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Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Victimization Survey

September 2004, NCJ 205455

Criminal Victimization, 2003

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In 2003 U.S. residents age 12 or older experienced an estimated 24.2 million violent and property victimizations, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). (See *Survey methodology*, page 11.) These criminal victimizations included an estimated 18.6 million property crimes (burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft), 5.4 million violent crimes (rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault), and 185,000 personal thefts (pocket picking and purse snatching).

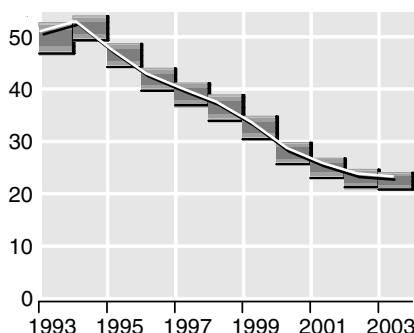
Except for rape/sexual assault, which showed a marginal decline, 2003 victimization rates for every major type of crime measured were unchanged from their 2002 levels. However, for every major category of crime except rape/sexual assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft, aggregated rates for the period 2002-03 were lower than those for 2001-02.

Taken together, the 1-year (2002-03) and 2-year average (2000-01 to 2002-03) change estimates indicate that crime rates have stabilized. The rates are the lowest experienced in the last 30 years.

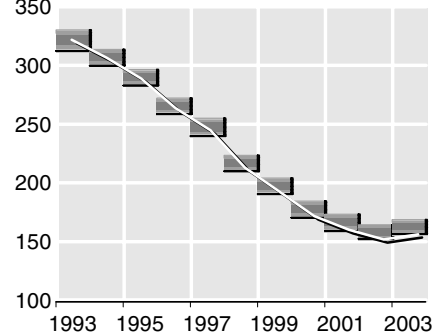
Highlights

The National Crime Victimization Survey reveals that violent and property crime rates in 2003 did not change from the previous year

Violent victimizations per 1,000 population age 12 or over



Property victimizations per 1,000 households



The best estimate and range of estimates

Each vertical bar shows the range within which the true victimization rate was likely to fall. For discussion of displaying estimates, see <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/dvctue.pdf>>.

- Though the downward trend in crime rates has stabilized, violent and property crime rates in 2003 remained at the lowest levels recorded since the survey's inception in 1973.
- Rates for robbery and assault did not change from 2002 to 2003, while the rate for rape/sexual assault declined marginally.
- The rate of violent crime dropped 14% from the period 2000-01 to the period 2002-03.
- For the decade the rate for crimes of violence was down 55%, from 50 to 23 victimizations per 1,000 persons.
- During 2003, 24% of all violent crime incidents were committed by an armed offender; 7%, by an offender with a firearm.
- As in previous years, males were most vulnerable to violence by strangers (54% of the violence against males), while females were most often victimized by nonstrangers (67%).
- Persons who have been historically the most vulnerable to violent crime — males, blacks, and youths — continued to be victimized at higher rates than others in 2003.
- During 2003, 48% of all violent victimizations and 38% of all property crimes were reported to the police — representing significant increases in reporting to the police over the last decade.

Between 1993 and 2003 the violent crime rate decreased 55%, from 50 to 23 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older. Property crime declined 49% from 319 to 163 per 1,000 households.

In 2003, according to victims, 48% of violent crimes and 38% of property crimes were reported to the police. The proportion of crime reported to the police has increased since 1993, when victims indicated that 43% of the violent crimes and 34% of the property crimes had been reported.

Criminal victimization, 2002-03

The NCVS collects data on nonfatal crimes against persons age 12 or older, reported and not reported to the police, from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. Information on homicide is obtained from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program of the FBI.

Crimes measured by the NCVS

Violent crimes refer to rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault taken as a whole. Property crimes refer to household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft considered together.

Table 1. Criminal victimization, numbers and rates, 2002 and 2003

Type of crime	Number of victimizations		Victimization rate (per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households)	
	2002	2003	2002	2003
All crimes	23,036,030	24,212,800
Violent crimes^a	5,341,410	5,401,720	23.1	22.6
Rape/sexual assault	247,730	198,850	1.1	0.8 [†]
Robbery	512,490	596,130	2.2	2.5
Assault	4,581,190	4,606,740	19.8	19.3
Aggravated	990,110	1,101,110	4.3	4.6
Simple	3,591,090	3,505,630	15.5	14.6
Property crimes	17,539,220	18,626,380	159.0	163.2
Household burglary	3,055,720	3,395,620	27.7	29.8
Motor vehicle theft	988,760	1,032,470	9.0	9.0
Theft	13,494,750	14,198,290	122.3	124.4

Note: The total population age 12 or older was 231,589,260 in 2002 and 239,305,990 in 2003. The total number of households was 110,323,840 in 2002 and 114,136,930 in 2003. The population estimates for 2003 incorporate controls based on the 2000 decennial Census. See the box on page 12 for a discussion of the impact on survey estimates.

... Not applicable.

[†]The difference from 2002 to 2003 is significant at the 90%-confidence level.

^aThe NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

See *Survey methodology*, pages 11 and 12.

The violent and property crime rates remained stable, 2002-03, and the rates for individual types of violence did not change, except for rape/sexual assault, the rates of which decreased marginally.

murdered; the estimate for 2003 is about 16,420 victims of murder. Based on these preliminary data, the homicide rate for 2003 is about 5.6 per 100,000 persons, unchanged from 2001 and 2002.

Murder/nonnegligent manslaughter

Based on preliminary 2003 data from the FBI, the number of persons murdered in the United States increased 1.3% between 2002 and 2003. In 2002, 16,200 persons were

Preliminary data suggest that increases in the number of murders occurred in the Northeast (+5.1%), South (+2.8%), and West (+1.8%). A decline in the number of murders was measured in the Midwest (-4.7%).

Murder and victim characteristics, 2002

In 2002, the year in which the most recent comprehensive data are available, the FBI reported a total of 16,200 murders or nonnegligent manslaughters. The total represents a 1% increase from the 16,040 murders recorded in 2001. The FBI defines murder in its annual *Crime in the United States* as the willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. Not included are deaths caused by negligence, suicide, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempts to murder or assaults to murder, which are scored as aggravated assaults. The FBI's UCR program gathers statistics on murder from over 17,000 city, county, and State law enforcement agencies.

Though the rate and level of homicide change year to year, the relationship between victim characteristics and

homicide tends to remain the same. For example, as in previous years, in 2002 —

- Most murder victims were male (77%).
- When the race of the murder victim was known, about half were white (49%), and about half were black (49%). About 3% of murder victims were of another race.
- When information on the victim/offender relationship was available, 76% of the offenders were known to the victim, while 24% were a stranger to the victim.
- Firearms were used in the majority of murders (71%).
- Offenders were most often male (90%), and most often adults (92%).
- Homicide is generally intraracial.
- Arguments were the most often cited circumstance leading to murder (28%).
- Homicides occurred in connection with another felony (such as rape, robbery, or arson) in 17% of incidents.

