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Crime Trend Series

Uniform Crime Reporting Program in Hawaii

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Larceny-Theft in the State of Hawaii, 1979-1993

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A previous report, "Property Crimes 1978-1992" (Green et al., 1993), highlighted the impact of property crimes in Hawaii. The current report focuses upon the most commonly committed property crime, larceny-theft.

HIGHLIGHTS

The State of Hawaii ranked second the nation in reported theft rates for 1993. Since 1985, while the national trend saw decreases in theft rates, the state experienced increases.

- Based on the 1993 crime victimization survey results, the estimated number of thefts from motor vehicle offenses in Hawaii was 151,000, less than 10 percent of which were reported to the police.

- Police cleared by arrest 16 percent of Hawaii's reported larcenies in 1993, down from 21 percent in 1991. From 1991 to 1993, while reported crimes in general increased, police clearances decreased.

- Tourists are more likely to be victimized by thefts. They were victimized at a 77 percent higher rate than residents in 1993.

- By 1993, theft of articles from motor vehicles, not including parts and

accessories, accounted for almost twice as many larcenies as theft of items from buildings (where the offender had legal access). However, total values of the items taken in each of these two largest types of larceny were about equal, roughly \$10 million each in 1993.

- A review of the criminal histories of persons arrested for theft during a one-week period in March, 1994 revealed that 50 percent had prior arrests for theft, 20 percent had no prior arrests for theft, and 30 percent had no prior arrests. Individuals without prior arrests were seven years younger, on average, and more likely to be female than those who had prior arrests. The correlation between arrest for theft and drug-related arrests was weak but significant; however, there was a stronger, significant correlation between drug-related arrests and arrests for violent crime.

- Females accounted for one-third of the arrests for larceny-theft in 1993. This is by far the highest percentage among the more serious, frequently reported crimes. In 1991, females accounted for 29 percent of the juvenile arrests for theft. By 1993, females comprised 36 percent of the juvenile theft arrestees. Females account for higher than average percentages of theft arrestees in the following age ranges: 13-16, 25-29, and 50-64.

This finding has serious implications for courts, juvenile and women's correctional facilities. A similar finding was reported in the previous issue of *Crime Trends*, "Crimes Committed by Females" (Taira et al., 1994).

THE OFFENSE OF LARCENY-THEFT

Larceny-theft is one of the seven Index Crimes reported by the police in most U.S. localities to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for inclusion in their annual report, *Crime in the United States*. Larceny-Theft is defined by the FBI as the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another.¹ The Crime Index is comprised of four violent crimes and three property crimes.²

Looking back to 1979, the Index Crime rate in the U.S. was estimated at 5565.5 per 100,000 inhabitants, whereas by 1993, the latest year currently reported, the U.S. rate was reported at 5482.9, a decrease of 1.5 percent. The 1979 property crime rate in the U.S. was 5016.6; in 1993 it was reported at 4736.9, a decrease of 5.6 percent.

Hawaii's Index Crime rate in 1979 was 6949.0. By 1993, it had declined 9.6 percent to 6279.1 (Department of the

Attorney General, 1994). The property crime rate in Hawaii declined similarly, by 9.8 percent, from 6671.4 in 1979 to 6017.9 in 1993.

While all of these rates have decreased, the property rate decrease in the U.S. was larger than the Index rate decrease. Also, in 1993, the property crime rate in Hawaii accounted for 96 percent of the Index Crime rate, while in the U.S., the property crime rate was 86 percent of the Index Crime rate. Therefore, the Index Crime rate in Hawaii appears to be driven - or more influenced - by the property crime rate. Furthermore, due to the larger property rate decrease in the U.S. since 1979, it appears that property crime is now relatively more of a problem for Hawaii than for the nation as a whole.

Larceny-theft is the single offense that accounts for the greatest percent of Index and property crimes. In 1979, larceny-thefts accounted for 54 percent of the Index Crimes reported in the U.S. and 60 percent of the property crimes. By 1993, larceny-thefts were 55 percent of U.S. Index Crimes and 64 percent of the U.S. property crimes.

In Hawaii in 1979, larceny-thefts were 61 percent of the reported Index Crimes and 64 percent of the property crimes; while in 1993, they accounted for 71 percent of the Index Crimes and 74 percent of the property crimes. Therefore, while larceny-thefts have increased their share of both Index and property crime in both the U.S. and Hawaii over the last 15 years, the increases have been significantly larger in Hawaii than in the nation. In Hawaii, at least, it can be said that the property and total Crime Indexes have been driven by larceny-theft.

The *Crime in the United States* reports also include a rate for each Index Crime in each state. Washington, D.C. was added as the 51st jurisdiction in

this reporting in 1980. Table 1 tracks the rank of Hawaii's larceny-theft rate among the states and Washington, D.C. from this date.

Theft of items from motor vehicles has consistently accounted for the greatest number of larceny-thefts during the 15-year period under review. However,

Table 1: Top Eleven among the States and Washington, D.C. for Larceny-Theft Jurisdiction and Rate per 100,000 inhabitants, 1980-1993

Year	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Rank														
1	D.C. 5,016.7	D.C. 5,311.6	D.C. 5,388.3	D.C. 5,419.6	D.C. 4,621.0	Colorado 4,287.0	Florida 4,372.6	Florida 4,846.2	Arizona 4,821.7	Arizona 5,106.1	D.C. 4,985.8	D.C. 4,979.9	D.C. 5,205.9	D.C. 5,449.0
2	Arizona 4,891.2	Arizona 4,853.9	Colorado 4,429.3	Colorado 4,245.7	Colorado 4,054.7	Arizona 4,258.8	Arizona 4,338.6	Arizona 4,827.3	Florida 4,780.6	D.C. 4,828.5	Arizona 4,703.0	Florida 4,573.5	Florida 4,434.3	HAWAII 4,428.4
3	HAWAII 4,723.2	Colorado 4,375.9	Arizona 4,350.8	Arizona 3,871.8	Arizona 3,894.8	Florida 4,089.1	Washington 4,268.6	Washington 4,277.9	D.C. 4,816.8	Florida 4,908.6	Florida 4,589.8	Arizona 4,286.3	HAWAII 4,357.2	Florida 4,413.8
4	Florida 4,434.2	Nevada 4,373.4	HAWAII 4,250.3	Washington 3,912.9	Washington 3,748.9	D.C. 4,003.2	Colorado 4,230.8	Texas 4,238.5	Texas 4,407.9	Texas 4,385.0	Texas 4,304.7	Utah 4,238.6	Utah 4,245.1	Arizona 4,397.4
5	Nevada 4,358.3	Oregon 4,250.8	HAWAII 4,117.9	HAWAII 3,804.5	Florida 3,716.8	Oregon 3,878.4	Oregon 4,182.8	Utah 4,228.8	Washington 4,358.1	Utah 4,288.8	Utah 4,257.5	Texas 4,232.3	Arizona 4,124.8	Washington 4,314.4
6	Colorado 4,326.8	Florida 4,241.8	Florida 4,103.9	New Mexico 3,793.9	HAWAII 3,659.0	Oregon 3,834.7	D.C. 4,131.2	Oregon 4,181.6	Utah 4,238.7	HAWAII 4,260.3	HAWAII 4,217.1	HAWAII 4,155.7	Washington 4,045.1	Utah 3,803.4
7	Delaware 4,216.2	HAWAII 4,157.2	Oregon 4,003.8	Florida 3,752.8	Alaska 3,828.0	Utah 3,870.4	Utah 4,073.6	HAWAII 4,033.7	Oregon 4,164.4	Washington 4,119.3	Washington 4,011.4	Washington 4,101.5	Texas 3,905.8	Louisiana 3,902.8
8	Washington 4,192.8	Delaware 4,140.3	Delaware 3,989.6	Oregon 3,714.5	Oregon 3,617.9	New Mexico 3,592.6	Texas 3,880.5	D.C. 4,021.2	HAWAII 4,112.2	Georgia 3,971.1	Colorado 3,890.6	Colorado 3,830.0	Colorado 3,790.1	Texas 3,587.3
9	Oregon 4,097.9	Washington 4,083.4	New Mexico 3,828.5	Utah 3,810.4	New Mexico 3,595.2	Texas 3,640.3	Alaska 3,808.9	Colorado 4,012.8	Colorado 3,900.6	Colorado 3,864.8	Colorado 3,828.5	New Mexico 3,775.3	Oregon 3,570.6	Oregon 3,565.9
10	Utah 3,931.8	Alaska 3,958.7	Washington 3,914.9	Alaska 3,588.8	Nevada 3,458.6	Nevada 3,591.5	HAWAII 3,768.7	New Mexico 3,786.1	New Mexico 3,721.5	New Mexico 3,909.0	Georgia 3,714.3	Delaware 3,652.4	Georgia 3,653.1	Montana 3,652.1
11	California 3,880.0	Utah 3,882.3	Alaska 3,806.4	Nevada 3,583.3	Utah 3,437.2	HAWAII 3,544.3	New Mexico 3,712.4	Nevada 3,491.3	Nevada 3,528.4	Oregon 3,877.0	Louisiana 3,548.8	Georgia 3,829.2	New Mexico 3,605.9	Georgia 3,548.7

