



Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

A National Crime Survey Report

Criminal Victimization 1989

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During 1989, persons age 12 or older living in the United States experienced 19.7 million victimizations involving violence or personal theft, according to the National Crime Survey (NCS). In addition, 16.1 million household crimes (burglary, household larceny, and motor vehicle theft) were committed. The NCS measures selected non-commercial crimes regardless of whether or not they were reported to the police. The NCS does not collect data on homicides. About 37% of the crimes measured by the NCS that occurred in 1989 were reported to the police, a proportion similar to that recorded in 1988.¹

While the overall level of crime did not change from the 1988 level, the number of certain types of crimes was noticeably different in 1989. The number of burglaries decreased by 7.3% from 1988; the number of household larcenies increased by 6.4%; and there is some evidence that the number of motor vehicle thefts also increased.²

Crime rates, the number of crimes per 1,000 persons or households, also showed significant changes for burglary. Measurable declines were apparent not only in overall burglary rates but also in rates for

¹For definitions of the crimes measured by the National Crime Survey and a description of NCS operations, see *Measuring Crime*, BJS Bulletin, NCJ-75710, February 1981.

²Because the numbers in this report are estimates based on a sample, some apparent differences may reflect sampling variation. Such differences are described in the report as not statistically significant or not measurably different. Unless one of these designations is used, any difference described reflects at least a 90% certainty that the difference is not the result of sampling variation. See the discussion on page 7.

completed burglary, forcible entry, and unlawful entry without force. The rate of household larceny also changed, but unlike the burglary rate, it rose 5% to a point marginally above the 1988 rate.

Crime rates varied in different regions of the United States; for example, the household crime rate rose significantly in the South and dropped significantly in the Midwest. The rate of personal crime in the Midwest also showed a significant decline.

While the overall level of crime has not changed since 1988, the level of crime has decreased significantly since 1981, the peak year for victimizations. The number of violent crimes in 1989 was 11% lower than in 1981, and there were 15% fewer household crimes (table 1 and figures 1-3).

October 1990

The data in this Bulletin update the preliminary estimates of victimization in 1989, which were released in May of this year.

The National Crime Survey (NCS) measures both crimes reported to the police and crimes that were not reported. Nearly two-thirds of all NCS crimes, including slightly more than half of all violent crimes, are not reported to the police, and this year's survey shows that the reporting rate has remained stable.

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Victimization trends, 1973-89

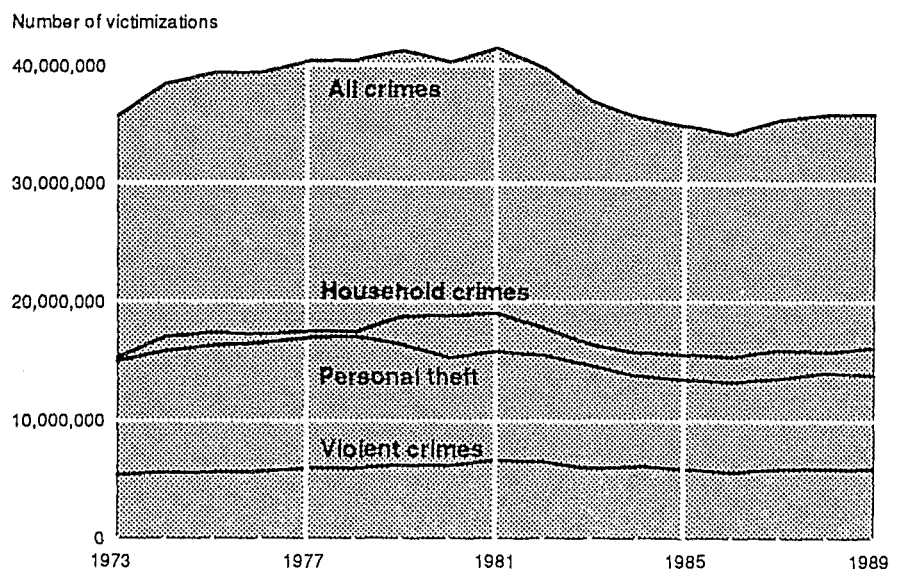


Figure 1

No change in personal crime

The personal crime levels in 1989 exhibited no significant changes from 1988 except for personal larcenies without contact resulting

in losses of less than \$50 (table 2). The corresponding rate decreased 10%. The only other rate change among the personal crime categories was a marginal decline in completed larceny.

Household crime levels varied

The overall rate of household crime remained stable at 170 victimizations per 1,000 households. The level of overall household crime also remained stable, but the level of attempted household crime increased 10.3%, a significant amount. The level of household burglary decreased significantly as did the levels of completed burglary and unlawful

Table 1. Victimization levels for selected crimes, 1973-89

	Number of victimizations (in 1,000's)			
	Total	Violent crimes	Personal theft	Household crimes
1973	35,661	5,350	14,970	15,340
1974	38,411	5,510	15,889	17,012
1975	39,266	5,573	16,294	17,400
1976	39,318	5,599	16,519	17,199
1977	40,314	5,902	16,933	17,480
1978	40,412	5,941	17,050	17,421
1979	41,249	6,159	16,382	18,708
1980	40,252	6,130	15,300	18,821
1981	41,454	6,582	15,863	19,009
1982	39,756	6,459	15,553	17,744
1983	37,001	5,903	14,657	16,440
1984	35,544	6,021	13,789	15,733
1985	34,864	5,823	13,474	15,568
1986	34,118	5,515	13,235	15,368
1987	35,336	5,796	13,575	15,966
1988	35,796	5,910	14,056	15,830
1989	35,818	5,861	13,829	16,128
Percent change, 1981-89 ^a	-13.6% ^b	-11.0% ^b	-12.8% ^b	-15.2% ^b

^aTotal victimizations peaked in 1981.