Criminal victimization, 2000-01 and 2002-03

Comparing 2-year average annual rates shows that for every major category of crime except rape/sexual assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft the average annual rates were significantly lower in 2002-03 than in 2000-01 (text box below and table 2). The average annual rates of rape/sexual assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft were unchanged, 2000-01 to 2002-03.

Estimating change in crime victimization rates

Since 1995, the NCVS has undergone sample reductions because of the escalating costs of data collection. At the same time, the rate of violence has continued to decline. The combination of the two – fewer survey respondents and less crime – has resulted in a diminished ability to detect statistically significant year-to-year changes in rates.

Comparing 2-year average rates gives the reader a picture of the continuing decline in rates seen over the last few years. For those who rely upon the annual detailed table of victimization counts and per capita rates, those data are located on the BJS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv03.htm.

Victimization rates as compared to victimization counts

The analyses in this report incorporate rates per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households. Using rates rather than counts takes into account the size of the population being examined. This allows for accurate comparisons of groups of differing sizes as well as changes in populations over time. Ignoring these differences in populations (examining counts alone) can lead to misleading conclusions.

The average annual overall violent victimization rate declined 14% from 27 to 23 victimizations per 1,000 persons per year, 2000-01 to 2002-03. During the same time robbery rates fell 21%, aggravated assault rates fell 20%, and simple assault rates fell 11%.

Property crime rates declined 7% from 172 to 161 crimes per 1,000 households per year, comparing 2000-01 to 2002-03. Over the same period of comparison, property theft rates declined 8%.

Table 2. Criminal victimization, average annual rates, 2000-01 and 2002-03

Type of crime	Average annual number of victimizations		Average annual victimization rate (per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households)		
	2000-01	2002-03	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change ^d
All crimes	25,054,520	23,624,410
Personal crimes^a	6,264,440	5,541,610	27.5	23.5	-14.3%*
Crimes of violence	6,033,280	5,371,570	26.5	22.8	-13.8*
Completed violence	1,936,170	1,704,040	8.5	7.2	-14.8*
Attempted/threatened violence	4,097,110	3,667,520	18.0	15.6	-13.3*
Rape/sexual assault	254,600	223,290	1.1	0.9	-15.1
Rape/attempted rape	146,700	142,380	0.6	0.6	-6.0
Rape	88,030	81,310	0.4	0.3	-10.5
Attempted rape	58,670	61,060	0.3	0.3	0.8
Sexual assault	107,900	80,910	0.5	0.3	-27.4
Robbery	681,230	554,310	3.0	2.4	-21.2*
Completed/property taken	473,400	381,880	2.1	1.6	-21.9*
With injury	167,100	165,090	0.7	0.7	-4.3
Without injury	306,300	216,780	1.3	0.9	-31.5*
Attempted to take property	207,830	172,440	0.9	0.7	-19.6
With injury	66,720	48,160	0.3	0.2	-30.1
Without injury	141,110	124,290	0.6	0.5	-14.7
Assault	5,097,450	4,593,970	22.4	19.5	-12.7*
Aggravated	1,257,330	1,045,610	5.5	4.4	-19.5*
With injury	368,810	338,930	1.6	1.4	-11.0
Threatened with weapon	888,520	706,680	3.9	3.0	-23.0*
Simple	3,840,110	3,548,360	16.8	15.1	-10.5*
With minor injury	916,980	837,770	4.0	3.6	-11.5
Without injury	2,923,130	2,710,590	12.8	11.5	-10.2 [†]
Personal theft ^b	231,170	170,050	1.0	0.7	-28.8*
Property crimes	18,790,080	18,082,800	172.4	161.1	-6.6%*
Household burglary	3,291,700	3,225,670	30.2	28.7	-4.9
Completed	2,798,080	2,703,900	25.7	24.1	-6.2
Forcible entry	1,047,230	1,016,990	9.6	9.1	-5.7
Unlawful entry without force	1,750,840	1,686,910	16.1	15.0	-6.5
Attempted forcible entry	493,620	521,770	4.5	4.6	2.6
Motor vehicle theft	972,890	1,010,610	8.9	9.0	0.9
Completed	682,980	772,070	6.3	6.9	9.8
Attempted	289,910	238,550	2.7	2.1	-20.1 [†]
Theft	14,525,500	13,846,520	133.3	123.4	-7.5*
Completed ^c	13,986,000	13,379,380	128.4	119.2	-7.1*
Less than \$50	4,701,510	4,188,440	43.1	37.3	-13.5*
\$50-\$249	5,055,100	4,603,610	46.4	41.0	-11.6*
\$250 or more	3,176,160	3,323,300	29.1	29.6	1.6
Attempted	539,490	467,140	5.0	4.2	-15.9 [†]

Note: Completed violent crimes include rape, sexual assault, robbery with or without injury, aggravated assault with injury, and simple assault with minor injury. The total population age 12 or older was 226,804,610 in 2000; 229,215,290 in 2001; 231,589,260 in 2002; and 239,305,990 in 2003. The total number of households was 108,352,960 in 2000; 109,568,450 in 2001; 110,323,840 in 2002; and 114,136,930 in 2003. The population estimates for 2003 incorporate controls based on the 2000 decennial Census. See the box on page 12 for a discussion of the impact on survey estimates.

... Not applicable.

*The difference from 2000-01 to 2002-03 is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

[†]The difference from 2000-01 to 2002-03 is significant at the 90%-confidence level.

^aThe NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

^bIncludes pocket picking, purse snatching, and attempted purse snatching.

^cIncludes thefts with unknown losses.

^dPercent change was calculated using unrounded rates.

Characteristics of the crime victim, from 2000-01 to 2002-03

Violent crime

Violent crime rates for both genders dropped 14% from 2000-01 to 2002-03: from 30 to 26 victimizations per 1,000 males and from 23 to 20 victimizations per 1,000 females.

	Average annual rate of violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
Male	30.1	25.9	-13.8%*
Female	23.1	19.9	-13.8*

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the *95%-confidence level.

Changed category definitions of race and ethnicity from 2000-01 to 2002-03 prevent comparisons. (See *Methodology* on page 11 for further details.)

Rates of violence against persons in every marital category declined at least somewhat from 2000-01 to 2002-03.

	Average annual rate of violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
Never married	48.0	42.4	-11.6%*
Married	12.1	10.4	-14.0*
Widowed	7.9	5.3	-33.0†
Divorced/separated	42.1	33.0	-21.7*

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the *95%-confidence level or †90%-confidence level.

For persons between ages 12 and 15, violent crime fell significantly from 58 to 48 victimizations per 1,000 persons. Rates of violent victimization fell significantly for all persons between ages 25 and 49. For persons between ages 25 and 49, rates declined 18%.

	Average annual rate of violent crimes per 1,000 persons		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
12-15 years	57.6	48.1	-16.6%*
16-19 years	60.0	55.6	-7.4
20-24 years	47.0	45.4	-3.5
25-34 years	32.0	26.3	-17.9*
35-49 years	22.4	18.3	-18.1*
50-64 years	11.6	10.5	-9.6
65+ years	3.5	2.7	-22.6

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the *95%-confidence level.