During the 14-year period from 1980-1993, Hawaii's rank for larceny-theft (i.e., the rate per 100,000 resident population) began at third highest, fell to eleventh in 1985, then increased to second in 1993. Washington, D.C. placed first in nine of the 14 years reviewed, including the first four years of the 1990's. The three states that ranked first from 1985-1989, Colorado, Florida, and Arizona, all attained decreases in larceny-theft rates by 1993, while Hawaii's rate increased 25 percent from the 15-year low point in 1985 and 4 percent from 1989 to 1993.

Furthermore, the number of jurisdictions with larceny-theft rates exceeding 4,000 per 100,000 inhabitants has held steady or decreased in every year since 1987, beginning at nine, and ending at four in 1993. Regrettably, Hawaii's experience with reported larcenies has moved up, contrary to the national trend of the last several years. The subcategories of larceny-theft are defined in the Appendix.

while thefts from buildings were the highest in 1979, they climbed ahead the declining number of thefts of motor vehicle parts and accessories in 1989 and remained in second place through 1993 (see Chart 1 on page 11). Also, thefts from buildings generally accounted for the greatest value lost during the 15-year period. Only in the years 1979 and 1993 did the total value of the items taken from motor vehicles exceed the total value lost in thefts from buildings. And, while there were consistently more shopliftings than bicycle thefts, the total value lost in bicycle thefts was, coincidentally, always near the total amount shoplifted (see Chart 2 on page 11). These relationships have interesting implications for the average value lost per offense, which will be considered shortly.

There are three subcategories of larceny-theft by the estimated value of the items taken: \$200 and over, \$50 to \$200, and under \$50. In 1979, the

numbers of thefts in the two groups, over \$200 and \$50 to \$200, were just 1 percent apart; by 1993 there were more than twice as many larcenies reported in the over \$200 group than in the \$50 to \$200 group. While it may at first appear that this change is due to inflation, inflation may not be the primary cause. Our lack of detailed knowledge as to the types of items being taken as reported in the UCR makes it difficult to accurately assess the impact of inflation on these data. This lack of detailed information leaves open the possibility that there are new, and more expensive, targets of theft which were not on the market 10-15 years ago. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, which publishes the Consumer Price Index reports, has changed the names of indexes to encompass new products in some areas. The premier example: "television and sound equipment" has been updated to "video and audio products". However since these same changes have not occurred in the collection of UCR data, it is difficult to compare.

While offenses in the \$50 to \$200 group decreased by less than 5 percent over the 15-year period, thefts in the \$200 and over group almost doubled to reach 22,764. Meanwhile, offenses in the under \$50 category increased slightly, by 3 percent, while their share of total larcenies decreased from 44 percent to 35 percent (see Chart 3 on page 11). Total reported larcenies increased 28 percent from 1979 to 1993, from 40,534 to 51,912.

Total value lost in the \$200 and over per theft category increased by 182 percent, from \$11.2 million in 1979 to \$31.7 million in 1993, while the comparable change for the \$50 to \$200 category was a decrease of 5 percent, from \$1.28 million to \$1.21 million. The total value lost in thefts under \$50 worth per incident was down 44 percent, from \$343,000 in 1979 to

\$194,000 in 1993 (see Chart 4 on page 11). The total value lost in thefts in Hawaii increased 158 percent from 1979 to 1993, from \$12.9 million to \$33.1 million. Over the same period, the Honolulu Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all items increased 115 percent (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994).

Chart 5 (see page 11) shows average loss per theft by nature of larcenies. Chart 6 (see page 11) shows this average by value groups.

The average value of items stolen from buildings per incident of theft more than doubled from \$533 in 1979 to \$1,091 in 1993. Meanwhile, the average value of items taken from motor vehicles increased 68 percent from \$409 to \$689. Over the same period, the average value of bicycles and mopeds stolen increased 124 percent from \$191 to \$428, while the average loss per theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories more than tripled, from \$111 to \$344. Finally, shopliftings increased 56 percent in value of the items lost, from \$97 in 1979 to \$152 in 1993.

The average value lost in the \$200 and over category changed from \$979 in 1979 to \$1,393 in 1993, an increase of 42 percent. The \$50 to \$200 group showed almost no change, with average loss decreasing from \$112 to \$111 over the 15-year period; while the under \$50 group's average loss declined 45 percent, from \$19.36 to \$10.58. However, the average loss from all larcenies increased 101 percent from \$317 in 1979 to \$638 in 1993. The percentage increase in the overall average loss was greater than each of the within group percentage changes due to the large increase in the share of the offenses which occurred in the \$200 and over group.

The distribution of larceny-theft

offenses by county from 1979 to 1993 is shown in Chart 7 (see page 12).

As with most county crime statistics in the State of Hawaii, larceny-thefts reported in the City and County of Honolulu largely shape the state total. With 74 percent of the state's 1993 population, Honolulu determines many statewide trends. The numbers of reported larceny-thefts in Maui and Hawaii counties remained close to each other throughout the 15-year period, although Maui usually reported the higher total. Kauai is the only county which held larceny-thefts steady over the period, actually posting a 2 percent decrease. Review of monthly statistics for 1992 and 1993 suggests Hurricane Iniki may have contributed to the Kauai decreases in those years. From 1979 to 1993, Honolulu's reported larcenies increased by 25 percent, while Maui County's increase was 46 percent. Hawaii County saw a 56 percent increase from 1979 to 1993.

CLEARANCES

The police report Index Crimes to the FBI as "cleared" when at least one suspect in the crime incident has been arrested or cleared, by exceptional means, when the police know the exact location of a suspect but are prevented from arresting him/her due to a circumstance beyond their control, such as death of the suspect, or refusal of another jurisdiction to extradite (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1984).

