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Bureau of Justice Statistics



Female Victims of Violent Crime

Bureau of Justice Statistics reports

(Revised January 1991)

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- White-collar crime NCJ-106876, 9/87
- Pretrial release and misconduct, NCJ-96132, 1/85

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- 1990 directory of automated criminal justice information systems, Vol. 1, Corrections; 2, Courts; 3, Law enforcement; 4, Probation and parole; 5, Prosecution; NCJ-122226-30, 5/90

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Female Victims of Violent Crime

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January 1991, NCJ-126826

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

126826

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**U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
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Acknowledgments. This report was written by Caroline Wolf Harlow, Ph.D., statistician, under the supervision of Patsy A. Klaus, chief, National Crime Survey, and Charles R. Kindermann, Ph.D., associate director. Thomas Hester edited the report. Bruce Taylor provided statistical review, assisted by Ida Hines. Lalls A. Cotton provided graphical assistance. Marilyn Marbrook, publications unit chief, supervised production, assisted by Yvonne Boston, Betty Sherman, and Jayne Pugh.

The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program offices and bureaus: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Office for Victims of Crime.

Foreword

The Office for Victims of Crime

The 1984 Victims of Crime Act established a Crime Victims Fund with monies obtained from Federal offenders in the form of fines, financial penalties, forfeited bail bonds, and literary profits. Through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) of the Office of Justice Programs, monies from this fund augment State victim compensation and assistance programs. In 1990, OVC provided a record amount of \$125 million to support victims programs, including more than 1,600 specialized victim assistance programs for sexual assault and domestic violence victims.

Since the beginning of the grant program in 1986, OVC has been committed to assisting sexual assault victims throughout the States and in Indian Country by supporting such services as rape crisis hotlines and improved training for criminal justice officials and victim assistance professionals and through other specialized services for sexual assault victims. In addition, reimbursement by State compensation programs for medical and counseling expenses increased from approximately \$11 million in fiscal 1986 to more than \$29 million in fiscal 1989.

Most States have enacted victims rights legislation to protect victims and to improve their treatment within the criminal justice system. In 1990 the Congress passed and President Bush signed legislation creating a Federal Victims' Bill of Rights.

Violent crimes, particularly rape and violence against intimates, are vitally important to understand and to prevent. The debilitating effects of these crimes, most of which are against women, are dramatic and long-lasting for the victim and for society. Yet the very nature of these crimes and the consequences of them mean that victims are often unwilling or even unable to report them to the police or to a National Crime Survey (NCS) interviewer.

Despite the difficulties, in more than a half million interviews of women, thousands who were raped and thousands who were victims of violence by family members or boyfriends have described their experiences to the NCS. Relying on data from those interviews, this report makes current in a readily usable form the information first presented in two BJS Special Reports.

The NCS has redesigned questions to gain a deeper understanding of violent crimes, especially those in which the victim and offender are members of the same household. As interviewers begin asking the redesigned questions, we may obtain fuller information about rape and other violence by intimates. As the public more openly discusses these crimes because of information such as that in this report, victims will be better able to make known the full extent of the problem.

Steven D. Dillingham, Ph.D.
Director

Contents

Introduction

- Violence by intimates 1
 - Reporting violence by intimates to the police 3
 - Characteristics of women victimized by intimates 5
 - Characteristics of violence by intimates 6
- Rape 7
 - When and where rapes occurred 7
 - Characteristics of victims of completed or attempted rape 8
 - Reporting rape to the police 9
 - Characteristics of offenders 10
 - Comparison of rape by a nonstranger and by a stranger 12

Methodology 14

Special information

- How to interpret NCS data on rape and on violence by intimates 1
- Comparing female and male victims of violence 4
- Completed and attempted rapes reported to the NCS, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 7
- The NCS questionnaire and the reporting of rape 10

Figures

- Trends in violent crime victimization for victims age 12 or older, 1973-87 2

Tables

1. Rate of violent crime victimization of women and men, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 1
2. Violence sustained by female victims, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 1
3. Victim-offender relationship in crimes of violence reported to the NCS, by sex, 1979-87 2
4. Type of violent crime reported to the NCS by female victims, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 2
5. Series and nonseries crimes, by victim-offender relationship for female victims, 1979-87 3
6. Whether violent crimes were reported to the police, by victim-offender relationship for female victims, 1979-87 3
7. Reasons why female victims reported violent crimes to the police, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 3
8. Reasons why female victims did not report violent crimes to the police, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 3
9. Average annual rate of violent victimization of women, by type of intimate victim-offender relationship and selected characteristics of victims, 1979-87 5
10. Weapons present in violent victimizations of women, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 6
11. The nature of the violence, the kind of injury, and the site of the medical care received by female victims of violent crime, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 6
12. Self-protective measures that female victims took during violent victimizations, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87 6
13. Number of crimes, violent crimes, and rapes reported to the NCS, 1973-87 7

Contents

14. When and where rapes of women occurred, by whether the rape was completed or attempted, 1979-87 7
15. Average annual rate of completed and attempted rape, by selected characteristics of female victims, 1973-87 8
16. Average annual rate of completed and attempted rape, by residential, employment, and income characteristics of female victims, 1973-87 8
17. Average annual rate of rape, by family income and race of female victims, 1979-87 8
18. Reporting of rape of women to the police, by characteristics of the crime and the victim, 1973-87 9
19. Reasons why female victims of completed or attempted rape reported the crime to the police, 1979-87 9
20. Reasons why female victims of completed or attempted rape did not report the crime to the police, 1979-87 9
21. Race of offenders, by race of female victims of rape, 1973-87 10
22. Race of offenders, by race of female victims of rape and victim-offender relationship, 1973-87 10
23. Age of offenders in single- and multiple-offender rape of women, 1979-87 10
24. Age of female victims of rape with one victim and one offender, by age of offender, 1979-87 11
25. Weapon present in rape of women, by whether the rape was completed or attempted, 1973-87 11
26. Whether the rape was completed or attempted, by whether female victims took self-protective measures, 1973-87 11
27. Whether female victims of rape were injured, by whether they took self-protective measures, 1973-87 11
28. Injury and medical care received by female victims of completed or attempted rape, 1973-87 11
29. Incident characteristics of rape of women, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87 12
30. Injury and medical care received by female victims of rape, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87 12
31. Characteristics of offenders in rape of women, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87 12
32. Female victims' reporting rape to the police, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87 13
- Appendix table. Rate of victimization from selected violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older, by sex and year, 1973-87 14

Women are generally less likely than men to be crime victims. The rate at which women fell victim to a violent crime from 1979 to 1987 was just less than three-fifths the violent victimization rate of men. Yet, the difference between men's and women's rates of victimization from violent crime has slowly decreased from 1973 through 1987. In most violent crime categories, rates for men declined throughout the period while the rates for women either remained constant or declined less than those for men.

In two classifications of crime, violence between intimates and rape, female victims predominate.¹ The National Crime Survey (NCS) permits a detailed examination of these two kinds of crime as well as other violent offenses that affect women. Data from the NCS can be used to explore the relationship between the victims and their attackers and to portray some of the characteristics of the crimes and the outcomes of those crimes.

An earlier report presented survey findings on assaults within the family, considering only offenders who were related to the victim (*Family Violence*, BJS Special Report, April 1984). This presentation uses the more inclusive category of offender as intimate — family member, ex-spouse, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend — to update the previous report. An offender was classified as a boyfriend or ex-boyfriend if he had dated, had taken out, or had gone with the victim.

This report also examines rape in detail. The NCS data from 15 years have been aggregated to obtain a large number of sample cases for a comprehensive statistical profile. These findings update information presented in *The Crime of Rape* (BJS Bulletin, March 1985). (See the box on page 10 discussing the questions asked NCS respondents.)

Violence by Intimates

In the NCS violence against intimates includes any violent crime measured by the survey — rape, robbery, and assault, both aggravated and simple.

¹The NCS collects data on criminal victimizations experienced by persons age 12 or older. Except where age is explicitly discussed, references to women in this report include female adolescents but not children under age 12.

• Because the NCS cannot account for murder or manslaughter, crimes that comprise about 1% of all violent crimes, the best source for information on homicide is the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), collected by the FBI from local authorities. Among all female victims of murders that police reported to the UCR in 1989, 28% were believed to have been slain by husbands or boyfriends.²

• Women were victims of violent intimates at a rate 3 times that of men (6.3 per 1,000 women compared to 1.8 per 1,000 men) (table 1). Among victims of violence

²Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, Uniform Crime Reports for the United States 1989*, August 1990, p. 12.

How to Interpret NCS data on rape and on violence by intimates

The estimates [of family violence]...should not be used as estimates of the level of family violence in the United States. Rather, they are estimates of the amount of family violence that people considered to be criminal and that victims chose to and were able to relate to survey interviewers.

