Reactions to Victimisation: Why has Anger been Ignored?

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A previous article demonstrated, from an analysis of data derived from a quantitative survey of 1,629 adult Scottish residents, that being 'angry', rather than being 'afraid', was the reaction most respondents thought they would feel when imagining crime victimisation, irrespective of age, gender or victim-status. This article plumbs the same data base, but here considers reactions to actual victimisations experienced in the past year. When initial reactions are considered, only assault victims experience other reactions more than that of anger. When later reactions are examined, respondents report less anger (except for assault), much less fear (particularly for assault) and many more non-fear and non-anger responses. These results are placed in the context of other research, and against a qualitative background derived from interviews conducted with an initial sample of different respondents. Some possible reasons for the relative neglect of victim-anger are discussed.

Key Words: Reactions to victimisation; anger; fear; the victim movement

Mrs Basham beats the burglar

Two elderly women described yesterday how they floored a teenage burglar and held him 'like a wriggly worm' by tying his legs with a handbag strap and sitting on top of him. Edith Basham, 69, and her aunt, Doris Ray, a frail 84-year-old, saw the intruder removing glass to break into a house and intervened. With John Roberts, a 64-year-old neighbour, they grappled with the 17-year-old burglar and held him despite sustaining cuts and bruises as he punched and kicked them. Mrs Basham, a grandmother, said: 'We are pensioners but not pushovers. None of us felt fear, just anger'.[2]

Introduction

We have been investigating the phenomenon of the 'fear' of crime with increasing scepticism since 1994. Initially tasked to check what had become a rather woolly concept, this Economic and Social Research Council-funded project[3] has been able to make some useful inroads into question-design choices,[4] and some further re-analysis of common explanatory models is under way.[5] Some suggestions relating to recommendations for future crime and fear of crime surveying have been made,[6] and some contributions to substantive issues published or forthcoming.[7]

This article extends the argument advanced elsewhere:[8] the idea that 'anger' about crime is rather more common than is 'fear' (although this does not mean that those who are angry

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might not also be fearful). That article considered the general feelings that members of a random sample (of 1,629 domestically-resident Scottish adults, living in the region then called Strathclyde) thought they would experience when considering the prospect of victimisation. Of the total, 396 individuals had experienced a total of 638 prior-year victimisations, and for the purposes of that article, they were treated as 'victims'. That article concluded that, however the sample was divided (whether by age, gender or victim status), anger, rather than fear, was the dominant prospective response.

This article uses different victimisation data, but from the same survey. In addition to assessing the extent of prior-year victimisation, the 396 respondents were probed in rather more detail about the most recent prior-year victimisation they had experienced.[9] This total of 396 was fashioned from 112 housebreaking cases, 175 vehicle crime ones, 68 assaults, and 41 cases of vandalism. The 396 respondents provided data on how long ago the victimisation occurred, where it happened, how they felt initially, how they felt later, what the worst thing about the victimisation was, and whether or not they felt they had been specifically targeted.

In a sense, this article merely states the obvious. It would be faintly daft to 'worry' about or 'fear' something which has already happened (although not that it might happen again). Yet so obsessed have analysts been with the 'fear' of crime that other responses to victimisation have effectively been ignored.

Background

Post-victimisation anger has been noted en passant before, although at least one major review of the effect of crime victimisation on victims doesn't mention it at all.[10] While most crime surveys have not asked directly the angry question of respondents generally, some have included anger as a possible specific response to victimisation, but few of these have reported the results. The contrast with fear is marked. By the time the British Crime Survey gave anger an independent existence as a victim response (in its third sweep of 1987–8), crime fear had assumed its current status as an evil of equal stature with crime itself. Pease noted that the issues which emerged as important from early crime surveys did so primarily because of the theoretical predilections of the researchers, rather than because of their intrinsic importance.[11] Asking those questions about fear and police accountability, for example, (rather than anger and dismay about the impotence of agencies of social control), derives from a pre-existing view of the world, not from the priorities and concerns of citizens.

An early study reported interviews with 322 burglary victims between 1977 and 1979.[12] The author found that the dominant first reaction to burglary was anger (30% of respondents) rather than fear (only 9%). There was a greater disparity between the two feelings for males (41% anger, 4% fear) than for females (19% anger 13% fear), but anger was greater for both genders.

Kinsey and Anderson, in one of the fullest reports of British Crime Survey (Scotland) data, report that: 'respondents were asked whether they had experienced an emotional reaction as a result of vandalism, and, if so, of what kind. For both vandalism against the home and car vandalism, about two-thirds of respondents reported that they had suffered some form of emotional reaction. Overwhelmingly, the main reaction to both kinds of vandalism was one of anger'.[13] Later (p 29) they comment on the emotional costs of housebreaking paid by their respondents, and note: 'the most common reaction was anger … anger was more common among the men interviewed (92% in comparison with 67% of women)'. Anger was the most common response for 78% of the sample. For 'fear', it was: men 13%, women 35%, and for

the whole sample, 25%. For assault (p 42) the emotional reactions by those victims that claimed to have them were: men 77% angry; women 76% angry. For fear of assault it was men 22% fearful, and women 63% fearful.

Later still (p 59) they conclude that on their examination of the reported 'worst thing' about all BCS offences, anger was discovered to be second (at 21%) after nuisance (22%). Fear at the time of victimisation was 7%, and subsequent fears 11%. They further indicate (p 60) that an examination of reactions to victimisation by age, gender and income shows that anger dominates for both men (50% anger, 8% fear) and women (52% anger, 16% fear); and for age, with those aged 16–24 (50% anger, 11% fear), those aged 25–44 (53% anger, 11% fear), those aged 45–64 (50% anger, 9% fear), and those aged 65+ (39% anger, 9% fear); and for income, with those with an annual income under £10,000 (55% anger, 16% fear), for those with an annual income of between £10,000 and £20,000 (54% anger, 6% fear), and for those with an annual income of over £20,000 (48% anger, 4% fear).

In 1993, Ostrihanska and Wójcik reported interviews with 50 burglary victims, 20 of whom were re-interviewed 6 months later. They report, when investigating respondent feelings on discovering their burglary, that 'the answers most often mentioned agitation and anger (40%), shock and fear (26%)'.[14]

Further, in the main report of the latest Scottish Crime Survey,[15] it is reported that anger is the predominant 'emotional response', both 'at time of incident' and 'at time of interview' (equivalent to our 'initially' and 'later'), for housebreaking (Figure 3.2, p 22), car crime (Figure 3.5, p 27) and assault (Figure 3.8, p 34). Actual percentages are not always given in the text, but visual inspection of the Figures suggests that for housebreaking, the 'immediate' and 'now' percentages feeling angry are about 81% and 42% (for fear, only 29% and 17%); for car crime, about 78% and 46% (for fear, only 4% and 3%); and for assault, 75% and 39% (although for fear of it, only 31% and 11%). Whilst it appears that respondents were allowed to list more than one response, making any comparisons with our data strictly impermissible, the overall picture is one of anger dominating all other responses.

