

A photograph of a concrete staircase with a metal handrail. A large, white, jagged line graphic is superimposed over the stairs, resembling a stylized 'Z' or a series of connected 'V' shapes. The text 'ECSO6002: Crime & Victimology' is overlaid in blue on the left side of the image.

ECSO6002: Crime & Victimology

CRIME & DEVIANCE VERSUS
POWER & CONTROL

Don't Panic!

The likelihood of any of us being a victim of crime in the UK is currently 2021 is low:

- 13% of people have reported being a victim of crime in the past year in 2021.
- Homicide rates were 11.7 per million population
- 695 people murdered in 2020 for the WHOLE of the UK

This figure includes ALL types of crime:

- violent crime
- property crime
- victimless crime
- white-collar crime
- organized crime

(ONS, 2020)

Victimology: What is it?

Victimology branch of criminology that studies the victims rather than the offenders

It analyses a

- victim's characteristics
- role in the criminal justice system
- psychological state
- factors that increase their chance of being targeted

Understanding and studying victims are essential for developing effective deterrence methods because it helps criminologists better understand all the actors' role in a crime

(Fattah, 2000)



Victimology: What is it?

Through the study of victims experts can determine the

- risk factors that increase an individual's chance of becoming a victim

If the reason someone is victimized is unknown

- it's nearly impossible to devise a method that will lower the rate of victimization

To better explain why specific individuals are victimized, criminologists developed

- four theories of victimology

(Fattah, 2000)

- Victim Precipitation Theory
- Lifestyle Theory
- Deviant Place Theory
- Routine Activities Theory

Victimology

- The Scientific Study of Victimization, including:
 - the relationships between victims and offenders
 - the interactions between victims and the criminal justice system
 - the connections between victims and other societal groups and institutions, such as the media, businesses, and social movements
(Burgess, Reghehr & Roberts, 2010).

What is Victimization?

Victimization can be defined as

- the outcome of an individual or institution's intentional action to
- exploit,
- oppress,
- or harm someone else.

It also includes

- destroying
- or illegally acquiring someone else's property or possessions

These actions can cause

- psychological,
- emotional,
- physical,
- sexual,
- or economic harm to the victim.

(Burgess, Reghehr & Roberts, 2010).

Victimology

Benjamin Mendelsohn 1947 coined the phrase:

- Victimology: the study of crime victims

Victimology is the study of

- Etiology (or causes) of victimisation
- its consequences
- How the criminal justice system accommodates and assists victims
- How other elements of society, such as the media, deal with crime victims

Theories of Victimisation

Victimisation Theories	
Victimisation Theory	Major Premise
Victim Precipitation theory (Precipitation, Facilitation and Provocation)	Victims provoke criminals
Lifestyle theory	Victims put themselves in danger by engaging in high-risk activities, such as going out late at night, living in a high-crime area and associating with high-risk peers
Deviant Place theory	Victimisation risk is related to neighbourhood crime rates
Routine Activities Theory	A pool of motivated offenders exists, and these offenders will take advantage of unguarded, suitable targets.

(Burgess, Reghehr & Roberts, 2010).

The Role of the Victim in Crime: Victim Precipitation Theory

Victim
Precipitation

Victim
Facilitation

Victim
Provocation

Victim Precipitation

The extent to which a victim is responsible for their own victimisation

Victim precipitation acknowledges that crime victimisation involves at least two people

- Offender
- Victim

And that both parties are

- acting
- and often reacting
 - before,
 - during
 - and after the incident

This position believes that:

- Although some victims are not at all responsible for their victimisation
- Other victims are responsible

(Victimology, n.d.)

Victim Precipitation

Identifying victim precipitation does not necessarily lead to negatives outcomes

But it is problematic, when used to blame the victim while ignoring the offender's role.

Victim Facilitation

However, Stealing is 'wrong':

The victim is not BLAMEWORTHY

The offender should not steal, regardless of whether the purse is in plain view.

When a victim unintentionally makes it easier for an offender to commit a crime

- The victim may be a catalyst for victimisation

Example:

- When someone leaves a purse in plain view in the office then goes to lunch.
- To a degree it could be said the victim facilitates her own victimisation

(Burgess, Regehr & Roberts, 2010)

Victim Facilitation

Unlike Victim Precipitation . . .

Victim Facilitation
helps us understand
why one person
may be victimised
over another
but does not connote any
blame or responsibility

Victim Provocation

Provocation, most certainly connotes blame - In fact the offender is not responsible at all.