Family Violence (NCJ-93449, April 1984)

The social stigma traditionally attached to rape makes the experience difficult for many victims to discuss. Only about half of the victims of rape or attempted rape surveyed during the decade stated that the crime had been reported to the police.... Just as some women are reluctant to report rape to the police, others are reluctant to report the event to a survey interviewer.... The exact amount of the understatement is impossible to ascertain.

In the National Crime Survey, each victim defines rape for herself. If she reports that she has been the victim of rape or attempted rape, she is not asked to explain what happened any further. On the other hand, no one in the survey is ever asked directly if she has been raped. This response must come voluntarily in reply to a series of questions on bodily harm.

The Crime of Rape (NCJ-96777, March 1985)

NCS procedures for measuring rape are changing as a result of a 10-year redesign study. The survey will ask direct questions about sexual assault, including rapes involving family members or other intimates. These questions are currently being asked in 10% of the NCS sample; they will be phased into the full sample by 1993.

New Directions for the National Crime Survey (NCJ-115571, March 1989)

by a stranger, the rate for women (11.4 per 1,000) was 61% lower than that for men (29.4 per 1,000). Women were 6 times more likely than men to be victimized by a spouse, ex-spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend.

• During the 9-year period, intimates committed 5.6 million violent victimizations against women, an annual average of almost 626,000 (table 2).

Table 1. Rate of violent crime victimization of women and men, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Victim-offender relationship	Rate of violent crime victimization per 1,000	
	Women	Men
Intimate	6.3	1.8
Other person whom victim knew	7.0	12.1
Stranger	11.4	29.4

Note: NCS collects data on criminal victimizations experienced by persons age 12 or older. References to women and men include adolescents but not children under age 12.

Table 2. Violence sustained by female victims, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Victim-offender relationship	Estimated number of violent victimizations that female victims sustained	
	Total, 1979-87	Average annual number
Intimate	5,632,400	625,800
Spouse	512,000	56,900
Ex-spouse*	1,945,300	216,100
Parent	187,700	20,900
Child	149,900	16,700
Brother/sister	307,500	34,200
Other relative	539,600	60,000
Boyfriend	1,789,200	198,800
Unspecified	201,200	22,400
Other person whom victim knew	6,271,400	696,800
Stranger	10,193,300	1,132,600

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding. There were 852,000 estimated violent victimizations of women for which the victim-offender relationship was unknown.

*Includes separated or divorced spouses.

• Among violent crime victims, 25% of the women and 4% of the men were victimized by persons whom they knew intimately (table 3).

• Three out of four offenders committing domestic violence against women were spouses (9%), ex-spouses (35%), and boyfriends or ex-boyfriends (32%). When only spousal abuse is considered, divorced or separated men committed 79% of such violence, and husbands, 21%.

• Of the intimates' violent crimes that female victims reported, 85% were assaults, 11% were robberies, and 3% were rapes (table 4). Approximately a quarter of the assaults were aggravated, meaning that the offender had used a weapon or had seriously injured the victim. The remaining assaults were simple, indicating either a minor injury — bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, swelling, or undetermined injuries requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization — or a verbal threat of harm.

• Those women victimized by intimates were more likely to experience assaults and less likely to be robbed than female victims of nonintimates.

• About 1 in 5 women victimized by their spouse or ex-spouse reported that they had been the victim of a series of similar

Table 4. Type of violent crime reported to the NCS by female victims, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Type of crime	Total	Violence by intimates			Violence by nonintimates		
		All	Spouse/ex-spouse	Other family	Boy-friend	All	Stranger
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Rape	6	3	2	4	5	7	7
Robbery	17	11	11	11	13	19	25
Assault	77	85	87	85	82	74	67
Aggravated	22	21	21	24	20	21	21
Simple	56	64	67	62	62	53	46

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Table 3. Victim-offender relationship in crimes of violence reported to the NCS, by sex, 1979-87

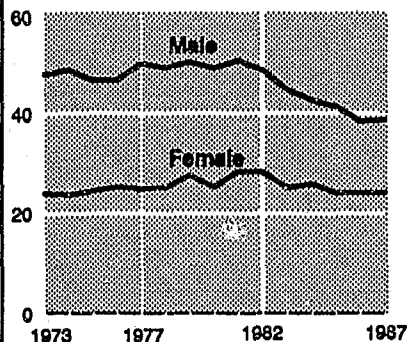
Victim-offender relationship	Percent of violent crimes	
	Female victims	Male victims
All NCS violent crimes	100.0%	100.0%
Intimate	24.5%	3.9%
Spouse*	2.2	.2
Ex-spouse	8.5	.6
Parent	.8	.3
Child	.7	.1
Brother/sister	1.3	.5
Other relative	2.4	1.1
Boyfriend/girlfriend	7.8	.4
Unspecified	.9	.7
Other person whom victim knew	27.3%	26.8%
Stranger	44.4%	65.3%
Unknown relationship	3.7%	4.0%

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding. For victimizations with multiple offenders (4% of all victimizations by intimates), the victimization is classified as being committed by the closest relative involved — first spouse or ex-spouse and then parent, child, brother or sister, other relatives, and boyfriend or girlfriend. Any group of offenders that had at least one related person was included.

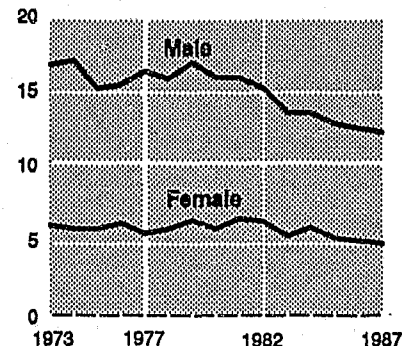
*Includes separated or divorced spouses.

Trends in violent crime victimization for victims age 12 or older, 1973-87

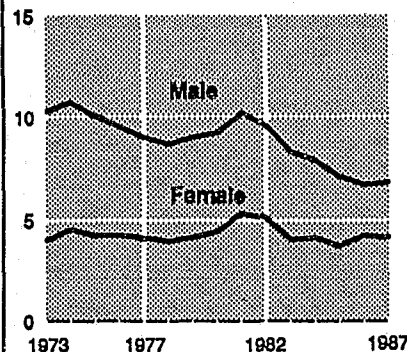
Total violent crime. Women experienced violent crime at the same rate in 1973 and 1987. The 1987 rate of violent crime victimization for men was 20% lower than the 1973 rate.



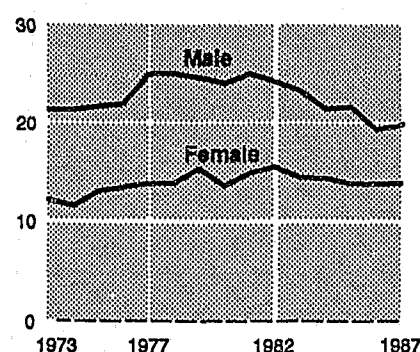
Aggravated assault. Victimization rates for aggravated assaults against women declined 21% from 1973 to 1987. The aggravated assault victimization rate for men was 27% lower in 1987 than in 1973.



Robbery. Women were robbed at about the same annual rate throughout the period. The robbery rate for men went down a third from 1973 to 1987.



Simple assault. By 1987 women were experiencing simple assaults at a rate 14% higher than in 1973. The simple assault rate for men was about the same at the beginning and end of the period.



crimes (table 5). They had sustained at least three assaults within 6 months of the interview, and the assaults were so similar that they could not remember them distinctly.

- Series crimes also accounted for about 15% of the assaults against women victimized by a violent boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, or family member other than a husband or ex-husband. About 9% of the women who knew the offender but not intimately and about 4% who were victimized by strangers had sustained series crimes.

Reporting violence by intimates to the police

- When women were victimized by intimates, 56% of the victimizations were reported to the police; when the offenders were not intimates, 52% were reported (table 6). When women were victimized by strangers, 57% of the incidents were reported to law enforcement authorities. The finding that women were as likely to report violence by intimates as violence by strangers helps to establish the serious nature of the assaults by intimates being reported to the NCS.

- When offenders were friends or acquaintances but not intimates, 45% of the incidents were reported to the police. Victims of friends and acquaintances were significantly younger than victims of intimates and strangers, and this factor of age may have influenced whether the victim reported to the police.

- Almost half of the victims of intimate violence said that the incident was reported to the police to stop it from happening; less than a third of the victims of violence by strangers or friends and acquaintances gave that reason (table 7). About half of each group of victims said that the crime was reported to prevent a similar crime. While a fourth of the victims of intimate violence said that they reported to the police to punish the offender, a third of the victims of strangers or friends and acquaintances gave that answer.