Similarly, Mirrlees-Black, Mayhew, and Percy, reporting the 1996 British Crime Survey, England and Wales, state: 'For burglary victims, the most common response was one of anger (23%)'.[16] Later (p 48), when commenting on what their respondents claimed was the 'worst thing' about car crime, they reported: 'Over half of victims of thefts of vehicles said these practical problems [inconvenience, nuisance and other practical problems] were the worst aspect (55%), and just under half of those who had something stolen from their vehicle (45%). Emotional reactions were much less commonly cited as the *worst* aspect, although anger was the second most mentioned consequence at 11% of victims of thefts of, and 21% of victims of thefts from [vehicles]'.

Mawby and Walklate report a fear of crime survey conducted in two English towns. They found that in Plymouth, 78% of burglary victims were angry, and 31% fearful.[17] In Salford, they discovered that 77% were angry and 41% fearful. In these burgled households, other adults were also more likely to be angry than fearful, but children there were more likely to be fearful than angry.[18] Finally (there may be many other examples not known to us), MacLeod et al report their analysis of the responses of 255 Scottish victims documented in 1991–92. Precise numbers are not given, but visual inspection of published graphs suggests that 51% were angry at the time of the incident, with only 15% shocked, 13% depressed or upset, and 11% worried or scared.[19] It seems, from Appendix A of their report, that this was an open question.

In pinpointing post-victimisation anger as the dominant victim response, we can hardly claim novelty or originality. Merely, we ask three questions: one, given the plethora of studies of victimisation 'fear' (Hale's seminal article contains the most exhaustive list),[20] are the few examples listed above atypical or can they be shown, empirically, to be typical? Two, what are the correlates and meanings of anger? And, three, why has anger, relatively speaking, been ignored?

Results

Quantitative data

Victims were offered the following response options to the question about initial post-victimisation feeling, and in this order: none, angry, upset or tearful, fear or fearful, shocked, suffered insomnia, invaded, disappointed or fed up, other, don't know. Only one choice was permitted.[21] For all victimisations combined, only anger (at 69%) exceeded 8% of responses. For initial purposes, 'anger' was left unchanged and all other responses were combined into a single 'other' category. Responses, by age, gender and crime type are in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage 'angry' or 'other' initially after victimisation

	1. % Angry: % Other (n)	2. Housebreaking	3. Vehicle crime	4. Assault	5. Vandalism
1. Male, 16–34	68% Angry: 32% Other (60)	50:50 (10)	100:0 (24)	36:64 (22)	100:0 (4)(*)
2. Female, 16–34	76% Angry: 24% Other (75)	83:17 (18)	94:6 (34)	32:68 (19)	100:0 (4)(*)
3. Male, 35–59	68% Angry: 32% Other (94)	60:40 (30)	82:18 (34)	56:44 (16)	64:36 (14)
4. Female, 35–59	73% Angry: 27% Other (89)	42:58 (26)	88:12 (48)	100:0 (5)(*)	70:30 (10)(*)
5. Male, 60+	80% Angry: 20% Other (40)	79:21 (14)	90:10 (19)	0:100 (1)(*)	67:33 (6)(*)
6. Female, 60+	37% Angry: 63% Other (35)	15:85 (13)	57:43 (14)	20:80 (5)(*)	67:33 (3)(*)
7. Male	71% Angry: 29% Other (195)	64:36 (55)	90:10 (77)	44:56 (39)	71:29 (24)
8. Female	68% Angry: 32% Other (201)	49:51 (57)	86:14 (98)	41:59 (29)	71:29 (17)
9. All	69% Angry: 31% Other (396)	56:44 (112)	87:13 (175)	43:57 (68)	73:27 (41)

Note: the most dramatic (and anomalous) differences are in cells with small n values. Those cells with an n of 10 or less are marked (*). The ages of 1 male and 2 females are unknown.

Anger dominates other feelings, with three age-gender categories being exceptions: first, middle-aged women (row 4) are more 'other' than 'angry' about housebreaking; second, older women (row 6) are overall more 'other' than 'angry' (particularly for housebreaking and assault, but not for vehicle crime and vandalism, where they are more angry than other); and third, respondents are slightly more 'other' than 'angry' about assault (row 9, column 4) except for young men (row 3, column 4) and those aged 35–59 (rows 3 and 4, column 4).

The picture changes, in some minor directions (except for assault), when the same victims were asked about how they felt later. Response options were identical. Anger was reported by 67% of respondents, no emotional response by 12%, with no other response being cited by more than 8% of respondents. Again, 'anger' was left unchanged, and all other responses were combined into a single 'other' category. Responses, by age, gender and crime type are in Table 2.

Table 2. Percentage 'angry' or 'other' later after victimisation

	1. % Angry: % Other (n)	2. Housebreaking	3. Vehicle crime	4. Assault	5. Vandalism
1. Male, 16–34	72% Angry: 28% Other (60)	40:60 (10)	75:25 (24)	77:23 (22)	100:0 (4)(*)
2. Female, 16–34	61% Angry: 39% Other (75)	72:28 (18)	65:35 (34)	53:47 (19)	25:75 (4)(*)
3. Male, 35–59	60% Angry: 40% Other (94)	50:50 (30)	68:32 (34)	75:25 (16)	43:57 (14)
4. Female, 35–59	67% Angry: 33% Other (89)	58:42 (26)	67:33 (48)	100:0 (5)(*)	80:20 (10)(*)
5. Male, 60+	70% Angry: 30% Other (40)	71:29 (14)	79:21 (19)	0:100 (1)(*)	50:50 (6)(*)
6. Female, 60+	86% Angry: 14% Other (35)	92:8 (13)	79:21 (14)	80:20 (5)(*)	100:0 (3)(*)
7. Male	66% Angry: 34% Other (195)	55:45 (55)	73:27 (77)	74:26 (39)	52:46 (24)
8. Female	69% Angry: 31% Other (201)	70:30 (57)	68:32 (98)	66:34 (29)	71:29 (17)
9. All	67% Angry: 33% Other (396)	63:37 (112)	70:30 (175)	71:29 (68)	61:39 (41)

Note: the most dramatic (and anomalous) differences are in cells with small n values. Those cells with an n of 10 or less are marked (*). The ages of 1 male and 2 females are unknown.