^bThe difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Trends in victimization rates of household crimes, 1973-89

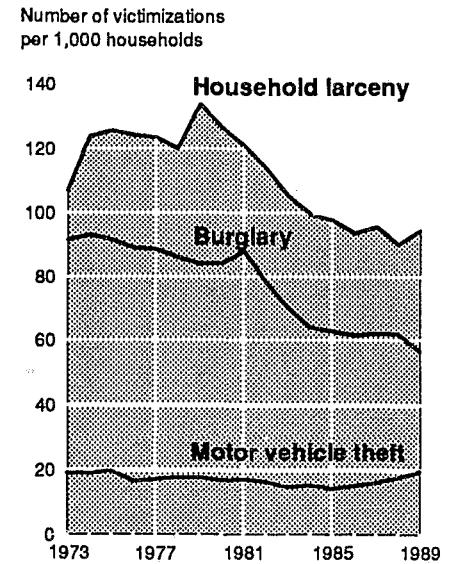


Figure 3

Trends in victimization rates of personal crimes, 1973-89

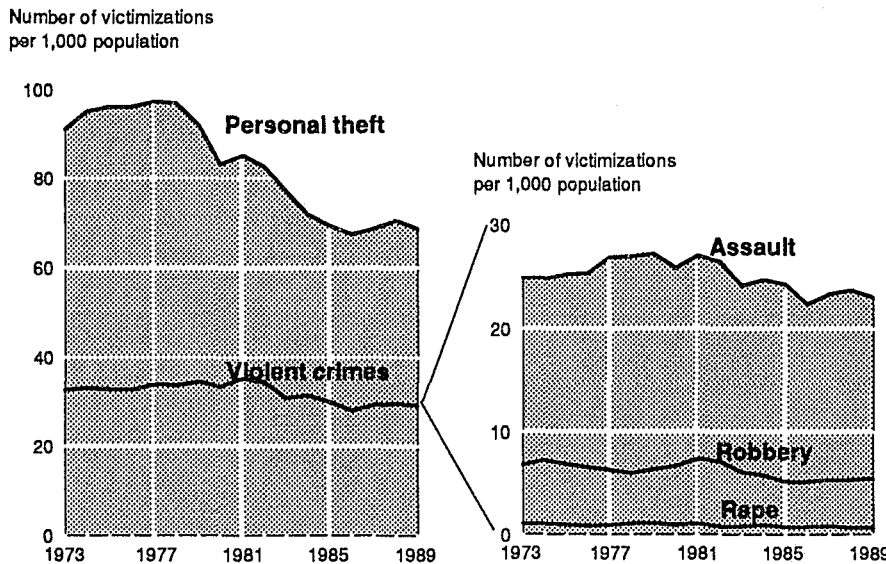


Figure 2

entry without force. The number of forcible entries also declined, but only marginally. The corresponding rates for these crimes all showed significant declines, and the 1989

burglary rate was significantly lower than in any year since the beginning of the NCS in 1973 (tables 3 and 4).

Household larceny levels rose significantly from 1988 to 1989, not only for the overall crime category but also for completed household larceny, household larceny resulting in losses of \$50 or more, and attempted household larceny. The 1989 rates for household larceny and household larceny resulting in losses of \$50 or more showed marginally significant increases over the 1988 rates. Motor vehicle theft rates in 1989 were not significantly different from the 1988 rates; however, there is some evidence that the level of motor vehicle theft increased by a significant amount.

The West had highest crime rate

Despite a marginally significant decrease in personal crime, the West, with 120 personal crimes per 1,000 persons and 215 household crimes per 1,000 households, still had the highest crime rates of the Nation's four regions (table 5). The Northeast retained the lowest overall crime rates, even after a marginal increase in household crimes. The Northeast had 75 personal crimes per 1,000 persons and 126 household crimes per 1,000 households. The Midwest and the South showed no measurable differences in their rates for personal crimes (96 versus 101 per 1,000 persons); however, the Midwest experienced a significant decrease of 7.3% in its personal crime rate. The household crime rate declined significantly in the Midwest and increased significantly in the South. Thus, the South had a significantly higher rate of household crime than the Midwest (184 versus 151 per 1,000 households).