No clear pattern in short-term changes for income was measured. A decline in the rate of violent victimization against persons in households earning between \$7,500 and \$14,999 was indicated between 2000-01 and 2002-03. A slight decline in the rate of violence was indicated for those in households earning between \$35,000 and \$49,999. The differences in rates for households earning between \$15,000 and \$34,999 and households earning more than \$50,000 were not statistically significant.

	Average annual rate of violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
Less than \$7,500	53.7	47.7	-11.2%
\$7,500-\$14,999	37.4	31.1	-16.6†
\$15,000-\$24,999	31.8	28.1	-11.6
\$25,000-\$34,999	29.4	26.0	-11.8
\$35,000-\$49,999	27.4	23.5	-14.4†
\$50,000-\$74,999	22.3	20.8	-6.8
\$75,000 or more	20.4	18.2	-10.8

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the †90%-confidence level.

Violent crime decreased 16% in the South from 24 to 20 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older. Violent victimizations declined 18% in the West from 33 to 27 victimizations per 1,000 persons. Rates of violent victimization did not change significantly in the Northeast or Midwest. Significant declines in the rate of violent victimization were noted for persons residing in suburban and rural areas while a slight decline was indicated for urban

	Average annual rate of violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
Northeast	21.8	19.9	-8.7%
Midwest	27.4	24.7	-10.1
South	24.3	20.4	-16.1*
West	33.1	27.3	-17.5*
Urban	34.1	30.6	-10.3†
Suburban	24.1	20.7	-14.1*
Rural	22.3	18.0	-19.3*

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the *95%-confidence level or †90%-confidence level.

residents.

Property crime

Between 2000-01 and 2002-03, significant declines in property crime were observed for households with an annual income of \$50,000 or more. Apparent rate declines for households earning less were not statistically significant.

	Average annual rate of property crimes per 1,000 households		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
Less than \$7,500	203.4	196.8	-3.3%
\$7,500-\$14,999	174.2	167.2	-4.0
\$15,000-\$24,999	186.3	175.7	-5.7
\$25,000-\$34,999	181.4	171.3	-5.6
\$35,000-\$49,999	184.8	176.3	-4.6
\$50,000-\$74,999	180.3	163.3	-9.4*
\$75,000 or more	188.3	173.3	-8.0†

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the *95%-confidence level or †90%-confidence level.

A decline of 11% in property crimes was measured in the Northeast and Midwest, 2000-01 to 2002-03. Rates of property crime for households in the Northeast declined from 134 to 120 per 1,000 households, and rates of property crime in the Midwest dropped from 177 to 158 per 1,000 households. Apparent declines in the South and West were not statistically significant.

Rates of property crime declined 10% in rural areas from 142 to 128 per 1,000 households. Households in suburban areas experienced a decline of 9% from 160 to 145 property victimizations per 1,000 households.

From 2000-01 to 2002-03, average annual property crime rates declined significantly for resident owners and somewhat for renters.

	Average annual rate of property crimes per 1,000 households		
	2000-01	2002-03	Percent change
Northeast	133.8	119.5	-10.7%*
Midwest	177.1	158.0	-10.7*
South	162.6	154.3	-5.1
West	219.9	213.5	-2.9
Urban	217.4	215.8	-0.7
Suburban	160.2	145.1	-9.4*
Rural	142.2	127.6	-10.3*
Owned	149.8	140.0	-6.5*
Rented	219.0	206.7	-5.6†

The 2000-01 and 2002-03 difference is significant at the *95%-confidence level or †90%-confidence level.

Table 3. Rates of criminal victimization and percent change, 1993-2003

Type of crime	Victimization rates (per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households)		Percent change ^a 1993-2003
	1993	2003	
Personal crimes^b	52.2	23.3	-55.4%*
Crimes of violence	49.9	22.6	-54.7*
Completed violence	15.0	6.9	-54.0*
Attempted/threatened violence	34.9	15.7	-55.0*
Rape/sexual assault	2.5	0.8	-68.0*
Rape/attempted rape	1.6	0.5	-68.8*
Rape	1.0	0.3	-70.0*
Attempted rape	0.7	0.2	-71.4*
Sexual assault	0.8	0.3	-62.5*
Robbery	6.0	2.5	-58.3*
Completed robbery	3.8	1.6	-57.9*
With injury	1.3	0.7	-46.2*
Without injury	2.5	0.9	-64.0*
Attempted robbery	2.2	0.9	-59.1*
With injury	0.4	0.2	-50.0 [†]
Without injury	1.8	0.7	-61.1*
Assault	41.4	19.3	-53.4*
Aggravated	12.0	4.6	-61.7*
With injury	3.4	1.5	-55.9*
Threatened with weapon	8.6	3.1	-64.0*
Simple	29.4	14.6	-50.3*
With minor injury	6.1	3.2	-47.5*
Without injury	23.3	11.4	-51.1*
Personal theft ^c	2.3	0.8	-65.2*
Property crimes	318.9	163.2	-48.8%*
Household burglary	58.2	29.8	-48.8*
Completed	47.2	24.6	-47.9*
Forcible entry	18.1	8.9	-50.8*
Unlawful entry without force	29.1	15.7	-46.0*
Attempted forcible entry	10.9	5.1	-53.2*
Motor vehicle theft	19.0	9.0	-52.6*
Completed	12.4	6.7	-46.0*
Attempted	6.6	2.3	-65.2*
Theft	241.7	124.4	-48.5*
Completed ^d	230.1	120.2	-47.8*
Less than \$50	98.7	36.7	-62.8*
\$50-\$249	76.1	41.6	-45.3*
\$250 or more	41.6	29.6	-28.8*
Attempted	11.6	4.2	-63.8*

Note: Victimization rates are now based on data collected in each calendar year rather than on data about events within a calendar year. (See *Survey methodology* on page 11.) Completed violent crimes include rape, sexual assault, robbery with or without injury, aggravated assault with injury, and simple assault with minor injury. In 1993 the total population age 12 or older was 211,524,770; in 2003, 239,305,990. The total number of households in 1993 was 99,927,410; in 2003, 114,136,930. The population estimates for 2003 incorporate controls based on the 2000 decennial Census. See the box on page 12 for a discussion of the impact on survey estimates.

*The difference between the indicated years is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

[†]The difference between the indicated years is significant at the 90%-confidence level.

^aDifferences between the annual rates shown do not take into account changes that may have occurred during interim years.

^bThe NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

^cIncludes pocket picking, purse snatching, and attempted purse snatching.

