

The victim

Patsy A. Klaus
Michael R. Rand
Bruce M. Taylor

This chapter profiles victims of crime with data that answer such questions as—

How do crime rates compare with the rates of other life events?

Is there a relationship between the fear of crime and actual risks of victimization?

What groups of people are most likely and least likely to become victims of crime?

What are the risks of becoming a victim of rape, robbery, or assault?

What kinds of households are victimized by crime?

Is a person more likely to be victimized by a stranger or by a relative or acquaintance?

How does crime affect its victims?

How do victims of violent crime protect themselves?

Why are only a third of all crimes against people and their households reported to the police?

Which States have compensation programs to help victims of violent crime?

Chapter II was written by Patsy A. Klaus, Michael R. Rand, and Bruce M. Taylor of the BJS staff. Adolfo L. Paez of the Center for Demographic Studies, U.S. Bureau of the Census, prepared the data on risks of various life events. Invaluable contributions were also made by other members of the Center for Demographic Studies, U.S. Bureau of the Census, particularly by Siretta L. Kelly and by Sandra Brill Stolker of the National Organization for Victim Assistance.

The fear of crime affects many people, including some who have never been victims of crime

How do crime rates compare with the rates of other life events?

Events	Rate per 1,000 adults per year*
Accidental injury, all circumstances	290
Accidental injury at home	105
Personal theft	82
Accidental injury at work	68
Violent victimization	33
Assault (aggravated and simple)	25
Injury in motor vehicle accident	23
Divorce	23
Death, all causes	11
Serious (aggravated) assault	9
Death of spouse	9
Robbery	7
Heart disease death	4
Cancer death	2
Rape (women only)	2
Accidental death, all circumstances	0.5
Motor vehicle accident death	0.3
Pneumonia/influenza death	0.3
Suicide	0.2
Injury from fire	0.1
Homicide/legal intervention death	0.1
Death from fire	0.03

These rates are an approximate assessment of your chances of becoming a victim of these events. More precise estimates can be derived by taking account of such factors as age, sex, race, place of residence, and lifestyle. Findings are based on 1979-81 data, but there is little variation in rates from year to year.

*These rates have been standardized to exclude children (those under age 15 to 17, depending on the series). Fire injury/death data are based on the total population, because no age-specific data are available in this series.

Sources: *Current estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, United States, 1981*, Vital and Health Statistics Series 10, no. 141, October 1982; *Advance report of final divorce statistics, 1979*, Monthly Vital Statistics Report, vol. 30, no. 2, supplement, May 29, 1981; *Advance report on final mortality statistics*, Monthly Vital Statistics Report, vol. 31, no. 6, supplement, September 30, 1982, National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Public Health Service, Washington, D.C. *Preliminary estimates of the population of the United States, by age, sex, and race, 1970 to 1981*, Series P-25, no. 917, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 1982. "Fire loss in the United States during 1981," Michael J. Karter, Jr., *Fire Journal*, vol. 76, no. 5, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Mass., September 1982.

The chance of being a violent crime victim, with or without injury, is greater than that of being hurt in a traffic accident

The rates of some violent crimes are higher than those of some other serious life events. For example, the risk of being the victim of a violent crime is higher than the risk of being affected by divorce, or death from cancer, or injury or death from a fire. Still, a person is much more likely to die from natural causes than as a result of a criminal victimization.

People fear crime in general but think their own neighborhood is safer than other neighborhoods

Public opinion polls show that most people have mixed feelings about their fear of crime. However, different polls using different methods and asking different questions get varying results. When asked about the impact of crime on their daily lives, people usually express less fear than of crime in general. Most say they feel safe when out alone in their neighborhood and think that their neighborhoods are less dangerous than others. Yet they believe that people in general have limited their activities because of crime.

The groups of people who have the highest risk of becoming victims are not the ones who express the greatest fear of crime. Females and the elderly are not in the population groups most victimized, yet they generally express a greater fear of crime than do people in groups who face a much greater risk. The Reactions to Crime project found that such impressions can be explained by the content of communications about crime. Such communications emphasize stories about elderly and female victims. These stories may become reference points for women and the elderly to judge the seriousness of their own condition.

The extent to which fear levels impair the quality of life is difficult to measure

The relationship between fear of crime and actual risk of victimization is difficult to assess. It may be that groups such as the elderly reduce their risk of victimization by restricting their activities to reduce their exposure to danger. If this behavior is a response to fear of crime, such fear is itself a form of victimization.