- Almost half of the victims who reported intimate violence to the NCS but not to the police said that the violence was a private or personal matter or that they took care of it themselves (table 8). A higher pro-

Table 5. Series and nonseries crimes, by victim-offender relationship for female victims, 1979-87

Type of crime	Total	Violence by intimates			Violence by nonintimates			
		All	Spouse/ ex-spouse	Other family	Boy- friend	All	Other per- son whom victim knew	Stranger
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Series crimes	9	18	21	15	15	6	9	4
Nonseries crimes	91	82	79	85	85	94	91	96

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Table 6. Whether violent crimes were reported to the police, by victim-offender relationship for female victims, 1979-87

Reporting to the police	Total	Violence by intimates			Violence by nonintimates			
		All	Spouse/ ex-spouse	Other family	Boy- friend	All	Other per- son whom victim knew	Stranger
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Not reported	46	44	44	41	46	46	54	42
Reported	53	56	56	58	54	52	45	57
Unknown	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Table 7. Reasons why female victims reported violent crimes to the police, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Reasons for reporting to the police	Offenders	
	Intimate	Nonintimate
To keep incident from happening again	51%	49%
To stop incident from happening	47	32
To punish the offender	24	33
To fulfill a victim's duty	7	19
To get help after incident	10	6
To recover property	4	12
Because it was a crime	5	6
Because there was evidence or proof	5	5
To collect insurance	-	2
Other reasons	18	17
Number, 1979-87	2,193,900	5,067,800

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% because some respondents gave more than one reason.
--Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

portion of victims of intimate violence than victims of nonintimate violence gave as a reason for not reporting to the police that the violent crime was a personal matter.

Table 8. Reasons why female victims did not report violent crimes to the police, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Reasons for not reporting to the police	Offenders	
	Intimate	Nonintimate
Private or personal matter or took care of herself	48%	22%
Afraid of reprisal by offender or his family or friends	19	7
Reported to someone else	5	19
Did not think it important enough	6	17
Police wouldn't think it important enough	9	8
Police would be inefficient, ineffective, or insensitive	7	6
Lack of proof or no way to find offender	1	9
Object was recovered or offender was unsuccessful	2	8
Did not want to take the time or too inconvenient	1	3
Property would be difficult to recover	-	1
Other reasons	18	16

Note: Percentages add to more than 100% because some respondents gave more than one reason. "Did not realize it was a crime until later" received less than 0.5% and is omitted.
--Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Comparing female and male victims of violence

Race and ethnicity

- Women, regardless of race or ethnicity, experienced lower rates of violent crime than men.

	Average annual rate of violent victimization per 1,000	
	Women	Men
Total	25.8	45.1
White	24.6	44.0
Black	35.3	54.3
Other	21.3	43.1

- Black women experienced violent crime at a rate higher than that of women of other races and at a rate lower than that of men of any race.
- Hispanic women were more likely to be violent crime victims than non-Hispanic women.

	Average annual rate ^a	
	Women	Men
Hispanic	30.3	49.9
Non-Hispanic	25.5	44.7

Age

- Women in all age categories experienced violent crime at a lower rate than men. Women younger than 35 experienced higher rates of crime than men or women older than 34. Men between the ages of 12 and 34 had the highest rates of victimization by violent crime.

	Average annual rate ^a	
	Women	Men
12-15	42.6	73.7
16-19	50.9	94.5
20-24	52.4	92.9
25-34	34.7	53.9
35-49	18.7	27.8
50-64	8.8	13.4
65 or older	4.8	7.3

Marital status

- Separated or divorced women were 6 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than widows, 4 1/2 times more likely than married women, and 3 times more likely than widowers and married men. Only males who had never married had higher rates of violent crime than separated or divorced women.

^aAll rates reflect the annual average number of violent crime victimizations per 1,000 persons of each sex age 12 or older, 1979 to 1987.

Average annual rate of violent victimization per 1,000

	Women	Men
Married	12.6	24.3
Widowed	8.7	14.4
Separated or divorced	66.5	88.1
Never married	43.9	79.3

Family income

- Persons with high family incomes sustained the least amount of violent crime; persons earning the least money had the highest violent crime rates. At each level of family income, women had a lower violent crime rate than men. Women in the bottom income category — with the highest rate of violent crime for women — had about the same rate as men in the top income category — the lowest rate of violent crime for men.

	Average annual rate ^a	
	Women	Men
Low ^b	37.8	61.3
Middle	23.3	43.9
High	18.1	37.3
Unknown	20.0	36.2

Employment

- Among persons in all employment categories, the unemployed, members of the Armed Forces, and students were the most likely to be victims of violent crime. Women generally had lower rates than men in each employment category. The exceptions with the sexes' having no reliable difference in their violent crime rates were retirees, members of the Armed Forces, and persons keeping house. (These data reflect responses from persons age 16 or older, 1979-85.)

	Average annual rate	
	Women	Men
Unemployed	73.1	94.5
School	37.5	69.0
Armed Forces	44.6	55.8
Civilian employment	29.0	46.5
Unable to work	16.5	28.2
Keeping house	14.7	26.4
Retired	6.1	8.3
Other situations	47.9	91.8

Location of residence

- Regardless of area — urban or rural — women experienced violent crimes at a

^bThe survey respondents with known income in each year were distributed almost evenly to create the low, middle, and high family income categories.

rate about 55% below that of men. For both sexes rates of crimes of violence were highest for central city residents and lowest for persons in nonmetropolitan areas. (See *Methodology* for definitions of locations of residence.)

	Average annual rate of violent victimization per 1,000	
	Women	Men
Central city	35.8	61.3
Suburbs	23.3	43.0
Nonmetropolitan area	19.3	33.2

Housing

- Renters experienced relatively more violent crime than homeowners. Women who rented had lower violent crime rates than men who rented but higher violent crime rates than men who owned their homes.

	Average annual rate ^a	
	Women	Men
Owned home	15.9	31.6
Rented	47.4	77.2

- For each type of housing unit, women sustained relatively less violent crime than men. Persons living in dormitories, boarding houses, halfway houses, missions, and flophouses and noninstitutionalized persons living in institutions had the highest violent crime rates. Next highest were for those living in dwellings with four or more units. Those living in single dwellings had the lowest rates.

	Average annual rate ^a	
	Women	Men
One housing unit	19.2	35.9
Two-three units	38.0	65.6
Four or more units	46.8	78.5
Mobile home	29.8	43.6
Other housing	73.0	141.4

Household size

- Among women, those who lived in households of three or more persons were most likely to be victims of violent crime, but their rate was lower than that of men in every household-size category. Two-person households had the lowest violent crime rates for both men and

	Average annual rate ^a	
	Women	Men
One in household	24.2	54.4
Two	21.8	35.4
Three or more	28.2	46.9

• The next most frequently mentioned reason for not reporting violence by intimates to the police was fear of reprisal from the offender or his family. Women victimized by intimates admitted fear of reprisal almost 3 times more often than did victims of nonintimate violence.

Characteristics of women victimized by intimates

• In a comparison of white and black women, white women were more likely to be assaulted by spouses and ex-spouses (2.9 per 1,000 women), while black women were more likely to be victims of boyfriends or ex-boyfriends (4.1 per 1,000 women) (table 9). The rate of victimization by other family members was almost the same for all races.

• Hispanic and non-Hispanic women had about the same rate of violence between intimates.

• The victims of violence by a spouse or ex-spouse were most likely to be age 20 to 34, while the victims of boyfriends were most likely to be age 16 to 24. Those under 25 were more likely than those age 25 or older to have been victims of other family members.

• Separated or divorced women were 14 times more likely than married women to report having been a victim of violence by a spouse or ex-spouse. Although separated or divorced women comprised 10% of all women, they reported 75% of the spousal violence.

• Women living in families with low incomes were 3 times more likely to be victims of domestic assault than those in families with high incomes.

• Unemployed women were more likely to be victimized by their intimates than were women who were employed, keeping house, attending school, retired, or unable to work.

• Women living in central cities were more likely to be victims of violence between intimates than were suburbanites and were somewhat more likely than women living in nonmetropolitan areas. Location of res-

idence accounted for very small differences in rates of violence between intimates but very large differences in rates of violence against women by strangers.

Women in central cities were 3 times more likely to experience violence by a stranger than were women living outside a metropolitan area.