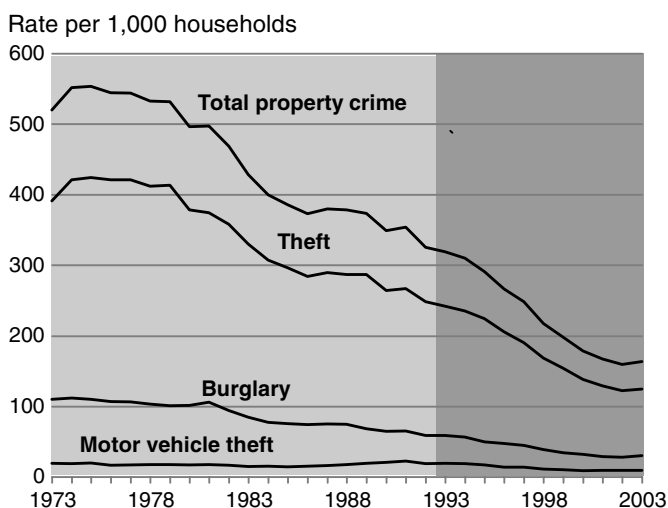
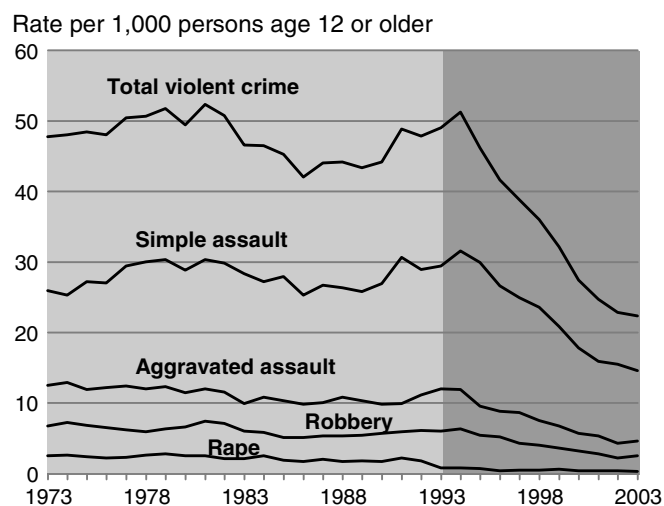
^dIncludes theft with unknown losses.

Victimization trends, 1993-2003

The rate of every major violent and property crime measured in the NCVS — rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft — fell significantly between 1993-2003 (table 3).

The overall violent crime rate fell 55% from 50 to 23 violent victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older between 1993 and 2003. Among significant declines measured were those for rates of attempted rape (down 71%), rape/sexual assault (down 68%), robbery (down 58%), aggravated assault (down 62%), and simple assault (down 50%).

The rate of overall property crime declined significantly from 1993 to 2003, as did the rate for each major type of property crime considered. The household burglary rate fell 49%; the motor vehicle theft rate fell 53%; and the rate of theft fell 49%. Attempted motor vehicle theft was marked by one of the largest percentage rate decreases (65%) of all property crime categories examined, 1993-2003.



Note: Data collected before the NCVS redesign was implemented during the latter half of 1992 (the lightly shaded areas) have been made comparable to the post-redesign NCVS. Those data were re-estimated to account for the effects of the redesign. Rape does not include sexual assault.

Figures 1 and 2

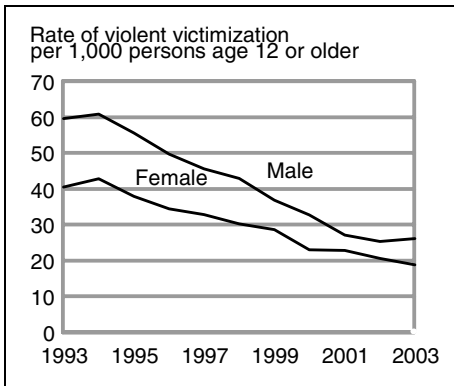


Figure 3 - Violent crime and gender

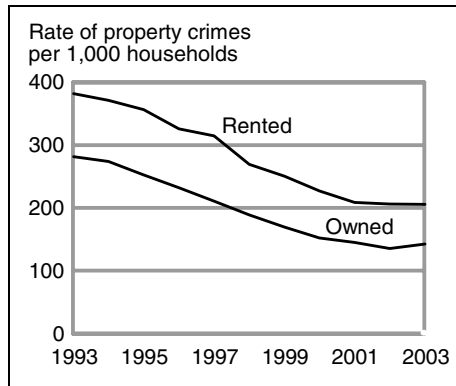


Figure 4 - Property crime and owned/rented residences

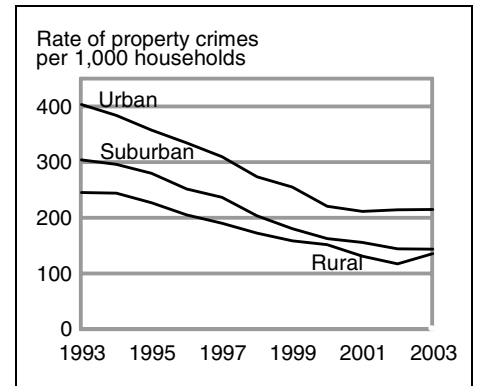


Figure 5 - Property crime and urbanicity

Characteristics of victims, 1993-2003

Declines in violent victimization were experienced by persons within gender and household income, 1993-2003 (figure 3 and table 4).

While violence decreased for both males and females between 1993 and 2003, the rate for males declined faster than that for females. The rate of violence against males declined 56%, from 60 to 26 violent victimizations per 1,000 males. The rate of violence against females declined 53%, from 41 to 19 victimizations per 1,000 females.

Changes in survey methodology prevent comparisons for race and ethnicity of victims. See *Methodology* on page 11 for further details.

Violent crime rates declined at least 40% in every income category examined, 1993-2003.

Property crime rates fell for every demographic group considered, 1993-2003 (figures 4, 5, and 6 and table 5). Property crime rates for households that owned their homes showed a decline of 49%, and rates of households of renters declined 46%.

Households with an annual income greater than \$50,000 experienced larger drops in property crime rates than did households with lower annual incomes. Households with annual incomes of between \$35,000 and \$49,999 experienced a larger decrease than households with incomes of less than \$25,000 annually.

The rate of urban property crime declined 41%, 1993-2003. Property crime in rural areas decreased 45% during this period (figure 5). The greatest decline in property crime rates was 53% from 1993 to 2003 in the suburbs.

Table 4. Violent victimization rates of selected demographic categories, 1993-2003

Demographic category of victim	Number of violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older											Percent change, 1993-2003
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	
Gender												
Male	59.8	61.1	55.7	49.9	45.8	43.1	37.0	32.9	27.3	25.5	26.3	-56.0%*
Female	40.7	43.0	38.1	34.6	33.0	30.4	28.8	23.2	23.0	20.8	19.0	-53.3*
Race												
White	47.9	50.5	44.7	40.9	38.3	36.3	31.9	27.1	24.5	22.8	21.5	-55.1%*
Black	67.4	61.3	61.1	52.3	49.0	41.7	41.6	35.3	31.2	27.9	29.1	-56.8*
Other race	39.8	49.9	41.9	33.2	28.0	27.6	24.5	20.7	18.2	14.7	16.0	-59.8*
Two or more races	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	67.7	--
Hispanic origin												
Hispanic	55.2	61.6	57.3	44.0	43.1	32.8	33.8	28.4	29.5	23.6	24.2	-56.2%*
Non-Hispanic	49.5	50.7	45.2	41.6	38.3	36.8	32.4	27.7	24.5	23.0	22.3	-54.9*
Annual household income												
Less than \$7,500	84.7	86.0	77.8	65.3	71.0	63.8	57.5	60.3	46.6	45.5	49.9	-41.1%*
\$7,500-\$14,999	56.4	60.7	49.8	52.1	51.2	49.3	44.5	37.8	36.9	31.5	30.8	-45.4*
\$15,000-\$24,999	49.0	50.7	48.9	44.1	40.1	39.4	35.3	31.8	31.8	30.0	26.3	-46.3*
\$25,000-\$34,999	51.0	47.3	47.1	43.0	40.2	42.0	37.9	29.8	29.1	27.0	24.9	-51.2*
\$35,000-\$49,999	45.6	47.0	45.8	43.0	38.7	31.7	30.3	28.5	26.3	25.6	21.4	-53.1*
\$50,000-\$74,999	44.0	48.0	44.6	37.5	33.9	32.0	33.3	23.7	21.0	18.7	22.9	-48.0*
\$75,000 or more	41.3	39.5	37.3	30.5	30.7	33.1	22.9	22.3	18.5	19.0	17.5	-57.6*

