightened and scared to go to school. It wasn't as though the necklace was expensive. I wouldn't have let her go to school with anything valuable.'
Chapter 7
The Profile of the Offender

7.1 Creating Offender Profiles

Attempting to ascertain characteristics of offenders is more complex than assessing victims. Due to the nature of a victim survey the sole knowledge that can be reported is that of the experience as perceived by the victim, without the collaboration of any witnesses. Admittedly, due to the nature of the criminal acts under investigation, witnesses are scarce. But if an offender profile is to be created as accurately as possible, comment should be made as to why caution should be applied with reference to victim data. Firstly, the acts of street robbery or snatch require, from the offenders point of view, an element of surprise, the mere fact that a victim is caught unaware complicates any attempt to commit to memory the events which occurred with strict accuracy. Secondly, a characteristic of both street robbery and snatch is the speed of the incident and the quick exit of the offender from the scene; this may hinder the victim’s ability to register events accurately. Third, the ability of the victim to offer information concerning offenders is reliant upon their own subjectivity, for example, ability to judge accurately the age or ethnicity of an offender may vary significantly between victims. Finally, problems of memory recall are obviously dependent upon how long ago the incident took place.

Despite these difficulties it would be negligent not to attempt to construct some form of offender profile. To minimize the difficulties the information sought by the questionnaire was limited to: (a) the number of people involved in the incident (b) the sex of the offender (c) the approximate age of the offender, and (d) the ethnic group the person belonged to (the selection for this response being restricted to: White, Black, Asian, Greek/Turkish Cypriot, Mixed Group or Other).

7.2 Number of Attackers Involved in Specific Incidents

With regard to the number of offenders involved in a specific incident, the response suggests that both types of incident are more often undertaken by a single offender or by two people. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show this information for street robbery and snatch, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7.1: Size of Offender Group Reported in Snatch Incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7.2: Size of Offender Group Reported in Street Robbery Incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The large number of victims of snatch unsure of the group size (28.6%) should come as no surprise for this reflects, to a certain extent, the presence of ‘dip’ instances reported in this group. If the ‘Don’t Know’ group are extracted from the results we obtain the following percentages - one offender: 44%, two offenders: 52%, three offenders: 4%. Although there are more examples of large groups involved in street robbery, groups of one or two offenders account for nearly two-thirds of incidents; however, one in five victims were attacked a by group of five or six offenders.

7.3 Gender of Offenders

The survey recorded, unsurprisingly, a gender asymmetry in offender data. Males were responsible for the vast majority of offences committed. Within the category of street robbery males accounted for 90% of offenders. In snatch, however, there is more evidence of female participation: of those respondents aware of being the victims of snatch 70.8% claimed the incident involved male offenders. Thus females accounted for one in four incidents in this type of street crime; the remaining 4.2% of incidents involved mixed groups.

7.4 Age of Offender

The perceived age of the offender is probably the hardest characteristic for victims to gauge. However the vast majority of victims did attempt to place offenders into specific age groups. This information is summarised in Table 7.3.
TABLE 7.3: Cross Tabulation of Offenders Committing either Street Robbery or Snatch, by age, and gender (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Street Robbery</th>
<th>Snatch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female:Male</td>
<td>TOTAL (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;16</td>
<td>25:75</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>25:75</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>0:100</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>0:100</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>0:100</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Offenders of street robbery consistently belong to the younger age groups, with 91% of offenders perceived to be under the age of 25. Within this category it should be noted that all female offenders were considered to be under the age of 20. Male offending, however, appears to peak between the ages of 16-25, after which there is a dramatic fall in numbers of offenders. None of the victims of street robbery perceived their offender(s) to be over the age of thirty.

The age range of people committing snatch offences has a greater spread, up to the age of 45 yrs. However, once again this seems to be an activity of the younger members of the community with three quarters of offenders (78.3%) being deemed to be under the age of 26. Interestingly, it appears, that this range can be attributed to gender differences. Women are involved in a minority of snatch incidents occurring in the younger age groups, but they are exclusively involved in offences committed by the over 25’s. Male offenders show the opposite pattern, that is, offending occurs under the age of twenty-five; further the peak for male offenders centres in the 16-25 age group.