Location	Rate of violent crime victimization per 1,000 women age 12 or older	
	Intimate	Stranger
Central city	7.0	18.3
Suburbs	5.5	10.4
Nonmetropolitan area	6.0	6.2

Location	Rate of violent crime victimization by intimates per 1,000 women age 12 or older		
	Spouse/ex-spouse	Other family	Boy-friend
Central city	2.8	1.3	2.9
Suburbs	2.6	1.2	1.8
Nonmetropolitan area	3.0	1.6	1.5

Table 9. Average annual rate of violent victimization of women, by type of intimate victim-offender relationship and selected characteristics of victims, 1979-87

Characteristic of female victim	Rate of violent crime victimization by intimates per 1,000 women age 12 or older			
	Total for intimates	Spouse or ex-spouse	Other family	Boy-friend
Total	6.1	2.8	1.3	2.0
Race				
White	5.9	2.9	1.3	1.8
Black	7.8	2.2	1.6	4.1
Other	4.7	1.8	1.9	1.0
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	6.5	3.1	1.7	1.7
Non-Hispanic	6.3	2.7	1.3	2.0
Age				
12-15	2.8	0	2.0	.8
16-19	10.6	1.8	3.0	5.7
20-24	15.6	6.8	2.4	6.5
25-34	10.3	5.9	1.5	2.9
35-49	4.9	2.7	1.1	1.0
50 or older	.9	.4	.5	.1
Marital status				
Married	2.1	1.2	.8	.2
Widowed	1.4	.1	.9	.4
Separated or divorced	30.9	21.2	2.9	6.8
Never married	6.8	.1	2.1	4.6
Family income ^a				
Low	10.9	4.7	2.4	3.9
Middle	5.1	2.6	1.1	1.5
High	2.7	1.3	.6	.9
Unknown	4.2	1.8	1.1	1.3
Employment status ^b				
Employed	6.6	3.4	1.0	2.2
Unemployed	22.2	8.4	5.5	8.3
Keeping house	4.1	2.0	1.1	1.1
School	5.6	1.7	1.9	2.0
Unable to work	3.2	.9	1.8	.5
Retired	.7	.1	.5	.1
Armed Forces	12.7	2.8	3.2	6.7
Other	6.4	2.8	1.7	1.9

Note: Cases in which the relationship is not ascertained are omitted from this table.

^aThe survey respondents with known family income in each year were distributed almost evenly to create

the low, middle, and high family income categories. ^bData on employment status include persons age 16 or older, 1979 through the fourth collection quarter of 1985.

Characteristics of violence by intimates

● In 21% of the violent victimizations by an intimate, the offender used or showed a weapon, compared to 33% of victimizations by strangers (table 10). The weapons of intimates were about equally as likely to be guns, knives, and other objects used as weapons.

● Spouses, ex-spouses, and boyfriends physically attacked their victim in over 70% of the assaults; in the remainder they attempted to attack or threatened violence either verbally or by showing a weapon (table 11). About 60% of the assaults by other family members were attacks.

● Over half of the victims of intimate offenders were injured — contrasted with just under a quarter of the victims of strangers. Almost 6 in 10 victims of violent spouses, ex-spouses and boyfriends suffered injuries, while victims of violence by other family members or by nonintimate offenders were less likely to be injured (42% and 27%, respectively).

● More than 85% of the injured victims of violence by intimates reported that the injuries were cuts, bruises, black eyes, and other such injuries.

Table 10. Weapons present in violent victimizations of women, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Presence and type of weapon	Percent of violent victimizations of women		
	Total	Intimate	Stranger
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	64	76	54
Did not know if weapon were present	8	3	12
Weapon	28	21	33
Gun	10	7	13
Knife	7	6	9
Other	9	7	10
Type not ascertained	2	2	2

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Detail may not add to total because of rounding. Categories of weapon use are arrayed in perceived order of seriousness. For crimes in which offenders possessed more than one type of weapon, the crime is classified by the most serious weapon present.

● In almost a quarter of the cases of violence by an intimate, the victim received medical care. One in ten were treated in a hospital or emergency room; about 1 in 20, in a doctor's office; and about 1 in 10, at other places. Victims of violence by nonintimate offenders were less likely than victims of intimates to receive medical treatment (13% versus 23%).

● Four out of five victims of intimate offenders resisted the assault (table 12). They passively resisted — trying to get help, threatening or arguing, or using evasive action — twice as often as they actively resisted — using a weapon or fighting back.

● Victims of violence by intimates were more likely to resist the offenders than were victims of other violent offenders (81% versus 73%).

Table 11. The nature of the violence, the kind of injury, and the site of the medical care received by female victims of violent crime, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

	Violence by intimates				Violence by nonintimates	
	All	Spouse or ex-spouse	Other family	Boy-friend	All	Stranger
Threat	30%	29%	40%	25%	52%	54%
Attack	70	71	60	75	48	46
Injury ^a	54	56	42	58	27	24
Minor	46	49	36	49	23	21
Serious	7	6	5	9	3	3
Medical care received ^b	23	23	19	27	13	12
Doctor's office	4	4	4	4	2	2
Hospital/ emergency room	10	10	9	11	6	7
Other places	9	9	7	11	5	4

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

^aSerious injuries include gunshot or knife wounds, broken bones, loss of teeth, internal injuries, loss of consciousness, and undetermined injuries requiring 2 or more days of hospitalization. Minor injuries include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, swelling, and undetermined injuries requiring less

than 2 days of hospitalization.

^bMedical care is any care or treatment given for physical injuries by a trained medical provider, by a nonmedical person, or by the victim. If a victim receives more than one type of medical care, she is classified as having received the most serious type.

Table 12. Self-protective measures that female victims took during violent victimizations, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

Self-protective measure	Violence by intimates				Violence by nonintimates	
	All	Spouse/ ex-spouse	Other family	Boy-friend	All ^a	Stranger
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Some resistance	81	81	76	84	73	71
Active	22	19	22	27	17	15
Passive	57	60	53	55	53	53
Other	2	2	2	2	3	3
No resistance	19	18	23	16	26	29

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories.

^aIncludes violence by friends without an intimate relationship and by casual acquaintances.

Rape

Rape for the NCS is carnal knowledge through the use of force or the threat of force, including attempts. This definition excludes statutory rape. When a robber attempts to rape or rapes a victim, the offense is classified as a rape. When an offender assaults a woman and rapes or attempts to rape her, the offense is classified as a rape, even if the victim is injured or the offender carried a weapon.

- An estimated 155,000 women were raped each year between 1973 and 1987 (table 13).³

³The 95% confidence interval is approximately 113,000 to 196,000 rapes per year. For further discussion of sampling error and measurement issues, see *Methodology* (pages 14-15) and the boxes with special information on pages 1 and 10.

- From 1973 to 1987 there were annually 1.6 rapes per 1,000 women age 12 or older, meaning that 1 out of every 600 women was a rape victim each year.

- Rape and attempted rape are relatively rare crimes compared to robbery and assault, amounting to less than 3% of all violent crime measured by the NCS.

When and where rapes occurred

- Almost two-thirds of rapes occurred at night (table 14). Completed rapes were more likely than attempted rapes to occur at night, particularly between midnight and 6 a.m.
- Most rapes occurred at home. Four in ten completed rapes took place at the victim's home; 2 in 10 occurred at or near a friend's home, and 2 in 10, on the street.

- About 3 in 10 attempted rapes took place at home; 2 in 10 attempted rapes occurred on the street, and about 1 in 10, at a friend's house.

Table 13. Number of crimes, violent crimes, and rapes reported to the NCS, 1973-87

	Number of victimizations	Average annual number	Annual rate per 1,000 persons age 12 or older
All NCS crimes	583,974,400	38,931,600	
All violent crimes	96,711,900	6,447,500	35.4
Rape	2,515,200	167,700	.9
Completed	832,200	55,500	.3
Attempted	1,683,000	112,200	.6
Female victims	2,317,900	154,500	1.6
Completed	794,000	52,900	.6
Attempted	1,523,800	101,600	1.1
Male victims	197,300	13,200	.2

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding. Rates are calculated from unrounded numbers. Rates of victimization by rape for the

sexes are based on the respective number of each sex.

Table 14. When and where rapes of women occurred, by whether the rape was completed or attempted, 1979-87

	Rape of women		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
Time of occurrence			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Dawn	1*	1*	1*
Day	31	25	34
Dusk	3	2*	3
Night	65	72	61
Before midnight	34	33	34
After midnight	30	36	26
Don't know	1	3*	1*
Place of occurrence			
Total	100%	100%	100%
At or in own home	35	41	31
Near own home	8	3*	10
At or near friend's home	15	19	12
On the street	20	18	21
Inside commercial buildings	4	2*	5
On public transportation	0*	0*	1*
In parking lot or garage	6	5	7
On school property	4	1*	5
In a park	3	2*	4
Other places	5	8	4
Number of victimizations	1,382,800	495,900	886,800

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Detail may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories. "At or in own home" includes vacation homes. *Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Completed and attempted rapes reported to the NCS, by victim-offender relationship, 1979-87

- Offenders who were intimates completed the rape in half the attempts. Other men whom the victim knew completed about 4 of 10 rape attempts; strangers, 3 of 10.

