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## **RESEARCHERS FIND THAT RATES OF VICTIMIZATION FOR BLACK AND LATINO MALES ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO CHANGING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

TALLAHASSEE, FLA—In a study published in *Criminology & Public Policy* (CPP), researchers found that changing economic conditions in the United States can have modest effects on the rates of victimization for Black and Latino males. Professors Janet Lauritsen of the University of Missouri at St. Louis and Karen Heimer of the University of Iowa examined United States crime and victimization data from 1973-2005. They found that violent victimization trends for Blacks and Latinos follow patterns of economic fluctuation and appear to be related to national economic downturns. Specifically, the peaks in violence coincided with periods of economic recession and high consumer pessimism in the United States. These trends do not appear to hold true for rates of White victimization. Black and Latino males seem to be more vulnerable than Whites to increases in violent victimization and increases in poverty and unemployment during periods of economic downturn because they are more likely to be employed in the least skilled jobs that are often eliminated first and in greater numbers during economic recessions.

Regarding the policy implications suggested by these findings, Philip Cook along with Kenneth Land and Hui Zheng all from Duke University, strongly encourage criminologists to conduct more research about the causes of the victimization trends discovered by Lauritsen and Heimer. Patricia Warren of Florida State University and Ramiro Martinez of Florida International University encourage policy makers and legislators to use research findings to implement policies and safeguards for the minority populations most susceptible to job losses and victimization before economically difficult times emerge. Echoing each of the policy essayists, Professor Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie Mellon University highlights the importance of continued research on changing economic conditions and victimization. Blumstein urges criminologists to focus on the populations that are most likely to be impacted by economic downturns.