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## Tourist victimization in and around the artificial environment

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TOURIST VICTIMIZATION IN AND  
AROUND THE ARTIFICIAL  
ENVIRONMENT

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
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**Master of Arts**

**in**

**Criminal Justice**

**Department of Criminal Justice  
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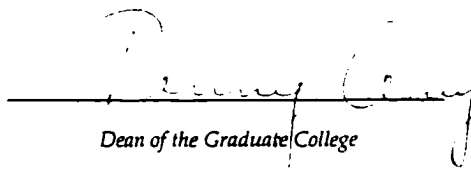
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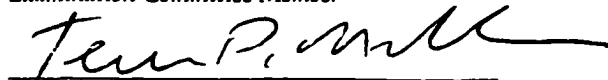
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Master Of Arts

  
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## ABSTRACT

### **Tourist Victimization In and Around the Artificial Environment**

By Theodore R. Snodgrass

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Professor of Criminal Justice  
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Despite a new emphasis on tourism and the resulting victimization of travelers to the “artificial environments,” such as those offered in Las Vegas and Orlando, little empirical research has been conducted to estimate the extent to which the traveler is victimized when in these different areas. Research reported in this paper is a result of a survey of travelers who were victimized in Southern Nevada, Clark County, during the summer of 1996.

Information was gathered from questions which were asked on the survey and combined with data on the victim, which was taken off the victims’ original crime reports. This data provided insight on the victims’ opinions on how their victimization was handled, and also provided information about previous victimization in their own home town, which was combined with information on their age, race, gender, work status, and professional background.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

A recent article in Newsweek magazine lamented that:

What Hollywood represented to the 20th century, Las Vegas will be to the 21st, the embodiment of American Entertainment in all its irresponsible greedy exuberance. While the studios spend \$100.000 a second on computer simulations of explosions, Las Vegas actually blew up a real hotel on New Year's Eve in front of 200.000 tourists, just for the fun of it. In its place will rise a 4.000 room \$80 million dollar resort whose theme is described as 'an ancient forbidden city discovered on a lush, wave tossed tropical island.' The project includes manmade surf, a swim-up shark exhibit, and micro brewery themed as a sugar refinery, with regularly scheduled rain showers. Las Vegas has a childlike fascination with ancient cities, like Rome, Venice, Luxor, and New York, whose architecture can be gleefully parodied in billion dollar hotels ringed with roller coasters. (Adler, 1997, p.70)

Indeed, while Hollywood spent the twentieth century entertaining us with movies of Caesar and Cleopatra, Camelot, Oz, and various tales of New York; Las Vegas will actually make these places available to us in one weekend in the twenty-first century. The MCGA-resorts of the Las Vegas Strip have already reproduced these places and, as described above, promise more. All of these places were created in the barren desert to lure the visitor into the respective environments they represent with the intent to get the visitor to gamble. Although all have different themes, the central point of each is the casino.

Las Vegas has produced must-see environments that lure the traveler to its confines to be entertained. Unlike other destination spots, such as national parks and major cities, this environment was created specifically for the pleasure of the visitor. There are no natural rain forests to visit, no natural beaches to lay around, and no historical monuments to inspect. Yet, all of these have been recreated artificially in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas is the county seat for Clark County, Nevada. Clark County is the most southern county in Nevada, and is bordered by two of the largest counties in the United States, San Bernardino County in California to the west, and Nye County in Nevada to the northwest. This area of the country is the most arid in North America, and until recently the most desolate. Originally, Las Vegas served as a stop over for the railroad between Salt Lake City, Utah; and Los Angeles, California. Temperatures are generally over 100 degree Fahrenheit during the daytime, during the summer months, with it not being unusual to reach temperatures of 110 degrees.

With the advent of artificial air conditioning, Las Vegas was able to overcome to extreme heat and become what it is today. Both Las Vegas and Orlando, Florida, offer the predominantly artificially created tourism experience. As discussed by Smith and Eadington (1992): Orlando has its "Hollywood" style theme parks and Disney World. Las Vegas has its fantasy themed resorts centered around gambling opportunities. Both offer similar fantasies, the main difference being that Las Vegas is centered on gambling.

As long as Las Vegas has been a tourist destination, it's theme has been tied to gambling with an emphasis on the "artificial environment." Las Vegas developed the

“artificial environment” with showroom extravaganzas, ornate hotels, and fabulous restaurants with “all you can eat” buffets to lure the visitor in to gamble. Once inside the “artificial environment” one might find themselves in an Egyptian tomb, a tropical forest, or at Mardi Gras in Rio de Janeiro. Always at the center, however, is the casino. There are no clocks available, and little else to distract the visitor with the burdensome realities of life, except maybe a scantily clad cocktail waitress who offers free drinks to the gambler. The sounds of electronic gambling machines and the occasional scream of a lucky winner are almost mesmerizing.

Interestingly enough, as Las Vegas developed as a tourist destination, so did Disneyland in Southern California. Both have evolved in much the same way with an emphasis on the “artificial environment.” This environment is distanced from the world of reality and has an emphasis on fantasy. It also has the added bonus of being planned from the foundation up. Its inhabitants come to visit, not to live. There are few of the long term problems associated with more permanent environments, such as schools, day cares, supermarkets, and long term housing developments.

This being said, one might think that Las Vegas and Clark County are nothing more than huge connections that make up one giant artificial environment. Las Vegas is a city like other cities. It has a downtown area, freeways and suburbs with smaller cities connected to it, such as Henderson and North Las Vegas. The “Strip,” with the majority of the larger resorts, is actually not in Las Vegas at all, but Winchester Township, Clark County. Clark County also oversees Laughlin, which is about one hundred miles south of Las Vegas, across the Colorado River from bullhead City, Arizona; and a handful of

resorts that run along Interstate 15 from the California border to the "Strip."

Still, the "artificial environments" created in the resorts of Southern Nevada have their share of problems. Circus Circus Hotel employs more security personnel within its circus like confines to handle problems than Green Bay, Wisconsin employs police to deal with problems within its city limits!

People have to have a place to stay, and Las Vegas has thousands of rooms to accommodate them. There are hundreds of taxi cabs, and numerous buses to get around. In order to get to the "artificial environments" of the resorts and enjoy the rooms around the casino, and eventually experience everything that is there to be offered, one has to have money to spend. This leads to potential victims who draw potential predators to this environment.

These potential victims can be referred to as traveler, visitor, or tourist. For the sake of clarity in this paper, the visitor will be referred to as "tourist." The tourist includes every person who comes to Southern Nevada and experiences the "artificial environment." It does not include people who reside in Southern Nevada, or who reside close enough to frequently come to the area to do their everyday business. It does not include people who come to Southern Nevada for extended stays, such as Air Force crewmen from Nellis Air Force Base, or construction workers who have come from other states to build more resorts. It does not distinguish between "high rollers" (large stake gamblers) who fly in from far away lands, or a husband and wife who have come to Southern Nevada by automobile for the weekend.



Tourist, as defined by Smith (1992), has its origins from the Latin words *tornus* or *lathe*, and defines an individual who makes a circuitous journey, usually for pleasure, and returns to the starting point. Jafari (1992) describes the tourist culture as being framed in fantasy. Consciously or unconsciously, the tourist colors the vacation and experience through their own tinted glasses. Gottlieb (1982) explains this further through the notion of *inversion*, a strong contrast to what is normally done in the daily life "back home."

Obviously the "artificial environments" that the resorts have to offer to not only attract tourists. People who reside in Southern Nevada, or nearby, often go to them, also. According to GLS Research, which was commissioned by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority to do different studies concerning gambling in Clark County, gambling was the third highest form of leisure activity enjoyed by residents. Eating out and going to the movies were rated first and second. Most residents who gambled stated that they did so "elsewhere" (neither the "Strip" or "Downtown") 61% of the time, the "Strip" 23% of the time, and "Downtown" 15% of the time.

This contrasts with responses given by tourists who stated that they gambled on the "Strip" 78% during fiscal year 1996, down from over 80% the previous three years: "Downtown" 64%, "Just off the Strip" 31%, "Boulder Strip" 18%, and the outlying areas 2%. The "Strip," as mentioned, includes all resorts along one street, Las Vegas Boulevard, approximately five miles, between Sunset Road and Sahara. "Just off the Strip" refers to resorts mainly to the west of the "Strip" that are on streets that cross the "Strip," and continue across Interstate 15, which runs parallel to the "Strip." The "Boulder Strip" refers to a group of resorts that are along the Boulder Highway, which is

an extension of Fremont Street, which runs through the middle of downtown Las Vegas. Boulder Highway begins approximately two miles east of downtown Las Vegas and proceeds south some ten miles.