A final cross-tabulation which introduces interesting information is that of age by group size. It is noticeable that all incidents involving larger groups of offenders (3 or more individuals) occur where the age of the offenders is less than twenty. Street robbery and snatch involving over twenty-one year olds is characterised by the fact that offenders only ‘operate’ alone or in couples.

7.5 Offender’s Ethnic Group

The following results were offered by victims regarding the perceived ethnic appearance of the offender(s):

TABLE 7.4: Ethnic Appearance of Offender, Street Robbery and Snatch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>Street Robbery</th>
<th>Snatch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypriot</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brackets exclude ‘don’t know’.

In the area of street robbery the indication is that there are a disproportionately large amount of black offenders, and a correspondingly low figure for all other groups within the area. This is also the characteristic revealed in snatch incidents. If the proportion in each group is calculated excluding, the ‘Don’t Know’ category the following results emerge: Blacks - 69.6%; White - 17.4%; Asian - 4.3% and mixed 8.7%)

7.6 Conclusion

As with victim characteristics it is possible to create a profile of offender characteristics. However, as stated previously this must only be seen as a very broad image and not one to generate a precise impression of generalised offenders. It must also be borne in mind that this information is only applicable to the results of the survey and cannot be inferred onto a profile of street criminals outside of the scope of this study.

TABLE 7.5: Offender Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>Street Robbery</th>
<th>Snatch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. Offenders</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>16-25</td>
<td>16-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8
Policy Conclusions

This piece of research has been primarily that of ascertaining the extent of street crime in the Finsbury Park area. We have revealed the widespread nature of the problem, dispelled any notion of irrational fears within the population with regards to street crime and, in conjunction with our various previous studies of public priorities of policing (eg. Jones et al, 1986; Painter et al, 1989), established street crime as a justified major item on the agenda of both the police and other agencies concerned with crime control.

Having, thus, stressed the priority of street crime, it has to be said that it is an extremely difficult crime to control. This is because, although a witnessed crime (unlike, for example, in most instances burglary), the victim does not know the offender(s) and is unable to report to the police. The exception to this is school children (see below). Furthermore many of the conventional direct police interventions used in policing are ineffective. Stop and search, as we have seen, in our recent report (Young, 1994) does not yield effective results in this area whilst police patrols are extremely unlikely to come upon street crime in progress and can never, for any length of time, be of sufficient saturation to deter would-be offenders.

Much hope has recently been pinned on the notion of encouraging the public to volunteer information on offenders with the explicit exhortation that ‘mugging’ in the area is committed by a small number of individuals and their arrest would summarily obliterate the problem. Even if the cooperation of the section of the public who have direct knowledge of these offenders were possible and all available research suggests that this is extremely unlikely (see Jones et al, 1990), the strategy is based on a fundamental flaw. For street crime is perhaps the most amateurish of all property crimes, there is no criminal ‘career’ in the offender profile and the individuals enter and leave the ranks of street criminals with ease. Thus, although there is, in truth, only a small number of individuals involved in street crime, there is no fixed cast of offenders.

Both reactive and proactive policing is thus limited if we attempt to control street crime by the direct arrest of offenders. What is necessary is to look at measures which prevent the crime occurring or decrease the motivation to offend. These will be, of necessity, tentative. It would be completely wrong to suggest easy strategies: there have been too many magical solutions to crime suggested in the past.

1. RECEIVERS OF STOLEN GOODS

Like burglary, street crime is in part dependent on there being a market for stolen goods. Stricter controls of second hand shops, particularly those dealing in jewellery, may make it harder for the offender to ‘fence’ his goods. Lea et al (1988) have suggested that the police should make a careful note of the characteristics of the goods stolen and ‘take a vigilant stance’ with respect to such shops. Certificates of purchase could additionally be insisted upon. Security cameras should be encouraged in such shops, they are, after all victims of robbery themselves and such videotapes would provide not only protection for the shopowners but enable the monitoring of regular sellers of jewellery.

2. SCHOOLS

Given that school children are often the victims of street crime and that the perpetrator is usually another school child, cooperation and communication between the schools and the police should be improved in order to encourage reporting and to help with identifying the culprits. In this instance the identity is more likely to be known by the victim and by teachers.