Anger again dominates other feelings, again with some exceptions. First, young men (row 1) are more 'other' than 'angry' about housebreaking; two, young women are more 'other' than 'angry' about vandalism; three, middle-aged men are equally 'other' and 'angry' about housebreaking, but more 'other' than 'angry' about vandalism; and four, the one older man who had been assaulted (row 5 column 4) was more 'other' than 'angry', and the six older men who had been vandalism victims were equally 'other' and 'angry'. However, it is noticeable that first, older women are now angrier than anybody, and second, feelings about assault (initially slightly predominantly 'other') are now strongly 'angry'. The difference for general feelings about assault is visually apparent in a comparison of Figure 1 with Figure 2.

Table 3 shows more precisely the flux in opinion: that is, the proportions of those remaining 'angry', remaining 'other', and changing from one to the other.

In each batch of four figures separated by colons positioned at the top of each Table cell, the first and last show those who don't change; and the middle two figures show those that do. Of all, 66% don't (women 59%; men 74%). Older women change the most (66% do), older men the least (only 16% do). Overall, for housebreaking victims, change is moderate (65% don't), for vehicle crime and vandalism victims, change is slight (72% and 74% don't respectively), and for assault victims, change is marked (only 39% don't).

Figure 1. Percentage 'angry' and 'other' initially on victimisation

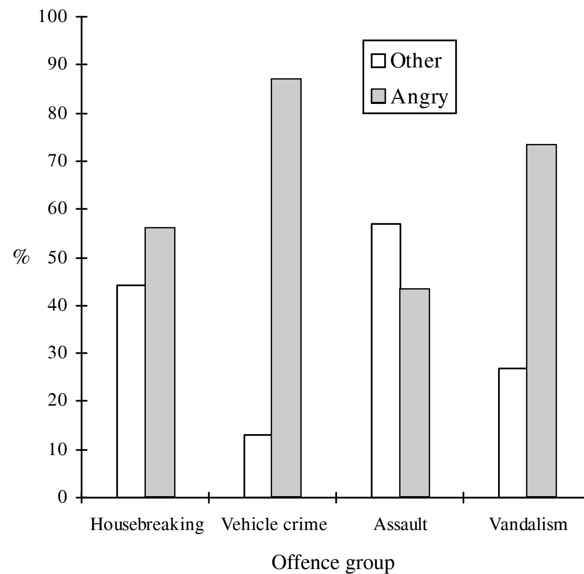
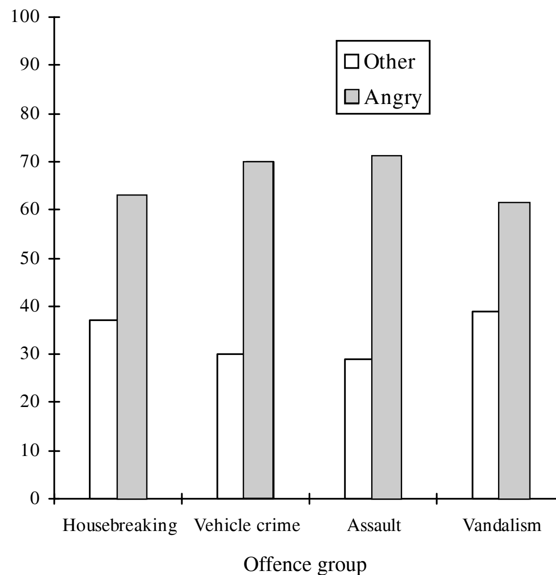


Figure 2. Percentage 'angry' and 'other' later after victimisation



What does this tell us? It confirms that Tables 1 and 2 conceal the fact that change is bidirectional. For example, column 1, row 1 of Table 1 indicates 68% initially angry, and column 1, row 1 of Table 2 indicates 72% later angry. Table 3 adds the information that 48% were angry on both occasions, 20% who were initially angry became later other, 23% who were initially other became later angry, and 8% were other on both occasions. It also shows that changing emotions are a function of both offence types and personal characteristics.

So far (Table 3) initial and later reactions to victimisation have been treated as a binary 'anger' and 'other'. This recoding was principally on numerical grounds, as can be seen from Table 4.

Table 3. Percentage changing/not changing feelings since victimisation

	1. A2A:A2O:O2A:O2O (n)	2. Housebreaking	3. Vehicle crime	4. Assault	5. Vandalism
1. Male, 16–34	48:20:23:8 (60)	20:20:30:30 (10)	75:25:0:0 (24)	23:14:55:9 (22)	100:0:0:0 (4)(*)
2. Female, 16–34	48:28:13:11 (75)	56:28:17:0 (18)	62:32:3:3 (34)	21:11:32:37 (19)	25:75:0:0 (4)(*)
3. Male, 35–59	53:15:6:26 (94)	50:10:0:40 (30)	65:18:3:15 (34)	44:13:31:13 (16)	43:21:0:36 (14)
4. Female, 35–59	53:19:14:14 (89)	31:12:27:31 (26)	60:27:6:6 (48)	5:0:0:0 (5)(*)	60:10:20:10 (10)
5. Male, 60+	68:13:3:18 (40)	64:14:7:14 (14)	79:10:0:11 (19)	0:0:0:100 (1)(*)	50:17:0:33 (6)(*)
6. Female, 60+	29:9:57:6 (35)	15:0:77:8 (13)	43:14:36:7 (14)	0:20:80:0 (5)(*)	67:0:33:0 (3)(*)
7. Male	55:16:11:19 (195)	49:15:6:31 (55)	71:18:1:9 (77)	31:13:44:13 (39)	54:17:0:29 (24)
8. Female	48:20:21:11 (201)	35:14:35:16 (57)	59:27:9:5 (98)	31:10:35:24 (29)	53:24:18:6 (17)
9. All	51:18:16:15 (396)	42:14:21:23 (112)	65:23:6:7 (175)	21:12:40:18 (68)	54:20:7:20 (41)

A2A: Anger to Anger; A2O: Anger to Other; O2A: Other to Anger; O2O: Other to Other.

Note: the most dramatic (and anomalous) differences are in cells with small n values. Those cells with an n of 10 or less are marked (*). The ages of 1 male and 2 females are unknown.

