**NOT AVAILABLE ON LINE**

Data are reported on one of the few programs focusing on the use of VOM with violent offenders. From February 1991 through July 1994, one hundred and thirty cases were referred to the VOM in Langley. Thirty-nine were accepted for possible mediation. Of those accepted, 48% were sexual assault cases, 23% armed robbery, and 18% involved murder. The average length of time from sentence to referral was 3.7 years. The average portion of sentence served at the time of referral was 41%.

The program was somewhat unique in that referrals could be either victim-generated or offender-generated. The program screening process accepted 27% of the offender-generated cases, largely due either to inability to locate the victim (22%), victim unwillingness to participate (19%) or concerns over offender’s readiness (19%). In contrast, 50% of the victim-generated cases were accepted. Thus the 39 accepted cases included 22 victim-generated cases (56%) and 17 offender-generated cases (44%).

Victim motivation for participation focused on finding out information about the offense and sharing the impact. Offender motivation was chiefly that it was the “right” thing to do, both for their own self esteem and for the needs of the victims.

Preparation for these mediations was intensive and time consuming. This included showing video interviews of victims and offenders to their counterparts.

By the time the study was concluded, 56% of the cases reached face-to-face mediation and additional mediations were still pending. Most of these mediations occurred in a corrections institution. Two VOM staff were present and the average meeting lasted 3-5 hours. Typical issues in mediation included changes in offender, expression of impact of offense, explanation of circumstances of the crime and apologies. Written agreements were an outcome of only 3 of the 22 meetings.

Staff were perceived as caring, neutral, patient, and experienced. Like those victims of less serious crimes who choose to participate in many VOM programs, these victims were also motivated to participate by the desire to know more about the why of the offense and to tell about its impact on them. Offenders participated because it was the right thing to do for themselves and for the victims. Both parties identified fears involved in meeting with the other. Neither offender nor victim felt un-empowered or externally controlled. Mediation brought personal closure about the offense for many victims. The major outcome identified by offenders was personal growth. Strong support for the program was expressed by all but two of the 23 criminal justice respondents.

**KEYWORDS**
VOM
ADULT
FELONY, VIOLENT
PARTICIPATION RATES, REASONS, SATISFACTION
VICTIM DATA, OFFENDER DATA
SURVEY, RECORD DATA
CANADA