The percent of offenses cleared is generally lower for property crimes than for violent crimes. This is because violent crimes are confrontational by nature: victims usually see and can often identify perpetrators. However, among the three property crimes, the percent of larceny-thefts cleared is usually the highest. Police report Index Crimes, values lost,

clearances, and arrests monthly. Therefore, clearances for some offenses are posted in months (and years) after the offense is reported, and reported clearances do not exactly correspond to the offenses reported in any period.

The percentage of larcenies cleared in 1989 was 15.1, increasing for the next two years to 18.5 percent in 1990 and 21.0 percent in 1991, then decreasing for the most recent two years to 18.7 in 1992 and 16.0 in 1993. The percents of Hawaii larcenies cleared, while showing greater variation, roughly paralleled the comparable nationwide statistics. U.S. clearances were 20.2 percent of reported thefts in 1989, peaking at 20.5 percent in 1990, then steadily decreasing to 19.8 percent in 1993.

The reported clearance rate for theft is probably underestimated. A problem is apparent because the large number of reported thefts cannot be thoroughly investigated upon the arrest of every probable suspect. The arrest of one suspect may *actually* solve dozens of crimes, but there may not be sufficient evidence to count those crimes as "cleared". The police are also interested in learning about and solving the likely even larger number of unreported thefts, which is the topic of the following section.

1993 HAWAII VICTIMIZATION SURVEY

One aspect of official reports of the number of thefts, and the crime rates which result from those numbers, is clear: they severely under count the actual volume of thefts. In order to get an accurate count of thefts and other crimes, the U.S. Department of Justice has conducted a nationwide, crime victimization survey to supplement the Uniform Crime Reporting Program.

In 20 years of assessing the number of crimes that are not reported to law enforcement agencies, several trends have emerged which are relevant to this report. First, the more serious the crime, the more likely it is that the crime will be reported to the police: in 1992, victims reported 50 percent of all violent crime victimizations, 41 percent of household crimes, and 30 percent of personal thefts. Among crimes of personal theft, purse snatching was reported in 58 percent of the cases, personal larceny without contact for \$50 or more in 42 percent of the cases, household larceny for \$50 or more, 36 percent, pocket picking, 24 percent, personal larceny without contact for less than \$50, 15 percent, and household larceny for less than \$50 was reported in only 13 percent of the cases (U.S. Department of Justice, 1994).

In 1994, the Crime Prevention Division of the Department of the Attorney General conducted Hawaii's first, comprehensive crime victimization survey. The results support the findings of the national survey: larceny-theft is grossly under reported. The wording used in the survey questionnaire does not allow for many direct comparisons with official reporting of theft. One comparison can be made, however, and it involves the largest category of larceny-theft in Hawaii: theft from motor vehicles.

In 1993, there were 14,771 official reports of theft from a motor vehicle. The crime victimization survey results revealed that 17.1 percent of all adult respondents had something stolen from their car or truck in 1993. Based on the adult population, this figure translates to approximately 151,679 persons who were the victims of a theft from a motor vehicle. The national victimization survey includes theft of items from motor vehicles in a more comprehensive category, "household

larceny", and no other state's recent survey as of September, 1994 included this specific type of theft. Overall, 9 percent of these victims reported their victimization to the police (Green et al., 1994).

Individuals did not report crimes primarily because they felt that the offense was too minor or that the police would not be able to do anything about it (Department of the Attorney General, 1994). The survey supplements official reporting by providing a snapshot of crime victimization. However, until the crime victimization survey is repeated for a number of years, there is no way to determine whether the actual number of thefts is increasing, decreasing, or remaining static.

ARRESTS

Total arrests for larceny-theft are broken down by age, sex, and race. First, each individual arrested is classified as either a juvenile, under 18 years of age; or an adult, over 18. Within each of these categories, subtotals are available by sex within age groups, with most groups spanning five years for adults and smaller ranges at younger ages. Also available are breakouts of the two major age categories by racial groups. However, the reliability of race data is considered to be lower than that for age and sex. Arrest data is not collected for any of the nature of larceny and value lost subcategories.

The number of police departments which report to the FBI from year to year changes somewhat due to new incorporations in growing areas and incomplete reporting in some sparsely populated areas. Therefore, *Crime in the United States* publishes arrest trends for only the first and last years of a comparison period, where data from only the same departments are

counted. Comparisons are made within one, five, and ten years prior to report year. Over the five-year period 1989-1993, juvenile arrests from 8,383 departments representing 70 percent of the 1993 estimated U.S. population increased 5 percent from approximately 317,000 to 334,000. In the same period, adult arrests decreased 7 percent from about 785,000 to 731,000. From 1992 to 1993, juvenile arrests from 9,337 departments representing 78 percent of the 1993 U.S. population decreased by 1 percent, from about 374,000 to 369,000, while adult arrests decreased 4 percent from approximately 841,000 to 811,000.

Hawaii juvenile and adult arrests for larceny-theft 1989-1993 are plotted in Chart 8 (see page 12).

Most arrest trends in recent years have fluctuated. Juvenile arrests for theft increased 8 percent from 3,285 in 1989 to 3,027 in 1991, then increased 5 percent to 3,187 by 1993. The net five-year change was a 3 percent decrease; while the change from 1992 to 1993 was a 5 percent increase. Adult arrests for theft increased 11 percent from 4,530 in 1989 to 5,039 in 1991, decreased 2 percent to 4,920 in 1992, then increased less than 1 percent to 4,950 in 1993. Adult arrests increased 9 percent over the five-year period.

In the late 1970's, more juveniles were being arrested for theft than adults. In 1980, this relationship reversed, and the trend to a lower ratio of juvenile to total arrests is continuing. Juvenile arrests were 42 percent of total arrests for larceny-theft in 1989. In 1993, they were 39 percent. Nationwide in 1993, juvenile arrests accounted for only 31 percent of the arrests for theft.

While juvenile arrests in the state decreased from 1989 to 1993, they

increased in the nation. Conversely, adult arrests in Hawaii increased during this period, while decreasing nationally. The resulting total arrest trends for this period were a 3 percent decrease nationally and a 4 percent increase in the state. Also, Hawaii's ratio of total theft arrests to total population was 19 percent higher than the comparable national ratio in 1993. Even when the Hawaii population was standardized to match the U.S. population in the proportion in each five-year age group, the ratio of theft arrests to residents held at 19 percent higher in Hawaii.

Over the past 15 years, total arrests for larceny in Hawaii moved up at about the same rate as total thefts, by 31 percent from 1979-1993, whereas total thefts were up 28 percent. However, arrests increased more slowly during the past five years (4 percent), while total thefts rose 10 percent.

State arrests of juveniles and adults by sex are presented in Chart 9 (see page 12).

Adult male arrests steadily increased over the five-year period, by 10 percent, while juvenile male arrests steadily fell, by 13 percent. Arrests of adult females increased 18 percent from 1989 to 1991, then decreased 9 percent by 1993, for a net increase of 7 percent from 1989 to 1993. Juvenile female arrests showed more relative variation, up 7 percent from 1989 to 1990, down 15 percent from 1990 to 1991, then swelling 33 percent from 1991 to 1993. The net five-year increase amounted to 22 percent. However, because of the smaller numbers of arrests in this group, both adult males and juvenile males experienced larger changes in number of arrestees.