Table 4. Options given respondents (and responses)

	Initial feelings n (%)	Later feelings n (%)
1. None	3 (1)	46 (12)
2. Angry	275 (69)	266 (67)
3. Upset, tearful	27 (7)	5 (1)
4. Fear, fearful	29 (7)	3 (1)
5. Shocked	28 (7)	2 (1)
6. Suffered insomnia	– (–)	– (–)
7. Invaded	3 (1)	4 (1)
8. Disappointed, fed up	15 (4)	28 (7)
9. Other	4 (1)	30 (8)
10. Don't know	12 (3)	12 (3)
	396 (100)	**396 (100)**

A number of derived specific points can be made. In order:

1. Only three selected 'none' as their initial feeling. One of them said the same later, and the other two had become angry later. Of the 46 that claimed no feelings later, one had claimed this initially, 28 had initially been angry, one fearful, five shocked, eight disappointed and one other. Two didn't know.

2. Of the 275 initially angry, 203 were still angry later. Of the remainder, 28 claimed no feeling later, two that they had become upset, one shocked, three invaded, 15 disappointed,

16 other and seven didn't know. Of the 266 angry later, two had initially no feelings, 14 had been upset, 25 fearful, 13 shocked, two felt invaded, and two disappointed. Again, two didn't know.

3. Of the 27 initially upset, only two remained this way later. Of the other 25, 14 became angry later, one fearful, six disappointed and the four other. Of the five later upset, two had initially been so, two had initially been angry, and one initially disappointed.

4. Of the 29 initially fearful, two remained this way, 25 had become angry, one claimed no later feeling, with the remaining person giving an other reason. Of the three later fearful, two had initially claimed this, and one had initially been upset.

5. Of the 28 initially being shocked, none remained this way. Five claimed no later feeling, 13 that they had become angry, five disappointed, and five gave an other reason. Only two were later shocked. One had initially been angry, and one disappointed.

6. Nobody reported suffering from insomnia.

7. Of the 15 who had initially been disappointed, two remained this way later, eight later claimed no feeling, two were angry, one upset, one shocked and one gave an other reason. Of the 28 who were disappointed later, two had been so initially, 15 had initially been angry, six upset and five shocked.

8. Four initially gave an other (uncoded) reaction. Three remained this way, and the other claimed later to have no feeling. Of the 30 who gave other as a feeling later, three had done so initially, 16 had initially been angry, four upset, one fearful, five shocked, and one disappointed.

9. Of the 12 that said that initially they didn't know, five claimed the same thing later, but two claimed no feeling and five that they had become angry. The 12 later don't knows included five who had originally claimed that, and seven who had initially been angry.

Some general points are also worth making:

1. Reactions may be regrouped into three main types: anger, fear (upset, fearful, shocked, invaded) and other (none, disappointed, other, don't know). As can be seen in Table 5, anger remains evident in about two-thirds of the sample (albeit with the switching about noted in specific point 2 above; and given that initial anger and later anger may be quite different feelings: something that further research dedicated to this subject might choose to examine), but fear as a consequence of actual victimisation diminishes considerably, as other reactions increase.

2. Thus regrouped, these can be cross-tabulated, as in Table 6.

Table 5. Time differences in feelings: all victims

	Anger n (%)	Fear n (%)	Other n (%)
Initial	275 (69)	87 (22)	34 (9)
Later	266 (67)	14 (4)	116 (29)

Table 6. Changes in feelings: all victims

n (% of total)	Later anger	Later fear	Later other
Initial anger	203 (51)	6 (2)	66 (17)
Initial fear	54 (14)	6 (2)	27 (7)
Initial other	9 (2)	2 (1)	23 (6)

Further, if those who report the same feeling on both occasions (59%) are classed as 'constants' and those whose emotional state changes (41%) as (unsurprisingly) 'changers', then age does not significantly predict group membership, but gender does (with women being more likely to change their stated feeling, $p<0.01$, 2df). Offence type has greater predictive power, being highly statistically significantly related to changing feelings. Vehicle crime victims changed their minds less than did housebreaking and vandalism victims, and assault victims more ($p<0.001$, 3df).

What can be made of this? First, a summary measure, as in Table 7.

Table 7. Time differences in feelings: all victims

	Anger n (%)	Fear n (%)	Other n (%)
Hb:initial	63 (56)	33 (30)	16 (14)
Hb:later	70 (63)	9 (8)	33 (30)
Vehicle:initial	153 (87)	13 (7)	9 (5)
Vehicle:later	123 (70)	3 (2)	49 (28)
Ass:initial	29 (43)	33 (49)	6 (9)
Ass:later	48 (71)	2 (3)	18 (27)
Vand:initial	30 (73)	8 (20)	3 (7)
Vand:later	25 (61)	– (–)	16 (39)

Again, there seem to be two patterns here. First, victim groups that are not hugely angry initially become more angry and less fearful with the passage of time (housebreaking victims and assault victims); and second, victim groups that start off much angrier become less angry and more 'other' with the passage of time (vehicle crime victims and vandalism victims). The percentages angry initially are, in order (housebreaking, vehicle crime, assault, vandalism), 56, 87, 43 and 73 (a range of 44%); the percentages later angry are 63, 70, 71 and 61 (a range of only 10%).

Taking the first group, is there a relation between response and age and gender? For housebreaking, 55% report the same feeling on both occasions ('constants') and 45% don't ('changers'). Age does not predict this, but gender does, with women less likely to change feelings ($p<0.01$, 1df). For assault, only 37% report the same feeling on both occasions ('constants') and 63% don't ('changers'). Age predicts this (in a curious curvilinear way, with the young and old more likely to be constant, $p<0.01$, 2df), but gender doesn't.

For the second group, the picture is different. For vehicle crime, 69% report the same feeling on both occasion ('constants') and 31% don't ('changers'). Neither age nor gender predicts this. Finally, for vandalism, 61% report the same feeling on both occasion ('constants') and 39% don't ('changers'). Neither age nor gender predicts this.

Respondents were also asked what was the 'worst thing' about the victimisation they were being probed about. Responses were recoded into a binary variable. The first ('nasty') contained a group of responses which either referred to some element of the criminal act or to some impersonal effect on the victim. This included: financial loss, nuisance and inconvenience, the viciousness of the damage, or 'other' reasons. A second group of responses which referred to the direct personal effect on the victim, were here recoded as 'pain'. This included: privacy invaded, fear of it happening again, sentimental loss, physical pain or injury, the shock of it all, or don't know.