When a person does something that incites another person to commit an illegal act

Victim provocation suggests that

- 1) Without the victim's behaviour
- 2) The crime would not have occurred

Victim Provocation

Example:

A person attempts to mug someone in the street.

The person in the street retaliates and hits the mugger.

The offender in this scenario ultimately is a victim

But, they would not have been hit if not for attempting to mug the person in the street.

Hans von Hentig (1948)

Some of the same characteristics that
produce crime also produce victimisation

The Criminal and his Victim:
Studies in the Socio-biology
of Crime (1948)

*His terminology would not
be acceptable today*

(Wolfgang, 1948)

Criminal Dyad: Hans von Hentig 1948

Some of the same characteristics that produce crime also produce victimisation

- Criminal-Victim Dyad
- The criminal and victim should not be considered in isolation but rather together

Victim Provocation

- He considers that at times victims provoke victimisation
- Acting as Agent Provocateurs
- Based on 13 Characteristics
- He saw them all as contributing to their own victimisation
- (Dupont-Morales, 2009)

Victims and Blame: von Hentig

(Dupont-Morales, 2009)

No.	Victim Provocateur Type	Example
1	The Young	Children and Infants
2	The Female	All Women
3	The Old	Elderly Persons
4	The Mentally 'defective and deranged'	The Feeble-minded, The Insane, Drug addicts, Alcoholics
5	Immigrants	Foreigners unfamiliar with the culture
6	Minorities	Racially disadvantaged persons
7	Dull normal	Simple-minded persons
8	The depressed	Persons with various psychological maladies
9	The Acquisitive	The greedy, those looking for quick gains
10	The Wonton	Promiscuous persons
11	The lonesome and the heartbroken	Widows, widowers, and those in mourning
12	The tormentor	An abusive parent
13	The blocked, exempted or fighting	Victims of blackmail, extortion, confidence games

Benjamin Mendelsohn (1940s)

His classification emphasizes the degrees of culpability, recognizing that some victims bear no responsibility for their victimization, whereas, others, based on their behaviours or actions, do.

He was interested in the relationship between the victim and the criminal

He realised that victims and offenders often knew each other and had some degree of existing relationship

He classified victims based on their culpability or the degree of the victim's blame

(O'Connell, 2008)

Victims and Blame: Mendelsohn

No.	Type of Victim	Example
1	Completely innocent victim	A victim who bears no responsibility at all for victimisation; Victimised simply because of their nature, such as being a child
2	Victim with minor guilt	A victim who is victimised due to ignorance A victim who inadvertently places their self in harm's way
3	Victim as guilty as offender/voluntary victim	A victim who bears as much responsibility as the oftener A person who, for examples, enters into a suicide pact
4	Victim more guilty than offender	A victim who instigates or provokes their own victimisation
5	Most guilty victim	A victim who is victimised during the perpetration of a crime or as a result of a crime
6	Simulating or imaginary victim	A victim who is not victimised at all but instead fabricates a victimisation event

Stephen Schafer 1968

Schafer also proposed a victim typology

Social characteristics

Behaviours

And how responsible the victim was for their own victimisation

7 categories

The Victim and His Criminal:

A study in Functional Responsibility (1968)

- Similar to von Hentig and Mendelsohn

He argued that

- People have a functional responsibility NOT to provoke others into victimising or harming them

They should also

- actively attempt to prevent that from occurring.

(Schafer, 1968)

Victims and Blame: Schafter 1968

1	Unrelated Victims	No responsibility
2	Provocative Victims	Share responsibility
3	Precipitative Victims	Some degree of responsibility
4	Biologically Weak Victims	No responsibility
5	Socially Weak Victims	No Responsibility
6	Self-Victimising	Total responsibly
7	Political Victims	No Responsibility

Marvin Wolfgang (1958)

Patterns in Criminal Homicide (1958)

Classic Study of Homicides in Philadelphia
from 1948-1952

Considered to what extent the victims precipitated their own death

558 homicides

E.g. victim precipitated – the victim in the such an incident would be the first to brandish or use a weapon, strike the first blow, initiate physical violence.