Table 2. Changes in victimization levels and rates for personal and household crimes, 1988-89

	Number of victimizations (1,000's)			Victimization rates		
	1988	1989	Percent change, 1988-89	1988	1989	Percent change, 1988-89
All crimes	35,796	35,818	.1%
Personal crimes	19,966	19,691	-1.4%	100.1	97.8	-2.3%
Crimes of violence	5,910	5,861	-.8	29.6	29.1	-1.8
Completed	2,180	2,196	.7	10.9	10.9	-.2
Attempted	3,730	3,665	-1.7	18.7	18.2	-2.7
Rape ^c	127	135	6.3	.6	.7	5.2
Robbery	1,048	1,092	4.2	5.3	5.4	3.2
Completed	684	744	8.7	3.4	3.7	7.6
With injury	263	300	14.3	1.3	1.5	13.1
Without injury	421	443	5.2	2.1	2.2	4.2
Attempted	364	348	-4.2	1.8	1.7	-5.2
With injury	110	94	-15.0	.6	.5	-15.9
Without injury	253	255	.4	1.3	1.3	-.6
Assault	4,734	4,634	-2.1	23.7	23.0	-3.1
Aggravated	1,741	1,665	-4.4	8.7	8.3	-5.3
Completed with injury	571	586	2.7	2.9	2.9	1.7
Attempted assault with weapon	1,171	1,079	-7.9	5.9	5.4	-8.8
Simple	2,993	2,969	-.8	15.0	14.7	-1.8
Completed with injury	860	820	-4.6	4.3	4.1	-5.5
Attempted assault without weapon	2,133	2,149	.7	10.7	10.7	-.3
Crimes of theft	14,056	13,829	-1.6	70.5	68.7	-2.6
Completed	13,242	12,996	-1.9	66.4	64.5	-2.8
Attempted	815	834	2.3	4.1	4.1	1.3
Personal larceny with contact	489	543	10.9	2.5	2.7	9.9
Purse snatching	155	162	3.9	.8	.8	3.0
Pocket picking	334	381	14.2	1.7	1.9	13.1
Personal larceny without contact	13,567	13,287	-2.1	68.0	66.0	-3.0
Completed	12,795	12,491	-2.4	64.2	62.0	-3.3 ^b
Less than \$50	5,642	5,126	-9.1 ^a	28.3	25.5	-10.0 ^a
\$50 or more	6,681	6,838	2.3	33.5	34.0	1.3
Amount not available	473	527	11.5	2.4	2.6	10.4
Attempted	772	795	3.1	3.9	4.0	2.1
Household crimes	15,830	16,128	1.9%	169.6	169.9	.2%
Completed	13,555	13,619	.5	145.2	143.5	-1.2
Attempted	2,275	2,509	10.3 ^a	24.4	26.4	8.5
Household burglary	5,777	5,352	-7.3 ^a	61.9	56.4	-8.8 ^a
Completed	4,585	4,111	-10.3 ^a	49.1	43.3	-11.8 ^a
Forcible entry	1,986	1,813	-8.7 ^b	21.3	19.1	-10.2 ^a
Unlawful entry without force	2,599	2,298	-11.6 ^a	27.8	24.2	-13.0 ^a
Attempted forcible entry	1,191	1,241	4.2	12.8	13.1	2.5
Household larceny	8,419	8,955	6.4 ^a	90.2	94.4	4.6 ^b
Completed	7,896	8,327	5.5 ^a	84.6	87.8	3.7
Less than \$50	3,418	3,413	-.1	36.6	36.0	-1.8
\$50 or more	4,109	4,482	9.1 ^a	44.0	47.2	7.3 ^b
Amount not available	370	432	16.9	4.0	4.6	15.0
Attempted	523	628	20.2 ^a	5.6	6.6	18.2
Motor vehicle theft	1,634	1,820	11.4 ^b	17.5	19.2	9.6
Completed	1,073	1,180	10.0	11.5	12.4	8.2
Attempted	561	640	14.0	6.0	6.7	12.1

Note: Detail may not add to totals shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Victimization rates are calculated on the basis of the number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households. The population age 12 or older grew from 199,412,460 in 1988 to 201,375,630 in 1989, an increase of 1%. The number of households grew from 93,362,150 to 94,899,080 between 1988 and 1989, an increase of 1.6%.

... Not applicable.

^aThe difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

^bThe difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

^cThere were 1.2 rapes per 1,000 women age 12 or older in 1988 and 1.2 in 1989.

Table 3. Victimization rates for personal and household crimes, 1973-89

	Victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households																	
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	
Personal crimes	123.6	128.1	128.9	128.7	131.2	130.5	126.4	116.3	120.5	116.8	107.9	103.2	99.4	95.6	98.0	100.1	97.8	
Crimes of violence	32.6	33.0	32.8	32.6	33.9	33.7	34.5	33.3	35.3	34.3	31.0	31.4	30.0	28.1	29.3	29.6	29.1	
Rape	1.0	1.0	.9	.8	.9	1.0	1.1	.9	1.0	.8	.8	.9	.7	.7	.8	.6	.7	
Robbery	6.7	7.2	6.8	6.5	6.2	5.9	6.3	6.6	7.4	7.1	6.0	5.7	5.1	5.1	5.3	5.3	5.4	
Assault	24.9	24.8	25.2	25.3	26.8	26.9	27.2	25.8	27.0	26.4	24.1	24.7	24.2	22.3	23.3	23.7	23.0	
Aggravated	10.1	10.4	9.6	9.9	10.0	9.7	9.9	9.3	9.6	9.3	8.0	9.0	8.3	7.9	8.0	8.7	8.3	
Simple	14.8	14.4	15.6	15.4	16.8	17.2	17.3	16.5	17.3	17.1	16.2	15.7	15.9	14.4	15.2	15.0	14.7	
Crimes of theft	91.1	95.1	96.0	96.1	97.3	96.8	91.9	83.0	85.1	82.5	76.9	71.8	69.4	67.5	68.7	70.5	68.7	
Personal larceny																		
With contact	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.7	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.7	
Without contact	88.0	92.0	92.9	93.2	94.6	93.6	89.0	80.0	81.9	79.5	74.0	69.1	66.7	64.7	66.1	68.0	66.0	
Household crimes	217.8	235.7	236.5	229.5	228.8	223.4	235.3	227.4	226.0	208.2	189.8	178.7	174.4	170.0	173.9	169.6	169.9	
Household burglary	91.7	93.1	91.7	88.9	88.5	86.0	84.1	84.3	87.9	78.2	70.0	64.1	62.7	61.5	62.1	61.9	56.4	
Household larceny	107.0	123.8	125.4	124.1	123.3	119.9	133.7	126.5	121.0	113.9	105.2	99.4	97.5	93.5	95.7	90.2	94.4	
Motor vehicle theft	19.1	18.8	19.5	16.5	17.0	17.5	17.5	16.7	17.1	16.2	14.6	15.2	14.2	15.0	16.0	17.5	19.2	

