

## **UMD NCVS Research Forum, Session 1: Roundtable Discussion—Webinar Transcript**

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DR. MIN XIE: Good morning everyone. Welcome to the University of Maryland, NCVS Research Forum. I'm Min Xie. I'm a professor at the University of Maryland, the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice and my co-host, who's also a Moderator for this session, Dr. Jim Lynch, who is also a professor in the same department. And welcome to today's research forum. Before we start the meeting, I would like to provide some notes for today's session. We encourage participants to use chat to submit your questions. And even though there are many ways to ask questions on Zoom, because we have a lot of people here, it's the easiest if you write down your questions and submit through chat. Then my research assistant, who's a doctoral student in the University of Maryland, Bailey, who will help us compile all the questions, so we can get to those questions later. And then the PowerPoint slides and also a recording of the session today will be posted later and so you can review the materials after we conclude all three sessions for the research forum. And I wanted to briefly talk about today's agenda. So Jim and I will provide some opening remarks. This is to help you understand the goal for today's session. And after that, we will introduce the panel, so you will get a chance to meet the panelists. And then we have compiled questions for today's discussion and we'll have two sections for the discussion. The first one is ask the panelists to provide individual remarks, so we'll go around the group, each of them will have like two minutes to address each question. And then after that, we will have a group discussion which is free format, meaning that to a way, invite panelists to share their opinions and comment on each person's suggestions, which should be fun that we can see how they interact with one another. And then after that, we'll have a Q&A session and then the panelists, and also the moderators can provide some closing remarks for today's session. All right. So, again, welcome to today's session. As you are aware, we have designed three sessions for the NCVS Research Forum. The goal is to increase the use of NCVS data for research and analytical purposes. And today's session is a roundtable discussion, which we hope that to invite these well-known-- world-known scholars to the session, which will inspire researchers to see the advantages of the NCVS and how the data might be used to help you address problems of crime and victimization. Right, we hope the discussion will provide you with some ideas of how you might use the survey and ideas of how you can use related data and theory to further your research agenda. So that's what we're trying to accomplish today. And then, we have session two which is tomorrow, which will focus on specific examples of research that have been conducted by BJS statisticians and also external researchers. And these are examples of research and showing the creative use of the NCVS, so that would be very interesting discussion. And then, next week, session three, which is on May 4th, by the way, that's a very important day for Star War fans. We'll have a hands-on workshop, showing you how to use the NCVS data, how to manipulate the files, and how to use weights and so on. And that can be very important for young scholars who are trying to learn how to use the NCVS. So three sessions and I hope you will be able to participate in all of them. And then we also have recordings

that you can use afterwards. And so now, Jim, could you provide some very brief note about what NCVS is and also people on this panel? Thank you.

DR. JAMES P. LYNCH: I want to start by saying that that this grew out of a conversation that Min and me were having about why aren't students using the NCVS more. And so we determined that it's--they just couldn't get their arms around the elephant. And so, part of the logic behind these three sessions is to give people a way to relate to this massive amount of data that's sitting there year after year after year. And I'm astounded why people just aren't all over it. And so, let's hope that we can give them some kind of foothold that they can begin to explore this database the way you all. So I think that--let me say something about the NCVS. So I think that there may be people online who don't know anything about it. That's the longest running continuous victimization survey in the world. I think there's some guy in Finland named Aroma, who says--who claims that thing, but I don't think he's right. But anyway, it's a unique in that regard. And I think it has a--it's focused--it started out looking at street crimes, basically like the index crimes and FBI collects data, and plus assault, so that was the scope of it. But it's grown significantly, especially in the recent past to include other kinds of crime like hate crime and stalking, which you'll see later on in the presentation. So it has really expanded with the times. And I think that's another advantage of this particular survey. And so, it's organized in a way where you have screening interview where you ask respondents to report on their crime experience in the last six months. And then, that's followed up by an incident form, which collects a lot of detailed information about that event and how people responded to that event. So it's a rotating panel design so that people are admitted into the sample for three and a half years. And they're asked about their victimization experience in six months intervals. So this gives the survey some very unique aspects. That is to say, that it gives you some long--it's not a perfect longitudinal file, but it gives you some longitudinal data. And it interviews everybody in the household 12 years of age and older. And so, that you have the unique feature of having more than one person per household, which is a tremendous advantage I think. And so, that's the basic sort of organization of the survey. And I think that's some of the unique features of the survey that make it useful for research purposes. And so, I think that the data are available generally from BJS in the form of reports and spreadsheets, but also the datasets are available. Some of these datasets which have added considerably to the base data by linking it over time, by taking the micro data, and Janet, and has done with over a long time series to look at narratives, Lynn Addington has, to add context to the data. So all these kinds of unique features are available and some of the datasets at ICPSR and from BJS website itself. So I think that much of this will be explained in much greater detail in the third session of this forum. So I think that in this particular session I'm so thrilled that nobody said no. And, you know, this is an assemblage of the people that I respect most in terms of how they have used these data, you know. In some cases they use the data to look at criminal victimization, and risk, and for unique type. And I think, so, repeat victimization, Machi Tseloni has done a tremendous amount as well as other folks who have done things on repeat victimization. I think that people have also used it, this group has used it, in very creative ways where they've extended the value of the data by linking it over time and linking it to other

datasets. So Eric and Min have done some work where they've taken aerial data from the census and attach to the survey and been able to speak to immigration and other issues that wouldn't be able to be done without that creative linkage. Lynn has used the structured--sort of structured the narratives that the interviewers collect, which is another fairly unique feature of this survey. And so, this group is distinctive, I think, because it has brought these data to bear on some important substantive issues, but they've also made very creative use of the unique features of the survey. And so we're hoping that this will give other people ideas about not only how to use the data for its obvious purposes, but also how to use these data in very creative ways that were not initially intended. So I'm thrilled to get this group all in one place even if we can't be in person. So this is--I'm looking forward to this. I think before we get into the panel, I'd like to say something that this is--we have to have a disclaimer, this is not a BJS function, so this is--this is a labor of love. We just explained to you why we got interested in it, why we pulled you all together. And this is not a BJS event. So anything that these crazy people say is not BJS policy, so we should be clear about that. The only thing that would be BJS statements are those that are authorized, made by BJS. And so I want to--they've been very helpful in putting this together and especially in the second session and the third session they've been very helpful. I want to acknowledge that. And I want to hold them harmless for any crazy comments that we make during the course of this event. So I think without further ado, we should probably go to introduction of panel members.

DR. MIN XIE: Okay, thank you, Jim. Yes, I also would like to thank the support of the BJS, but we do have to make it clear that all the statements made today is not official policy of the BJS. Okay. Now, it's the exciting time to meet the panelists. Truthfully, I think people on this panel need no introduction, but we do invite them to say their name and affiliation and also use one sentence just to say very briefly about their interest in this panel. And their names are listed here alphabetically. And that's how I will invite them to introduce themselves. The first person is Dr. Lynn Addington.

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: Great. Thanks, Min. Hi, everyone. It's wonderful to be with you today. My name is Lynn Addington. I am a professor at American University. Actually, I am celebrating 20 years since I defended my dissertation with NCVS data. So--and I've actually been working with NCVS once I saw about it for almost 25 years, so this is kind of my--I don't have children, so the NCVS are my child, so I look forward to being with everyone today.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. And Eric Baumer.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Yeah. Hi, thanks. It's great to see so many people here. I'm a professor of Sociology and Criminology at Penn State University. My main interests are in spatial and temporal variation and behavior. And so the NCVS I learned early on is a pretty cool source for that. So I've been involved mainly as an active researcher and I've also collaborated with BJS on preparing some area identified NCVS files.

DR. MIN XIE: Great. David Cantor.

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Hello, pleasure to be here. I work at Westat. I'm a vice president in the Statistical and Data Science Unit. And I'm probably maybe besides Colin, I'm probably the most senior person on this panel. I'm probably the only person who has been involved in both of the redesigns of the NCVS. And I've worked with the survey quite a lot from a substantive point of view and a methodological, so looking forward to the conversation.

DR. MIN XIE: Okay. Next is Lynn Langton.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: Hi, everyone. Thanks for inviting me to be here today. I am a research criminologist at RTI International. But prior to joining RTI, I spent about nine years at BJS working on the NCVS and as chief of the Victimizations Statistics Unit at BJS, so I know firsthand how valuable and important the survey is. And this is a great group of panelists, so I'm really interested to hear all of the ideas today.

DR. MIN XIE: Next, Janet Lauriten.

DR. JANET LAURITEN: Hi, I'm Janet Lauriten. I'm a professor at the University of Missouri in St. Louis. I've used the data both as an academic researcher starting about 25 years ago when I was first able to access information that allowed spatial linkages, linkage to spatial data with the NCVS. And I've also done some work with BJS on other topics related to victimization, and methodology, and measurement. I'm very excited to be here, I want to encourage many people to use the data.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Colin Loftin.