26% of all homicides in his study were
Victim Precipitated

(Wolfgang, 1958)

Victim Precipitated

He determined that often in this kind of homicide,

- The victim and the offender knew each other

More likely to be

- Male offender to male victim
- Have a history of violent offending himself
- Alcohol was also likely to play a role in victim-precipitated homicides

Considered that homicides

- Often start out as minor altercations

Since Wolfgang's study others have expanded his definition to include

- Felony-related homicide
- Sub-intentional homicide

(Kaufman, 1998)

Sub-Intentional homicide

Occurs when

- the victim facilitates their own demise by using poor judgment
- Placing themselves at risk,
- living a risky lifestyle
- using alcohol or drugs

Studies have found out that up to

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of victims appear to be sub-intentional
- (Allen, 1980)

Menachem Amir (1958-1960)

Rape incidents reported to the police
between 1958-1960 in Philadelphia

He examined the extent to
which

- Victims precipitated their own rapes
- Identified common attributes of
victim-precipitated rape

Amir **LABEL** almost

*1 in 5 rapes victim as being
victim precipitated*

(Amir, 1967)

Rape: Victim Precipitated

He found that it was the

- offender's **INTERPRETATION** of actions that is important
- NOT that the victim actually does

The offender may view the victim's

- Actions
- Words
- Clothing

As going against what **HE** considers appropriate female behaviour

The Offender's Interpretation of Actions

He viewed the victim as being

- Bad in terms of how women should behave sexually

He may then choose to rape her

- Because of his misguided view of how women should act,
- Because he thinks she
 - 'deserves it'
- Or because he thinks she
 - 'has it coming to her'

Amir's study was **CONTROVERSIAL**

- It was attacked for
- Blaming victims
- Namely women
- For their own victimisation

Courts and Society may still hold this view

- And women as often still seen as being
- At fault

Lifestyle Theory

Lifestyle Theory

The lifestyle theory maintains that

- criminals target individuals due to their lifestyle choices

Many victims' options

- expose them to criminal offenders
- and situations where crime is likely to occur

Correlation between

- the lifestyles of victims
- The lifestyle of offenders

Both tend to be

- impulsive
- lack self-control

Making the victim more likely to

- put themselves in high-risk situations

And the offender is

- more likely to engage in an unlawful act

(Schneider, 2001)

Lifestyle Theory

Examples of lifestyle choices that may raise one's risk of victimization include

- Walking alone at night.
- Living in the “bad” part of town
- Being promiscuous
- Drinking in excess
- Doing drugs
- Associating with felons

(Siegel, 2006; Schneider, 2001)

Deviant Place Theory

Deviant Place Theory



More often a victim visits

- a dangerous place
- the more likely they will be exposed to crime
- which raises their chance of being victimized

The theory states that

- the victim does not play a role in encouraging the crime
- but is still prone to being a victim because they live in a socially disorganized high-crime location

Even though they may not engage in

- risky behaviours
- or lead a dangerous lifestyle,
- residents of areas with high crime rates
- have the most significant risk of coming into contact with offenders.

(Meier & Miethe, 1993)

Deviant Place Theory

Minorities tend to be victimized at

- higher rates
- because of social and economic inequality
- more likely to reside in low-income neighbourhoods
- with high crime rates
- and cannot move from areas with significant criminal activity
- compared to their neighbours

(Meier & Miethe, 1993)

Deviant Place Theory

This theory proposes that

- safety measures taken in dangerous areas
- may be of little to no use
- since it's the area's demographic
- that increases victimization
- rather than the victim's lifestyle choices

(Meier & Miethe, 1993)

Deviant Place Theory

If an individual lives in a deviant area

- the only way to lower their chance of being a victim of a crime
- is to leave the deviant and dangerous neighbourhood
- for one that is less deviant and has a lower crime rate

(Meier & Miethe, 1993)

Routine Activities Theory

There must be three factors present for a crime to occur

These factors reflect the:

- regular activities incorporated in
- a typical lifestyle
- and they increase an individual's risk of victimization when they converge.