Note: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Table 4 identifies statistically significant differences between the rates for 1989 and each preceding year.

Table 4. Comparison of changes in victimization rates for personal and household crimes, 1973-89

	1973-89	74-89	75-89	76-89	77-89	78-89	79-89	80-89	81-89	82-89	83-89	84-89	85-89	86-89	87-89	88-89
Personal crimes	-20.9%	-23.7%	-24.1%	-24.0%	-25.4%	-25.1%	-22.7%	-15.9%	-18.8%	-16.3%	-9.4%	-5.3%	-1.6%*	2.3%*	-2*	-2.3*
Crimes of violence	-10.6	-11.7	-11.4	-10.6	-14.1	-13.7	-15.7	-12.5	-17.6	-15.1	-6.1	-7.2	-3.0*	3.5*	-7*	-1.8*
Rape	-29.5	-31.6	-26.4	-20.2*	-24.7*	-30.9	-38.0	-29.7	-29.5	-17.3*	-17.3*	-28.7	-5.6*	1.5*	-10.7*	4.7*
Robbery	-19.6	-24.5	-19.8	-16.1	-12.9	-8.0*	-13.4	-17.4	-26.9	-23.4	-10.1*	-5.1*	6.9*	5.4*	2.5*	3.0*
Assault	-7.5	-7.3	-8.6	-8.9	-14.1	-14.3	-15.4	-10.6	-14.7	-12.8	-4.7*	-6.9	-5.0*	3.1*	-1.1*	-3.1*
Aggravated	-17.9	-20.4	-13.9	-16.1	-17.1	-14.7	-16.6	-10.7	-14.2	-11.2	3.9*	-8.1*	--	5.1*	3.0*	-5.3*
Simple	-4*	2.1*	-5.3*	-4.3*	-12.3	-14.1	-14.7	-10.6	-14.9	-13.7	-8.9	-6.2*	-7.5	2.1*	-3.3*	-1.8*
Crimes of theft	-24.6	-27.8	-28.5	-28.5	-29.4	-29.0	-25.3	-17.3	-19.3	-16.8	-10.7	-4.4	-1.1*	1.8*	--	-2.6*
Personal larceny																
With contact	-12.1*	-13.2*	-12.6*	-6.6*	1.9*	-13.5*	-5.9*	-10.9*	-16.9	-11.8*	-8.5*	-2.2*	.4*	-1.1*	5.1*	10.2*
Without contact	-25.0	-28.3	-29.0	-29.2	-30.3	-29.5	-25.9	-17.5	-19.4	-17.0	-10.8	-4.5	-1.1*	1.9*	-2*	-3.0*
Household crimes	-22.0%	-27.9%	-28.2%	-25.9%	-25.7%	-23.9%	-27.8%	-25.3%	-24.8%	-18.4%	-10.4%	-4.9%	-2.6%*	--	-2.3%*	.2%*
Household burglary	-38.5	-39.4	-38.5	-36.6	-36.3	-34.4	-32.9	-33.1	-35.9	-27.9	-19.4	-12.0	-10.0	-8.2	-9.2	-8.9
Household larceny	-11.8	-23.8	-24.7	-23.9	-23.4	-21.3	-29.4	-25.4	-22.0	-17.1	-10.3	-5.1	-3.2*	.9*	-1.4*	4.6
Motor vehicle theft	.5*	1.9*	-1.5*	16.5	13.0	9.5*	9.5*	14.9	12.1	18.7	31.5	26.0	34.8	27.9	19.6	9.6*

Note: Percent change was calculated using rates that were rounded to the nearest hundredth. --Less than 0.05%.

*The difference is not statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

Table 5. Victimization rates for personal and household crimes, by region, 1988-89

	Victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households											
	Northeast			Midwest			South			West		
	1988	1989	Percent change, 1988-89	1988	1989	Percent change, 1988-89	1988	1989	Percent change, 1988-89	1988	1989	Percent change, 1988-89
Personal crimes	73.2	74.7	2.0%	103.2	95.7	-7.3% ^a	99.3	100.5	1.2%	126.4	120.0	-5.0% ^b
Crimes of violence	21.4	23.1	8.1	28.8	26.6	-7.5	28.9	30.3	4.7	40.8	36.4	-10.6% ^a
Robbery	5.7	6.7	18.4	4.0	3.8	-5.0	4.8	5.7	18.8	7.2	5.5	-23.1% ^a
Assault	15.1	15.9	5.5	23.9	21.8	-8.7	23.7	24.0	1.4	32.8	30.2	-7.9
Aggravated	4.7	4.9	5.5	8.9	7.1	-19.5% ^a	9.8	9.4	-3.6	11.1	11.1	.8
Simple	10.4	11.0	5.5	15.1	14.7	-2.3	13.9	14.6	4.9	21.8	19.1	-12.4% ^b
Crimes of theft	51.8	51.6	-.5	74.4	69.1	-7.2% ^b	70.4	70.3	-.2	85.7	83.6	-2.4
Personal larceny												
With contact	3.6	3.9	10.0	2.1	2.6	22.7	2.1	2.1	-2.7	2.2	2.6	15.6
Without contact	48.3	47.6	-1.3	72.3	66.5	-8.1% ^a	68.2	68.2	-.1	83.4	81.0	-2.9
Total population age 12 or older (in 1,000's)	41,888	42,687	1.9%	48,536	47,917	-1.3%	69,547	70,683	1.6%	39,441	40,089	1.6%
Household crimes	115.4	126.3	9.4% ^b	166.3	150.5	-9.5% ^a	172.8	184.0	6.5% ^a	224.2	215.0	-4.1%
Household burglary	38.0	39.1	2.7	63.1	50.5	-20.0% ^a	68.5	68.5	-.1	73.6	60.6	-17.7% ^a
Household larceny	59.4	65.7	10.6	87.6	87.9	.3	87.8	96.9	10.3% ^a	129.4	128.1	-1.0
Motor vehicle theft	18.0	21.5	19.7	15.6	12.1	-22.2% ^a	16.5	18.6	13.0	21.2	26.3	24.3% ^b
Total number of households (in 1,000's)	19,415	19,877	2.4%	22,909	22,990	.4%	32,366	33,168	2.5%	18,672	18,864	1.0%

Note: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Crimes of violence rates include rape.

^aThe difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

^bThe difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

No change in reporting to the police

In 1989, 37% of all crimes were reported to the police, nearly the same percentage as in 1988 (table 6 and figure 4). The reporting rates for certain personal crimes, such as

violent crime, were down. Overall, 34% of personal crimes and 41% of household crimes were reported. Household larceny and crimes of theft, particularly personal larceny without contact, had the lowest levels of reporting: Almost 3 out of every

10 of these offenses were reported to the police. The police were informed of three-fourths of all motor vehicle thefts; therefore, this crime retains the highest rate of reporting of any crime measured by the NCS.

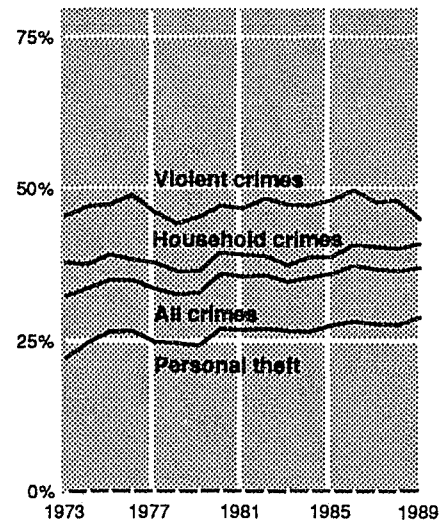
Table 6. Reporting victimizations to the police, 1973-89

	Percent of victimizations reported to the police																
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
All crimes	32%	33%	35%	35%	34%	33%	33%	36%	35%	36%	35%	35%	36%	37%	37%	36%	37%
Personal crimes	28%	30%	32%	32%	30%	30%	30%	33%	33%	33%	32%	33%	34%	34%	34%	34%	34%
Crimes of violence	46	47	47	49	46	44	45	47	47	48	47	47	48	50	48	48	45
Rape	49	52	56	53	58	49	51	41	56	53	47	56	61	48	52	45	51
Robbery	52	54	53	53	56	51	55	57	56	56	53	54	54	58	55	57	51
Assault	44	45	45	48	44	43	42	45	44	46	46	45	46	48	46	46	43
Aggravated	52	53	55	58	51	53	51	54	52	58	56	55	58	59	60	54	52
Simple	38	39	39	41	39	37	37	40	39	40	41	40	40	41	38	41	38
Crimes of theft	22	25	26	27	25	25	24	27	27	27	26	26	27	28	28	27	29
Personal larceny																	
With contact	33	34	35	36	37	34	36	36	40	33	36	31	33	38	36	35	30
Without contact	22	24	26	26	24	24	24	27	26	27	26	26	27	28	27	27	29
Household crimes	38%	37%	39%	38%	38%	36%	36%	39%	39%	39%	37%	38%	39%	41%	40%	40%	41%
Household burglary	47	48	49	48	49	47	48	51	51	49	49	49	50	52	52	51	50
Household larceny	25	25	27	27	25	24	25	28	26	27	25	27	27	28	27	26	28
Motor vehicle theft	68	67	71	69	68	66	68	69	67	72	69	69	71	73	75	73	76