It appears that the tourists are attracted to the "Strip" and "Downtown" Las Vegas where the majority of larger resorts are, and the "artificial environments" are more pronounced. This is not to say that these are the only places with an "artificial environment," they are larger and carry over from one resort to the other. For instance, "Downtown" has an artificial canopy that covers Fremont Street and puts on a light show periodically. This is connected to the majority of the resorts in the "Downtown" area. Thus, one could leave one resort and walk to another and never venture into a traditional environment with a sidewalk or traditional public street. This is also the case on the southern end of the "Strip" where pedestrian walkways have been established to move tourists from one resort to another without ever having to leave the resort environment.

The "artificial environment" contributes to the fantasy and contrasts to what is "back home." People do not have to fix dinner in the "artificial environment," it is there for them. People will probably devote a great deal of time gambling, which is highly unlikely "back home." People will probably consume more alcohol during this time than they normally do. Most important, people will not be as familiar with the "artificial environment" as they are with their own home towns, and homes in general.

It is within this framework that this paper seeks to determine what extent the tourist can be the victim of crime. Have the variables changed enough from "back home" to make the tourist more likely to be the victim of a crime? Do tourists take more

precautions while in the “artificial environment” and/or around it? Once victimized, are tourists satisfied with their treatment by police and the establishment where the crime occurred? Does being the victim of a crime outside one’s hometown influence whether the tourist will return to testify against the offender?

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Although little has been written specifically about victimization of tourists, there are multiple theories of victimization based on lifestyle and exposure of the victim to the potential offender. The routine activity theory (Cohen and Felson, 1979) emphasizes how patterns of routine activities or lifestyles in conventional society provide an opportunity for crime. Structural changes in routine activity patterns influence crime rates by affecting the convergence in time and space of three minimal elements of direct-contact predatory crimes (robbery, assault with a deadly weapon): (1) motivated offenders, (2) suitable targets, and (3) the absence of capable guardians against the violation. As necessary elements, the lack of any of these conditions is sufficient to thwart criminal activity.

According to Miethe and Meier (1994), this theory downplays the importance of offender motivation and other aspects of criminality in understanding individuals' risk of victimization and the social ecology of crime. This poses a problem as it appears that offender motivation is an important aspect when dealing with tourist related crimes.

The choice of targets by an offender is important when dealing with tourist victimization, because it explains why some tourists are selected over others. Hough

(1987) stated that if members of one group are selected as targets of crime more frequently than others, they must meet at least one of three conditions:

They must be exposed more frequently to motivated offenders, be more attractive as a target in that they afford a better "yield" to the offender, or be more attractive, or less defended against victimization. (Hough, p.359)  
Hough's concentration on the offender's target selection has relevance when

discussing tourists as victims in the "artificial environment," especially the better the yield to the offender and less defended against the victimization the victim is. As previously explained, people come to the "artificial environment" that the resorts have to offer to marvel at its attractions. Ultimately though, most will come and stay a period of time to gamble. To gamble, one must have money, thus this environment is target rich for the offender. In fiscal year 1996, GLS Research found that 53% of the tourists surveyed played slot machines, another 14% played video poker. Both types of machines are situated in long rows, where people sit next to each other and play them. Traditionally, women carry purses, which they set next to the machines. This offers an excellent opportunity for the offender with a good chance of an attractive payoff.

As Fujii and Mak (1979) observe, tourists are strangers of a unique sort. They carry large amounts of portable wealth (cameras and cash). They are transients and, therefore, they are less likely to return to court after having been victimized. They are also unfamiliar with the community and they are likely to frequent a setting and engage in activities which make them vulnerable to criminal victimization. Thus, one could conclude that they make "suitable targets because they are visible, accessible, and carry possessions that are easy to carry away and worth stealing."

The lifestyle-exposure approach developed by Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garafalo (1978) was originally developed to account for differences in risks of violent victimization across different social groups, but has been extended to include property crimes. It forms the basis for more elaborate theories of target-selection processes, such as Hough's, which was discussed above.

The basic premise underlying the lifestyle-exposure theory is that demographic differences in the likelihood of victimization are attributed to differences in lifestyles. Variation in lifestyles are important because they are related to the differential exposure to dangerous places, times, and others: such as situations which there are high risks of victimization. (Miethe and Meier, 1990)

This theory relies on the individual's lifestyle as a critical factor that determines risks of criminal activities, both vocational, and more important for this paper, leisure activities. According to Miethe and Meier (1994), under this theoretical model, both ascribe and achieved status characteristics (age, gender, race, income, marital status, education, occupation) are important correlates of predatory crime because these status attributes carry with them shared expectations about appropriate behavior and structural choices. Adherence to these cultural and structural expectations leads to the establishment of routine activity patterns. These lifestyles and associations are expected to enhance one's exposure to risky or vulnerable situations that, in turn, increase an individual's chances for victimization.

Gender plays an important part in determining where men and women spend their time. Men typically spend their leisure time in contact with more strangers and exposed

to risky and more dangerous places, such as bars. Females, on the other hand, spend a greater proportion of their time inside the home because as adolescents they are more closely supervised than males, and as adults, they are more likely to assume housekeeping and child-rearing responsibilities (Hindelang et al. 1978). Greater responsibilities regarding the family and denial of economic and education opportunities may severely impede women's participation in public life. Men in contrast are traditionally socialized to be active in the public domain, and spend more time away from the protective environment of home. Thus, it can be assumed that these traditional lifestyles explain why there are higher victimization rates for men than women.

This can be carried out with income, age, and other determinants of lifestyle to predict a person's chance of being the victim of a crime. For example, a person of a higher income bracket might have more to be taken, but also has the means to protect their valuables with alarms, enclosed communities with security officers, and the like. Furthermore, an older person would be far less likely to take risks by going into an environment with potential risks of victimization than a younger person. Do these factors hold the same in the "artificial environments?"

Journalistic accounts often make it seem that crimes committed against tourists are numerous and typically focus on the most violent offenses. As reported in *Hotel/Motel Security and Safety Management* in April of 1993:

Stung by headlines in Canada and elsewhere that described Florida as "a state of terror" for tourists, and concerned about reports that tourists are going to other locals on vacation, officials and executives in government, tourism, law enforcement, the lodging industry, and security have moved quickly to launch a counteroffensive to correct misconceptions and allay fears of the 40 million tourists that visit the state annually. Florida

officials point out that crime is no more rampant there than in other resort areas, only the perception of crime as fanned by media accounts. (Trevelle, p.5)

In Las Vegas, much was written and reviewed about the Scottish tourist who was murdered by the homeless man in the fall of 1995. Numerous comparisons were made with problems in Florida as a result of that homicide, but little empirical data has been gathered to see what the actual amount of crime has happened to the tourist and to what extent it has affected them and their decision to return to Las Vegas.

Wellford's paper, "Victimization Rates for Domestic Travelers" (1995), actually concluded that victimization rates for domestic travelers are substantially less than the rate of victimization for the general population. Wellford explains this through routine activity theory, suggesting that travelers would have lower crime rates because they make greater efforts to secure their property, travel in situations that will increase guardianship (most travelers in groups of two or more), and observation of each others behavior, and locate themselves in areas that are heavily patrolled and have high levels of security. Wellford goes on to say that many of the most highly publicized instances of travelers' victimization occurred when travelers placed themselves in relatively unprotected areas and locations, such as getting lost and frequenting high crime areas.

Wellford (1995) discusses the relationship between traveling, income, and victimization. Assuming, as explained above, that lower income households have higher rates of victimization than higher income households, and assuming also, that the lack of sufficient income adversely effects the ability to travel, one might conclude that this



could result in less crime for the traveling population, due to the fact that this population is more affluent and has the resources to protect their possessions.