Total male arrests were almost unchanged during the period 1989-1993,

increasing by less than one-half of 1 percent from 5,453 to 5,472. Total female arrests increased 13 percent, from 2,362 to 2,665.

Among the eight Index Offenses, including arson, the crime having, by far, the highest proportion of arrestees accounted for by females is larceny-theft. In 1989, females accounted for 29 percent of juvenile arrests for theft. This percentage was unchanged in 1991, but by 1993, it had grown to 36 percent. Meanwhile, the 1989 proportion of adult arrests for theft accounted for by females, 31 percent, was almost unchanged at 30 percent in 1993.

Chart 10 (see page 12 shows the distribution of 1993 arrests for larceny by sex and five-year age groups. The 15-19 year old group is comprised of both juveniles and adults. Chart 11 (see page 12) gives the percentage of arrests at each age or in each age group which were accounted for by females.

Chart 10 indicates that through age 49, female arrests were roughly half of male arrests. Then, from 50 to 64 years, the sexes were near equal in arrests, with male arrests again returning to about twice the level of female arrests after age 65. However, a more complete picture is given in Chart 11, where the full detail of the available age data is used.

Data on the race of arrestees cannot be considered to approach the reliability, or accuracy, of the sex and age data. While there has never been a formal effort to verify race classifications assigned by the police, we do not have reason to suspect large scale errors.

The distribution of 1993 juvenile arrests for theft by race shows Hawaiians with 32 percent (1,017 arrests), Caucasians with 22 percent (687 arrests), and Filipinos with 15 percent

(484 arrests). Each of the other specified groups accounted for less than 10 percent of the juvenile arrests.

Among adult arrests for theft in 1993, Caucasians accounted for 43 percent and Hawaiians accounted for 19 percent, with each of the other specified groups contributing less than 10 percent of the total. It is interesting to note the dramatic shift in the largest percentage of arrests from Hawaiians among juveniles to Caucasians among adults.

CRIMINAL HISTORIES

To obtain a glimpse of persons committing thefts in Hawaii, criminal history records were acquired for offenders arrested for larceny-theft during the week of March 13-19, 1994. This was a non-random sample of the criminal histories of all individuals arrested for theft from January 1, 1994 through December 31, 1994 and, as such, may not be representative of all 1994 theft arrestees. The sample contained the records of 123 individuals - 86 males and 37 females. Ages ranged from 19 to 80 years, with an average age of 33.

Fifty percent of the sample had a prior arrest, or arrests, for theft; 20 percent had a prior arrest, or arrests, for an offense, or offenses, other than theft. The remaining 30 percent of the sample had no previous arrests. The top three charges among the last group were theft in the fourth degree (39 percent), theft in the second degree (24 percent), and shoplifting (20 percent)³.

Offenders with prior arrests were older than first-time arrestees (median age 32 versus 25, respectively), and males were more representative of this group (77 percent versus 54 percent). As with first time arrestees, theft in the fourth degree (theft-4) was the most common charge.

Among the 62 cases with prior arrests for theft, the conviction rate for theft was 61 percent. Among these cases, the total number of prior arrests per individual ranged from one to 58, with a median of ten. The number of prior theft arrests per individual ran from one to 26, with a median of three.

There was a significant, but weak, correlation between arrest for thefts and drug related arrests (Pearson's correlation coefficient = .2211, $p = .014$). There was a stronger, significant correlation between drug related arrests and arrests for violent crimes (Pearson's correlation coefficient = .4085, $p = .000$), but only 27 percent of the sample had drug arrests.

THEFTS FROM TOURISTS

A question of continuing interest in a resort area such as Hawaii is, "What proportion of crimes is committed against tourists?" Property and robbery offenses are ordinarily counted as incidents. Because incidents may include both residents and tourists as victims, the limited offense data which we have from the City and County of Honolulu for 1993 are counts of individual victims, excluding businesses, for all Index Crimes.

This information shows that 14 percent of Honolulu's individual larceny victims were tourists. Tourists were just 6 percent of the victims of all the other Index Crimes taken as a group.

Eighty-four percent of the tourists in the City and County of Honolulu who were also the victims of Index Crimes in 1993 were the victims of theft. Theft was the only one of the seven Index Crimes for which a higher than average percentage of the individual victims were tourists. With the population components of visitors and residents temporarily absent from Honolulu provided by the Department

of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, the 1993 larceny-theft rate against visitors was calculated at 6,674, while the comparable rate against residents was 3,771. Hence, the larceny-theft rate against tourists was 77 percent higher than the rate against residents. However, the visitors' rate for all other Index Crimes was 36 percent lower than the comparable rate for residents. This finding supports an earlier study by Meda Chesney-Lind and Ian Lind (1986).

DISCUSSION

The statistics reported in the sections on arrests and the crime victimization survey suggest that theft may be more prevalent than many people believe. If the ten-to-one ratio of thefts from motor vehicles as indicated by the victimization survey to thefts from motor vehicles as reported to the police was found to be true for the other types of theft, we would conclude that over 500,000 larcenies occurred in Hawaii in 1993. Even if other types of theft occur at closer to three times their reported frequencies as suggested by the national survey, this would translate into over 250,000 thefts in Hawaii in 1993. With only about one-sixth of the reported larcenies being cleared, it can be extrapolated that an arrest may be made for only one in about every 30 larcenies committed in the state. However, this ratio is lower if arrests are *actually* solving substantial numbers of offenses which cannot be cleared due to lack of reporting or lack of resources to investigate all reports.

With 35 percent of reported larcenies in the under \$50 value lost category, theft of property or services not exceeding \$100 in total value being the most frequent arrest charge among recent arrestees for theft, and many survey respondents not reporting a theft to the police because they considered the offense too minor, a pattern of

many small, opportunistic, dismissed by the victim larcenies is a possible explanation.

Information from an interview with a detective from the Honolulu Police Department suggests that a stronger correlation exists between drugs and crime than was revealed by arrest record data. According to police, most thieves buy small amounts of drugs for immediate consumption. In fact, by the time many start looking for their next theft, they probably want their next dose. Hence the finding that few theft arrestees have drugs in their possession. A smaller group of thieves steals for profit.

Based on the arrest and interview data, it appears that thieves are a particular type of criminal. A substantial number of first time offenders finds the theft easy and likes the high from the drugs enough to continue stealing. Even when repeat arrests occur, corrections does not have the types and amounts of resources needed to give the courts the ability to impose meaningful sentences, mandate effective drug treatments, or offer life skills and job training which will provide incentive to a sizable percentage of these offenders. Incarceration is the most secure and most expensive type of sentence. Yet, since most thieves are not violent, they are seldom sentenced to prison.

Thieves tend to stick to their specialty and may even have "moral" reasons for not committing other types of theft. The example given in the interview comes from the crime of burglary, but may serve to illustrate the type of reasoning used by many criminals: some burglars of businesses say they will not steal from homes because it is "wrong".

Interview information also supported our belief that many low value thefts are opportunistic, while adding that the

higher value thefts are generally planned. One reason suggested for the large growth in thefts from motor vehicles is that gangs are using car break-ins as initiation tests.

Thieves target smaller items for which there is a ready local market or which can be easily traded for drugs, such as cash, checks, credit cards, credit card receipts, jewelry, cameras, and VCRs. Checks, credit cards, and receipts are often sold or traded by the original thief. The buyers then use them to commit fraud. Some immigrants are being paid fees to forge checks and receipts. A fairly new, hot target of theft is decorative potted plants, in demand for new subdivisions.