Trends in reporting crimes to the police, 1973-89

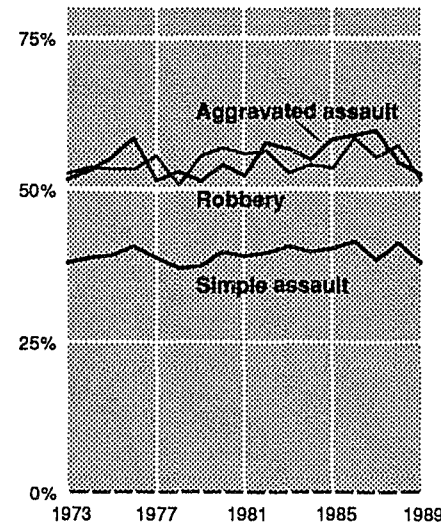
General trends

Percent of crimes reported



Violent crime trends

Percent of crimes reported



Household crime trends

Percent of crimes reported

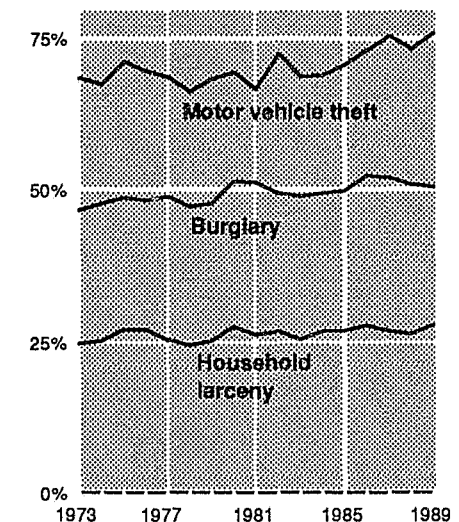


Figure 4

Characteristics of victims

As in the past, crime rates varied considerably according to the demographic characteristics of victims. Males, younger persons, blacks, Hispanics, residents of central cities, and the poor tended to have higher risks of victimization than persons who did not share these characteristics (table 7).

Males sustained significantly higher rates of violent crimes than females. For example, for every 1,000 males there were 11.9 aggravated assaults, for every 1,000 females, 4.9. Males were also at greater risk of being victims of personal theft than were females.

Blacks were more likely than whites to be victimized in a violent crime; the rate for robbery, for example, was 12.9 per 1,000 persons for blacks and 4.4 per 1,000 whites or members of other racial groups. However, the rates of personal theft for the three racial categories did not differ significantly.

Persons under age 25 had higher victimization rates for both crimes of violence and crimes of theft than did older persons. For each age group 25 or older, the crime rates for violence and personal theft were significantly lower than the rates for the next younger category.

Although similar to non-Hispanics in the rate of personal theft, Hispanics had a significantly higher violent crime rate. For example, for every 1,000 Hispanics there were 11.7 robberies, compared to 4.9 robberies for every 1,000 non-Hispanics.

In general, persons from households with low incomes sustained a higher risk of violent crimes than persons from wealthier households. For example, persons residing in a household with less than \$7,500 in income had significantly higher rates for both robbery and assault than did persons from any other income group. This pattern did not apply to crimes of theft; those persons with a household income of less than \$7,500 had personal theft rates that were not significantly different from those persons with a household income of \$50,000 or more.

Table 7. Victimization rates for persons age 12 or older, by type of crime and sex, age, race, ethnicity, income, and locality of residence of victims, 1989

	Victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older						Crimes of theft
	Total	Crimes of violence				Crimes of theft	
		Total*	Robbery	Total	Assault Aggravated		
Sex							
Male	109.6	37.0	7.6	29.3	11.9	17.4	72.6
Female	86.8	21.8	3.4	17.2	4.9	12.3	65.0
Age							
12-15	162.2	62.9	9.5	52.3	14.2	38.2	99.3
16-19	189.1	73.8	10.4	61.5	23.2	38.3	115.3
20-24	175.3	57.8	9.1	47.1	17.2	29.9	117.5
25-34	118.6	34.9	7.0	27.1	9.7	17.4	83.7
35-49	84.5	20.8	4.5	15.7	6.3	9.5	63.8
50-64	48.7	7.9	2.4	5.5	2.0	3.5	40.8
65 or older	23.5	3.9	1.5	2.2	1.2	1.0	19.6
Race							
White	97.0	28.2	4.4	23.1	8.0	15.1	68.8
Black	105.0	36.0	12.9	22.1	10.0	12.1	69.0
Other	91.7	27.3	4.4	22.9	7.8	15.1	64.3
Ethnicity							
Hispanic	109.9	39.4	11.7	27.1	10.3	16.8	70.6
Non-Hispanic	96.8	28.3	4.9	22.7	8.1	14.6	68.5
Family income							
Less than \$7,500	121.4	50.2	12.3	36.3	13.0	23.2	71.2
\$7,500-\$9,999	83.6	31.8	6.0	24.9	9.2	15.7	51.8
\$10,000-\$14,999	96.3	34.8	7.4	26.8	8.9	17.9	61.5
\$15,000-\$24,999	94.9	29.3	4.0	24.6	8.8	15.8	65.6
\$25,000-\$29,999	97.8	27.9	4.7	23.0	8.0	15.0	69.9
\$30,000-\$49,999	91.4	23.1	3.3	19.3	6.3	13.0	68.4
\$50,000 or more	98.1	20.0	3.3	16.5	6.3	10.2	78.1
Residence							
Central city	126.1	38.3	9.8	27.5	10.6	16.9	87.9
Suburban	97.2	27.2	4.2	22.4	7.6	14.8	70.0
Nonmetropolitan areas	67.3	22.0	2.5	19.0	6.8	12.2	45.3

*Includes data on rape not shown separately.

