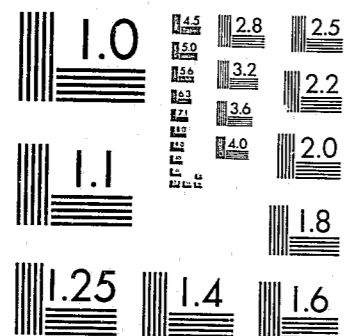


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National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20531

8/3/83

Juvenile Crime In Florida: Myths And Facts

88875

Prepared By:
State Of Florida
Department Of Health And Rehabilitative Services
Children, Youth And Families Program Office
Data Analysis Unit

July, 1982

U.S. Department of Justice
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NCJRS

MAR 25 1983

ACQUISITIONS

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ABSTRACT

Juvenile crime, although a serious problem in Florida and in the nation, has not posted an increase in the last seven years whereas crimes committed by adults have shown an increase.

Despite the encouraging statistics the present perception held by the public and the media is that there has been a dramatic and disproportionate increase in arrests for serious and violent crime attributable to juveniles.

This report presents seven years of juvenile arrest data and dispels the common myth that Florida is in the grip of a massive juvenile crime wave.

MYTH # 1

The juvenile arrest rate in Florida is up.

FACT

The rate of juvenile arrests in Florida per 1000 population at risk has decreased. (see Chart A)

DISCUSSION

The number of arrests per 1000 population at risk (public and private school enrollment grades 4-12, ages 10-17) has declined since 1979 and is also significantly lower than for 1975. In 1975, 82.7 juveniles were arrested for every 1000 "children at risk". In 1981, 69.9 juveniles were arrested per 1000 "children at risk".

The population at risk has declined since 1975. The juvenile population in 1981 was 6.9% lower than for 1975.

CHART A

Trends in the Juvenile Population and Juvenile Arrests

	<u>Population at Risk</u>	<u>Arrests (ages 0-17)</u>	<u>Arrests (ages 0-17) Per 1000 Population at Risk</u>
1981	1,194,763	83,537	69.9
1980	1,178,628	95,239	80.8
1979	1,177,273	100,738	85.6
1978	1,198,286	97,433	81.3
1977	1,215,416	89,666	73.8
1976	1,224,705	94,293	77.0
1975	1,283,574	106,214	82.7

1. "Population at Risk" indicates public and private school enrollment, grades 4-12 (ages 10-17)
2. Seventeen year olds were not counted as juveniles prior to 1974
3. Arrest data obtained from Florida Department of Law Enforcement Annual Report
4. During 1975 status offenses were decriminalized. A significant decline in arrests the following year is most likely attributed to the law change.
5. Summary: The 1981 population at risk was 6.9% lower than for 1975, while the number of juvenile arrests has decreased 21.4% since 1975.

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MYTH # 2

The number of juvenile arrests is increasing.

FACT

The number of juvenile arrests has declined from 106,214 in 1975 to 83,537 in 1981. In fact since 1975, the number of juvenile arrests has decreased 21.4%. (see Chart B and D)

Comparatively, the number of adult arrests have increased from 322,688 in 1975 to 379,917 in 1981, a increase of 17.7%. (see Chart C)

Number of Arrests and Percent Changes for Juveniles

CHART B

1975-1981

OFFENSES	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Percent Change 1976/75	Percent Change 1977/76	Percent Change 1978/77	Percent Change 1979/78	Percent Change 1980/79	Percent Change 1981/80
Murder	43	55	51	59	62	70	76	+27.9	-7.3	+15.7	+5.1	+19.4	+ 8.6
Manslaughter	22	7	8	4	10	11	14	-68.2	+14.3	-50.0	+150.0	+10.0	+27.3
Forcible Rape	200	201	219	254	285	303	263	+0.5	+9.0	+16.0	+12.2	+6.4	-13.2
Robbery	1817	1384	1207	1568	1915	2131	2113	-23.8	-12.8	+29.9	+22.2	+11.3	- 0.8
Aggravated Assault	3198	2920	2443	3305	3493	3601	3123	-8.7	-16.3	+35.3	+5.7	+3.1	-13.3
Breaking & Entering-Burglary	16124	13143	12660	15445	16003	16503	14578	-18.5	-3.7	-22.0	+3.5	+3.5	-11.7
Larceny	25196	23635	21688	25320	26554	26090	23138	-6.2	-8.2	+16.7	+4.7	-1.8	-11.3
Motor Vehicle Theft	2757	1934	1960	2701	2941	3080	2280	-29.9	+1.3	+37.8	+8.9	+3.1	-26.0
Subtotal for Part I Offenses	49357	43279	40236	48656	51263	51799	45585	-12.3	-7.0	+20.9	+5.4	+1.1	-12.0
Total for Part II Offenses	56857	51014	49430	48777	49475	43440	37952	-10.3	-3.1	-1.3	+1.4	-12.2	-12.6
Total for Florida	106214	94293	89666	97433	100738	95239	83537	-11.2	-4.9	+8.7	+3.4	-5.5	-12.3

Source: FDLE Annual Reports (1975-1981)

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Number of Arrests and Percent Changes for Adults

CHART C

1975-1981

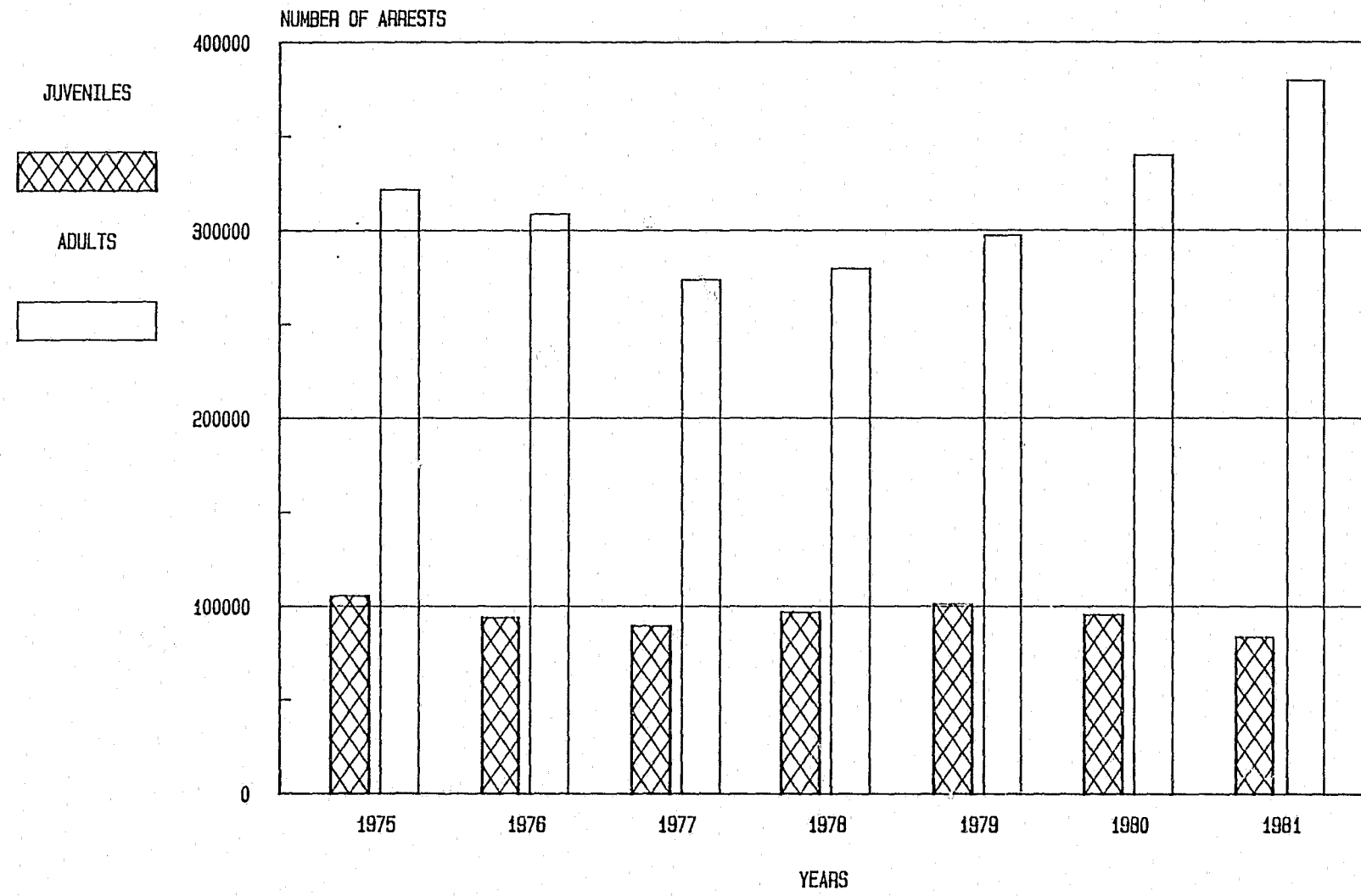
OFFENSES	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1980	Percent Change 1976/75	Percent Change 1977/76	Percent Change 1978/77	Percent Change 1979/78	Percent Change 1980/79	Percent Change 1981/80
Murder	907	732	680	720	782	973	1106	-19.3	-7.1	+5.9	+8.6	+24.4	+13.7
Manslaughter	128	137	119	108	170	219	231	+7.0	-13.1	-9.2	+57.4	+28.8	+ 5.5
Forcible Rape	934	910	899	966	1212	1318	1285	-2.6	-1.2	+7.5	+25.5	+8.7	- 2.5
Robbery	4462	3657	3555	3903	4812	5700	6410	-18.0	-2.8	+9.8	+23.3	+18.5	+12.5
Aggravated Assault	10477	11223	11774	13868	15244	16805	17881	+7.1	+4.9	+17.8	+9.9	+10.2	+ 6.4
Breaking & Entering-Burglary	12107	11572	11440	12681	15146	18290	18751	-4.4	-1.1	+10.8	+19.4	+20.8	+ 2.5
Larceny	34440	32538	31097	30902	34704	40637	44553	-5.5	-4.4	-0.6	+12.3	+17.1	+ 9.6
Motor Vehicle Theft	2497	1713	1540	2283	2546	2807	3316	-21.4	-10.1	+48.2	+11.5	+10.3	+18.1
Subtotal for Part I Offenses	65952	62482	61104	65431	74616	86749	93533	-5.3	-2.2	+7.1	+14.0	+16.3	+ 7.8
Total for Part II Offenses	256736	247676	213468	215363	223041	253234	286384	-3.5	-13.8	+0.9	+3.6	+13.5	+13.1
Total for Florida	322688	310158	274572	280794	297657	339983	379917	-3.9	-11.5	+2.3	+6.0	+14.2	+11.7

Source: FDCL Annual Report (1975-1981)

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CHART D

COMPARISON OF ADULT AND JUVENILE ARRESTS



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MYTH # 3

Juvenile arrests account for a large and growing proportion of total arrests.