Note: Annual rates are based on interviews conducted during the calendar year. For 2003 the racial categories are white/black/other "only" and "two or more races." The collection of racial and ethnic categories in 2003 changed from that of previous years; however, because about 0.9% of survey respondents identified two or more races, the impact on the victimization rates for each race is small. See *Survey methodology* on page 11 for explanation. The population estimates for 2003 incorporate controls based on the 2000 decennial Census. See the box on page 12 for a discussion of the impact on survey estimates.

--Not available.

*1993-2003 difference is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

Table 5. Property crime rates of selected household demographics, 1993-2003

Demographic category	Number of property crimes per 1,000 households											Percent change, 1993-2003
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	
Region												
Northeast	235.6	236.6	234.1	215.2	195.6	159.3	159.5	143.7	123.9	117.0	122.1	-48.2%*
Midwest	311.2	295.2	269.6	249.6	219.9	214.0	199.9	181.9	172.3	155.8	160.2	-48.5%*
South	299.4	288.6	269.9	259.9	253.8	213.5	191.4	167.8	157.5	147.8	160.5	-46.4%*
West	434.5	436.1	406.0	345.6	322.2	282.3	243.1	223.4	216.4	219.9	207.4	-52.3%*
Ownership												
Owned	282.5	275.2	253.7	233.7	211.7	189.6	170.4	153.4	146.3	136.4	143.5	-49.2%*
Rented	383.5	372.7	357.7	327.1	316.0	270.6	251.9	228.3	209.6	207.0	206.4	-46.2%*
Location												
Urban	404.8	384.7	358.3	335.8	311.1	274.2	256.3	222.1	212.8	215.3	216.3	-46.6%*
Suburban	305.1	297.2	280.6	252.6	238.0	204.5	181.4	163.7	156.7	145.3	144.8	-52.5%*
Rural	246.4	245.2	228.4	206.4	191.7	173.5	159.8	152.6	131.9	118.3	136.6	-44.6%*
Annual household income												
Less than \$7,500	305.9	299.6	304.3	282.7	258.8	209.0	220.8	220.9	184.6	188.9	204.6	-33.1%*
\$7,500-\$14,999	285.9	299.1	267.1	247.5	236.3	229.8	200.1	167.1	181.6	166.7	167.7	-41.3%*
\$15,000-\$24,999	307.0	308.1	289.8	273.1	242.4	211.0	214.9	193.1	179.2	172.1	179.2	-41.6%*
\$25,000-\$34,999	336.7	305.2	294.8	285.1	260.3	233.8	199.1	192.2	170.4	161.7	180.7	-46.3%*
\$35,000-\$49,999	342.7	326.9	301.5	287.6	271.7	221.7	207.6	192.9	176.4	175.4	177.1	-48.3%*
\$50,000-\$74,999	374.4	364.1	333.2	284.0	270.9	248.6	213.6	181.9	178.8	158.3	168.1	-55.1%*
\$75,000 or more	400.3	356.0	350.4	304.6	292.8	248.6	220.4	197.2	180.0	169.8	176.4	-55.9%*

Note: Annual rates are based on interviews conducted during the calendar year. See the methodology in <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cvusmeth.pdf>>. The population estimates for 2003 incorporate controls based on the 2000 decennial Census. See the box on page 12 for a discussion of the impact on survey estimates.
*1993-2003 difference is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

Table 6. Rates of violent crime and personal theft, by gender, race, Hispanic origin, and age, 2003

Characteristic of victim	Population	Victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older						Personal theft
		Violent crimes					Personal theft	
		All	Rape/sexual assault	Robbery	Total	Assault Aggravated		
Gender								
Male	116,041,090	26.3	0.2*	3.2	23.0	5.9	17.1	0.4
Female	123,264,890	19.0	1.5	1.9	15.7	3.3	12.4	1.1
Race^a								
White	197,577,400	21.5	0.8	1.9	18.8	4.2	14.7	0.6
Black	28,561,780	29.1	0.8*	5.9	22.3	6.0	16.3	1.7
Other race	11,120,220	16.0	0.2*	3.4	12.4	5.4	7.0	0.9*
Two or more	2,046,590	67.7	5.8*	8.1*	53.7	21.3	32.4	2.7*
Hispanic origin^a								
Hispanic	30,275,550	24.2	0.4*	3.1	20.8	4.6	16.1	1.1*
Non-Hispanic	207,263,340	22.3	0.9	2.4	19.0	4.6	14.4	0.7
Age								
12-15	17,084,330	51.6	1.2*	5.2	45.3	8.9	36.4	1.5*
16-19	16,210,780	53.0	1.3*	5.1	46.6	11.9	34.7	1.4*
20-24	19,786,270	43.3	1.7	6.4	35.3	9.8	25.5	1.6
25-34	39,449,790	26.4	1.6	2.5	22.3	6.0	16.3	1.0
35-49	65,780,190	18.5	0.6	1.7	16.1	3.8	12.3	0.5
50-64	46,736,200	10.3	0.4*	1.4	8.5	1.6	7.0	0.3*
65 or older	34,258,430	2.0	0.1*	0.7*	1.2	0.1*	1.1	0.5*

Note: The National Crime Victimization Survey includes as violent crime rape, sexual assault, robbery, and assault. Because the NCVS interviews persons about their victimizations, murder and manslaughter cannot be included.
*Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.
^aRacial and ethnic categories in 2003 are not comparable to those in previous years. See *Survey methodology* on page 11 for a discussion.

Households in all regions experienced decreases in property crime rates of at least 46%, 1993-2003 (figure 6).

Characteristics of violent crime victims, 2003

Persons who have been historically the most vulnerable to violent victimization — males and youths — continued to be victimized at higher rates than others in 2003 (table 6).