Place of residence played an important role in crime rates. For personal crimes of both violence and theft, central city residents had significantly higher rates than suburbanites, who had significantly higher rates than those living in nonmetropolitan areas.

Place of residence also played a role in the rate of household crimes. As with personal crime, central city households were victimized more often than suburban households (table 8). Households in nonmetropolitan areas had the lowest crime rates.

Households headed by blacks were victimized more than those headed by whites or persons of other racial groups. Likewise, households headed by Hispanics had higher household crime rates than did households headed by non-Hispanics.

Households that rented their residence had a household crime rate of 224 per 1,000 households, while households that owned or were in the process of buying their residence had the significantly lower rate of 140.

Survey methodology and sampling error

The National Crime Survey measures personal and household offenses, including crimes not reported to the police, by interviewing all the occupants of the housing units selected to comprise a representative sample. Each housing unit is interviewed at 6-month intervals, with interviews for different residences spaced out over the year. In 1989, approximately 97,000 people in 48,000 housing units were interviewed about the crimes they had experienced in the previous 6 months. These numbers reflect a 96% response rate.

Each person interviewed is asked about the crimes he or she may have experienced over the previous 6 months. Because responses to questions may be erroneously recorded, questions may not be answered correctly, or some people may forget to mention crimes, a certain amount of error is inherent to the data. The NCS was designed to eliminate as many of these errors as possible.

Another source of error comes from taking a sample instead of a complete census. Since the NCS cannot question everyone, a sampling error (standard error) is associated with every number in this report. In general, if the difference between two numbers is greater than twice the standard error for that difference, then the two numbers can be declared significantly different at the 95% confidence level. This means that about 95% of the time the two numbers are truly different, and roughly 5% of the time the sample will be imprecise enough that it detects a difference which does not actually exist. Similarly, if the difference is greater than 1.6 standard errors, the results are significant at the 90% confidence level. Everything described in the text as significantly different is at or above the 90% confidence level. If the difference between two numbers is less than 1.6 standard errors, then the two numbers are described as not measurably different.

Preliminary estimates

In May 1990 the Bureau of Justice Statistics released preliminary NCS victimization levels, rates, and police reporting data for 1989. For most crimes the preliminary rate estimates were close to the final ones. For example, the rate for crimes of violence decreased 1.2% from 29.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons in the preliminary estimate to 29.1 in the final estimate (table 9).³

Preliminary numbers indicated that all personal crimes except the completed robbery level had not changed measurably from 1988. Final estimates confirmed the earlier findings, except for completed robbery, which remained unchanged from 1988, and the rate of completed personal larceny with contact, which increased marginally.

³For a complete discussion of preliminary estimation procedures, see *Criminal Victimization, 1983*, BJS Bulletin, NCJ-93869, June 1984.

Table 8. Household victimization rates, by type of crime and race, ethnicity, income, residence, and form of tenure of head of household, 1989

	Victimizations per 1,000 households			
	Total	Burglary	Household larceny	Motor vehicle theft
Race				
White	162.2	52.1	92.7	17.4
Black	228.2	88.4	109.0	30.8
Other	171.4	58.3	84.2	28.9
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	271.4	85.2	143.7	42.5
Non-Hispanic	163.0	54.5	91.0	17.5
Family income				
Less than \$7,500	193.4	82.1	98.0	13.2
\$7,500-\$9,999	162.7	62.2	88.5	12.1
\$10,000-\$14,999	178.1	56.3	103.1	18.7
\$15,000-\$24,999	170.0	55.8	93.9	20.3
\$25,000-\$29,999	175.4	53.4	103.0	19.0
\$30,000-\$49,999	158.4	46.9	91.3	20.2
\$50,000 or more	165.3	53.1	89.2	23.1
Residence				
Central city	235.1	77.1	127.2	30.7
Suburban	149.0	48.6	83.2	17.2
Nonmetropolitan areas	126.2	44.2	73.2	8.8
Form of tenure				
Home owned	139.9	45.2	79.9	14.7
Home rented	224.1	76.5	120.4	27.2

Table 9. Preliminary and final estimates for victimization levels and rates, 1989

	Number of victimizations (in 1,000's)			Victimization rates		
	Preliminary	Final	Percent change	Preliminary	Final	Percent change
Personal crimes	20,315	19,691	-3.1%	100.9	97.8	-3.1%
Crimes of violence	5,933	5,861	-1.2	29.5	29.1	-1.2
Rape	117	135	16.2	.5	.7	15.5
Robbery	1,162	1,092	-6.1	5.8	5.4	-6.1
Assault	4,661	4,634	-.6	23.2	23.0	-.6
Aggravated	1,691	1,665	-1.6	8.5	8.3	-1.6
Simple	2,969	2,969	--	14.7	14.7	-.1
Crimes of theft	14,385	13,829	-3.9	71.5	68.7	-3.9
Personal larceny						
With contact	560	543	-3.0	2.8	2.7	-2.9
Without contact	13,825	13,287	-3.9	68.7	66.0	-3.9
Household crimes	15,768	16,128	2.3%	166.0	169.9	2.4%
Household burglary	5,275	5,352	1.5	55.5	56.4	1.6
Household larceny	8,780	8,955	2.0	92.4	94.4	2.1
Motor vehicle theft	1,723	1,820	5.6	18.1	19.2	5.8

Note: Detail may not add to totals shown because of rounding. Victimization rates are calculated on the basis of the number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. --Less than 0.05%.