The development of educational initiatives designed to deter young people from committing street robbery and snatch may prove useful. The problem here, however, is that those school children who are the most likely to be offenders may be the least likely to respond to such messages from the schools. Educational initiatives aimed at younger children as part of programmes to encourage responsible citizenship from an early age should be developed.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Increasing pedestrian flow in an area affects the crime rate in terms of informal social control. The more pedestrians around the greater the possibility of the offender being identified and of someone coming to the aid of the victim. There are several ways of increasing the pedestrian flow, these include: improving the street lighting (see Painter, 1988), removing underpasses and ensuring that estates have streets running through them, rather than being enclosed.
Appendix I
Main Questionnaire

I would like to ask you some questions about things which may have happened to you in the last twelve months.

1a In the last 12 months have you had anything you were carrying stolen out of your hands or from your pockets or from a bag or case?

HOW MANY TIMES?

b) IF ONE OR MORE ASK:
How many of these incidents did you report to the police?

HOW MANY TIMES?

c) IF ONE OR MORE AT (a) ASK:
Of these incidents, how many times were you aware that someone was stealing anything from you at the time?

HOW MANY TIMES?

d) During any of these incidents were you threatened with, or was violence or force or a weapon used against you?

HOW MANY TIMES?

e) IF ONE OR MORE TO (d) ASK
Can you tell me whether the incidents happened in any of the following places:

i) the street, subway, underpass, park, alleyway, car park, uncovered shopping area.

HOW MANY TIMES?

ii) in a shop, covered market

HOW MANY TIMES?

iii) on a bus.

HOW MANY TIMES?

iv) inside a train/bus/underground station, and on a train/tube.

HOW MANY TIMES?

v) elsewhere?
WRITE IN WHERE AND HOW MANY TIMES
2a. Excluding anything you have already mentioned, in the last 12 months has anyone tried to steal something you were carrying - out of your hands or from a bag or case?

HOW MANY TIMES?

IF NONE GOTO 3

b) How many of these incidents did you report to the police?

HOW MANY TIMES?

c) IF ONE OR MORE AT a) ASK:
During the incidents were you threatened with violence or was violence or force or a weapon used against you?

HOW MANY TIMES?

IF NONE GOTO 3

d) IF ONE OR MORE TO c) ASK:
Can you tell me whether the incidents happened in any of the following places:

i) the street, subway, underpass, park, alleyway, car park, uncovered shopping area.

HOW MANY TIMES?

ii) in a shop, covered market,

HOW MANY TIMES

iii) on a bus.

HOW MANY TIMES

iv) inside a train/bus/underground station, and on a train/tube.

HOW MANY TIMES

v) elsewhere?

WRITE IN WHERE AND HOW MANY TIMES
3. IF ONE OR MORE TO EITHER (1) OR (2) SHOW MAP B AND ASK:

a) How many of these incidents took place in:

i) the Durham Road neighbourhood? HOW MANY TIMES? GOTO (b)

ii) in the surrounding area? HOW MANY TIMES? GOTO (b)

iii) elsewhere? HOW MANY TIMES? GOTO (c)

b) IF ANY IN DURHAM ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD OR THE SURROUNDING AREA:
Can you mark on the map where these incidents took place?
SHOW MAP B

c) IF ANY IN DURHAM ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD OR ELSEWHERE
GO TO VICTIM SHEET
4a. Excluding those incidents you have already mentioned, has anyone at any time before the last 12 months stolen any thing you were carrying -out of your hands or from a bag or case?

   HOW MANY TIMES?

   IF NONE
   GOTO 5

b) IF ONE OR MORE AT (a) ASK:
   Of these incidents, were you aware of having something stolen from you at the time?

   HOW MANY TIMES?

c) During the incidents were you threatened with violence or was violence or force or a weapon used against you?

   HOW MANY TIMES?

   IF NONE
   GOTO 5

d) IF ONE OR MORE TO (c) ASK
   Can you tell me whether the incidents happened in any of the following places:

   i) the street, subway, underpass, park, alleyway, car park, uncovered shopping area.
      HOW MANY TIMES?

   ii) in a shop, covered market,
       HOW MANY TIMES?

   iii) on a bus.
       HOW MANY TIMES?

   iv) inside a train/bus/underground station, and on a train/tube.
       HOW MANY TIMES?

   v) elsewhere?
       WRITE IN WHERE AND HOW MANY TIMES
5a) Excluding those incidents you have already mentioned, has anyone at any time before the last 12 months attempted to steal something you were carrying out of your hands or from a bag or case?