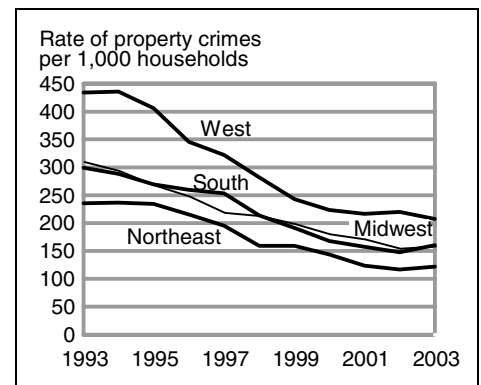


Figure 6 - Property crime and region

Table 7. Rates of violent crime and personal theft, by household income, marital status, region, and location of residence of victims, 2003

Characteristic of victim	Population	Victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older						Personal theft	
		Violent crimes				Total	Assault Aggravated		Simple
		All	Rape/sexual assault	Robbery	Assault				
Household income									
Less than \$7,500	8,335,120	49.9	1.6*	9.0	39.3	10.8	28.5	1.2*	
\$7,500 - \$14,999	15,893,630	30.8	1.8*	4.0	25.0	7.9	17.0	1.1*	
\$15,000 - \$24,999	24,560,390	26.3	0.8*	4.0	21.5	4.5	17.0	0.7*	
\$25,000 - \$34,999	24,252,930	24.9	0.9*	2.2	21.8	5.0	16.9	0.8*	
\$35,000 - \$49,999	32,082,950	21.4	0.9*	2.1	18.3	4.8	13.5	0.7*	
\$50,000 - \$74,999	35,174,290	22.9	0.5*	2.0	20.4	5.2	15.2	0.5*	
\$75,000 or more	47,855,860	17.5	0.5*	1.7	15.4	2.7	12.6	1.0	
Marital status									
Never married	76,429,290	41.6	1.6	5.2	34.8	8.7	26.1	1.4	
Married	120,862,960	10.2	0.2*	0.8	9.2	1.8	7.4	0.3	
Divorced/separated	25,907,600	35.1	1.9	3.5	29.7	7.8	21.9	0.7*	
Widowed	14,297,780	3.5	0.0*	1.1*	2.5	0.1*	2.3	0.8*	
Region									
Northeast	44,525,430	21.0	0.2*	2.7	18.1	3.9	14.2	1.1	
Midwest	55,886,090	23.6	1.5	2.7	19.4	4.6	14.8	1.0	
South	86,489,420	21.1	0.9	2.5	17.8	4.4	13.4	0.5	
West	52,405,050	25.2	0.6*	2.1	22.5	5.6	16.9	0.6	
Residence									
Urban	66,466,630	28.2	0.8	3.7	23.8	5.4	18.3	1.3	
Suburban	115,814,150	21.3	1.0	2.3	18.1	4.3	13.7	0.7	
Rural	57,025,210	18.6	0.6	1.6	16.4	4.2	12.2	0.3*	

Note: The National Crime Victimization Survey includes as violent crime rape, sexual assault, robbery, and assault. Because the NCVS interviews persons about their victimizations, murder and manslaughter cannot be included.

*Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

Household income

During 2003 persons in households with an annual income under \$7,500 were more likely to be victims of robbery and assault than members of households with higher incomes (table 7).

Individuals in households earning less than \$15,000 annually were victims of aggravated assault at a significantly higher rate than those of persons in households at higher income levels. Members in households earning \$15,000 to \$24,999 and \$25,000 to \$34,999 experienced rape/sexual assault, aggravated and simple assault, and personal theft at similar rates. Persons residing in households earning more than \$75,000 were victims of violent crime at a significantly lower rate than those of persons in households earning less.

Marital status

Persons who were never married experienced overall violent victimization at rates higher than those for married, widowed, or divorced/separated persons.

Region

Western residents experienced assault at significantly higher rates than the rates of residents in the Northeast and South in 2003. Northeastern, Southern, and Midwestern residents were victims of violent crime overall at similar rates, 2003. There were no regional differences in rates of robbery.

Residence

Urban residents were victimized at rates higher than rates for suburban and rural residents during 2003. Suburban and rural residents were victims of violence at statistically similar rates during 2003.

Gender of victim

Males were victims of overall violent crime, robbery, total assault, simple assault, and aggravated assault at rates higher than those of females. Females were more likely than males to be victims of rape/sexual assault.

Race of victim

Beginning in 2003 survey respondents were able to self-identify with more than one race. Persons of two or more races were victims of overall violence at significantly higher rates than those for whites, blacks, and persons of other races.

Blacks were victims of overall violence, robbery, aggravated assault, and personal theft at rates higher than those for whites in 2003. Blacks and whites were equally likely to experience rape/sexual assault in 2003.

Blacks were also more likely than persons of other races to be victims of overall violence, robbery, and simple assault.

Hispanic origin of victim

Hispanics and non-Hispanics were victims of violence at similar rates during 2003, with one exception: non-Hispanics were more likely than Hispanics to be victims of rape and sexual assault.

Age of victim

During 2003 there was a general pattern of decreasing crime rates for persons of older age categories. Persons age 12 to 19 experienced overall violence at rates higher than rates for persons age 25 or older. Persons age 20 to 24 experienced violent victimization at rates somewhat lower than rates for persons in the age category 16 to 19.

Characteristics of victims of property crime, 2003

Annual household income

With one exception, overall property crime rates did not differ by annual household income (table 8). Households earning less than \$7,500 experienced total property victimizations at a rate higher than those of households with higher annual incomes. The relationship between annual household income and crime rates did vary for specific types of property crime.

Households with an annual income below \$35,000 were burglarized at rates higher than those of households with larger incomes. Households earning \$7,500 to \$14,999 experienced theft at rates significantly lower than rates of households earning \$35,000 or more annually. Households earning \$25,000 to \$34,999 were more likely to experience motor vehicle theft than households earning \$50,000 to \$74,999.

Region, locality, and home ownership

Western households were victims of overall property crime at the highest rate; Northeastern households, at the lowest, in 2003. Southern and Midwestern households were victims of property crimes at similar rates.

Table 8. Property crime victimization, by household income, region, residence, and home ownership of households victimized, 2003

Characteristic of household or head of household	Number of households, 2003	Victimizations per 1,000 households			
		Total	Burglary	Motor vehicle theft	Theft
Household income					
Less than \$7,500	5,161,000	204.6	58.0	6.3	140.3
\$7,500 - \$14,999	9,214,180	167.7	42.2	7.3	118.3
\$15,000 - \$24,999	12,550,810	179.2	38.4	8.9	131.9
\$25,000 - \$34,999	11,764,020	180.7	35.3	12.3	133.1
\$35,000 - \$49,999	14,731,780	177.1	27.6	9.5	140.0
\$50,000 - \$74,999	15,017,300	168.1	24.9	8.4	134.7
\$75,000 or more	19,395,640	176.4	20.8	11.9	143.7
Region					
Northeast	21,259,800	122.1	20.5	7.2	94.4
Midwest	27,137,920	160.2	32.5	6.9	120.9
South	41,583,860	160.5	32.2	7.8	120.4
West	24,155,340	207.4	30.6	15.2	161.6
Residence					
Urban	32,515,050	216.3	38.7	13.0	164.7
Suburban	53,701,950	144.8	24.0	9.3	111.6
Rural	27,919,930	136.6	30.5	4.0	102.1
Home ownership					
Owned	78,421,480	143.5	24.5	7.3	111.7
Rented	35,715,440	206.4	41.2	13.0	152.2

Northeastern households were less likely to be burglarized than households in other regions. The Midwest, South, and West had similar 2003 rates of burglary. Western households were victims of motor vehicle theft at rates higher than those in other regions.