The preliminary estimates for household crimes showed more variability than the ones for personal crimes. Often a rate or level will increase or decrease but not be significantly different because of the number of cases comprising the estimate. As the sample size increases, the standard error decreases, and a difference that was insignificant in the preliminary estimate may gain significance. Thus, while the preliminary 1989 level for completed household larceny was higher than the 1988 level, the increase was not statistically significant. However, the final estimates indicated that the completed household larceny level had increased significantly.

The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program offices and bureaus: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Office for Victims of Crime.

Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletins are prepared principally by the staff of BJS. This Bulletin was written by Joan M. Johnson and Marshall M. DeBerry, Jr. Thomas Hester edited the report. Marilyn Marbrook, publications unit chief, administered report production, assisted by Yvonne Boston, Tina Dorsey, Rhonda Keith, and Jayne Pugh. Marianne Zawitz assisted in data presentation.

October 1990, NCJ-125615

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- National victimization statistics from the BJS National Crime Survey.
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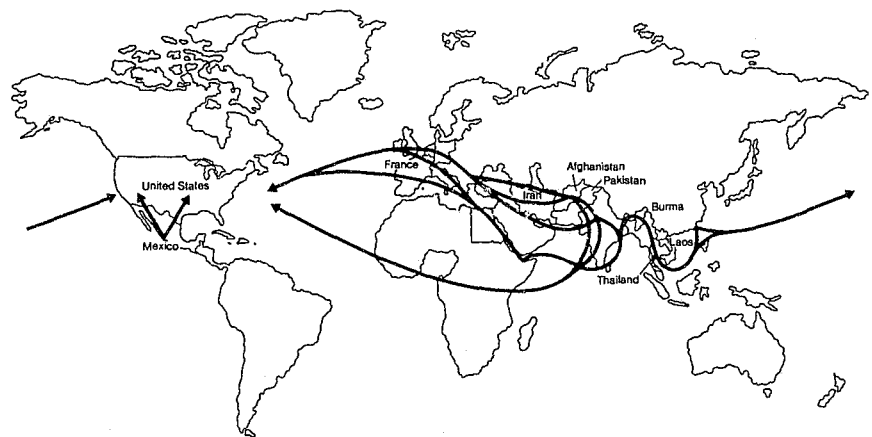
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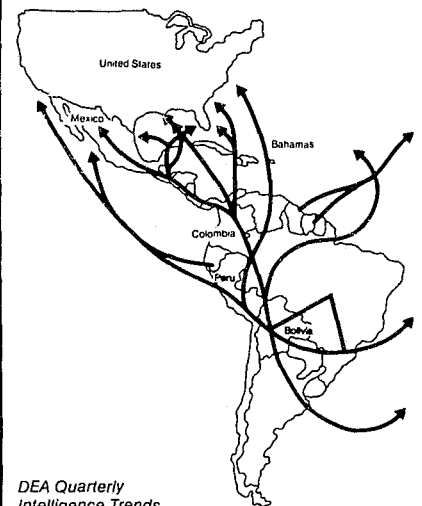
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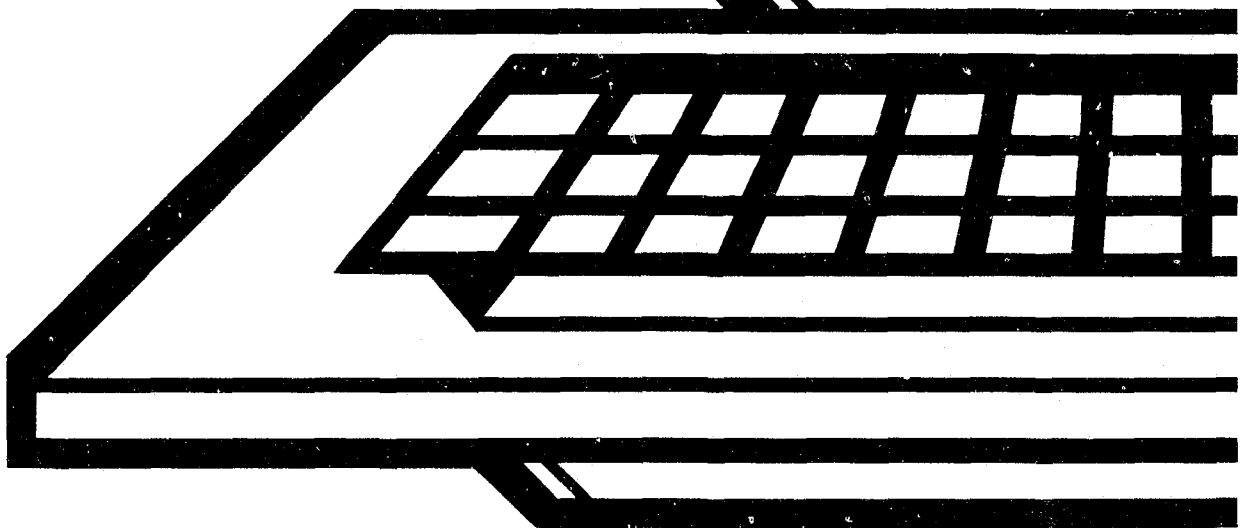
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