

# Progress and prospects in the prevention of repeat victimization

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### Introduction

This is a *handbook* of crime prevention and community safety, so this chapter does not seek to examine the entirety of knowledge relating to repeat victimization. Rather, it takes stock of developments in research and practice relating to its prevention. It identifies problem areas and outlines prospects for future research and prevention efforts. Readers interested in documenting progress from earlier reviews are referred to *Repeat Victimization: Taking Stock* (Pease 1998, available free online), which is the definitive work covering the period prior to its publication.

Some facts relating to repeat victimisation are particularly relevant to crime prevention and are now largely accepted:

- Crime surveys find an average of 40 per cent of crimes against individuals and households are repeats against targets already victimized that year, with variation by crime type and place.<sup>21</sup>
- Repeat victimization against the same target often occurs quickly.
- The same offenders are more likely to commit repeat victimization (after learning that a target is suitable for further crime).
- Risks of repeat victimization vary by crime type and context but high rates are typically found for personal crimes including domestic violence, sexual victimization, abuse of elders and children, racial attacks, bullying, and assaults and threats.
- Amongst property crimes, high rates of repeat victimization are often found in crimes against businesses, including commercial burglary, robbery and shoplifting.

For those crime types typically referred to as 'street' or 'common' crimes that often take place in residential neighbourhoods:

- rates of repeat victimization are, on average, higher for personal crime than property crime;
- when a house is burgled, nearby neighbours experience a heightened risk. The risk declines with time and distance from the crime site;
- rates of repeat victimization are disproportionately higher in high-crime areas for the relevant property and personal crimes; and
- repeat victimization often underpins, or disproportionately contributes to, apparent geographical hotspots of crime.

All of the above points can inform decisions about where, when and how to allocate crime prevention resources. Several projects aiming to prevent repeat victimization have been evaluated and are discussed in more detail later. Some efforts have proven more effective than others, and key practical lessons have been learnt. Of particular importance are those lessons relating to implementation:

- It is not necessarily easy to identify appropriate areas or contexts in which to tackle repeat victimization (partly because some data are of limited use, and partly because some analysts find it difficult to measure repeat victimization).
- Identifying appropriate preventive measures to introduce is still difficult for many types of crime.
- Where known prevention measures exist, victims or others involved can be difficult to contact.
- When contacted, some victims (or others involved) do not want, or do not have the means, to adopt preventive measures.

Amongst other key issues is the fact that practice and evaluation to date have focused disproportionately on repeat residential burglary. There is a pressing need for a broader agenda in relation to the many types of crimes that might be fruitfully addressed by this approach. Some crime types, as diverse as sexual victimization and computer network attacks, have hardly begun to be approached via this prevention strategy.

The next section of this chapter defines repeat victimization, discusses developments in terminology and presents a preliminary typology. After a brief look at the types of crime that are repeated and the extent of repetition, the chapter examines why repeat victimization is an attractive crime prevention strategy. A section on how to prevent repeat victimization includes a summary of findings from evaluations. This facilitates the identification of 'what works' and 'what does not work' which in turns leads to an examination of specific 'tricky issues' relating to the development and implementation of prevention efforts. Towards the end of the chapter, repeat victimization is suggested to be integral to other strategies that can be used to focus prevention efforts, including targeting hotspots, repeat offenders and hot products. The conclusion suggests that the prevention of repeat victimization needs to be undertaken

in relation to far more types of crime than it has been to date. It proposes that repeat victimization should be treated not as a short-term fad but as a fundamental shift in the manner in which society understands and handles the problem of crime.

### **What is repeat victimization?**

Repeat victimization (or RV) is usually used to refer to various types of repeatedly victimized targets. Restricting the term to victims (people) only is inappropriate because a repeatedly victimized target can be a business, a vehicle, a household, a building with several households, a person, or other type of target however defined. The unit of analysis should be that which works best to promote crime prevention. So, whether repeats are counted as occurring against, say, the owner or the vehicle (if it changes ownership) or the household or its occupants (if they relocate), it should be determined by what best serves prevention of any further crime. Thus viewed, the flexibility and adaptability of the definition are not only unproblematic but can promote crime prevention.

Definitions have developed alongside research and practice. Pease (1998) proposed 'virtual repeat victimization' or virtual-repeats to refer to instances where targets are selected because offenders have already offended against similar or identical targets. For example, the same make and model of car offer similar prospects to offenders. If the car is parked in a similar location or situation, the virtual-repeat is all the more identical. Nearby households with the same layout are prone to virtual-repeats because, for the offender, there is a good chance that the same types of effort and skills are needed, and the risks and rewards are similar to those of the previous target. These virtual-repeats provide a useful angle for thinking about crime prevention: whether virtual-repeat victimization occurs due to a target's design (easy to break into), its location (in an unlit area) or its high resale value and low traceability (for example, a laptop, a portable MP3 player), can influence the choice of tactics for a preventive response.

The term 'near-repeat' was coined to refer to the victimization of targets located near to one that is victimized (Townnsley *et al.* 2003; Johnson and Bowers 2004; Johnson *et al.* 2004). For example, households close to a burglary have an increased likelihood of experiencing that crime type. The increased risk declines with distance from the initial target. Townnsley *et al.* found that burglaries are 'infectious' – that is, they can spread like a disease across an area. They found this to be particularly the case in areas with uniformly similar housing type and layout, with higher repeat rates in areas of more diverse housing type. The likely explanation is that many offenders prefer easy pickings – that is, more familiar targets where they have a better knowledge of likely risk, effort and rewards.

Johnson and Bowers have developed 'prospective hotspotting' which utilizes near-repeats as the trigger for area-based preventive interventions. They demonstrate that '[T]he risk of burglary is communicable, with properties within 400 metres of a burgled household being at a significantly elevated risk