The finding that visitors are more likely to be victims of theft has serious implications for the tourism industry, as well as policy makers, since the State of Hawaii's economy is heavily supported by tourism. The good news here appears that tourists are less likely to be victimized by violent offenders. This finding is supported by reports and studies undertaken by the Crime Prevention Division that show perpetrators of violent offenses in a good number of cases know their victims (Green, et al., 1993, Department of the Attorney General, 1994).

Those items that have been the favorite targets of theft may have increased in price to the point where substantially more offenses are being committed in the highest value category (\$200 or over). The U.S. city average for all items increased 75 percent from 1980 to 1993 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994). In Honolulu, the increase was 93 percent (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). However, the comparable index for audio products declined 4 percent and that for apparel commodities increased 41 percent (24 percent for apparel in Honolulu). The Consumer Price Indexes (CPIs) for

these traditional targets have generally not kept pace with the all-items CPI over the past 15 years, and UCR reports in the 1990's show shifting to clothing and targets in the "miscellaneous"⁴ property type category.

Unfortunately, UCR reports losses by type of property for all Index Crimes only. Although we know that larcenies contributed 52 percent of the total loss in 1993 and removing motor vehicles from the list of property types essentially removes the effect of the crime of motor vehicle theft from the remaining list such that the share contributed by larcenies is increased to 63 percent, 35 percent of the remaining list is contributed by burglaries and less than 2 percent by the violent crime of robbery. It cannot be determined by how much the losses within each property type differ from the overall distribution.

The list of property types contains 11 items. Five of these groups are so small that they totaled less than 6 percent of Index Crime loss in every year from 1979-1993. The "miscellaneous" group contributed about 20 percent throughout the 1980's, 26 percent in 1990, and over 30 percent from 1991-1993. Motor vehicles accounted for 17 percent of the 1993 total loss. The jewelry and precious metals category accounted for 18 percent of 1993's loss; however it may be assumed that this category is more a target of burglary than of theft. Television sets and radios contributed 8 percent of 1993's loss. We would expect more of the television sets to be stolen in burglaries and more of the radios to be lost in theft. Finally, cash/notes and clothing/furs accounted for 8 and 13 percent, respectively, of the 1993 loss. Since we believe that larger portions of these categories were contributed by theft, the amounts lost in each together with the relative changes in the respective Consumer Price Indexes from 1979-1993 are

displayed in Chart 12 (see page 12).

Please note that the Honolulu CPIs have been moved up the scale to start at the same point as the 1979 losses for the respective groups. In these positions, they plot the changes in the CPIs, not the actual values of the CPIs at any time. Because the two CPIs as plotted start at such different levels, the 33 percent total increase in the apparel average does not appear to approach one-third of the 115 percent total increase in the all-items average.

With the exception of a spike in 1989, the loss of cash/notes has not increased. Perhaps people are being more careful and have found better ways to protect their cash. A trend to increased credit card use may have reduced opportunities for cash theft. The value of stolen clothing was up 1,153 percent in the 15-year period, while inflation in this area has been controlled. Meanwhile, the dollar value of stolen television sets and radios increased 41 percent, and 18 percent from 1980-1993. From 1980-1993, the U.S. city average for video and audio products declined 23 percent; for audio products alone, the decline was 4 percent (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994).

It is logical to believe that thieves' efforts are being concentrated on the types of items which have become more valuable. Unfortunately, with only four groups to compare, including cash/notes and "miscellaneous" property, the data can only suggest that this premise may be worthy of further study.

To create conditions which will generally reduce crime is a complex problem. However, it does appear that many thefts are opportunistic. Therefore, the following are some steps that individuals can take to discourage thieves.

SUGGESTIONS

Motor vehicles are the prime target for larceny. If articles or automotive accessories are visible from outside the vehicle, it must be assumed that the risk of theft is higher. This risk can be reduced by locking the items in the trunk or taking them with you. Use common sense: lock your car. Be sure the windows are fully closed. Some thieves have tools that help unlock cars through a minimum of open space. Avoid leaving your car in an unattended lot for an extended time. Consider purchasing, installing, and using an alarm (Hawaii Association of Special Investigation Units, Inc., 1995).

The following are some tips for building managers. Furnish the public areas of offices and condominiums to meet the needs of customers, residents, and guests. Keep furnishings and appointments as simple as you reasonably can. Frequently check to make sure automatically locking doors are working as designed. Consider building users' reports of abnormal conditions on your property with respect. Let consumers know you appreciate their interest and take corrective action promptly. The Crime Prevention Division has an educational video detailing these and other tips available for public check-out.

ENDNOTES

¹ Motor vehicle theft is not included in larceny-theft and is counted separately because of the great volume of thefts in that particular category. All thefts and attempted thefts are counted. Also counted under separate classifications are embezzlement, fraudulent conversion of entrusted property, counterfeiting, obtaining money by false pretenses, larceny by check, and check fraud. Larceny and theft mean the same thing in this program of police reporting to the FBI, known as Uniform Crime Reporting (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1984).

² Although a fourth property crime, arson, was added in 1980, reporting is not as complete as for the original three property crimes, and arson is not included in the summary Index Crime and property crime rates published in *Crime in the United States*. A crime rate is the number of offenses reported to the police for each 100,000 population in their jurisdiction.

³ Hawaii Statutes, updated through 1994 Regular Session of the Hawaii Legislature. Chapter 708, Offenses Against Property Rights Part IV, Theft and Related Offenses

Section 708-830. Theft.

A person commits theft if he does any of the following:

(1) Obtains or exerts unauthorized control over property. He obtains, or exerts control over, the property of another with intent to deprive him of the property.

(2) Property obtained or control exerted through deception. He obtains, or exerts control over, the property of another by deception with intent to deprive him of the property.

(3) Appropriation of property. He obtains, or exerts control over, the property of another which he knows to have been lost or mislaid, or to have been delivered under a mistake as to the nature or amount of the property, the identity of the recipient, or other facts, and, with the intent to deprive the owner of the property, he fails to take reasonable measures to discover and notify him.

(4) Obtaining services by deception. He intentionally obtains services, known by him to be available only for compensation, by deception, false token, or other means to avoid payment for the services. Where compensation for services is ordinarily paid immediately upon the rendering of them, absconding without payment or offer to pay is prima facie evidence that the services were obtained by deception.

(5) Diversion of services. Having control over the disposition of services of another to which he is not entitled, he intentionally diverts those services to his own benefit or to the benefit of a person not entitled thereto.

(6) Failure to make required disposition of funds.

(a) He intentionally obtains property from anyone upon an agreement, or subject to a known legal obligation, to make specified payment or other disposition, whether from the property or its proceeds or from his own property reserved in equivalent amount, and deals with the property as his own and fails to make the required payment or disposition. It does not matter that it is impossible to identify particular property as belonging to the victim at the time of the defendant's failure to make the required payment or disposition. A person's status as an officer or employee of the government or a financial institution is prima facie evidence that he knows his legal obligations with respect to making

payments and other dispositions. If the officer or employee fails to pay or account upon lawful demand, or if an audit reveals a falsification of accounts, it shall be prima facie evidence that he has intentionally dealt with the property as his own.

(b) He obtains personal services from an employee upon agreement or subject to a known legal obligation to make a payment or other disposition of funds to a third person on account of the employment, and he intentionally fails to make the payment or disposition at the proper time.