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: Hello, everyone. I know I pronounced it Colin [COE-lin], not Colin [Cah-lin], but that's because I was named after somebody who pronounced it Colin. I'm a professor in School of Criminal Justice at the University of Albany. And I also work with colleagues in the violence research group. I've been a cheerleader for the National Crime Victimization Survey for a long time. And it started, I won't tell you how long but David's right, I probably have been around the survey longer than most of the group. But I attended a workshop where the instructors were people like Al Reiss and Al Biderman. And they inspired me to get involved in the National Crime Victimization Survey, so I've been doing it ever since.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Mike Planty.

DR. MIKE PLANTY: Hey, everyone, nice to be here. Great to see all these faces I haven't seen in a few years. Yeah, I'm Mike Planty the enter director at RTI International in the Applied Justice Research Center. I'm also a former BJSer statistician, first job out of graduate school. I was introduced to the NCVS with Jim Lynch at American

University and have been using it for 25 years to study all kinds of different problems and use it for looking at a whole bunch of different social issues. Thanks.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Machi Tseloni. Hey, Machi, are you there? Yeah, I saw her earlier. Hopefully, she will circle back. And Jianhua Xu.

DR. JIANHUA XU: Thank you, Min, for inviting me. I can't think of why I'm invited for this as a panel, probably I'm the only one who have never uses an NCVS data. And basically I'm a qualitative sociology scholar. I'm managing--I'm from Macau University, part of China. I have been using--I'm interested in how the data is produced rather than using the data itself. So I have done some research about the construction of the crime rate, crime data in China. So probably that is the only reason I can think of why I'm invited to the panel. Thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah, the--yeah, the panel is interested in victim surveys or all kinds of survey methodology. It doesn't have to be narrowly defined as NCVS. So thank you for being here. Just let me quickly make sure, is Machi back? Oh, sorry. Because she's from the UK and she has been involved in the victimization research in using the UK data extensively. That's another example of international scholars participating in this very important research area. So hopefully we'll get her back.

DR. MIKE PLANTY: She's on the screen, ma'am. She just having audio problems.

DR. MIN XIE: Oh, I'm so sorry.

DR. MIKE PLANTY: Right.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah.

DR. MIKE PLANTY: I just waved her.

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Yeah.

DR. MIN XIE: So David, are you suggesting we wait or not sure? Well, we'll have Machi to participate in the discussion, so we'll have a chance. All right. So now we're in the session where we have questions designed for the panelists, and I will read out each question and then each person will have about two minutes. And I will police the time and too bad where we don't have music to stop people, but let's see how this works. So the first question, some of you already addressed it. So there are two questions for--in this particular question is, how did you first get involved in victimization surveys, either thorough the graduate school studies, dissertation, ICPSR, or through work? And then what was the most important or fun substantive issues you investigated with victim survey data? All right, again, I'll go through the order here, so Lynn Addington?

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: Oh, actually, couldn't we reverse it? Because I'm going to go first all the time and I really, I...

DR. MIN XIE: Oh, okay. All right.

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: I'd like to start after somebody else. Okay. Thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Okay, sure. Eric. Eric Baumer?

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Sure. Yeah. Well, I became first involved with the NCVS and that was my first forte into victimization research in general as a second-year assistant professor, but I think the seeds were planted several years before that. You know, and so one of the early mentors I had was Janet Lauritsen and so, you know, seeing, I think somebody with such a great research reputation, work with the data and then, you know, care about things like the validity and reliability of crime statistics was impactful. And then eventually, though, as an assistant professor, you're looking for projects. And so Janet Lauritsen, Al Blumstein, and others, with the National Consortium on Violence Research had negotiated access to the area identified NCVS and so that was my first experience working with the data. In terms of what was the most important or fun substantive issue, it is kind of difficult to say, because there are a couple people on the-- on the screen here and I wouldn't want to disappoint them. But I think probably my first experience, you know, because it was such a learning experience since it was challenging, but it really just made me appreciate how rich the data were and are and so I'll go with that. And that was a study of how community context influences victim crime reporting, so I'll say that was both, you know, and certainly my most meaningful to me at the time.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Yeah.

DR. MIN XIE: David?

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Sure. So my experience with the NCVS starts all the way back in graduate school. I was working with Ken Land, Larry Cohen, Marcus Felson, when they were developing all their great opportunity theories and so when they--Land walks into the room and says, "You know, there's this NCVS up at Michigan, go figure out how to use it. We need it." So, I spent most of my graduate school career figuring it out and we ended up publishing a number of papers. I co-authored a number of papers on opportunity theories, how socio-demographics are related to victim risk using a lot of the work that they had done, as well as in the lines work, but we sort of applied it in a multivariate framework. We published three or four papers on that and, of course, I was the research assistant grunt who did all the runs for the more well cited papers by those authors. Since then, I've been doing quite a bit of work on the methodology and supporting the development and the methodology of the survey. As I mentioned before,

I've worked on the '92 redesign with Jim. And we published a number of papers and chapters related to how the different survey conditions affect, how people report victimization, and issues related to things like panel conditioning, proxy reporting, and those sorts of things.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Lynn Langton?

DR. LYNN LANGTON: Yeah, so I got involved with the NCVS through my employment at BJS. I did not have a lot of exposure to victim surveys in grad school. I focused primarily on white collar crime and corporate crime at that point. And then when I first started working at BJS, I was working primarily on law enforcement and [INDISTINCT] after a couple years at BJS, I pretty quickly realized that the NCVS is where the action is. It's really the flag survey for BJS and so I was able to make the leap over to work in the NCVS unit. And actually, one of the first things I worked on was the identity theft supplement which was new at that point in time. So that was really exciting to be able to work on that really, from the beginning and to help BJS kind of branch into that new area, take the NCVS into a new direction. In terms of the most important substantive issue, I mean, I agree that this is a really important, really difficult question because there's so many important topics that the survey covers, and so much important research. But I would say that in terms of importance, I think, you know, one of the areas that I've worked on with NCVS that's up there at the top of the list is hate crime, because I would say it's a crime that has such huge impacts, not just on victims themselves, but also on their communities. And so understanding the level and nature of hate crime is really critical. And this is one area where police data are particularly bad. You have the--you have the hidden figure of crime due to victims not reporting to the police, but even when victims are reporting often the police aren't classifying incidents as hate crimes for a variety of reasons. So we know we don't have good data on the law enforcement side on hate crime and so the NCVS is really important for shedding light on that topic. So I would put that at the top. And then if I can just say one more that I think is more on the fun side, not that crime is ever really fun, but another really exciting thing, a fun thing that I worked on was developing a supplement to measure financial fraud with the NCVS. And I think that was really interesting and exciting, because there's just this perception that there's so much fraud out there. But the truth is what we learned in the development of that supplement is that the term fraud is thrown around a lot to describe a lot of things that are bad business practices or, you know, a case of under-cheesed pizza. And when you really strip away and get down to the nuts and bolts of what is actually fraud, we found that it wasn't as prevalent as some estimates might lead you to believe. So that's where measurement was really important. Not to say that it's not still a serious crime for people who experience it, but that was interesting.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Janet?

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: Thanks. So I first became involved in victim surveys in graduate school when I was working with Robert Sampson on the British crime survey

data. And I then became involved in other forms of victim survey research through a postdoc that I had with NIJ and with Sampson and Laub on using youth surveys to measure victimization. It wasn't until '95 or--I've been actually tenured that I was able to start working with the NCVS. And as Eric mentioned that was because we were part of a consortium in which we were allowed access to the census confidential files known as the area identified, so that we could separate the contribution of contextual factors versus socio-demographic individual and household factors on risk, so I think that was the most important thing that I did. I became, like Eric, hooked on the capacity of the data, and it was overwhelming and it seemed like a real challenge. I learned a lot from everyone who worked with me on that including Eric but also Colin Loftin and Brian Wiersema were there and provided much valuable advice. It was not a fast process. It was a very challenging process because we couldn't work with it on our own computers, we had to fly to Pittsburgh to do that. So it required a unique set of time management skills and planning. I think that was probably the most important thing because it made me appreciate the methodological history and development and the ways in which national survey data were created, so I became then very interested in methodological history of the survey and recognized through a fellowship with BJS that they had, at BJS, more interesting work buried in their file cabinets than I had been reading the journals. So I was much appreciative of their open discussions of all these issues, and I appreciated the time that they gave me to learn all that stuff. And so I would say that was my most important because from then on I've been with the data.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you, Colin Loftin?