of victimization for up to two months after an initial event.' (Johnson *et al.* 2004: 641). Johnson and Bowers suggest prospective hotspotting can increase the predictability of future crime compared with traditional hotspotting. In the popular press, the comparison was made between these crime analysis efforts and the futuristic prediction/prevention effort of a Hollywood blockbuster: 'Every police force in the country have been ordered to develop hi-tech crime maps – as seen in sci-fi blockbuster film *Minority Report* – to predict future offending... In *Minority Report*, starring Tom Cruise, criminals are caught before the crimes they commit' (Roberts 2005). Prospective hotspotting has fewer ethical problems than its fictional counterpart, and is an emerging area of RV research. In the present context, virtual-repeats and near-repeats can be viewed as specific instances from a more general typology. The defining characteristics of the virtual-repeat is the replication of the modus operandi of an earlier crime. The repetition is of a particular tactic or skill. For instance, if an offender only knows how to pick locks of a certain type or brand then this modus operandi is the defining characteristic of what might also be termed a *tactical repeat*. However, the primary characteristic of a 'near-repeat' is spatial proximity to a previous crime. Hence it is a *spatial repeat* even though it is likely to combine elements of the tactical repeat (since nearby houses are more likely to be similar in layout, guardianship and likely rewards). From these building blocks, a preliminary typology of RV is set out as Table 6.1. Each type is defined by the predominant characteristic that underpins repetition. In reality they will rarely be so distinct (that is, the types overlap with more than one involved in a repeat crime). Hence a neighbouring household may be burgled the same night because it is nearby (spatial repeat) at the opportune time (temporal repeat), has a similar layout and level of security requiring identical skills in its commission (tactical repeat). Bowers and Johnson (forthcoming) examined the modus operandi of near-repeats to find similarities suggesting they are committed by the same offenders. (Note that the type referred to here as 'repeat targets' are those traditionally framed as RV in most previous work. The typology is intended to assist the process of developing crime prevention responses that are appropriately tailored to the crime.)

### **What types of crime and disorder are repeated?**

Though it is more intuitively obvious that RV occurs for domestic violence, racial attacks and bullying, frequent repetition has been demonstrated for many types of crime and disorder. Property crimes include:

- bank robbery;
- commercial burglary;
- computer network hacking;
- computer theft;
- credit card fraud;
- criminal damage and vandalism;
- fraud and other white-collar crimes;
- graffiti;

**Table 6.1** Typology of repeat victimization

Repeat type	Characteristics	Example(s)
Target	Crime against the same target	Crime against same person, building, household, vehicle or other target however defined
Tactical (virtual)	Crimes requiring the same skill, or modus operandi, to commit. Often the same type of target	Particular type of locks picked (on different types of property); websites with particular types of security are repeatedly targeted; theft of same model of car; burglary of property with same layout
Temporal	An offending spree – temporal proximity is the defining characteristic	Multiple burglaries of different properties in the same night; theft of car, then a robbery and getaway
Spatial (near)	Crime in nearby location due to proximity and characteristics	High crime areas; hotspots
Crime type	The same target victimized by different types of crime	The same person is burgled, assaulted, robbed at different times
Offender	Victimization of same target by different offenders	A property appears attractive to different offenders; Any easy or rewarding target

*Note:*

This table owes much to typologies of displacement (Repetto 1974; Barr and Pease 1990).

- property crime against schools;
- residential burglary;
- shoplifting;
- theft of and from vehicles; and
- computer network attacks.

Personal or violent crimes and disorder where extensive RV has been shown to date include:

- common assault;
- domestic violence;
- elder abuse;
- neighbour disputes;
- robbery of shops and stores (commercial);
- sexual victimization (including rape, other physical, verbal and visual sexual victimizations);
- serious assault;

- stalking;
- child abuse (physical, sexual and emotional, including neglect as a repeated or ongoing crime of omission);
- street robbery (including 'muggings', stick-ups, robbery at cash machines); and
- threats of violence.

The aggregate information that a review essay of this type necessarily presents risks losing vital information relating to the experience of victims. Although at best a limited effort to overcome this, Box 6.1 presents a case study of domestic violence lest the reader forget the damage that RV can cause or the potential reward from its prevention.

The list of crime types above is not exhaustive, but demonstrates some crime types that prevention efforts need to tackle.<sup>2</sup> However the list is useful because, when contrasted with current evaluated practices discussed further

**Box 6.1** A survivor of domestic violence

This is a brief case history of a woman and her children who experienced repeated domestic violence for at least ten years. She received an emergency police alarm (mobile phones are now more typically used, though they remain to be formally evaluated). The case history was related by a local domestic violence agency worker. Ms Everton is a pseudonym.

*Ms Everton*

The violence against Ms Everton by her (ex-) husband has been going on for at least 10 years. She left home with her four children aged 8 to 16 and spent two nights in the open, as she did not know where to go. Eventually she spent a few weeks with her two youngest children in a refuge and she returned home when the Housing Office put the house solely in her name. The house had been damaged by her husband and furniture and clothes destroyed. Ms Everton said that her husband has said he wants to murder her. Before the installation of the police alarm he used to arrive unexpectedly. He would smash his way into the house and usually become violent. The two eldest children are terrified of him.

Since the installation of the alarm he has only called once. He knows that Ms Everton has an alarm, as the letter offering the alarm arrived whilst she was in the refuge and he was still living in the property. Ms Everton thinks this knowledge has deterred him from making any more visits. She says that the police response when she activated the alarm was excellent: two officers went after her husband who ran away, and he did not have time to do any damage. Unfortunately they did not succeed in catching him. She said the police took only about two minutes to arrive and were sympathetic and helpful.

Ms Everton believes that the alarm may have prevented her murder or his (she feels that when defending either herself or the children she could kill him). Her son, aged 13, has stabbed the father once, in an effort to stop him attacking her. Since this event the boy has become withdrawn and nervous. Ms Everton thinks that the alarm has given greater confidence to the children, as well as to herself and says that they are no longer living under quite the same amount of pressure. She carries the alarm everywhere with her.

Source: Adapted from Lloyd *et al.* (1994: 14–15).

below, it quickly becomes apparent that efforts to prevent RV are in their infancy. Relatively few crime types have been tackled by prevention efforts (or if they have, they have not been evaluated). It is also the case that prevention policy and practice to date have embodied a particular focus upon residential burglary. Possible explanations for the bias towards residential burglary are suggested in Box 6.2. What is clear is that far more attention needs to be paid to the prevention of repetition of other types of crime.

**Box 6.2** Why has repeat residential burglary usually been the focus?

Despite the fact that residential burglary has, on average, lower rates of RV than many types of crime, to date it has received the most preventive attention. The reasons for this are likely to include the following:

- The success of the influential Kirkholt Burglary Prevention Project (Forrester *et al.* 1988, 1990) which reduced burglary by 70 per cent and provoked much interest in RV.
- Burglary is a high-volume crime in recorded crime statistics and a high-profile crime in the media.
- Burglary has relatively high rates of reporting to the police (for insurance purposes). This contact can be used to initiate preventive activities by police and other agencies.
- Burglary is uncontentious as a target for prevention.
- There is a broader range of known preventive tactics against burglary compared with many crime types (including locks and bolts, alarms, grilles, tracking devices for property, property marking, local property-watch).
- Burglary may be less likely to involve difficult interpersonal negotiations.
- Burglary takes place at a known and fixed location (whereas, say, street robbery and assaults 'move around' with the victim)

### **The extent of repeat victimization**

The extent of RV will only be covered briefly. It is taken as given that RV contributes disproportionately to the overall crime count. Pease (1998: 3) found that, in one year:

- 16 per cent of the UK population experience property crime, but 2 per cent of the population experience 41 per cent of property crime
- 8 per cent of the UK population experience personal crime, but 1 per cent of the population experienced 59 per cent of personal crime.