FACT

Juvenile arrests account for a decreasing proportion of total arrests. (see Chart B, C, D and E)

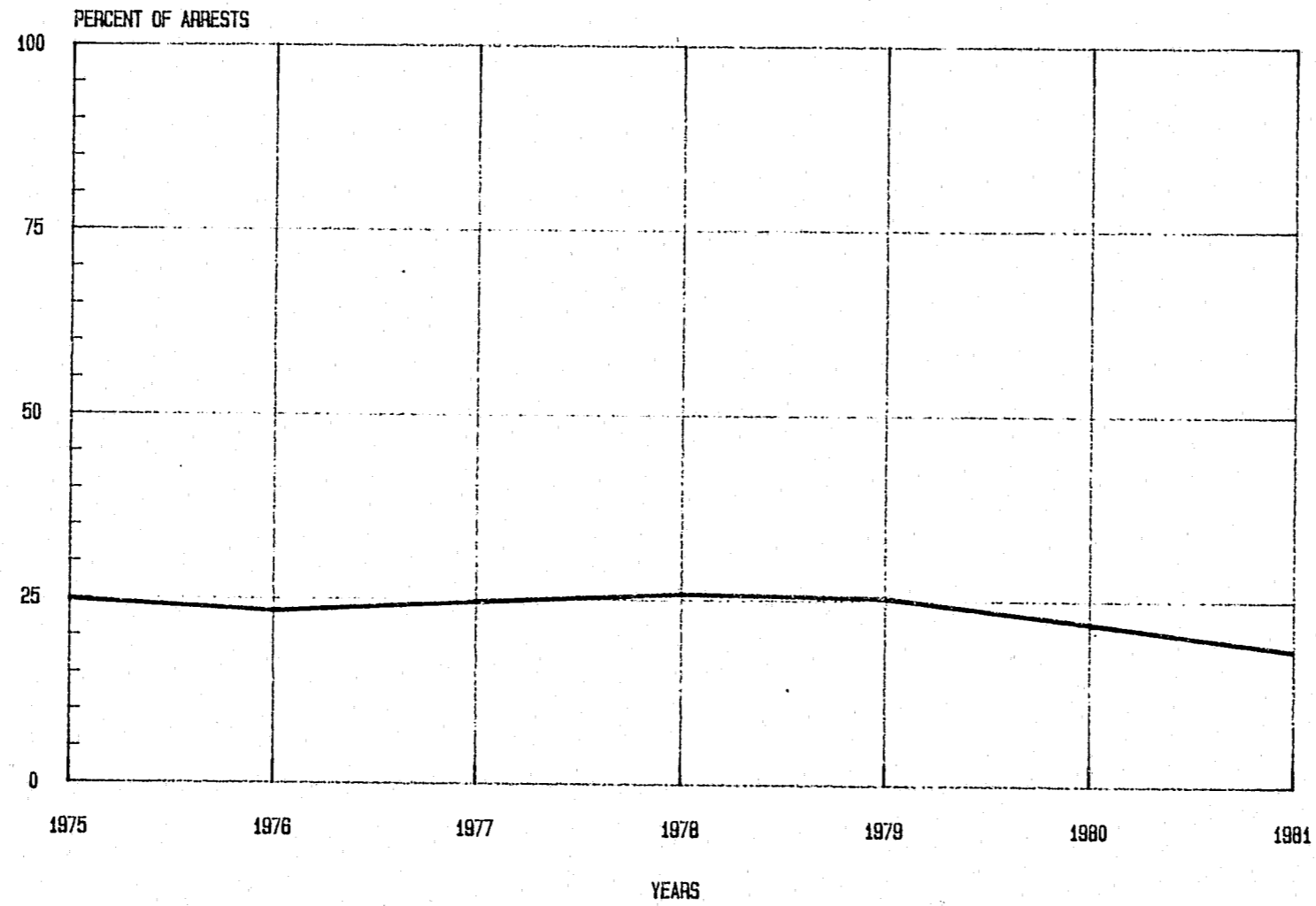
DISCUSSION

In 1975, juveniles represented 24.8% of all arrests in Florida. In 1981, 18.0% of all those arrested were juveniles.

This is contrary to the present public perception that juveniles are responsible for the vast majority of arrests.

CHART E

PROPORTION OF TOTAL ARRESTS
JUVENILES



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July 8, 1982

MYTH #4

There is a disproportionate and dramatic increase in serious and violent crime committed by juveniles.

FACT

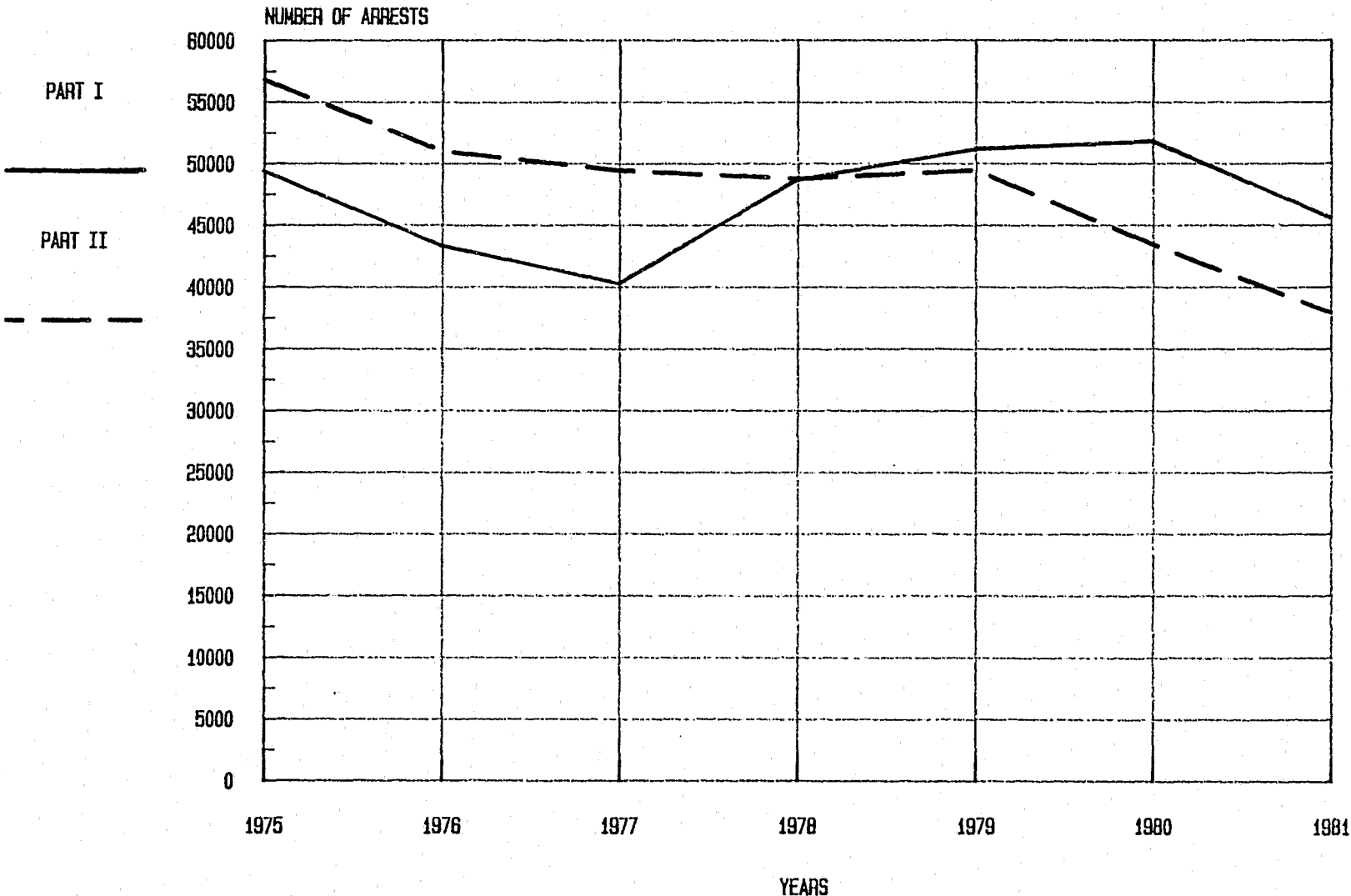
The number of juveniles arrested for Part I offenses (considered most serious, but not necessarily violent) began to rise in 1978, but has since declined in 1981. (see Chart F)

The proportion of all juvenile arrests for Part I offenses has gradually increased since 1975. Whereas the actual number of arrests for serious offenses decreased by over 4000 arrests. The proportion of all adult arrests for Part I offenses has also increased since 1975. Unlike juveniles, however, the increase in the proportion of Part I arrests for adults was the result of an increase of 28,000 arrests. In 1975 46.5% of juvenile arrests were Part I offenses whereas 20.4% of adult arrests were for Part I offenses. In 1981, this percentage increased to 54.6% for juveniles and to 24.6% for adults. (see Chart F, G and H)

The proportion of Part I arrests attributed to juveniles varies considerably among offenses. (see Chart I-1 through I-7) For example, in 1981 juveniles accounted for 43.7% of all arrests for burglary but for only 6.4% of all arrests for murder and manslaughter.