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: I already told you how I got involved, originally. So I'll cut quickly to an interesting project, it's something that I did with my colleagues in the Violence Research Group, David McDowell, and Brian Wiersma, so on the defensive use of guns and victimization. And the context is that the existing estimates of how prevalent use of a gun was and defending oneself in a crime victimization situation are based on whatever data was available and they figuratively were poorly worded surveys with not very good samples. And we realized that the National Crime Victimization Survey was ideal for estimating these kinds of incidents. So we use the National Crime Victimization Survey to determine how many cases where a person used a gun — there are a number of items on defense, but one of them involves the use of a gun. And because they're related to a specific incident, they're ideal, because the other estimates tend to just say things like, "Have you ever used a gun to defend yourself?" And that's open to all kinds of interpretations. So, if you carry a gun in your car to protect yourself, but you never use it, that's still using a gun to protect yourself. But the crime survey links it to a specific incident and said, "Okay, did you use a gun in this particular incident?" So we use a crime survey to do those national estimates and it turned out that they're about a fourth of the size of the estimates based on the more general question. And it turns out that they're very small, less than a 10th of a percent of cases depending on whether you're talking about violent victimization or victimization in general. But yeah, that's probably the most interesting thing I've done with the survey.



DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Mike Planty?

DR. MIKE PLANTY: Yeah, thanks. Yeah, like I said, I started in graduate school with Jim Lynch and he introduced me to the NCS and the NCVS through hours of late night coding that were really fun. But I think to two streams of research that Jim was working on, and that I think are still relevant today, one was comparing crime--police-based administrator records to the victim survey, to try to make sense of why these things might diverge, and how they could complement one another. And as we move into the NIBRS era, right? This is going to be even more important to try to assemble because we have so few measures of crime for the nation and to see these as competing rather than complementary, I think it's something that's still, you know, a big conversation to have today. But I think one of the really interesting alliance of researchers around repeat victimization, the same pattern that we see throughout crime is that a small portion of victims can account for a disproportionate amount of the overall crime rate and trying to understand those victims presented both technical and substantive issues that remain today are the quintessential measurement of a crime, right? Somebody comes up to you, punches you then walks away. And these discrete events don't fit for repeat victims often. Domestic violence, where does the threat--where does the violence begin? And where does it end? And so it presents both methodological and substantive issues that were really challenging, interesting, and I think really important to work out. And I think today, even when we think about this notion of high flyers, and people revisiting police, calling the police multiple times, or using victim services over and over and to really try to understand their problem, well, there's so few data systems that you can leverage to understand that and the NCVS is one that's primed for those questions. Police data are often heavily focused on the offender, less so on the victim. And so it's often a challenge or impossible to use those data to answer these really important questions around victimization risk and repeat victimization. Thanks.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you, Machi Tseloni?

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Hello, can you hear me or see me?

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah, we can hear you.

DR. MIKE PLANTY: Yeah.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Oh, really? Thank you. All right. Right. Apologies, you know, three computers later, here I am, really excited, and thrilled to be joining this forum, just to back a bit, I'm Machi Tseloni, I'm Professor of Quantitative Criminology at Nottingham Trent University for the last 15 years. And I [INDISTINCT] at the University of Maryland, and I'm very well acquainted with the work of all people and know most of the people in the firm. So thank you so much. And I started being involved with crime surveys back in 1990 when I did my PhD, because I was an economist aspiring to do more than solving integral equations and what you do something socially relevant with my [INDISTINCT] skills and there came the British Crime Survey back then. And then in

1996, I joined Professor James Lynch at the ICPSR summer school at the University of Michigan and that's how I got acquainted with NCVS and then got a small [INDISTINCT] association grant to use NCVS to study repeat victimization. So what was the most important first issue? It's repeat victimization, but it's also all the contextual factors. So in my PhD, I looked at crime counts rather than the victim, non-victim dichotomy and I use specific modeling for that. And then via the crime counts then came acquainted with crime concentration on particular population subgroups, and therefore then looked at what can be done to protect them. And so I'm examining various crime ties but, like, just before the lockdowns actually, I got awarded Office for National Statistics Research Excellence award for my work in which good devices protect whom and in what context. So I use the features, the very rich contextual information that a victim surveys offer, as well as more truthful counting of crime in society to look on who is lacking and how so over time effective security against the burglary and many more things, but I'll stop there.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Jianhua Xu.

DR. JIANHUA XU: Thank you. I think it's great to see like NCVS has been there for almost 50 years. But for Chinese criminologists we don't have such luck, I had to use the similar data, we don't have any national level crime victims survey data. We only have official crime statistics but we all know that the official data are always to be socially produced. There are various reasons to produce that data. So sometimes it's very hard to believe how accurate that data is. So I started a project during--around 15 years ago in Guangzhou to look at one specific city and the change of a crime pattern contained. The official statistics shows that data has been--the official crime data has been declining for over 60% in 10 years, so I feel very excited. As I start to look at what would make like the city so safe, and then start to look at the--Guangzhou, China has been following the global crime decline trend. But then I started to look at whether we have alternative data to show--to check whether the official data are accurate or not so since we don't have the national level survey data and then [INDISTINCT] very fortunately, I find on local level, city level crime victims survey data and very luckily, but the two data shows exactly the opposite trend and then official data has been declined for over 60% but the victims survey data shows that the crime trend has been increased therefore 60%. So that will make me very excited to look at what are the reasons which make such a huge disparity between two sorts of data, and that is the beginning of my interest in crime victim survey data. Thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Lynn Addington?

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: Thanks, Min. So I guess my experience, I'm going to start with the NCVS really was in grad school, so two classes were pivotal and I think you're going to see the kind of family tree of people and their use of the crime survey. So one class was pivotal was with Colin Lofton, my wonderful mentor and my dissertation advisor, but I first worked with him in his measurement of crime class and for him to show all of us about, you know, both eCR data and also NCVS and the potential of all these data, it

was--it was eye opening and it was such an important class that I took in grad school that's kind of started me on this journey. And the other I will give a shout out to Alan Lizotte. And part of his legacy is the students that he touched and with his research design class that required all of us to use a secondary data source. And so I selected, actually, the school crime supplement of the NCVS. So my entry to NCVS was really with the supplements that they have. So I encourage people who are kind of looking at NCVS that are kind of getting their toe in the water. Sometimes the supplements are kind of a helpful way to kind of contextualize some of the work there, and also the specific questions that you might be interested in. So that really led me into a deep dive into the survey questions and what they covered. And again, I encourage people who are getting used to or going into the NCVS, to really study those instruments, because through understanding both the questions that were asked and the structure of them, that led me to my dissertation, which actually was a quasi-experiment, looking at students fear of crime pre- and post-Columbine, because I kind of just gained another survey. I realized the questions that they were asked, and also understanding how the survey was implemented in the field. With the rotating panel design, it created this really unique opportunity that I had to do my dissertation. And so it really kind of got me started with a lot of work using NCVS, especially with the school crime supplement. So I had a lot of other papers that came out of looking at that, changes in school security over time, in response to Columbine and other mass school shootings. I even collaborated with a colleague in Israel. So we've created kind of a nod to that our colleagues on the panel who were doing international work and comparative work, which I think is so important. And I actually work with a colleague in Israel to develop a school crime supplement type of survey. So we were able to compare student experiences in Israel and in the United States. So there's a lot of wonderful opportunities that you can do with the data both in the United States and also with a comparative context. So I think that that's really, really awesome. My most--I'll kind of put this as, kind of, a little twist on that question, most important, most fun, I'd say it's my next project, whatever that project's gonna be, because there's just so much opportunity with the NCVS. There's so many interesting questions that can be asked with it. So I always find, like, I finished one project and then there's something else I'm like, I can--there's a new crime issue that's happening, or new crime concern or some under--or new supplement, new supplement data or something like that, that you can really utilize those data. And so I think that that, to me, is one of the great things about the NCVS is that there's always kind of a new project that's exciting and fun and a lot of opportunities. So I'll end it with that.

DR. MIN XIE: All right, thank you. Okay, now, let's go to the next question. This question says, "Did you find the use of the NCVS, or another victim survey, easy or challenging? And name the top two reasons." We'll start from Eric Baumer.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Well, so James started off by saying that the purpose is here to get people to use the data source. So I'm supposed to say easy, but I'd say actually, the truth is, I found it always pretty challenging, but also very, very much worth it. And probably also not unusually challenging, compared to say other very large complex

surveys. So the two reasons I'll mention for why I think it's always been pretty challenging then I'll mention these as things I think that BJS and others have, I wouldn't say may be taken care of, but certainly made much easier. So for me early on, and for some of the people in here, I think this is true as well. I mean, the early days, these were hierarchical data structures and not really easy to sort of walk in and start using back then. Now some of the people on this webinar would laugh at that probably, but that was difficult, for me at least, and then I think ICPSR and BJS have come together through the NACJD and made that much easier by providing incident files, personal files, and household files and so on, along with code to read in the data. So that's largely been, I think, solved for the public use files. And then I guess the second issue I'll highlight is that, you know, much of my work is focused on either piecing together incident level files over different areas of the NCVS. And that I found very challenging to do based on what was out there. And I was pleased to see that BJS and I think maybe RTI have partnered on, hopefully making that a lot easier for the people who are here, looking forward. And then another related thing is that the area identified files that are available, really are kind of like raw files, they're like, kind of going way back to what the files look like when I started. Those were difficult to work with, you know, they're provided by census. They don't have that same kind of processing that ICPSR does. There is an infrastructure that's been developed, I'm hoping that that becomes available to everybody, because I think some of us have worked pretty hard on essentially trying to build that infrastructure so that other people could come in and use those data much more readily. And that's why I think it's pretty challenging, but I'll just end by saying very, very much worth it. Because I think that the NCVS is so unique and such a pivotal dataset for our country, and what we think about crime. So don't let it scare you.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Dr. David Cantor.