With variation by crime type time and place, RV contributed disproportionately to all types of crimes adequately studied to date. Box 6.3 lists some key findings from the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS).

From the mid-1990s there was an exponential increase in the number of studies examining RV. By the start of 2005 they number in the hundreds and

**Box 6.3** Key findings from the International Crime Victims Survey

- Patterns of RV are remarkably similar in the 17 western industrialized countries that were studied.
- Repeated sexual incidents against women are typically the crimes most likely to be repeated, with close to half of all incidents being repeats against the same women.
- Rates of repeat personal crimes were generally higher than those of repeat property crime. Rates of repeat 'assault and theft' and robbery were particularly high.
- The ICVS findings on RV are remarkably consistent for survey sweeps covering more than a decade.

*Source:* Farrell and Bouloukos (2001).

document the extent of RV for various crime types, using various methods and in many countries and contexts. Yet whilst there is now little doubt about the contribution of RV to the overall makeup of crime, this does not necessarily mean that practical prevention efforts have made the same degree of progress.

The significance of RV continues to be revealed in relation to new and different types of crime as they are studied. For example, a recent study by Soumyo Moitra and Suresh Konda (2004), investigating network attacks on computer systems, demonstrated extensive RV. It is summarized in Box 6.4 which also makes some preliminary suggestions regarding the implications of the findings for prevention.

**Box 6.4** Network attacks on computer systems as an example of an emerging area of RV research

With the widespread use of the Internet, e-commerce, business and other networks, the security of such networks is increasingly important. Yet attacks and incidents against networks are increasingly common. Potential crimes include fraud, theft (of funds, knowledge and information, or other), account break-ins, malicious damage to users, institutions or networks.

Over a quarter (27 per cent) of the 6,684 computer sites studied experienced at least three attacks and a mean of twelve attacks each. The ten most victimized sites experienced an average of 369 attacks! Repeat attacks were far more likely to occur soon after a prior attack, particularly in the first week. Some types of attack were likely to occur more quickly than others, and repeats were more likely to be the same type of incident (perhaps suggesting the same offenders). Some network domain types experienced more rapid repeats (those ending '.edu' were fastest and those ending '.com' were slowest).

Though prevention was not the primary focus of the research, the potential is evident. Focusing network security on sites already hacked could prevent a lot of hacking (and the displacement literature suggests that, for various reasons, much

of it will not simply move to other networks). Security should be put in place quickly and certain types of domain such, as educational institutions (.edu sites), should be particularly proactive in prevention. There could exist the potential to track and detect returning hackers who, in turn, may well be the most prolific and serious hackers.

*Source:* Adapted from Moitra and Konda (2004).

The next section examines why the prevention of RV is an attractive crime prevention strategy, followed by sections examining actual prevention efforts that have taken place to date.

### **Why prevent repeat victimization?**

Seventeen reasons underpinning efforts to prevent RV are summarized in Box 6.5. The list of reasons touches on various aspects of economics, philosophy, politics and practice, reflecting both theoretical and empirical research. Setting these diverse reasons alongside each other gives clearer insight into why the prevention of RV is an attractive crime prevention strategy with much potential.

#### **Box 6.5** Seventeen reasons for policing to prevent repeat victimization

1. Preventing RV is a crime prevention activity and hence pursuant to the most fundamental of police mandates as defined since Robert Peel's original list of policing principles outlined in 1829.
2. Targeting RV is an efficient means of allocating, in time and space, scarce police resources to crime problems.
3. Preventing RV is an approach that is relevant to all crimes with a target. It has been shown to be a feature of crimes including hate crimes, domestic and commercial burglary; school crime (burglary and vandalism); bullying; sexual assault; car crime; neighbour disputes; credit card fraud and other retail sector crime; and domestic violence and child abuse. Even murder can be the repeat of attempted murder.
4. Police managers can use RV as a performance indicator (Tilley 1995; Farrell and Buckley 1999). These can range from the national to the local level.
5. Preventing RV naturally allocates resources to high-crime areas, crime hotspots and the most victimized targets (Bennett 1995; Townsley *et al.* 2000).
6. Preventing RV may inform the allocation of crime prevention to nearby targets (near-repeats) and targets with similar characteristics (virtual repeats; Pease 1998).
7. Preventing RV is a form of 'drip feeding' of prevention resources (Pease 1991). Since all crime does not occur at once, police resources need only be allocated as victimizations occur from day to day.
8. Preventing RV is even less likely to result in displacement than unfocused crime prevention efforts (Bouloukos and Farrell 1997; Chenery *et al.* 1995).

9. Offenders will be made uncertain and more generally deterred by changed circumstances at the most attractive and vulnerable targets. Hence preventing RV may be even more likely to result in a diffusion of crime control benefits than more general crime prevention.
10. Preventing RV can generate common goals and positive work between police and other agencies (such as housing, social services and victim organizations) which may in turn facilitate broader co-operation.
11. Focusing on RV empowers police officers to do something tangible and constructive to help crime victims and for policing to become more generally oriented towards victims who are arguably its core consumers (Farrell 2001).
12. Efforts to prevent RV can lead to positive feedback from victims. This is still a relatively rare reward for police in the community. It may promote good community relations.
13. Preventing RV is triggered by a crime being reported. Since victims can be asked about prior victimizations, a response does not necessarily require data analysis.
14. Preventing RV can sometimes – but not always – use off-the-shelf prevention tactics rather than requiring inventive and sometimes difficult problem-solving.
15. Preventing RV can be used to enhance the detection of serious and prolific offenders. Police officers like detecting offenders.
16. Preventing RV presents possibilities for preventing and detecting organized crime and terrorism that focuses on vulnerable and rewarding victims and targets – including protection rackets, forced prostitution, loan-sharking, repeat trafficking via certain low-risk locations, art and other high-value thefts and robberies, and terrorist bombings.
17. Targeting RV can inform thinking on repeat crimes typically perceived as ‘victimless’ where the repeatedly victimized target is the state or nation.

*Source:* Adapted from Laycock and Farrell (2003).

The list of reasons for preventing RV given in Box 6.5 is a summary of a large amount of information gleaned from research and practice. However, it also highlights some of the potential for work on RV to extend into areas that are currently largely uncharted, such as the prevention of organized crime and terrorism. These are areas where, although there may be clear potential, to our knowledge there has been little research to date.

