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Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

Criminal Victimization 1988

U.S. households and persons age 12 or older sustained 35.8 million crime victimizations in 1988, according to the National Crime Survey (NCS). Of this total, 5.9 million were violent crimes (rape, robbery, simple and aggravated assault); 14 million were crimes of personal theft; and 15.8 million were household crimes (burglary, household theft, and motor vehicle theft).¹

Personal crime victimizations, which include personal theft and crimes of violence, increased by almost 600,000 to approximately 20 million in 1988 — a 1-year increase of 3.1%. This was the second year in a row that the number of personal crimes increased.

Although several categories of crime have shown increases in recent years, the NCS measured at least 10% fewer violent crimes, personal thefts, and household crimes in 1988 than in the peak year 1981 (table 1 and figure 1).

When adjusted for the changes in population, the number of personal crimes went from a rate of 98 crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older in 1987 to 100 crimes per 1,000 persons in 1988 — a statistically insignificant increase.² The decrease in household crimes per 1,000 households, from 174 in 1987 to 170 in 1988, was also

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.

October 1989

The data in this bulletin present the final estimates for victimization suffered in the United States in 1988. Preliminary data were released in April. Personal crimes, including rape, robbery, assault, and personal theft, increased 3% from 1987, while household crimes (burglary, household theft, and motor vehicle theft) remained basically unchanged. The National Crime Survey (NCS) measures not only crimes reported to the police but also those not reported.

Nearly two-thirds of all NCS crimes, including about half of all violent crimes, were not reported to the police in 1988, about the same rates as in recent years. Nonetheless, victims in recent years have been more likely to report crimes to the police than they were when the survey began in 1973.

Joseph M. Bessette
Acting Director

Victimization trends, 1973-88

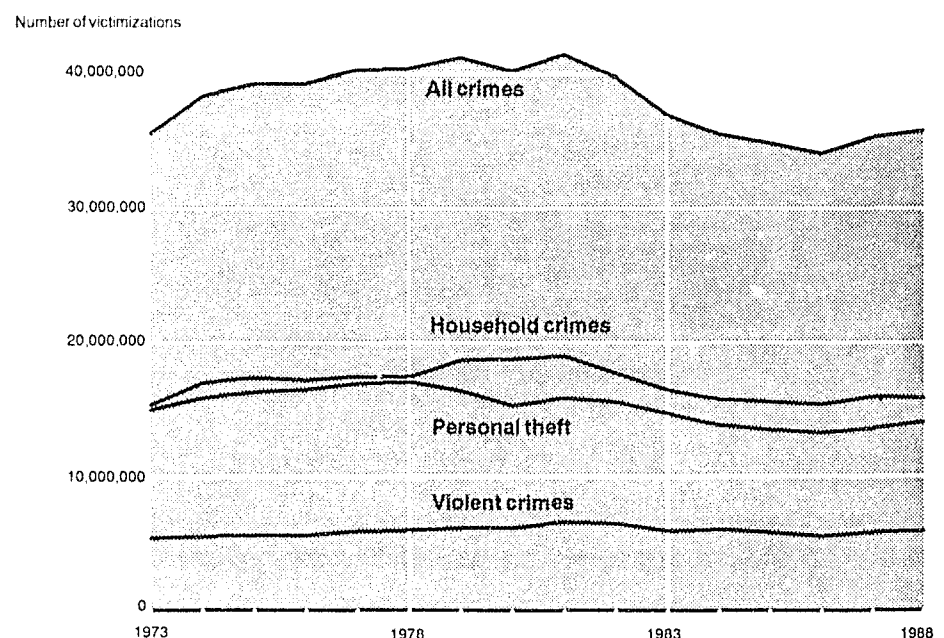


Figure 1

not measurably different. Among household crimes the rate of larceny decreased 6% from 1987 to 1988, while the other two major categories, burglary and motor vehicle theft, had no measurable changes.

Crime rates varied in different regions of the United States; only in the South did personal crimes show a significant increase. However, the West continued to have the highest rates of victimization for both personal and household crimes. The Northeast retained the lowest rate for both personal and household crimes.

