# "Taking a Bite Out of Crime":

## The Impact of a Mass Media Crime Prevention Campaign

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## Abstract

This report addresses: (1) The impact of the Take a Bite Out of Crime national media campaign on citizen perceptions, attitudes and behaviors regarding crime prevention; and (2) How the findings from that evaluation may be applied toward strategies for subsequent communication efforts aimed at increasing citizen participation in crime prevention activities.

Recent studies of the impact of public information campaigns indicate they may have greater efficacy than the research of earlier decades had suggested. A previous study of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign's first phase suggested it was having modest levels of public impact. The present research provided a more elaborate design for investigating that campaign's impact two years after its inception.

The design included a national probability sample survey of 1,200 adults to determine overall citizen response to the campaign, and a three-city panel survey of 426 adults to assess changes in citizen crime prevention orientations as a function of exposure to the campaign over a two-year span.

The results of the surveys were analyzed in the context of citizens' general dispositions toward crime and its prevention, including their concern about crime; their beliefs and attitudes regarding crime prevention techniques; and their patterns of crime prevention activities.

Over half of the national sample said they had seen or heard at least one of the Take a Bite Out of Crime public service advertisements (PSAs) as of late 1981. Most of those people also indicated that they were favorably impressed by the ads, and a substantial portion reported that the ads had influenced some of their views and actions concerning crime prevention.

The findings suggest that the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign had marked and consistent influences on citizen perceptions and attitudes regarding crime prevention, as well as on their taking of specific preventative actions.

Individuals exposed to the campaign exhibited significant increases over those not exposed in how much they thought they knew about crime prevention; how effective they thought citizen prevention efforts were; and how confident they felt about being able to protect themselves from crime. The PSAs also appeared to have a strong impact on the taking of crime prevention actions by citizens. Exposure to the campaign was significantly related to increases in six of the seven specific preventative activities most emphasized in televised PSAs. Particularly noteworthy were campaign-related increases in neighborhood cooperative crime prevention efforts.

While the campaign appeared to have significant effects on prevention orientations and activities for the sample as a whole, the distribution of those effects was by no means uniform across population subgroups. While in many instances the campaign seemed more effective among individuals already more competent in terms of prevention, it also appeared to stimulate substantial changes among less competent citizen subgroups as well.

In general, the rather scattershot nature of the campaign's dissemination appears to have resulted in a wide range of effects across an even wider range of people. Such differences in impact result from a host of interacting personal dispositions and social and environmental factors.

Based upon the research, several key issues need to be taken account of in designing subsequent communication strategies aimed at citizen-based crime prevention efforts. These include: (1) The salience of crime as an issue on the public agenda; (2) The importance of community-based prevention efforts; (3) The perplexing role of fear arousal in determining campaign effectiveness; (4) The role of formative research in campaign design; (5) The problem of audience targeting; and (6) The potential for the neglect of the elderly as an audience of such campaigns.

Insofar as the future progress of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign in particular is concerned, its sponsors and producers would do well to continue several things that appear to have been effective within the confines of public service advertising. Techniques are also needed which will keep the campaign--and the issue of crime prevention--fresh in the eyes of past and future audiences. More specific campaign goals need to be formulated as to what kinds of changes are optimal among particular citizen groups, and data-based criteria need to be established to determine the relative success of the campaign in meeting those goals.

## Acknowledgements

Many conscientious individuals proved indispensable in the carrying out of this project. The authors particularly benefited from the numerous and productive insights provided by the members of the advisory group established to provide counsel on various phases of the study. The group consisted of Ms. Lynn Dixon, Office of Policy and Management, OJARS; Mr. Mac Gray, National Council on Crime and Delinquency; and Dr. Wesley Skogan, Department of Political Science and Urban Affairs, Northwestern University. A fourth member of the group, Dr. Paul Lavrakas, Medill School of Journalism and the Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University, expended a special effort to share with us his extensive expertise in citizen-based crime prevention efforts.

We are also indebted for the additional consulting assistance ably provided by Dr. Jack McLeod, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and by Ms. Jenny Liu on computer programming issues. Ms. Elinor Hangley of The Advertising Council was most helpful in sharing her insights as campaign director with us, as was Mr. Scott Rossborough of Dancer Fitzgerald Sample, responsible for the creative portion of the media campaign.

Dr. Irving Crespi and his staff at The Roper Organization proved exceptionally capable in carrying out the survey field work, often under rather demanding conditions. We are of course immensely grateful to the more than 2,000 citizens who took the time and energy to serve as survey respondents, and who taught us so much about themselves.

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## I. Introduction and Overview

Citizen involvement in crime prevention activities has emerged as a critical issue in recent years as it has become more clear that such actions can play a key role in controlling the level of crime. As such, numerous efforts have been aimed at encouraging citizen participation in activities aimed at reducing their own risk of victimization, and those of others as well. One highly prominent effort has been the three-year-old "Take a Bite Out of Crime" national public information campaign, produced under the sponsorship of the Crime Prevention Coalition, with the cooperation of The Advertising Council.

This report addresses: (1) The impact of the Take a Bite Out of Crime national media campaign on citizen perceptions, attitudes and behaviors regarding crime prevention; and (2) The application of the findings of that evaluation toward strategies for subsequent communication efforts aimed at increasing citizen participation in crime prevention activities.

The study builds in part from a previous work carried out within a few months of the beginning of the campaign and reported in Public Communication and the Prevention of Crime: Evaluations and Strategies, funded under National Institute of Justice Grant No. 78NIAX0105.

Such research on crime prevention campaign effectiveness is important not only in its own right, but also in terms of being both complementary and supplemental to critical public policy research efforts concerned with such allied topics as citizens' fear of crime (cf. Skogan and Maxfield, 1981) and factors impinging upon citizen involvement in anti-crime behaviors (cf. Lavrakas, 1980; Podolesky and Dubow, 1981). The research should also prove useful in facilitating key recommendations of Phase One of the Attorney General's Task Force on Violent Crime, notably including:

> "The Attorney General should exercise leadership in informing the American public about the extent of violent crime." (Recommendation 12); and
>
> "The Attorney General should direct responsible officials in appropriate branches of the Department of Justice to give priority to testing systematically programs to reduce violent crime and to inform state and local law enforcement officials and the public about effective programs." (Recommendation 15).

This investigation follows the overall pattern of the first study in that we will examine what kinds of people were exposed to the campaign materials: what uses they made of them; and what effects resulted.

More specifically, the approach is one of: (1) Explicitly identifying meaningful patterns of exposure and attention to the campaign; (2) Linking these exposure and attention patterns to relevant antecedent factors, including extensive demographic, sociological and psychological characteristics of audience members, as well as their orientations toward crime and crime prevention and relevant communication behaviors: and (3) Examining the possible effects of the campaign both in of themselves and as functions of their interactions with antecedent factors. The findings then serve as a basis for recommending strategies for subsequent crime prevention information campaigns.

The report begins with an overview of the uses of public service advertising campaigns to promote changes in citizen perceptions, attitudes and behaviors. The effectiveness of such campaigns is examined, particularly in the context of what is known about effects of media on individuals overall. The Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign is then described, followed by a summary of the previous evaluations of it and a research plan for the present undertaking.

The research methodology for evaluating the campaign involved both a national probability sample of citizens to determine overall reactions to the campaign, and a three-city panel sample to measure changes in individuals as a consequence of the campaign. These are detailed in Part III.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign after two years serves as the focus of Parts IV and V. The national sample data indicate that not only were over half of the U.S. adults exposed to the media campaign, but also that substantial portions of people reacted favorably to it and reported that it had influenced their views and actions concerning crime prevention. The panel survey evaluation strongly supports the national survey findings and suggests that the campaign had marked and consistent influences on citizen perceptions and attitudes regarding crime prevention, as well as on the taking of specific preventative actions.

Part VI considers the above findings in terms of what they have taught us about the efficacy of crime prevention information efforts in general, and Part VII

suggests strategies for subsequent campaigns and for the future conduct of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign in particular.

## Project Management

Dr. Garrett J. O'Keefe, co-principal investigator, had overall responsibility for the study. In addition to managing the technical part of the project, he was responsible for developing and implementing the research design, measurement instruments, data analysis, and the writing of this report.

Dr. Harold Mendelsohn, co-principal investigator, actively participated in all research phases of the project. In addition, he was responsible for the writing of the technical appendix to this report, dealing with citizen orientations toward crime and its prevention.

Dr. H. T. Spetnagel served as project manager in dealing with the business part of the study, and assisted in various substantive aspects of the project as well.

Kathaleen Reid-Nash, M.A., served as the principal research assistant on the project, with the major responsibility of assisting in data analysis for the length of the study. Acting as research assistants on various phases of the project were Elise Henry, M.A., Beth Rosenzweig, M.A., Catherine Helmick, and Kathy Bedell. Providing secretarial support were Betty Whitmore and JoAnn Swierenga.

In addition to the project management group and staff, an advisory group was established to provide advice and counsel on critical phases of the study. The group consisted of: Ms. Lynn Dixon, Office of Policy and Management, OJARS; Mr. Mac Gray, National Council on Crime and Delinquency; Dr. Paul Lavrakas, Medill School of Journalism and the Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University; and Dr. Wesley Skogan, Department of Political Science and Urban Affairs, Northwestern University. Additional consulting assistance was provided by Dr. Jack McLeod, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Ms. Jenny Liu also served as a consultant on computer programming. Ms. Elinor Hangley of the Advertising Council was particularly helpful in sharing her insights as campaign director with us.

## II. Background and Research Perspectives

Public information campaigns form a unique content area in American mass communications systems, and public service advertisements are typically their dominant form (Paisley, 1981). Public service advertisements or announcements are promotional materials which address problems assumed to be of general concern to citizens at large. PSAs typically attempt to increase public awareness of such problems and their possible solutions, and in many instances also try to affect public beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors concerning them. Most PSAs emanate from non-profit or governmental organizations, and these usually receive gratis placement in broadcast and print media. The Advertising Council serves as something of a clearing house for many national public service ad campaigns, and enlists the services of major advertising companies to produce and distribute the ads while charging sponsoring groups for production costs only.

Those PSAs warranting free media placement are ordinarily relegated to status behind regular paid ads and are apt to appear only as space or time becomes available. Most televised PSAs, for example, run during the least watched viewing periods, while newspaper PSAs are rarely seen on the more heavily traveled pages. Competition between PSA sponsors for media placement is heavy, and many of the ads fail to be disseminated at all.

The ads of course reflect the individual concerns of their sponsors. Content analyses of televised PSAs in the early 1970s indicated that nearly half of them dealt with health or personal safety topics, including alcohol and drug abuse, medical check-ups and care, traffic safety, nutrition and the like (Hanneman, McEwen and Coyne, 1973; Paletz, Pearson and Willis, 1977). Other ads were distributed over such subject areas as environmental concerns, community services, educational and occupational opportunities, and crime prevention.

### The "Take a Bite Out of Crime" Campaign

The specific campaign under study is the Advertising Council's Take a Bite Out of Crime public service advertising campaign, produced under the sponsorship of the Crime Prevention Coalition. Creative work on the campaign was carried out by Dancer Fitzgerald Sample. The campaign has been running since October 1979, and has attained, by the Advertising Council's standards, an unusually high degree of gratis placement in the nation's media channels. The campaign is aimed at promoting citizen involvement in

crime prevention efforts, mainly through increased burglary self-protection, and, most notably, through neighborhood cooperative efforts among citizens.

More specifically, the campaign has four major objectives:

1) To change unwarranted feelings about crime and the criminal justice system, particularly those feelings of frustration and hopelessness.

2) To generate an individual sense of responsibility among citizens.

3) To encourage citizens, working within their communities and with local law enforcement, to take collective crime prevention action.

4) To enhance existing crime prevention programs at local, state and national levels.

The campaign uses a cartoon dog character, "McGruff," arrayed in a trenchcoat and admonishing citizens to follow the example of "real people" prototypes who through various means helped "take a bite out of crime " (See Appendix B).

The campaign in total incorporates the more visible media campaign utilizing public service advertisements, and perhaps less obvious but potentially equally important community projects in hundreds of locales all over the U.S. The localized projects are highly diversified and dependent upon individual community needs and resources. The media campaign serves as something of an umbrella for these, providing a shared identity and rationale. Our concern in this study at this point is almost exclusively with the impact on the public-at-large of the media campaign. Nationwide, the public service advertisements were, as of November 1981, by far the most publicized aspect of it with the greatest potential for impact on citizens overall as of that time.

As of July 1981, media response to the campaign had been excellent. More than $ 100 million of documented time and space had been donated, making McGruff one of the most popular Ad Council campaigns. About 1,000,000 booklets had been distributed free-of-charge in response to the ads. Another 250,000 had been sold through the Government Printing Office. More than 100 requests had been received for negatives to use in reprinting the booklets locally. The Department of the Army printed 300,000 McGruff booklets for use in their programs. A host of national, state and local programs have either been enhanced or initiated as a result of campaign activities.