### **How to prevent repeat victimization**

A recent review of evaluated efforts to prevent repeat residential burglary produced findings that are likely to apply to other types of crime. The review examined ten evaluations that met the criteria of being able to compare the rate of RV before and after an intervention in both a project area and a comparison group (see Farrell and Pease in press for further details). Some evaluations do not meet the evaluation quality standards for such a review or are otherwise patchy, inconsistent, opaque, or poor in various respects to the extent they

cannot be included.<sup>3</sup> The types of interventions that were introduced varied quite widely between projects. Some projects were able to contact a large proportion of victims and implement a wide range of security upgrades and other prevention measures (from mini-neighbourhood watch to focused police patrols) at and around victimized properties. Some projects offered only advice and recommendations to victims on what measures to take – that is, they did not actually assist victims with the implementation of preventive measures. This was for various reasons such as predefined project protocols or restrictions upon the funding of security equipment. Some projects had problems contacting victims so that, regardless of the nature of the preventive intervention, overall implementation rates were necessarily low. The ten evaluated anti-burglary projects are summarized in Table 6.2. Each evaluation is detailed across one row of the table. The table has six columns that detail critical information: project name and key publications or reports; the nature of the comparison area(s); summary details of the intervention and funding; implementation rates; outcome measures; and the rate of displacement. The two outcome measures detailed are the change in repeat burglary and the change in overall burglary, though both were not always available. The final column detailing displacement also gives any relevant information deemed critical to the overall assessment of the project.

The evaluated projects were not all successful in reducing crime. Depending on how a ‘project evaluation’ is defined, between half and two thirds of the projects were assessed to have prevented burglary.<sup>4</sup> This is not necessarily the whole picture, however. Perhaps the most important information to be gleaned from such review work relates to insight about best and worst practices. Such information can be used to inform (that is, to revise and improve) further research and prevention efforts. It could only be claimed that preventing RV often does not work if the practice is viewed in a vacuum whereby future revision and improvement of the practices cannot occur. In reality, research and practice take place as an iterative learning process whereby current research informs future practice. The review detailed in Table 6.2 highlighted a series of findings about projects, from which conclusions can be drawn about what works and what does not in preventing RV. Such conclusions should be used to inform future research and practice. The remainder of this section summarizes the conclusions and is followed by a section that expands upon the lessons learned with a particular focus upon various ‘tricky issues’ encountered during the developing and implementation of efforts to prevent RV.

The main conclusions of the review of residential burglary efforts are summarized in Boxes 6.6 and 6.7 where they have been adapted to apply more generally. To prevent RV, something must be changed to reduce risk against the target where crime has occurred. If nothing is changed (even if someone is trying but failing to change something) then risk is not reduced. It is also possible that something is changed but risk of further crime is still not reduced.

**Table 6.2** Ten evaluations of the prevention of repeat residential burglary

Study (main publications)	Comparison area	Intervention (and who paid?)	Implementation rates and issues	1. Reduced repeat burglary? 2. Reduced overall burglary?	1. Displacement? 2. Any other key issues?
Kirkholt (Forrester <i>et al.</i> 1989, 1990; Farrington 1992)	Remainder of police subdivision; lower burglary rate	Focused security upgrades; coin-box removal; Cocoon Neighbourhood Watch. Debt counselling for offenders; arrests (free for victims)	68% for security upgrading; close to 100% for Cocoon Watch	1. Repeat burglary fell to zero in sequence with implementation 2. Burglary fell 60% in 6 months and 75% over 3 years	1. No displacement found
Site ?R1 (Tilley 1993a)	Remainder of police subdivision	Target-hardening security measures (locks and Cocoon Watch – also at some non-burgled ‘vulnerable’ properties) (free for victims)	Cocoon Watch achieved 25% coverage (p. 7)	1. Not measured 2. A 24.3% fall relative to comparison area (but increase in absolute terms)	1. Displacement not measured
Site ?R3 (Tilley 1993a)	Remainder of police subdivision	Target-hardening security measures (free for victims)	55% of victims received target hardening	1. 40% fall in proportion relative to comparison; increased time to repeats; no drop in secured properties without prior burglary 2. 54% drop in incidence relative to comparison area	1. Displacement not measured
Huddersfield (Anderson <i>et al.</i> 1995; Chenery <i>et al.</i> 1997)	Remainder of police force area except contiguous areas to measure displacement	Graded response according to risk, with multiple tactics (some free, some part-sponsored)	‘[I]mplementation a factor in any repeats’ (p. 17)	1. Reduction in silver and gold responses suggested reduced repeat burglaries 2. A 30% drop in incidence relative to comparison area	1. No displacement found

Cambridge (Bennett and Durie 1999)	Matched non-contiguous areas plus computer-generated groups	Combined package of security, guardianship and offender-based measures (p. 19) (means-tested eligibility or purchase by victims)	Low rates for key tactics: 3.5% of victims received door locks; 9% received loan alarms (p. 36)	1. No reduction 2. No reduction	1. Not measured 2. 'The right medicine but the wrong dosage' (p. 41) suggests implementation failure
Baltimore (Weisel <i>et al.</i> 1999)	Matched non-contiguous area (p. 25)	Advice cards for victims and neighbours; security surveys, property registration, police patrols (p. 27) (free advice but no funding for security)	Few process measures; police 'distributed' cards and 'alerted' neighbours (p. 27)	1. No reduction 2. A 5.2% decrease in treatment and 24% increase in comparison (p. 91)	1. Not measured 2. No explanation for why reduction occurred
Dallas (Weisel <i>et al.</i> 1999)	Matched non-contiguous area	Advice letter to victims, security surveys, apartment managers notified of risks (p. 35) (free advice but no funding for security)	13% of victims bought alarms; 9% boarded windows; 18% locks; 27% moved/moving (p. 107)	1. No change relative to comparison group 2. Slight burglary increase relative to control (p. 91)	1. Not measured 2. Advice to victims did not lead to implementation of prevention tactics
San Diego (Weisel <i>et al.</i> 1999)	Matched non-contiguous area (p. 39)	Improved investigations; security checks and brochure for victims (pp. 40-1) (free advice but no funding for security)	Few process measures; Police personnel 'sceptical' (p. 43)	1. No reduction 2. Incidence fell 12% relative to comparison area (p. 92)	1. No explanation for why reduction occurred
Beenleigh (Budz <i>et al.</i> 2001)	Matched non-contiguous area (p. 12)	Three-tiered response for one-time victims (security advice and materials), two-	Victims more likely than controls to	1. Repeat victims fell 16% and repeat incidents 15%, and increased in	1. 'Possible' displacement within treatment area (p. 21)