In 1988 approximately 36% of all crimes measured by the NCS were reported to the police. This proportion is consistent with the level recorded throughout the 1980's but is higher than when the survey began in 1973.

Changes in crime rates, 1973-88

Generally for personal theft and household crimes, the peak rates were reached in the mid to late 1970's (figures 2 and 3). For example, rates of burglary from 1973 to 1975 were about a third higher than the rate in 1988.

Violent crime rates were also lower in 1988 than in any year from 1973 to 1982. The violent crime rate in 1988 was 16% lower than in 1981.

Personal crimes increase

The number of personal crime victimizations increased by more than a half million from 1987 to 1988. A major component of this increase was the increased number of aggravated assaults and personal larcenies without contact. The number of aggravated assaults went up 9.7%, from 1.6 million in 1987 to 1.7 million in 1988; the number of personal larcenies without contact gained .5 million, a 3.8% annual increase. None of the other major categories of personal crimes exhibited any measurable changes between 1987 and 1988 (table 2).

When adjusted for population growth, the increase in personal crimes was not measurable. Nor did there occur a measurable increase in any of the major categories of personal crimes.

Numbers of household crimes

The number of household crimes in 1988, 15.8 million, did not change measurably from 1987. The only significant changes for the numbers in major categories of household crime were for household larceny (a 4.2% decline) and motor vehicle theft (a 10.9% increase).

Table 1. Victimization levels for selected crimes, 1973-88

	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
Percent change, 1981-88 ^a	-13.6% ^b	-10.2% ^b	-11.4% ^b	-16.7% ^b

^aTotal victimizations peaked in 1981.

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

Trends in victimization rates of personal crimes, 1973-88

Number of victimizations per 1,000 population

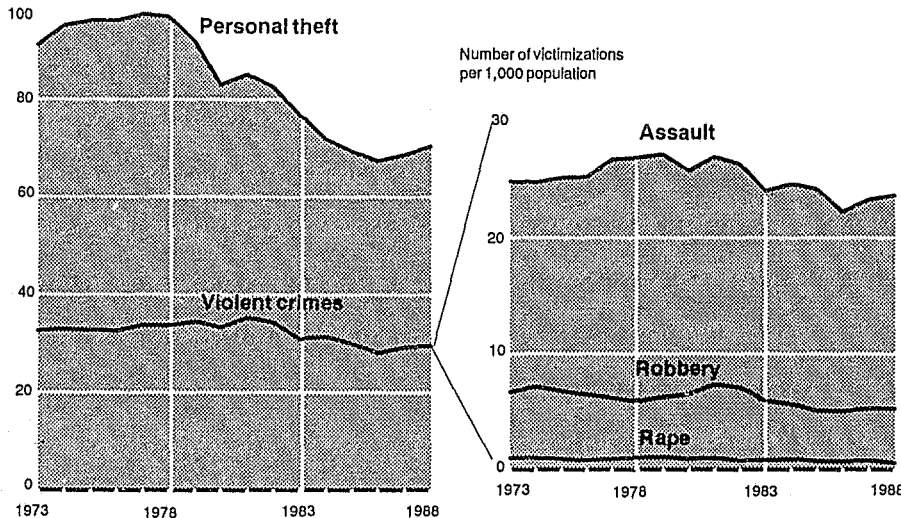


Figure 2

Trends in victimization rates of household crimes, 1973-88

Number of victimizations per 1,000 households

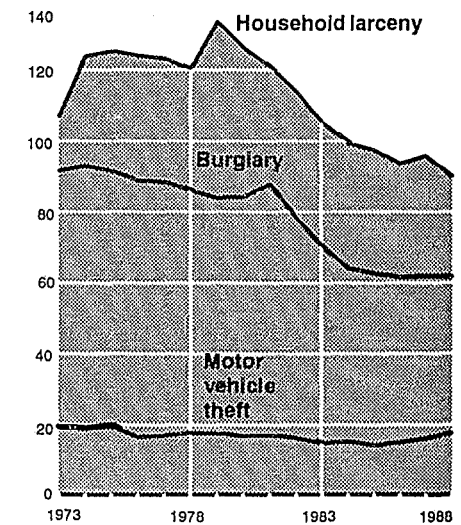


Figure 3

Table 2. Changes in victimization levels and rates for personal and household crimes, 1987-88