(7) Receiving stolen property. He intentionally receives, retains, or disposes of the property of another, knowing that it has been stolen, with intent to deprive the owner of the property. It is prima facie evidence that a person knows the property to have been stolen if, being a dealer in property of the sort received, he acquires the property for a consideration which he knows is far below its reasonable value.

(8) Shoplifting.

(a) He conceals or takes possession of the goods or merchandise of any store or retail establishment, with intent to defraud.

(b) He alters the price tag or other price marking on goods or merchandise of any store or retail establishment, with intent to defraud.

(c) He transfers the goods or merchandise of any store or retail establishment from one container to another, with intent to defraud. The unaltered price or name tag or other marking on goods or merchandise, or duly identified photographs thereof, shall be prima facie evidence of value and ownership of such goods or merchandise. Photographs of the goods or merchandise involved, duly identified in writing by the arresting police officer as accurately representing such goods or merchandise, shall

be deemed competent evidence of the goods or merchandise involved and shall be admissible in any proceedings, hearings, and trials for shoplifting, to the same extent as the goods or merchandise themselves.

Section 708-830.5. Theft in the first degree.

(1) A person commits the offense of theft in the first degree if the person commits theft:

- (a) Of property or services, the value of which exceeds \$20,000;
- (b) Of a firearm; or
- (c) Of dynamite or other explosive.

(2) Theft in the first degree is a class B felony.

Section 708-831. Theft in the second degree.

(1) A person commits the offense of theft in the second degree if the person commits theft:

(a) Of property from the person of another;

(b) Of property or services the value of which exceeds \$300;

(c) Of an aquaculture product or part thereof from premises that is fenced or enclosed in a manner designed to exclude intruders and there is prominently displayed on the premises a sign or signs sufficient to give notice and reading substantially as follows: "It is a crime to take or remove products from these premises, Hawaii Revised Statutes section 708-831, theft in the second degree. Violators will be prosecuted.";

(d) Of agricultural equipment, supplies, or products, or part thereof, the value of which exceeds \$100 but does not exceed \$20,000, from premises that are fenced, enclosed, or secured in a manner designed to exclude intruders and there is prominently displayed on the premises a sign or signs sufficient to give notice and reading substantially as follows: "It is

a crime to take or remove agricultural equipment, supplies, or products from these premises, Hawaii Revised Statutes section 708-831, theft in the second degree. Violators will be prosecuted." The sign or signs, containing letters not less than two inches in height, shall be placed not more than 1000 feet apart along the boundary line of the land in a manner and in such position as to be clearly noticeable from outside the boundary line.

(2) Theft in the second degree is a class C felony. A person convicted of committing the offense of theft in the second degree under paragraphs (c) and (d) shall be sentenced in accordance with chapter 706, except that for the first offense, the court may impose a minimum sentence of a fine of at least \$1,000 or twofold damages sustained by the victim, whichever is greater.

Section 708-832. Theft in the third degree.

(1) A person commits the offense of theft in the third degree if the person commits theft:

(a) Of property or services the value of which exceeds \$100; or

(b) Of gasoline, diesel fuel or other related petroleum products used as propellants of any value not exceeding \$200.

(2) Theft in the third degree is a misdemeanor.

Section 708-833. Theft in the fourth degree.

(1) A person commits the offense of theft in the fourth degree if the person commits theft of property or services of any value not in excess of \$100.

(2) Theft in the fourth degree is a petty misdemeanor.

Section 708-833.5. Shoplifting.

A person convicted of committing the offense of shoplifting as defined in section 708-830 shall be sentenced as follows:

(1) In cases involving property the value or aggregate value of which exceeds \$300: as a class C felony, provided that the minimum fine shall be four times the value or aggregate value involved;

(2) In cases involving property the value or aggregate value of which exceeds \$100; as a misdemeanor, provided that the minimum fine shall be three times the value or aggregate value involved;

(3) In cases involving property the value or aggregate value of which is \$100 or less: as a petty misdemeanor, provided that the minimum fine shall be twice the value or aggregate value involved;

(4) If a person has previously been convicted of committing the offense of shoplifting as defined in section 708-830, the minimum fine shall be doubled that specified in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively, as set forth above; provided in the event the convicted person defaults in payment of any fine, and the default was not contumacious, the court may sentence the person to community services as authorized by section 706-605(1)(e).

⁴ Miscellaneous - Items that are not accounted for in a previous listing in the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook* (F.B.I., 1984) would fall into this category. Some general examples are shrubbery, vehicle parts, boats, trailers, airplanes, books, household pets, etc.

Chart 1: Larceny-Theft Offenses by Nature: Subcategories with over 1,000 Offenses per Year, State of Hawaii, 1979-1993

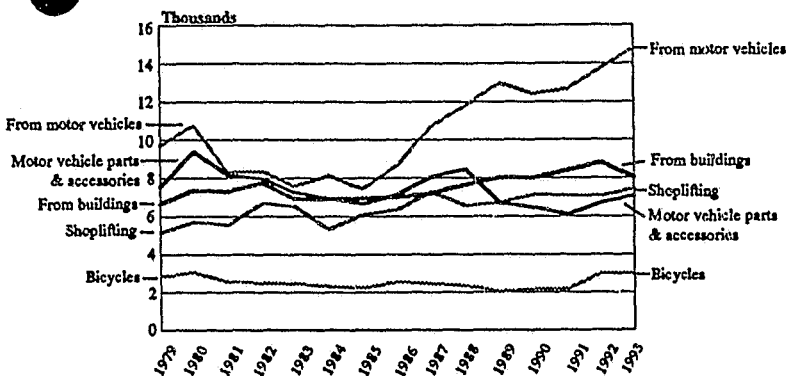


Chart 2: Total Losses Due to Larceny-Theft by Nature of Larcenies State of Hawaii, 1979-1993

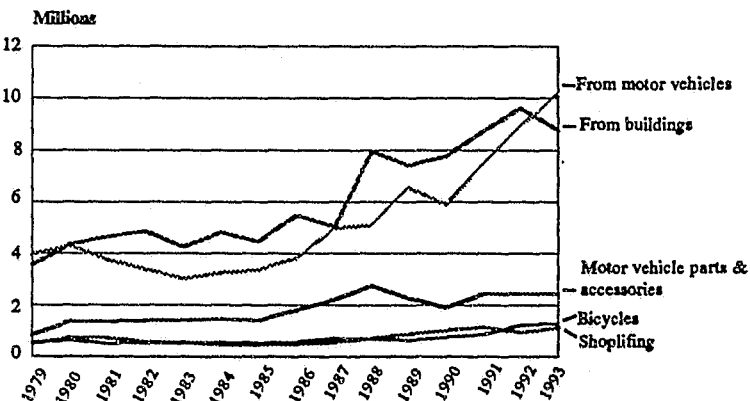


Chart 3: Larceny-Theft Offenses: Subcategories by Value of Items Taken State of Hawaii, 1979-1993

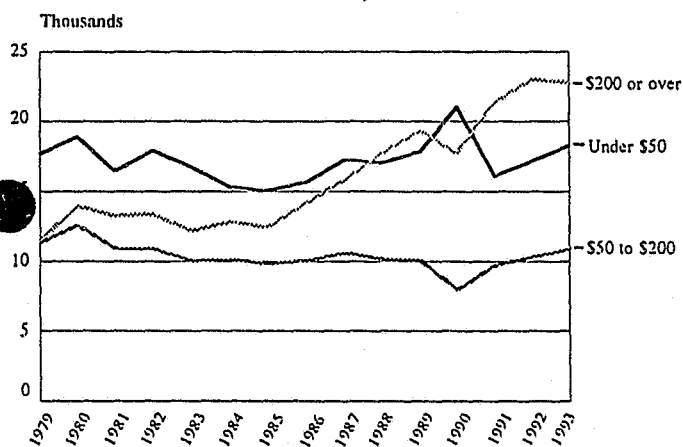


Chart 4: Total Losses Due to Larceny-Theft by Value of Items Taken per Offense, State of Hawaii, 1979-1993