The present study was conducted following the first three phases of the campaign. The first phase focused on offering audiences tips about protecting homes and property. The second and third phases emphasized the importance of observing and reporting suspected criminal behavior and organizing neighborhood and local groups in support of various community crime prevention activities.

## Previous Research on Information Campaigns

While public service-oriented media campaign effects research has a long tradition going back to now-classic field studies of the 1940s and early 1950s, the area went through a period of relative dormancy until fairly recently. At least partly at the root of that dormant period in the late 1950s and 1960s were inferences from the previous research that media campaigns were apt to have few if any effects, and when they did occur they were likely to be among particular segments of the population who were primarily seeking reinforcement of their already existing attitudes and behaviors (cf. Star and Hughes, 1950; Hyman and Sheatsley, 1947; Klapper, 1960). Such "limited effects" hypotheses were by no means peculiar to campaign research; indeed, early studies of media effects on such diverse activities as childhood socialization, aggressive behavior, and voting behavior generally reached the same kinds of conclusions.

However, research endeavors into these same areas over the past decade have led to substantially revised conceptions of the kinds of effects media are capable of having on individual and social behavior. Perhaps the two most notable examples have involved: (1) Examinations of the effects of violent media portrayals on the aggressive behavior of audience members; and (2) The effects of political media content, especially during election campaigns, on citizens' political cognitions, attitudes and behaviors. In both instances, while the gravity and extent of the media influences are open to argument, the empirical evidence is clearly supportive of the media having the potential for doing more than simply reinforcing a psychological status quo among audience members.

The increased potential for media influence in contemporary society should not seem overly surprising. While the underlying social processes remain largely open to inquiry, it is clear that mass media have taken a far more visible role as sources of information, and perhaps influence as well. The predominance and immediacy of television undeniably plays a part in all this, but also important are changes in the social and political structure of the society itself. For various reasons, social and

political institutions and processes are not as stable as they appear to have been in the 1940s and 1950s. Greater geographic mobility, the changing makeup and role of family, and a lessening of the impact of traditional social ties and values, to name a few things, have perhaps led to somewhat greater reliance on more "impersonal" sources of information and influence, such as mass media.

While research on the persuasive effects of public information campaigns was in the forefront of the media studies of three decades ago, there have been only few and widely scattered efforts in recent years (cf. Atkin, 1979; Douglas et al, 1970; Farquahar, 1977; Hanneman and McEwen, 1973; Maccoby and Solomon, 1981; McAlister, et al, 1980; Mendelsohn, 1973; O'Keefe, 1971; Salcedo et al, 1974; Schemeling and Wotring, 1976). However, the collective findings from these studies suggest rather strongly that such campaigns may have noteworthy effects on audiences. Perhaps the most striking data, as well as conceptual elaborations, are found in the multi-year community heart disease prevention project underway at Stanford University (cf. Maccoby and Solomon, 1981). Those results suggest rather salient effects of mass media messages per se on public cognitions, attitudes and behaviors concerning heart disease prevention.

One difficulty found throughout the recent research on campaigns has been a lack of consistent conceptual or theoretical perspectives to guide problem development and design. However, as more data-centered evaluative studies continue to contradict the earlier limited effects-related hypotheses, more elaborate models will surely be developed. And, they are likely to be based upon assumptions that it is critical to investigate the contingencies under which different media messages result in different effects for different kinds of people under different circumstances and at different points in time. That is, media effects are unlikely to be found en masse, or to be attributable to any one set of factors. Rather, it may be more important to determine which factors are most operative in given communication situations involving given audiences.

## Evaluating "McGruff" After Two Years: A Research Plan

The present research effort aimed to: (1) Examine citizen exposure and reaction patterns to the various stages of the campaign over a two-year period; (2) Investigate changes over time within specific citizen groups both previously exposed and unexposed to the campaign's

initial stage; (3) Generate and clarify hypotheses concerning the effects and consequences of broad-based long-term crime prevention campaigns on citizens; and (4) Elaborate upon policies and strategies for the development of more effective subsequent public crime prevention campaigns.

The general design utilized consisted of two parts: (1) a national survey sample of U.S. adults, primarily aimed at investigating the summative impact of the campaign; and (2) a longitudinal sample survey based upon re-interviews with a substantial portion of the respondents included in the Phase One panel survey, for the purpose of tracing changes in campaign exposure and reaction patterns. (These designs are elaborated on in the following methodology section.)

The overall approach was one of: (1) Explicitly and definitively identifying meaningful patterns of exposure and attention to the campaign; (2) Linking these exposure and attention patterns to relevant antecedent factors, including extensive demographic, sociological and psychological characteristics of audience members, as well as their orientations toward crime (e.g. fear) and crime prevention and relevant communication behaviors; and (3) Examining the possible effects and consequences of the campaign messages both in of themselves and as functions of their interactions with antecedent factors.

Our approach rests on an assumption that investigations of prevention campaigns, or of any purposive communication phenomenon, toward policy-related ends will be most productive in an explanatory way if it entails more than either: (1) only basic descriptions of audience types and requisites as related to campaign exposure; or (2) only possible outcomes of such exposure in terms of direct effects. Rather, at a minimum such research should include an interactive process approach containing all such components.

The campaign in general, and the public service advertisements in particular, presented citizens with a rather diversified range of appeals, content areas, media formats, and suggestions for actions. Here, we have considered those crime prevention orientations and behaviors which the campaign would seem to have had the greatest potential for influencing during its first two years.

In the most general terms, we view the campaign as having been largely concerned with effecting increased

citizen competence in helping to reduce crime. The term "prevention competence" serves as an organizing rubric encompassing several kinds of orientations and behaviors through which citizens may demonstrate their ability in the crime prevention arena. Prevention competence is likely to increase among citizens to the extent that they (1) are more fully aware of effective prevention techniques; (2) hold positive attitudes about the effectiveness of citizen-initiated prevention activities, and about their own responsibility for getting involved in prevention; (3) feel capable about carrying out actions themselves to reduce their chances of victimization; (4) are concerned about protecting themselves and others from crime; and (5) actually engage in actions aimed at reducing crime.

Thus prevention competence includes the same general constellation of dependent variables often found in communication effects and persuasion studies. With varying degrees of conceptual sophistication, persuasion is usually apt to be seen as at least a four-step process involving: (1) the building of awareness or knowledge; (2) the inducement of attitude change; (3) motivating individuals toward behavior by generating interest or concern; and (4) finally effecting behavioral change (cf. McGuire, 1969; Percy and Rossiter, 1980; Cialdini et al, 1981; Solomon, 1981).

While this sequence of potential campaign-induced events has a nice logic about it, rarely can even well-designed and carefully targeted media campaigns be expected to successfully induce changes on their own along all of the above dimensions. For one thing, the degree to which persuasion may occur is highly dependent upon existing audience dispositions concerning the topic or issue at hand. Some issues are simply more change-resistant than are others. And, when media campaigns in of themselves are effective to any degree, it is likelier to be in terms of providing increased knowledge or, perhaps, in changing attitudes. As Bandura (1977) has cogently theorized and as Farquhar et al (1977), Maccoby and Solomon (1981), and McAlister et al (1980) have demonstrated empirically, people are more likely to act on information acquired from mass media sources when appropriate social and environmental supports are present. There are indeed several ambiquities and problems in interpreting the specific types of changes, and the processes underlying them, which may be influenced at least in part by public information campaigns.

Moreover, it is also possible that media messages may induce action-taking without necessarily effecting congruent

cognitive or attitudinal changes. This would seem particularly true of actions requiring little rationalization, cost or effort (Ray, 1973).

It is important to note that the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign, particularly insofar as the PSAs are concerned, was aimed at "the public" in a highly diversified manner. A reasonable possibility exists that the campaign would have scattershot influences on various types of people depending upon their already existing orientations toward crime and prevention--perhaps simply informing some, changing selected attitudes in others, making still others more concerned, and perhaps triggering some into action. For example, if a particular citizen is already concerned about crime, and already feels that self-prevention techniques may be effective, the campaign may have provided information about specific prevention techniques and how to use them, prompting "action."

The primary purpose of the present research is to provide empirically based recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of public communications aimed at encouraging citizen crime prevention efforts. As such, the findings from the research described above are integrated into reasoned recommendations for effective communication strategies in subsequent crime prevention efforts.

## III. Methodology

The nature of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign presents several obstacles to well-controlled evaluation of its effects on citizens. As noted above, while the overall campaign includes a wide range of community-based efforts, our concern is rather exclusively with the impact of the public service advertisements. Those were arguably the most obvious component of the campaign as of November 1981, and had the greatest potential for public impact. (Only seven percent of the respondents in the national sample, and 13 percent of the campaign-exposed respondents, were aware of community-based crime prevention activities based upon the campaign at that point.)

The public service advertisement format renders placement of specific ads within specific locales over the country quite haphazard and dependent upon the willingness of media outlets to incorporate them as space and time permit. Moreover, the design of the campaign made no allowance for attempted dissemination of the PSAs in particular communities while withholding the messages from others, making classic "treatment versus control community" field experiment controls impossible. Thus our overall research effort is based upon the "next best" design options available: (1) The use of a national sample survey to determine the reach or penetration of the campaign over the nation as a whole and within various kinds of citizen subgroups; and to examine citizen self-evaluations of the impact and effectiveness of the campaign; and (2) The incorporation of a panel survey in which respondents interviewed in 1979 prior to the campaign's release would be reinterviewed in 1981, for the purpose of examining changes in their crime prevention orientations and attempting to trace those to exposure to the campaign.

### The National Sample Survey

The national sample survey, subcontracted to the Roper Organization, was conducted with a standard multi-stage probability sample of 1,200 adults interviewed in their homes for approximately 45 minutes during November 1981. The questionnaire included unaided and aided recall measures of exposure to the campaign PSAs and extensive self-report

measures of their perceived impact upon the respondents. Other items focused upon citizen cognitions, attitudes and behaviors concerning crime and its prevention; media habits in general; and demographic indicators.

The overall analytic strategy for the national sample involved first identifying specific indicators of public reaction to the campaign, including simple measures of exposure and respondent self-reports of campaign effects. Then, emphasis turned to identifying the make-up of the exposed audiences in terms of their media patterns, demographics, psychological attributes, crime orientations and other relevant factors. The characteristics of individuals reporting having been affected by the campaign were then identified. More general profiles concerning crime prevention-related communication behaviors were also presented.

## The Panel Sample Survey

The panel survey encompassed a probability sample of 1,049 adults initially interviewed in person in Buffalo, Denver and Milwaukee in September 1979, three months prior to the campaign's onset. The three locales were chosen to provide diversity in regional characteristics and crime rate profiles, while assuring an adequate media mix for at least potentially moderate distribution of the McGruff campaign PSAs. The second round of interviews was carried out by telephone in November 1981, with 426 of the original respondents (41 percent) being successfully reinterviewed.

The advantages of the panel field design were first put to use to find out which respondent dispositions prior to the campaign were most associated with subsequent campaign exposure. Pre-to-post change score measures were then used as relatively objective indicators of campaign effects. Respondents' self-reports as to whether they recalled having been exposed to the advertisements served as the basis for separating the sample into an experimental group (those exposed) and a control group (those unexposed). After the investigation of selectivity factors in exposure to the ad, effects of that exposure in terms of changes in crime prevention, crime, and general psychological orientations were studied by means of both simple group comparison tests and

multivariate control procedures. Thereafter, analyses focused on specific types of campaign effects within various kinds of audiences, with an eye toward subsequently integrating the respondent typologies identified here with those noted in the national sample, and arriving at reasoned communication strategies for targeting crime prevention information to the public.

It is important to note that while sample surveys such as these have proven to be valid indicators of public opinion and behavior over the decades, the data derived are based upon individuals' own self-reports of their cognitions, attitudes and behaviors, and not upon more "objectively" observed evidence.

## IV. The National Sample Campaign Evaluation

The national sample evaluation of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign primarily addresses the extent of citizen exposure to the campaign as well as their reactions to it, particularly in terms of their perceptions of its impact upon them.

### Exposure to the Campaign

Simple exposure to campaign stimuli was measured in terms of respondents' ability to recall having seen or heard any of the Take a Bite Out of Crime PSAs in any of the media. Respondents were classified as having been exposed if they either: (1) mentioned the PSA voluntarily when they were asked to describe any one particular recent public service ad that stood out in their memory (unaided recall); or (2) indicated recognition of the ads when they were shown to them by the interviewer (aided recall). Forty-one respondents (three percent of the national sample) mentioned the ads without interviewer aid, and 573 (48 percent) said they recognized the PSA when prompted by the interviewer. The unaided recall group was considered too small for meaningful subanalyses, and the two cohorts were combined to constitute the campaign-exposed group, totalling 614 respondents or 51.7 percent of the sample.