	Number of victimizations (1,000's)			Victimization rates		
	1987	1988	Percent change, 1987-88	1987	1988	Percent change, 1987-88
All crimes	35,336	35,796	1.3%
Personal crimes	19,371	19,966	3.1% ^a	98.0	100.1	2.2%
Crimes of violence	5,796	5,910	2.0	29.3	29.6	1.1
Completed	2,169	2,180	.5	11.0	10.9	-.3
Attempted	3,627	3,730	2.8	18.3	18.7	2.0
Rape ^c	148	127	-14.2	.8	.6	-14.9
Robbery	1,046	1,048	.2	5.3	5.3	-.7
Completed	698	684	-2.0	3.5	3.4	-2.8
With injury	266	263	-1.4	1.4	1.3	-2.2
Without injury	432	421	-2.4	2.2	2.1	-3.2
Attempted	348	364	4.6	1.8	1.8	3.7
With injury	92	110	19.9	.5	.6	18.9
Without injury	256	253	-.9	1.3	1.3	-1.8
Assault	4,602	4,734	2.9	23.3	23.7	2.0
Aggravated	1,587	1,741	9.7 ^a	8.0	8.7	8.8
Completed with injury	510	571	11.8	2.6	2.9	10.9
Attempted assault with weapon	1,077	1,171	8.7	5.5	5.9	7.7
Simple	3,014	2,993	-.7	15.2	15.0	-1.5
Completed with injury	891	860	-3.5	4.5	4.3	-4.3
Attempted assault without weapon	2,123	2,133	.5	10.7	10.7	-.4
Crimes of theft	13,575	14,056	3.5 ^a	68.7	70.5	2.7
Completed	12,720	13,242	4.1 ^a	64.3	66.4	3.2
Attempted	855	815	-4.7	4.3	4.1	-5.5
Personal larceny with contact	509	489	-3.8	2.6	2.5	-4.6
Purse snatching	189	155	-17.9	1.0	.8	-18.7
Pocket picking	319	334	4.6	1.6	1.7	3.8
Personal larceny without contact	13,066	13,567	3.8 ^a	66.1	68.0	3.0
Completed	12,276	12,795	4.2 ^a	62.1	64.2	3.3
Less than \$50	5,545	5,642	1.7	28.1	28.3	.9
\$50 or more	6,227	6,681	7.3 ^a	31.5	33.5	6.4 ^a
Amount not available	504	473	-6.1	2.6	2.4	-6.9
Attempted	790	772	-2.3	4.0	3.9	-3.2
Household crimes	15,966	15,830	-.9%	173.9	169.6	-2.5%
Completed	13,499	13,555	.4	147.0	145.2	-1.2
Attempted	2,467	2,275	-7.8 ^a	26.9	24.4	-9.3 ^a
Household burglary	5,705	5,777	1.3	62.1	61.9	-.4
Completed	4,355	4,585	5.3	47.4	49.1	3.6
Forcible entry	2,002	1,986	-.8	21.8	21.3	-2.4
Unlawful entry without force	2,353	2,599	10.4 ^a	25.6	27.8	8.6 ^b
Attempted forcible entry	1,350	1,191	-11.7 ^a	14.7	12.8	-13.2 ^a
Household larceny	8,788	8,419	-4.2 ^a	95.7	90.2	-5.8 ^a
Completed	8,162	7,896	-3.3	88.9	84.6	-4.8 ^a
Less than \$50	3,565	3,418	-4.1	38.8	36.6	-5.7
\$50 or more	4,174	4,109	-1.6	45.5	44.0	-3.2
Amount not available	423	370	-12.5	4.6	4.0	-13.9
Attempted	626	523	-16.5 ^a	6.8	5.6	-17.9 ^a
Motor vehicle theft	1,473	1,634	10.9 ^b	16.0	17.5	9.1
Completed	982	1,073	9.3	10.7	11.5	7.5
Attempted	491	561	14.3	5.4	6.0	12.4

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 197,726,980 in 1987 to 199,412,460 in 1988, an increase of .9%. The number of households grew from 91,823,260 to 93,362,150 between 1987 and 1988, an increase of 1.7%.