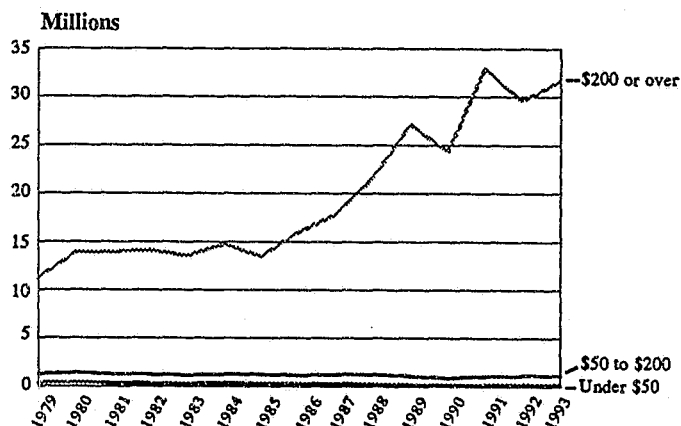


Chart 5: Average Loss per Larceny-Theft by Nature of Larcenies State of Hawaii, 1979-1993

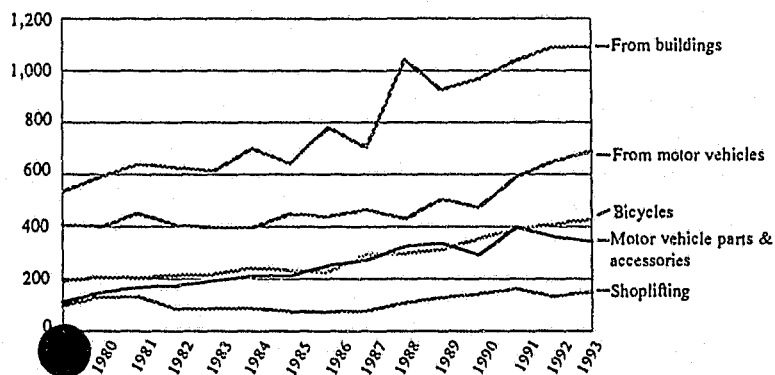
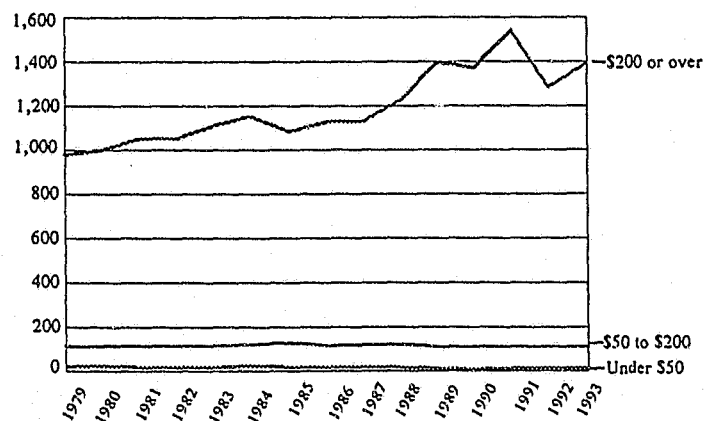
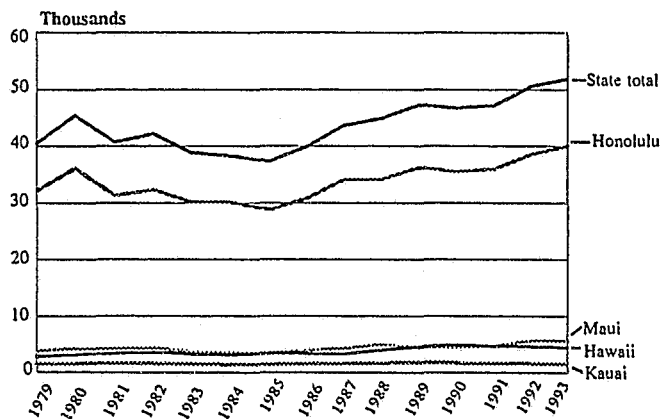


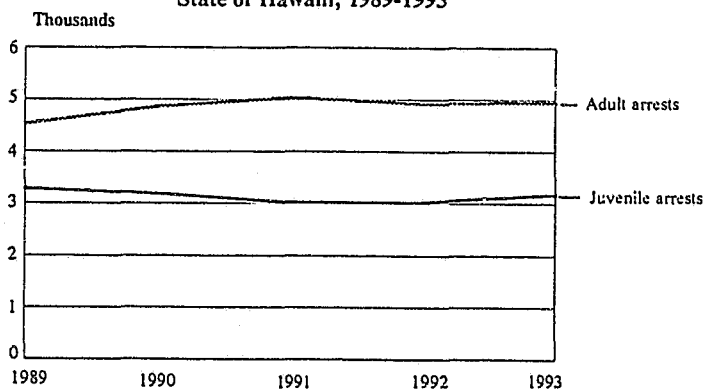
Chart 6: Average Loss per Larceny-Theft by Value of Items Taken State of Hawaii, 1979-1993



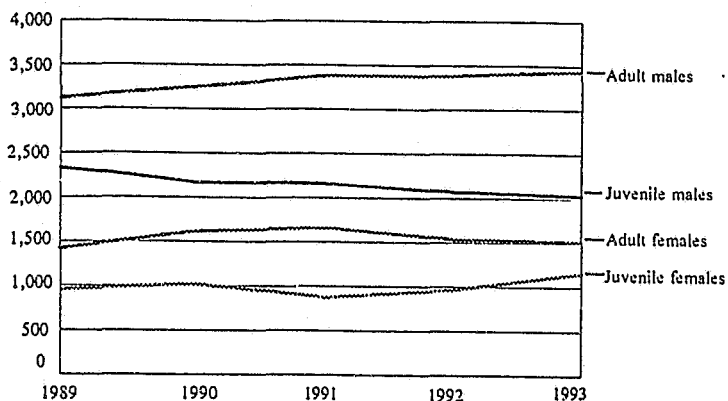
**Chart 7: Larceny-Theft Offenses by County
State of Hawaii, 1979-1993**



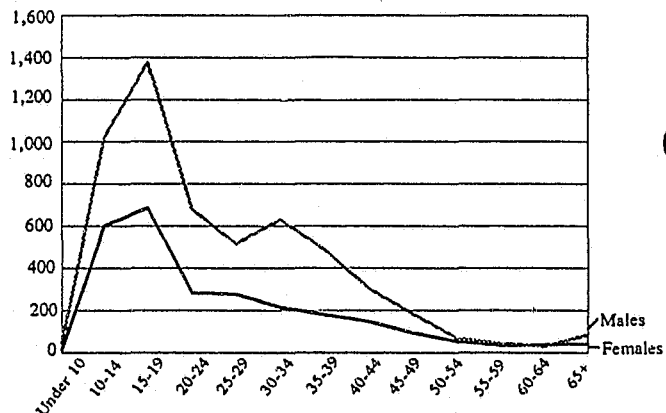
**Chart 8: Adult and Juvenile Arrests for Larceny-Theft
State of Hawaii, 1989-1993**