Table 6.2 continued overleaf

Table 6.2 continued

Study (main publications)	Comparison area	Intervention (and who paid?)	Implementation rates and issues	1. Reduced repeat burglary? 2. Reduced overall burglary?	1. Displacement? 2. Any other key issues?
		time victims (more extensive prevention materials) and hotspots areas (security assessments, property marking ) (free to victims)	implement tactics but still unlikely overall (p. 22)	1. comparison areas 2. Burglaries increased relative to comparison group	1. Low burglary rate with prominent random and seasonal effects (p. 14)
Tee Tree Gully (Ball PR and Walters 2002; Henderson 2002)	Matched non-contiguous area; contiguous areas to measure displacement	Security audit; informal support, referral to other agencies; referral for property marking; links to neighbours (free advice to victims)	Advice at 32% of properties (p. 9) resulted in locks and alarms at 8% and 4% respectively	1. Repeats reduced relative to control (stable in absolute terms) 2. Incidence increased relative to comparison area	1. No displacement found

*Note*

Page references refer to the relevant main report  
 Source: Adapted from Farrell and Pease (in press).

**Box 6.6** What works in preventing repeat victimization?

Evaluation research to date suggests that what works to prevent RV is the following:

1. *A strong preventive mechanism.* Specific prevention tactics need to be tailored to the context and household because the nature of crime varies from one place to the next.
2. *Multiple tactics.* The currently available evidence suggests multiple tactics working together can produce a synergistic effect. Whilst there is little conclusive evidence regarding the effectiveness of particular tactics, opportunity-blocking aimed at preventing RV by the same *modus operandi* seems the most likely candidate for effectiveness.
3. *Strong implementation.* Some prevention efforts failed because the preventive mechanism was not introduced.
4. *A focus on situations with high rates of RV.* Those crimes, times and places where repeat rates are highest are clearly an appropriate focus for prevention efforts.

Source: Adapted from Farrell and Pease (2005 in press)

**Box 6.7** What doesn't work in preventing repeat victimization?

Evaluation research to date suggests that what causes some efforts to fail to prevent RV is the following:

1. *Weak or inappropriate preventive tactics* fail to prevent crime. Further, the same prevention tactic in a different context does not necessarily bring prevention if the nature of the crime problem is different.
2. *Poor implementation* fails. In particular, education or advice for victims is an indirect route which, even if well meaning, does not necessarily mean that security and other measures are implemented: victims may be unable or unwilling to spend money on crime prevention. This suggests better sources of funding for security and other equipment, and better motivation and incentives for victims, are required.
3. *Replicating tactics without attention to context* does not necessarily work. The most transferable aspects tend to be methods or strategies. For example, security upgrades to prevent repeat burglary by the *modus operandi* of the prior burglary require different tactics to be adopted as necessary.
4. *Overall impact is less where RV rates are low.* Attempting to prevent RV in circumstances where none is likely to be present cannot be said to fail *per se*, because it is a non-starter.

Source: Adapted from Farrell and Pease (in press)

Existing evaluation research suggests there is reasonable evidence that a package of prevention measures often works better than a single measure. So, for example, locks and bolts on the point of entry, a household alarm, smart property marking, encouraging neighbours to keep watch, satellite-tracking of high-value items (cars, some electrical goods), other efforts to

detect revisiting offenders, increased police patrols and other efforts seem to work better as a team. Teasing out the independent and interaction effects of multiple interventions in different contexts may prove a difficult task for future research.

### **Preventing repetition of other types of crime**

The focus on residential burglary does not mean that there has not been some effort to prevent the repetition of other types of crime. Efforts have been undertaken in relation to the prevention of repeat commercial burglary (Tilley 1993b; Taylor 1999; Bowers 2001), repeat domestic violence (Hanmer *et al.* 1999), repeat family violence (David and Taylor 1997), repeat elder abuse (Davis and Medina-Ariza 2001) and repeat sexual victimization (Breitenbecher *et al.* 1998). Other evaluations have included an element of the prevention of RV. For example, the series of domestic violence arrest experiments evaluated the impact of a single tactic (arrest) in the prevention of repeat domestic violence (see, e.g., Sherman and Berk 1984; Sherman 1992), whilst evaluations of police domestic violence units are justified in examining their effectiveness in preventing repeat calls to domestic violence incidents (Farrell and Buckley 1999).

The nature and type of efforts to prevent crime types other than residential burglary, as well as the nature of the evaluations, have varied widely. Broadly speaking, however, they have met with less success than the evaluated anti-burglary efforts detailed previously. However, the types of problems encountered by the variety of prevention efforts are remarkably similar. In particular, those projects where the intervention was the small-scale education of victims or the leafleting of households appeared to produce little change in the crime rate. Presumably nothing changed that would be likely to prevent further crime, and such issues are discussed below.

Several of the projects undertaken as part of the recent Crime Reduction Programme have contained elements that seek to prevent RV. However, there is little published information available on RV for individual projects at the time of writing, whilst that which is available appears to suggest a situation broadly similar to that represented by the previous evaluations of burglary projects shown in Table 6.2.

The apparently straightforward nature of the aspects of 'what works' in preventing RV does not chime well with the lack of success in some projects. The most common weakness of projects was in the identification of appropriate preventive tactics and in the implementation of tactics, and the next section addresses these 'tricky issues' in more detail.

### **Tricky issues in preventing repeat victimization**

The main stumbling blocks to the prevention of RV can be broken down into five distinct issues. They are presented in Box 6.8 in roughly the chronological order that they occur in the development and implementation of a crime prevention project. RV can be tricky to measure, it is sometimes tricky to know

what to do to prevent it, tricky to get victims or others to do anything, tricky to copy successful efforts from elsewhere, and tricky to sustain successful efforts and make them part of routine practice. Problems with any one of these tricky issues can lead to failure to prevent further crime (or, in the case of evaluation failure, of being found to have succeeded).

**Box 6.8** Tricky issues in the prevention of repeat victimization

Evaluated efforts to prevent RV suggest that it is tricky to:

1. measure RV and, hence, to identify it or evaluate the impact of prevention efforts (the *measurement and evaluation problem*);
2. know what to do to prevent RV (the *intervention or tactical problem*);
3. get people, including victims, to adopt preventive measures (the *implementation problem*);
4. copy prevention efforts from elsewhere because local burglary problems can vary (the *transferability and replicability problem*); and
5. maintain prevention efforts once a funded intervention project has completed its funding cycle (the *sustainability problem*).