The PSAs apparently made a fairly strong impression on those recalling them. Sixty-three percent said they were "very sure" they'd seen or heard ads exactly like the McGruff one, and 29 percent said they were "fairly sure" they had. Moreover, more than a third said they had seen the ads more than ten times, and only a fifth had seen them only "once or twice." The ads also were gaining new audiences up to the point of the 1981 survey. Twenty-six percent of those exposed said they had first noticed the PSA "within the past couple of months," while 37 percent said they had first seen or heard it between two months and a year before.

Television emerged as the dominant medium of choice for exposure, with 78 percent of the exposed group naming it as where they had seen or heard the ads most often. Posters or billboards ran a somewhat surprising second, with 14 percent naming them. Following in order were newspapers (eight percent), radio (six percent), magazines (five percent), and car cards (four percent).

The campaign appeared to be reaching a highly diversified audience demographically, with little indication that persons in any particular social or economic strata were

beyond the scope of the PSAs. Something of an exception was age level, with younger persons decidedly more likely than older ones to report exposure; nonetheless, a third of respondents over age 64 could recall the McGruff ads. Persons who regularly either watched more television or listened more to the radio were likelier to have come across the ads, having of course greater opportunity to do so. (See Table 1.)

To the extent that demographic differences were found, it appeared that the campaign was particularly successful in reaching individuals usually regarded as being more crime-prone than others. These include the young, males, more residentially mobile, and those residing in lower-working class neighborhoods. The campaign appeared to have lesser, but still noteworthy, reach among two cohorts with typically higher self-perceived vulnerability to crime--the elderly, and to a less striking degree, women.

More specifically, the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign appears to have been successful in reaching large segments of the populace with: (1) specific concerns about crime; (2) a greater potential for victimization; and (3) an expressed need for ideas and advice on prevention. It also seems to have reached nearly equally sized proportions of persons with lesser crime prevention-related concerns and needs, which may well be important as well if for no other reason than building public awareness.

## Public Reactions to the Campaign

Over a quarter of those exposed reported paying "a great deal" of attention to the ads, and another 51 percent said that they usually paid "some" attention to them. Twenty-two percent said they paid "hardly any" attention. This finding in and of itself suggests a generally positive interest in the ads among most persons. Eighty-eight percent of the campaign-exposed individuals were able to verbalize one or more points related to crime prevention when they were asked what they thought the ads were "trying to get across" to people. More specifically:

* 46 percent gave a "general" answer along the lines of saying that the PSAs were trying to make people more aware of crime as a problem, or more aware of how to prevent crime, or asking people to be more careful in protecting themselves from crime.

* Another 20 percent more specifically suggested that the campaign was aimed at telling people how to protect themselves and their homes, and many gave detailed examples.

* And, a rather substantial 28 percent pointed specifically to encouragement of citizen participation in crime prevention efforts, ranging from working with neighbors, joining community action programs, reporting crimes when observed, helping police, and the like.

The emphasis in the more recent stages of the campaign on community participation appears to have made its mark, at least in part.

Apart from simply recalling the general theme or logo used in the ads, thirty-nine percent of those exposed could describe a specific ad which stood out in their minds.

When directly asked whether they personally liked or disliked the use of the McGruff cartoon character, 57 percent of those exposed responded positively, five percent disliked it, and 36 percent were neutral. A third of those liking it said they did so simply because they liked dogs or animals, and another half praised it as being attention-getting, "clever," "different," or as appealing to all ages. The few negative comments referred to it as "too cutesy," too vague, and the like. The pattern of positive affect toward the ads is reinforced by the finding that only 15 percent could name anything in the PSAs that specifically "turned them off" (individual comments were highly varied), and just eight percent said they were annoyed by them (as opposed to 59 percent saying they were "pleased" by them).

While the campaign seems to have gotten favorable "reviews" from its audiences, it is more important to determine whether it made an impact in terms of helping to change public awareness, attitudes and beliefs regarding prevention. In the national sample, this was ascertained by directly asking respondents the extent to which they thought the PSAs had influenced them in various ways. While such self-perceptions may not always reflect precise degrees of change, they do provide a general impression of such reactions across the sample.

Respondents were asked both whether they thought they had learned anything new from the ads, and whether the ads had "reinforced" or reminded them of things they might have previously known but had forgotten about (Table 2).

Twenty-two percent said they had learned something new from the PSAs, and 46 percent said that they had been reminded of something they'd known before but had forgotten about.

Upwards of half of the respondents recalling the ads said they had made them more concerned about crime and more confident in protecting themselves. Over half said the PSAs had made them feel more responsible about preventing crime and in perceiving citizen group efforts as more effective. Twenty-two percent said the ads made them more fearful of being victimized, with women being likelier to report this than men. Nearly a fourth of the exposed sample said they had taken preventative actions due to having seen or heard the ads, including improving household security and helping their neighbors in prevention efforts. Women were likelier to have reported doing so than men. Moreover, persons reporting having been influenced in one particular way were likely to report other influences as well. The extent to which people reported having been influenced appeared more a function of how much attention they paid to the ads, rather than a consequence of how many times they had seen or heard them (Tables 3,4).

One potential weak spot in the findings was the lack of respondents seeking further information about prevention which was recommended in almost all of the ads. Only two percent of the exposed group said they had written or phoned for more information about crime prevention.

However, the overall impression made by the PSAs appears positive, with only negligible numbers of respondents appearing put off by them. There is scant evidence of a "boomerang" effect in terms of exposed persons feeling less concerned about crime, less competent in protecting themselves, or feeling that group action is less effective. The results suggest quite strongly the opposite. The one exception, if it may be called that, is that nearly a quarter of the respondents reported becoming more fearful of victimization. Since at face value the content of the ads down-played that element, perhaps such respondent perceptions necessarily go with the territory of dealing with a troublesome topic with almost inherent fear-arousing components. On the other hand, there was some evidence here that respondents who did become more fearful were also likelier to have been influenced by the campaign in other more positive ways, e.g. taking preventative actions.

While the campaign tended to generate somewhat differing reactions from various groups--particularly the young and women--the overall pattern of perceived effects

suggests that the campaign's impact was relatively uniform across the exposed populace. As was the case with exposure to the campaign per se, no particular demographic subset seemed immune to its effects. The campaign, perhaps for a variety of reasons, appeared to be transcending many of the audience-bound constraints which seem to inhibit the wider dissemination of other crime prevention information campaign efforts. Other prevention campaigns were found to have greater penetration among those seeing themselves in greater need of information about prevention, e.g. women and minority group members. However, the McGruff ads reached sizeable numbers of those individuals as well as citizens with perhaps lesser crime-related concerns.

## V. The Panel Sample Campaign Evaluation

The panel sample campaign evaluation was aimed at providing more stringent empirical evidence concerning the McGruff campaign's ability to stimulate specific kinds of changes in citizens' psychological orientations toward crime prevention, and in their taking of personal actions to help reduce crime. The findings will also be viewed in the context of the more population generalizable national sample results.

### Determinants of Campaign Exposure

The panel data supported the inference drawn from the national sample that the campaign reached a broad-based population demographically. Moreover, while there was a tendency for persons perceiving themselves as less knowledgeable and prevention measures as more effective to have been exposed, the PSAs appear to have reached goodly numbers of individuals with widely varying perceptions and orientations regarding crime and its prevention. However, attentiveness to the PSAs was much less uniform, with greater attention to them being paid by persons previously more knowledgeable and confident regarding prevention, and those more concerned about protecting themselves. Individuals engaged in more prevention activities were also more attentive, as were those who anticipated that more information about prevention would benefit them. Thus selective exposure was found to be only a minor factor here, perhaps not surprising in an age of ubiquitous television commercials. However, selective attention proved far more prominent.

While, with a few exceptions, exposure rates do seem relatively homogenous across the sample, this should not of course imply that the messages were perceived in the same way by persons with varied orientations to crime and prevention, nor that the messages were as effective for some individuals as for others. But the findings do testify to the strength of dissemination of the campaign, as well as to the impact of its themes and appeals, in allowing citizens with many varying dispositions toward crime and prevention to at least have had the opportunity to hear the message.

### Prevention Orientation Effects

Persons exposed to the campaign showed significant changes in three of five reported crime prevention orientation dispositions. Campaign exposure was associated with:

(1) Increases in how much respondents thought they knew about crime prevention; (2) More positive attitudes about the effectiveness of citizens taking action to help prevent crime; and (3) Greater feelings of personal competence in protecting oneself from crime. The campaign appeared to have no impact, however, on feelings of personal responsibility for helping prevent crime, or on personal concern regarding crime prevention. These findings held even when controlling for the several possible intervening variables, including demographics, exposure to other campaigns, general attention to media crime content and prior victimization (Table 5).

These findings are strongly supportive of (and in turn are reinforced by) self-reports of respondents in the national sample according to what they said they thought they had gained from PSAs.

The lack of impact of campaign exposure on concern about protecting oneself from crime lends itself to some ambiguity in interpretation. On the one hand, a goal of the campaign is to make citizens concerned enough so that they will act appropriately, but not so concerned as to unduly frighten them. Given that concern about prevention was substantially correlated with heightened perceptions of crime in one's own environment, and greater personal vulnerability, it may actually be a "plus" for the campaign that it did not significantly increase such concern. Indeed, the PSAs, by emphasizing the most positive approaches to crime prevention, may have built more positive citizen dispositions--knowledge, sense of efficacy, and confidence--while at the same time minimizing potentially more negative orientations toward prevention.

## Crime Orientation Effects

It could be argued that while the campaign was having positive influences on certain prevention orientations, it may have been doing so at the expense of making individuals more fearful of crime per se or seeing themselves as more vulnerable to it.

The panel sample respondents were asked in both waves of the survey: (1) Whether they thought the crime rate was increasing or decreasing in their neighborhoods; (2) How safe they felt being out in their neighborhoods at night; (3) How dangerous in terms of crime they saw their own neighborhoods as compared to others; (4) How likely they thought it was that their residences would be burglarized; and (5) How likely they thought it was that they would be attacked or robbed.

The findings suggest that the campaign had virtually no impact on respondents' perceptions of crime within their immediate neighborhoods. No meaningful changes in perceptions of crime rate, sense of personal safety at night, or comparative neighborhood danger were found to be associated with exposure to the campaign. However, the campaign did appear to have some effect on perceptions of likelihood of victimization, and in a curiously inverse way at that. Persons exposed to the McGruff PSAs significantly lowered their estimations of likelihood of being burglarized. But, campaign exposure was also related to modest increases in perceived probability of being a victim of violent crime. One working possibility at this point might be that, since the most prominent features of the campaign dealt with household protection against burglary, the exposed respondents may have felt somewhat assured that what they got out of the campaign would help diminish their chances of burglary. On the other hand, the overall theme of "crime" in the PSAs may have also heightened their general concern about it, channeling that concern more into thoughts about violent crime, which most of the PSAs dealt very little with.

## Prevention Activities and Campaign Effects

The most stringent test of an information campaign's effectiveness is whether changes in people's actual actions or behaviors can be traced to their exposure to the campaign. In the national sample, nearly a fourth of the campaign-exposed respondents said they had taken preventative actions as a result of having seen or heard the McGruff PSAs, and they typically gave such examples as improving household security or helping their neighbors in prevention efforts.

Panel respondents were queried in both 1979 and 1981 as to whether or to what extent they were engaged in each of 25 prevention activities aimed at protecting themselves and others from victimization. To the degree that the campaign was effective in stimulating behavioral change, it was expected that persons exposed to it would have been likelier than those unexposed to have either adopted or begun "doing more of" specific kinds of activities.

As others have alluded to (Lavrakas, 1980; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981), categorizing the full set of prevention activities is a complex undertaking due to their diversity. Moreover, some activities may be seen as functionally equivalent to others, and some have greater relevance to

certain kinds of people in certain situations. For organizational purposes here, we arranged the activities into several discrete groups, building on the groundwork provided by Lavrakas and Skogan and Maxfield. We have generally attempted to order them according to the degree of "cost" involved in implementing or practicing them.

We began with the most effortless behaviors of locking doors or leaving on lights when out, moving to more effortful actions such as asking neighbors or police to watch the house, to cooperating with neighbors cr joining prevention groups. We conclude with more costly actual "purchases" such as buying burglar alarms, theft insurance and the like. We also include under purchases any employment of professional prevention resources such as having police do a household security check. Even though usually "free of cost," the effort can be quite time-consuming.