...Not applicable.

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

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

^cThere were 1.3 rapes per 1,000 women age 12 or older in 1987 and 1.2 in 1988.

There were 170 household crimes per 1,000 households in 1988, not measurably different from 1987. The burglary rate remained stable at 62 per 1,000 households. Household larceny decreased significantly from 96 to 90 victimizations per 1,000 households. The 1988 household larceny rate was the smallest recorded in the 16-year history of the NCS and was significantly smaller than the rate in every year except 1986 (tables 3 and 4). Unlike the increase in the number, the increase in the rate of motor vehicle theft from 1987 to 1988 was not statistically significant.

Highest crime rate in the West

Among the four regions of the country, the West had the highest personal and household crime rates, with 126 crimes per 1,000 persons and 224 victimizations per 1,000 households (table 5). The Northeast retained the lowest victimization rates, with 73 personal crimes per 1,000 persons and 115 household crimes per 1,000 households. The Midwest and the South showed no measurable differences in their rates for personal crimes and household crimes (103 versus 99 per 1,000 persons and 166 versus 173 per 1,000 households, respectively).

The South was the only region to have a significant increase from 1987 to 1988 in the overall personal crime rate, which rose from 93.5 to 99.3 personal crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.

The simple assault rate decreased significantly in the Midwest from 18.1 to 15.1 assaults per 1,000 persons while the violent crime rate increased in the West from 36.7 crimes of violence to 40.8 per 1,000 persons. Except for a 12% decrease in the rate of household burglaries, from 43.2 to 38.0 burglaries per 1,000 households, the rates of personal and household crimes in the Northeast remained stable from 1987 to 1988.

Table 3. Victimization rates for personal and household crimes, 1973-88

	Victimization rates 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
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
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
Rape	1.0	1.0	.9	.8	.9	1.0	1.1	.9	1.0	.8	.8	.9	.7	.7	.8	.6
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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

Note: Detail may not add to totals shown because of rounding. Statistically significant differences between the rates for 1988 and each preceding year are identified in table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of changes in victimization rates for personal and household crimes, 1973-88

	1973-88	74-88	75-88	76-88	77-88	78-88	79-88	80-88	81-88	82-88	83-88	84-88	85-88	86-88	87-88
Personal crimes	-19.0%	21.8%	-22.3%	-22.2%	-23.7%	-23.2%	-20.8%	-13.9%	-16.9%	-14.3%	-7.2%	-3.0%	.7%*	4.7%	2.2%*
Crimes of violence	-8.9	-10.1	-9.7	-9.0	-12.6	-12.1	-14.2	-10.9	-16.1	-13.5	-4.4*	-5.5	-1.2*	5.4*	1.1*
Rape	-32.6	-34.7	-29.7	-23.8*	-28.1	-34.0	-40.7	-31.9	-32.6	-21.0*	-21.0*	-31.8	-10.5*	-3.5*	-14.9*
Robbery	-22.0	-26.7	-22.2	-18.6	-15.4	-10.7*	-16.0	-19.8	-29.0	-25.7	-12.9	-8.0*	3.6*	2.1*	-.7*
Assault	-4.5*	-4.4*	-5.7	-6.1	-11.4	-11.6	-12.8	-7.8	-11.9	-10.0	-1.7*	-3.9*	-1.9*	6.4	2.0*
Aggravated	-13.3	-16.0	-9.2	-11.5	-12.5	-9.9	-12.0	-5.7*	-9.4	-6.2*	9.6*	-2.9*	5.6*	11.0	8.8*
Simple	1.4*	3.9*	-3.5*	-2.6*	-10.7	-12.5	-13.2	-9.0	-13.3	-12.1	-7.3	-4.5*	-5.9*	3.9*	-1.5*
Crimes of theft	-22.6	-25.9	-26.6	-26.6	-27.5	-27.1	-23.3	-15.1	-17.2	-14.6	-8.4	-1.9*	1.5*	4.5	2.7*
Personal larceny															
With contact	-20.2	-21.2	-20.7	-15.2	-7.5*	-21.5	-14.6*	-19.1	-24.6	-19.9	-16.9	-11.1*	-8.9*	-10.2*	-4.6*
Without contact	-22.7	-26.0	-26.8	-27.0	-28.1	-27.3	-23.6	-14.9	-16.9	-14.4	-8.0	-1.5*	2.0*	5.1	3.0*
Household crimes	-22.1%	-28.1%	-28.3%	-26.1%	-25.9%	-24.1%	-28.0%	-25.5%	-25.0%	-18.6%	-10.7%	-5.1%	-2.8%*	-.3%*	-2.5%*
Household burglary	-32.5	-33.6	-32.5	-30.4	-30.1	-28.0	-26.4	-26.6	-29.6	-20.9	-11.6	-3.5*	-1.3*	.7*	-.4*
Household larceny	-15.7	-27.2	-28.1	-27.3	-26.8	-24.8	-32.6	-28.7	-25.5	-20.8	-14.3	-9.3	-7.5	-3.6*	-5.8
Motor vehicle theft	-8.3*	-7.0*	-10.2	6.3*	3.1*	-1*	-1*	4.9*	2.3*	8.3*	20.0	15.0	23.0	16.7	9.1*