- Intimates committed 14 of every 100 attempted or completed rapes; other men whom the victim knew or recognized, 28 of 100; and strangers, 54 of 100. The offender was more likely to be intimately known to the victim in completed than in attempted rapes.

Rape	Percent of female rape or attempted rape victims age 12 or older against whom the crime was completed when the offender was:				Rape	Percent of female rape victims age 12 or older when the rapist or attempted rapist was:			
	Total	Intimate	Other known	Stranger		Total	Intimate	Other known	Stranger
Completed	36%	52%	38%	30%	Total	100%	14%	28%	54%
					Completed	100	20	29	46
					Attempted	100	10	27	58

Characteristics of victims of completed or attempted rape

- Black women were significantly more likely to be raped than white women, although a larger number of white women than the total of black, American Indian, Aleut, Eskimo, Asian, and Pacific Islander women were raped each year (table 15).
- Hispanic and non-Hispanic women were equally likely to be raped.
- Women age 16 to 24 were 3 times more likely to be raped than other women. This age pattern was similar for black and white women.

Age	Average annual rate of rape per 1,000 women age 12 or older		
	Total	White	Black
Total	1.6	1.5	2.7
12-15	2.3	2.0	3.7
16-19	4.8	4.8	5.1
20-24	4.1	3.8	5.5
25-34	2.3	2.0	4.0
35-49	.6	.6	1.0
50-64	.2	.2	.4
65 or older	.1	.1	.4

- Women who were separated or divorced or who had never married were 9 times more likely to be raped than those who were married or widowed.

Table 15. Average annual rate of completed and attempted rape, by selected characteristics of female victims, 1973-87

Victim characteristics	Average annual rate of rape per 1,000 women age 12 or older		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
Total	1.6	.6	1.1
Race			
White	1.5	.5	1.0
Black	2.7	1.2	1.5
Other	1.8	.9	.9
Ethnicity			
Hispanic	1.5	.5	1.0
Non-Hispanic	1.6	.6	1.1
Age			
12-15	2.3	.7	1.6
16-19	4.8	1.7	3.1
20-24	4.1	1.3	2.7
25-34	2.3	.8	1.4
35-49	.6	.2	.4
50 or older	.2	.1	.1
Marital status			
Married	.5	.1	.4
Widowed	.4	.1	.3
Separated/divorced	4.3	1.7	2.6
Never married	3.5	1.2	2.3

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

- Among women of different residential localities, central city residents were the most likely to be raped; those who lived outside the metropolitan area were the least likely (table 16).

- Women who rented were more likely than those who owned their own homes to be raped.

Table 16. Average annual rate of completed and attempted rape, by residential, employment, and income characteristics of female victims, 1973-87

Characteristics	Average annual rate of rape per 1,000 women age 12 or older		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
Total	1.6	.6	1.1
Location of residence			
Central city	2.5	.9	1.6
Suburbs	1.4	.5	.9
Nonmetropolitan area	1.1	.3	.8
Home ownership			
Owned	.8	.3	.5
Rented	3.5	1.2	2.2
Number of housing units			
One	1.0	.3	.7
Two-three	2.4	.8	1.6
Four or more	3.7	1.3	2.4
Mobile home	2.0	.8	1.4
Other	8.4	3.5	5.0
Number in household			
One	2.2	.8	1.4
Two	1.4	.5	.9
Three or more	1.6	.6	1.1
Employment status ^a			
Employed	1.7	.6	1.2
Unemployed	6.2	2.3	3.9
Keeping house	.8	.3	.6
School	3.8	1.4	2.4
Unable to work	1.3	.3	1.0
Retired	.2 [*]	.1 [*]	.1 [*]
Armed Forces	1.6 [*]	1.6 [*]	--
Other	7.6	3.0	4.7
Family income ^b			
Low	2.7	1.1	1.7
Middle	1.2	.4	.8
High	.8	.2	.6
Not reported	1.2	.4	.8

—Less than 0.05.

^{*}Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

^aEmployment status data are based on responses from persons age 16 or older, 1979 through the fourth collection quarter of 1985.

^bThe survey respondents with known family income in each year, 1979 through 1987, were distributed almost evenly to create the low, middle, and high family income categories.

- Women who lived in places like dormitories, halfway houses, and boarding houses and those in apartment houses with four or more units were more likely to be raped than were other women.

- Women who lived alone were more likely to be raped than those who lived with others.

- Unemployed women were 3 times more likely to be raped, and students 1 1/2 times more likely, than women overall. Those who were retired or keeping house had the lowest rates of rape.

- About half of all rape victims and almost three-quarters of black rape victims were in the lowest third of the income distribution (table 17). Women in the low-income group were the most likely to be raped, and those in the top third, 15% of all victims, were the least likely.

- Black women with low incomes were more likely to be raped than black women with middle or high incomes; they were also more likely to be raped than white women in any income category. Middle- and upper-income women of all races had about the same likelihood of being raped.

Table 17. Average annual rate of rape, by family income and race of female victims, 1979-87

Family income	Average annual rate of rape per 1,000 women age 12 or older		
	Total	White	Black
Total	1.6	1.4	2.6
Low	2.7	2.5	3.6
Middle	1.2	1.1	1.6
High	.8	.8	1.0 [*]
Not reported	1.2	1.2	1.7
	Percent of female NCS respondents		
Total	100%	100%	100%
Low	53	48	72
Middle	23	25	15
High	15	18	5 [*]
Not reported	9	9	7
Number of victims	1,382,700	1,074,200	271,800

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding. Total includes persons of other races not shown. The survey respondents with known family income in each year, 1979 through 1987, were distributed almost evenly to create the low, middle, and high family income categories. ^{*}Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Reporting rape to the police

● Of all attempted or completed rapes, 53% were reported to the police (table 18). Completed rapes and stranger rapes were reported more frequently than attempted rapes and those in which the offender and victim knew each other.

● The presence of a weapon increased the likelihood of the crime being reported to the police. Approximately 7 in 10 rapes were reported when the offender had had a weapon, and fewer than 5 in 10 when the rapist had been unarmed.

Table 18. Reporting of rape of women to the police, by characteristics of the crime and the victim, 1973-87

Characteristics of crime or victim	Average annual number of rapes	Percent of victimizations reported to the police
All rapes	154,500	53%
Attempted	101,600	50
Completed	52,900	59
Victim-offender relationship		
Nonstranger	58,800	47%
Stranger	89,900	57
Presence of weapon		
No weapon	101,600	47%
Weapon	36,500	71
Presence of injury		
No injury	93,900	48%
Injury*	60,700	61
Minor	41,200	55
Serious	19,300	74
Race of victim		
White	121,400	52%
Black	29,900	56
Other	3,200	50
Age of victim		
12-15	16,800	70%
16-19	37,600	48
20-24	41,000	48
25-34	41,600	51
35-49	11,800	56
50-64	3,800	74
65 or older	1,800	55
Marital status of victim		
Married	27,100	54%
Widowed	3,900	62
Separated/divorced	36,500	51
Never married	86,500	53

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories.
*See note on table 11 for definitions of serious and minor injuries.

● When victims were injured, police were more likely to be informed of the crime. Between 7 and 8 rapes out of 10 in which the victim was seriously injured were reported to the police, possibly by medical personnel. Less than half of the rapes in which there was no physical injury were reported.

● When rape victims themselves reported the crime to the police, the reason they cited most frequently to NCS interviewers was to prevent the rape from happening again (table 19). Of the rape victims, 60% mentioned prevention, 47% said they wanted to punish the offender, and 31% said they wanted to stop the incident from happening.

● Victims of completed rape mentioned that they needed help after the incident more frequently than did victims of attempted rape (24% versus 9%). The victims of completed rape also cited punishing the offender more frequently than the victims of attempted rape (58% versus 41%).

● When the police were not informed of a completed rape, victims gave three main reasons to the NCS: They considered the rape to be a private or personal matter or a matter that they wanted to resolve themselves (25%); they feared reprisal by the offender, his family, or friends (23%); and the police would be inefficient, ineffective, or insensitive (23%) (table 20).