Obviously, some individual actions are going to be relatively easy for some people while costly for others, and we do not offer this schema as a uniform "scale" of difficulty. Rather, it is a way of organizing a wide range of diverse actions in a reasonably coherent manner. Moreover, we discriminated within the "behavioral" actions and the "purchase" actions by noting ones associated with target hardening, deterrence, surveillance, personal precaution, loss reduction, and cooperation with others, borrowing heavily from Lavrakas and Skogan, and Maxfield.

A "test" of campaign effects on prevention action-taking is made even more difficult because of the varying degrees of emphasis placed on specific activities within different components of the campaign. While the televised PSAs focused on a fairly discrete set of activities, print ads covered a much broader range of recommendations, including at one point or another nearly all of those the panel respondents were asked about.

Thus we might argue that "positive" changes, i.e. in the direction of "doing more," in <u>any</u> of the prevention activities among those exposed to the campaign provide some evidence of its impact on behavior. But also, we may have more concrete assurance of the effectiveness of the campaign if more changes are found among those activities that were clearly advocated in the specific PSAs to which respondents were more exposed. Since 71 percent of the respondents said they saw the ads most often over television, it seems reasonable to expect that, to the extent that the campaign was having an impact, it would be best discerned among those activities specifically

recommended in the three televised PSAs.

Consequently, we expected the most likely changes to have been in:

* Locking doors when out of the house ("Stop a Crime" PSA)

* Leaving outdoor lights on ("Stop a Crime")

* Using timer lights indoors ("Stop a Crime")

* Having neighbors watch the house ("Stop a Crime")

* Keeping a watch on the neighborhood ("Gilstraps," "Mimi Marth")

* Reporting suspicious incidents to police ("Gilstraps," "Mimi Marth")

* Joining with others to prevent crime ("Mimi Marth")

In terms of emphasis, the first four of the above actions were mentioned in the original "Stop a Crime" PSA, but the latter three served as the overall themes for the two more recent ads, "Gilstraps" and "Mimi Marth." As for the other activities, no other specific behaviors (police security checks, not going out at night alone, etc.) were mentioned or alluded to in the televised PSAs, nor were any of the prevention purchases recommended.

## Prevention Activity Effects

Out of the seven above prevention activities the campaign would seem most likely to have influenced, significant changes associated with exposure to the campaign were found in six. No changes traceable to campaign exposure were found in any of the other activities, save one--having acquired a dog at least partly for security purposes (Table 6).

This striking finding strongly suggests a marked and consistent influence of the campaign on citizens' crime prevention activities. Moreover, the one case in which a significant campaign effect was expected but not found was that of more frequently locking doors when leaving the residence. Here, there is strong evidence of a "ceiling effect" precluding measureable change, since 75 percent of the respondents in the first wave of interviews reported "always" locking up to begin with.

The strongest relationships between McGruff exposure and behavioral changes occurred among the cooperative action-taking steps, which also received the heaviest emphasis in the "Gilstraps" and "Mimi Marth" PSAs. Campaign exposure was significantly correlated with increases in "keeping a watch" outside one's home, reporting suspicious events to the police, and joining crime prevention groups or organizations. These relationships are particularly noteworthy given that these can be regarded as fairly "costly" actions to take in terms of time and effort--at least certainly moreso than, say, locking up or leaving on lights. As with the precautionary actions, exposure to prevention campaigns other than McGruff was also significantly related to positive changes in cooperative behaviors, again suggesting community-based campaign efforts advocating such in the panel locales.

On the whole, the PSAs appear to have been most effective in promoting cooperative behaviors, followed by certain deterrence and surveillance actions.

The campaign overall generally downplayed the need for citizens to spend money on property protection by purchasing such things as burglar alarms, theft insurance and particularly, weapons. We have also included under "purchases" activities which require effort in terms of contacting and enlisting the help of professional crime prevention agencies, including having police do security checks, obtaining property I.D. materials, and the like. While some of these latter steps may have been recommended in other components of the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign, they were not dealt with in the televised PSAs.

The panel findings clearly indicate that campaign exposure was generally unassociated with such purchases made during the period between the two surveys, with the notable exception of getting a dog "at least partially for security purposes." While the campaign never specifically advocated or remarked on the value of canine acquisitions, perhaps the ambiance of the McGruff character and its general identification with "watchdogs" and "taking a bite out of crime" sparked in some respondents a desire for a dog for protection. This result may have been abetted by the rather strong positive audience appeal of McGruff noted among national sample respondents.

## Variations in Campaign Effects Across Citizens

Despite the strength of the above relationships, it should be kept in mind that the campaign of course did not impact <u>all</u> persons encountering it, or even necessarily

sizeable majorities. While the campaign appeared to have significant effects on prevention orientations and activities for the sample as a whole, the distribution of those effects was by no means uniform across the demographic subgroups. And, while in many instances the PSAs seemed most effective within those demographic subgroups already more competent in terms of prevention, the campaign also appeared to stimulate substantial changes within other demographic cohorts as well.

More specifically, the PSAs appeared to stimulate far greater attitudinal changes among men, as well as increases in somewhat individualistic behaviors, e.g. police reporting and acquiring a dog. On the other hand, women exposed to the campaign were considerably more likely to engage in increased cooperative prevention activities with their neighbors. Moreover, upper income groups tended to show greater campaign-related gains in cooperative activities, as well as in perceived knowledge and confidence. Campaign-exposed lower income persons, however, became more concerned about crime prevention, and increased in such activities as use of outdoor lights and reporting suspicious incidents to the police.

While the campaign appeared to have greater cognitive and attitudinal influences on persons seeing themselves as less threatened by victimization, increased preventative action-taking was found among those seeing themselves as more vulnerable. Increased action-taking was also likelier among citizens perceiving themselves as less prevention-competent prior to the campaign. Campaign effects were found among both opinion leaders and non-leaders, although the nature of the effects differed between the two cohorts. Greater action-taking was found among persons who had previously indicated a greater need for information about prevention, and who were more attentive to media crime content overall and to PSAs in general.

All in all, however, the findings suggest that the Advertising Council's Take a Bite Out of Crime PSAs had marked and consistent influences on citizen perceptions and attitudes regarding crime prevention, as well as on their taking of specific preventative actions.

## VI. Conclusions from the Evaluation Surveys

We have examined in some depth citizen reactions to the Take a Bite Out of Crime campaign, and in particular to the Advertising Council's McGruff PSAs. We have considered those results in the context of what is known about citizen orientation with respect to crime and its prevention, and about media influences on individuals in general.

We will now briefly highlight what we see the overall import of the combined findings from the national and panel samples as being for crime prevention practitioners and for the design of subsequent crime prevention campaign strategies.

### Campaign Exposure

The campaign had, in our view, surprisingly widespread penetration among the American public. Just over half of U.S. adults could recall having seen or heard the McGruff PSAs within two years of the campaign's start. Given the catch-as-catch-can dissemination of PSAs, this suggests a rather heavy commitment on the part of media channels to use them, and that the ads were salient enough to make at least a minimal impression on substantial numbers of people.

Television was clearly the "medium of choice" by which the most people saw the most PSAs. We cannot answer whether that was because more of them were shown over television, or because the television ads were more memorable to people; we suspect that both reasons were operative, and perhaps others as well. It does appear, however, that the ads were quite heavily repeated across the media: A third of the people said they had seen or heard them more than 10 times.

The campaign's penetration was extensive enough to reach a highly diversified audience demographically, and no economic or social class appeared beyond the campaign's reach. While McGruff was decidedly likelier to reach younger adults, a third of the people over age 64 could recall the ads.

Persons who regularly either watched more television or listened more to the radio were likelier to have come across the PSAs, having greater opportunity to do so. Exposure to the campaign was also somewhat greater among persons who saw themselves as initially less knowledgeable about crime prevention, and among those who saw citizen crime prevention efforts as potentially more effective. Just why this occurred is somewhat unclear, but for whatever reasons McGruff appeared to be reaching an audience at least in part rather ideally targeted to the campaign's themes. However, it should be added that across the board

the PSAs reached substantial numbers of citizens with widely varied perceptions, attitudes and behaviors regarding crime and its prevention.

Among those exposed to the campaign, a greater amount of attention was paid by persons who saw themselves as more knowledgeable about prevention, and those more confident about being able to protect themselves from crime. More attention was also paid by individuals already engaged in a greater range of prevention activities, as well as those who felt that getting more information about prevention would be useful to them. This pattern is in keeping with the "selective attention" hypothesis: People tend to pay more attention to message content which they are already interested in, and/or in agreement with. However, as we have seen above, there was less evidence of selective exposure to the campaign.

## Campaign Effectiveness

The format and content of the PSAs elicited favorable reactions from the vast majority of the audience. Most said they thought the ads were effective in conveying their message, that they liked the McGruff character, and that they felt the information in them was worth passing on to other people. These reactions were consistently favorable across the sample, although younger persons tended to rate them most highly. From a perspective of long-term impact, that is quite encouraging.

The campaign appeared to have a sizeable impact on what people knew about crime prevention techniques. Nearly a quarter of the national sample exposed to the campaign said they had learned something new about prevention from the PSAs, and nearly half said they had been reminded of things they had known before but had forgotten. Campaign-exposed persons in the panel sample were significantly likelier than those unexposed to show increases in how much they thought they knew about crime prevention.

Similarly, the McGruff PSAs appeared to have a positive influence on citizens' attitudes about crime prevention. Nearly half of the national sample respondents recalling the ads said they made them feel more confident in being able to protect themselves from victimization, and that citizen prevention efforts were an effective means of helping prevent crime. Significant changes in both of these attitudes were found among exposed panel respondents as well.

Individuals reporting having been influenced in one particular way were likely to report other influences as

well. The extent of influence seemed to depend more on how much attention was paid to the ads, rather than how many times they had been seen or heard. Moreover, people who said they had been made more fearful of crime by the ads were likelier to report having been influenced in other ways as well. Less conclusive was evidence for campaign-stimulated changes in degree of concern about crime and sense of individual self-responsibility to help prevent it: While about half of the exposed national sample respondents reported having gained more positive attitudes from the campaign on both dimensions, no significant differences were found within the panel sample.

On the most salient criterion of campaign success--behavioral change--the McGruff campaign appears to have had a noteworthy impact. Nearly a fourth of the exposed national sample said they had taken preventative actions as a result of having seen or heard the ads; mentioned in particular were improving household security and cooperating with neighbors in prevention efforts, the two main themes of the McGruff PSAs. Moreover, among the panel sample exposure to the campaign was significantly related to increases in six of the seven specific preventative activities most emphasized in the televised PSAs. Again, particularly strong increases were found for neighborhood cooperative crime prevention efforts. Importantly, the campaign appears not to have stimulated greater use of behavioral restrictions or avoidance methods among citizens in dealing with crime, and any "boomerang" effects overall were either slight or nonexistent.

## Variations in Campaign Effects

While the campaign appeared to have had significant effects on the populace as a whole, there was considerable variation in the degree of influence across demographic subgroups. (While the more general national sample self-report items showed relatively small demographic differences, the more precise panel change measures revealed far less uniformity.) While in many instances the PSAs seemed most effective within those demographic groups already more competent in terms of prevention, the campaign also appeared to stimulate substantial change within other cohorts as well.

Demographic differences in campaign effects appeared to reflect the varying kinds of opportunities people had in carrying out actions advocated by the campaign. For example, women and members of upper-income groups tended to show greater gains in neighborhood cooperative prevention activities. Lower-income persons increased in such activities as use of outdoor lights and the reporting of suspicious incidents to the police. Men showed increases

in somewhat more individualistic behaviors, e.g. acquiring a dog and reporting things to police. Greater attitudinal changes were also found among men than women. Upper income groups indicated greater gains in perceived knowledge and confidence, while lower income persons became more concerned about crime prevention. The social class differences are akin to comparisons previously made between "resource poor" and "resource rich" citizens, each type apt to cope with crime according to the means most readily available to them (Lavrakas, 1980).

The demographic differences notwithstanding, perhaps more meaningful indications of "who was" versus "who wasn't" influenced by the McGruff PSAs rest in people's perceptions prior to the campaign of crime per se. Clearly, the campaign had greater impact on the attitudes of citizens who felt themselves to be less at risk from crime. Conversely, it had more influence on the behaviors of those perceiving themselves as more at risk. Thus we have evidence that the campaign acted as it was designed to in terms of inducing behavioral change on an appropriate target, but failed to impact at the supposedly easier task of bringing about attitudinal change. Some reasons why this may have occurred will be considered below.

There was little evidence that the McGruff PSAs widened the gap between more prevention-competent and less competent citizens. To the extent that the campaign did stimulate more preventative action taking, it was among those who had previously indicated less knowledge, perceived effectiveness and competence. Persons fitting this profile also were likelier to have indicated a greater need for information about prevention.