It is difficult to determine when limitations in lifestyle result from fear of crime and when they result from other factors such as physical impairment, lack of transportation, or lack of economic resources. For example, the Reactions to Crime project found that household protective measures taken by people in general are linked to social and economic factors rather than to the direct threat of crime or neighborhood crime conditions.

Relatives, friends, and neighbors who hear about a crime become as fearful as the victim

When one household in a neighborhood is affected by a crime, households in the entire neighborhood may feel more vulnerable. Studies have shown that victimization experience does not have as much impact on the victim's attitudes as one might expect. These findings suggest the possibility that people who have not been victimized personally may be very strongly affected when they hear about the victimization experiences of others. The Reactions to Crime project, in particular, found that indirect reaction to crime is often intense.

The risk of victimization depends on a combination of factors

Who are the victims of crime?

- Victims of crime are more often men than women.

- Younger people are much more likely than the elderly to be victims of crime. But the elderly have a greater fear of crime and may restrict their lives in ways that reduce their chances of being victimized.

- Blacks are more likely to be victims of violent crime than whites or members of other racial groups.

- The divorced and the never married are more likely than the married or the widowed to be victims of crime. These differences may result in part because of the age differences of people in various marital-status groups.

- Violent crime rates are higher for lower income people.

- Theft rates are highest for people with low incomes (less than \$3,000 per year) and those with high incomes (more than \$25,000 per year).

- Students and the unemployed are more likely than housewives, retirees, or the employed to be victims of crime.

- Rural residents are less often crime victims than are people living in cities.

- Young black males have the highest violent crime rates; elderly white females have the lowest rates.

Victimization rates per 1,000 persons age 12 and over

	Personal crimes of...		Personal crimes of...		Personal crimes of...	
	violence*	theft*	violence*	theft*	violence*	theft*
Total (U.S.)	35	85				
Sex						
Male	46	91				
Female	25	80				
Age						
12-15	59	128				
16-19	68	132				
20-24	68	133				
25-34	44	101				
35-49	23	78				
50-64	13	51				
65 and over	8	22				
Race and origin						
White	33	85				
Black	50	85				
Other	38	81				
Hispanic	39	86				
Non-Hispanic	35	85				
Marital status by sex						
Males						
Never married	80	137				
Divorced/separated	68	133				
Married	26	63				
Widowed	15	40				
Females						
Never married	42	120				
Divorced/separated	65	112				
Married	13	64				
Widowed	11	34				
Income						
Less than \$3,000	67	106				
\$3,000-\$7,499	45	66				
\$7,500-\$9,999	43	71				
\$10,000-\$14,999	40	82				
\$15,000-\$24,999	31	84				
\$25,000 or more	28	104				
Education						
0-4 years	14	26				
5-7 years	19	28				
8 years	13	29				
9-11 years	25	46				
High school graduate	20	63				
1-3 years college	36	94				
College graduate	27	105				
Employment status						
Retired	10	27				
Keeping house	15	41				
Unable to work	24	26				
Employed	37	97				
In school	56	121				
Unemployed	76	118				
Residence						
Central city	52	101				
1,000,000 or more	64	113				
500,000-999,999	54	106				
250,000-499,999	45	91				
50,000-249,999	42	93				
Suburban	33	94				
Rural	24	60				
Race, sex, and age summary						
White males						
12-15	69	139				
16-19	95	144				
20-24	91	145				
25-34	52	104				
35-49	28	76				
50-64	14	50				
65 and over	8	26				
White females						
12-15	40	133				
16-19	37	133				
20-24	44	124				
25-34	35	95				
35-49	16	80				
50-64	10	55				
65 and over	6	18				
Black males						
12-15	95	92				
16-19	112	111				
20-24	86	164				
25-34	57	124				
35-49	35	85				
50-64	28	40				
65 and over	28	38				
Black females						
12-15	69	90				
16-19	49	81				
20-24	61	88				
25-34	40	103				
35-49	36	80				
50-64	27	37				
65 and over	12	28				

* Personal crimes of violence include rape, robbery, and assault. Personal crimes of theft include larceny without contact, purse snatching, and pocket picking.

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

Who are the victims of violent crime?

- Assault is the most common violent crime.
- Violent crime (except for rape) affects men more than women.
- People with low incomes have the highest violent crime victimization rate.