Note: Percent change was calculated using rates that were rounded to the nearest hundredth. *The difference is not statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

Table 5. Victimization rates for personal and household crimes, by region, 1987-88

	Victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households											
	Northeast			Midwest			South			West		
	1987	1988	Percent change, 1987-88	1987	1988	Percent change, 1987-88	1987	1988	Percent change, 1987-88	1987	1988	Percent change, 1987-88
Personal crimes	75.6	73.2	-3.2%	101.5	103.2	1.6%	93.5	99.3	6.2% ^a	125.0	126.4	1.1%
Crimes of violence	23.7	21.4	-10.0	31.3	28.8	-8.1	27.0	28.9	7.0	36.7	40.8	11.0 ^b
Robbery	6.5	5.7	-13.1	4.6	4.0	-13.2	4.6	4.8	4.7	6.1	7.2	18.4
Assault	16.5	15.1	-8.6	25.9	23.9	-7.7	21.7	23.7	9.2	29.9	32.8	9.7
Aggravated	5.5	4.7	-14.3	7.9	8.9	12.6	7.9	9.8	24.0 ^a	11.2	11.1	-1.4
Simple	11.0	10.4	-5.7	18.1	15.1	-16.5 ^a	13.8	13.9	.8	18.7	21.8	16.4 ^b
Crimes of theft	51.9	51.8	-.1	70.2	74.4	6.0	66.5	70.4	5.9 ^b	88.3	85.7	-3.0
Personal larceny												
with contact	3.8	3.6	-6.6	2.2	2.1	-3.8	1.9	2.1	13.2	2.9	2.2	-22.4
without contact	48.1	48.3	.4	68.0	72.3	6.3	64.6	68.2	5.7	85.4	83.4	-2.3
Total population age 12 or older (in 1,000's)	41,709	41,888	.4%	48,963	48,536	-.9%	67,771	69,547	2.6%	39,285	39,441	.4%
Household crimes	121.4	115.4	-4.9%	169.8	166.3	-2.0%	179.8	172.8	-3.9%	223.8	224.2	.2%
Household burglary	43.2	38.0	-12.0 ^b	60.5	63.1	4.3	70.5	68.5	-2.8	69.6	73.6	5.7
Household larceny	63.1	59.4	-5.9	94.2	87.6	-7.0	95.3	87.8	-7.8 ^a	132.4	129.4	-2.3
Motor vehicle theft	15.1	18.0	19.4	15.1	15.6	3.4	14.0	16.5	17.5	21.8	21.2	-2.6
Total number of households (in 1,000's)	19,265	19,415	.8%	22,844	22,909	.3%	31,297	32,366	3.4%	18,417	18,672	1.4%

Note: Detail may not add to totals 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 police reporting

In 1988, 36% of all crimes were reported to the police, which was not measurably different from the 37% in 1987 (table 6 and figure 4). The 1988 rate was a statistically significant increase from the 32% of victim-

izations reported to police in 1973. Over 3 out of 10 personal crimes and 4 of every 10 household crimes were reported in 1988. Household larceny and crimes of theft, particularly personal larceny without contact, had the lowest levels of reporting, with about 27% of such thefts being reported

to the police. Police received reports on nearly three-fourths of all motor vehicle thefts; this crime continues to have the highest reporting rate of any crime measured by the NCS.