More generally, the campaign appeared to reach and influence substantial proportions of individuals across a wide spectrum of communication dispositions. McGruff seemingly overcame many of the audience-bound constraints which often inhibit other information campaign efforts. Thus opinion leaders as well as non-leaders were affected, as were those with greater and lesser informational needs, and those typically more attentive to crime content in the media and those not so attentive. The nature of the effects within these varying cohorts differed, but not necessarily their intensity.

## Gleanings from the Findings

The necessarily scattershot nature of the campaign's dissemination appears to have resulted in a wide range of effects across an even wider range of people. While the impact of the key themes of the PSAs--improved home security and cooperation with neighbors and police--were clear and prevalent throughout these findings, it is also

apparent that some parts of the messages hit home with some citizens but not with others. The reasons underlying such differences are doubtlessly bound up in a host of interacting personal dispositions and social and environmental considerations which we will consider below with an eye toward recommendations for future successful crime prevention campaign strategies.

From a more theoretical viewpoint, the findings suggest several interesting things about the overall impact of the McGruff campaign. For one, there is a strong suggestion that in at least some instances behavioral change was stimulated without corresponding changes in cognitive or attitudinal orientations. Citizens seeing themselves as more threatened and more at risk increased their cooperative observing behavior, but showed no significant changes in prevention knowledge, effectiveness or competence. Nor does it seem likely that the behavioral change came at the end of a cumulative series of previous changes in orientations. The high threat-high risk group was indeed lower in prevention knowledge, effectiveness and competence prior to the campaign, and thus they were not poised at a high attitudinal plateau "waiting" for a message or other stimulus to goad them into action-taking.

What seems more likely is that the PSAs suggested behaviors to them which seemed reasonable enough to try out, perhaps on a quite experimental basis, and perhaps even somewhat warily. (It should be kept in mind that what we are talking about here is persons who see themselves more threatened or at risk, either simply looking out for their neighbors and/or asking their neighbors to do the same, and/or actually joining with them in group efforts. These may not be, for many people, effortless tasks.) At least some of these people may see themselves in rather desperate straits regarding their personal safety, and may be willing to try just about anything. Perhaps the realistic touches in the "Gilstraps" and "Mini Marth" PSAs provided the proper cues relating to their own environments. However, they also appear to be waiting to see some results before "adopting" those cooperative behaviors with any confidence. They seemed to be trying out the actions before believing that they've learned anything, or that they feel more confident, or that they believe that citizen prevention measures are necessarily effective.

On the other hand, among the lesser threatened and at-risk, the campaign appears to have done a better job of stimulating cognitive and attitudinal changes, along with some action-taking as well, most notably police reporting. The pattern here is more akin to the classic reinforcement

process, in which persons with already somewhat positive orientations toward crime prevention become even more positive through exposure to the campaign, and indeed take some actions which they had not been carrying out before, or at least as extensively.

The campaign also appears to have stimulated greater overall levels of prevention competence among those initially less, rather than more, competent. The lack of increased action-taking among those more psychologically disposed to crime prevention is not immediately explainable from these data. One possible hypothesis is that they perceived themselves as already doing as much as they thought was warranted for self-protection. This argument would be supported by the finding that those high in prevention orientations saw their neighborhoods as safer, and themselves as less prone to victimization.

It is also noteworthy that the campaign seemed to stimulate greater cognitive and attitudinal change among those seeing themselves with lesser informational needs, along with increasing prevention activities on just two dimensions. Thus we have yet another instance of mixed effects for mixed groups, although again it is possible to impose a certain logic on the pattern of findings. In this case, it seems likely that those indicating a need for information were looking for just that--some practical advice. They received a great deal of advice from the campaign advocating cooperative actions, and they put that advice to use, perhaps on an experimental basis. Attitudinal change was only partial here, and it may be another case of persons trying out the advice before committing themselves to it. Among the low information need group, in which cognitive and attitudinal levels were already high, the campaign served to reinforce or strengthen those even further, without a great deal in the way of concommitant behavioral changes taking place. While this group may have benefited from more action taking, they may have been too confident of their own position prior to the campaign, and not motivated to follow the specific information offered.

The campaign, perhaps for a variety of reasons, appeared to be transcending many of the audience-bound constraints which seem to inhibit the wider dissemination of other crime prevention information campaign efforts. Other prevention campaigns were found to have greater penetration among those seeing themselves in greater need of information about prevention, e.g women and minority group members. However, the McGruff ads reached sizeable numbers of those individuals as well as citizens with perhaps lesser crime-related concerns.

It is highly appropriate to ask when we might expect "saturation" of the campaign to occur. That is, at what penetration of the population can we safely say that the campaign has reached just about everybody that it is going to? Campaign effectiveness and diffusion theorists have often indicated that about ten to fifteen percent of any general population can be classed as being equivalent to "know nothings" and beyond the impact of any campaign or innovation, and lying beyond the realm of traditional communication efforts. Most public service campaigns begin with a premise of reaching "everybody concerned" with the topic or remedy under dissemination, but typically fail to attribute any realistic absolute number of percent to when "success" occurs.

Given a lack of previous guidelines, simply reaching half of the general population with a campaign certainly seems significant, and it is indeed difficult to conclude from these data as to when we might expect the diffusion of awareness of the PSAs to begin diminishing.

## Limitations of the Study

Before proceeding with more policy-related interpretations of the findings, we should note again that these results are based upon standard social survey research techniques, and are subject to the same limitations as are all such data. At the risk of sounding overly cautious, it should be kept in mind that the findings derive from respondents' self-reports of their own cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors, and thus may be subject to the typical respondent perceptual biases inherent in any survey research effort. Be that as it may, it seems clear that such survey self-reporting techniques have more than adequately demonstrated their value and validity as evaluative research tools over the decades. In addition, the present study benefits strongly from the congruence of findings derived from the more population-generalizable national survey and the more causally explicit panel survey.

## VII. Recommendations on Strategies for Subsequent Campaign Efforts

Based upon our own research efforts as well as previous ones, we see several key issues which need to be taken into account in the planning of subsequent crime prevention campaign efforts, including those based upon McGruff. These include: (1) The salience of crime as an issue on the public agenda; (2) The necessity of community-based campaign efforts; (3) The perplexing role of fear arousal in campaign effectiveness; (4) The role of formative research; (5) The problem of audience targeting; and (6) The potential for neglect of the elderly as an audience.

### The Salience of Crime as an Issue

The campaign began during a period when crime as an issue was decidedly high on the public agenda of citizens. Virtually every public opinion poll measuring importance of issues in the early 1980s found crime listed in the top three, and often as the most important issue. Within weeks of each other in 1981, the three major national news magazines all had cover stories on the crime issue, e.g. "The Curse of Violent Crime," Time, March 23, 1981; "The People's War Against Crime," U.S. News and World Report, July 13, 1981. Newspapers and television newscasts devoted substantial amounts of continued emphasis to crime news (cf. Graber, 1980). Thus the McGruff campaign was acting in an environment of already existing public interest and concern about the problem, and presumably including more of a willingness to listen to some ideas as to what to do about the problem.

This is not to say that the campaign was simply "reinforcing" citizen orientations which already existed: The wide ranging influences of the campaign per se seem quite clear. But rather, it does imply that the first three phases of the campaign benefited from a climate of opinion that probably made it more likely that the campaign would have an impact. The opening phases of the campaign did not have to cope with public apathy toward the central issue being dealt with.

Many, and perhaps most, information campaigns of course do not have such an advantage, and there is no guarantee that crime prevention campaigns will have it over subsequent years. In fact, the normal cycle of such public issues is one of peaks and valleys, and one can already see that the state of the economy and unemployment have edged out crime as the critical issue facing the country as of this writing. On the other hand, it can be

assumed that "crime will always be with us," and that citizen concern over it is unlikely to soon drop to a trivial level.

However, subsequent prevention campaign efforts should not simply assume that because the early phases of McGruff made notable strides, that future efforts will as well. Indeed, campaign designers might well want to consider strategies that will either keep crime and prevention high on the public agenda, or increase the visibility of the issue should it be drastically reduced on that agenda.

In a sense, the challenge for campaign planners is much the same as that encountered when a highly successful product finds itself competing with newer products; marketing strategies have to be developed to keep the public from tiring of the old one or simply wanting to experiment with the new. "Brand loyalty" becomes a central issue. Those people who have improved in their crime prevention activities have to be reminded to keep doing what they have been, regardless of various changes in the social climate.

## The Necessity for Community-Based Efforts

While underinvestigated in this study, we cannot overemphasize the import of supplementing the national media campaign with strong local community-based input. This is particularly necessary if the campaign is to have long-term impact once the initial novelty wears off. Studies of campaigns from Cartwright (1949) to Maccoby and Solomon (1981) have consistently demonstrated the strong power of interpersonal and community-level communication in information dissemination and persuasion efforts. While the media campaign appears to have brought about significant effects on its own, we would have every reason to suspect that, as Maccoby and Solomon empirically demonstrated, the effects would be substantially heightened with the placement of community action programs.

Such programs serve several purposes. For one, they reinforce the national campaign and provide it with greater visibility. This is particularly true if local broadcast and print media are encouraged to run more of the McGruff ads as a result of local concern. For another, local efforts give an important local "angle" to the campaign, letting citizens know that crime prevention is indeed a concern in "River City" as well as nationally. Concurrently, as is already apparently happening, the campaign serves as a focal point for various local agencies, groups and interested citizens to gather under. The simple use of the logo provides an image of familiarity, and probably a

certain degree of status conferral as well. The logo is "recognized" as a symbol which has gained a certain degree of legitimacy through its use in national media. Moreover, the McGruff character is quite well liked, leading to positive dispositions toward the campaign as well.

The main function of grass-roots support for the campaign, however, should be to facilitate face-to-face interaction with and among citizens on the issue of crime prevention. Without the element of personal contact, a great deal of the potential impact of community involvement will be lost. Local programs should attempt to maximize opportunities for crime prevention professionals to meet with citizens in groups or individually, and also stimulate greater discussion among citizens themselves about crime prevention.

We would also strongly advocate that local prevention professionals emphasize instruction in their meetings with citizens, as opposed to simply trying to "motivate" or "persuade" citizens to become more involved. Focus should be upon specifically how steps advocated in the general campaign could be applied by individuals within the specific community or neighborhood. For example, a neighborhood of apartment complexes is unlikely to have the same response pattern to neighbor watch programs as is one of single detached dwellings. And, of course, high crime areas are apt to have different concerns than low crime ones, and so forth. Many useful and specific considerations concerning community level prevention practice are found in Lavrakas (1980) and Podolefsky and Dubow (1981).

However, the main argument to be made here is that the most effective and efficient "targeting" of crime prevention information to specific subgroups of citizens is most likely to be through narrow community-level channels, not the mass media. Moreover, the greater the role of interpersonal communication in those efforts, the greater the chance of meaningful impact.

## Fear Arousal and Campaign Effectiveness

While the McGruff campaign was quite cautious in terms of any deliberate use of fear-provoking themes, the area of crime is one which is bound to raise some anxiety among at least some citizens, as our findings have indicated. Subsequent campaign efforts will doubtless encounter the same problem. As we have found, however, the arousal of some minimal level of fear

may not be wholly counterproductive, as long as the fear may be justified by the "reality" of the actual situation being dealt with.

In a more practical vein, the findings do not necessarily contradict the view that information campaigns dealing with such "loaded" topics as crime prevention may often do well to soft-pedal fear appeals in the design of messages. However, it is important to note that the reasoning should not necessarily be that low increased fear among audience members will be detrimental to the campaign goals. Fear arousal to at least a limited degree may well enhance the persuasive impact of a message. But, if the topic is such that one can assume that target audiences are already anxious over it, many individuals may be counted on to become more fearful by simply having the topic brought to their attention. And, that arousal can "work" to stimulate more effective persuasive changes, assuming that the message provides adequate information and argumentation to serve as a basis for them. On the other hand, for topics for which previous fear is unlikely to exist among audience members, it may at times be beneficial to introduce fear appeals within the message assuming that they are legitimate and reasonably restrained. More extensive research is clearly needed here.

The findings more specifically suggested that the messages used here triggered more in the way of what McGuire has referred to as the drive component of fear as opposed to the cue component. The stimulation of the drive component of fear increases the likelihood of activity to reduce that fear, e.g. attitudinal or behavioral change. On the other hand, if a message arouses fear by cuing undesirable consequences (such as being criminally assaulted) in the mind of the receiver, the message stands more of a chance of being unattended to or refuted without resulting in persuasion. The likely explanation here is that while the PSAs were quite bereft of specific fear-arousing cues, for many individuals the topic of crime in general aroused fear, resulting in drive to reduce it. Had the PSAs included more in the way of particular information about how people are victimized, or the consequences of victimization, those cues may well have triggered fear in ways which would have interferred with the persuasive impact of the message.