CHART F

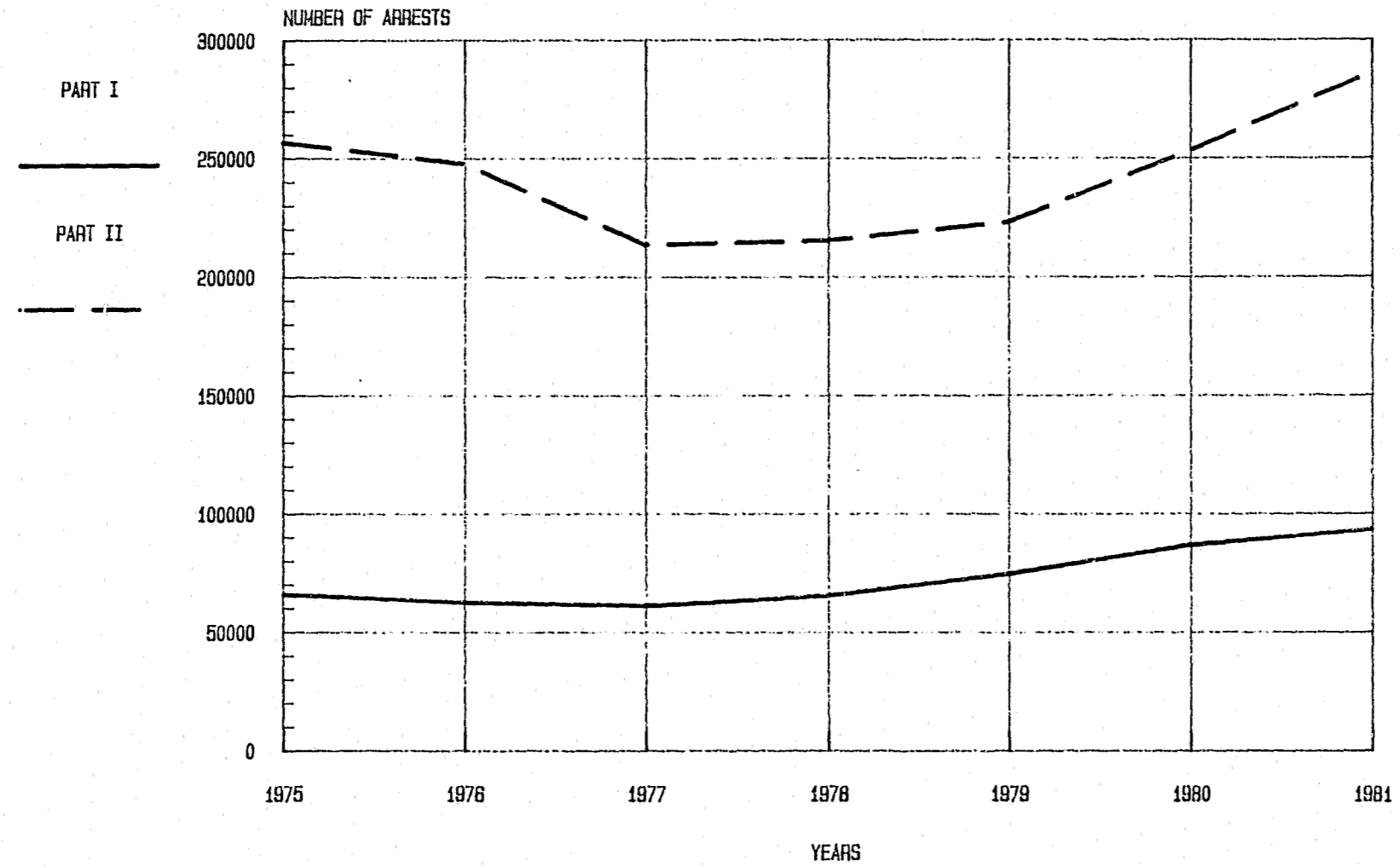
JUVENILE ARRESTS BY OFFENSE TYPE



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July 8, 1982

CHART G

ADULT ARRESTS BY OFFENSE TYPE

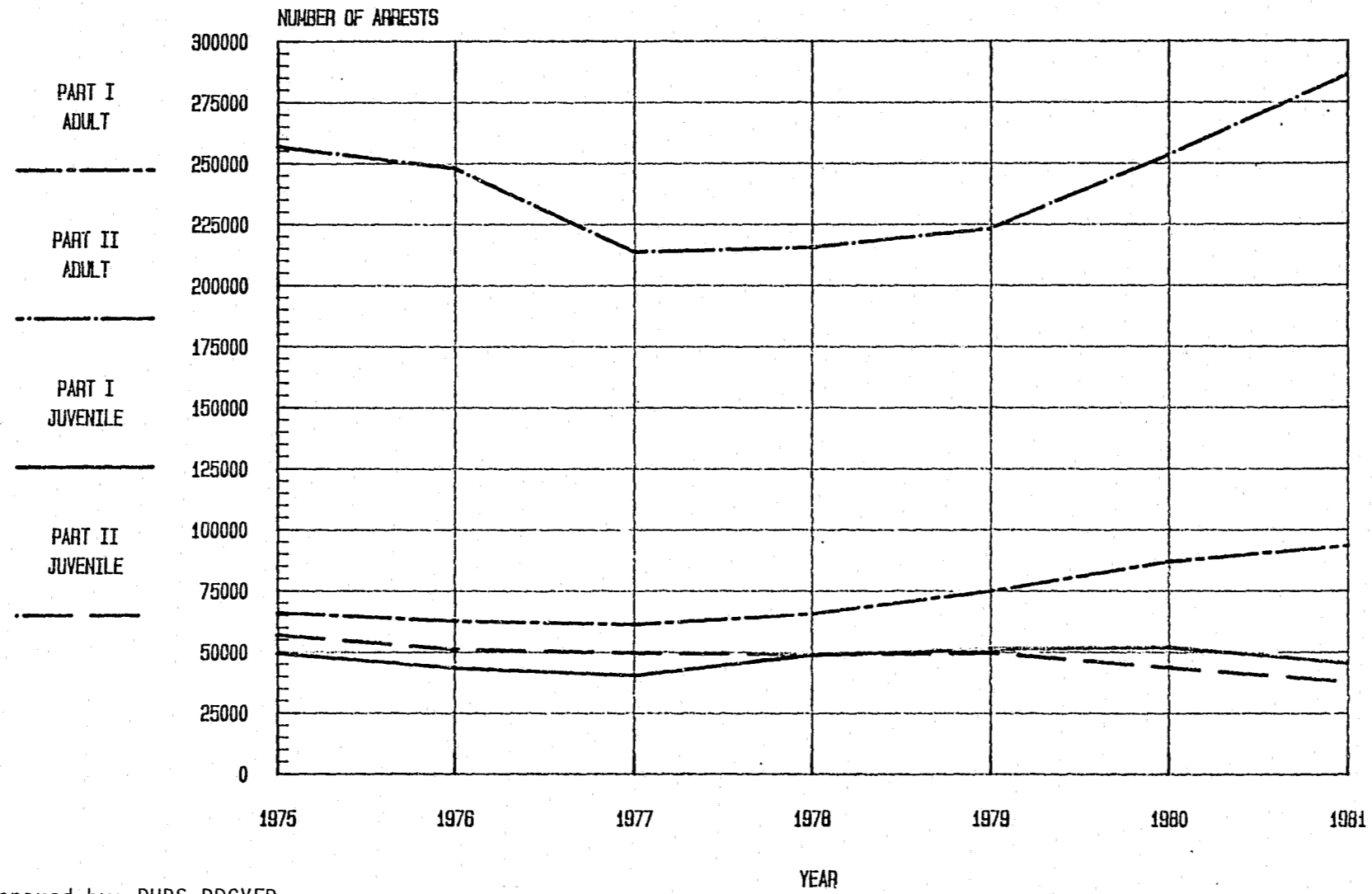


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CHART H

ADULT AND JUVENILE ARRESTS BY OFFENSE

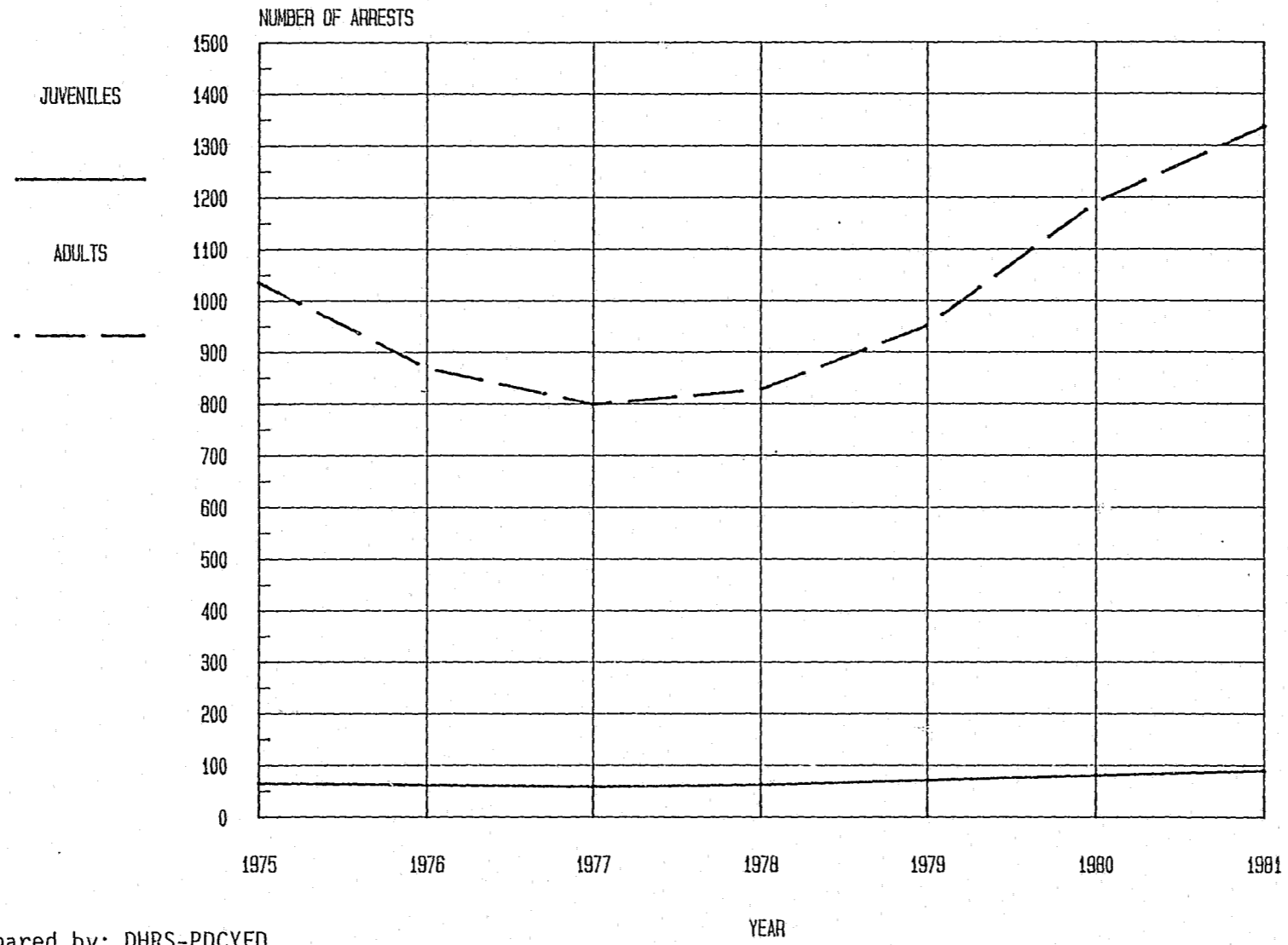