Table 19. Reasons why female victims of completed or attempted rape reported the crime to the police, 1979-87

Reasons for reporting to the police	Rape of women		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
To keep incident from happening again	60%	55%	63%
To punish the offender	47	58	41
To stop incident from happening	31	27	32
To fulfill a victim's duty	18	14	19
To get help after incident	15	24	9
Because there was evidence or proof	8	10	6
To recover property	7	3*	9
Because it was a crime	5	8*	3*
To collect insurance	2*	3*	1*
Other reasons	11	9*	12
Number of victims, 1979-87	440,800	160,400	280,500

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Percentages add to more than 100% because of rounding and because some respondents gave more than one reason.
*Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Table 20. Reasons why female victims of completed or attempted rape did not report the crime to the police, 1979-87

Reasons for not reporting to the police	Rape of women		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
Private or personal matter or took care of it herself	26%	25%	27%
Afraid of reprisal by offender or his family or friends	17	23	14
Police would be inefficient, ineffective, or insensitive	16	23	13
Lack of proof or no way to find offender	12	7*	14
Reported to someone else	10	7*	11
Police wouldn't think it important enough	7	5*	8
Did not think it important enough	5	1*	6
Offender was unsuccessful	5	0	7
Property would be difficult to recover	1*	3*	0*
Did not want to take the time or too inconvenient	1*	1*	2*
Did not realize it was a crime until later	1*	1*	0*
Other reasons	30	39	25
Number of victims, 1979-87	638,900	204,500	434,400

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Percentages add to more than 100% because of rounding and because some respondents gave more than one reason.
*Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Characteristics of offenders

• In about 9 out of 10 rapes there was one victim; in about 8 out of 10, one offender. In almost 8 in 10 rapes, one offender confronted one victim. In about 12%, more than one offender attacked one victim. In about 8% of all rapes, more than one victim was present, with at least one being raped.

Table 21. Race of offenders, by race of female victims of rape, 1973-87

Race of offender	Race of female victim		
	Total	White	Black
Single offender			
Total	100%	100%	100%
White	60	73	9
Black	32	20	84
Other	5	5	3*
Number of rapes	1,927,200	1,514,800	368,100
Multiple offenders			
Total	100%	100%	100%
White	41	49	13*
Black	38	29	72
Other	6	6	4*
Mixed	13	14	8*
Number of rapes	365,200	287,400	73,500

Note: Total number of victims includes persons of other races. Detail may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories.
*Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Number of victims	Number of offenders		
	All	One	More than one
Total	100%	83%	16%
One woman	91	78	12
More than one	8	5	3

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

• Rapists and their victims were likely to be of the same race (table 21). In rapes with one offender, about 7 of every 10 white victims were raped by a white offender, and about 8 of every 10 black victims were raped by a black offender. In rapes with two or more offenders, victims and offenders were of the same race 49% of the time for white victims and 72% of the time for black victims.

• Offenders and victims were more likely to be of the same race when they knew each other than when they were strangers (table 22). Of nonstranger rapes 83% involving white victims and 91% involving black victims were committed by men of the same race; in rapes by

strangers, offenders were of the same race in 60% of the rapes of white women and in 77% of the rapes of black women.

• Rape is largely a crime of the older offender. In almost three-fourths of all rapes, the offenders were age 21 or older (table 23).

Table 23. Age of offenders in single- and multiple-offender rape of women, 1979-87

Age of offenders	Rape of women	
	Single offenders	Multiple offenders
Total	100%	100%
20 or under	18	30
21-29	43	22
30 or older	36	8
Mixed		35
Number of rapes	1,181,900	184,200

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Percentages may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories.

Table 22. Race of offenders, by race of female victims of rape and victim-offender relationship, 1973-87

Race of offenders	Race of female victim											
	All rapes				Nonstranger rape				Stranger rape			
	Total	White	Black	Other	Total	White	Black	Other	Total	White	Black	Other
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White	57	68	10	59	69	83	4	64	51	60	14	51
Black	33	22	80	17	24	9	91	0	39	30	77	31
Other	5	5	3	14	6	5	4	36	5	5	3	0
Mixed	2	2	1	0	2	2	1	0	2	3	2	0

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories.

The NCS questionnaire and the reporting of rape

As a household survey, the NCS directs interviewers to ask each household member age 12 or older if he or she experienced a crime in the previous 6 months. If an individual says that he or she has been victimized by a crime, whether or not the incident was reported to the police, the interviewer collects information on the crime.

Each respondent is asked if he or she were attacked; and if so, how. If the respondent says that he or she was raped, the incident is classified as a completed rape. If the victim reports an offender's attacking and trying to rape her or him, the incident is classified as an attempted rape, even if the victim incurred injuries. If the offender threatened to rape the victim but did not attack, the incident is classified as an attempted rape. Rapes committed by non-strangers, particularly those intimate with the victim, were less likely to be reported to the NCS than rapes by strangers.

7b. Did the person(s) hit you, knock you down, or actually attack you in any way?
 Yes
 No

7c. Did the person(s) threaten you with harm in any way?
 Yes
 No

7d. How were you threatened? Any other way?
 Verbal threat of rape
 Verbal threat of attack other than rape

Weapon present or threatened with weapon
 Attempted attack with weapon
 Object thrown at person
 Followed, surrounded
 Other (specify) _____

7f. How did the person(s) attack you? Any other way?
 Raped
 Tried to rape
 Shot
 Knifed
 Hit with object in hand
 Hit by thrown object
 Hit, slapped, knocked down
 Grabbed, held, tripped, pushed, etc.
 Other (specify) _____

- Offenders who committed rape in a group tended to be younger than lone rapists, according to victims' reports. In rapes with one offender, fewer than 2 in 10 offenders were under age 21. In rapes with two or more offenders, 3 in 10 rapists were under 21.

- In attempted or completed rapes with one victim and one offender, victims tended to be about the same age as their offenders (table 24). More than 6 in 10 of the victims of an offender under age 21 were age 19 or younger. About 3 in 10

Table 24. Age of female victims of rape with one victim and one offender, by age of offender, 1973-87

Age of victim	Age of offender		
	20 or younger	21-29	30 or older
Total	100%	100%	100%
12-15	27	7	6
16-19	36	22	17
20-24	21	37	19
25-34	12	25	41
35-49	3*	7	13
50-64	1*	1*	3*
65 or older	0	1*	1*
Number of rapes	207,100	504,300	428,600

*Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

Table 25. Weapon present in rape of women, by whether the rape was completed or attempted, 1973-87

Presence of weapon	Rape of women		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	66	61	68
Did not know if offender had a weapon	10	7	11
Weapon	24	31	21
Gun	9	13	6
Knife	11	14	9
Other	4	3	5
Type unknown	1	1	1
Number of rapes	2,317,900	794,000	1,523,800

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Detail may not add to total because of rounding. See note on table 10 for categories of weapon use.

- victims were age 19 or younger when the offender was between age 21 and 29, and about 6 in 10 of the victims were age 20 to 34. When the offender was 30 or older, 2 in 10 victims were under age 21, and almost 6 in 10 were age 25 or older.

- Most offenders were unarmed. A fourth of all rapists showed weapons (table 25). A tenth of the victims were unsure whether a weapon was present.

- Weapons were more likely to be present in completed rapes than in rape attempts. About the same percentage of offenders carried knives as carried guns.

Table 26. Whether the rape was completed or attempted, by whether female victims took self-protective measures, 1973-87

Self-protective measure	Number of victims	Rape of women		
		Total	Completed	Attempted
All victims	2,317,900	100%	34%	66%
Victims who took self-protective measures	1,920,000	100	29	71
Victims who took no self-protective measure	397,800	100	60	40

Table 27. Whether female victims of rape were injured, by whether they took self-protective measures, 1973-87

Self-protective measure	Number of victims	Rape of women		
		Total	Injured	Uninjured
All victims	1,625,200	100%	56%	44%
Victims who took self-protective measures	1,340,900	100	58	42
Victims who took no self-protective measure	284,200	100	46	54

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Excludes 693,000 female victims of verbal threats of rape without a physical attack. Injury means injury in addition to the rape or the attempted rape itself. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

- Most rape victims (about 8 in 10) tried to protect themselves (table 26). Those using self-protection were less likely to be victims of a completed rape than those not taking a self-protective measure.

- When victims were attacked and were thereby put at risk of injury, victims who tried to protect themselves were more likely to be injured (58%) than were those who took no measure (46%) (table 27).

- Thirty percent of rape victims were threatened either with a weapon or verbally (table 28). About 45% of the victims of rape attempts were threatened; 55% were attacked. By definition, a completed rape is considered an attack.

- Victims of completed rapes were more likely to be injured than victims of rape attempts. Almost 60% of the victims of completed rape were injured: 14% seriously and 44% with minor injuries. These victims were more likely than victims of rape attempts to receive medical care.

- More than half of the victims of a completed rape received medical care for rape or injury; about a tenth of the victims of rape attempts received medical care. About 4 in 10 victims of a completed rape were treated in a hospital or emergency room, compared to fewer than 1 in 10 victims of attempted rape.