Rates per 1,000 persons

	Robbery	Assault	Rape
Sex			
Male	10	36	*
Female	5	18	2**
Age			
12-15	12	46	1
16-19	12	53	2
20-24	12	54	2
25-34	8	35	1
35-49	5	17	*
50-64	5	8	*
65 and over	4	4	*
Race and origin			
White	6	26	1
Black	17	31	2
Other	10	27	*
Hispanic	12	25	*
Non-Hispanic	7	27	1
Marital status			
Divorced/separated	15	48	3
Never married	13	47	2
Married	4	16	*
Widowed	5	6	*
Income			
Less than \$3,000	16	47	4
\$3,000-\$7,499	12	31	2
\$7,500-\$9,999	9	32	1
\$10,000-\$14,999	8	31	1
\$15,000-\$24,999	6	25	1
\$25,000 or more	5	23	*
Employment status			
Retired	6	4	*
Keeping house	4	11	1
Unable to work	6	18	*
Employed	7	29	1
In school	11	44	*
Unemployed	13	60	3
Residence			
Central city	15	35	1
Suburban	6	26	1
Rural	3	21	1

What kinds of households are the victims of crime?

- Larceny is the most common property crime; motor vehicle theft is the least common.
- Hispanics are more often victims of household crimes than non-Hispanics.
- Household crimes more often affect households headed by younger people.
- Household crime rates are highest for households with six or more people.
- Renters have higher rates than home owners.
- Households in central cities have higher rates than suburban or rural households.

Rates per 1,000 households

	Burglary	Household larceny	Motor vehicle theft
Age of household head			
12-19	218	184	29
20-34	115	156	25
35-49	95	138	20
50-64	68	104	12
65 and over	54	63	7
Race or origin of household head			
White	83	119	16
Black	134	142	24
Other	68	118	13
Hispanic	104	148	29
Non-Hispanic	87	120	17
Income			
Less than \$3,000	132	118	12
\$3,000-\$7,499	99	120	12
\$7,500-\$9,999	89	121	14
\$10,000-\$14,999	87	123	20
\$15,000-\$24,999	80	129	19
\$25,000 or more	83	123	18
Number of persons in household			
1	84	77	15
2-3	86	115	17
4-5	93	165	19
6 or more	109	196	21
Form of tenure			
Home owned or being bought	73	110	13
Home rented	115	141	25
Place of residence			
Central city	120	149	26
1,000,000 or more	115	116	38
500,000-999,999	126	166	27
250,000-499,999	129	159	24
50,000-249,999	114	163	15
Outside central city (suburban)	80	119	17
Nonmetropolitan (rural)	68	98	8

*Too few cases in the survey sample to obtain statistically reliable data.

**This rate based on women only; the rate based on the total population is 1.

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

What is the relationship between victim and offender?

Men, blacks, and young people face the greatest risk of violent crime by strangers

During 1973-79, men were victimized by violent strangers at an annual rate almost triple that of women (29 vs. 11 per 1,000). Blacks were more than twice as likely as whites to be robbed by strangers.

The overall chance of becoming a victim of violent crime by strangers decreases with age but the robbery rate does not drop as much across age groups as do the rates of other violent crimes. For example, persons age 25-34 suffered 4.8 robberies and 7.4 aggravated assaults per 1,000 people, while persons age 65 and older suffered 3.7 robberies but only 0.6 aggravated assaults per 1,000 people.

Because many older people are physically unable to move about outside their home and, according to published surveys, many have curtailed their outside activities because of their fear of crime, it is possible that the risk of robbery for older persons who continue to be active and mobile may be as great as that for the population as a whole.

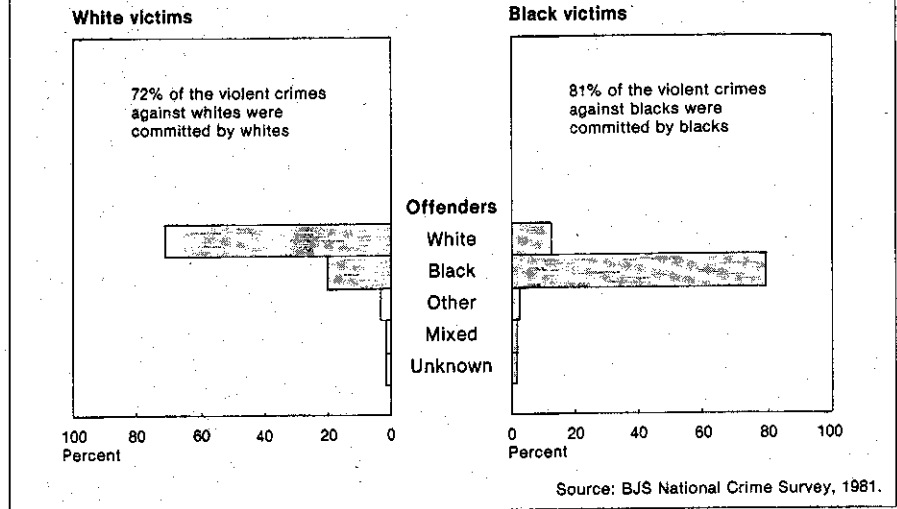
Women were more vulnerable than men to assaults by acquaintances and relatives¹