However, according to Wellford (1995), this approach must consider the fact that travel estimates indicate that 75% of the population travels each year. In a sense, there may be little difference between the characteristics of the traveling and non-traveling population. In addition, Wellford asserts the fact that total victimization rates are not strongly associated with income. He cites the total victimization rate in 1993 for those with incomes above \$75,000 as 429 per 1,000, while the comparable rate for incomes under \$7,500 was 407 per 1,000. One could conclude from this that Wellford feels that income is not a strong determinant of victimization. Furthermore, since 75% of the population travels anyway, income has little or no bearing on who travels and who does not. Thus, according to Wellford, a person's income has little or no significance as to whether they will be the victim of a crime while traveling.

Wellford (1995) contends that there is a continuation of the pattern found in the general population that males are more likely to be the victim of a crime while traveling than females. Wellford cites 183 per 1,000 males are the victims of crime, compared to 110 per 1,000 for females. Wellford also found that the total crime victimization rate per year for the general population of males was 259 per 1,000; and for the general population of females, 156 per 1,000 per year.

In summary, Wellford feels it is reasonable to suggest that the efforts undertaken by travelers to avoid areas with high incidents of crime, and by the areas they visit providing increased security, reduced levels of victimization's for travelers relative to the

rates observed when the population is not traveling. Thus, travelers avoid potential areas where crime might happen, and increased security personnel also lower their risk. This is not the case for people in their own familiar environments.

Wellford also sees a continuation of the general population, in that male travelers are more likely to be the victims of crime over female travelers. Finally, when victimized, the traveler is more likely to be the victim of a property crime, than a crime against person. This is also in line with the general population.

Wellford relies on the routine activity theory for his findings. This seems to be flawed, however, as a person who is traveling, unless they do it all the time, is not experiencing a routine activity. Lifestyle exposure theory, on the other hand, is better as it covers what the person is exposed to, including leisure activities, as explained before.

Both (theories) emphasize how patterns of routine activities or lifestyles in conventional society provide an opportunity structure for crime. Each theory also downplays the importance of offender motivation and other aspects of criminality in understanding individuals' risk of victimization and the social ecology of crime. These theories are also representative of a wider "criminal opportunity" perspective because they stress how the availability of criminal opportunities is determined, in large part, by routine activity patterns of everyday life. The fundamental differences between these theories are in terminology and in the fact that routine activity theory was originally developed to account for changes in crime rates over time, whereas lifestyle-exposure theory was proposed to account for difference in victimization risks across social groups. (Miethe and Meier, p.35 & 36)

How do people act when they travel? Does the "artificial environment" influence victimization based on their backgrounds such as gender, race, or income? Is property crime more prevalent than crimes against the person? Is the traveler safer in and around

the resort because of the precautions they take, and the precautions taken by the resorts, than “back home” in environments that they are more familiar with?

Before these questions can be addressed, one last concern must be covered. “The gambling casinos of Las Vegas have long been suspected as a means of laundering monies of the Mafia.” (Ryan, 1991) Does gambling in itself promote crime? Do casinos make a difference in the crime rate of a community? Curran and Scarpetti (1991), in discussing Atlantic City concluded:

Although one can state that the crime rate in Atlantic City continues to exceed the national crime rate, it is inaccurate to argue that crime in the community has risen significantly since the legalization of gambling. When crime committed in the casinos are extracted from the Uniform Crime Reports totals, Atlantic City rates are not very different from those of comparable cities. The UCR rates are further reduced when the population at risk includes the thousands of daily visitors to the city. (P.448)

Albanese (1985) agrees and finds that, “when average daily population is controlled, growth in the number of visitors to Atlantic City has surpassed increases in crime to the point that the personal risk of victimization was declining. Albanese concludes that:

the increase in serious crime in Atlantic City has been more than offset by an increasing population there. The result has been a slight reduction in the likelihood of being victimized there. (p.43)

Chang (1996) views the impact of casinos on crime in small cities as possibly different from that in large cities. Several studies have made comparisons of crime rates before and after the introduction of casinos in small cities. According to Chang, because of the small number of cities that operate casinos, some cities are cited repeatedly in different studies. One of those studies prepared by the WEFA Group was based on

experiences in Alton, East St. Louis, Joliet, and Rock Island in Illinois; Davenport and Dubuque in Iowa; and Gulfport in Mississippi. The study found crimes to have decreased in five of the seven cities after casinos were introduced. (Current Information. WEFA 1994)

According to Chang (1996):

Viewing the two years of postcasino separately, a substantial decrease in overall crime rates was noticed during the first full year of casinos. During the second year, however, crime rates appear to have returned to the precasino level. Overall, there was no increase in crime during the first two years of casinos. The long-term impact of casinos on crime in Biloxi is yet to be tested. (p.436)

The data described suggests that there is indeed an increase in crime, but the increase is probably due to the increase in jobs and people to the immediate area where gambling is introduced. As Roehl (1994) concludes:

More visitors to an area means that there are more opportunities for crime to occur. An increase in resident population and/or income levels may also create more opportunity. (p.159)

Davidson (1989), while looking into assaults, found functional properties of the place where the incident occurs. These indicate the reason for the potential victims presence. Such criteria may be loosely termed the "behavioral environment." The three prime behavioral settings which correlated to violence were: the family environment, the peer environment, and the job environment. This may serve to explain the reason why tourists, according to Wellford, experience less victimization in the form of crimes against the person, specifically assaults, than crimes against property, specifically thefts. Building on this, one might start with the hypothesis that: The setting of the "artificial

environment” is more conducive to property crimes, specifically thefts, than crimes against the person, specifically assaults.

Wellford found that people were actually safer while traveling than at home. This seems to contrast other authors’ views, specifically Fujii and Mak. Furthermore, as Hough explained, target selection is a primary requirement in selection of one group over another. The targets in the artificial environment would seem to afford a better yield.

A concentration of tourists increases the persons and property at risk in an area and, therefore, possibly makes that area more attractive to criminal elements within the population. Similarly, tourist areas are characterized by anonymity and high turnover of population with a result that may well be easy for criminals to conceal themselves and avoid apprehension, particularly when police have to cope with massive increases in the volume of traffic and increases in other forms of “routine” work unrelated to crime. (Walmsley, Boskovic, Pigram, 1981, p.4)

Schiebler, Crotts, and Hollinger (1996), found that the more police and security officers in an area were strongly related to the rate of tourist crime. Even though the routine activities theory predicts that capable guardians such as these would have an adverse impact on crime, these authors’ research predicts the opposite is true. This does not mean that the increased amount of security and police officers is causing more crime, rather this result is commonly attributed to the reactive nature of police and security hirings. In other words, numbers of security officers and police officers are increased in response to higher levels of crime.

These same authors introduce the idea of “hot spots theory,” where a particular location provides convergent opportunities in which predatory crimes can occur. According to Ryan, when discussing tourist destinations, they create

...centers of populations where visitors are obvious by their dress and the areas they visit. They also carry easily disposed of items of wealth such as cameras, cash, and credit cards. They are temporary visitors, and as such, are unable to place much pressure on the law enforcement agencies to take action against criminals, or indeed, if the criminals are caught and taken to court, are unlikely to appear as a prosecution witness. Tourist zones (therefore) are areas of criminal opportunity. (1993, p.14)

As Schiebler, Crotts, and Hollinger point out, both the routine activities approach and hot spots theory are similar in basic assumptions about the role of the environment in crime causation. hot spots theory differs from the routine activities approach in the types of variable examined. With routine activities' theory, one looks at the combined effect of suitable targets, motivated offenders, and the absence of capable guardians on the rate of crime in a given community. The hot spots' explanation determines, instead, the particular types of physical locations which put victims and offenders in greatest proximity to each other, thereby allowing the opportunity for crime to occur.

Although the authors view their efforts as exploratory in nature, they did find relationships to tourist crime while examining Florida. Crimes against tourists are more likely to occur in those counties that are experiencing a disproportionately high level of conventional crime. An area with a lot of crime happening to the residents also experiences a large amount of crime towards the visitors.

Introducing higher crime rates of tourism in a low crime rate county will not automatically lead to higher rates of tourist victimization. However, increasing the numbers of tourists in an already high crime county does have a significant effect on the rates of crimes committed against tourists. (Schiebler, Crotts, Hollinger, p.48)

The authors further warn that the tourist should not be lulled into a false sense of security due to the increased volume of guardians present in a facility or area. Without

simultaneously reducing the number of motivated offenders in the area, simply adding more capable guardians may not produce the intended effect.