Western households experienced theft at the highest regional rate; Northeastern households, at the lowest. Midwestern and Southern household theft rates were similar during 2003.

Urban households were victims of each type of property crime at rates higher than those for suburban and rural households, 2003. Except for burglary, suburban households were victims of each type of property crime at rates higher than rural household rates.

Rural households were burglarized at a rate higher than that for suburban households but lower than the urban burglary rate.

Table 9. Victim and offender relationship, 2003

Relationship with victim	Violent crime		Rape/sexual assault		Robbery		Aggravated assault		Simple assault	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male victims										
Total	3,056,160	100%	19,670	100%	365,590	100%	688,420	100%	1,982,480	100%
Nonstranger	1,287,960	42%	14,500	74%*	118,300	32%	266,770	39%	888,400	45%
Intimate	83,750	3	5,940	30*	6,130	2*	21,910	3*	49,780	3
Other relative	138,310	5	0	0*	17,250	5*	12,490	2*	108,570	6
Friend/acquaintance	1,065,900	35	8,560	44*	94,910	26	232,370	34	730,050	37
Stranger	1,658,160	54%	5,170	26%*	226,110	62%	399,240	58%	1,027,630	52%
Relationship unknown	110,050	4%	0	0%*	21,180	6%*	22,420	3%*	66,450	3%
Female victims										
Total	2,345,550	100%	179,170	100%	230,540	100%	412,690	100%	1,523,150	100%
Nonstranger	1,562,010	67%	125,370	70%	110,670	48%	274,430	67%	1,051,540	69%
Intimate	437,990	19	21,440	12*	30,990	13*	101,400	25	284,170	19
Other relative	230,850	10	13,930	8*	17,430	8*	40,320	10	159,180	11
Friend/acquaintance	893,170	38	90,000	50	62,260	27	132,720	32	608,190	40
Stranger	745,930	32%	53,800	30%	103,630	45%	131,850	32%	456,640	30%
Relationship unknown	37,610	2%	0	0%*	16,240	7%*	6,400	2%*	14,970	1%*

Note: Percentages may not total to 100% because of rounding. *Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

Table 10. Presence of weapons in violent incidents, 2003

Presence of offender's weapon	Violent crime		Rape/sexual assault		Robbery		Simple and aggravated assault	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	4,949,380	100%	191,350	100%	552,830	100%	4,205,190	100%
No weapon	3,398,040	69%	160,960	84%	223,620	41%	3,013,450	72%
Weapon	1,166,570	24%	20,690	11%*	246,820	45%	899,070	21%
Firearm	366,840	7	5,860	3*	138,280	25	222,700	5
Knife	331,240	7	11,380	6*	56,570	10	263,290	6
Other	427,510	9	3,450	2*	41,840	8	382,220	9
Type not ascertained	40,980	1	0	0*	10,120	2*	30,860	1*
Don't know	384,770	8%	9,710	5%*	82,390	15%	292,670	7%

Note: Percentages may not total to 100% because of rounding. If the offender was armed with more than one weapon, the crime is classified based on the most serious weapon present. *Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

In 2003 households that rented were more likely than households that owned their home to experience all types of property crime.

Characteristics of the crime incident

Victim-offender relationship in violent crimes

Females were most often victimized by someone they knew while males were more likely to be victimized by a stranger during 2003 (table 9).

Of those offenders victimizing females, 19% were described as intimates and 32% as strangers. In contrast, of those offenders victimizing males, 3% were intimates and 54% were strangers.

Robbery was the crime most likely to be committed by a stranger for both male and female victims.

Presence of weapons in violent crimes

During 2003, 24% of all violent crime incidents were committed by an armed offender (table 10). The presence of a weapon during a violent crime was related to the type of crime. For example, rape and sexual assault incidents were the least likely (11%) and robberies the most likely (45%) to occur with an armed offender.

The type of weapon also varied by the type of violence. Three percent of rape/sexual assault incidents occurred with a firearm present, compared to

25% of robbery incidents. The rate of firearm violence declined significantly between 1993 and 2003, from 5.9 to 1.9 victimizations per 1,000.

	1993	2003
Firearm Incidents	1,054,820	366,840
Firearm Victims	1,248,250	449,150
Firearm crime Rate per 1,000	5.9	1.9
Percent of violent incidents	11%	7%

Note: The rate of firearm victimization in 2002-03 — 1.9 per 1,000 — was marginally lower than the 2000-01 rate of 2.3 per 1,000.

Reporting to the police

During 2003, 48% of all violent victimizations and 38% of all property crimes were reported to the police. The percentage of violent crime reported differed among the specific types of crime. Robbery (61%) and aggravated assault (59%) were most frequently reported to police. Thirty-nine percent of victims of rape/sexual assault and 42% of the victims of simple assault indicated that their victimization had been reported to the police. Motor vehicle theft continued to be the property crime most frequently reported to the police (77%).

	Percent of crime reported to the police, 2003
Violent crime	47.5%
Rape/sexual assault	38.5
Robbery	60.5
Aggravated assault	59.4
Simple assault	42.1
Personal theft	43.9%
Property crime	38.4%
Burglary	54.1
Motor vehicle theft	76.8
Theft	31.8

Fifty-four percent of burglaries and 32% of thefts were reported to the police in 2003.

Reporting and victim characteristics

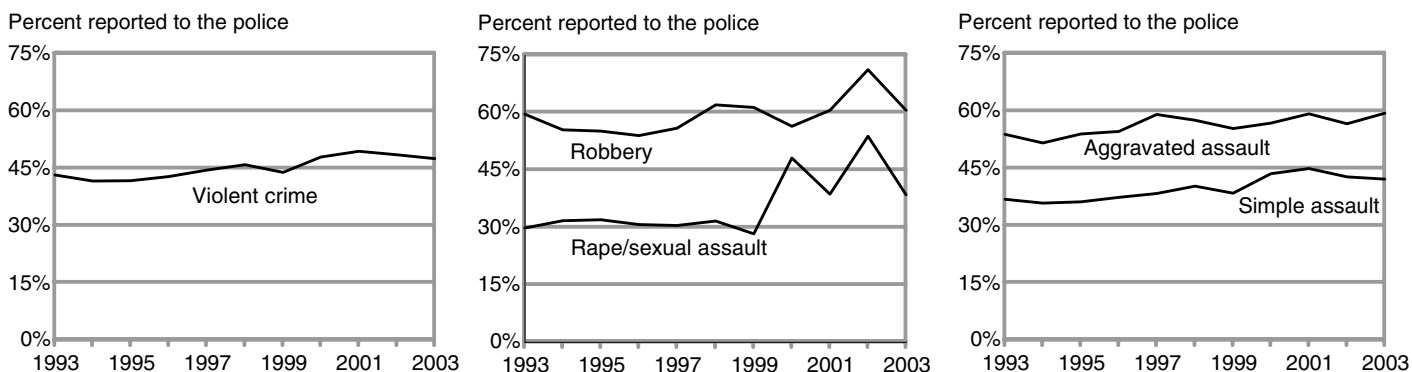
In 2003 males and females were equally likely to report violent and property victimizations to the police. Apparent differences in the rate of reporting between these two groups were not significant.