Two-thirds of all assaults on divorced and separated women were committed by acquaintances and relatives.

Half of all assaults on women who have never been married and 40% of assaults on married women were committed by nonstrangers.

More than half of all assaults on women, but only a third of those on men, were committed by relatives or acquaintances.

Victims and offenders are of the same race in 3 out of 4 violent crimes



Spouses or former spouses committed 5% of the assaults by lone offenders

NCS data show that during 1973-77 95% of all assaults on spouses or ex-spouses were committed by men. In only 5% of such assaults was the offender the wife or ex-wife of the victim.

In almost three-quarters of spouse-on-spouse assaults, the victim was divorced or separated at the time of the incident.

Young offenders did not appear to be singling out the elderly as victims of robbery and assault

During 1973-77, there was little difference between persons age 65 or older and the rest of the population in the rates at which they were robbed or assaulted by youths under age 21.

How does crime affect its victims?

Losses from personal and household crime exceeded \$10 billion in 1980

NCS data indicate that in 1980 direct cash and property losses from personal robberies, personal and household larcenies, household burglaries, and privately owned motor vehicle theft approached \$9.5 billion. The amount recovered by insurance or other means was reported to be less than \$3.6 billion. This figure probably underestimates the amount recovered by insurance because the claims of many respondents remained unsettled at the time of the NCS interview. In addition, almost \$600 million worth of damage was done to personal and household property.

UCR data show that reported commercial robberies, nonresidential burglaries, and shoplifting surpassed \$1 billion in 1980. The overall economic impact of crime is staggering, particularly when it includes such consequences of crime as lost productivity resulting from victims' absence from work, medical care, and the introduction of security measures to discourage victimization.

Computer-related fraud, arson for profit, embezzlement, and a number of types of underground economic activity result in economic losses, but the impact of many such crimes is difficult to measure. Simon and Witte estimated that the total income for the underground economy in 1980 was somewhere between \$170 billion and \$300 billion. The social costs of such activity include lost tax revenues, treatment programs for drug abusers, higher insurance premiums, burned-out neighborhoods resulting from professional arson rings, increased property crime as a means to support drug habits, and increased law enforcement efforts to apprehend smugglers, drug dealers, arsonists, and other offenders. The full cost of operating the criminal justice system is also an indirect cost of crime.

The economic impact of crime hits the poor most heavily

The cost of crime is borne by all segments of society, but to different degrees. NCS data for 1980 show that the dollar loss from crimes involving money, property loss, or destruction of property rises with income.

The average loss from such a crime was about—

- \$180 for victims with a family income of less than \$6,000 a year
- \$340 for those with family incomes of \$25,000 or more.

The burden of such crimes expressed as a proportion of reported family income decreased with increasing family income. In 1980, the relative impact per incident was 5 times greater on families with yearly incomes of less than \$6,000 than for those with incomes of \$25,000 or more. However, this gap has been narrowing in recent years. In 1977, the relative impact was 10 times greater on the low- than on the high-income families. This change may partially result from the movement of individuals or households more prone to victimization into higher income categories because of inflation, but there is also evidence of a significant upward change between 1977 and 1980 in the economic burden of such crimes on all income levels except on family households with incomes of less than \$6,000.

2 million injuries or deaths resulted from violent crime

Based on UCR data for 1980, an estimated 23,044 people were murdered.

NCS data for 1980 show that—

- 2,014,300 injuries resulted from violent crimes other than homicide.
- 30% of all rape, robbery, and assault victims were injured.
- 15% of the victims of violent crime required some kind of medical attention; 8% required hospital care.

The likelihood of injury was—

- Greater for females than males even when rape was excluded from the analysis.
- Greater for blacks than for whites.