As pointed out by the previous authors, more research is needed to better understand tourist victimization. As Fujii and Mak (1979) pointed out, tourists are strangers of a unique sort and are different from the average citizen, but to what extent? Because of this basic lack of knowledge, this study centered around exploration research. As Maxfield and Babbie (1995) point out: "An exploratory study may be conducted to develop methods that will be used in a more careful study in the future (p.70)."

This study was developed and completed with this fact as a focal point. Questions were selected from the previous studies cited, but the fact remains that little empirical data is known about tourist victimization. It appears, however, that strides have been made to understand this problem, even as this paper was written, but the fact remains there is very little that researchers agree on when focusing on this dilemma. Therefore, this study may actually raise more questions than it answers!

The following ten hypotheses will be examined in this paper:

- H1 People are more likely to be the victim of a property crime (larceny or burglary) than a crime against their person (assault/battery or robbery) while in or around the "artificial environments."
- H2 Male tourists are more likely to be the victim of a crime than female tourists.
- H3 People are safer in and around the "artificial environment" than "back home." Therefore, a proportionate amount of people who have been

victimized in the “artificial environment” have probably experienced some victimization “back home.” also.

- H4 The victim’s age is a factor in an offenders target selection while in or around the “artificial environment.”
- H5 Race is not a factor in an offender’s target selection while in or around the “artificial environment.”
- H6 Familiarity with the “artificial environment” makes a person less likely to be the victim of a crime. Thus, the more times one comes to the “artificial environment,” the less likely they are to become the victim of crime.
- H7 Groups offer more protection to potential victims while in the “artificial environment” as they offer more guardians to “watch over” the potential victim and their possessions.
- H8 A person’s income is not a determinant if they are a “suitable target” while in the “artificial environment.”
- H9 The closer a person lives to Southern Nevada, the more likely they are to return and testify against an offender.
- H10 The victim’s satisfaction with their case and how it is handled is not dependent on such factors as race, age, and profession.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Sampling Procedure**

During the summer of 1996, data was gathered by the Crime Analysis Unit of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. The data listed persons from outside the Metropolitan Police Department jurisdiction, which include all unincorporated areas of Clark County, Nevada, and the City of Las Vegas, who had become the victim of a crime during June, July, and August of 1996. These months are commonly associated with being the summer months of Southern Nevada. This time period was selected because there was no large sporting events, such as a major prize fight, or the National Finals Rodeo, nor were there any major conventions, such as the Consumer Electronics Show. This was important because major events, such as these, may have an influence on a survey of tourists who were victims of crime by having a disproportionate amount of people from one particular class or particular background.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has jurisdiction over the City of Las Vegas and all unincorporated portions of Clark County. It does not have jurisdiction over smaller cities surrounding Las Vegas, such as North Las Vegas to the north, or Henderson and Boulder City, which are to the southeast. The Las Vegas Metropolitan

Police Department does not have jurisdiction over Mesquite, Nevada, which sits on the north end of Interstate 15, on the Nevada-Arizona border; or areas surrounding Lake Mead, which are policed by the National Park Service.

For the sake of this study, the tourist areas which include the “artificial environments” described previously were divided into: “The Strip,” which includes the resorts located on Las Vegas Boulevard and Paradise, which runs parallel to Las Vegas Boulevard, between Sahara to the north and Sunset to the south. This also takes in McCarran International Airport, which is the major airport in the region. “Downtown,” which comprises resorts located along Fremont Street, from Main Street to Fifteenth Street, and south to Sahara where the “Strip” begins. “Laughlin,” which is a small community with numerous casinos, that is about 100 miles south of Las Vegas, near the tip of Nevada, in Clark County. Finally, “other” comprised those casinos located within the jurisdiction of the police department but were not located in the areas described above. These include resorts located west of Interstate 15, which runs parallel to “The Strip,” resorts along Boulder Highway, sometimes known as the “Boulder Strip,” and resorts south of Las Vegas along Interstate 15, in the small communities of Primm and Jean, Nevada. People who were victimized in these areas during the time period described were selected as the population.

A random sample was selected and 704 surveys of a possible 1,623 were sent out via U. S. Mail in the late summer and early fall of 1996. The sample was stratified with every other person being sent a sample. Persons were skipped if it appeared that their victimization had no relationship to the locations described above. Persons selected had

to reside outside of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police jurisdiction and be a tourist. It also excluded people who resided in Bullhead City, Arizona, as it is just across the Colorado River from Laughlin; and Nellis Air Force Base personnel, as Nellis is a major Air Force training facility with crewmen sometimes staying in the area for months for training.

Of the 704 surveys sent out (postage paid return envelopes included), 320 were returned. Although the rate of return was less than half of the total sent out, this was more than compensated for with the large amount of surveys sent out, that being over 40% of the total (704 out of 1,623, or 43.4%). The return of 320 surveys represents a return of approximately one in five of the total victims for that time period (320 out of 1,623; or 19.7%).

Once the surveys were returned, they were matched up with the crime reports taken at the time of the original victimization. This was done by matching the event number, which is the number assigned to the actual call when it is received by dispatch, and follows the case to its completion through the courts, if it goes that far. After the survey and crime reports were combined, information was taken from the crime report dealing with the victims' age, gender, racial ethnicity, and time and day of victimization.

The survey asked 20 questions. These questions asked such things as whether the victim was willing to return to Southern Nevada to testify in court if needed, and how the victim felt their victimization was handled, by both the police and the organization where the victimization occurred, and finally how they felt their victimization was handled overall. Questions were asked of the victim as to where the crime physically happened.

such as in the hotel casino, public bus, airport, or public street. The victim was then asked if they suspected anyone affiliated with the business, if applicable, where the crime occurred to be involved in the offense. Questions were asked to where the victim stayed while in Southern Nevada, how many times they visited, and was it for business or pleasure, or a combination of both. Questions were asked of the victim as to their employment status, profession, and household income for the year. Finally, questions were asked as to the amount of victimization the responder had experienced in their home town environment, and whether they felt safer at home or while traveling in Southern Nevada.

Hypothesis 1 can be looked at by dividing the crimes experienced by the victims into crimes against person and crimes against property. This would be according to Uniform Crime Report. Thus, burglaries, larcenies, auto thefts, and vandalisms would be crimes against property. Robberies, and assaults, including sexual assaults, would be listed as crimes against the person. There were no murders of tourists during the recorded time. Once divided into the two different categories, a comparison can be made into the four different environments, which included: "The Strip," "Downtown," "Laughlin," and "Other."

Hypothesis 2 can be analyzed by taking the total number of males victimized and comparing it to the amount of females. According to GLS Research, males made up 51% of the entire population of visitors during fiscal 1996, so one would expect a greater population of males to be victimized just to remain even with the population. This can be

divided further by the place of the crime, inside the hotel/casino or in the surrounding areas.

Since the surveyed population were victims of a crime, one would expect them to also have a corresponding victimization “back home,” if one was to draw the conclusion that people are safer while traveling than at home. Even though this might not relate to everyone sampled, there should be a large percentage of people who have experienced victimization while at home if, indeed, it’s safer to be a traveler. This can be further investigated by factoring in income, since it can be argued that people with adequate income usually have the means to protect their property through alarms, dogs, or by just visiting areas that have a high frequency of crime. Thus, Hypothesis 3 might be true for some people, but not true for others. This is important when determining what effect the “artificial environment” and its surrounding have in how people protect themselves from crime.

Age was divided into four categories. These categories were combined to give loosely fitting categories of seniors, 65 and over; pre-retirement, 51 to 64; middle-aged, 41 to 50; and juniors, ages 20 to 40. During fiscal year 1996, 22% of the visiting tourists were seniors, 28% were pre-retirement, 19% were middle-aged, and 31% were juniors according to GLS Research. For age not to be a factor, the survey results should reflect these overall numbers to some extent. If a significant difference appears in one or more of the categories, it may appear that offenders are targeting a certain group based on their age. This is important to determine if some people are at higher risk because they appear to be an easier target such as seniors, or possibly people who place themselves in

situations with more risk. Hypothesis 4 predicts that age will not be a factor.

Race was divided into White, Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics. Only one person responded that did not fit into one of the above categories, and because of this low number, this figure was dropped. Again, to be relevant, these categories were compared with GLS Research which showed a breakdown of the entire population of tourists as follows: 81% white, 6% Black, 7% Asian, and 5% Hispanic. Race is an important determinant when predicating crimes, but does it have a bearing in the “artificial environment?” Hypothesis 5 predicts that it does not.