Those whose initial reaction had already been established as 'angry' were more likely to pick a response in the nasty group, and those whose initial reaction had already been established as 'other' were more likely to pick one in the pain group ($p<0.0001$, 1df). Further, those whose later reaction had been established as 'angry' were again more likely to pick a response in the nasty group, and those whose later reaction had been established as 'other' were again more likely to pick one in the pain group, albeit at a lower level of significance ($p<0.01$, 1df). Those who were consistently either 'angry' or 'other' were more likely to select a 'worst thing' from the nasty group, and those who changed their feeling between initially and later were more likely to select one from the pain group ($p<0.0001$, df).

When victims were separated into the four offence groups (housebreaking, vehicle crime, assault and vandalism), the direction and strength of this pattern held except for assault. Age, gender and recency of victimisation were all unrelated to the pattern.

Finally, victims were asked whether or not they thought that the victimisation they were describing was a random event, or that they had been deliberately targeted by an offender. Only 73 (18% of all victims) thought that they had been deliberately targeted. Vandalism and assault victims (22% and 41% respectively) were more likely to think they had been singled out than were housebreaking or vehicle crime victims (16% and 13%). This did not affect initial or later victimisation feelings, or whether or not these feelings changed between these two time reference points. Nor was the self-definition of having been specifically targeted related to age or gender. It should be recalled that these data concern the most recent victimisation event, and the picture might well have been different if multiple events against the same target had been included.

Qualitative data

We have no sense of what respondents mean when they claim that the 'thought of someone' victimising them in some way or other makes them 'angry' 'some of the time' or 'all of the time'. Nor do we know why actual victims predominantly respond to the two questions, 'How did you feel immediately you knew you had been victimised?' and 'How do you feel about it now?' by picking the response, 'angry'. But unarguably they do, and they do it consistently whatever their age or gender.

Anger has been a dominant response in other surveys when respondents are given that option. Yet, we are no nearer to discovering what it means, or, more likely, what range of meanings respondents allocate to the term when they use it. Some flavour of this range can be distilled, in part, from our initial qualitative work with individual interviewees.[22] First, some on housebreaking.

Sometimes anger is mixed with worry, although on at least one occasion an elderly woman interviewed had someone else to do her worrying, and this gave her free reign to voice her anger:

> my husband was very upset about … after the first and second burglaries. He was very upset and he started putting bars over the windows. Making sure the locks were secure, and things like that. Because he was taking responsibility, I think I was quite easygoing about it. He was worrying, so why should I worry as well? I felt terribly angry that they had dared to come into the house …
>
> (75-year-old woman)

Another woman was angry because her husband was upset:

> He was devastated, he was physically affected, he just went absolutely grey. He's not a wimp, my husband, all 6 ft 4 of him! But I think he felt that the family silver had been entrusted to him, and he had let the family down by losing it …
>
> (47-year-old woman)

Occasionally, anger is at oneself for failing to recognise that a burglary (to a neighbour) was in progress. The police, in this case, had attended, and this was approved of. However:

> What annoyed me was the mere fact that I was in my house, and her door was just facing me, and I never heard a thing. I didn't see it, and that was annoying, you know … It was fear and anger, it was both. If I had them there and then, I don't know what I'd have done, right enough … but the police were good. Needless to say, they didn't catch them. They never do. Very rarely …
>
> (53-year-old woman)

Others can be angry about other people's failure to take adequate security precautions. As in this case:

> My cousin was staying with me. I gave her my keys, and said to go and get another set of keys cut, and I would be home in two days. I phoned her the next day to find out if she'd done it. And there was no answer, so I went down to the flat and found that we'd been broken into … and what she'd done was put the keys on a string on one side of the door and, you're going to love this! … hanging on the inside of the door, and a note on the other side of the door, to say that the keys were hanging there! … [My flatmate] got back at the weekend, and the place was ransacked … stereo, TV, everything … gone. I was so angry at my cousin for being so stupid. I hope it happens to her …
>
> (34-year-old woman)

Or the anger might be directed at those responsible for installing security systems, or for dealing with the consequences of their failure:

> I was absolutely furious with the police. Here, we have a system where we have an alarm which dials through to the police. Now, in fact, we thought that had happened anyway. It was so naïve of us, and so silly. Obviously, if you cut the telephone line, it can't dial through to the police … well, the bell goes off, but the system doesn't actually work properly [and didn't ring through to the police station]or other … The neighbour heard, it was one o'clock in the morning, it was Saturday night … they had already phoned the police … the police came, and they didn't notice that the wire was hanging down the side of the house. They didn't notice that there was a ladder lying in the garden … They didn't check the phone, and they didn't notice that the alarm wasn't setting properly … So the police didn't come back, and you'd have thought it might have been reasonable to come back and check, and I was very, very angry … and they were quite unrepentant … I was very angry …
>
> (47-year-old woman)

As for the housebreaking itself, the same woman felt:

> Just angry … We were fortunate. It has had a very serious, it would not be too strong to say, an effect on my youngest child, and for that I feel very angry …

A 32-year-old man had mixed feelings—both internally, and about the official response. His response to a housebreaking was a mixture of anger and fear: 'Angry and frightened … I think it was a bit of both. Angry, and especially when the police knew who done it, and done nothing about it'. The well-known sense of being 'invaded' can lead to anger as well as to fear, as in this case:

> I'm not particularly religious, but … if you go through the whole of the Bible, you will only once find Jesus reportedly in a state of deep anger, and that was when people had invaded the temple and it's the same thing … it's people coming into your house, and that sensation of being invaded or violated is actually the theft itself …
>
> (38-year-old-woman)

Others, as in the following case, mix anger with fear, at least in the way the two words are used:

> I felt a bit angry that somebody came in and rifled through your belongings … So I did feel a bit angry, as I say, people going through your personal belongings, but I don't have that fear now, because of the new door that's on … [but I felt] angry at someone going through your belongings, but I just had to put it to the back of my mind afterwards …
>
> (54-year-old-woman)

And of course, occasionally, a housebreaking just seems to be the last straw:

> It's a combination of anger and … I suppose fear … because too … and then you say to yourself, 'Well, thank God I wasn't in, and if I was in, how would I have coped?' … You know? 'Would they have mugged me? Would they?', and I'm sure they would just, you know, fire in and assault you. I mean, it's happening every day, isn't it? But, um … and just anger at the way society's going.
>
> (65-year-old woman)

Reactions to car crime also generate feelings of anger. In some cases (perhaps unlike most housebreakings) anger may be a reaction based on attachment to the vehicle, but annoyance is more likely if no great feelings of fondness are present:

> I was just pissed off … 'cause it's bloody inconvenient. The car itself, I mean … as it was the Nova … I wasn't particularly bothered … but we still had the Beetle, and we like Beetles, and all the rest of it, if it had been the Bug [term of endearment for Beetle], then I would have been really annoyed, because you're far more attached to that. I would have been really annoyed … but the fact was, in that situation, I just felt, 'This is inconvenient. I'm about to get in this and go to work. I don't need to handle this' … You know? I'm going to have to fill out all those insurance forms, go back in, phone the police, get them to come down. Get them to take a look at it. Going to have to phone work. Going to have to tell them that I'm gonna be two hours late, blah, blah, blah, blah … That's the last thing you want. For some clown to have broken into your car … No, that was all. Annoyed, angry, but not particularly shocked or upset … It was just more annoyed that it had happened …
>
> (26-year-old-man)

However, others seem even more angry if the car is of little value:

> I'm not going to lose sleep over it. It's only the car. You know, I would be angry, but it's only the car … [First reaction was amazement. Her daughter] couldn't believe it. It was

> actually somebody down the road who had phoned up to say, 'Somebody's just stolen your car!', and I thought, 'Na! You're joking!', you know, and then Jean and her boyfriend turned up in his car, and we were coming up the stairs, and she went, 'Where's ma car?' It had gone! It was so strange … She was angry, the fact that they had, you know, messed it up inside. There was nothing in the car worth stealing, because she doesn't have a stereo, a radio, or anything like that in it, and like I said, it's an old banger, it gets her from A to B and back again … They had mucked up the steering wheel, and steering column and all the wiring and all that, you know, anger that way …
>
> (40-year-old-woman)

Some women just feel irritated rather than angry:

> It was just taken from the front door, it disappeared overnight. On both [the first two] occasions we got the car back pretty quickly. It seems that it was just young people taking it for a joyride. But on the third occasion we got the car back but we had to go to ___ to collect it. A bit of a trek … It was a real inconvenience. It made me angrier once I had children. The first time I had my car stolen, I had no children, so that was fine. Anybody can cope, get to work, and that, but when you've got children to get out in the morning, it's a really busy time, and if you don't have the car, it's a real inconvenience …
>
> (35-year-old woman)

Others can feel greater anger over the loss of smaller items:

> My husband bought me a bike for my birthday. We brought it home, and a week later went out for a bike ride with my family. Came home, put it in the garage … and that night somebody nicked my bike. I was so annoyed, so annoyed about it … I discovered the next morning that the bike had been stolen. I felt angry, and then I looked round to see if anything else had been stolen. The car was still there … So I just came in, and said to my husband, 'The bloody bike's been stolen!' … and that was it. I reported it to the police, I felt really, really annoyed … just because it was new, and I'd never sort of really used it. I knew that there was another £50 excess [insurance claim] to pay on it, so that was it. It just annoyed me …
>
> (36-year-old-woman)

Assault victims might be expected to respond with fear rather than anger (and some do initially, see Table 1 above). Nevertheless, anger still dominates, even when it is mixed with fear, as in the following case — a young man attacked by two others, but whose anger is reserved for the police. On being asked how he felt, he replied:

> Angry, actually. Do you want a laugh? I got a phone call from the police a couple of weeks ago, and they said to me on the phone, 'Have you heard any rumours about who it was that attacked you?' I said to the guy on the phone, 'From that question, I can take it that enquiries are going well?' He said, 'Not as well as we would have liked' … and I just told him the rumour that I'd heard that they were from ___, that's another not very hospitable area of Glasgow, and they took that on board, but I've heard nothing from them since …
>
> (20-year-old male)

A young woman was attacked in the street by a female gang including the woman that her ex-husband was then living with. Who was she angry with?

> Him. He knew about it, but he never did anything aboot it … I was very angry, pissed off that he knew, and he never done nothing, you know what I mean? To stop it … She battered him all the time, know what I mean? Put his head through windows, and what

> have you, so I don't think he could have stopped her, 'cause she was a maniac, know what I mean? The lassie was just a pure maniac … plus she pushed ma wee lassie on the road as well, wasn't caring whether she got knocked down, or whatever … while they were kicking into me down the street, and everybody stood and watched, and nobody helped … First of all, it's embarrassing, and it's … I was really angry that everybody stood and watched and never stopped it, especially when there was so many on me … that's all right if it's only one, I can defend myself, but I had me wee lassie at the time, and five people kicking into me in the street, plus ma wee lassie was standing screaming … nobody came over to calm her down or bugger all … They just stood and watched. I told the polis that as well, and they never done nothing about it …
>
> (24-year-old woman)

Another young woman was also attacked, in the middle of the city, by someone she referred to as an 'ex-friend'. How did she feel?

> Angry, very angry … I don't know, just really really strange. It was a female as well … she's … I don't know if she's the full penny or not. Since then, every time I was seeing her, I was actually pretty scared about it. I was watching over my shoulder … because she'd just jumped me in the middle of ___ Square, and gave me five punches to the face, my nose was out there … my eyes were over there … and one of my friends with me, he brought me home … Aye, that really shook me, but I was angry more than anything else, because I didn't deserve it … It's like act now and think later, basically, and it really, really angered me, and I was bitter about it, but I was so angry … When my friends came up the next night, I thought, 'I'm going to show everybody what she's done to me' … I was so angry that I got myself together, got myself dressed, and went out dancing with my friends, to show everybody what she'd done to me …
>
> (24-year-old woman)

Fear seems often to be mixed with anger in assault cases, with the latter taking over from the former very speedily. This woman had been attacked by a male stranger in the street:

> I didn't know whether he had a knife in his hand, or what. He could've. I think he sort of had his hands behind his back, but he just looked like an ordinary sort of bloke, I mean not particularly, you know, sort of down-and-out … He looked like an ordinary guy, but he obviously had a bit of a mad streak … I didn't find it funny at the time, because at the time it's, well, it's very frightening, because it was very sore. I mean, I had … my shin was black and blue. I mean he really … he didn't just kick me, you know, I mean, it was an assault really, I suppose because he had boots on, and he gave it to me with everything he had, so you know, it wasn't … I didn't find it funny at the time. I was crying. I was upset about it … It's funny. It's a funny thing 'cause it seems to be, for me, it seems to be varied in relation to an incident. If an incident happens, I have a feeling about it, whether it's anger, or upset, or whatever, but then it's gone. I don't … it doesn't seem to, it's not even as though I'm deliberately trying to … it sounds almost like the way I'm describing it, that I'm deliberately trying to rid myself of these fears … but I just don't feel strongly worried about or anxious about these things …
>
> (39-year-old woman)

Hypothetically, perhaps, vandalism might be expected to provoke only mild irritation rather than either great fear or anger. Here is someone whose common entrance to his flat had been feloniously spray-painted:

> Aye, it would upset me and, like, angry, aye. Just like I'm saying, 'Why don't they just go and spray-paint their own place?' Why come to mine and deface it, or whatever you want to call it? I don't think that's on … I don't definitely worry about it. It would upset me, make me helluva angry, if it was tae happen even on the stair … and a helluva lot more angry it if was to happen in here, but I don't worry about it …
>
> (30-year-old man)

A 24-year-old woman felt the same way:

> In one flat I was in, somebody held a party and the whole stairwell got wrecked, and I was mad at that, because I don't like anybody wrecking anybody else's property … you should respect anybody else's property as much as if it were my own … If it happened here, if we got the close or anything wrecked, I'd be angry. I had another place in ___, just before I came here, and there you're constantly getting the kids going about with spray-paint, which angered me. But that's their life, that's part of their life, that's the way they've been brought up, to wreck bus shelters and things like that … That angers me when I see it happening, that angers me …

Discussion

To return to our three questions: first, post-victimisation anger has been shown to be the typical (rather than atypical) response in a large random sample. Second, some of the correlates, and some of the possible meanings of anger, have been sketched out. However, since anger was an unexpected finding, more research, directed specifically towards its elucidation, is clearly essential. This might well lead to some additional questions that the analysis presented here has suggested. First, is 'initial' anger the same as 'later' anger? The first is presumably 'hot', the second, 'cold', but do they share the same characteristics? If so, in what proportion? Second, are the changes in the frequency with which anger is expressed (between 'initial' and 'later') a change in some or all of these sub-meanings? Third, respondents should not be asked only to choose one main response from a list (and the list itself should be rotated to control for primacy and/or recency effects), and they should be asked, for each effect recalled, how intense it was, and how long they were affected by it.

Third of our main questions, and most problematic of all: why has anger hitherto been ignored? One possibility is that anger may not always have been so dominant, and/or may be more dominant for Scottish victims than for those of other nationalities. There is some evidence that both are the case. Table 8 reports British Crime Survey data for the three sweeps which allow direct analysis of the feeling of anger in response to a victimisation. The general outcome is shown for victims of any crime. The precise wording of the question was, 'Many people have emotional reactions after incidents in which they are the victims of crime. Did you or anyone else in your household, including children, have any of these reactions after the incident? If yes, which of these reactions did … have?'

Table 8. Anger and fear: British Crime Survey data

Year	% Angry	% Afraid
1988	50	11
1992	62	13
1994	69	17

Three observations can be made. First, the percentage angry is always much greater than the percentage afraid. Second, the ratio of the fearful to the angry stays roughly the same (about 23 per cent in each of the three years). Three, the percentage angry in 1994 is remarkably similar to the percentage angry in the data reported in this article.

Are the Scots more likely to be angry? The most useful source of comparison is the 1993 Scottish Crime Survey[23] and the 1996 British Crime Survey.[24] As reported earlier, the Scots do seem to

report anger as an immediate and subsequent feeling with greater frequency than do the English and Welsh, although the data is reported in ways that make strict comparisons difficult.

Many people change their reported emotional response to crime over time, and do so most to crimes of violence. Cross-sectional surveys by their nature cannot tap this development. It is important to assert that change does not reflect inconsistency, but rather the effects of a process whereby people come to understand and respond to what has happened to them. This has itself to be understood. Shaw seeks to apply bereavement models to this process.[25] Anger is a stage in the best-known bereavement models. The heuristic value of this kind of approach may be considerable.

Very significant national and local resources have been directed to reducing apparent levels of crime-fear, and we are left only to wonder where resources might have been directed had 'crime-anger' rather than 'crime-fear' been the cornerstone of policy since crime surveying began in earnest in the UK in 1982.[26] Why was it not so? The following account is necessarily speculative.

The major planks of the victim movement cast the victim as essentially passive. The charity formed to aid victims came to be known as 'Victim Support'. This has overtones of victim tendency to wilt which the alternative expression 'victim help' does not. The recent substitution of 'survivor' for 'victim' as the term used for those who suffer abuse came about precisely because of the supine overtones of the victim appellation. Fear is a 'seemly' reaction by the passive. Anger is not. Anger is inconsistent with the victim role. Why do we prefer to characterise those who suffer crime as passive? It is expedient so to do. The passive accept gratefully such support as is given, and such compensation as the state is prepared, however tardily, to provide. The angry victim is liable to vigilantism, informal punishments of the locally troublesome, and is likely to get uppity in the face of the inefficiencies and absurdities of the criminal justice process. The fearful victim is mercifully compliant. Angry victims are the ultimate silent majority, those whose reaction is not documented or attended to in policy. It is difficult to overstate the consequences of the lack of attention given to the angry victim, and the celebration of the fearful crime victim. It is time to redress that balance.

It isn't easy to point to where this should start, but one option is suggested by answers to one other British Crime Survey question, where 49 per cent of victims said that they would have accepted the chance of meeting the offender 'to agree a way in which the offender could make a repayment for what he had done', and a further 20 per cent would have liked an out-of-court agreement of this kind without a meeting.[27]

Conclusion

Anger about crime was shown to be reported at higher levels than fear as a general attitude to the prospect of victimisation in an earlier article, and as the most typical specific reaction to actual victimisation in this one. Some flavour of the possible range of meanings that respondents give the term 'anger' following victimisation has been derived retrospectively from initial qualitative interviewing. The full range of anger meanings, and the comparative frequency of each member of it, can only be guesswork at this stage. Given the political and other importance of specific victimisation-reaction, further research concentrating on the nature and meaning of victimisation-anger is strongly recommended, as is research into the apparently anomalous predominance of fear experienced by children living in victimised households. This may indicate, among other things, that anger is as misplaced as fear of crime is sometimes believed to be. Conducting such research in the manner recommended by Hale,[28] which was the way that the research reported here was carried out, might in future confirm that anger following victimisation is too important to be ignored.

Notes

1 Jason Ditton is in the Law Department at Sheffield University and is Director of the Scottish Centre for Criminology at Charing Cross Clinic, 8 Woodside Crescent, Glasgow G3 7UY; Stephen Farrall is at the Centre for Criminological Research, Oxford University; Jon Bannister is in the Department of Social Administration and Social Work at Glasgow University; Elizabeth Gilchrist is in the School of Psychology at the University of Birmingham; and Ken Pease is in the Applied Criminology Group at Huddersfield University.

2 *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 December 1998.