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Sure. I mean, Eric stole part of my thunder. I think when I started using the NCVS, which was, you know, late '70s, early '80s, they were all hierarchical files. Those were the days where you had to have someone mount the computer tape for you in order to look at the data. So if you made a mistake on your code, it could be two days before we ever could redo it. So that was a challenge. And I think at the time, the documentation was not as good as it is now. I think BJS and Census and ICPSR have made the files much more accessible to people and learning how to use it. I think probably still a challenge is to just learn about the structure of the NCVS. It is, as Jim mentioned, a rotating panel design, which can be quite challenging in terms of understanding who's actually in the sample at any point in time and how to put the files together. So there is some learning curve, but as Eric said, it's well worth learning. And I think it's much easier to learn both with regard to the documentation, but also, there are a number of workshops now available for people to learn how to use the NCVS, which I think having been part of those workshops, I think Colin was running those in the early days, I think there were a lot of people coming out of those workshops that ended up with--who are now tenured professors, and they made their name using the NCVS. So I think that it's certainly well worth using. I think another point that is important to consider is just how some of the design idiosyncrasies of the NCVS might affect your analysis.

So a big one is whether the interview was bounded or not. So in the NCVS, if someone moves into the panel into a housing unit in the middle of the panel, they get interviewed about the last six months, but their last interview doesn't exist, because they weren't there at the time. So it's an unbounded interview. And a lot of the research on the NCVS has shown that those tend to produce much higher rates of victimization. So there are little or big things, depending on what you're doing, like that related to the NCVS that you have to become familiar with and make sure that you're accounting for these in whatever analysis that you're doing.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Lynn Langton.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: I certainly felt grateful to have come up working with the NCVS at the point I did when we had the separate files and that can be intimidating. I mean, I think that it is intimidating. But like anything, you know, and I don't want to be redundant with what David and Eric have already said. I mean, there's certainly a learning curve and that process of really getting familiar with the structure of the files, but to just be a little bit more, I don't know, optimistic or encouraging, I think one thing about the NCVS is that once you understand the structure, then each of the files, the person file, the household file, the incident file, the way the variables are named and labeled, is really logical and I think pretty easy to follow and understand once you are familiar with that structure. And then I think the other nice thing about the NCVS that makes it easy to use is that there's consistency from one year to the next in terms of how variables are named, how the values are coded. So you're going to see the same values being used to identify missing values, for example, the same numeric value being used to identify where something's missing or there was a skip pattern. And so from that perspective, I think there's a learning curve, but once you learn it, it's really easy to use in terms of how clean the data are, and how well structured and logical they are. And the documentation has definitely improved over the years. I think this has sort of been referenced, but BJS is much more or has been much more willing to make the recodes that they use and how it's available for researchers to use, so that you don't have to figure out how all of the different incident questions get you to a particular crime type, that code has already been created. And so you can get your hands on that code too and you have those recodes already available to really understand what the different components are that are going into each of the type of crime measures, for example. I think that's really helpful for learning. And it also makes life a lot easier. So I would say intimidating, but logical once you get in there.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Janet Lauritsen.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: Sorry about that. Yeah, I would agree with everything that's been said and bridge those eras of NCS and NCVS. And I think one of the things--I'll try to say something a little bit different, one of the things that for students and graduate students I found in users is that, related to file setup, you really have to think carefully about what your research question is and your purpose is before you go ahead and start creating the file structure to answer that question. Because sometimes you can

use the pre-made files, if you're studying for example, incidents, or you're trying to do rates. But other times, you will need to be careful that you know whether or not you're asking a question about what affects the outcome of a particular incident. In that case, you would need an incident file. Or what affects household risk, in that case, you need a personnel file, or household level file or vice versa. So you have to think carefully before you get started, what is it that you want to learn? And then begin to realize that how that structure should be created. So that would be one of the challenging things, I think it's--this is not a data set you just download, nor is it a dataset where you can just create it for your own purpose and people say, "Oh, can I--can I use your data?" It's like, well, if--you don't know what I've done to the data, you won't understand how to use the data file that I'm using to answer a particular research question. So I think that--and that makes it challenging, but once you get started, then there is a path that's easier to manage now than it used to be in the past. Another follow up on some of the comments made, I agree that the NCVS component is easier to use, because the consistency in the variable measures over time and the availability of things like standard error correction codes, and PSU, pseudo-PSU, information for standard errors. But one of the things that is more challenging in the work I've been doing is the historical work going back to '73. It is not easy to work with his files from the 1970s, but once you get them set up, it's okay. And there are things that have changed over time and you need to double check that for any given year, for example, for some big issues, like the measurement of race and ethnicity in the United States, changes almost descend on the--following the decennial census, so you will have to write code that allows you to link that, it become much more complex now than it was, for example, 10 years ago. So whatever it is you do, if you're working with historical files and trying to add just one more year of data, you need to really look at that new year of data to see if anything changed before I assume that nothing did. So that's the biggest challenges, but once, like everybody suggested, once you make that investment in understanding it, there's so many opportunities and it gets easier. It gets easier over time.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Mike Planty.

DR. MIKE PLANTY: Well, yeah, thanks. Yeah, I agree. I think the accessibility documentation has improved so much that those are no longer hindrances really. I think I will really echo Janet's advice, it's really about your research project. You can start with a flat file, like the screener--or like a supplement. You can move into the incident file with just victims, right? And comparing different types of victims. But then it gets more complicated when you want to include non-victims and victims. And then to Eric and Janet's work and others' work in the longitudinal sense, when you start layering in multiple interviews over a three and a half year period of time, that becomes even more complex, not only with the technical linking, but the interpretation and because you have attrition, and you have other things happening that David mentioned in terms of unbounding. So I think it's as complex and it's as difficult as you want it to be, but it has to be matched to your research question. The other things that often came up in the past were around variance estimation and waiting. And those are pretty much solved with the software, too. It's almost like the Bronco chicken, right? You set it and forget it.

The guidance there is pretty much available on Google, there's enough examples. So again, I don't think those challenges are any longer insurmountable or there's not enough guidance out there. So it's really about getting into the data file, because it's so massive, and understanding whether the information there can really address the research question that you're interested in.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Colin Loftin.

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: Okay. I sort of have a long-term perspective on this and I can say that the technology has changed tremendously. As David said, we don't have to mount the tape anymore and wait two days before we can correct the error. But it's remarkable, in my class, day before yesterday, I had the students use the data tool that BJS sets up to analyze data. Now that's fairly simple analysis. But it's really remarkable when the [INDISTINCT] was in that class, we couldn't do anything with the data itself, but now I can have them. And it gives them an opportunity to sort of see how useful the data are. And we could do a time series back to, I think it was '93 to 2020, and do graphs and so on. So that's really exciting. And you couldn't think about doing anything like that. So the data is easy to use, but it depends on what your question is, and how much you want to get into it. Also, maybe Mike Planty should give me a tutorial on Taylor Series linearization, because I think of that as a headless horseman that lives in Suitland, Maryland somewhere. And so it's a little challenging to me.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Dr. Machi Tseloni.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Yeah, so I agree with everything people said just because this recording with them will be geared towards graduate students. So you know, coming with them, you know, graduate school, like masters and undergraduates from economics, when I was using like aggregate data for whatever number of countries or regions, just the sheer volume of victimization survey data and especially, the NCVS, it was like mind-blowing. What? Half a million cases? Is that possible? And so as a graduate student, that was the first challenging thing. And then the other challenge was filter questions. So sometimes you would run frequencies and you have like, huge missing values. Oh, what's happening here? Oh, yeah, you know, it's, you know, it's ties you that follows on from something else. So that's something that graduate students should keep in mind. Also, multiple answers to the same question. So remember, Pat Mayhew who is the one of the of these crime survey, actually traveled from London to provincial north dark city of Manchester on a Saturday morning to, like, explain to me how the data matches the actual questionnaire. Bless her. And the last challenging thing of all crime surveys is the use of weight and likely, you know, the statistics. And like--likewise, as often, as she says, have a lot of documentation. Now in particular to the NCVS, just to explore a bit on the attrition issue that was raised before, that was pretty challenging when I wanted to use the different six monthly periods as ways to see how victimization say, January to June over a year might be related to victimization from July to December. And so issues around respond fatigue or more defect like going from in-person to telephone et cetera, would have affect attrition. And therefore I couldn't

really examine repeat victimization--effects of repeat victimization from one period to the other, as you would have done with repeat offender interviews, for example, so that's one issue that I've encountered that with the 1994 for data so I'm not sure whether this has been addressed to date. So thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Jianhua Xu. Jianhua.