Hypothesis 6 predicts that people that have been to the “artificial environments” of Southern Nevada are more likely to be familiar with it, and more likely to take precautions determined from their previous experiences when coming to it. Thus, the more times a person comes to Southern Nevada, the less likely they are to be a victim of a crime. For this to hold true, one would expect that the less experience one has in Southern Nevada, the more likely they are to be victimized. This question was divided into the number of previous experience one had in coming to Southern Nevada: never; once; more than once, but less than five; and finally, five or more times. It was combined with other factors such as race, age, gender, and income to determine its relevancy. For example, do females seem to take more precautions based on prior visits than males. For this to hold true, you would expect females to experience less crime the more times they come to Southern Nevada, with no change to males.

The same hypothesis can be tested with groups. Do groups help to protect a person from crime in the “artificial environment?” Furthermore, as suggested above, do

they protect certain people from crime based on age, race, or gender?

Hypothesis 8 seeks to determine if “suitable targets” are based on income.

Income was stratified in the following manner: less than \$20,000 a year per household; \$20,000 to \$39,999; \$40,000 to \$59,999; \$60,000 to \$79,999; and finally, over \$80,000 a year per household. These figures were not compared with the GLS Research for fiscal 1996 due to the fact that one in four, or 25%, of their responders chose not to answer that specific question.

Hypothesis 9 seeks to discover if once victimized, people will return to testify in court against the offender. It was previously mentioned that Fujii and Mak had stated that victims were reluctant to return to a vacation spot where they had been victimized. Of course their research dealt with Hawaii, which might be different than Las Vegas, which one could hypothesize has visitors that come from locations which are closer, such as California. This was broken down by area, and compared to whether people would or would not come back to testify. These areas were: the Eastern states, Southern states, Midwestern states, and Western states. These areas are broken down to include states in the same manner as GLS Research. The Eastern states include Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Southern states include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Midwestern states included Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Finally, the

Western states included Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. There were no surveys sent out to any victims who resided in Nevada.

The final hypothesis to be tested was whether people were satisfied with how their victimization was handled. This was broken down with people's satisfaction with the establishment, and whether they felt an employee had anything to do with the actual crime, the police, and finally their overall satisfaction. This is important to determine if the victim will ever return to Southern Nevada, and if crime is a detriment to the tourist economy.

The first part of the findings are as a result of univariate analysis. When possible, this analysis was compared with the overall number of tourists which were polled for the time period of fiscal year 1996 by GLS Research. Due to the fact that random sampling techniques were used in both studies, the probability exists that these samples are representative of the overall population of victims during the time periods tested. These findings, however, are not the entire population, and do not measure people who are non-victims in the first study, and do not take into account the final two summer months of July and August of 1996 in the GLS study. Therefore, the findings of this study must be taken into account within this context. Furthermore, as explained previously, this study is an explorative one, and seeks to begin to understand a rather complex problem more, not to solve its overall problem.



## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### Part I: Hypothesis Results

##### Univariate Analysis

##### Hypothesis 1

As noted in Table 1, 89% of the respondents were victims of property crime. This includes burglary, larceny, auto thefts, and vandalism. Eleven percent of the population that responded were victims of crimes against persons. This includes assaults and robberies. There were no murders or attempted murders in measured areas of tourists during the summer months of 1996.

This data would suggest, as did Wellford's data previously mentioned, that tourists are much more likely to be the victim of a property crime rather than a crime against the person. This data tends to parallel that of Wellford's in suggesting that tourists are at least five times more likely to be victims of a property crime than a crime against the person.

To summarize, the data collected in this paper supports the hypothesis that:

*People are more likely to be the victim of a property crime (larceny or burglary) than a crime against their person (assault/battery or robbery) while in or around the "artificial*

*environments.*” This also parallels victimization patterns in the general population.

As shown in the Uniform Crime Reports for 1993: violent crime, rape, robbery, and aggravated assaults: totaled 746 out of 100,000; while property crime reports, burglary, larceny, and auto theft: showed 4,737 out of 100,000. This breaks down to about 14% violent crimes or crimes against the person, and about 86% property crimes. In Las Vegas, the break down is 1,003 per 10,000 for violent crimes in 1993; and 5,661 per 100,000 for property crimes. This translates to about 15% for violent crimes or crimes against the person, and about 85% for property crimes in Las Vegas for 1993.

### Hypothesis 2

As shown in Table 1, 47% of the respondent victims were male and 53% of the respondent victims were female. Furthermore, as shown in the table, the numbers seem to suggest, as demonstrated by GLS Research, that more males travel to Southern Nevada than females. In fiscal 1996, 51% of the population traveling to Southern Nevada was male, and 49% female. In fiscal 1995, 52% of the population was male and 48% of the population was female.

However, these findings may exaggerate the proportion of males as victims, because males are more likely to be listed as the victim of a crime when community property, such as vehicle or money, taken in a burglary happen: and when both are married and traveling together. This tends to show males as the single victim when, in fact, both the man and his married wife have been victimized, which skews statistics towards the male. Definite numbers were not available showing how often this might have occurred, though.

To summarize, the data does not suggest that: *Male tourists are more likely to be the victim of a crime than female tourists.* This not only contrasts with what Wellford found, but also contrasts with that of the overall population.

### Hypothesis 3

Sixty-six percent of the respondents or their immediate family had never been the victim of a crime prior to their victimization in Southern Nevada. As shown in Table 1: 66% had no prior victimization; 28% had been victimized, but it had been over a year prior to the survey; and only 5% had been victimized within a year of responding to the survey.

For a person to be safer while traveling or in the “artificial environment” than at home, one might expect some type of relationship between victimization in the “artificial environment” and “back home.” In fact, the opposite is true. Nearly two thirds of the persons who were surveyed, all being victims of crime in the “artificial environment,” had never been the victim of a crime “back home.” This data does not support the hypothesis that: *People are safer while in and around the “artificial environment” than “back home.” Therefore, a proportionate amount of people who have been victimized in the “artificial environment” have also probably been victimized “back home.”*

### Hypothesis 4

As shown in Table 1, Juniors, those 20 to 40 years of age, made up 26% of the population. Middle-aged persons, ages 41 to 50 years, made up 24% of the population of the victims responding. Pre-retirement persons made up 26% of the population responding, their ages were 51 to 64 years of age. Finally, Seniors, those people age 65

years and over, made up 24% of the population of victims responding to the survey.

These numbers tend to show that the four categories experienced nearly an equal amount of crime distributed throughout. Each of the four categories experience around one quarter of the overall crime divided among the four categories.

For age to be a factor, then, one of the groups would have to show a much higher population than the others. According to GLS Research, this just was not the case. As shown in Table 1, 32% of the overall population for fiscal 1996 were Juniors, 19% of the population were Middle-aged persons, 28% were Pre-retirement persons, and 22% were Seniors.

None of the overall numbers shown differed by over 5%. Therefore, the data cannot support the hypothesis that: *Age is a factor in an offender's target selection while in or around the "artificial environment."*

#### Hypothesis 5

As reflected in Table 1, 83% of the victims that responded were Caucasian or White, 4% were Black, and 5% were Hispanic in origin. Eight percent of those people responding were Asian or Pacific Islander in origin. This contrasts with an overall population as demonstrated by GLS Research for fiscal 1996 of 81% Caucasian or White, 6% Black, 5% Hispanic, and 7% Asian or Pacific Islander.

The overall populations of different races, according to GLS Research, for fiscal 1996 are almost exactly the same as those reflected in the victimization survey. Thus, evidence suggest that: *Race is not a factor in an offender's target selection while in or around the "artificial environment."*

### Hypothesis 6

Thirteen percent of the victims responding were enjoying their first trip to Southern Nevada when their victimization occurred. Another 13% had been to Southern Nevada once previously. Another 17% had been to Southern Nevada more than once, but less than five times. As shown in Table 1, 57% of the responding victims had been to Southern Nevada five or more times!

These totals compare with GLS Research data that showed 36% of the total visitors, in fiscal 1996, had been to Southern Nevada only once within the last five years. 39% had been to Southern Nevada two to five times in five years, and 25% had been to Southern Nevada over five times in five years.