HOW MANY TIMES?

b) IF ONE OR MORE AT a) ASK:
During the incidents were you threatened with violence or was violence or force or a weapon used against you?

HOW MANY TIMES?

IF NONE GOTO 6

IF NONE GOTO 6

c) IF ONE OR MORE TO (b) ASK:
Can you tell me whether the incidents happened in any of the following places:

i) the street, subway, underpass, park, alleyway, car park, uncovered shopping area.
HOW MANY TIMES?

ii) in a shop, covered market
HOW MANY TIMES?

iii) on a bus.
HOW MANY TIMES?

iv) inside a train/bus/underground station, and on a train/tube.
HOW MANY TIMES?

v) elsewhere?
WRITE IN WHERE AND HOW MANY TIMES
6. IF ONE OR MORE TO EITHER (4.a) OR (5.a) SHOW MAP C AND ASK:

a) How many of these incidents took place in:
   i) the Durham Road neighbourhood?
   ii) the surrounding area?
   iii) elsewhere?

7. What sort of affect have these incidents had on you?

(INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT eg DEPRESSION, NERVOUSNESS, NOT GOING OUT AT NIGHT AND OTHER AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOURS)

WRITE IN
8. How many people do you have living in your household who are:
   a) male and under 16 years old?
   b) female and under 16 years old?

9. IF ANY CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OLD ASK:
   a) During the past 12 months have any of these children had anything they were carrying stolen - out of their hands or from their pockets or from a bag or case?
      HOW MANY TIMES?
   b) IF ONE OR MORE ASK:
      Of these incidents, were any of them reported to the police?
      WRITE IN HOW MANY TIMES?
   c) During the incidents were they threatened with violence, or was violence or force or a weapon used against them?
      WRITE IN HOW MANY TIMES?
   d) IF ONE OR MORE TO (c) ASK
      Can you tell me whether the incidents happened in any of the following places:
      i) in school.
         HOW MANY TIMES?
      ii) the street, subway, underpass, park, alleyway, car park, uncovered shopping area.
         HOW MANY TIMES?
      iii) in a shop, covered market,
         HOW MANY TIMES?
      iv) on a bus.
         HOW MANY TIMES?
      v) inside a train/bus/underground station, and on a train/tube.
         HOW MANY TIMES?
      vi) elsewhere?
         WRITE IN WHERE AND HOW MANY TIMES
   e) How many of these incidents involved a male victim?
      HOW MANY TIMES?
   ii) How many of these incidents involved a female victim?
      HOW MANY TIMES?
10a. Excluding anything you have already mentioned, has anyone ever tried to steal something that they were carrying out of their hands or from a bag or case.

HOW MANY TIMES?

b) How many of these incidents were reported to the police?

HOW MANY TIMES?

c) IF ONE OR MORE AT (a) ASK:
During the incidents were they threatened with violence or was violence, or force or a weapon used against them?

HOW MANY TIMES?

d) IF ONE OR MORE TO (c) ASK:
Can you tell me whether the incidents happened in any of the following places:

i) in school.
HOW MANY TIMES?

ii) the street, subway, underpass, park, alleyway, car park, uncovered shopping area.
HOW MANY TIMES?

iii) in a shop, covered market,
HOW MANY TIMES?

iv) on a bus.
HOW MANY TIMES?

v) inside a train/bus/underground station, and on a train/tube.
HOW MANY TIMES?

vi) elsewhere?
WRITE IN WHERE AND HOW MANY TIMES

e) How many of these incidents involved a male victim?
WRITE IN HOW MANY TIMES?

ii) How many of these incidents involved a female victim?
WRITE IN HOW MANY TIMES?
11. IF ONE OR MORE TO EITHER (10) OR (11) SHOW MAP AND ASK:

a) How many of these incidents took place in:
   WRITE IN HOW MANY TIMES?
   i) the Durham Road neighbourhood?
   ii) in the surrounding area?
   iii) elsewhere

b) Can you describe what happened during the incident(s)?
INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR WHETHER THE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE
NEAR TO THEIR SCHOOL, WHETHER THE OFFENDER WAS KNOWN TO
THE VICTIM, WHAT WAS TAKEN
Appendix II

Victim Sheet

THE VICTIM SHEET IS TO BE FILLED IN FOR THE INCIDENT OR THE LAST INCIDENT THAT OCCURRED IN DURHAM ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD OR IN THE CASE OF MULTIPLE INCIDENTS OCCURRING IN THE DURHAM ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD AND THE SURROUNDING AREA, TAKE THE LAST ONE THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE DURHAM ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD.