The issues presented in Box 6.8 warrant identification and the space that is given to them here in order that they might be overcome. They are discussed in turn in more detail below.

**The measurement and evaluation problem**

It is now well known that RV can sometimes be difficult to measure. The issue remains important because measurement can directly influence the perceived need for prevention, the preventive policies and tactics developed, plus the findings of an evaluation. Measurement problems are particularly acute when recorded crime data are used, yet this is the data source most commonly utilized by police, other practitioners and researchers (because it is routinely recorded and therefore most easily and cheaply available). The main reasons that RV is difficult to measure are summarized in Box 6.9 for the key types of data that are typically utilized.

**Box 6.9** The measurement and evaluation problem for different data sources

**Recorded crime data**

*Under-reporting and recording is disproportionate*

Under-reporting and recording of crime disproportionately reduce the rate of RV found in police data. For example, if there is 50 per cent likelihood or 0.5 probability of a burglary being reported to the police then there is only 25 per cent likelihood (i.e.  $0.5 \times 0.5 = 0.25$  probability) of two burglaries being reported from the same household and, therefore, of them being represented in the police dataset (assuming, for simplicity, that the likelihood of reporting is consistent across burglaries).

*Address and name-linking issues*

Most police databases seek to trace RV by tracing the same addresses or names. This means that if the same person or place is typed-in differently, they may not be identified as repeats (so, instead of two crimes against one target, the data identify two crimes against different targets). Differences in spelling, syntax, abbreviations or even in the use of upper and lower-case letters may (depending on the IT system) serve to understate the rate of repeats and overstate the apparent rate of single-incident victimizations. Linking victims' locations and offenders is also difficult with most current police information technology (Pease 1998: 32–3).

**The time-window problem (relevant to any data type)**

This is an issue relevant to any type of data. It is most acute in datasets covering only a few months. RV occurs over time, so when any period of data is examined it will contain some crimes that are repeats of crimes that occurred before the period in question, as well as some crimes that are precursors of crimes that will occur after the time period. One year of data was found to capture, proportionately, over 40 per cent more repeats than six months of data (Farrell et al. 2002).

**Victim survey data**

The main problem with survey data is often a problem with researchers who refuse to count RV accurately. This is particularly the case with the National Crime Victimization Survey in the USA (see Box 6.10 dedicated to the NCVS). Many surveys place an artificial limit on the number of crimes that a victim is 'allowed' to report to the survey, and then often reclassify or place an upper limit on the number of crimes that are counted.

*Source:* Adapted from Farrell and Pease (1993, 2003)

Site selection error can be the result of measurement error. Some sites have received funding to prevent RV when, in reality, they may have had low rates of RV. In some instances relating to the recent Crime Reduction Programme sponsored by the Home Office, it has been suggested that some bids for funding may have claimed artificially high rates of RV in order to attract monies. Rather than suggest fraudulent activities, the lesson that might be learnt is that if measurement can be manipulated, it needs to be transparent with respect to method.

A further problem usually identified as evaluation failure can be the result of problems in the measurement of RV. If RV is poorly measured, then an evaluation is unlikely to be precise enough to detect a change in the level of RV. The result may be that some successful prevention efforts go undetected because of measurement error, although the extent to which this occurs remains unknown. Victim surveys are more likely to elicit more accurate measures of RV than recorded crime data, and should be the measurement tool of choice where feasible.

A particularly important instance of the measurement problem is manifest in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) of the USA. It is detailed in Box 6.10. The NCVS systematically under-counts RV with the result that the national crime rate in the USA is significantly misrepresented. Due to

the prominence and influence of the NCVS, it is difficult to estimate the overall impact upon crime prevention policy that is due to this counting error. Although the problem has been recognized for many years, it is hard to modify a survey such as the NCVS without making it difficult to continue the time-series of data that has resulted, and so it is possible that the problem has been swept under the carpet. A recent study by Mike Planty (2004) suggests that, if estimates by victims of their actual annual victimization rate were to be included in the NCVS crime counts, the violent crime rate in the USA would treble!

**Box 6.10** RV in the USA – a conspiracy of silence?

The National Crime Survey is the main annual survey of crime in the USA. It has long been known grossly to under-represent RV – and, thereby, crime in the USA overall. However, little has been done to address the problem:

- As far back as 1980, Albert Reiss of Yale University noted that the inclusion of series incidents in the national crime count would increase the number of crimes by 18 per cent. Since then, Reiss's words and their implications have been largely ignored.
- Most NCVS-based reports continue to exclude RV where the person says the crimes were very similar and occurred in a series. As a result, most US government crime reports ignore the experiences of these repeat victims, silencing their voices and systematically under-counting crime in the USA.
- The NCVS uses a six-month recall period which is a short window of time to measure RV. Different methodologies find that a six-month recall period captures around 40 per cent less RV than a one-year recall period (Farrell and Sousa 1997; Farrell *et al.* 2002).
- A major recent piece of work concludes that the survey is poor at measuring RV (Ybarra and Lohr 2002).
- The International Crime Victims Survey find similar rates of RV in the United States to those found in other countries (Farrell *et al.* forthcoming).
- Dr Michael Planty (2004) examined the impact of the exclusion from NCVS reports. He found that, on average, *including repeat victimisation as RV reported by victims produced a 313 per cent increase for all violent victimizations in the USA between 1993 and 2002. Put another way, the current counting rules which exclude RV serve to exclude 79 per cent of all violent victimizations!*

**The intervention problem**

What prevention measures should be put in place to prevent RV? One reason burglary has been the focus of much RV research to date is probably because there is a fairly broad repertoire of existing prevention tactics. These include locks and bolts and other forms of target-hardening security, movement detectors and other alarms, police patrols, tracking systems for high-cost

targets, CCTV and other measures. Securing the target with locks and bolts, with extra measures to prevent entry to premises by the same modus operandi, may appear relatively straightforward. In contrast, however, the existing repertoire to prevent many types of personal crime appears relatively limited. Improvements have been made in the repertoire of tactics to tackle some types of crime including domestic violence, bullying, assaults and disorder in pubs and clubs, some forms of commercial burglary and robbery, and shoplifting. However, generally speaking, the pool of techniques is less well known and more difficult to implement than those for burglary (if, say, they involve changes to the design, layout or working practices of a store or business). For some types of crime that are frequently repeated, such as sexual victimization of women, and the abuse of children and elders, the development of prevention tactics remains in its early stages. Further research into RV may assist and promote the development of such prevention tactics. However, it is arguable that the strategy is also hostage to the need to expand further the repertoire of prevention tactics available for different crime types.