The relationship of the victim to the offender also influences the likelihood of injury

- Victims were more likely to report injury requiring medical attention when the offender was an acquaintance rather than a stranger.
- Victims were more likely to be injured seriously if the assailant was a relative rather than an acquaintance or a stranger.
- The victim's relationship to the offender tended to vary with the type of crime, and this may have some influence on these results. Still, when the effect of victim-offender relationship on injury is examined separately for each of the four violent crime types, injury was consistently less likely to result when the assailant was a stranger rather than an acquaintance or relative. There was also some indication of a greater likelihood of injury when the offender was a relative rather than a stranger or acquaintance. These results may be tempered by the possibility that victims may be reluctant to report victimizations by relatives to an interviewer. Consequently, they may mention only the most serious of such incidents.

How do victims of violent crime protect themselves?

- Rape victims are more likely than other violent crime victims to use force, try a verbal response, or attract attention, and they are less likely than the others to do nothing to protect themselves.
- Robbery victims are the least likely to try to talk themselves out of being victimized and the most likely to do nothing.
- Assault victims are the least likely to attract attention and the most likely to attempt some form of nonviolent evasion.
- Compared with simple assault victims, aggravated assault victims are more likely to use a weapon, less likely to try to talk themselves out of the incident, and less likely to do nothing to defend themselves. The fact that weapons are used more frequently by victims of aggravated assault than by victims of any other violent crime leads to the suspicion that some of these victims may have played a part in causing the incident.

Victim response*	Percent of victims who used response by type of crime*		
	Rape	Robbery	Assault
Weapons use			
Used or brandished gun or knife	1%	2%	2%
Physical force			
Used or tried physical force	33	23	23
Verbal response			
Threatened, argued, reasoned, etc. with offender	17	8	13
Attracting attention			
Tried to get help, attract attention, scare offender away	15	7	6
Nonviolent evasion			
Resisted without force, used evasive action	10	11	19
Other	5	4	7
No self-protective actions	19	45	30
Total	100% (873)	100% (5,868)	100% (24,876)

*Victim self-protective responses are listed in the table in order of assertiveness. If victims indicated that they took more than one type of action, only the most assertive action was used in the analysis.

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1973-79.

Likelihood of injury appears to be related to a victim's self-protective response

Most violent victimizations do not result in serious injury. Yet, NCS data for 1973 to 1979 show that some self-protective responses to violent crimes are more likely than others to be associated with serious injury.²

Of all responses reported by victims to NCS, physical force, trying to attract attention, and doing nothing to protect oneself or property resulted in the highest proportions of seriously injured victims (16%, 14%, and 12%, respectively). On the other hand, those who tried to talk themselves out of their predicament or took nonviolent evasive action were less likely to incur serious injury (both 6%).³

The NCS provides no information on the sequence of events in a crime incident. Thus, the relatively high association of no self-protection with injury may reflect either passive victims presenting no obstacles to injury or victims who are injured at the start of

an incident and who are reluctant to risk further harm by acting in any way. Consequently, the data do not always indicate the probability of subsequent injury resulting from various self-protective strategies, but they do suggest that some actions may be more dangerous than others.

The pattern of serious injury associated with each of the self-protective measures was consistent for all NCS-measured violent crimes except robbery and simple assault. (Victims of these crimes were less likely than victims of other violent crimes to be injured seriously if they did nothing to protect themselves.) This finding is noteworthy, since each type of violent crime tends to provoke different responses by victims. For example, rape victims are particularly likely to use physical force to repel rapists. This may be an automatic reaction to being grabbed, or it may be a deliberate act intended to be self-protective. In either case, the NCS data indicate that a victim who uses physical force

against an offender runs a relatively high risk of serious injury.

These results further suggest that adapting responses to different types of violent crime incidents may not be helpful in avoiding injury. Rape victims took those actions more likely to be tied to injury more frequently than did assault victims, and robbery victims were even more likely to react in this manner. In fact, violent crime victims as a group tended to take the self-defensive actions that were more rather than less closely associated with serious injury. Sixty-two percent of all violent crime victims interviewed by the NCS reported that they took one or more such actions.

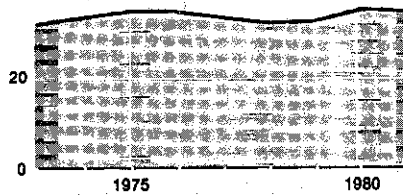
Each incident of violent crime has unique features that may affect how victims are able to protect themselves, but the NCS data suggest that the responses of physical force, attracting attention, or deliberate inaction are related to a higher likelihood of injury.