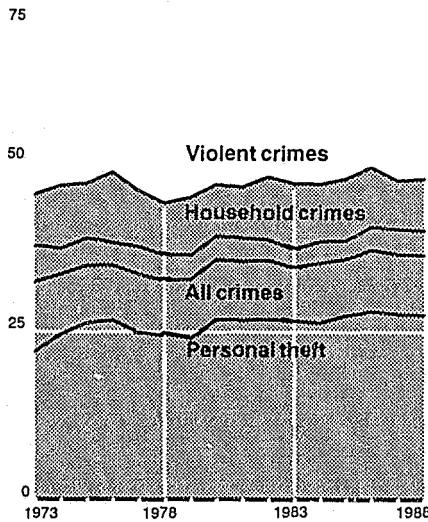
Table 6. Reporting victimizations to the police, 1973-88

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

Trends in reporting crimes to the police, 1973-88

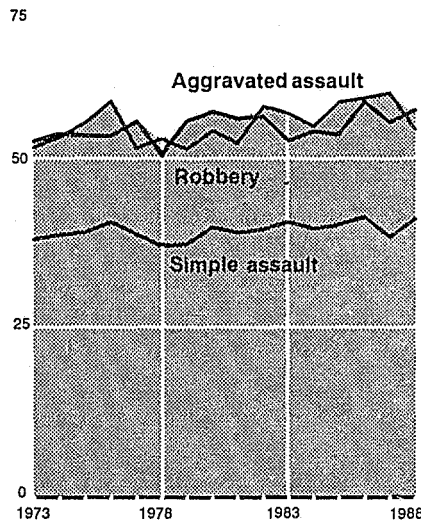
General trends

Percent of crimes reported



Violent crime trends

Percent of crimes reported



Household crime trends

Percent of crimes reported

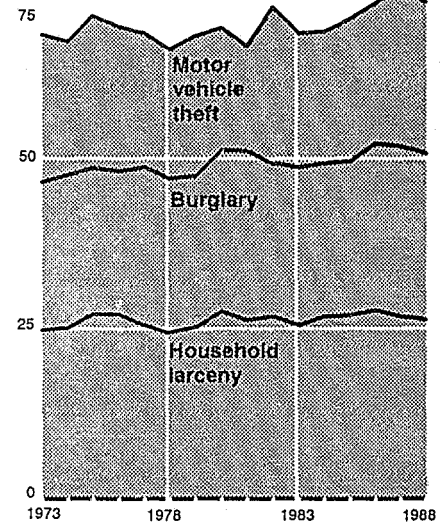


Figure 4

Characteristics of victims

Crime rates varied in 1988 according to characteristics of victims. Males, younger people, the poor, residents of central cities, and renters suffered overall higher rates of criminal victimization than their counterparts (tables 7 and 8).

For crimes of violence and personal theft, men had higher victimization rates than women; the greatest differences were for violent crimes, especially aggravated assault (table 7).

While whites, blacks, and persons of other races had about the same rates of victimization for crimes of theft and simple assault, the rates of the more serious crimes of violence — rape, robbery, and aggravated assault — were higher for blacks than for other races. The rates of robbery were 9.4 victimizations per 1,000 blacks, 4.7 per 1,000 whites, and 5.5 per 1,000 persons of other races. The rates of aggravated assault were 14.7 victimizations per 1,000 persons for blacks, 7.9 for whites, and 9.9 for persons of other races.

Generally persons younger than age 25 sustained higher rates of crime victimization than those age 25 or older.

Hispanics and non-Hispanics had similar rates of victimization for all violent crimes except robbery. For every 1,000 Hispanics there were 10.1 robberies, compared to 4.9 robbery victimizations for every 1,000 non-Hispanics.

The lower the family income, the higher the rate of crimes of violence; however, for personal crimes of theft, victimization had a different relation to income. Per 1,000 persons in each category, those with family income under \$7,500 had a rate of 73.6 personal thefts; those with family incomes of \$10,000 to \$14,999 had 58.8 thefts; and those with \$50,000 or more, 83.0 thefts.