3 As part of the ESRC's Crime and Social Order Research Programme, specifically as: Ditton, J. and Bannister, J. *Fear of Crime: Conceptual Development, Field Testing and Empirical Confirmation*, L210 25 2007. A detailed account of the methodology adopted is provided in Ditton, J., Farrall, S., Bannister, J. and Gilchrist, E. (1999a) Recently Discovered Methodological Problems with the Fear of Crime. In Jupp, V., Davies, P. and Francis, P. (eds) *The Practice of Criminological Research*. London: Sage. Our thanks to Michael Hough for reading and commenting on this paper at an earlier stage.

4 Farrall, S., Bannister, J., Ditton, J. and Gilchrist, E. (1997) Measuring Crime and the 'Fear of Crime': Findings from a Methodological Study. *British Journal of Criminology*. Vol. 37, No. 4, pp 657–678; and Farrall, S., Bannister, J., Ditton, J. and Gilchrist, E. (1997) Open and Closed Questions. *Social Research Update*, No. 17.

5 Farrall, S., Bannister, J., Ditton, J. and Gilchrist, E. (1999) Social Psychology and the Fear of Crime: Re-examining a Speculative Model. *British Journal of Criminology* (forthcoming); and Farrall, S., Ditton, J. and Bannister, J. (1999) Quantitative Testing of the Fear of Crime: the Apparent Demise of Age and Gender as Key Explanatory Variables (submitted).

6 Ditton, J., Farrall, S., Bannister, J. and Gilchrist, E. (1998) Measuring Fear of Crime. *Criminal Justice Matters*. No. 31, Spring, pp 10–12; and Ditton et al (1999a) op cit.

7 Gilchrist, E., Farrall, S., Bannister, J. and Ditton, J. (1998) Women and Men Talking about the 'Fear of Crime': Challenging the Accepted Stereotype. *British Journal of Criminology*. Vol. 38, No. 2, Spring, pp 283–298; and Ditton, J., Bannister, J., Gilchrist, E. and Farrall, S. (1999b) Afraid or Angry? Recalibrating the Fear of Crime, *International Review of Victimology*. Vol. 6, pp 83–99.

8 Ditton et al (1999b) op cit.

9 Unweighted n. Unweighted data is used throughout this paper.

10 Zedner, L. (1994) Ch 25, 'Victims'. In Maguire, M., Morgan, R. and Reiner, R. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp 1207–1246.

11 Pease, K. (1993) The Local Crime Survey: Pitfalls and Possibilities. In Farrell, G. and Pease, K. *Repeat Victimisation*. New York: Willow Tree Press.

12 Maguire, M. (1980) The Impact of Burglary upon Victims. *British Journal of Criminology*. Vol. 20, No. 3, pp 261–275, at p 262.

13 Kinsey, R. and Anderson, S. (1992) *Crime and the Quality of Life: Public Perceptions and Experiences of Crime in Scotland: Findings from the 1988 British Crime Survey*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Office Central Research Unit, p 12.

14 Ostrihanska, Z. and Wójcik, D. (1993) Burglaries As Seen by the Victims. *International Review of Victimology*. Vol. 2, pp 217–225, at p 220.

15 Anderson, S. and Leitch, S. (1996) *Main Findings from the 1993 Scottish Crime Survey*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Office Central Research Unit.

16 Mirrlees-Black, C., Mayhew, P. and Percy, A. (1996) *The 1996 British Crime Survey, England and Wales*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 19/96. London: Home Office, at p 42.

17 Mawby, R. I. and Walklate, S. (1997) The Impact of Burglary: a Tale of Two Cities. *International Review of Victimology.* Vol. 4, pp 267–295, at p 280.

18 This is an interesting finding, which we cannot develop. Readers are directed to the work of Goodey: Goodey, J. (1994) Fear Of Crime: What Can Children Tell Us? *International Review Of Victimology*. Vol. 3, pp 195–210; and Goodey, J. (1997) Boys Don't Cry: Masculinities, Fear of Crime and Fearlessness. *British Journal of Criminology*. Vol. 37, No. 3, pp 401–418.

19 MacLeod, M., Prescott, R. and Carson, L. (1996) *Listening to Victims of Crime: Victimisation Episodes and the Criminal Justice System in Scotland*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Office Central Research Unit, Figure 4.6, p 39.

20 Hale, C. (1996) Fear of Crime: A Review of the Literature. *International Review of Victimology*. Vol. 4, pp 79–150.

21 A primacy effect may have increased the angry vote, or a recency one may have depressed it (or both may have been at work, and may have thus cancelled each other out). The technical bible (Schuman, H. and Presser, S. [1996 edn.] *Questions & Answers in Attitude Surveys: Experiments on Question Form, Wording, and Context*, London, Sage, p 56 *et seq.*) claims that the jury is still out on the issue. There was no reason why anger was near the front of the offered list. At that point, we had no expectation that anger would be the dominant response. In retrospect, however, it would have been wiser to rotate the options on the list. The effects of permitting only one claimed response are obvious.

22 As part of the preparatory work for the main survey, 168 respondents were contacted in a quasi-random fashion from four different housing areas, and, using a brief quantitative instrument, classified into four groups in terms of their fear and risk self-ratings along two dichotomies (high/low fear and high/low risk). Sixteen respondents were selected at random from each of the four resulting groups, and re-interviewed individually in an open-ended and tape-recorded session. The interview materials were transcribed and entered into Atlas-TI. When anger was later unexpectedly 'discovered' as a significant response in the main quantitative survey, these earlier qualitative materials were recovered using 'anger' and 'angry' as search words. What follows is a reorganisation of all the resulting 'angry' data.

23 Anderson and Leitch, op cit.

24 Mirrlees-Black et al, op cit.

25 Shaw, M. (1998) The Bereavement Process and Repeated Crime Victimisation. In Farrell, G. and Pease, K. *Repeat Victimisation*. New York: Willow Tree Press.

26 Instead of victim-support, we might have had victim-restraint schemes, wherein revenge-reduction and offender-protection strategies might have filled the boots of the current community safety schemes (although note that in all the statements quoted from our respondents—and none were omitted—anger at offenders does not once surface).

27 We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this point. The data quoted comes from Maguire, M. and Corbett, C. (1987) *The Effects of Crime and the Work of Victims Support Schemes*. Aldershot: Gower, pp 227–31. More generally, we do not wish to imply that some victims do not need the support they currently receive, and we feel that, even for this smaller group, the financial resources given to Victim Support are still inadequate. On the politics of such schemes generally, see: Fattah, E. (1989) Victims and Victimology: The Facts and the Rhetoric. *International Review of Victimology*. Vol. 1, pp 43–66.

28 Hale, op cit, p 132.