PART I AND PART II



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CHART I-1

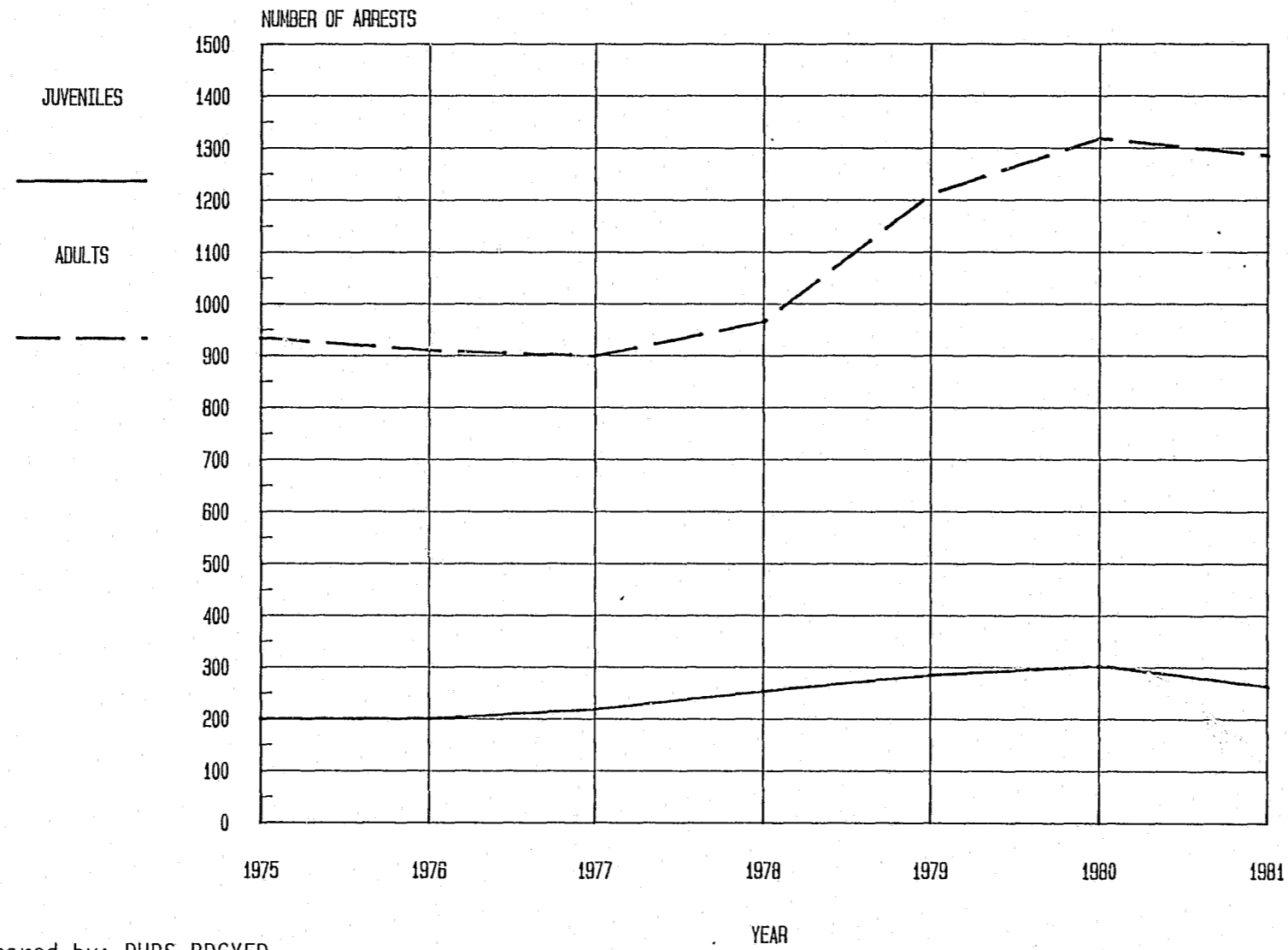
ARRESTS FOR MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON



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CHART I-2

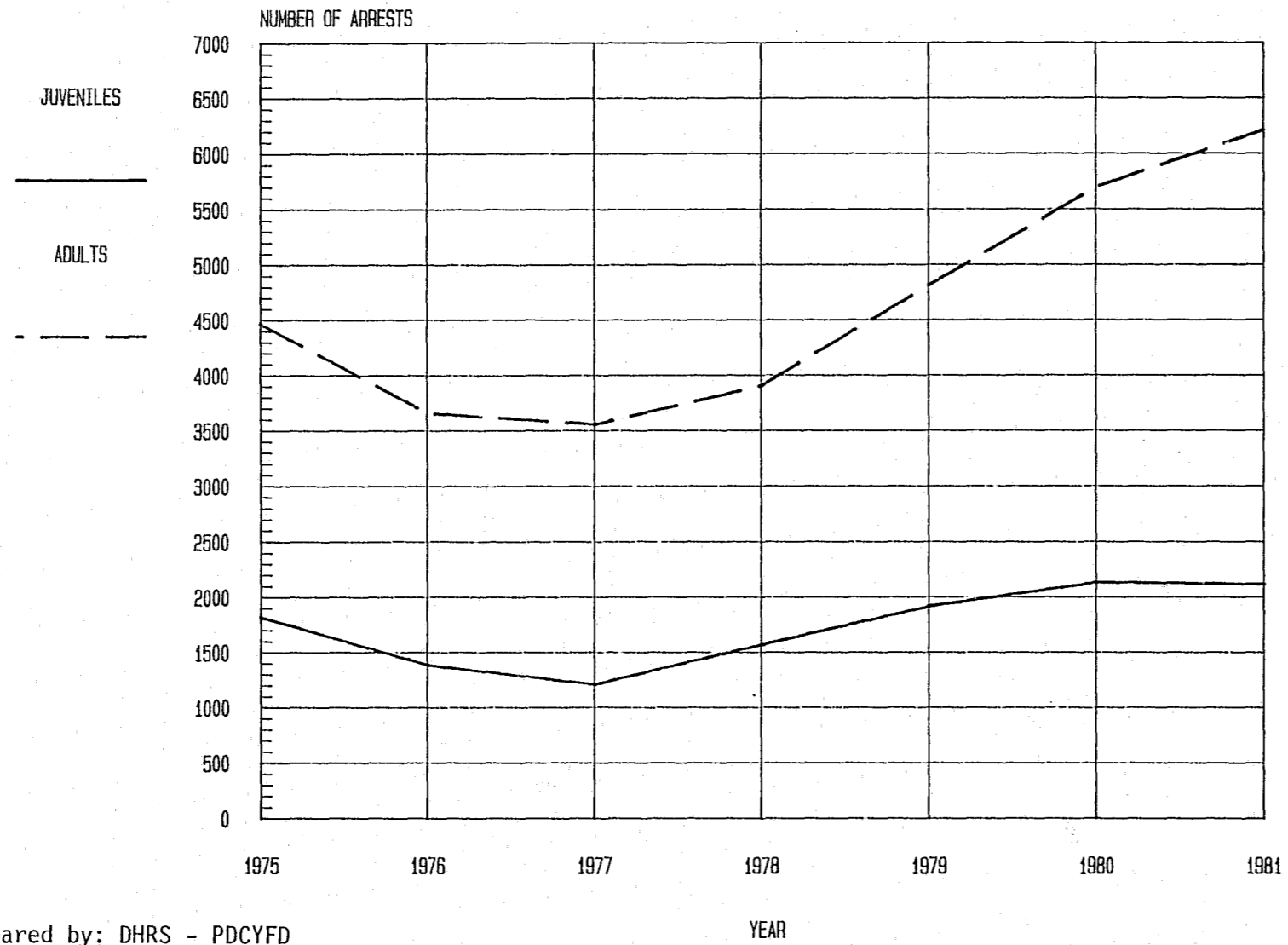
ARRESTS FOR RAPE ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON



Prepared by: DHRS-PDCYFD
July 8, 1982

CHART I-3

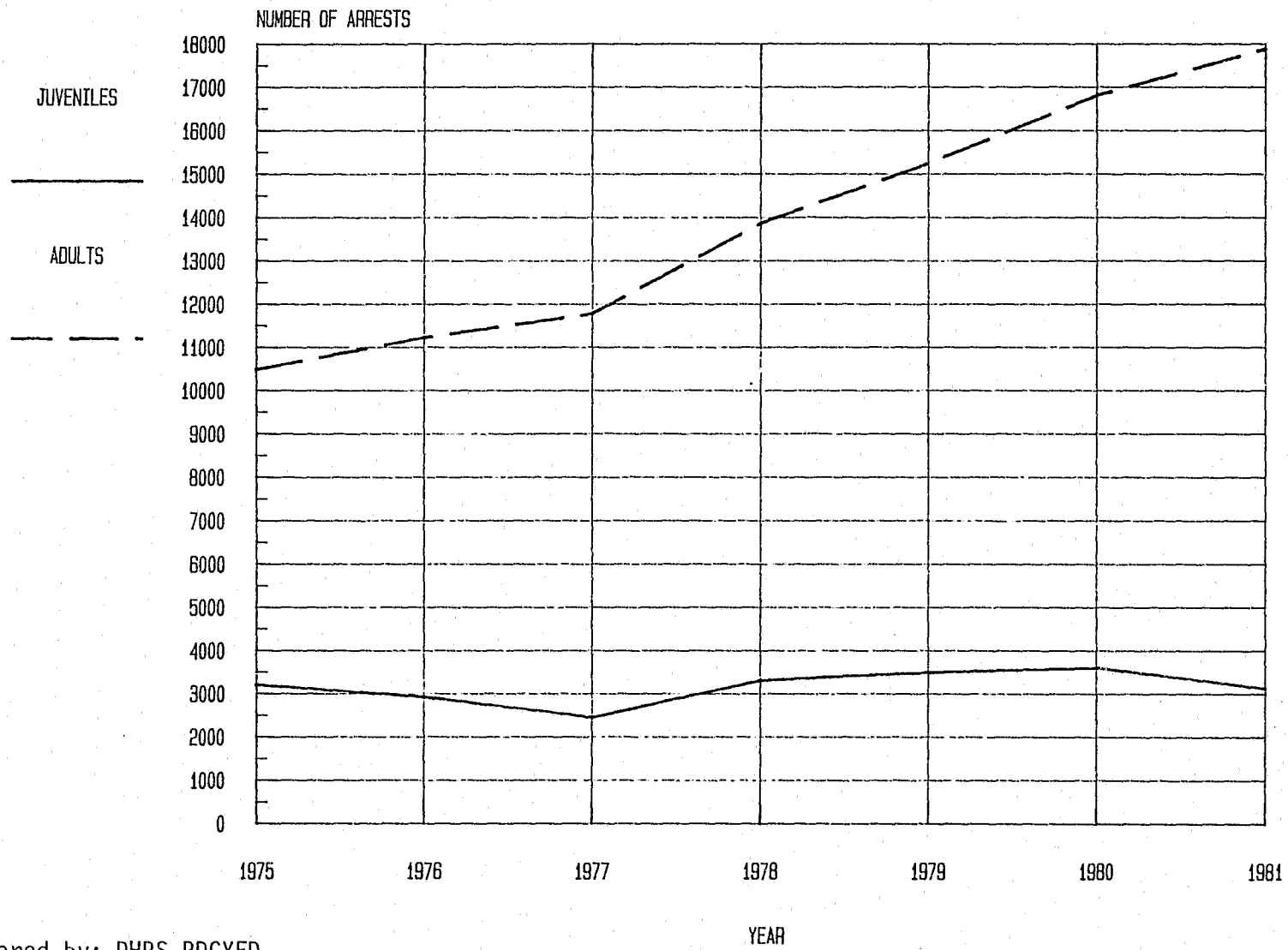
ARRESTS FOR ROBBERY
ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON



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CHART I-4

ARRESTS FOR AGGRAVATED ASSAULT ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON

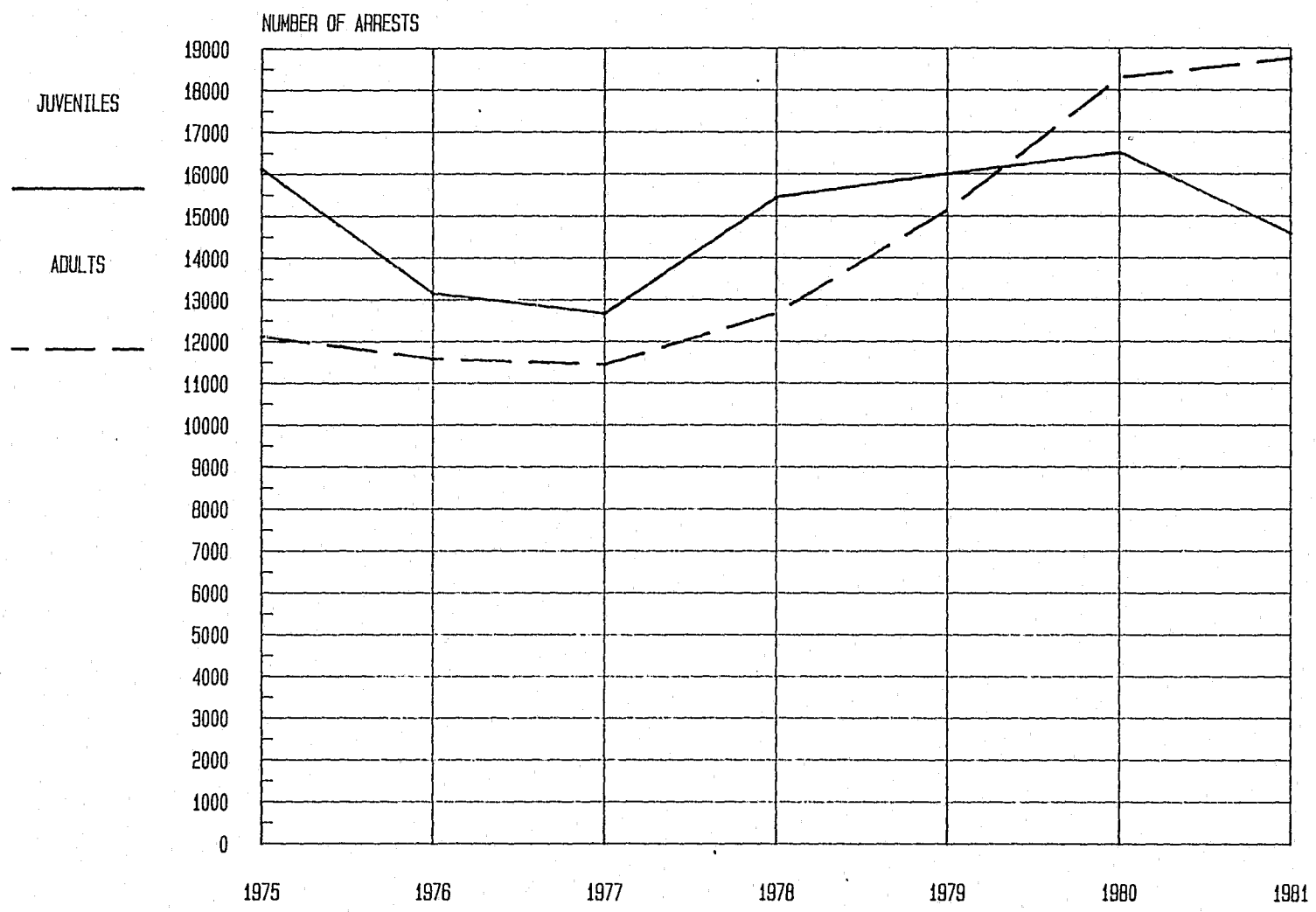


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CHART I-5

ARRESTS FOR BREAKING AND ENTERING

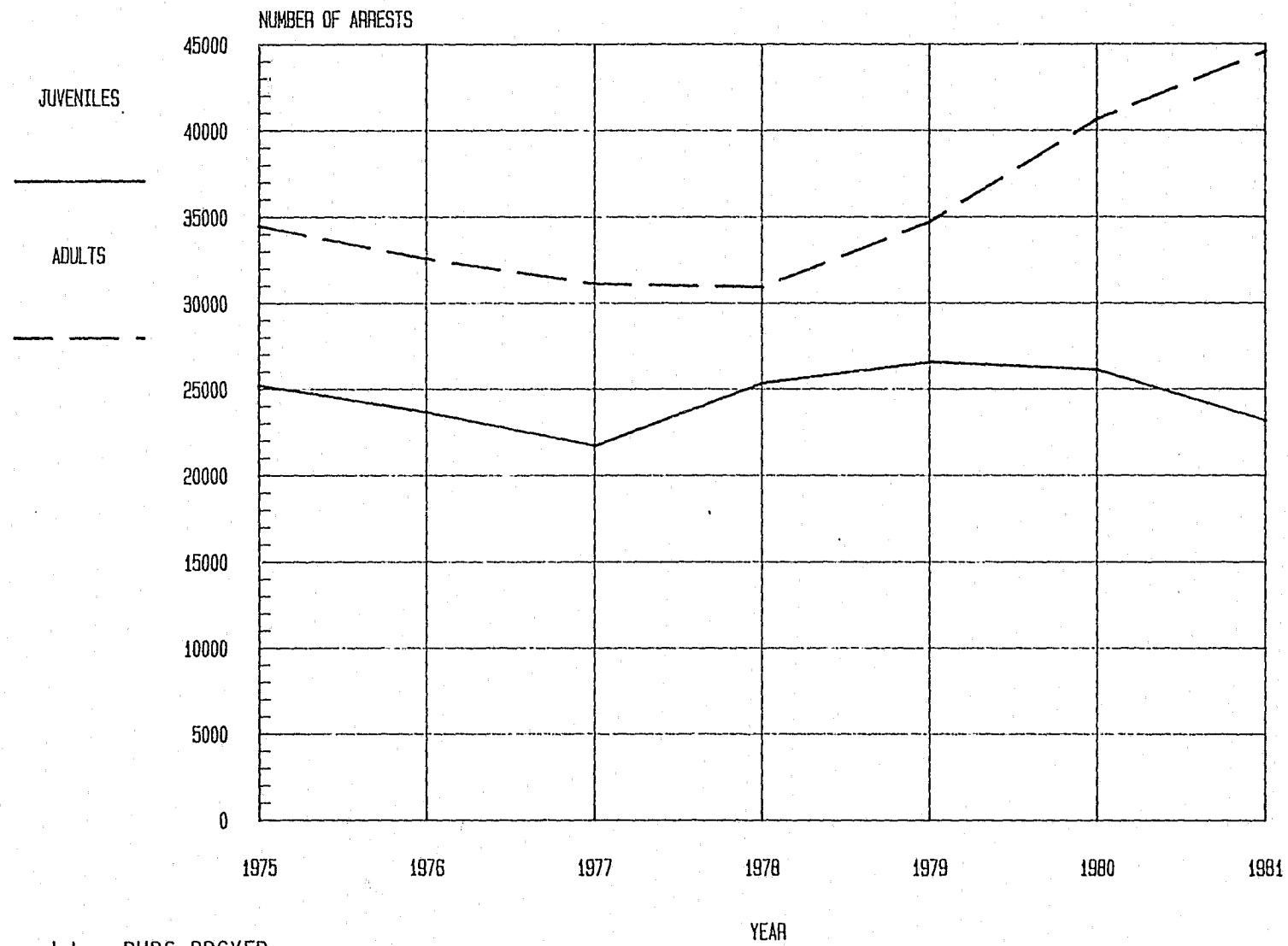
ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON



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CHART I-6

ARRESTS FOR LARCENY
ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON

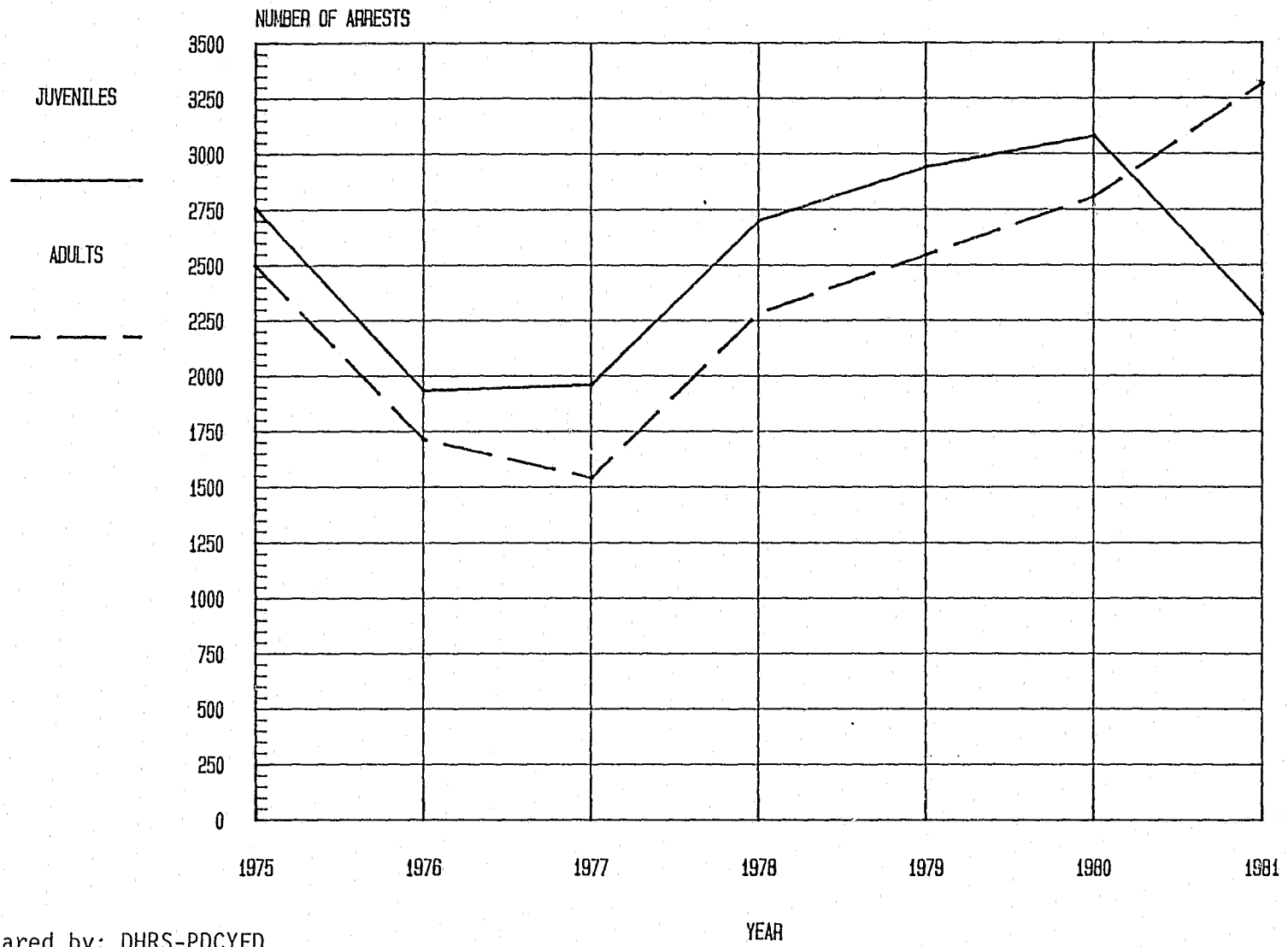


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CHART I-7

ARRESTS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

ADULT AND JUVENILE COMPARISON



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MYTH #5

The volume of juvenile arrests accurately reflect the number of reported crimes committed by juveniles.

FACT

Arrests tend to over represent the amount of reported crime committed by juveniles.

DISCUSSION

Forty-four percent of the arrests recorded for burglary in 1981 involved a juvenile. Is it reasonable to assume that 44% of all burglaries are committed by juveniles?

The Florida Department of Law Enforcements records, for each Part I offense, the percent of reported offenses in each category that were designated as cleared. Operationally, law enforcement agencies record a crime as cleared when they believe they know who the offender is. Some clearances occur without an arrest and include cases where witnesses or victims decline to testify, the offender is being prosecuted by another jurisdiction, the offender admits to a number of crimes but is not arrested for each separate crime, or the offender is unavailable. Consequently for many of the crime categories, there are more clearances than arrests. (see Chart J)

One immediately noticable feature of the arrest/clearance comparison is that there are more arrests than clearances for murder and robbery. A possible explanation may be that a group of offenders act together to commit a single offense; hence, two or more arrests may clear only one reported offense. Intuitively, this explanation seems more plausible for robbery than for murder. The relatively low ratios of arrests to clearances for rape and aggravated assault may be the result of the difficulty in getting victims to follow through with prosecutions.

Although Chart J is based on 1981 data only, previous years also show similar arrest/clearance ratios with more murder and robbery arrests being recorded than clearances and with comparatively low ratios for rape and aggravated assault.

DISCUSSION (cont.)