It is also likely that the emphasis of the PSAs on offering rather concrete actions which citizens could reasonably take to help protect themselves increased the persuasive force of fear arousal here. As Leventhal

has indicated, fear appeals appear more likely to succeed when specific and preferably immediate means of reducing the arousal are presented as well, and subsequent campaigns would do well to note that.

Given the range of fear arousal occurring among members of an audience to one group of PSAs with the same low level of fear appeal in the content, it also seems clear that in instances where fear as a message response is either likely or being sought, extensive pre-campaign research among target audiences is highly necessary.

## The Role of Formative Research

We would hope that the use to which the panel survey design was put here would also serve as something of a plug for formative, pre-campaign evaluative research efforts. Our use of it was more to help define and explain effects, but it should be clear that if the first stage of panel interviews had taken place prior to the design of the first phase of the campaign, things might have been learned about audience dispositions regarding crime and prevention which would have helped generate even more substantial effects. Pre-campaign research efforts--at the national or community levels--become even more important when specific kinds of target audiences are being delineated.

## The Problem of Audience Targeting

Targeting is a very useful concept in campaign planning, but with a reliance upon public service advertisements a great deal of the rationale and work goes for naught. Even if PSAs are aimed at, say women in higher crime areas, it becomes highly inefficient to produce the ads and then literally "throw them to the winds" in the media, hoping that some might just happen to show up on television programs or in publications with a respectable reach among that audience. This is not to say that it should not be done failing other alternatives, but just that it's quite wasteful of communication resources. While this is a recommendation beyond the scope of our charge here, there would seem to be a great deal of value in having representatives of the broadcast and print industries get together with those concerned with public service advertising (such as the Advertising Council) to attempt to work out a system through which PSAs would have a better chance of being placed in times and slots more appropriate to their intended audiences. Perhaps a standard method of

coding PSAs by audience type could be devised, or maybe a plan could be worked out for some "paid" PSAs to be run in more appropriate slots, but at rates much lower than regular commercial rates.

As the situation is at this time, however, targeting would seem to be more in the baliwick of campaign strategists within individual communities. In instances where targeting does seem appropriate and possible, we recommend following the general conceptual strategy of seeking to build greater levels of prevention competence among citizens. Previous to implementing the campaign, research should establish the makeup of target groups in terms of: (1) Their awareness of crime prevention techniques; (2) Their attitudes toward citizen-initiated prevention activities, e.g. how effective they are; how responsible citizens ought to be; (3) How capable they feel about acting on their own; (4) How concerned or interested they are in protecting themselves and others from crime; and, (5) The extent to which they have already taken prevention-related actions. Once an existing level of competence in terms of these factors can be identified, appropriate messages can be designed to attempt to stimulate change effects as warranted.

## The Elderly: A Potentially Neglected Audience

The evaluation suggests that the campaign made less of an impression upon one group with particularly strong concerns about crime: the elderly. Why that happened remains unclear, but one can speculate on a few possible reasons. For one, many of those aged 65 and over may not be as attuned to advertising in general, and television advertising in particular, including PSAs. Some may have felt less pulled to the dog character than, say, later generations weaned on movie and television cartoons. (However, elderly persons who were exposed to the PSAs were about equally supportive of the format as were younger individuals.) In some instances, diminished ability to remember or recall the stimulus may have been a factor as well. One element which would most probably have been unlikely to turn off older audiences is the story content of the PSAs. The situations in the television ads could not be seen as "age biasing" in any obvious sense, and in fact the central character in "Mimi Marth" should have appealed more to the elderly.

Be that as it may, what can be done to direct a stronger appeal toward older citizens, particularly those who see themselves as more vulnerable? One suspects

that, for some of the above reasons and others, media may be less effective in reaching the elderly than younger cohorts. Rather, local community and neighborhood campaigns focusing specifically on the problems of the elderly would seem to be far more effective.

## Recommendations Specific to the Ongoing McGruff Campaign

The campaign would do well to continue several things that have apparently been working quite well. Certainly one of these is the use of McGruff. The dog "tested" very positively in terms of citizen evaluations of it. And, it appears to be in continuously high demand as a logo for neighborhood and statewide crime prevention efforts. (Over 200 copyrights have been issued for such uses of McGruff, and it is in the process of being marketed as a doll figure aimed at general consumers (Personal conversation with Mac Gray and Elinor Hangley, June 18, 1982.)) The character may well approach the general popularity of "Smokey the Bear" as a campaign symbol. At the least, there does not seem to be any character other than those two which have become so highly visible through public information campaigns. In short, the high acceptance of McGruff needs to be taken advantage of.

In a similar vein, it is important to note that the popularity of both McGruff and the Take a Bite Out of Crime label is probably in large part due to the high quality of the PSAs themselves, and to the source credibility which we can assume the Advertising Council and Crime Prevention Coalition hold. It is critical to future efforts that such credibility be maintained. The Advertising Council should continue, as it has been doing, to keep a watchful eye on unauthorized uses of the logo. This includes not only misuses of it in campaigns which may be providing specious or inaccurate information, but in campaigns of arguably poor production quality as well. Such uses can only diminish the credibility and attractiveness of the character.

The central--or at least most visible--feature of the campaign should continue to be television spots. It is adamantly clear from the findings here that prevention activities advocated in them were the primary ones which the most citizens were showing the most substantial changes in. This does not necessarily mean that the print PSAs or the campaign booklet were not finding appropriate audiences, however. It may well be that their more audience-specific content was having an

impact on smaller, but still noteworthy, groupings of citizens. Such influences are extremely difficult to "pick up" in survey evaluations. But overall, the evidence strongly favors the use of television PSAs to carry the most important campaign themes. It probably goes without saying that the apparent popularity of the campaign among broadcast producers implies that they will continue to give heavy play to the McGruff ads, assuming that their quality remains high.

We also suspect that the high impact of the television PSAs resulted in part from their simplicity, or lack of clutter. Each segment included but a few bits of information, carefully orchestrated within a central theme, with citizen cooperation of course the dominant one. Again, the survey findings concerning neighborhood cooperative efforts would seem to speak for themselves in attesting to the effectiveness of that appeal.

It may be a quite effective campaign ploy to keep the public informed in a factual way of how public adoption of various techniques has helped reduce certain kinds of crimes, either nationwide or within specific communities. If the overall theme is to inform the public of how they can become more prevention competent in order to reduce their risk or probability of being victimized, it would be most appropriate to use basic statistics supporting that claim. This may be particularly important given the finding that some people appear to be adopting preventative activities without necessarily undergoing attitudinal changes. It may be productive for subsequent ads to reinforce those tentatively adopted behaviors by showing how they can and have been effective. Perhaps McGruff could even be featured in a self-congratulatory bow.

The campaign producers appear to have been quite effective in pursuing tie-ins not only with state and local agencies, but with corporations and other groups as well. The use of the campaign with the Southland Corporation (7-11 stores) in 1982 is a notable example. Those avenues certainly deserve further efforts.

Another tie-in consideration might be with the media themselves. It seemed rather clear from the findings that persons high in exposure to television crime content, both journalistic and entertainment-oriented, were particularly concerned about crime as an issue and receptive to the campaign as well. Efforts might be made at cooperating, for example, with producers of some

of the crime or police-oriented television entertainment programs to include citizen prevention information in them, perhaps subtly using the McGruff logo as well. On a recent "CHiPs" episode, for example, a subtheme involved the drunk driving problem, with publicity given to the "MADD" program. The past year has also seen a spate of citizen features on television news programs and in newspapers, often involving citizen "tip-off" themes. Local prevention groups might emphasize to local journalists the value of using at least the popular McGruff logo in the content of those presentations. Moreover, given the cartoon format, perhaps similar tie-ins could be used on Saturday morning children's programs. Or, perhaps a specific PSA aimed at children could be produced particularly for insertion in child-oriented programming. Our data suggest that the existing PSAs already have a fair amount of appeal for children, and perhaps that could be emphasized even more.

Reiterating what was noted above, it is highly difficult to predict when the campaign as a whole may reach a point of saturation, or when the public will simply become bored with repeated messages from it. In large part, what is desired is to maintain the same campaign theme and logo for reinforcement purposes, while emphasizing new information and story lines to maintain freshness and interest. This is obviously not an easy task, and it demands a high amount of creative ingenuity on the part of campaign designers. It may be instructive to draw from the ongoing experience of the Smokey campaign, now in its 37th year. (An excellent description of the development of it appears in McNamara, Kurth and Hansen, 1981.) It is also important that campaign practitioners keep closely abreast with what crime prevention practitioners and researchers, as well as communications specialists, learn about the effectiveness of both various prevention techniques and means of disseminating such information.

In conclusion, the time may well be at hand for strategists involved with the McGruff campaign to more elaborately formulate specific goals as to what kinds of changes are desired in citizen crime prevention efforts, and to what extent. This would seem particularly practical at the community level. One of the rather obvious difficulties in our own evaluation process has been one of "deciding" at what points the campaign was "succeeding" or falling short, the simple reason for that being that no criteria for success or failure have been established by those responsible for the campaign. Nor could there have been: We have already alluded to the lack of baseline research on the efficacy of public information campaigns

overall, not to mention crime prevention campaigns. Given the data provided in this report, however, it may now be quite appropriate for the campaign strategists to work with prevention and communications researchers to try to determine, for example, what citizen participation rates within communities are "optimal" for actual crime reduction. Or, to determine what percentages of citizens being involved in, say neighborhood watch programs, are effective for minimal reductions in household burglaries. Given such data, prevention campaigns could then be even more specifically targeted for communities or neighborhoods with demonstrable shortcomings either in citizen participation or crime rates. The task would not be easy, since such variables as police protection and environmental factors enter in. But nonetheless, the effectiveness and efficiency with which prevention information campaigns can be disseminated are highly dependent upon having such baselines.

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# TECHNICAL APPENDIX

# EMERGING PERSPECTIVES ON CITIZEN CRIME PREVENTION

# BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

## Emerging Perspectives on Citizen Crime Prevention Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors[1]

Crime prevention information campaigns obviously work within a milieu of pre-existing citizen perceptions, attitudes, values and behaviors concerning crime and related issues. The purpose of the discussion below is to present an overview of such general citizen orientations toward crime and prevention, based upon data from the 1981 national sample survey.

While the findings will doubtlessly be beneficial to those more concerned with the more theoretical development of crime prevention concepts (c.f. Lavrakas, 1980; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981), the chapter is primarily intended to provide a context in which subsequent prevention mobilization efforts can be viewed.

### Beliefs About Crime Prevention Responsibility

In its various aspects "crime" represents a very serious problem for 85 percent of American adults who were sampled nationwide in the 1981 national survey. And most American adults (59 percent) acknowledge that at the very least the public shares equal responsibility with the police for preventing crimes. A fourth of the 1981 respondents believed that citizens actually have more responsibility on this score, while an important one in ten (12 percent averred that the ordinary citizen should be burdened with less responsibility than the police. For this latter subgroup, the prevention of crime is primarily the responsibility of the State, and ordinary citizens should not be required to do what the State seemingly has failed to accomplish--the protection of the individual against crime victimization.

The existence of even a relatively small subgroup of the population that opposes the thesis of significant individual responsibility for protection against crime can represent an important barrier to communicators in the business of promoting just such a theme. Here, the problem is two-fold. Not only is 12 percent of the public primed to turn a deaf ear to promotional calls to individual protection action-taking, but this subgroup may represent a core of actual/potential active opposition to the very concept of individual responsibility as well.

Additionally, Americans are not altogether convinced that high citizen involvement in crime prevention activity--by itself--necessarily will result in a substantial reduction in the crime rate overall. Roughly half of the 1981

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[1] By Harold Mendelsohn, Ph.D.

national sample believed that crime could be reduced "a great deal" via the active involvement of ordinary citizens protecting themselves. The remainder (52 percent) were generally less sanguine. Among the more skeptical, 8 percent believed that individual action-taking on the part of citizens would affect the overall crime rate "hardly at all."

Overall, 35 percent of the 1981 sample rated individual citizen action-taking as relatively ineffectual in preventing crimes. Among these were included:

- 44 percent of the residents who considered their neighborhoods to be "very dangerous" labeled citizen involvement in countering crime the least effective of four different options that were posed;
- 42 percent of the respondents who see themselves as the least vulnerable to crime believe citizen participation is relatively ineffective;
- 42 percent of the respondents claiming to pay no attention or very little attention to crime news on TV, see individual citizen action-taking as relatively impotent in curbing crime;
- 41 percent of those who fatalistically believed crime to be inevitable label citizen participation as the least effective of the four crime prevention means posed in the 1981 study;
- 40 percent of the individuals reporting they worry about being victimized by crime a "great deal" view citizen action-taking as the least effective of the prevention options put before them.