DR. JIANHUA XU: Yes, yes. Thank you. For the crime victim data, I used in Guangzhou. Of course, that's very helpful for my analysis, because you can provide data triangulation and towards the government official discourse. That is very helpful. But the problem is, because you can provide an alternative reality to the official discourse, but nowadays, when the political climate has been changing, that alternative discourse has been suspended. Nowadays, no victim survey data in Guangzhou anymore. They only exist for around 10 years, so that is very discouraging information. And so my research has been working on how our perception, our understanding about the crime variation is socially produced. So I'm thinking of we're doing our comparative study Guangzhou and in Macau, because in Mainland China we have political reasons for not producing that data. But in Macau and Hong Kong, it's less political reason and have more administrative reasons, because nobody have--in Macau, for example in Macau, 20 years ago, there's even no official premise statistics under the Portuguese government. But now, the Macau--as our government did collect official data, but they never have come up with the idea of this over doing crime victims survey. It's not about political reason, but it's more about the military, about the administrative reasons. So I--so I'm interested in how the crime data, those official data and crime victim data are socially produced and the underwater circumstance and that is--I think that is why--definitely I think that it's definitely interesting. How the process of producing the data is also interesting. Thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Lynn Addington.

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: Yes. So one of the things, because I agree with all the logistical issues that we've been talking about, but I mentioned a couple things that I think could make it--using the NCVS a little easier which is read up on it. Before you use that, there's a lot of resources that have like explained the survey, explain the structure, you know, kind of, gone through that. So I recommend reading this and also reading the instrument after you--the other comments about skip patterns, about understanding how those data are structured, why you might find a whole bunch of cases missing. And that's perfectly legitimate because of how people get asked questions and certain follow-up questions and that sort of thing. So to put that investment of time in, and I think that that will help ease the use of the NCVS. But the other challenge that's kind of one that I don't think people really touched on, but kind of maybe touched around, is the fact that it is a secondary data source. And to, kind of, paraphrase the line of "You got to love the data you got." You know, that's what you got. And sometimes, it might make measuring things a little bit awkward, but you get the benefit of having a nationally representative survey, you get the benefit of years and years of data, you get the benefit



of all the investment and of research and design that BJS has done with the survey over such a long period of time. So sometimes I think it's easy for people to poopoo the NCVS or like reviewers, "Oh, well, it doesn't ask this or that." You know what? You got to balance it out because there are very few researchers that could conduct a survey up the scale of the NCVS to do this research. So sometimes, that is a challenge with the data but it's something you have to work around. But knowing the survey and knowing the instrument, that's what gives you, I think, the leverage to, kind of, be a little bit creative with the data and to get around some of those challenges. But that is an issue with all secondary data sources. But that's one that sometimes I do confront with reviewers or people during a presentation and they want to take an easy, you know, kind of, shout at you but there's so many other benefits of the NCVS. And then also, knowing the survey really well helps you counteract those challenges as well.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. All right. So the next question is, what's the most exciting or unique aspect about the NCVS or another victim survey for research purposes? We'll start from Eric Baumer.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: To make it more exciting for the others, how about I defer to one of the other panelists? That way, Lynn doesn't have to go last again. So, Min, I'll let you choose. But maybe we just skip me or...

DR. MIN XIE: Oh, sure. You mean, should I go to David Cantor?

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Sure. You can come to me. I mean, I think probably the most exciting thing about the NCVS is just the basic sample size and repetition of the survey. So the sample size alone is a big benefit for looking at things related in criminology because a lot of surveys don't have the sample sizes to pick up things that don't happen very often. So looking, a recent addition to the NCVS, for example, they just added a gender identity question that's now being asked to most of the respondents. And so, looking at issues related to gender identity is extremely important but it's not a characteristic in the population that is very common. I mean, I think it's probably somewhere in the one to two percent range. So if you want to do analysis of risk related to that population, the NCVS is a resource that you can use and you can accumulate things over time. So I don't know what the current sample size looks like these days. But I mean, you're talking about hundreds of thousands of people over a number of years that you can accumulate and look at things like victimization, especially predatory victimization. And BJS has put out a number of reports that have looked at things like workplace violence, domestic violence, police response to serious violence, self-protective measures, as Colin mentioned, rape and sexual assault. These are all issues that can be looked at with the NCVS that almost no other data set can really do with any kind of statistical reliability, especially with respect to the integrity of the sample of the NCVS. So I think that's probably--if you're asking for one reason, there's many reasons, but if you're asked for one reason, I think that's probably the most exciting.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Lynn Langton.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: Yeah. So, I mean, just building on what David said, I mean, it really is, I think, the breadth and depth of topics that you can cover with the survey, not just because of the sample size which is obviously something in the longitudinal nature, but really just in--we've touched on this as we've been talking, but the detailed nature of the incident data that are collected, there's almost endless possibilities in terms of research questions that someone can dig into and start to explore. And we've been talking a lot about questions that require you using the area identified files or linking with other data files or explaining the longitudinal nature, linking people across time. But I think even just at a basic level, just using the files as they are, there are so many research questions that can be answered. And I think one example that always, kind of, stands out for me was when I was just brand new using the NCVS and the NCVS unit. As I mentioned, I started with identity theft. But then one of the first things that I produced a report on, it came out of a conversation that I was having outside of work, talking about gun control and talking about how even firearms that are legally owned and purchased can end up in the hands of people who shouldn't have them. And not being that familiar with the NCVS, I thought, "Huh. I wonder if I can learn anything from the NCVS about firearms being stolen." And of course, that is data that is contained in the NCVS. And so, you can look at trends and patterns and firearms being stolen during burglaries or motor vehicle thefts and put out an estimate of the number, the magnitude, of firearms that are stolen every year. And so, that was just, kind of, a question that came up in the course of a conversation and, of course, look at the survey instrument and, yeah, that's there and it's available. And so I think just that the detailed nature of the incident form just spending some time with it and really seeing how many different questions are asked about the nature of the incident and the victim response. I mean, the victim response is obviously, a hugely--the victim perspective is the obvious unique aspect of this, so that you can really understand from a victim's perspective, what their experience was, the harms that they experienced, and how they reacted in terms of what type of services they saw or didn't seek. There's a lot more that BJS can do in that area and I think is and we can talk about that a little bit more, but that's another big piece, too.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Janet Lauritsen.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: Yeah. Like--I mean, this has already been said. I mean it's the sheer power of the data, the sheer statistical power of the data that makes it wholly unique and its consistent nature over time. So for me, what I think is most exciting about it now is the capacity of the data to study changes over time. A lot of times in research, we read an article that might be five or ten years old and/or maybe twenty or thirty years old since somebody looked at the topic last, and we wonder if we restudy the issue now, will we find the same results? Well, you can check it out with the NCVS over time if you make a commitment to those data. One of the things that I've been able to work on with colleagues, in addition to Eric, but--work with him but we've looked at, for example, differences in the gap over time between males and females risk for victimization over almost a four--past forty-five years now where we find changes over time. We've also

looked at race and ethnic differences over time and found a persistent significance of race, Black-white differences, but not in the case of Latino versus white differences. So there is no other data in the world that would allow you to do that. That's pretty much makes it unique. And to be able to do it with comparatively small population groups also makes it unique, you might have to make some adjustments after studying the data whether you need to use rolling averages or pooling the data somehow. But it does have the capacity for you to not abandon the topic and say, "Oh, there's just not enough power." But to say, "Okay. What if I roll up some years and look at things in groups at the time?" So I think that's the most--to me right now, the most exciting aspect of it.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you call. Colin Loftin.

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: I'll try not to be redundant in the things I say. But one of the things that's always been useful to me and you can see that in what I was talking about before is that the crime survey is about things that actually happen. It documents a specific incident. And a lot of surveys just ask general questions about attitudes, and that's fine. There's nothing wrong with that kind of research. But it's a real advantage that you're documenting specific incidents and facts and the sample size contributes to that. But also, an awful lot of work has gone into framing questions that are methodologically sound and we can take advantage of the fact that that's been done. Another thing is that the Bureau of Justice Statistics is working on Subnational Estimates. And that's very valuable. I think that work is still in progress. I think some data have been made available for metropolitan areas, but that makes it possible to link the crime survey data with other sources. And that makes it really attractive to people who are doing research because they want to make causal inferences, rather than to just describe the population description doesn't get enough merit in our field. Description is very, very important. If we don't know the patterns of crime, it's hard to explain it. But nevertheless, maybe it's a fashion that people focus on causal inference and the small area estimates make that a lot easier. And that's important.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Mike Planty.

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Mike had to leave. I think he sent it...

DR. MIN XIE: Oh.

DR. DAVID CANTOR: ...in the chat. Yeah.