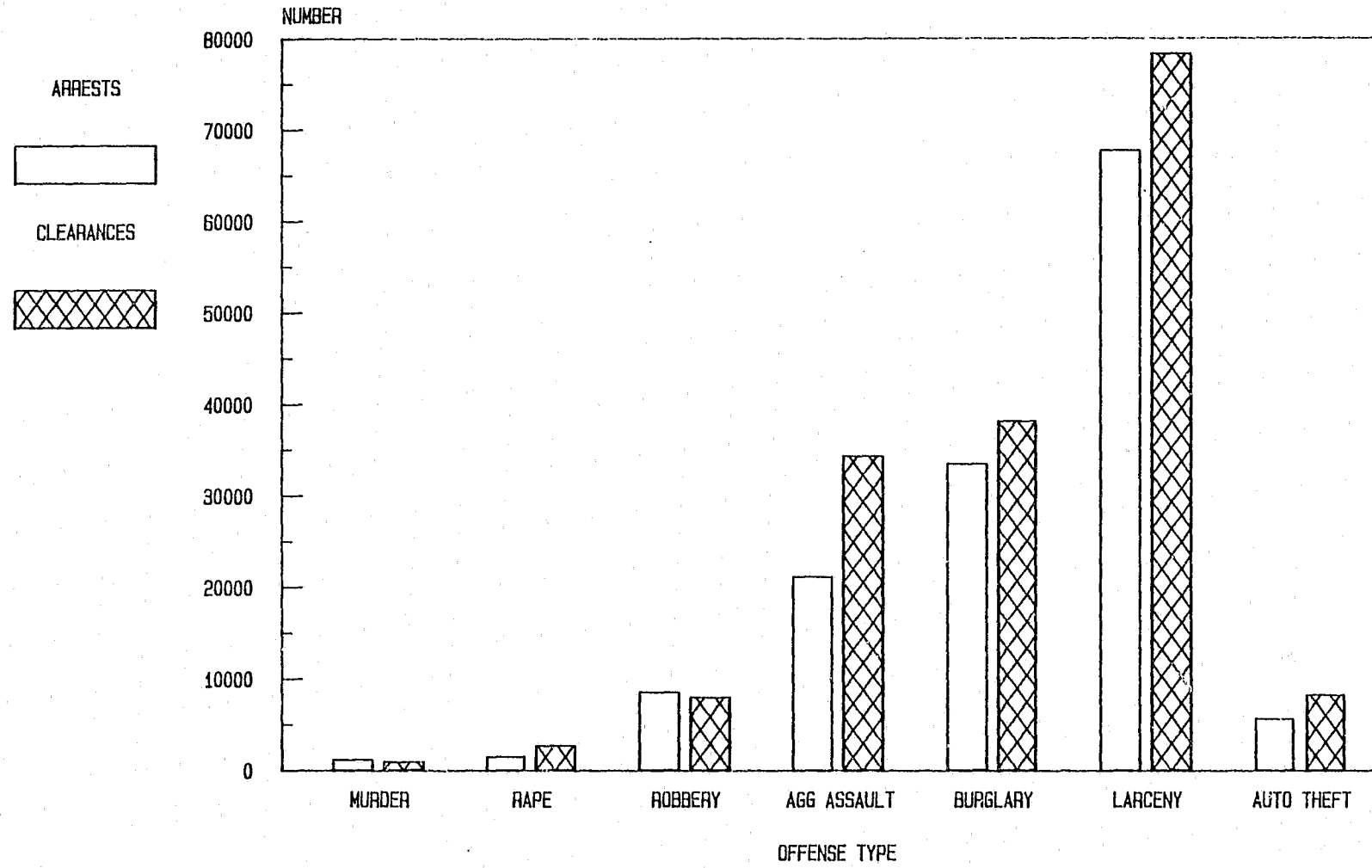
The purpose of this discussion has been to provide background for an analysis of arrest and clearance comparisons for juveniles. Chart K compares the number of arrests involving juveniles to the number of clearances involving juveniles for all Part I offenses for 1978-1981. As shown, there is only one instance in which there were more clearances than arrests (i.e., the rape category for 1978). The overwhelming picture is one of more arrests of juveniles being recorded than clearances involving juveniles being reported. There are a number of possible explanations which may help explain this finding. One possible explanation rests on recent research which shows that juveniles typically commit crimes in groups. A second possible explanation may relate to the investigatory process and the rules of evidence in juvenile court. It may be that juveniles are arrested and detained more readily than adults since juveniles are not subject to rigid rules of evidence and are not subject to bail.

It is very difficult to know the extent to which these possible explanations account for the difference in juvenile arrests and clearances. Despite this, it is clear that arrests, the most frequently cited measure of juvenile criminal behavior, tends to over represent the amount of crime committed by juveniles.

CHART J

ARRESTS AND CLEARANCES, PART I, 1981

(ADULT AND JUVENILE)

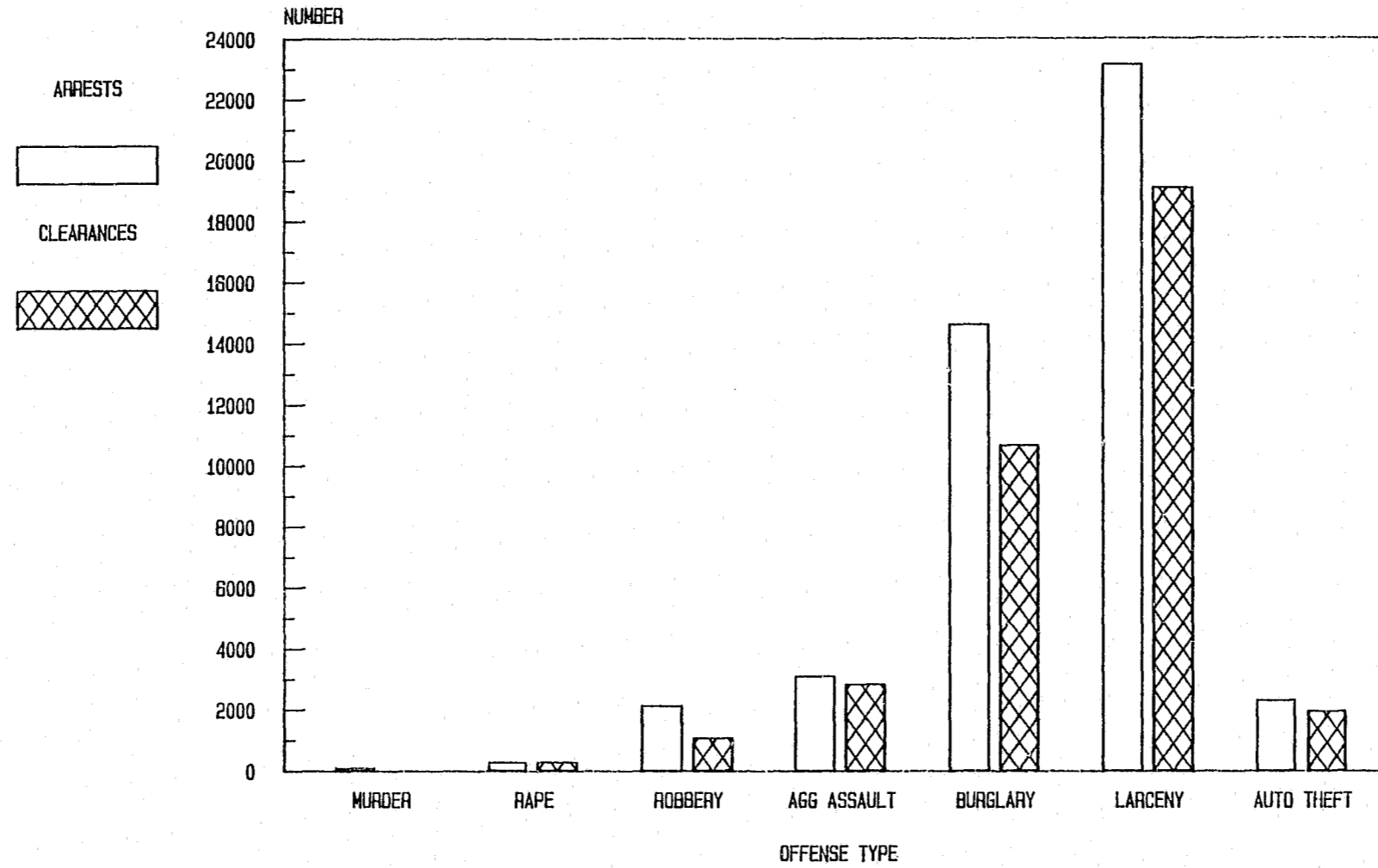


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CHART K

ARRESTS AND CLEARANCES, PART I, 1981

(JUVENILE ONLY)



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MYTH # 6

Juvenile crime is rapidly increasing in Florida's major metropolitan areas.

FACT

Every Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area identified in Florida except Leon County and Duval County experienced a substantial decline in the number of juvenile arrests. (see Chart L)

CHART L

Adult and Juvenile Arrests
in Florida SMSA Counties

This data was compiled using the FDLE Crime in Florida Annual Reports, Vols. 1975-1981.

The definition of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) is either a city with at least 50,000 inhabitants or a city and county having a combined population of at least 75,000 with a population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile. Since this report uses data from 1975 to 1981, the SMSA counties identified are those that met the definition in 1975.