Table 28. Injury and medical care received by female victims of completed or attempted rape, 1973-87

	Rape of women		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
Total	100%	100%	100%
Threat	30	0	45
Attack	70	100	55
No injury	31	42	25
Injury	39	58	30
Minor	32	44	26
Serious	7	14	4
Medical care received	27	55	12
Emergency room/hospital	18	40	7
Other places	8	15	5
Number of rapes	2,317,900	794,000	1,523,800

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Comparison of rape by a nonstranger and by a stranger

• Nonstranger rape usually occurred in the victim's home (48%) or in or near a friend's home (24%) (table 29). About 3 in 10 rapes by strangers occurred on the street; about 2 in 10, at the victim's home.

• Offenders were less likely to have a weapon when their victims were known than when they were strangers. Strangers, who were more likely to have a weapon than nonstrangers, were especially more likely to have guns or knives.

• Victims of nonstrangers tried to protect themselves about as often as victims of strangers; that is, they were as likely to threaten, argue with, or try to reason with the offender and to use physical force, hit, chase, or throw objects when they knew their offender as when they did not.

• When rape victims knew their offenders, they were about as likely to be injured as victims of strangers (table 30). Just over a quarter of victims received medical care, whether or not the victim knew the offender.

• Nonstranger rapes were more likely than rapes by strangers to be committed by one offender (table 31). Nine out of ten nonstranger rapes were committed by one offender, while 8 out of 10 rapes by a stranger had a lone offender. In about 9 rapes in 10 the victim was alone, re-

gardless of whether the offender was a nonstranger or a stranger.

Number of victims	Rape of women by a:	
	Nonstranger	Stranger
One	93%	90%
Two or more	7	9

• White rapists comprised 69% of those who knew their victim and 51% of those who were strangers to their victim.

• The ages of offenders were not different for the two different types of rape — stranger and acquaintance rapes. About three-fourths of each type were committed by men over age 20.

Table 29. Incident characteristics of rape of women, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87

Incident characteristic	Rape of women by a:	
	Nonstranger	Stranger
Place of occurrence^a		
Total	100%	100%
At or in own home	48	22
Near own home	6	9
At, in, or near friend's home	24	9
On the street	6	31
Inside commercial buildings	3	5
On public transportation	0*	0*
In parking lot or garage	3*	10
On school property	4	4
In a park	3*	4
Other places	4	6
Presence and type of weapon^b		
Total	100%	100%
No weapon	81	58
Did not know if offender had a weapon	4	13
Weapon	15	30
Gun	4	11
Knife	6	13
Other	4	4
Type not ascertained	1	1
Self-protective measures		
Victims who tried to protect themselves	87%	82%
Used weapon	1	2
Used physical force	36	29
Tried to get help	40	36
Threatened or argued	41	33
Resisted without force	28	31
Other	6	9
Number of rapes	881,300	1,348,700

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Percentages may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories. *Too few cases to obtain a statistically reliable estimate.

^aData for place of occurrence are from 1979 to 1987.

^bSee note on table 10 for categories of weapon use.

Table 30. Injury and medical care received by female victims of rape, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87

Incident characteristic	Rape of women by a:	
	Nonstranger	Stranger
Injury		
Total	100%	100%
No injury	57	62
Injury*	43	38
Minor	36	31
Serious	7	7
Medical care received*		
Total	100%	100%
No medical care	73	74
Medical care	27	26
Emergency room or hospital	16	19
Other places	10	7

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*See note on table 11 for definitions of serious and minor injuries and medical care.

Table 31. Characteristics of offenders in rape of women, by whether offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87

Characteristic of offenders	Rape of women by a:	
	Nonstranger	Stranger
Number of offenders		
Total rape	100%	100%
One	89	81
Two or more	11	19
Race of offenders		
Total rape	100%	100%
White	69	51
Black	24	39
Other	6	5
Mixed	2	2
Age of offenders		
Total rape	100%	100%
20 or under	22	18
21 or older	74	75
Mixed	3	3
Number of rapes	881,300	1,348,700

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Detail may not add to total because of rounding and omission of "don't know" and "not ascertained" categories.

• Rapes committed by strangers were more likely to be reported to the police than rapes by nonstrangers (table 32).

• Rapes from which physical injury resulted were more likely to be reported to the police than rapes without injury. Of the rapes by nonstrangers, 41% without injury and 52% with injury were reported to the police; of the rapes by strangers, 59% without injury and 67% involving some injury were reported to law authorities.

• The more serious the injury, the higher the likelihood of the rape's having been reported to the police. Among seriously injured victims, 64% of the women raped by someone whom they knew and 82% of the women raped by a stranger said that the crime was reported. Comparable reporting percentages for women who were robbed by a stranger were 100% of the women injured in a serious assault versus 84% of the women injured in a minor assault and 73% of the uninjured women.⁴

• The opinion that the rape was a personal or private matter was the most common reason for not reporting given by women victimized by someone whom they knew. Forty-one percent gave that reason, compared to 13% of the nonreporting victims of rape by a stranger.

• Women raped by someone whom they knew cited, among other specific reasons for not reporting to the police, fear of reprisal (22%) and belief that the police would be inefficient (17%). Among the women raped by strangers, the reasons for not reporting included the following: lack of proof (18%), belief that the police would be ineffective (16%), and fear of reprisal (14%).

⁴Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1987, BJS, NCJ-115524, June 1989.

Table 32. Female victims' reporting rape to the police, by whether the offender was a nonstranger or a stranger, 1973-87

Incident characteristic	Rape of women by a:	
	Nonstranger	Stranger
Victim reported rape to the police when:		
All victimizations	47%	57%
Weapon was present	67	71
Weapon was absent	43	51
Offender threatened only	47	43
Attack without injury	41	59
Attack with injury	52	67
Minor	47	61
Serious	64	82
Reasons for not reporting the rape to the police*		
Private or personal matter or took care of it herself	41%	13%
Afraid of reprisal by offender or his family or friends	22	14
Police would be inefficient, ineffective, or insensitive	17	16
Lack of proof or no way to find offender	5	18
Reported to someone else	10	11
Police wouldn't think it important enough	6	7
Object was recovered or offender was unsuccessful	4	6
Did not think it important enough	1	8
Did not want to take the time or too inconvenient	1	2
Did not realize it was a crime until later	0	1
Other reasons	28	29
Reasons for reporting the rape to the police		
To keep incident from happening again	60%	62%
To punish the offender	44	51
To stop incident from happening	34	29
To fulfill a victim's duty	14	21
To get help after incident	17	14
Because there was evidence or proof	8	8
To recover property	4	8
Because it was a crime	5	4
To collect insurance	2	2
Other reasons	9	11
Number of rapes	881,300	1,348,700

Note: References to women include adolescents but not children under age 12. Data for reasons for reporting or not reporting to the police are from 1979 to 1987.
 **Property difficult to recover" received less than 0.5% and is omitted.

Methodology

Location of residence

A metropolitan area is a county or counties that contain a city or cities having at least 50,000 total population. A central city is the largest city of a metropolitan area. A suburban area is the portion outside the central city. Nonmetropolitan areas include rural areas and cities of fewer than 50,000.

Sample description

Data for the National Crime Survey (NCS) are drawn from a nationally representative sample of the U.S. population. The sample includes resident inhabitants of the United States as well as persons residing in group quarters such as dormitories, rooming houses, religious group dwellings, and shelters. Excluded are crew members of merchant vessels; Armed Forces personnel living in military barracks; institutionalized persons, such as correctional facility inmates; Americans living abroad; and foreign visitors. The sample is a stratified, multistage cluster design. Sample size during the period 1973 to 1987 ranged from 49,000 to 62,000 households and 100,000 to 137,000 individuals interviewed from those housing units.

For each dwelling unit selected for the sample, all persons age 12 or older are included in the survey. From 1973 until July 1986, 12- and 13-year-old sample members were interviewed through a proxy, who was required to be another knowledgeable household member. Since July 1986, 12- and 13-year-olds have been interviewed directly. Persons residing in the dwelling unit are interviewed 7 times at 6-month intervals. Individuals in a sixth of the dwelling units are interviewed each month during a 6-month period.

A basic screen questionnaire and a crime incident report are used to elicit information on the relevant crimes committed against any members of the household age 12 or older. The initial interview is designed to screen for all instances of victimization before details of any specific incident are collected. In the screen questions respondents are asked if they were attacked or threatened but not directly asked if they have been raped. Nor are they told that threats or attacks by their intimates are germane to the survey. Only if a respondent volunteers that she or he has been raped or threatened with rape is the incident so classified.

When a dwelling unit first falls into the sample, interviews are conducted in personal visits, although interviewers are permitted to use telephones to complete interviews with some members of a household after the first contact is made. Prior to February 1980 the second through seventh interviews were also conducted in the same manner. Since that date telephone interviewing has increased. The first and fifth interviews are still conducted primarily in person, with telephone followup permitted. The remaining interviews are conducted insofar as possible by telephone. Face-to-face interviews are often conducted with other family members present. Consequently, if offender and victim reside in the same household, it may not be possible for the victim to relate his or her experience because of the presence of the offender. In telephone interviews the interviewer has no way of knowing if a household member's responses are being monitored.