DR. MIN XIE: All right. Sorry. Machi Tseloni.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Yeah. So I would agree with what people said. I'm just going to be--so in general and National Crime Survey of the quality and longevity of the NCVS. And the crime survey referring in ways have the advantage of consistency of their crime measurements. And I was told, I'm not going to say by who, that the NCVS was actually launched because the state did not trust the police recorded crime. And

similarly, the crime survey reported in Wales is the only reliable source of measuring crime. In England and Wales, the police recorded crime was the designated national data status just after a year. It was named a--because police recorded crime, at the end of the day, is simply administrative data of the work of the police. But it's not a measurement of the crime in the society. So consistency is a big aspect and also consistency in basic characteristics, factual information about the incidents, and characteristics and attributes of people affected by these crime incidents. But also crime is a sociological construct, right? It changes with the society, it's different things in different societies, different things in different periods of time. So at the same time that its consistent, a crime survey has the benefits of being adaptable, for example [INDISTINCT] again, had said, "Oh, we managed to increase domestic violence in the country." This is because there were questions about it. And therefore, it was highlighted as an issue. Hate crime, nowadays, is more important or a coercive control, which is a part of domestic violence that actually has no bruising and kicking, it's emotional violence. So all these aspects of crime are now unacceptable to the society, but they weren't 10 years ago and the crime service can measure this and can record this. So these are two major benefits. The other benefits and I would agree with previous panelists with NCVS is the volume. So that allows for conditioning of effect. If you want to do a random coefficients modeling, so you can see that something holds in certain settings, but doesn't hold in other settings, for example. And nowadays, what's really beautiful is the fact that you can link a crime survey data set with other sources, Jonathan, Eric, and other people in the panel, have linked with the census data. You could--the crime survey in Wales collects information about Self-Report Offending. So you could from now on link it with administrative justice data. And sorry, I forgot to mention, I'm also the academic leader of the [INDISTINCT], Minister of Justice here in the UK. And what's unique about the NCVS, the unique benefit is that it interviews all members of the housing unit and that's really important, that's only unique in the NCVS, as well as in [INDISTINCT] aspect. And in my view, you know, there's always more than can be done, especially as, again, we change perceptions of what's acceptable and what's not acceptable.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Thank you. Jianhua.

DR. JIANHUA XU: Thank you. The data I used, of course, I find it very interesting although it only existed for 10 years, but not anymore. But I think what is more interesting is about how the agency who used to collect data transformed its duty. In the past that they collect data about a crime victim survey. But now, they still collect data, but it's more about the opinion, people's fear of crime. So they totally changed the survey items are from more objective items to very subjective items. I think that is very exciting for me to understand the how our perception, our understanding about our society has been changed and also, kind of produced or manipulated by various reasons. I think that is mostly exciting for that kind of research. Thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Lynn Addington.

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: I guess I'll just--you know, I obviously highlight a lot, you can agree with a lot of what's been said. And I also want to highlight the point that Lynn Langton made about really being able to be creative with the data and there's a lot of things that you--kind of, like she had the conversation with a friend outside of work about about stolen guns and that issue. I often watch the news or read something and go like, "Well, that's not really right." And that leads me to oftentimes that something that you can study with NCVS included. That was kind of like the prompt with my dissertation. Right after Columbine, everyone, all the news--or the students are terrified, nobody wants to go to school. And then my question was like, "Is that true?" And so you're able to use these data to explore questions that are current, that people want to know the answers to. If you're curious about it, there's probably a lot of other people who are curious about it. And knowing the NCVS and all the issues it covers and the topics and that sort of thing, you can really drill down and explore some of these things, so again, just agreeing with Lynn's point about how you can be really creative with the data set once you get to know it and invest that time in it. So I would say that that's a really great aspect of the NCVS.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. Eric Baumer?

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Yeah, well, I wish I hadn't passed now but--no, I actually--I agree that I think that we're coming up almost 50 years of data. So the temporal--even though there have been some important shifts over time, the capacity for studying social change, I think that's probably most unique. But not just long-term change and not just in crime, but also in crime reporting and the nature of crime. I mean, like, who's involved, what happened in the incident, I think that there's a lot of untapped potential there both long-term and also short-term. Sometimes we have these massive changes like a pandemic or, you know, you can think of a lot of different things that occurred and it just becomes very interesting to look at what impact may those things had on the nature of crime or crime reporting or victimization risk. And so, I think that that's what I think is most unique because I can't really imagine another source of data that can allow for that. I mean, we know that, for example, UCR has some limitations there because of growth and police agencies, changes in citizen reporting and whatnot. And I'm--I think those issues are exciting but I actually mention one more that I don't think has been maybe, kind of, touched on a little bit. But I think the most exciting opportunity, and I'll call it the potential, that's the potential capacity for the NCVS to be used. Now, I'm talking about the main NCVS but also the supplement. So, you know, the school supplement comes to mind especially. To be used to assess criminal justice and social policy impacts. A lot of times, policies that we implement in our country at least are likely to make either people more or less likely report to the police. I think it's safe to say that nearly all of our assessments of policy in this country rely on police data and I--and I wonder if that's a smart thing. So to me, that's one example of an untapped market that I think would be very exciting to push to see what can be done. It's not going to be simple but I think that that very much excites me about the data.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you. So now, we actually are entering the group discussion session because I do want to make sure we have sufficient time for questions. And so, for each--we have two of these questions. Each one will just, you know, make eight minutes. That should give us time for discussion. The first question is, "What would you add to or change the NCVS to make it more useful for research purposes?" So please feel free to share your opinion as a panelist. Thank you.

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: My comment, it's not really about the survey itself. My comment is we need more things like this. We need more workshops where people learn from people with experience. Also videos that are made available online that address how to use the data would be useful. That's not a part of the survey itself but it's the context.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you.

DR. FRANK PEZZELLA: Is this the part where anybody can ask questions?

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah. People, feel free, we have a few minutes for this discussion. Just, you know...

DR. FRANK PEZZELLA: Yeah, so I just want to circle back to something Colin Loftin said about the availability of sub-national data. You know, I specialize in hate crimes and invariably, you know, probably over last two years, I've gotten maybe 24, 25 inquiries from the media, you know, regarding hate crimes. Hate crimes are very regionally nuanced. The types of hate crimes you're going to get here in New York are primarily anti-Semitic but those are going to be quite different than the ones you're going to get in Georgia and other places. So my question is and, Jim, this is something I asked you at a conference some years ago. To what extent are data available on a regional basis? Let's say like New York, to look at some of those, kind of, regionally-nuanced indicators of hate crimes in terms of reporting injuries and that type of thing?

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: I guess I could--oh, go ahead, Jim.

DR. JAMES LYNCH: Go ahead--no, Janet, you're--you go ahead, you're better able to answer.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: I just wanted to mention quickly that I did a report, it's called a third-party report for BJS that just came out this year where we, using the publicly-available NCVS data, investigated the degree at which you could do sub-national estimates. So that's what the data files that are currently available to ICPSR, what was the capacity of the data. We were able to look at region of the country, we were able to look at the city size in metropolitan areas, and it--and you can look at metropolitan area-level data. But you--we did have to use five years' worth of that data in that report. And that was a report for violence overall and for serious violence overall. When you ask whether or not those were hate crimes, I do not think the data can support a strong conclusion about that unless you were to try to roll up ten years which is not the kind of

thing media tends to be interested in. They want to know what's going on right now. But the problem is when you look at subtypes of violence, hate crime or non-hate crime, you further divide the power of the sample to be able to say something strong with a great deal of reliability. So I would say that you can do some of that. But if they want to know what's going on right now, the victim survey data are going to be limited in what they can provide for media purposes, especially.

DR. JAMES LYNCH: Frank, I think you--I don't want to speak for BJS but I think they have yet to finish their subnational. So they may have a clearer answer about state-level estimates when they finish their sub-national. It was sort of interrupted for a while there but I think it started again. But again, the BJS guys could probably give more authoritative information, but there may be a big state like New York may have the sample that would allow--but it's a rare event, relatively rare event. Since...

DR. FRANK PEZZELLA: Yeah, yeah. No doubt. Yeah.

DR. JAMES LYNCH: Janet's caution is still applicable.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Can I ask another question? I'm sorry, I'm not quite--I don't quite remember. Is there a more [INDISTINCT] self-report offending in drug taking and health in the NCVS?

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: There is no self-report offending measures in the NCVS.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Yeah. So I think that would--that would be really, really, really helpful because as you have done, Janet, does research on the links between victimization offending with the longitudinal youth data.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: Yeah.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: That would be very helpful to understand kind of motivations and needs of potential offenders and that would then feed into policy. And policy which is not punitive and, you know, divisive but more like supporting. People with, I don't know, needs or growing up in different environments or with mental health issues, et cetera, drug addiction, et cetera. So rather than, you know, reduce reoffending you simply support people with particular health issues. And you launch it as a public policy initiative rather than a justice initiative.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: I think Jim could probably speak to this, but I agree with your point. I also gave up on that push. I was convinced the concern about what effect surveys sponsored by an agency and the Department of Justice asking about offending, what effect that would have on participation and the rates themselves, and so I don't think it's going to ever happen. It's a government agency collecting the data, even under--it just would be likely to be very, very affecting...