Routine activities that raise one's risk of victimization

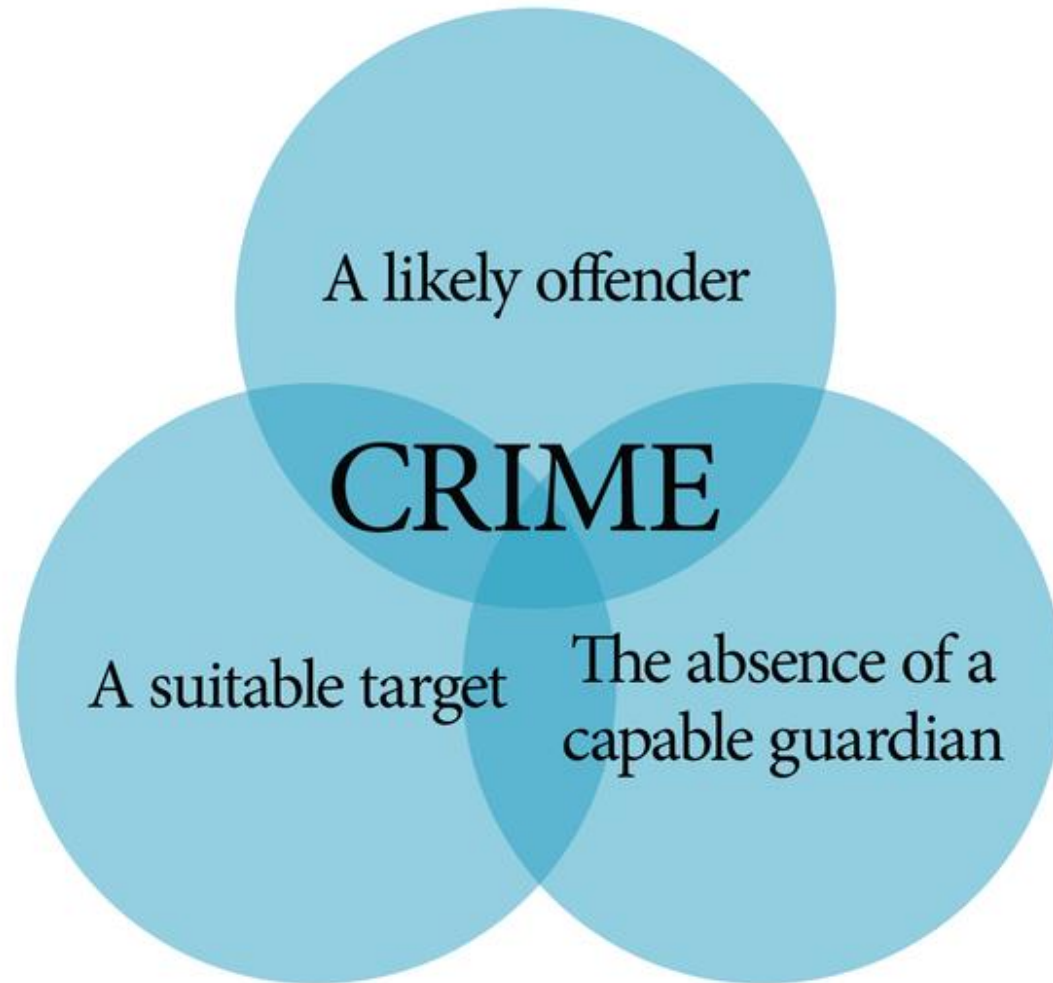
Risk: Routine Activity Theory

The availability of

- Suitable Targets,
- The absence of capable guardians
- The presence of motivated offenders

(Valan, 2021)

ROUTINE ACTIVITY THEORY



Physical convergence in time and space

Risk:

Routine Activity Theory

The availability of

- **Suitable Targets,**
 - including homes that contain high-value items that are relatively easy to obtain.
- **The absence of capable guardians**
 - Lack of guardianship such as the police,
 - a homeowner,
 - neighbours,
 - friends,
 - and relatives
 - can increase the probability of a crime.
 - A target that is undefended and attractive
 - is the holy grail for a motivated criminal.
- However, if a target is well-defended by capable guardianship,
 - even the most seasoned criminal may hesitate to attack

The presence of motivated offenders

- who have criminal intent
- and the ability to act on their plan
- For example,
 - a substantial amount of jobless teenagers
 - If there is a lack of motivated criminals in an area
 - the crime rate is likely to be lower than the rate in an area
 - with significantly more motivated offenders

(Valan, 2021)

Routine Activities Theory: But . . .

If all of these variables are present

- a crime can occur
- and the risk of victimization will increase

However,

- if one or more of the variables are absent
- then a crime is unlikely to happen

For example,

- many affluent neighbourhoods have low crime rates
- even though there's an availability of suitable targets

The low crime rates can be attributed to

- high guardianship such as
- security systems or
- a neighbourhood watch program
- and lack of motivated offenders to carry out criminal acts

(Valan, 2021)

Routine Activities Theory



Clarke and Eck (2003)

Victimisation Theories: Criminal-Victim Dyad

Hans von Hentig

- What makes someone a victim?
- Look at criminal-victim dyad

Can we decrease our chances of being victimized?

- Victim as agent provocateur
- Victim characteristics contribute to victimization
- Situational context
- Spatial characteristics

*Remember . . .
You are
highly unlikely
to be a victim of crime!!!*

KEEP SAFE

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A photograph of a grey concrete floor with a white zigzag line and a metal handrail. The zigzag line is painted on the floor and runs diagonally across the frame. A metal handrail is visible on the right side of the image, running parallel to the zigzag line.

ECS06002: Crime & Victimology

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