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER __________

CODE FOR THE RELEVANT OFFENCE

Theft from the person 1
Attempted theft from the person 2

AREA

Durham Road neighbourhood 1
Elsewhere 2
1. Did the last incident involve:
   a) Someone stealing something you were carrying out of your hands or from a bag or case?

   YES 1 GOTO (b)

   NO 2 GOTO 2

   IF 'YES' ASK (b) AND (c)

   b) Were you aware of having something stolen from you at the time?

   YES 1

   NO 2

   c) During the incident were you threatened with or was violence or force or a weapon used against you?

   YES 1 GOTO 3

   NO 2 GOTO 3

   IF 'NO' TO 1(a) ASK:

   2. Did the incident involve:
      a) Someone attempting to steal something you were carrying out of your hands or from a bag or case?

      YES 1 GOTO (b)

      NO 2 GOTO 3

      b) During the incident were you threatened or was violence or force or a weapon used against you?

      YES 1

      NO 2
3. Can you tell me where the incident happened:
   a) the street 01 GOTO 6
   b) uncovered shopping precinct (but not in a shop) 02 GOTO 6
   c) underpass/subway 03 GOTO 6
   d) car park 04 GOTO 6
   e) bus station (but not on a bus) 05 GOTO 6
   f) on a bus 06 GOTO 4
   g) in a taxi 07 GOTO 6
   h) in a shop/covered market 08 GOTO 6
   i) inside an underground/overground station 09 GOTO 5
   j) other (WRITE IN) 10 GOTO 6

4. IF ON A BUS ASK:
   On which deck did the incident take place?
   a) upper 1 GOTO 6
   b) lower 2 GOTO 6
   c) neither, single deck bus 3 GOTO 6

5. IF INSIDE AN UNDERGROUND/OVERGROUND TRAIN STATION ASK:
   Were you:
   a) on the platform 1
   b) in the tunnels leading to and from the platforms 2
   c) in the area around the ticket office 3
   d) on an underground train 4
   e) on an overground train 5
   f) other (WRITE IN)
6. What time of day did the incident take place?
   WRITE IN: 24 HOUR CLOCK
   DON'T KNOW

7. Was this
day
night
dusk

8. What were you doing immediately prior to the incident?
   (INTERVIEWER: PROBE FOR JUST BEEN TO BANK, CASH POINT, POST
   OFFICE, TAKEN CHILDREN TO SCHOOL ETC.)

9. How many other people were with you at the time?
   WRITE IN NUMBER

10. Was the group you were with:
    All male
    All female
    Mixed
    (Don't know)

11. Was the group you were with:
    White
    Black (African/W Indian)
    Black (Asian)
    Greek/Cypriot
    Turkish/Cypriot
    Mixed group
    Other
12. The people who did it. How many people were there?

WRITE IN NUMBER

13. Were they:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE OF BOTH SEXES</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. How old was the person/people who did it?
Would you say they were...

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a child/children under 16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a young person/people between the ages of 16 and 20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a person/people between the ages of 21 and 25</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a person/people between the ages of 26 and 30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a person/people between the ages of 31 and 45</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a person/people over 45</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people of mixed ages</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. As far you know, was the person/people who did it:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (African/W Indian)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek/Cypriot</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish/Cypriot</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. IF YES AT 1(a) ASK:
   IF NO AT 1(a) GOTO QU 22

   What was stolen? Was it any of the following:
   a) cash 1  GOTO 17
   b) credit cards, cheque book, cheque guarantee card, cash point card 2  GOTO 19
   c) jewellery 3  GOTO 18
   d) pension book 4  GOTO 19
   e) child allowance book 5  GOTO 19
   f) mountain bike 6  GOTO 19
   g) other bicycle 7  GOTO 19
   h) training shoes 8  GOTO 19
   i) other (WRITE IN) 9  GOTO 19

17. IF CASH WAS STOLEN ASK:

   How much cash was stolen?
   (INTERVIEWER CODE FROM ANSWER)

