

# **Study finds recession associated with increases in minority victims of crime**

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The victimization of both female and male blacks and Latinos increases during or after periods of economic recession, according to a study by researchers Karen Heimer of the University of Iowa and Janet Lauritsen of the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The study was presented Sunday, Feb. 15, at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Chicago. The study is the first of its kind to estimate trends in serious, non-lethal, violent victimization for non-Latino white, non-Latino black, and Latino males and females using data from the 1973-2005 National Crime Victimization Surveys, according to Lauritsen and Heimer.

"The findings offer new empirical evidence regarding the similarities and differences in risks of serious non-lethal violent victimization across race ethnic-gender groups over time," Heimer said.

"Minorities experience substantially higher rates of violent victimization than non-Latino whites in the United States," she said. "Our study shows that the higher rates of poverty, urban residence and differential age distributions of non-Latino blacks and Latinos help to explain these groups' higher victimization rates. Moreover, our study examines data from the early 1970s to the present and documents an association between economic downturn and increases in victimization rates among minorities over this period."

Heimer said that the findings will be important for police and criminal

justice policy-makers, as well as providers of services to victims of crime, who may be concerned about the potential consequences of our current recession for crime and victimization.

Lauritsen and Heimer's talk, titled "Long-Term Trends in Exposure to Serious Violent Crime by Race, Ethnicity, and Gender," was part of a AAAS session on "Race, Ethnicity and Violent Crime."

Source: University of Iowa

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