Although GLS Research data is slightly different, being those surveyed were asked how many times they had been to Southern Nevada in five years versus the victimization survey that put no time limit, it still shows a significant difference between those that had come to Southern Nevada numerous times, that being over five times, 25% versus the victimization survey which showed over double that for people who had come to Southern Nevada five or more times and had been victimized.

Even if this comparison were left out, the data from the victimization survey seems to suggest the more times one comes to Southern Nevada, the more likely they are to be a victim of a crime. This directly conflicts with the hypothesis which states:

*Familiarity with the "artificial environment" makes a person less likely to become the victim of a crime. Thus, the more times one comes to the "artificial environment" the less likely they are to become the victim of a crime.*

### Hypothesis 7

As shown in Table 1, 11% of the victims surveyed reported that they were the only one in their party at the time of victimization. Forty percent had another person with them in their party during their victimization. Ten percent had three in their group, and 15% had four in their group. Nearly 24% of those surveyed, that had been victimized, had more than four within their group.

This contrasts with data from GLS Research which showed 12% being alone in their party during their travels during fiscal year 1996. Fifty-seven percent had two in their party, while 12% had three in their party. Eleven percent had four within their party, and finally, 7% had five or more within their party.

The largest area of people responding were groups of two. Fifty-seven percent of those people coming to Southern Nevada had two people, which included themselves, within their party. Forty percent of the people victimized reported two in their party. These numbers were evened up with parties of five or more people. Total percent of those coming to Southern Nevada in fiscal 1996 with five or more people was 7%. Yet, over three times that, or 24%, had more than four within their group at the time of victimization. These numbers do not support the hypothesis that: *Groups offer more protection to potential victims while in the "artificial environment," as they offer more guardian to "watch over" the potential victim and their possessions.*

### Hypothesis 8

According to Table 1, approximately one out of ten of the victims responding noted their family income was less than \$20,000. Almost 25% made between \$20,000

and \$39,000. Almost 20% made between \$40,000 and \$59,999; and the same percentage of the victims surveyed made between \$60,000 and \$79,999. Finally, almost 25% made over \$80,000.

Data from GLS Research was not used to compare with the above information, as nearly 25% of those responding chose not to answer the question. This fact, in itself, makes the results concerning this question open to challenge. The overall numbers regarding this issue are fairly close with persons making under \$20,000 a year the least represented, and people making between \$20,000 and \$39,999 being the most represented. Because there is no real way of telling what the overall population might be in these categories, no conclusion can be drawn, as of yet, regarding this issue. Therefore: *A person's income is not a determinant if they are a "suitable target" while in the "artificial environment,"* cannot be determined either way at this stage.

#### Hypothesis 9

Almost 79% of those surveyed reported that they would return to Southern Nevada to testify against the offender in court. As shown in Table 1, over 21% said they would not return to Southern Nevada to testify. The data would seem to suggest that people would come back to testify, being in favor of doing this four to one. This data would have to be tested in a bivariate fashion with where a person lives as the independent variable, and their willingness to come back as the dependent variate. Until that time point, there is not enough data to determine either way whether: *The closer a person lives to Southern Nevada, the more likely they are to return and testify against the offender.*

### Hypothesis 10

The victims' thoughts on satisfaction were divided into three categories: satisfaction with the organization where the event happened, if applicable; satisfaction with the police; and finally, overall satisfaction. As shown in Table 1, approximately one third of those surveyed thought the organization was superior in handling the victimization. Almost 20% thought the organization was very good and helped out. Seventeen percent thought the organization handled the incident in an average way, and did only what they had to. One out of ten persons felt the organization were the victimization occurred handled the incident in a poor fashion, and the event was a fight all the way. Twenty percent had no contact with the organization where the incident occurred.

In regards to police, and as reflected in Table 1: over half of those surveyed felt the police performance was superior and helped in every way. Almost 20% felt that the police performance was very good, but for some reason fell short of excellent. Over 25% felt the police performance was average, and they did only what they to do, no more. Less then 4% felt the police performance was poor, and wished they had not even called the police for help!

Overall, as shown in Table 1, almost 75% of those surveyed felt satisfied on how their victimization was handled, while one out of four persons were not satisfied. Obviously, until bivariate analysis is conducted, there is not enough data to determine whether: *The victim's satisfaction with their case is not dependent on such factor as race, age, and profession.*



**TABLE 1**  
***A Profile of the Study***

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Gender	319	100.0
Male	151	47.3
Female	168	52.7
Crime	320	100.0
Person	35	10.9
Property	285	89.1
Income	292	100.0
<\$20,000	32	11.0
\$20,000-\$39,999	66	22.6
\$40,000-\$59,999	57	19.5
\$60,000-\$79,999	56	19.2
\$80,000+	65	22.3
Race	317	100.0
White	263	83.0
Non-white	54	17.0
Black	13	4.1
Hispanic	15	4.7
Asian	26	8.2
Age	318	100.0
20-40 years	83	26.1
41-50 years	75	23.6
51-64 years	83	26.1
65+ years	77	24.2
Victimization "Back Home"	318	100.0
Never	210	66.0
Yes, within last year	17	5.3
Yes, over a year ago	91	28.6
Prior Visits to Southern Nevada	319	100.0
Never	42	13.2
Once	42	13.2
More than Once, but		
Less than Five	54	16.9
Five or More	181	56.7

Table 1 (continued)	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Employment Status	319	100.0
Full-time	184	57.7
Retired	90	28.2
Other	45	15.1
Occupation	254	100.0
Professional/Technical	117	46.1
Manager	50	19.7
Sales/Clerical	38	15.0
Other	49	19.3
How Many in Party	317	100.0
One	36	11.3
Two	127	40.1
Three	32	10.1
Four	47	14.8
More than Four	75	23.7
Satisfaction With Organization	318	100.0
Superior	104	32.7
Good	59	18.6
Average	54	17.0
Poor	37	11.6
No Contact	64	20.1
Satisfaction With Police	318	100.0
Superior	160	50.6
Good	63	19.9
Average	83	26.3
Poor	10	3.2
Overall Satisfaction	314	100.0
Yes	229	72.9
No	85	27.1
Was a member of the Organization		
Involved in the Crime	317	100.0
Yes	66	20.8
No	167	52.7
Unknown	71	22.4
Non-applicable	13	4.1

## Part II: Hypothesis Results

### Bivariate Analysis

While checking the statistical significance relating to Hypothesis 1 through 7, none of the variable showed any statistical significance except Hypothesis 2, which dealt with gender and crime. By dividing property crimes into auto theft, burglary, larceny, and larceny against the person, and combining everything else into "other," a statistically significant comparison is shown. The other chi-squares were either too low, meaning there was less than a 95% probability, or there were cells that were left empty. This can probably be attributed to the high number of crimes against the property versus crimes against the person. Furthermore, some of the hypotheses only asked questions such as who were victims of crime in the "artificial environment," males versus females, number in party, or race. All of these categories were shown not to be significant statistically. When dealing with income, however, and comparing different incomes with crimes against property and person, the chi-square was significant. The chi-square for Hypothesis 9 was shown to lack significance which might say something in itself. Finally, some of the chi-square concerning Hypothesis 10 were significant and will be discussed.

After reworking crimes against property, as described above, and combining some crimes against person with other minor property crimes, such as malicious mischief, a statistically significant comparison was made concerning gender reference in Hypothesis 2. Females were shown to be the victim of larcenies more than half of their total victimizations. This might come as no surprise when one this about it. The purse

seems to be the primary target either while next to the video or slot machine, or in the bathroom. See Table 2.

As shown in Table 3, over 28% of those persons making less than \$20,000 per year were victims of a crime against their person. This is significantly higher than the 10% of the entire population, which experienced a crime against their person, and over two times higher than the next group, which was persons making over \$80,000 a year at just over 12%.

The results of Hypothesis 9 were somewhat disappointing. Almost 79% of those surveyed reported that they would return to Southern Nevada to testify against an offender in court. The question deliberately left out any reference to the cost of testifying being absorbed by the people of Clark County, Nevada, or the victim themselves. This might account for over 21% saying they would not return to testify.

The real question I was interested in, however, was does distance make a difference of whether a person will return to testify. As stated, the different states were divided into four categories that matched the breakdown done by GLS Research. The fourth category was classified as the Western states, and as such, included the states in the closest proximity to Nevada. As bivariate analysis was conducted to see the statistical relationship between whether people favored coming back to testify and the area or the county they had come from. Unfortunately, the Pearson Chi-square results were .372, making this statistically insignificant.