   Under £5 1  GOTO 19
   £5 but under £25 2  GOTO 19
   £25 but under £50 3  GOTO 19
   £50 but under £100 4  GOTO 19
   £100 but under £500 5  GOTO 19
   £500 but under £1000 6  GOTO 19
   Over £1000 7  GOTO 19
   Don’t know 9  GOTO 19
18. IF JEWELLERY WAS STOLEN ASK:
What jewellery was stolen?
(INTERVIEWER CODE FROM ANSWER)

- Necklace: 1
- Rings: 2
- Bracelet: 3
- Watch: 4
- Other (WRITE IN)

19. Were the items stolen from you:
- Actually on your person at the time: 1
- In a handbag: 2
- In a briefcase: 3
- Contained in something else (WRITE IN)

20. Was any of the stolen property recovered?
- YES: 1
- NO: 2

21. IF YES ASK:
What was recovered?
(WRITE IN)

22. Did anyone else who was with you have something stolen?
(IF ALONE GOTO QU 23)
- YES: 1
- NO: 2
23. Did the incident involve a weapon or something that could be used as a weapon?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>GOTO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. IF YES ASK:
What kind of weapon or object was this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapon/Object</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottle/glass</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick/club/blunt object</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knife</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scissors</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearm</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (WRITE IN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. During the incident were you actually hit or was violence or force used against you in any way?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>GOTO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. IF YES ASK:
In what way?
(INTERVIEWER: CODE FROM ANSWER)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Way</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grabbed/shaken</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punched/kicked</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head butted</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit with a weapon/object</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabbed with a weapon/object</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (WRITE IN)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
27. Were you injured in any way?

YES 1  GOTO 28

NO  2  GOTO 29

28. IF YES ASK:
In what way were you injured?  
(INTERVIEWER: CODE FROM ANSWER)

- Bruised/black eye 1
- Scratched 2
- Cut 3
- Bones broken 4
- Other (WRITE IN)

29. IF NOT ALONE ASK:
Was anyone else you were with hit or had violence or force used against them?

YES 1

NO 2

30. Can you describe what happened during the incident?  
(INTERVIWER: PROBE AND WRITE IN)
31. As a result of the incident did you:
   CODE YES=1, NO=2, DON'T KNOW=9
   a) see a doctor?
   b) need to stay overnight in a hospital?
   c) have to take time off work?
   d) have difficulty sleeping?
   e) feel worried, anxious or nervous?
   f) feel depressed or lose self confidence?

32. As a result of the incident do you now take any particular precautions?
   For example...
   CODE: YES=1, NO=2, DON'T KNOW=9
   a) do you carry anything to defend yourself?
   b) do you carry anything to alert other people, for instance a personal alarm or whistle?
   c) do you avoid where the incident happened or places like it?
   d) do you avoid particular kinds of people?

33. Has the incident affected you in any other way?
   (PROBE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT, eg DEPRESSION, NERVOUSNESS, NOT GOING OUT AT NIGHT AND WRITE IN)

34. Did you report the incident to the police?
   YES 1 GOTO 36
   NO 2 GOTO 35
35. **IF NO ASK:**

Would you agree with any of the following statements as the reason for not contacting the police?

- CODE YES=1, NO=2, DON'T KNOW=9

a) It was not serious enough

b) Wanted to forget the matter

c) Felt that you were partly to blame

d) Felt that the police and the courts would deal with the offender too seriously

e) Felt that the police and the courts would deal with the offender too leniently

f) Don’t like to inform the police

g) Felt that it was not worth all the time and effort

h) Felt that the police would not catch the person who did it and/or recover what had been stolen

i) Wanted to protect the person who did it

j) Other reason (WRITE IN)

36. Did you contact a victim support scheme?

- YES 1 GOTO 37

- NO 2 ENDS

37. **IF YES ASK:**

What did they do for you?

(WRITE IN)

38. Were you ‘very satisfied’, ‘fairly satisfied’ or ‘not satisfied at all’ with the response of the victim support scheme?

- very satisfied 1

- fairly satisfied 2

- not at all satisfied 3

- (don’t know) 9
Bibliography


Commissioner's Reports for the Metropolitan Police District for the years 1951-1992 London: HMSO

Greater London Records Office
File on Alsen Road site, File number GLC/DG/GLC/12/6