From the perspective of communicators attempting to persuade large numbers of citizens to engage in recommended crime prevention actions, the task of first convincing them that those actions actually will work is formidable. Here, the "worriers" must first be calmed; the disinterested and unconcerned, aroused; and those experiencing realistic danger, provided with some guarantees of efficacy.

Not only do people who consider citizens' responsibility vis-a-vis the police on the matter of crime prevention to be minor actually refrain much more than others from engaging in any crime prevention activity; but they also admit to doing less than well when they do take part in such activity.

On the other hand, those who believe that citizens carry even a heavier responsibility than do the police are likely to be the most actively involved in crime pre-

vention overall and to consider their actions to be effective as well.

Further, the data suggest that "apathy" cannot satisfactorily explain why close to a fifth of the adult population readily admits to a total lack of engagement in any crime prevention activity at all. For many of these particular individuals, their absence from such activity may be related more to their disbeliefs regarding individual citizen responsibilities and the effectiveness of citizen participation in crime prevention than to disinterest or laziness or lack of concern.

Substantial proportions of citizens interviewed rated as "fair or poor" the job performances of those community agencies considered to be most responsible for crime prevention. The local courts were so rated by 80 percent; local elected officials by 75 percent; voluntary community organizations by 65 percent; the local media by 58 percent and the local police by 44 percent. In the last case, it should be noted that four in ten Americans currently believe that their local police are doing less than a fully satisfactory job in crime prevention. Such a sizeable public expression of disenchantment is bound to have negative effects on how many citizens react to the police as credible sources of crime prevention information as well as on their attitudes regarding police vs. citizen responsibility for crime prevention.

## Worry About Crime Victimization

From their responses to questions regarding the possibility of victimization, 17 percent of the sample were classified as being very worried about victimization, 45 percent as moderately worried, and 38 percent as only slightly worried about the likelihood of being victimized.

Overall, persons who call crime a "very serious" matter are four times as likely to worry intensely about it as are those who believe crime is of moderate import. Further, those worrying more about the prospects of victimization are likelier to have endured a high degree of actual victimization (either personally or vicariously); they are more apt to believe that the neighborhoods they live in are very dangerous; they are more likely to believe themselves to be highly vulnerable to crime attacks.

At the same time, persons who are relatively unworried about potential victimization are most likely to live in neighborhoods they believe to be relatively safe from the hazards of crime.

By considerable margins, those whose concerns are relatively low also are more likely to have experienced either no or low victimization; they are more likely to believe that crime is not to be taken all that seriously; and they are more apt to feel only moderately vulnerable to crime. With regard to specific citizen action-taking overall--contacting the police, joining neighborhood crime prevention groups and discussing crime matters with others--the greater the degree of worry about victimization, the greater is the likelihood of action-taking in each case.

Moreover, the intensely-worried are likelier than non-worriers to endorse the proposition of citizens having even more responsibility than the police for their personal safety and well-being.

Apparently, intense worriers may try to overcome their concerns by doing those ameliorating things which best fit in with their perceived competence--by keeping as well informed about crime prevention as everyone else and by actually outperforming others in specific crime prevention actions they consider as falling within the bounds of their skills and resources.

That "worry about crime victimization" may be related more to motivating rather than inhibiting certain kinds of crime prevention activity is of considerable importance for communications strategy-building in crime prevention efforts across the board.

When people say they are highly concerned about the prospect of being criminally attacked, robbed or burglarized, their concern is not exclusively focused on the injuries they alone may suffer. Rather, their concern may cover a considerably wider spectrum which includes the safety of loved ones, community and ultimately, even of society.

What strongly concerns people who worry about self more than others is their own perceived weakness; their inability to protect themselves. Particularly high concern about one's self-protection capability (manifested by 23 percent of the total 1981 national sample) was voiced by:

- Blacks and other ethnics - 39%
- Heads of households comprised of four or more children - 39%
- Residents of upper class neighborhoods - 33%

. Inhabitants of the West South Central States - 37%

. Residents of suburbs near middle-sized cities - 36%

Relative lack of concern with preventing criminal victimization of the self (6 percent of the total sample) was unaffected by demography alone.

Worry about crime is far from being one-dimensional. It is both realistic and to some degree fanciful. It focuses on both the self and upon what might happen to others.

A good deal of the worry about self may be positively related to perceptions of lack of actual skill in regard to fending off crimes. These particular types of persons will require heavy doses of assurance before they take certain recommended actions that are directed to the public at large; particularly actions that are complex or which may be hazardous.

On the other hand, it would appear that the self-confident upper-scale subgroups in the population whose personal at-risk status is relatively low, as well as the elderly who may shrug away their concerns with a fatalistic orientation, might be directed more into crime prevention actions that are more community-oriented and less focused solely on personal action-taking. Note that fully 63 percent of the individuals proclaiming they rarely or never worry about the prospects of becoming victims of crime say they are more concerned about the effects of crime on society than about its possible effects on them as individuals.

An important contributor to this syndrome of less-self-worry-more-societal-concern is the fact that substantial majorities of this particular subgroup have already taken many of the key personal protection actions that crime prevention experts have been promoting for some time. It could very well be that taking these crime prevention actions eventually contribute to the sense of self-assurance that characterizes the subgroup which worries more about others than they do about self.

One interesting possibility emerges as a basis for future crime prevention mass communication's strategy, a two-pronged approach in which one set of messages is designed to provide concerned individuals with effective crime prevention skills mainly vis-a-vis the self; and another set of messages is designed primarily to motivate relatively unconcerned and fatalistically oriented individuals to participate in crime prevention activities that will benefit the community and society directly and themselves indirectly.

## The Critical Role of Neighborhood

If one fact stands out starkly from the 1981 national study, it is this paradox: the "better" the neighborhood people live in the less concern there is about crime generally, but the greater is their involvement in varieties of crime prevention activities. Put another way, people who might benefit most from taking certain recommended crime prevention actions that often require social cooperation are no more likely than others to engage in such actions due, at least in part, to the social disorganization of their neighborhoods to begin with. Social disorganization in these situations serves simultaneously to contribute to crime and to inhibit its prevention through intense community efforts.

Overall, 24 percent of the total 1981 sample was classified as residing in "highly dangerous" neighborhoods; 47 percent in "moderately dangerous" neighborhoods; and the remaining 29 percent was categorized as residing in "relatively safe" neighborhoods.

Perceptions of neighborhood danger are associated with a variety of crime prevention beliefs, perceptions and behaviors. For example:

1. The more dangerous the neighborhood is perceived to be, the more "serious" overall crime is perceived to be.

2. The more hazardous the neighborhood, the more apt are people to be concerned about personal crime victimization. Inversely, the safer one's neighborhood is considered to be, the lesser is the concern about potential victimization.

3. As perceived neighborhood danger increases, the reported ability to maintain control over one's life diminishes.

4. Residents of "highly dangerous" versus "safe" neighborhoods are likelier to show high concern regarding their ability to protect themselves against crime. Further, residents of "highly dangerous neighborhoods" are twice as likely (19 percent) as are "safe" neighborhood inhabitants (9 percent) to express a lack of confidence in their ability to protect themselves against crime.

The influence of perceptions of neighborhood danger on specific crime prevention behaviors is by no means clear-cut. For example, in regard to contacting the police we note a strong positive relationship between perceived danger and action. Here, 25 percent of the residents of "safe" neighborhoods report having contacted the police in the year prior to the 1981 interviews as compared to 28 percent of the "moderately dangerous" and 35 percent of the "highly dangerous" neighborhood residents who claim to have contacted the police during the same period.

Similarly, persons who live in highly dangerous neighborhoods (40 percent) are nearly four times as likely to practice avoidance of danger spots as are "safe" area residents (11 percent).

Additionally, residents of high hazard areas (24 percent) are nearly three times as likely as compared to residents of "safe" neighborhoods (9 percent) to discuss crime in general with their relatives, friends and neighbors.

In an apparent paradox, perceived neighborhood danger is inversely related to "keeping a watchful eye" on neighbors' homes and belongings. The safer the neighborhood, the likelier are people to report keeping watch on behalf of their neighbors.

Although ostensibly residents of highly dangerous neighborhoods have the most to gain from concerted community anti-crime action, they are no more impelled to join in with their neighbors than are their relatively "safer" counterparts. By itself, the perception of the high threat of crime is not powerful enough to motivate people to join in communal crime prevention efforts. Indeed, living in hazardous environments may serve more to curtail than to accelerate such activity.

Across the board totally, 12 percent of the adults sampled claim memberships in some formal neighborhood group or organization that is involved in crime prevention.

Membership in such groups and organizations is disproportionately high among "up-scale" sub-populations as contrasted to persons occupying niches in the bottom half of the socio-economic spectrum.

Being socially integrated into one's neighborhood can play an important role in determining whether one joins a neighborhood crime prevention organization. Here we

find that two-and-one-half times the respondents who claim to know most of their neighbors (14 percent) as compared to those acknowledging familiarity with "hardly any" (6 percent) of their neighbors claim membership in neighborhood crime-prevention organizations.

From the standpoint of public communications efforts that seek to increase membership in neighborhood crime prevention groups, a two-fold effort appears to be worth contemplating for strategic planning:

1. A strategy that aims at the formation of such groups primarily among upper-and middle-class civic-minded "cosmopolitan" groups to be supplemented by messages designed to direct more cosmopolitans into already-formed neighborhood anti-crime organizations.

2. Efforts that instruct already-established church, fraternal, and civic group opinion-leaders serving socially disorganized areas to incorporate crime prevention components into their on-going larger programs to be complemented by efforts designed to increase local neighborhood membership in these already established and accepted "organic" groups and organizations.

## Crime Prevention Know-How

Most Americans (68 percent) believe that their knowledge about what to do to lessen the possibility of their falling victim to crime represents less than an integrated solidly grounded body of substantial information; 23 percent believe they are very knowledgeable in this regard; and 8 percent admit to not knowing much at all about warding off the prospects of falling victim to criminal activity.

Overall, 29 percent of the 1981 sample expressed a "great" need to know more about crime prevention than they already did. Forty-one percent said they had a "small" need for additional crime prevention information, and 29 percent reported having hardly any need at all for such knowledge.

Despite the rather substantial crime prevention information-giving efforts of the past, substantial majorities of Americans still believe they ought to know more about self-protection than they did in the Fall of 1981. The more cognizant people are of their need for further crime pre-

vention information, the likelier they are to pay a great deal of attention to crime news in each of the media.

Even in their informal conversations with people they know or are related to, the individuals whose need for crime prevention information is strong are most likely to be highly attentive to crime news.

The reverse pattern exists among those acknowledging a rather low need or no need at all for crime prevention information.

Not only do determined prevention information seekers frequently turn to TV news for the information they need, they are also likelier to view televised crime dramas as well.

What emerges as rather paradoxical is that for many Americans, perhaps for the majority who view TV crime dramas, these entertainment programs appear not so much to be, as some have argued, "schools" which "teach" the commission of crime but rather, these shows appear to function as sources of information regarding the prevention of crimes. In particular, persons who acknowledge a great need for information about how best to protect oneself from the threats of crime are the most frequent viewers of television crime fiction. It may be always considering the reverse possibility that a primary rationale for doing so for this particular subgroup is their relatively high belief that the dramatized portrayals of crime in its various facets (including the strategies of prevention) are indeed accurate representations of reality. One strategy that suggests itself would be to include prevention messages in popular TV crime dramas.

Individuals who are relatively disinterested in viewing crime dramas on TV are more apt to be disinterested in the acquisition of knowledge about crime prevention as well. One important element in this mix is the proportionately high degree of skepticism this subgroup manifests regarding the accuracy of such fictionalized portrayals.

Crime prevention "opinion leaders" (19 percent of the population) act as additional sources for crime prevention information seekers.

## Taking Crime Prevention Action

The 1981 national survey asked respondents whether or not they had taken any of ten popularly recommended crime prevention actions and to indicate which recommendations they believe to be "most" and "least" effective as deterrents.

Several important considerations in regard to attempting to persuade people to take popularly recommended crime prevention actions emerge from the data:

1. Although more than eight of every ten Americans claim to have taken at least one of the ten commonly recommended actions, not one of the listed ten has been undertaken by a majority of the public. As a matter of fact, by the Fall of 1981, five of the ten actions that were studied each had been claimed by considerably fewer than a fourth of the sample.

2. By far the most common action claimed by the public is the installation of special locks in their homes. Special locks are the one device that on a net basis is believed to constitute the most effective crime deterrent of the ten posed.

   Although belief in the effectiveness of locks appears to be a prime motivator for installing them, it is not the only factor operating in the decision to do so. Special locks are relatively expensive, and clearly, economically better-off individuals are more readily able than others to afford their installation in the home.

3. The role of costs as factors in actually inhibiting certain crime prevention actions on the part of the public is further illustrated by the data regarding home burglar alarm systems.