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: And even if you do like--what is it?

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: A supplement maybe in an outgoing rotation but that's the, I think...

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: And when you did, with that--you know, with the kind of the mode where respondents answer and the interviewer cannot actually see the answers--what's it called, I forgot.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: [INDISTINCT]

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Self something.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: Self-report, yeah. It's [INDISTINCT]

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Yeah.

DR. JAMES LYNCH: Didn't the--didn't the home office sponsor an offending survey?

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: No--well, the home office had the Offending Crime and Justice Survey. Yeah. It was panel and so it had attrition and obviously, you know, crime is a rare event. And so that stopped. The panel was from 2002 to 2006, it was around 2000 who remained in the entire four-year period. But the crime suffering in Wales has a module named self-report drug addiction and alcohol abuse and self-report offending. Which is--yeah, which is fine, I think. And now I know where the [INDISTINCT] forum of crime surveys, always organized and they have been considering adding now a panel aspect because during lockdown they had to rely on a smaller sample, so they turn it into a panel. And now they're considering retaining this mode. But here it is administered by the Office for National Statistics, which is not linked to the home office or the Ministry of Justice. It's independent and it is directed by the National Statistician and they are free to say whatever they want against the government. So if you--if you go into my more or less link to the interview, so it's not just the statistician who said, you know, the prime minister doesn't know his data about crime, for example. And so of course [INDISTINCT] has this independence. And therefore, people would feel better to be truthful about their responses.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: I think--to all the points that you made and Janet made about the concerns adding these kind of items to the NCVS, I think BJS has looked into this before the victim offender overlap and recognizing that it's hugely important. And one of the considerations, there is a number of inmate surveys that BJS conducts and one of the things that we were exploring at one point in time is adding some victimization questions to the inmate survey and trying to get at the victim-offender overlap from that perspective. And so, that may be something that BJS picks up again down the road. So asking people who are incarcerated about their victimization experiences is another way to get at that.



DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Yeah, it'd be great. Yeah.

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: You know, there are some questions on victimization in the inmate surveys. But they aren't very precise.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: Yeah, and not necessarily just what's happening in the facility which is a lot--you know, like PREA, for example, the Prison Rape Elimination Act. Some of those surveys focus on what's happening in the facility but some of the questions are around what's happened to someone throughout their life course. What types of victimization experiences they've had.

DR. JAMES LYNCH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: Prior to incarceration too, yeah.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Min, I was going to just add one thing. I wouldn't want to make any additions or changes that compromise the primary purpose of the NCVS and also that undermine BJS in any way, but one thing that I sometimes wish for is a model for the supplemental surveys. It was like the general social survey does, like it's an open call to researchers and, oftentimes to just add one or two questions or could be a couple more but I understand the costs. You can even pass the cost on to whomever's proposing it. But I think that would be kind of cool just because it would add a capacity to make the vehicle of the NCVS adaptive and responsive to kind of like, things that are happening. And I think, also, that kind of model could bring in more people. I think I love some of the supplements and I actually think the process that's been used is really valuable. But I think it does take a while and then also might limit the circle because it really require--meaning, the people on this panel, I think participate in those, so I think that would be kind of neat. If feasible.

DR. MIN XIE: All right. Yeah. Thank you for the--for the interest of time. Let's go to--oh, sorry. Let's go to the other one, which is for scholars who want to use the NCVS survey or just victim surveys in general, what advice do you have for them? We'll do this quickly and then afterwards then we'll go to the Q&A session.

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: Can I just put a plug into whatever data set you're using, get that codebook, read it, love it, read it, love it. Because I think there's so many people jump--and I review papers and I'm just like, "Okay. You just completely--because you just grabbed the data and off you went." But it takes investment of time and I've been--yeah, I did learn NCVS in the Iverson Grad School, but I've picked up NISVS and SOCs and a few other--you know, all these great big data sets. But you have to really understand them. And that's an investment time, and it slows you down. And I know what you really want to do is just grab those data and run and use them. But I would really recommend that, it will save you grief in the long term if you just look at that documentation, read up on the data set. Other people used it, and then are also just,

wonderful like kind of just encyclopedia articles, and that sort of thing that you can just get a better sense of the data and what it can do and what it can't do. Because there are limitations--every data set has its limitations. Which doesn't mean it's wrong for your question, and I think I'm echoing what Janet was talking about and a few others: what's your research question and make sure that the data can answer that. And what's the structure and what's the skip pattern and all those kinds of things because it will save you so much grief going forward, just invest that little bit of time. And then once you have that investment, then as others have noted, you got that and you can just explore the data for so many research questions. I would really--I can't emphasize that enough, invest that time and it will pay off for you. I promise, it'll pay off for you.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you.

DR. LYNN LANGTON: And I think just to add to that, you know, at the risk of speaking for others, I think the folks that work at BJS are passionate about the NCVS, you've got a panel of people here, people that have worked on the NCVS for years that are passionate. And so, I think the other thing is, you know, put in the time and look at the codebook. But then if you have questions or even want to balance ideas off, I think that there is a large pool of people who feel really strongly about the NCVS and encouraging the use of it, and would be happy to be used as resources.

DR. MIN XIE: That's a very good point.

DR. COLIN LOFTIN: I'm going to add, it's not just the codebook. It's the questionnaire. You have to go through it and understand how it works. And as David Cantor said, there are a lot of subtleties that you have to understand in order to use the data. Things like who gets the telephone interviews at various times, at centralized telephone banks, and who gets the centralized telephone interviews and who doesn't. It's not just a random process. So things like that that you have to understand to you use the data effectively.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: Yes. If I may, that was the other thing I needed to add in the previous question. So I think for sensitive questions, if NCVS could consider the, you know, the funding to have all interviews in person. So I can understand, you know, people can log in, you know, their race, their gender, education, and employment state but sensitive things, like coercive control, domestic violence, self-report offending, you know, drug addiction, even other, you know, potentially embarrassing issues, like, I don't know, long-term disability, if they can have this part of the survey done consistently in person self--I forget again. You know, basically you turn the iPad to the interviewee and they click in and the interviewer doesn't even know what the answer was, that makes it more reliable. And then the respondent feels confident that their data is not going to be misused. So advice for the scholars, just think of it as two things and a long-term investment because we can see from the members in this panel, you know, careers have been built on using--analyzing crime survey data and long-term investment for the good of your social co-citizens because all aspects studied with the

NCVS could be turned into a policy initiative and improve lives. I think that's the most important reward.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: I'll only add one--two things.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: I think it's good as well.

DR. ERIC BAUMER: Sorry. I'll add two things, Min. One is, you know, listening to people describe how they came to use the data. There's clearly a mentorship model here and apprenticeship model, and so I would advise people to consider reaching out and seeking that kind of, you know, mentorship. And the second thing I'll say is that at least this used to be done ICPSR, I think, Jim, you taught maybe a one-week class there. And so, you know, telling people to read the codebook is great. I mean, I completely agree with that. At some point though, I think there's a little bit more that will be required and I thought it was a great model that ICPSR course that was thought I believe by Jim and maybe others. And so I would just lobby and advocate for that to be brought back in some passion. I think that was really valuable.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah. I believe Jim and Colin, and also Lynn, they all were instructor for the ICPSR workshop. I participated as well.

LYNN LANGTON: And one of the things I told them first day of the ICPSR was to do the codebook, so that was--and then we worked with it and work with other data sets, but that was one of the things that we kind of do, because most people don't and also the instrument and that sort of things. That's just kind of the core of it.

DR. MIN XIE: Okay. Why don't we...

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: [INDISTINCT] guys.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah. Why don't we go to...

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: I think ICPSR was a good community.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah. I think many of us are participants of that workshop. Why don't we go to the questions now and--I'm not sure if I can see the chat, but if you don't mind, could you read out some of the questions if we have some or if you--anyone wants to unmute themselves to ask questions, that will be fine as well.

WOMAN: Yeah. In the chat, we have one question. It says, I'm a PhD student. I will begin my dissertation next year. How often is the survey completed?

DR. MIN XIE: How often? So the main survey would be conducted annually. The data would be available in ICPSR. Depending on which you use, right, supplements and the main survey. Supplements will be conducted less frequently but the order availability of

the data would be on the BJS and ICPSR website. I'm not sure if I address the question, somebody else, please feel free to share information.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: Yeah. Just add that the data are available annually, but they are continuously being collected and collected first every month of the year. First week of the month, so that's one of the things that's a really important reason why you need to read something about the survey before you, I would actually say a little bit before you do that in the questionnaire then go into the codebook for some even more--the details. Another suggestion I have that's along the lines is I would recommend for graduate students that they begin reading a review or the most recent review of the victimization survey by the National Academy of Sciences. It's available free for the download at the National Academy Press. It's NAP.EDU. It's called Surveying Victims, Options for Conducting the NCVS. And you'll get a quick--not quick, but actually like--but you'll get a review of the history of the survey there, the issues about measurement and kind of the goals of the survey, so that you can then have a broader perspective--historical perspective on why it is what it is and why it takes the form that it does right now.