Hypothesis 10 dealt with a person's satisfaction on how their victimization was handled, and whether this might differ as to their race, age, and profession. For this

hypothesis the respondents' categories of superior and good were combined, while those not having contact with the organization, and thus not being able to have an opinion, were excluded.

Employment status was divided into full-time, retired, and other, which included people going to school, unemployed, and housewives. As shown in Table 4, this was found to be statistically significant. Retired persons seem to be significantly harder on the establishments where the victimization occurred than the other two categories. Over 37% of retirees felt that the establishment handled their victimization in a poor fashion. This is over double that of full-time workers, who rated only 16% in this category. Furthermore, retirees rated the establishment as good far less than the other categories. Nearly 63% of full-time workers, and almost 71% of others felt the establishment did a good job of handling their victimization, while only 43.8% of the retirees surveyed felt the establishment did a good job. Please see Table 4 for the entire breakdown.

A person's profession seemed to have significance when dealing with satisfaction with the establishment in dealing with a person's victimization. Professions were divided into professional/technical, managers/officials/proprietors, sales/clerical, and other. As shown in Table 5, the people working the sales/clerical were far more likely to rate their satisfaction as poor nearly 47% than any other category. The next closest dissatisfied profession was professional/technical, at just over 17%. The category of sales/clerical were also far less likely to rate the establishment as good. Only 40% rated it this way, in comparison to over 61% rating it good for professional/managers. Finally, it must be mentioned that sales/clerical was the smallest group with only 15 respondents, and with

such low numbers, this brings the above conclusion into question.

Finally, when dealing with people attitudes towards how the establishment handled their victimization, age showed to be a statistically significant factor, also. As mentioned before, age was broken down to: Senior, 65 years and older; Pre-retirement, 51 to 64 years of age; Middle-aged, 41 to 50 years of age; and, finally, Juniors, 20 to 40 years of age. Although one would expect the Seniors to be more critical of the establishment, as demonstrated by retirees, this was not the case. As it turned out, the Juniors were far more critical with the largest group rating the establishment as poor over 27%, compared with nearly 19% in the Pre-retirement category, and only 54.5% rating the establishment as good, compared to nearly 60% for the Pre-retirement, and over 70% for the Seniors. See Table 6.

**TABLE 2*****Types of Crime by Gender***

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Auto Theft	24 15.9%	6 3.6%	30 9.4%
Burglary	44 29.1%	23 13.7%	67 21.0%
Larceny	36 23.8%	87 51.8%	123 38.6%
Larceny from the Person	27 17.9%	29 17.3%	56 17.6%
Other	20 13.2%	23 13.7%	43 13.5%
Total	151 100.0%	168 100.0%	319 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$   
 N of Valid Cases 319

TABLE 3

*Income Versus Type of Crime*

	<u>Less than \$20,000</u>	<u>\$20,000 to \$39,999</u>	<u>\$40,000 to \$59,999</u>	<u>\$60,000 to \$79,999</u>	<u>\$80,000 and More</u>	<u>Total</u>
Crimes Against Person	9 28.1%	3 4.4%	6 10.5%	5 8.9%	8 12.3%	31 11.2%
Property Crime	23 71.9%	63 95.5%	51 89.5%	51 91.1%	57 87.7%	245 88.8%
Total	32 100.0%	66 100.0%	57 100.0%	56 100.0%	65 100.0%	276 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$   
N of Valid Cases 276



**TABLE 4**  
***Employment Status on How Well A  
 Person Feels Their Victimization  
 was Handled***

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Retired</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
Good	91 62.8%	7 43.8%	65 70.7%	163 64.4%
Average	30 20.7%	3 18.8%	20 21.7%	53 20.9%
Poor	24 16.6%	6 37.5%	7 7.6%	37 14.6%
Total	145 100.0%	16 100.0%	92 100.0%	253 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$   
 N of Valid Cases 253

**TABLE 5**

***Occupations by How a Person  
Feels Their Victimization  
was Handled***

	<u>Professional Technical</u>	<u>Managers Officials Proprietors</u>	<u>Sales Clerical</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
Good	60 61.2%	24 63.2%	6 40%	34 70.8%	124 62.3%
Average	21 21.4%	11 28.9%	2 13.3%	6 12.5%	40 20.1%
Poor	17 17.3%	3 7.9%	7 46.7%	8 16.7%	35 17.6%
Total	98 100.0%	38 100.0%	15 100.0%	48 100.0%	199 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$   
N of Valid Cases 199

TABLE 6

*The Age of the Victim and How They  
Feel the Establishment Handled  
Their Victimization*

	Age				<u>Total</u>
	<u>20 to 40 yrs</u> <u>Juniors</u>	<u>41 to 50 yrs</u> <u>Middle Aged</u> <u>Persons</u>	<u>51 to 60 yrs</u> <u>Pre-retirement</u> <u>Persons</u>	<u>65+ years</u> <u>Seniors</u>	
Good	36 54.5%	43 72.9%	38 59.4%	45 70.3%	162 64.0%
Average	12 18.2%	10 16.9%	14 21.9%	18 28.1%	54 21.3%
Poor	18 27.3%	6 10.2%	12 18.8%	1 1.6%	37 14.6%
Total	66 100.0%	59 100.0%	64 100.0%	64 100.0%	253 100.0%

Chi-Square:  $p < .05$

N of Valid Cases 253

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

This study dealt with crime in the “artificial environment.” Like any other environment, one has to look at the victim, the perpetrator or offender, and finally, the environment. The “artificial environment,” like other environments for the purpose of this study, was in and around the casino. This means it could be outside in a parking garage, or even inside a motel room. The point is, that like any other environment, it has many different aspects depending on where the person is at during that particular time. One thing is for sure, it is not like “back home.”

As Wellford found out, and in some respects like the environment “back home,” the data from this report confirms that a person is far more likely to be the victim of a property crime, possibly a burglary, auto theft, or other larceny; than a crime against the person, like an assault or robbery. The data gathered in this report showed a person to be nine times more likely to be the victim of a property crime than crime against person, and this seems consistent with the study done by Professor Wellford.

Unlike the study by Wellford, and unlike “back home,” of those visitors who were victims, women outnumbered men. Even though men and women come to Southern Nevada in fairly equal numbers, according to GLS, 53% of the population

surveyed as victims were female. If you take into consideration that men come to Southern Nevada just slightly more than women, 51% to 49%, and the fact that if both a man and woman are victimized as a couple, the man is traditionally listed as the victim: it adds more weight to the claim.

Bivariate analysis conducted on the victim population found more than half of the victimizations of women were the result of a larceny, and this can be traced mostly to the purse or coins set next to them. While playing the poker or slot machines, women will set their purse between the machines and play. This offers ample opportunity for the motivated thief to provide a distraction and take the purse or cup of coins. Furthermore, while inside the bathroom stall, women are likely to hand their purse on a hanger on the door, where someone can reach over and take it, or leave it on the floor where someone can reach under and take it. In any event, the purse seems to explain the high incident of female victimization in the "artificial environment." This conclusion is drawn from several different officers, both police and security, who have worked in the "artificial environment."

Wellford thought that people were much safer while traveling. It would stand to reason that if this was true, that a population that traveled and were victims of crimes would also have suffered some victimization "back home." Two thirds of the persons questioned, however, had never been victimized. Twenty-eight percent had been victimized, but it had been over a year prior to their current victimization in Southern Nevada. Only 5% had been victimized "back home" within the year of their victimization in Southern Nevada. While this does not give conclusive evidence that one

is safer while at home than while traveling, it certainly raises some questions to the validity of being safer while traveling than at home.

Ages of respondents were divided into four categories: Juniors, 20 years to 40 years of age; Middle-aged Persons, 41 to 50 years of age; Pre-retirement Persons, 51 to 64 years of age; and Seniors, 65 years of age and older. These four groups were divided nearly equally when looked at for numbers relating to crime. When overall numbers from fiscal year 1996 were brought in, no one group differed from their percentage total by more than 5% for overall numbers. For instance, 19% of the overall population for fiscal 1996, according to GLS, were middle-aged, while 24% of the population of victims were pre-retirement. This does not seem to support the theory that this group is being selected for victimization.