   Despite the fact that next to locks, burglar alarms are considered to provide a very high degree of protection, more than nine in every ten Americans have not as of Fall 1981 installed costly burglar alarm systems in their homes, and until those costs are substantially reduced, they are unlikely to do so in the near future.

4. Installing outdoor lights around the home is as highly frequent an affluent "middle-class" crime prevention activity as putting in special locks.

   Effectiveness of outdoor lights as a means for protecting oneself against crime is relatively weak as an influence here, though. Outdoor lights no doubt are seen to function as decorative property accoutrements as well as affording protection, and in these dual functions they can be viewed by landlords as prudent "home improvement" investments

in general. (A fifth of the 1981 sample claim they have installed outdoor lights despite their personal belief that outdoor lights are among the least effective means for combatting crime.)

5. For the lower-middle and working class 35-54 aged householder with several children all residing where pets are permitted, keeping a dog at least partially for protection is a crime prevention activity that occurs with relatively high frequency.

   Here too, effectiveness against crime appears not to be the major reason for keeping a dog--the major motivation most likely resting on the animal's principal role as a family pet. (Seventeen percent of the respondents who include dogs among their assessments of the least effective means of anti-crime protection nevertheless claim to own dogs at least partially for the purpose of security).

6. Beliefs regarding the relative ineffectiveness of such relatively infrequently implemented anti-crime measures as installing entry-door peep holes; "ID-ing" personal property; inviting the police to conduct home security checks; and displaying anti-theft stickers appear to be prime inhibitors in their implementation by large numbers of people. Skepticism in these instances tends to produce inaction within the skeptical target.

In sum, the public's perceptions of high efficacy for certain standardly recommended crime prevention actions either may serve to impel those specific actions, or else they may motivate actions that are perceived to be functionally equivalent. Where there is lack of confidence in the efficacy of specific unpopular actions, however, "substitute" actions are frequently adapted rather than no crime protection actions at all. As a consequence, communicators might do well to consider clustering small, functionally equivalent actions together into meaningful behavioral "bundles" from which message recipients can draw two or three related recommendations out of, say, a bundle of four or five and still maintain some confidence in the overall effectiveness of that particular package. Such clustering that offers perceived functionally equivalent choices appears to have a considerably greater chance for success than the customary grab-bag catalogues that willy-nilly seek to promote varied and unrelated separate actions of varying potentials for being effective against crime.

# APPENDIX A:

# TABLES

TABLE 1

CAMPAIGN EXPOSURE BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

| | 1981 Campaign Exposure (n = 1,188) |
|---|---|
| Total Percent Exposed: | 51.7% |
| Demographics | |
| Age | |
| 18 - 24 | 72.4[a] |
| 25 - 34 | 66.7 |
| 35 - 54 | 44.5 |
| 55 - 64 | 37.4 |
| 65+ | 33.3 |
| Sex | |
| Female | 49.1 |
| Male | 54.7 |
| Race | |
| White | 52.1 |
| Minority | 48.8 |
| Education | |
| 0 - 11 years | 46.8 |
| H.S. Diploma | 52.8 |
| Some College | 56.2 |
| College Degree | 50.5 |
| Income | |
| Under $10,000 | 47.9 |
| 10 - 19,999 | 53.3 |
| 20 - 29,999 | 55.3 |
| 30,000+ | 47.6 |

[a] $p < .001$

TABLE 2

LEARNING AMONG CAMPAIGN-EXPOSED GROUP

| | | Percent (n = 614) |
|---|---|---|
| **Information Gain** | | |
| Have you, yourself, found out anything about crime prevention from these ads that you hadn't known before? | Yes | 22% |
| | No | 78% |
| | | 100% |
| (If yes:) What was that? | | |
| *Watch neighborhood more; crime watch; report crimes when seen; join with neighbors; etc. | 27% | |
| *Household security in terms of locking doors and windows; burglar alarms; leaving lights on; etc. | 45% | |
| *Other household security, including stopping deliveries when away; having mail picked up; notifying police | 3% | |
| *Security outside of home, including auto security; having protection when walking; being more careful outdoors | 5% | |
| *Generally more awareness of crime problem | 8% | |
| *Miscellaneous | 12% | |
| | 100% | |
| **Reinforcement** | | |
| Did the ads remind you of things that you may have known before regarding crime prevention but had since forgotten about? | Yes | 46% |
| | No | 54% |
| | | 100% |

TABLE 3

ATTITUDE CHANGE AMONG CAMPAIGN-EXPOSED GROUP

| | | Percent (n = 614) |
|---|---|---|
| **Crime Concern** | | |
| All in all, did these "Take a Bite Out of Crime" ads make you any more concerned about crime than you were before, any less concerned, or didn't they make any difference at all in that way? | More concerned | 46% |
| | No difference | 53% |
| | Less concerned | 0% |
| | Don't know | 1% |
| | | 100% |
| **Self Protection Confidence** | | |
| Did they make you feel any more confident about being able to protect yourself from crime, any less confident, or didn't they make any difference at all in that way? | More confident | 37% |
| | No difference | 58% |
| | Less confident | 3% |
| | Don't know | 2% |
| | | 100% |
| **Victimization Fear** | | |
| Did these ads themselves make you more afraid of becoming a crime victim yourself, less afraid, or didn't they make any difference? | More afraid | 22% |
| | No difference | 70% |
| | Less afraid | 6% |
| | Don't know | 2% |
| | | 100% |
| **Prevention Self-Responsibility** | | |
| Did they in any way make you feel more responsible for helping prevent crime on your own, or not? | Yes | 59% |
| | No | 41% |
| | | 100% |
| **Group Participation** | | |
| Did they in any way make you consider getting together with other people around here to help prevent crime, or not? | Yes | 29% |
| | No | 71% |
| | | 100% |
| **Group Effectiveness** | | |
| Did these ads in any way make you feel more confident that citizens like yourself can get together to effectively prevent crime, or not? | Yes | 59% |
| | No | 33% |
| | Don't know | 8% |
| | | 100% |

TABLE 4

BEHAVIOR CHANGE AMONG CAMPAIGN-EXPOSED GROUP

| | | | Percent (n = 614) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Behavior Change** | | | |
| As a result of these ads, did you do anything that you probably would not have done before if you hadn't seen or heard them? | Yes | | 22% |
| | No | | 74% |
| | Can't recall | | 2% |
| | | | 100% |
| (If yes:) What specifically did you do? | | | |
| *Locking house; getting new locks | | 34% | |
| *Leaving lights on | | 6% | |
| *Locking automobile doors | | 8% | |
| *Getting alarms | | 2% | |
| *Keeping watch on neighbors; reporting suspicious activity | | 21% | |
| *Not going out alone at night | | 4% | |
| *Being more aware; more careful in general | | 8% | |
| *Miscellaneous | | 17% | |
| | | 100% | |
| **Information Seeking** | | | |
| Did you happen to write or phone for more information about crime prevention? | Yes | | 2% |
| | No | | 98% |
| | | | 100% |
| **Future Behavior Change** | | | |
| Are you thinking about doing something in the future that was suggested by the ads that we've been talking about? | Yes | | 24% |
| | No | | 68% |
| | Don't know | | 8% |
| | | | 100% |

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSES OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAMPAIGN EXPOSURE AND CITIZEN PREVENTION ORIENTATIONS (n = 426)

| | Beta Value Uncontrolled[1] | Beta Value With Controls[2] |
|---|---|---|
| Prevention Knowledge | .09* | .08* |
| Sense of Prevention Responsibility | -.02 | -.03 |
| Perceived Effectiveness of Prevention | .07* | .08* |
| Concern about Prevention | .01 | .02 |
| Self-Confidence in Prevention | .12** | .08* |

*$p < .05$, one-tailed test

**$p < .01$, one-tailed test

[1]Uncontrolled relationship between campaign exposure and change in orientation

[2]Relationship between campaign exposure and change in orientation, controlling for education, age, income, sex, neighborhood, victimization experience media crime attention, and exposure to other campaigns.

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSES OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAMPAIGN EXPOSURE AND CHANGES IN PREVENTION BEHAVIORS (n = 426)

| | Beta Value Uncontrolled[1] | Beta Value With Controls[2] |
|---|---|---|
| Campaign-Advocated Behaviors | | |
| Lock doors when out | .02 | .02 |
| Outdoor lights on | .12** | .12** |
| Use timer lights | .07* | .09* |
| Have neighbors watch | .08* | .10* |
| Keep watch on neighborhood | .11** | .12** |
| Reporting to police | .13** | .08* |
| Joining prevention groups | .09** | .09* |
| Non-Campaign-Advocated Behaviors | | |
| Lock doors when in | -.01 | .01 |
| Indoor lights | .00 | -.02 |
| Have police check property | -.03 | -.05 |
| Stop deliveries when out | .05 | .03 |
| Go out with someone | -.04 | -.04 |
| Go out by car | .03 | .00 |
| Have protective devices | .01 | -.01 |
| Avoid certain places | .00 | -.03 |

*$p < .05$, one-tailed test

**$p < .01$, one-tailed test

[1]Uncontrolled relationship between campaign exposure and change in behavior.

[2]Relationship between campaign exposure and change in behavior, controlling for education, age, income, sex, neighborhood, victimization experience, media crime attention, and exposure to other campaigns.

# APPENDIX B:

# SPECIMEN CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

# TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

Ad Council

A message from the Crime Prevention Coalition, this publication and The Ad Council.

# TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

Crime Prevention Coalition

## "MIMI MARTH"

Public Service Announcements
Available in :60, :30, :10 Versions

### 60 SECONDS

McGRUFF: Hey, McGruff here.

See that guy... he's stealin' that bike.

Now... see that lady – she's callin' the cops.

This is Mimi Marth, part of the Eves and Ears Patrol of Hartford, Connecticut.

There's 126 of 'em... regular people like you and me workin' together against crime.

Here's another one: Albert Bell. Yesterday, it was his turn to patrol.

Halfway down the block, Albert sees a strange man nosing around the Barnett's basement window.

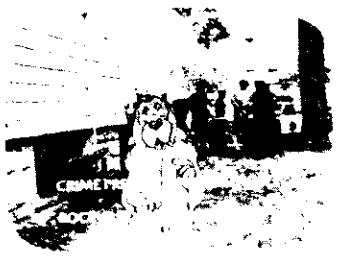
So, Albert calls the cops. Fast.

And the cops nick the guy up. Fast. Way to go, Albert!

Y'know, when it comes to preventin' crime,

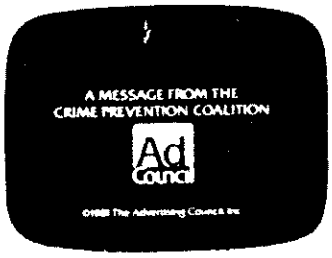
people like Mimi and Albert really make a difference.

So could a person like you. Find out more.



Write to Box 6600, Rockville, Maryland.


And help, ahh...Take a bite out of crime.




Volunteer Agency: Danner Fitzgerald Sample Inc. Volunteer Coordinator: Edward W. Dooley, Citibank, N.A.
CNCP 1961 CNCP 1186 CNCP 1190

Ad Council

# TAKE A BITE OUT OF "GILSTRAPS"

Crime Prevention Coalition

Public Service Announcements
Available in :60, :30, :10 Version

60 SECONDS



DOG (VO): Y'know, the Gilstraps aren't really movin'... they're being robbed.

DOG (OC): These crooks know the Gilstraps are out of town.

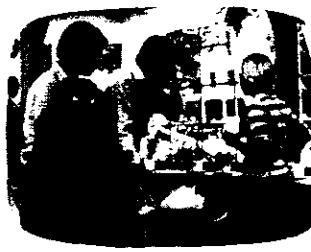
So, they're trying to move the Gilstraps – permanently.

They figure: they look lik movers, they act like movers so who's gonna know?

The Joneses. They know.
JONES BOY: Dad, aren't the Gilstraps in Toledo?

MR. JONES: I think they're being robbed. Should we call the police?
MRS. JONES: Call the police.

DOG: See, the Joneses know, if they don't tell the cops now,



the Gilstraps'll have to te them, later. (MR. JONES Hello, this is...)


DOG: Meanwhile, these fellows are eating lunch – oh, about a block away.

Hey, hot pastrami! That looks very good.

CDP: 10-4.


DOG: How 'bout that!

Know what it takes to stop a crime? Your help. And your neighbors'.


Find out more. Write to Box 6600, Rockville, Maryland. And help – ahh...


Take a bite out of crime.


Volunteer Agency: Dancer, Fitzgerald, Sample, Inc. Volunteer Coordinator: Edward W. Dooley, Citibank, N.A.

**CNCP-0160/CNCP-0130/CNCP-0110**

1179

* U.S. Government Printing Office : 1984 - 421-934/2820