Most crimes are not reported to the police

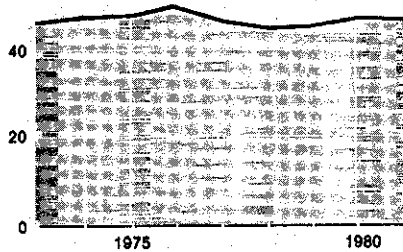
Only a third of all crimes are reported to the police

Percent reported to police

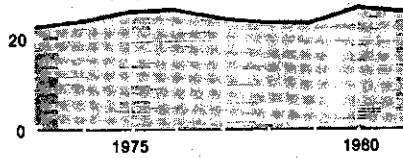
All NCS-measured crimes



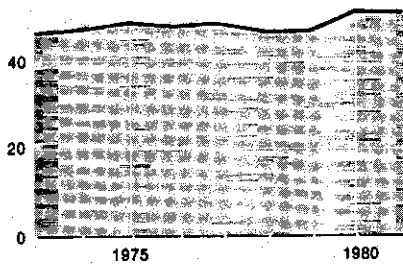
Violent crimes (Rape, robbery, assault)



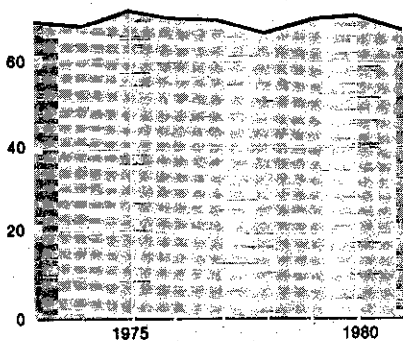
Larceny (personal and household)



Household burglary



Motor vehicle theft



Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

Information about the extent to which crime is reported to police has only become widely available in the past decade

It has long been known that many crimes do not come to the attention of the police, but it was only with the development of victimization surveys that systematic information became available on crimes that are not reported.

Early surveys undertaken by researchers working with the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1967 undertook studies to measure the so-called "dark figure" of crime. These early surveys found that a vast number of crimes do not come to police attention.

Since 1973, the National Crime Survey has provided yearly findings on the extent to which crimes are reported to the police, the characteristics of crimes that are and are not reported, and the reasons for not reporting.

Reporting rates varied by type of crime and sex and age of victim—but not by race

In 1981, the rate of reporting to the police was higher for—

- Violent crimes than for personal crimes of theft (47% vs. 27%)
- Female than for male victims of violent crimes (52% vs. 44%)
- Older than for younger victims.

Whites, blacks, Hispanics, and non-Hispanics reported both violent crimes and personal crimes of theft at more or less the same rates.

Reporting rates were higher for motor vehicle theft than for burglary and for household larceny

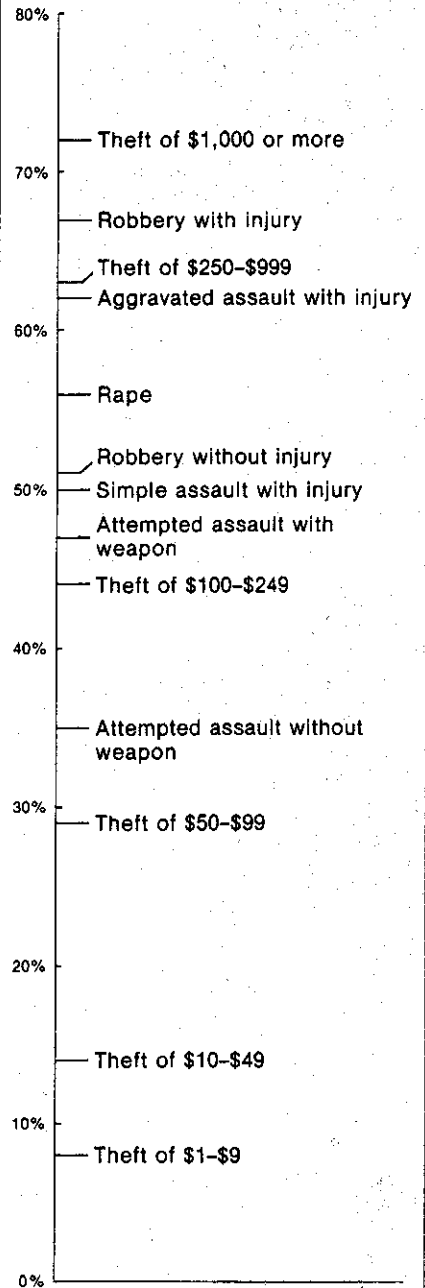
In 1981, the rates of reporting to the police were—

- 67% for motor vehicle theft
- 51% for household burglary
- 26% for household larceny.