DR. MIN XIE: Thank you, Janet. I believe Jamie Plexom has a question.

JAMIE PLEXOM: Can you hear me?

DR. MIN XIE: Yes.

JAMIE PLEXOM: Hi. I have just recently started getting into using the NCVS. I used the Police-Public Contact Survey on a previous paper, I want to use it again. I have a couple of issues maybe you all who have vast experience working with the NCVS can invest for me is I'm--I have some issues with how race and ethnicity are being measured and they seem to consolidate this into one measure. And I can't wrap my brain around trying to sort out and parcel out the effects of race. Now, it's currently being measured in the NCVS in, kind of, conjoined and this, like, almost, like, a single measure. So I was going to use the Police-Public Contact Survey for another study and I had abandoned it because of how the controls were linked back over to that subset survey and became not useful to me, so then I had gone over to the NCVS. And I agree with Lynn, I went to school with Lynn Addington, and it is a daunting task to go through the codebook and read the extra methodological reports and you get to the end of it, like, a year later after you're doing everything else as a professor and you're just like, can I use this with all the skip patterns and everything that comes? So, yes, I see the--so first, can you guys discuss the race variable, race/ethnicity, basically what they've done and I see a lot. And two, I know there's no shortcuts in life. But what is the biggest thing--I know, read the codebook. I read the codebook. And what is the biggest thing you can parcel out almost, like--because I don't intend on writing a dissertation on it and you're trying to get advanced people getting into using the NCVS. What is the one or two things that you can advise somebody like me who uses a number of data sets? Does a number of different studies would be the best way to orient themselves to the NCVS? Or is there

just no hope that there's a short-term thing, you just have to really this is going to be your life's goal? You know, so I hand it over.

DR. MIN XIE: Anyone would like to answer the race/ethnicity issue?

DR. LYNN LANGTON: I mean--so the NCVS follows the—is it the Office of Management and Budget Recommendations on how race and ethnicity should be collected in federal surveys. So oftentimes people will combine race and ethnicity into a single variable, but on the--on the file, you have the person's race and ethnicity are collected separately. And so you can get more detailed categories. Now, the question is whether those are actually on the PPCS survey. But I think the PPCS is now linked to the full NCVS, is it not? That that might be something. I'm happy to look into that a little bit more and provide guidance offline, I'm kind of talking on memory but...

JAMIE PLEXOM: I just throw that out there. I didn't see how to do that. I saw somebody going through great acrobatics, doing that in another paper, and it was kind of iffy to me. So it was not like a straightforward thing to do.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah, I believe Leann Slocum from the [INDISTINCT] wrote a paper about how to link the Police-Public Contact Survey with the main NCVS survey. Yeah, but in the main survey, you definitely get very detailed race, ethnicity information, as Lynn just mentioned, whether or not linking. I haven't done it myself, but I'm looking forward to see how the two surveys can be linked together. And Pat?

WOMAN: Yes. Do you see me? I--Machi mentioned the Office of National Statistics here had to go through enormous number of hoops, to deal with COVID. And they had to the change the sample, they had to change the mode of entry. What were the COVID implications for the NCVS? Including for instance the first in-person interview and alike to that, are there any sort of special COVID analysis planned for the data that came out during the COVID period?

DR. MIN XIE: That question is perhaps best addressed by BJS people here. I--because we recently had the--oh, also David can--might provide some information about the effect of COVID on the NCVS survey.

DR. DAVID CANTOR: Yeah. It's probably best Jenna or Heather might be better to do that. I think there was some interruption in the interviewing because the field studies were not going out into the field during certain parts of the COVID, but I'm not exactly sure what sorts of analysis they're planning to look at the effects.

WOMAN: Okay. Thank you.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah. The good news is Jenna from the BJS, Jenna Truman, she will have all the information you seek out, so I would recommend if you're really interested

in that issue definitely get in touched with BJS staff. Jenna Truman will be the person to contact. And if--Pat, you can send me your email.

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: Yeah, and there is a subsection in the Criminal Victimization 2020 report about some of the analysis they did for the 2020 release. So you get a sense of what the interruption was like and how they did the weighting adjustment for that, but it appeared for 2020. So that would have only covered part of the year and the incidents that occur that year to 2020 calendar year of data collection. But so there's some about that. I don't know if BJS wants to talk today. But you could start with that...

WOMAN: Well, I--it's my fault, because obviously much more issue for BJS, but more pertinent to this current discussion, can you think off the top of your head what COVID questions in the future--what answers to COVID questions in the future researchers might want to think about?

DR. MIN XIE: That's a very--do you mean like think about the survey mode? In order to address the...

WOMAN: No. No. Forget the technicalities. Obviously, you'd have to accommodate any changes that the technical changes introduced, but in terms of patterns of crime, for instance, I mean, it is generally assumed here, well, I think there's good evidence for it, that crime went down very, very substantially or some forms of predatory crime went down very substantially. But they--the thinking here is that computer crime increased enormously. That sort of a little bit off path. I think it remains to be seen whether there was--it will remain to be seen whether that was an actual effect. But it obviously raises all sorts of interesting little avenues for researchers to go down. Anyway, I'll stop there.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah, I agree. The discussion about COVID, for example, like how it has affected domestic violence, right? That's an important issue. And also there is this discussion about how minority groups or disadvantaged communities are affected more severely by COVID. And so, this kind of discussion about specific neighborhoods, race, ethnicity, disadvantaged communities, immigrant groups, all these would be important questions to be investigated and that would require us to have the capability of using the sub-area data. And so I think you're right on that, these questions could be explored, or some specific questions added to the NCVS, if possible. And BJS is in the process of redesigning the survey. So again, I always say, if you have important suggestions, get in touch with BJS staff members, those things perhaps could be--they would seriously consider the suggestions.

MAN: Min, can you hear me?

DR. MIN XIE: Yes.

MAN: My microphone died, so I'm using my phone which may die as well. But, hello, Pat, how are you? It's good to see you. I think you may have included this in your comments, but to sort all this stuff out, BJS is going to have to be revealing about any

kind of methodological changes that they that they engaged in during the COVID situation. And I don't know what their plans are for that. But I think it would be crucial to sorting out the methodological distortions that might occur as well as the real ones. So I think it would be good to have that too.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah, we have three minutes left and any other questions or comments from the panelists?

WOMAN: We did have a couple more questions in the chat. I don't know if you want to...

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah, please read them. Uh-hmm.

WOMAN: Okay. So this person says, could the panelists expand on the issues of understanding the sample due to the rotating panel design? My research question involves looking at recurrent victimization reported by participants followed across the three-year follow up period?

DR. MIN XIE: Sorry, you mean by increasing the sample?

DR. JANET LAURITSEN: I think what I would say is that if you're--I think I get the gist of the question, that is one of the most complex issues to use the data to study, you will have to create your own files with each interview, and then order them over time, it is not for the weak of heart. So if it was me, I've tried--I've done this before with other people and it probably took six months of assessing to make sure you did it right. So I would not--and I don't want to discourage you, but if you're just starting off, I would not really take that big dive yet.

DR. ANDROMACHI TSELONI: I think the 1994 NCVS data set I used for my [INDISTINCT] paper with [INDISTINCT] it was linked already by the bureau of statistics, I don't think I've done the linkage.

DR. MIN XIE: BJS now has a person in sample, address in sample, household in sample, they sort of give you some information about the longitudinal waves, but it's not linked automatically. So you will have to create or your own longitudinal data sets. And also not just by linking by ID, you also have to evaluate the accuracy of linking because sometimes, particularly in older data, the IDs may or may not show the same, you know, age patterns or race ethnicity patterns or even gender. So you know there's something--it's a small percentage, but for the accuracy of data linking, you do have to check the those issues.

DR. LYNN ADDINGTON: And sometimes you have to be careful when they introduce a new sample with the decennial census, because I've had people try replicate things with different years. And it just it's a huge mess. So it's like Janet said, tread cautiously.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah.

MAN: But I think Machi's recollection is correct. The census bureau did put together a longitudinal file. Because--so I think--and Dave may weigh in on this because I think some of the original work that Dave did with Al Reese on effects of proxy interviewing I think was used a longitudinal file that census had cobbled together. So I think that's maybe what Machi's thinking of.

DR. MIN XIE: Yeah. Okay. So we are--that's all the time we have and I apologize to those if your questions are not getting addressed. Please email me, I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. And just a reminder that we have a session tomorrow and then a session next week. And I really want to thank all the panelists for taking two hours of their busy time to participate and share the experience. And again get in touch with us and I thank you for all your participation and hopefully, we'll see more people use NCVS.