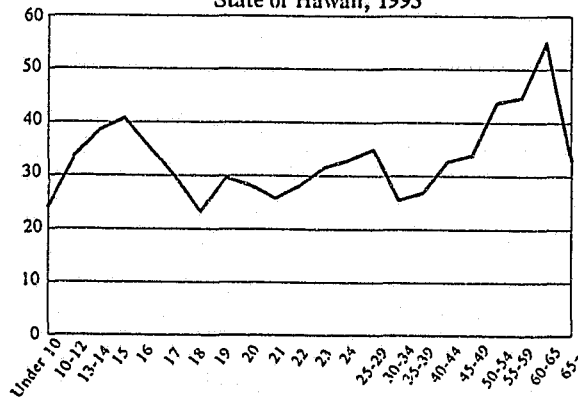
**Chart 9: Adult and Juvenile Arrests for Larceny-Theft by Sex
State of Hawaii, 1989-1993**



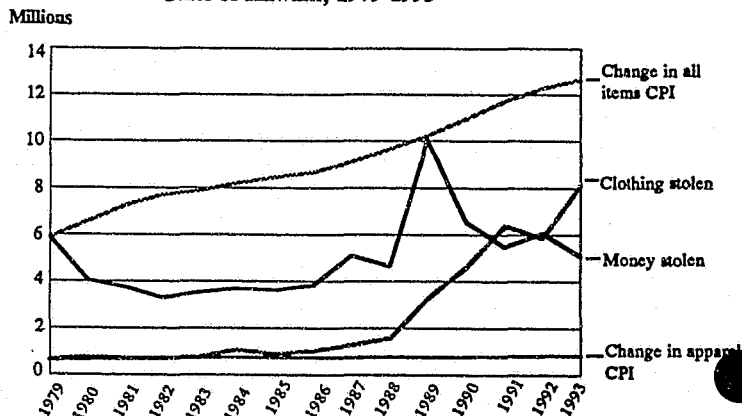
**Chart 10: Arrests for Larceny-Theft by Sex and
Five-Year Age Groups
State of Hawaii, 1993**



**Chart 11: Female Percentage of Arrests for Larceny-Theft by Age
State of Hawaii, 1993**



**Chart 12: Losses of Money and Clothing in Index Crimes
with Relative Changes in the Respective Honolulu CPIs
State of Hawaii, 1979-1993**



APPENDIX

The Subcategories of Larceny-Theft

The FBI subclassifies the offense of larceny-theft in two ways, one by nature of the theft, generally the type of location from which the property is taken, and two, by the estimated value of the property taken. There are nine subcategories by nature of larcenies and three by value of the property stolen. The definitions of the subcategories by nature are as follows:

A. Pocket-picking: The theft of articles from a person by stealth where the victim usually does not become immediately aware of the theft.

Commentary: The theft includes removal of such items as wallets from women's purses and men's pockets and usually occurs in a crowd, public conveyance, or other similar situation to disguise the activity. Theft from a person in an unconscious state, including drunks, are classified in this category. However, if the victim is manhandled or force beyond simple jostling is used to overcome the resistance of the victim, the offense becomes a strong-arm robbery.

B. Purse-snatching: The grabbing or snatching of a purse, handbag, etc., from the custody of an individual.

Commentary: If more force is used than is actually necessary to snatch the purse from the grasp of the person, then a strong-arm robbery has occurred.

C. Shoplifting: The theft by a person (other than an employee) of goods or merchandise exposed for sale.

Commentary: This violation assumes that the offender had legal access to the premise and thus no trespass or unlawful entry was involved. The

category includes thefts of merchandise displayed as a part of the stock in trade outside buildings, such as department

stores, hardware stores, supermarkets, fruit stands, gas stations, etc.

D. Thefts from Motor Vehicles (Except Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts and Accessories): The theft of articles from a motor vehicle, whether locked or unlocked.

Commentary: This type of larceny includes thefts from automobiles, trucks, truck trailers, buses, motorcycles, or other recreational vehicles. It also includes thefts from any area in the automobile or other vehicle including the trunk, glove compartment, or other enclosure. Some of the items included in this category of theft are cameras, suitcases, wearing apparel, packages, etc. Automobile accessories are included under the next category.

E. Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts and Accessories: The theft of any part or accessory attached to the interior or exterior of a motor vehicle in a manner which would make the part an attachment to the vehicle or necessary for the operation of the vehicle.

Commentary: Thefts of motors, transmissions, radios, heaters, hubcaps and wheel covers, manufacturer's emblems, license plates, radio antennas, side-view mirrors, gasoline, tape decks, etc., are included in this category. If items being transported in the vehicle are stolen, the offense is classified as a Theft from a Motor Vehicle (D, above).

NOTE: In larceny situations where the theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories occurs during the same incident as a theft of articles from a motor vehicle, the offense resulting in the greater value of property loss is counted. The dollar losses are combined and recorded in the subcategory with the higher value.

F. Theft of Bicycles: The unlawful taking of any bicycle, tandem bicycle, unicycle, motorized bicycle, or moped.

G. Theft from Buildings: A theft from within a building which is open to the general public and where the offender has legal access.

Commentary: Not included are shoplifting and thefts from coin-operated devices or machines within open buildings as these offenses are counted in separate subcategories. Thefts from buildings include those from such places as churches, restaurants, schools, libraries, public buildings, and other public and professional office buildings during the hours when such facilities are open to the public. A theft from a structure accompanied by a breaking or unlawful entry (trespass) without breaking is classified as burglary and not as larceny-theft.

H. Theft from Coin-Operated Machine: A theft from a device or machine which is operated or activated by the use of a coin.

Commentary: Some examples of such machines are candy, cigarette, and food vending machines; telephone coin-boxes; parking meters; pinball machines; or washers and dryers located in laundromats where no breaking or illegal entry of the building is involved. If a building is broken into or illegally entered and a coin-operated machine in the building is rifled for money and/or merchandise, the incident is classified as burglary.

I. All Other Larceny-Theft Not Specifically Classified: All thefts which do not fit the definitions of the specific categories of larceny listed above.

Commentary: This category includes thefts from fenced enclosures, boats, and airplanes. Thefts of animals, lawnmowers, lawn furniture, handtools, and farm and construction equipment are also included where no breaking or entering of a structure is involved. Additionally, the illegal entry of a tent, tent trailer, or travel trailer

used for recreational purposes followed by a theft or attempted theft, as well as the stealing of airplanes, bulldozers, and motorboats, should be counted as All Other Larceny. Yet another example of a theft to be classified in this category is the taking of gasoline from a self-service gas station and leaving without paying.

The ranges of the subcategories of larceny-theft by estimated value of the items taken are as follows:

- A. \$200 and over
- B. \$50 to \$200
- C. Under \$50

Attempted larceny-thefts are included in the under \$50 class.

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The data for the Crime Trend Series comes from the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR). The UCR in Hawaii collects offense and arrest data from each of the four county law enforcement agencies: Honolulu, Hawaii, Kauai and Maui.

The Research and Statistics Branch of the Crime Prevention Division, Department of the Attorney General, operates as a clearinghouse for the UCR, reporting the county offense and arrest data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and publishing the results annually in *Crime in Hawaii*.

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