There were only minor differences in the rates at which whites and blacks reported these three household crimes.

Thefts resulting in large losses and serious violent crimes with injury are most likely to be reported to the police

Percent reported to the police



Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

The highest income group was more likely than the lowest income group to report household crimes to the police

	Under \$3,000	\$25,000 and over
Household burglary	43%	59%
Household larceny	25	31
Motor vehicle theft	47	71

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

Homeowners were more likely than renters to report household crimes

	Owners	Renters
Household burglary	55%	47%
Household larceny	29	25
Motor vehicle theft	72	66

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

Roughly half of all crimes by strangers and by nonstrangers were reported to the police

NCS data reveal very little difference between the rates of reporting crimes by strangers and by nonstrangers. In 1980, 49% of the crimes by strangers and 44% of the crimes by nonstrangers were reported.

There was little difference, as well, between stranger and nonstranger crime reporting for any of the crimes of rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault.

This finding is somewhat surprising and may be the result of underreporting of crimes by relations and acquaintances. It may be that victims may be more willing to relate crimes by relatives or acquaintances if the crimes

have already been reported to police. Other people may not think of themselves as victims of crimes when assaulted by relatives and therefore may not relate incidents to survey interviewers. Because of this selective underreporting of some crimes by relatives and acquaintances, the percentage of such crimes reported to police obtained from survey data would be higher than it really is.

Many violent crimes were unreported because they were "private matters," and many crimes of theft were "not important enough to report"

Percent of victimizations not reported to the police, by reason for not reporting

	Private/personal matter	Nothing could be done/lack of proof	Not important enough	Reported to someone else	Police wouldn't want to be bothered	Too inconvenient	Fear of reprisal	All other reasons	Not given
Crimes of violence									
Rape	35%	18%	4%	8%	*%	2%	16%	42%	2%
Robbery	15	21	15	9	9	6	7	39	5
Aggravated assault	31	10	22	11	7	3	5	22	4
Simple assault	32	8	30	14	7	2	3	14	3
Crimes of theft									
Burglary	9	23	23	7	10	2	1	44	2
Larceny	8	23	39	3	10	2	1	32	2
Motor vehicle theft	12	18	16	8	8	3	*	52	1

Note: Percents add to more than 100% for each type of crime because some people gave more than one reason for not reporting.

*0 or less than 0.5%.

Source: BJS National Crime Survey, 1981.

Compensation for crime victims has become more available, particularly in the past 10 years

Victim compensation programs are a relatively new phenomenon

In 1965, California launched the first statewide program. Since then, more than half of all States have started similar programs, most of them in the past 5 years.⁴ These programs have been established in response to the problems faced by the victims of violent crime, particularly those who cannot afford medical expenses or loss of earnings. These State programs complement many other efforts to aid crime victims; such efforts include rape crisis centers and prosecutors' victim assistance programs.

Most programs provide for recovery of medical expenses and some lost earnings

Under many programs, if a victim dies, his or her family becomes eligible to apply for reimbursement of out-of-pocket medical and funeral expenses. At present, none of the programs reimburse the victim for property loss or damage. States usually deny awards to a victim who provoked the crime, was involved in an illegal activity when the crime occurred, or was related to the offender. Some States compensate only State residents as opposed to visitors to the State.

Victim compensation awards totaled \$34 million in 1980

To pay for their victim compensation programs—

- 14 States rely on penalty assessments against convicted offenders.
- Another 14 States rely on legislative appropriations.
- The remaining States rely on a combination of the two sources.

Restitution to the victim by the offender usually reduces the compensation award.

In 11 States, money earned by offenders as a result of their crimes, such as by writing books, is put into an account from which victims are compensated. This approach was established by the New York legislature when convicted murderer David Berkowitz, the "Son of Sam" murderer, had expectations of making a great deal of money by selling his story.