City dwellers had a significantly higher rate of personal crime than those persons living outside a metropolitan area.

Households headed by blacks sustained the highest rates of household victimization, recording a rate of 244.3 per 1,000 households, compared to 159.7 for white households and 178.3 for households of other races (table 8).

Households headed by Hispanics had a crime rate of 247.2, compared with 164.5

Table 7. Victimization rates for persons age 12 or older, by type of crime for sex, age, race, ethnicity, income, and residence of victim, 1988

	Victimizations from personal crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older						
	Total	Total*	Robbery	Crimes of Violence			Crimes of theft
				Total	Assault Aggravated	Simple	
Sex							
Male	109.2	35.9	6.5	29.3	12.0	17.3	73.3
Female	91.7	23.8	4.1	18.6	5.7	12.9	67.9
Age							
12-15	169.2	56.9	7.2	49.4	14.9	34.4	112.3
16-19	192.9	72.0	11.3	58.8	22.1	36.7	120.9
20-24	182.2	58.9	8.9	48.4	20.0	28.4	123.3
25-34	117.5	35.2	6.3	27.8	10.2	17.6	82.3
35-49	87.2	21.8	4.2	17.3	6.1	11.2	65.4
50-64	49.6	10.2	2.9	7.0	2.9	4.1	39.4
65 or older	22.4	4.1	1.7	2.4	.8	1.6	18.3
Race							
White	98.9	28.2	4.7	23.0	7.9	15.1	70.7
Black	109.8	40.4	9.4	29.6	14.7	14.9	69.4
Other	97.4	30.0	5.5	23.8	9.9	13.8	67.4
Ethnicity							
Hispanic	98.4	34.9	10.1	24.7	8.9	15.8	63.5
Non-Hispanic	100.2	29.3	4.9	23.7	8.7	15.0	71.0
Family Income							
Less than \$7,500	123.7	50.1	10.0	38.3	14.9	23.4	73.6
\$7,500-\$9,999	109.8	44.8	6.4	35.9	13.4	22.5	65.0
\$10,000-\$14,999	90.2	31.4	6.4	24.3	9.9	14.4	58.8
\$15,000-\$24,999	93.4	29.1	4.2	24.3	8.0	16.3	64.3
\$25,000-\$29,999	99.8	27.1	3.9	22.6	7.5	15.1	72.7
\$30,000-\$49,999	94.2	21.7	3.6	18.1	6.9	11.1	72.4
\$50,000 or more	104.1	21.1	3.0	18.0	6.0	12.0	83.0
Residence							
Central city	130.0	40.7	10.0	29.4	11.0	18.4	89.3
Suburban	98.0	26.6	3.9	22.3	8.3	13.9	71.4
Nonmetropolitan areas	70.7	22.3	2.1	19.9	6.9	13.0	48.4

*Includes data on rape not shown separately.

crimes per 1,000 households of non-Hispanics.

Renters sustained higher household crime rates than owners, and, as with personal crimes, households located in central cities had higher rates than their counterparts in suburban or nonmetropolitan areas.

The National Crime Survey

The NCS measures personal and household offenses, including crimes not reported to the police, by interviewing occupants of 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 1988, 101,000 people in 50,000 housing units were interviewed about the crimes they had experienced in the previous 6 months. These 101,000 people represent a 96% response rate.

Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) was first used on a small portion of the sample in 1987 to test the effects of this method. These data were not in-

cluded in the 1987 report to permit sufficient study of the effects. Because CATI was found to have no serious effect on the NCS data, the 1987 numbers have been recalculated to include CATI data. These recalculated numbers have replaced the data previously presented. Therefore, the 1987 and 1988 numbers in this bulletin are comparable.