Victimization for race reflects an almost exact parallel with the overall numbers for fiscal year 1996. White are victimized 83% of the time, and made up 81% of the overall population. Black were victimized 4% of the time and made up 6% of the overall population. Hispanics were victimized 5% of the time and made up 5% of the population. Finally, people of Asian decent were victimized 8% of the time and made up 7% of the overall population. These numbers could not be much closer. The evidence suggests that race is not a factor in an offender's target selection while in or around the "artificial environment."

More than half, 57%, of the total victims surveyed had been to Southern Nevada five or more times at the time of their victimization. Only 13% of those victims responding were on their first trip to Southern Nevada. This does not support the

hypothesis that familiarity with the "artificial environment" makes a person less likely to be the victim of a crime. Adversely, it appears that from this data, that people might become over-confident the more times they come to Southern Nevada and let down their guard, thus becoming the victim of a crime. This area appears to also need more study.

Unlike other tourist destinations, people who come to Southern Nevada in groups do not always stay to that group. Gambling and the other so called vices of the "artificial environment" tend to lend themselves better to single people. Only 7% of the overall population of visitors in fiscal 1996 came in a group of five or more, yet 24%, or over three times that, reported being the victim of a crime in Southern Nevada. This is not to say that groups promote criminal opportunity, but rather show the personal aspect one has when gambling. Different people enjoy different things in the "artificial environment," whether it be a different game, machine, or activity; and this does not promote group behavior, such as a trip to the zoo or the Grand Canyon would. Thus, the numbers do not support the hypothesis that groups offer more protection to potential victims in the "artificial environment." Again, as before, more study needs to be done on group behavior in the "artificial environment."

As with the general population, the results of this study seem to indicate that a person's income does have something to do with their victimization. As shown in Table 3, significantly more persons who make less than \$20,000 a year tend to be the victims of a crime against the person than any other group. This is more than double any other classification of income. I can only speculate as to why, but this might reflect the overall trend in our society, and this may contribute to it. Again, more study is needed, but this

does pose an interesting question which begs to be followed up.

Hypothesis 9 dealt with whether a person's distance from Southern Nevada had a bearing on whether they would come back to testify. This Chi-square did not add up, and no conclusion or speculation can be made here. The fact that the bivariate analysis was not significant opens up speculation, but again, as with the other hypothesis, more study is needed.

As shown in Tables 4 through 6, a person's job status, profession, and age appear to have a bearing on how they felt the establishment handled their victimization. Regarding how the police handled the victimization, none of the bivariate analysis was significant. There appears to be a relationship, but only how the establishment handled the incident, and only in the categories mentioned. Race and income do not appear to have a bearing, but as mentioned, the overall general population was overwhelmingly White, and this may have influenced the data. Again, more study is needed.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

This study was definitely exploratory in nature. Overall it raised many more questions than it answered. It did, however, open some doors in the understanding of the problem surrounding tourist victimization. I think it can be said that there is a difference between the victimization of a traveler or tourist and the victimization of the overall population.

This study showed that women tend to be victimized more than men. Although the numbers were close, the fact that men are being listed in the crime report in community property type situations much more than women, the figures can sometimes be skewed in the favor of men's victimization. Thus, it could very well be that women are even more likely to be a victim. On the other hand, these statistics might be skewed due to the possibility that women responded to this survey in higher numbers than men. Furthermore, the bivariate analysis shows evidence that women are being victimized very heavily in the area of larcenies. Fujii and Mak described tourists as being different, because of the items they carry, and in this case I feel it is reflected on the purse that women traditionally carry. The evidence was not conclusive in this area, and I must confess that even here, more study is needed, but this is a start.

Not everything tested showed a difference with the general population. People who make less money tend to be the victim of a crime against the person much more than others who make more money. Could this be related to where they go, or how they act once they get there? Probably, but it does suggest some routines that might carry themselves into the "artificial environment."

Some of the tables showed numbers that may appear too small in some categories. When combined together, these categories were determined not to be statistically significant. This in itself may raise some questions. The tables do suggest areas that may be strengthened in the future, and for this reason suggestions were drawn from them. In short, the tables in question, 4 through 6, tend to show that people judge how their victimization was handled based on their income, employment status, occupation, and age.

Some questions did not get answered at all. There is no way of telling, as a result of this study, whether proximity has anything to do with people's willingness to return to court to testify. The largest chunk of the population, both overall and through victimization, came from California, a neighboring state. It is unknown, however, whether this will influence a person's decision on returning as the bivariate analysis was not significant. Again, as before, more research is needed.

I hope this study will do just that, encourage more research. The tourist industry is one of the future, and surely crime will be a significant factor concerning it. We should attempt to understand crime's impact on the industry in an attempt to prevent it before it is too late.

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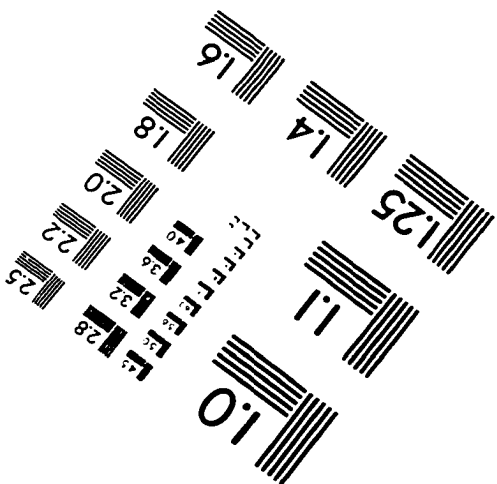
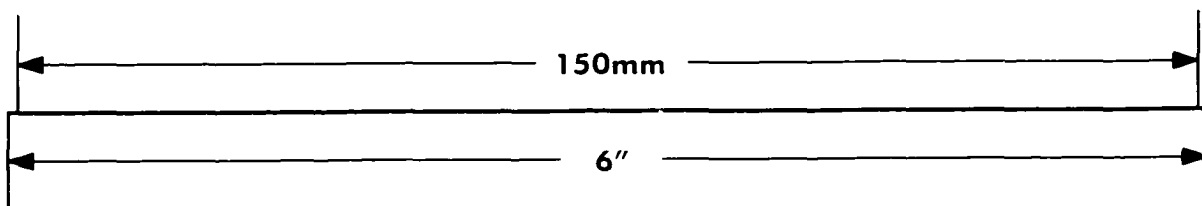
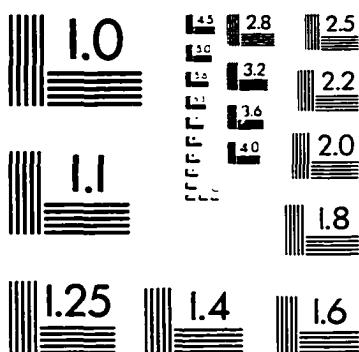
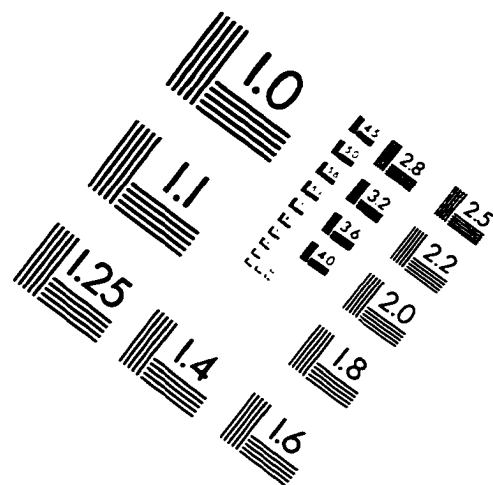
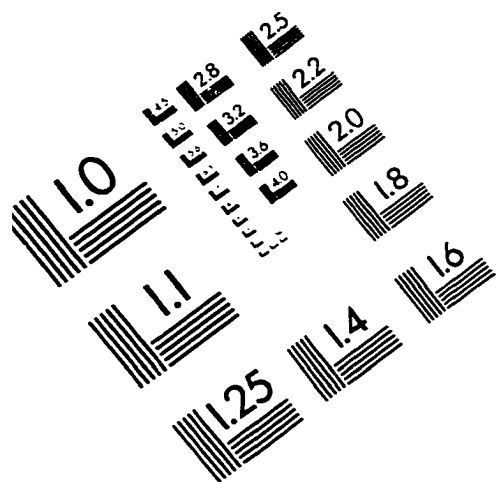
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