37 States and the District of Columbia have compensation programs to help victims of violent crime

State	Financial award	To qualify, victim must—		
		show financial need	report to police within:	file claim within:
Alaska	\$0-40,000	No	5 days	24 months
California	\$100-23,000	Yes	*	12 months
Colorado	\$25- 1,500	No	3 days	6 months
Connecticut	\$100-10,000	No	5 days	24 months
Delaware	\$25-10,000	No	*	12 months
D.C.	\$0-25,000	Yes	7 days	6 months
Florida	\$0-10,000	Yes	3 days	12 months
Hawaii	\$0-10,000	No	*	18 months
Illinois	\$0-15,000	No	3 days	12 months
Indiana	\$100-10,000	No	2 days	3 months
Iowa	\$0- 2,000	No	1 day	6 months
Kansas	\$100-10,000	Yes	3 days	12 months
Kentucky	\$100-15,000	Yes	2 days	12 months
Louisiana	\$250-10,000	No	3 days	12 months
Maryland	\$100-45,000	Yes	2 days	6 months
Massachusetts	\$100-10,000	No	2 days	12 months
Michigan	\$100-15,000	Yes	2 days	1 month
Minnesota	\$100-25,000	No	5 days	12 months
Missouri	\$200-10,000	No	2 days	12 months
Montana	\$0-25,000	No	3 days	12 months
Nebraska	\$0-10,000	No	3 days	24 months
Nevada	\$100- 5,000	Yes	5 days	12 months
New Jersey	\$100-25,000	No	90 days	24 months
New Mexico	\$0-12,500	No	30 days	12 months
New York	\$0-20,000 [†]	Yes	7 days	12 months
North Dakota	\$100-25,000	No	3 days	12 months
Ohio	\$0-25,000	No	3 days	12 months
Oklahoma	\$0-10,000	No	3 days	12 months
Oregon	\$250-23,000	No	3 days	6 months
Pennsylvania	\$100-25,000	No	3 days	12 months
Rhode Island	\$0-25,000	No	10 days	24 months
South Carolina	\$300-10,000	No	2 days	6 months
Tennessee	\$100-10,000	No	2 days	12 months
Texas	\$0-50,000	Yes	3 days	6 months
Virginia	\$100-10,000	Yes	2 days	6 months
Washington	\$200-15,000 [†]	No	3 days	12 months
West Virginia	\$0-20,000	No	3 days	24 months
Wisconsin	\$0-12,000	No	5 days	24 months

* Must report but no time limit specified.

[†] Plus unlimited medical expenses.

Source: *State Legislatures*, November/December 1981; with additions from the National Organization of Victim Assistance.

Basic sources

Dictionary of criminal justice data terminology, second edition, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, NCJ-76939 (Washington: USGPO, 1981).

Gaynes, Mindy, "New roads to justice: Compensating the victim," *State Legislatures* 7:11-17 (1981).

National Crime Survey:

Crime and seasonality, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ-64818 (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, May 1980).

Criminal victimization in the U.S., 1980-81 changes based on new estimates, BJS technical report, NCJ-87577 (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, March 1983).

Criminal victimization in the United States, 1980, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ-84015 (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, June 1983).

Victims of crime, BJS bulletin, NCJ-79615 (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, December 1981).

Violent crime by strangers, BJS bulletin, NCJ-80829 (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, April 1982).

Simon, Carl P., Ann D. Witte, et al., *Beating the system: The underground economy* (Boston: Auburn House Publishing Company, 1982).

Uniform Crime Reports:

Crime in the United States (annual), Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice (Washington: USGPO), 1970-1980.

Victim and witness assistance, BJS bulletin, NCJ-87934, (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, May 1983).

Vital statistics of the United States (annual), National Center for Health Statistics, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Reactions to Crime Project, executive summary. National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, May 1982.

Notes

¹It is widely believed that crimes by relatives and close acquaintances are underreported in the survey. For this reason, the number of crimes committed by non-strangers may be somewhat understated, and the proportion of crimes committed by strangers may be somewhat overstated.

²Injury requiring medical attention was chosen as the indicator for serious injury. This variable was judged to be a better summary of serious injury than a straightforward summary of reported injury, as the latter would include minor bruises, cuts, and scratches. Also, the NCS records information on medical attention only for those victims who actually report an injury and thus excludes many visits to doctors or hospitals that are purely cautionary.

³As discussed in the Technical Appendix, analyses were performed that controlled for other possible influences on the likelihood of injury including—

- type of crime
- relationship of victim to offender
- number of offenders
- age and sex of victims
- types of weapons carried by offenders.

When these factors were controlled, the relationship of serious injury to self-protective action still held true, indicating that overall these findings cannot be accounted for by a number of other possible explanations.

⁴"Crime victim compensation: A survey of State programs," Gerald Ranker and Martin Meager, *Federal Probation Quarterly*, March 1982.