Sampling error and preliminary estimates

A certain amount of nonsampling error is inherent to the data because responses to the NCS questions may be erroneously recorded, some questions may be answered incorrectly, or people may forget to mention crimes. The NCS was designed to eliminate as many of these nonsampling 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

Table 8. Household victimization rates, by type of crime for race, ethnicity, income, residence, and form of tenure of head of household, 1988

	Household victimization rates per 1,000 households			
	Total	Burglary	Household larceny	Motor vehicle theft
Race				
White	159.7	57.4	87.5	14.8
Black	244.3	95.6	112.7	36.0
Other	178.3	66.0	82.8	29.5
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	247.2	79.2	137.7	30.3
Non-Hispanic	164.5	60.7	87.2	16.7
Family income				
Less than \$7,500	190.0	85.1	94.1	10.8
\$7,500-\$9,999	190.1	74.9	99.3	15.9
\$10,000-\$14,999	169.1	68.5	85.4	15.2
\$15,000-\$24,999	163.6	57.3	89.3	17.0
\$25,000-\$29,999	166.1	48.2	96.0	21.9
\$30,000-\$49,999	161.5	52.4	91.1	17.9
\$50,000 or more	166.7	55.1	90.7	20.9
Residence				
Central city	228.6	81.9	119.6	27.0
Suburban	152.5	52.5	81.9	18.1
Nonmetropolitan areas	127.1	53.0	68.7	5.5
Form of tenure				
Home owned	140.0	49.8	76.9	13.2
Home rented	223.1	83.7	114.2	25.2

Table 9. Preliminary estimates and final results for 1988 victimization levels and rates

	Number of victimizations (in 1,000's)			Victimization rates		
	Preliminary	Final	Percent change	Preliminary	Final	Percent change
Personal crimes	19,606	19,966	1.8%	98.3	100.1	1.8%
Crimes of violence	6,025	5,910	-1.9	30.2	29.6	-1.9
Rape	167	127	-23.9	.8	.6	-23.9
Robbery	984	1,048	6.5	4.9	5.3	6.5
Assault	4,880	4,734	-3.0	24.5	23.7	-3.0
Aggravated	1,736	1,741	.3	8.7	8.7	.3
Simple	3,142	2,993	-4.8	15.8	15.0	-4.8
Crimes of theft	13,584	14,056	3.5	68.1	70.5	3.5
Personal larceny with contact	466	489	4.9	2.3	2.5	4.9
Personal larceny without contact	13,119	13,567	3.4	65.8	68.0	3.4
Household crimes	16,386	15,830	-3.4%	175.5	169.6	-3.4%
Household burglary	6,061	5,777	-4.7	64.9	61.9	-4.7
Household larceny	8,708	8,419	-3.3	93.3	90.2	-3.3
Motor vehicle theft	1,615	1,634	1.2	17.3	17.5	1.2

Note: Numbers and rates may not add to totals shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

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 that actually does not 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."

In April 1989 BJS released preliminary NCS victimization numbers and rates along with police reporting data for 1988. Except for crimes with a small number of cases, the preliminary rate estimates are close to the final ones. For example, the rate for crimes of violence decreased 1.9% from 30.2 victimizations per 1,000 persons to 29.6 (table 9).³

³For a complete discussion of preliminary estimation procedures, see *Criminal Victimization 1988*, BJS Bulletin, NCJ-93869, June 1984.

*U.S. G.P.O. 1990-262-190:00027

Preliminary numbers indicated that household crimes were increasing, mainly because of significant increases in burglaries and motor vehicle thefts. However, final numbers indicated that the number of burglaries had not changed significantly; the number of burglaries was 1.3% larger in 1988 than in 1987, unlike the initial estimated increase of 6.3%. In addition, the number of household larcenies in 1988 decreased 4.2% from the previous year, unlike the preliminary estimate of a .9% decrease. These changes caused the final numbers for household crimes to decrease, though this decrease in levels was not statistically significant.

The number of victimizations from personal crimes was higher than previously indicated primarily because the number of personal thefts increased significantly while the preliminary estimate did not. Conversely, the overall number of assaults was down from the preliminary level and, unlike the preliminary estimate, was not significantly different from the 1987 number.

The number of changes in significance caused by differences between the preliminary and final estimates was relatively high in 1988 because some of the differences between the 1987 and 1988 preliminary estimates were close to the threshold of

significance (1.6 standard errors). For the final estimates some of these differences shifted above or below this threshold, thereby changing their statistical significance.

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