### ***The implementation problem***

Knowing what to do and where to go is all well and good. Getting people actually to do something is a different issue. Ensuring that an appropriate alarm or CCTV is purchased, correctly sited and adequately monitored is not always straightforward. Ensuring that victims buy and install secure locks can be difficult in areas without public funding for equipment and labour. Sometimes implementation problems occur due to communication problems between agencies and victims. Some efforts to prevent repeat burglaries have failed to make a substantive contact with many of the victims (that is, anything more substantial than sending them a letter). In Box 6.11, implementation problems are split into those relating to responders (agency officials) and victims.

#### **Box 6.11** The implementation problem

Evaluation research to date has highlighted a number of implementation issues which are here separated into those relating to responders (police or other agencies) and those relating to victims or owners/managers of targets.

Responder implementation problems:

1. Poorly formulated policy guidance and protocols. This means agency workers on the ground do not know what to do.
2. Poorly supervised protocols that are allowed to slip – so little or no effort is made to contact victims.
3. Police try but fail to contact victims. Repeated calls, letters and even visits do not necessarily result in contact.
4. Contact is made, but only advice is given. The result is that no real preventive intervention occurs.

## Victim/target implementation problems:

1. Victims do not know what action to take to prevent further crime.
2. Victims are unwilling to take action. This may occur if they do not trust the police, or if they do not think it is worth the effort or expense.
3. Victims sometimes cannot afford to take recommended preventive action. Alarms and other security hardware can be expensive for low-income households.
4. Businesses do not realize that it may be cost-efficient to invest in security upgrades. It may appear that insurance eliminates the need for prevention even if this is rarely the case.

To date, however, there is little research examining which type of implementation problem is most prevalent. This may be a prerequisite to tackling implementation problems. An additional side of implementation that is rarely considered is unrecognized implementation. In the wake of a crime, there are some victims who will take action to reduce future risk even if they do not receive advice from an outside agency. In such instances, RV may be less likely to occur. Such independent efforts were recognized in the research of Weisel *et al.* (1999) in the USA but may warrant further examination to determine their extent and importance as well as those factors that make some actors more likely to undertake prevention than others. More generally, the identification of factors that facilitate or generate implementation may prove a fruitful line of inquiry for research.

### ***The transferability and replicability problem***

In the 1980s, the highly successful Kirkholt Burglary Project eliminated repeat burglaries in an area of public housing, and reduced overall burglary by 70 per cent (see Forrester *et al.* 1988, 1990; Pease 1991; Farrington 1992). It catalysed research on RV and inspired several efforts to replicate its success. Yet the success proved somewhat elusive. This was because the prevention tactics adopted in Kirkholt were developed to tackle the particular burglary problem that existed in Kirkholt. Other areas had burglary problems with different characteristics. For example, properties vary between areas, so the choice of target, means of entry and type of property stolen can vary widely (amongst other factors). Subsequent replications, and a particular theme of Tilley's work (since Tilley 1993a), has been that prevention needs to cut the cloth to match the coat, and that tailor-made prevention can require much time and skill.

Although some prevention tactics are not transferable, others may be. Clearly, those tactics that can be most easily and widely replicated in different circumstances are highly desirable. Those prevention tactics that are likely to prove unique to a particular area may be the most difficult to identify and introduce because of the level of expertise required. Hence in practice there is a trade-off between the relative ease of adopting proven tactics that are highly replicable (for instance, secure doors and window frames to reduce risk of repeat burglary), and the more arduous task of undertaking crime analysis to identify problem-specific tactics that address issues in a local context.

Efforts to prevent RV are often, and quite rightly, combined with other strategic crime prevention efforts. Hence, for example, a burglary prevention

project may have many components of which one is to aim to prevent RV. From the perspective of building a knowledge base this can introduce difficulties, as teasing out the contributions of different prevention components can be difficult. Subsequently, identifying those components that worked best in order that they might hopefully be adopted elsewhere is a difficult task.

Whilst the replication of specific tactics may appear efficient, is it not always appropriate. The most replicable aspect of many successful projects appears to be their analytical or methodological approach. This is typically an action research, crime analysis, targeted policing or problem-solving approach. Such approaches encounter a range of issues relating to the identification of appropriate tactics which are outside the scope of this chapter. Suffice to say that although there have been significant steps towards providing problem-solving tools to practitioners, such as Clarke and Eck's guide to *Become a Problem-Solving Crime Analyst in 55 Small Steps* (Clarke and Eck 2003), there is still a long way to go. However, the identification of tactics is in large part an issue which, whilst critical to efforts to prevent RV, is a more general issue relating to crime prevention.

### ***The sustainability problem***

This is arguably a problem that is applicable to crime prevention generally rather than specific to the prevention of RV. Many crime prevention evaluations or development projects receive funding from local or central government. The funding is typically for a fixed period of time in which the crime prevention effort is developed, implemented and evaluated. The usual scenario is that funding then ceases which, in turn, means that prevention efforts cease.

The development of routine practices, based on written protocols for police and other agencies that are then enforced, is a key effort to overcome this problem. The development and institutionalisation of performance indicators based on RV is another effort to ensure longevity. However, even written police policies may sometimes appear to pay only lip-service to the issue. A survey of UK police forces in 2000 found that, although all of them had written policies to prevent RV there was relatively little evidence of thorough implementation of prevention efforts. Some crime prevention officers who responded to the survey appeared unable to distinguish tactics to prevent repeat victimization from more general crime prevention tactics (Farrell *et al.* 2000). More generally, sustaining momentum among high-level government policy-makers, police chiefs and others can be difficult with changes in staff and operational priorities in addition to competing political and other demands.

### ***Concluding note on the tricky issues***

Some efforts to prevent RV, most notably residential burglary, have been located in areas with few repeats, whilst others have become mired in implementation problems. Despite government-backed national policies and performance indicators, some police policies and protocols appear to pay only lip-service to the problem. Contacting victims has sometimes proven difficult and, when contact is made, there are instances of inadequate or inappropriate advice, equipment or funding. Knowing what to do to prevent crime is not always

obvious. Victims, for their part, have sometimes been sceptical, either unable or unwilling to take crime prevention advice or adopt crime prevention security or other prevention tactics. Some victims appear to prefer to run the gauntlet whilst others cannot afford to do otherwise. Research on the prevention of RV needs to continue to adopt innovative approaches to address these issues as new types of crime are addressed.