Victim gender, race, and Hispanic origin	Percent of crime reported to the police, 2003	
	Violent	Property
Total	47.5%	38.4%
Male	45.7%	38.4%
White	45.4	38.1
Black	47.1	43.0
Other	53.6	34.7
Hispanic	40.0%	37.6%
Non-Hispanic	46.5	38.3
Female	49.9%	38.4%
White	47.9	38.0
Black	60.2	40.3
Other	59.6	37.2
Hispanic	54.8%	34.9%
Non-Hispanic	49.3	38.9

Note: Total includes estimates for persons identifying with two or more races, not shown separately. Racial categories displayed are for persons who identified one race only.

Differences between males and females in the reporting of violent crime were observed across racial and ethnic categories. Black and Hispanic females were more likely to report a violent victimization to the police than black or Hispanic males. Among male victims the percentage of violence reported to the police did not differ across racial and ethnic categories, 2003.

Reporting to the police increased from 43% of all violent crimes in 1993 to 48% in 2003



Figures 7, 8, 9

With one exception among female victims, percentages of crimes reported to the police did not differ across racial categories. Violent crimes against black women were more likely to be reported to the police than crimes against white women. Hispanic and non-Hispanic women were equally likely to report violent victimizations to the police in 2003.

Reporting crime to the police, 1993-2003

Overall reporting of violent and property crime increased significantly from 1993 to 2003 (figures 7-12).

Increases in reporting varied by type of crime. For both robbery and rape/sexual assault there was a decrease in the percentage of crime reported to police between 2002 to 2003, interrupting a generally upward trend and returning to levels of reporting similar

to those of 1993. Reporting of aggravated and simple assault remained statistically similar to reporting levels in 2002.

Reporting to police of burglary (from 50% in 1993 to 54% in 2003) increased somewhat. Increases in the reporting of theft were statistically significant from 1993 to 2003. (For further discussion see *Reporting Crime to the Police, 1992-2000*, <www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/rcp00.htm>).

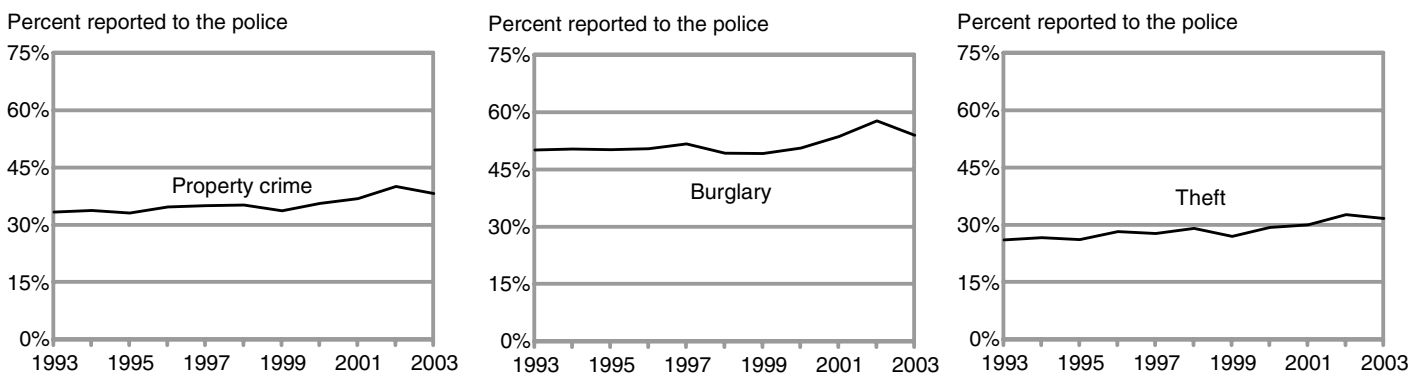
Survey methodology

This Bulletin presents data on nonlethal violence and property crimes from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), and data on homicide from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program. In 2003, 83,660 households and 149,040 people age 12 or older were interviewed. For the 2003 NCVS data presented here, the response rate was 91.6% of eligible households and 86.3% of eligible individuals.

In 1997 the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) introduced new guidelines for the collection and reporting of race and ethnicity data in government surveys. These methodological changes were implemented for all demographic surveys as of January 1, 2003. Individuals are now allowed to choose more than one racial category. In prior years they were asked to select a single primary race.

Racial categories presented in this report now consist of the following: white only, black only, other race only (American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Pacific Islander if only one of these races is given), and two or more races (all persons of any race indicating two or more races). About 0.9% of persons in the NCVS sample and about 2.6% of victims of crimes of violence identified two or more races. Individuals are now asked whether they are of Hispanic ethnicity before being asked about their race, and are now asked directly if they are Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino.

Reporting to the police increased from 34% of all property crimes in 1993 to 38% in 2003



Figures 10, 11, 12



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Standard error computations

Comparisons of percentages and rates made in this report were tested to determine if observed differences were statistically significant. Differences described as

higher, lower, or different passed a hypothesis test at the .05 level of statistical significance (95% confidence level). The tested difference was greater than twice the standard error of that difference. For comparisons that were statistically significant at the 0.10 level (90% confi-

dence level), "somewhat," "slightly," "marginally," or " there is some indication that" is used to note the nature of the difference. Caution is required when comparing estimates not explicitly discussed in this Special Report.

See <www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cvusst.htm> for additional information on methodology, standard error calculations, and definitions.

Impact of 2000 Census population controls

Estimates for 2003 incorporate population controls based on the 2000 decennial Census. The new controls increased the estimated level of the U.S. population age 12 or older. These increases may have impacted the estimates for numbers of crimes of violence and theft but have only minimal effect on the rate estimates presented in this report. When estimates for 2002 were recalibrated using 2000 Census population controls, neither the counts nor the rates of violent or property crimes changed significantly:

	Estimated number, 2002		Rate per 1,000 persons age 12 or older, 2002	
	Published	Based on 2000 Census	Published	Based on 2000 Census
Violent crimes	5,341,410	5,396,570	23.1	22.9
Property crimes	17,539,220	17,808,470	159.0	158.3
Population	231,589,260	235,322,810		

The Census Bureau did not revise the published estimates of population or crimes for 2000, 2001, and 2002, based on the 2000 decennial Census. Such revisions would have had only small impact on the estimates of crime for victim subgroups or for characterizing crime incidents.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Lawrence A. Greenfeld is director. Shannan Michelle Catalano, Ph.D, BJS Statistician, wrote this report under the supervision of Michael Rand. Cathy T. Maston provided statistical review. Marianne Zawitz produced the Highlight figures. Tom Hester produced and edited the report.

September 2004, NCJ 205455 L

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