Data for this report include series crimes, that is, three or more criminal events that are similar if not identical in nature and incurred by individuals who are unable to identify separately the details of each act or recount accurately the total number of such acts. Each series incident was counted as one incident.

Appendix table. Rate of victimization from selected violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older, by sex and year, 1973-87

Year	Violent crime victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older									
	Total violent		Rape		Robbery		Aggravated assault		Simple assault	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1973	48.2	23.9	.1	1.9	10.3	4.0	16.6	5.9	21.3	12.1
1974	48.0	23.7	0	1.9	10.7	4.5	16.9	5.7	21.3	11.5
1975	47.0	24.5	.1	1.7	10.0	4.2	15.1	5.7	21.7	13.0
1976	46.9	25.2	.2	1.5	9.5	4.2	15.3	6.1	21.9	13.4
1977	50.4	25.0	.1	1.7	9.0	4.1	16.2	5.4	25.0	13.8
1978	49.6	25.1	.2	1.8	8.7	3.9	15.7	5.7	25.0	13.8
1979	50.7	27.5	.2	1.9	9.0	4.1	16.8	6.3	24.6	15.3
1980	49.3	25.2	.3	1.7	9.2	4.4	15.8	5.7	24.0	13.5
1981	51.1	28.3	.1	1.8	10.2	5.3	15.8	6.4	25.0	14.8
1982	49.0	28.3	.1	1.5	9.6	5.1	15.1	6.2	24.2	15.5
1983	45.0	25.1	.2	1.5	8.3	4.0	13.4	5.2	23.2	14.4
1984	42.8	25.9	.2	1.7	7.9	4.1	13.4	5.8	21.4	14.3
1985	41.5	24.0	.1	1.4	7.1	3.7	12.7	5.1	21.6	13.8
1986	38.5	24.1	.1	1.3	6.7	4.2	12.4	4.9	19.3	13.7
1987	38.7	24.0	.1	1.3	6.8	4.1	12.1	4.7	19.8	13.8

Standard errors

The standard error of a survey estimate is a measure of the variation among the estimates from all possible samples and, therefore, a measure of the precision with which the estimate from a particular sample approximates the average result of all possible samples. The estimate and its associated standard error may be used to construct a confidence interval, that is, an interval having a prescribed probability that it would include the average result of all possible samples. Relationships described in this report are generally significant at the 95% level, meaning that the chances are 95 out of 100 that the interval prescribed by 2 standard errors around a value would include the average result of all possible samples. If a relationship is qualified by such phrases as "some indication" or "somewhat likely," the statement had a level of significance between 1.6 and 2.0 standard errors, or a 90% level.

Availability of data sets

Data utilized in this report are available from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the University of Michigan, 800-999-0960. The data sets are archived as the National Crime Surveys: national sample, 1973-1983 (complete sample) (ICPSR 7635); national sample, 1973-1983 (incident-level file) (ICPSR 7635); and national sample, 1979-1987 (revised questionnaire) (ICPSR 8608).

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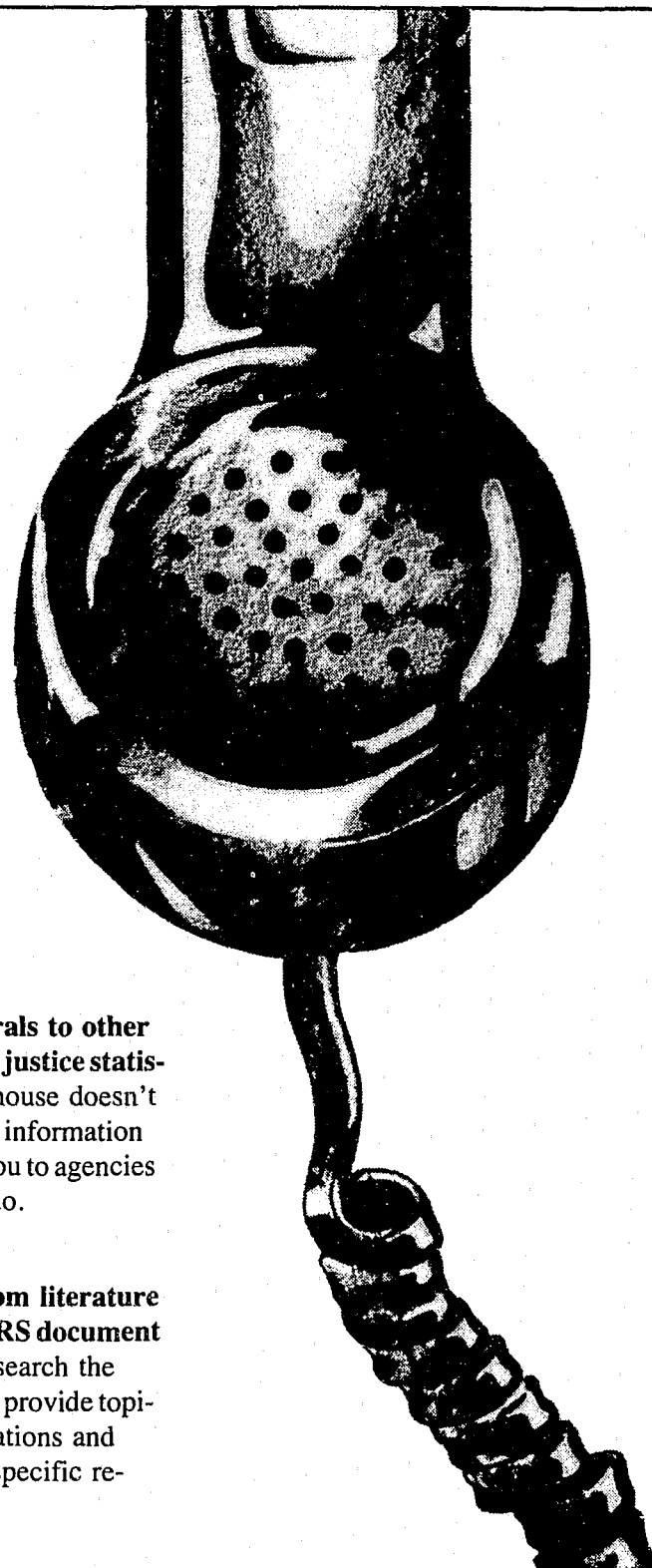
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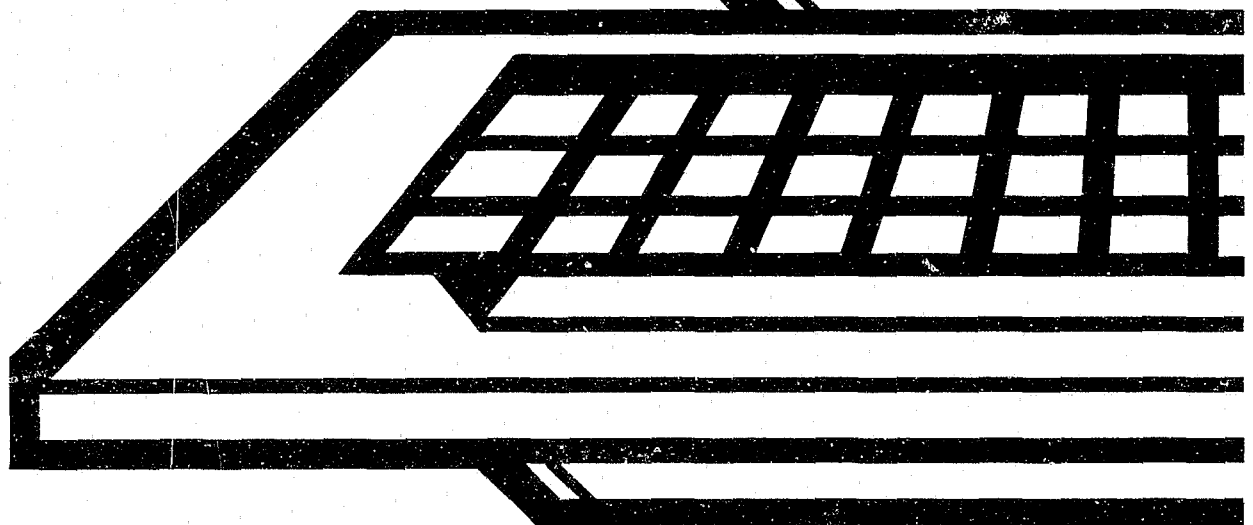
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