### **Allocating crime prevention effort using a range of indicators**

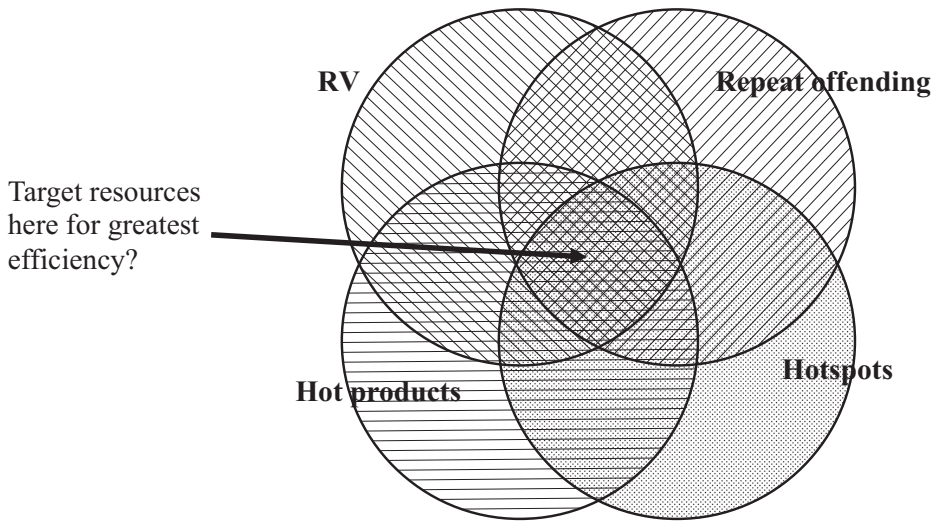
RV research and practice can be located within a more general picture of efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation of crime prevention resources. RV sits alongside efforts to target hotspots, hot products and repeat offenders as a means of allocating society's limited crime control resources.

Crime is grossly unevenly distributed in almost every dimension from which it is approached. This includes the following:

- *Hot products* – consumer products that are frequently stolen.
- *Hotspots* – geographical areas of varying size where crime is located.
- *RV* – particular people, places, vehicles or other targets which experience a disproportionate amount of crime.
- *Prolific offenders* – those repeat offenders who commit a disproportionate amount of crime.

Figure 6.1 is a crude hypothetical illustration showing the overlap between the concepts of RV, repeat offending, hotspots and hot products. The relative size of each phenomenon and the extent of the overlaps are not intended to be to scale. Whilst each of the four foci can be used to allocate prevention resources, there is a case to be made that resource allocation is even more efficient at the points of overlap. A complementary interpretation is that RV can be used to provide inroads into the other three phenomena. RV allocates resources to hotspots and can be used as a means of detecting prolific offenders. Since insurance means hot products are often replaced in the same location, targeting RV may provide a natural means of identifying and preventing the theft of hot products. The four foci identified here should ideally be viewed as complementary tools for focusing crime prevention and detection resources, but a case can be made for the use of RV as a spearhead. It has been argued elsewhere RV might also be used as a natural spearhead for victim-oriented policing (Farrell 2001) – that is, policing which has more of an overall focus upon the needs and rights of crime victims.

Crime control policy and strategies are slowly adapting to reflect the fact that crime is concentrated in various dimensions. Repeat offenders are the target of focused detection, special sentencing considerations, in-prison behavioural and other treatments regimes, and intensive probationary supervision. Hot products are gradually achieving attention from product designers as well as from legislators who realize that crime-free product design may pre-empt much crime. Hotspots draw police and other resources like moths to the



**Figure 6.1** Overlap between RV, hotspots, repeat offending and hot products

*Note:* Figure not to scale

flame, and repeatedly victimized targets receive post-victimization advice and assistance to avoid further crime. Which of these various strategies is the most cost-effective is probably a moot question. Specific strategies or combinations of strategies will be more appropriate at particular times and locations, and must evolve and adapt to meet the constantly changing shape of crime.

## Conclusions

Little or no efforts to prevent RV have been evaluated for most types of crime. This is the most glaring conclusion of this chapter. Much practice and research needs to be developed. Those efforts which have taken place to date have disproportionately focused on residential burglary and, in some instances, have been poorly developed or poorly implemented. Yet if the wrong areas are identified, if few victims are contacted or if few appropriate prevention measures are introduced, it is hardly surprising that some efforts do not succeed in preventing crime. Such lessons are emerging from the preliminary knowledge base relating to the prevention of RV.

By 2005 there are signs that the Home Office is beginning to throttle back on research and development relating to RV. In some recent policy-related debates and documents, RV is conspicuous by its absence. Some of this shift in emphasis may be attributed to the lack of institutional memory which occurs when key personnel change post. Perhaps some of it is due to political whim. Perhaps some of it is due to a greater emphasis on competing crime control strategies (even though most should be viewed as complementary). Perhaps some ignorant policy-makers think that RV can be handled as a fad rather than as a fundamental revision to the manner in which society understands and deals with crime. Such change – that is, if it is true that there

is reduced pressure from government researchers to pursue RV strategies – is clearly not evidence based. Whilst it is clear that there are implementation issues to overcome, this is a normal step in the learning process, and should not be allowed to hinder the development of further new and innovative research-driven practices to prevent RV. Such prevention efforts will be for the betterment of crime victims.

### Selected further reading

Overviews of repeat victimization are provided in Farrell and Pease (1993) and Pease (1998). A bibliography of repeat victimization studies (albeit now somewhat dated) is given on the International Victimology website at <http://www.victimology.nl/onlpub/otherdocs/rv-bibliography.pdf>. In addition, a range of PDF-downloadable publications on repeat victimization is available on the above author's websites via the Midlands Centre for Criminology and Criminal Justice at Loughborough University.

### Notes

1. This is a conservative estimate based on crime types found in 17 countries from the International Crime Victims Survey (Farrell and Bouloukos 2001). This average includes repeats across as well as within crime types.
2. The lists do not use legal categories, and it is clear that some of our 'types' are overlapping (for example, assault and domestic violence) and imperfect (for example 'sexual victimization' can include a further extensive list of crimes against adults and minors that is only hinted at here – see, e.g. Fisher *et al.* 2000).
3. See Tim Hope's evaluation work on the Reducing Burglary Initiative for a recent example (Hope 2004).
4. Table 6.2 lists ten evaluations of which five prevented burglary according to the outcome measures. However, the three evaluations in Baltimore, Dallas and San Diego were all part of a single project run by the Police Executive Research Forum (Weisel *et al.* 1999). The three sites had similar characteristics and themes and resulted in one main evaluation report. Hence the case could be made that they should count as a single evaluation, in which case, five of eight or 62.5 per cent of projects would be deemed to have prevented crime. In contrast, Tilley's (1993a) report contains three evaluations of projects undertaken separately.

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