Alachua				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+78.8%	-	-10.9%
1981	84.9% (4,761)	+ 9.1%	15.1% (847)	-31.7%
1980	79.9% (4,365)	+27.6%	22.1% (1,241)	+33.3%
1979	78.6% (3,420)	+ 9.7%	21.4% (931)	-11.2%
1978	74.8% (3,117)	+ .8%	25.2% (1,048)	+ 8.9%
1977	76.3% (3,091)	+ 1.0%	23.7% (962)	-10.0%
1976	74.1% (3,059)	+14.9%	25.9% (1,069)	+12.4%
1975	73.7% (2,663)	-	26.3% (951)	-

Brevard				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	-15.9%	-	-25.6%
1981	70.7% (5,318)	+11.0%	29.3% (2,205)	- 5.2%
1980	67.3% (4,789)	- 4.8%	32.7% (2,326)	-14.5%
1979	64.9% (5,028)	- 3.3%	35.1% (2,721)	+ 7.3%
1978	67.2% (5,200)	+20.1%	32.8% (2,536)	+28.1%
1977	68.6% (4,331)	-14.7%	31.4% (1,980)	- 9.2%
1976	70.0% (5,077)	-19.7%	30.0% (2,180)	-26.5%
1975	68.1% (6,324)	-	31.9% (2,964)	-

Broward				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+50.9%	-	- .5%
1981	80.7% (42,143)	+20.8%	19.3% (10,049)	-13.1%
1980	75.1% (34,888)	+30.5%	24.9% (11,560)	- 8.4%
1979	68.0% (26,739)	+ 9.8%	32.0% (12,585)	+12.2%
1978	68.5% (24,342)	+ 4.1%	31.5% (11,215)	+ 6.5%
1977	70.0% (23,389)	-18.0%	30.0% (10,526)	+ 3.3%
1976	73.7% (28,540)	+ 2.2%	26.3% (10,192)	+ .9%
1975	73.4% (27,927)	-	26.6% (10,098)	-

Dade				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+ 3.8%	-	-36.9%
1981	80.2% (62,496)	+28.8%	19.8% (15,405)	-13.3%
1980	73.2% (48,525)	+ 7.7%	26.8% (17,759)	-12.7%
1979	68.9% (45,051)	- 3.0%	31.1% (20,349)	+16.9%
1978	72.7% (46,436)	-10.7%	27.3% (17,403)	+50.0%
1977	81.8% (52,000)	- 9.8%	18.2% (11,600)	-32.3%
1976	77.1% (57,641)	- 4.3%	22.9% (17,146)	-29.7%
1975	71.2% (60,214)	-	28.8% (24,399)	-

Duval				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+ 4.1%	-	+65.4%
1981	84.1% (30,046)	+ .3%	15.9% (5,687)	-19.3%
1980	81.0% (29,955)	+ 9.8%	19.0% (7,049)	- 9.6%
1979	77.8% (27,288)	+ 7.9%	22.2% (7,796)	+ .3%
1978	76.5% (25,296)	- .3%	23.5% (7,771)	- 7.2%
1977	75.2% (25,370)	-15.5%	24.8% (8,375)	+ 55.8%
1976	84.8% (30,024)	+ 4.0%	15.2% (5,376)	+ 56.4%
1975	89.4% (28,858)	-	10.6% (3,438)	-

Escambia				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+16.7%	-	-42.2%
1981	86.4% (11,213)	+ 5.5%	13.6% (1,764)	-17.9%
1980	83.2% (10,628)	+12.1%	16.8% (2,149)	- 2.2%
1979	81.2% (9,483)	+ 1.4%	18.8% (2,197)	+ 4.3%
1978	81.6% (9,356)	+ 2.4%	18.4% (2,107)	- 1.1%
1977	81.1% (9,140)	+ 3.5%	18.9% (2,130)	- 4.2%
1976	79.9% (8,834)	- 8.1%	20.1% (2,223)	- 27.1%
1975	75.9% (9,608)	-	24.1% (3,050)	-

Hillsborough				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+ .4%	-	- 5.2%
1981	74.9% (22,134)	+ .5%	25.1% (7,419)	-11.4%
1980	72.5% (22,027)	+22.0%	27.5% (8,372)	+ 2.3%
1979	68.8% (18,053)	+ 5.7%	31.2% (8,186)	- 7.9%
1978	65.8% (17,073)	- 6.2%	34.2% (8,888)	- 5.4%
1977	65.9% (18,194)	- 1.1%	34.1% (9,394)	+16.6%
1976	69.5% (18,397)	-16.5%	31.5% (8,060)	+ 3.0%
1975	73.8% (22,038)	-	26.2% (7,824)	-

Lee				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+23.4%	-	-36.1%
1981	87.1% (8,782)	+10.9%	12.9% (1,304)	-21.8%
1980	82.6% (7,916)	- 2.9%	17.4% (1,667)	-22.9%
1979	79.0% (8,151)	+11.1%	21.0% (2,163)	+14.5%
1978	79.5% (7,337)	+ 1.5%	20.5% (1,889)	+ 2.1%
1977	79.6% (7,228)	+18.1%	20.4% (1,850)	- 6.7%
1976	75.5% (6,123)	-13.9%	24.5% (1,982)	- 2.9%
1975	77.7% (7,115)	-	22.3% (2,042)	-

Leon				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+32.6%	-	+26.3%
1981	80.7% (4,413)	+ 7.2%	19.3% (1,053)	- 5.9%
1980	78.6% (4,116)	+ 4.2%	21.4% (1,119)	+ 1.2%
1979	78.1% (3,952)	+ 7.1%	21.9% (1,106)	-10.2%
1978	75.0% (3,690)	+ 4.7%	25.0% (1,231)	+ .7%
1977	74.3% (3,525)	+12.2%	25.7% (1,222)	+24.9%
1976	76.3% (3,143)	- 5.6%	23.7% (978)	+17.3%
1975	80.0% (3,328)	-	20.0% (834)	-

Orange				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+23.9%	-	-52.9%
1981	83.0% (17,507)	+ 6.2%	17.0% (3,584)	+ 1.6%
1980	82.4% (16,484)	+18.9%	17.6% (3,527)	- 3.2%
1979	79.2% (13,866)	+ 8.1%	20.8% (3,642)	-21.0%
1978	73.6% (12,828)	+11.9%	26.4% (4,612)	-11.3%
1977	68.8% (11,466)	-28.9%	31.2% (5,199)	-30.0%
1976	68.5% (16,133)	+14.2%	31.5% (7,429)	- 2.3%
1975	65.0% (14,127)	-	35.0% (7,605)	-

Palm Beach				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+29.8%	-	-16.4%
1981	80.3% (28,343)	+16.5%	19.7% (6,960)	- 5.4%
1980	76.8% (24,328)	+27.0%	23.2% (7,356)	+ 2.2%
1979	72.7% (19,160)	+15.2%	27.3% (7,198)	- 3.3%
1978	69.1% (16,636)	+ 9.6%	30.9% (7,442)	+16.7%
1977	70.4% (15,185)	-21.1%	29.6% (6,376)	- 3.2%
1976	74.5% (19,235)	-11.9%	25.5% (6,585)	-20.9%
1975	72.4% (21,844)	-	27.6% (8,324)	-

Pinellas				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+19.1%	-	-36.9%
1981	75.4% (21,397)	+12.5%	24.6% (6,986)	-18.1%
1980	69.0% (19,017)	+ 2.4%	31.0% (8,532)	-10.4%
1979	66.1% (18,567)	+14.6%	33.9% (9,526)	- .9%
1978	62.8% (16,209)	+24.3%	37.2% (9,612)	- 3.2%
1977	56.8% (13,041)	- 9.9%	43.2% (9,928)	+ 1.1%
1976	59.6% (14,478)	-19.4%	40.4% (9,820)	-11.4%
1975	61.9% (17,968)	-	38.1% (11,078)	-

Polk				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	- 2.2%	-	-43.6%
1981	85.1%(10,956)	+ .6%	14.9%(1,913)	.0%
1980	85.1%(10,888)	+17.1%	14.9%(1,913)	- 5.5%
1979	82.1%(9,295)	+ 3.5%	17.9%(2,024)	+ 9.9%
1978	83.0%(8,982)	+ 7.2%	17.0%(1,842)	+12.9%
1977	83.7%(8,376)	-19.3%	16.3%(1,631)	-48.0%
1976	76.8%(10,381)	- 7.3%	23.2%(3,136)	- 7.5%
1975	76.8%(11,203)	-	23.2%(3,389)	-

Sarasota				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+92.9%	-	-40.1%
1981	88.2%(10,045)	+10.3%	11.8%(1,346)	-21.9%
1980	84.1%(9,106)	+42.3%	15.9%(1,724)	- 9.6%
1979	77.0%(6,398)	+24.0%	23.0%(1,907)	+ 3.2%
1978	73.6%(5,161)	+11.5%	26.4%(1,847)	+ 2.4%
1977	71.9%(4,627)	- 6.5%	28.1%(1,804)	+10.7%
1976	75.2%(4,951)	- 4.9%	24.8%(1,630)	-27.5%
1975	70.3%(5,207)	-	29.7%(2,248)	-

Volusia				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+ 8.5%	-	-33.0%
1981	87.9%(16,081)	- 9.0%	12.3%(2,217)	- 9.7%
1980	87.8%(17,675)	+ 8.3%	12.2%(2,456)	+ 6.6%
1979	87.6%(16,314)	+16.2%	12.4%(2,303)	+ 5.2%
1978	86.5%(14,037)	+ 1.5%	13.5%(2,190)	+ 1.9%
1977	86.5%(13,831)	-12.5%	13.5%(2,150)	-25.1%
1976	84.6%(15,809)	+ 6.7%	15.4%(2,870)	-13.2%
1975	81.8%(14,819)	-	18.2%(3,307)	-

Statewide				
	Adult	% Change Adult	Juvenile	% Change Juvenile
1975-1981	-	+17.7%	-	-21.4%
1981	(379,917)	+13.8%	(83,537)	-12.3%
1980	(333,983)	+14.2%	(95,239)	- 5.5%
1979	(297,657)	+ 6.0%	(100,738)	+ 3.4%
1978	(280,794)	+ 2.3%	(97,433)	+ 8.7%
1977	(274,572)	-11.5%	(89,666)	- 4.9%
1976	(310,158)	- 3.9%	(94,293)	-11.2%
1975	(322,688)	-	(106,214)	-

END