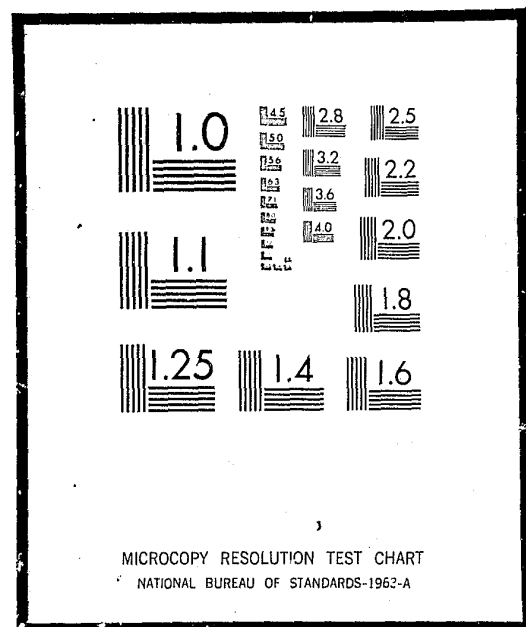


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Mortality Trends for Homicide,

by Age, Color, and Sex:

United States, 1960-1972

(With Glances at the Statistical Profiles
of the Victims during 1900-59 and 1973)

by

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A total of 19,638 men, women and children died in the United States in 1972 from injuries inflicted by another person or persons with intent to injure or kill.

An examination of the death rates for Homicide during this century shows that both the total rate and the age-adjusted rate increased from 1900 to about 1933 (figure 1). Then both rates declined slowly (except for the steep drop in the death rate for Homicide during the years of World War II) through the 1940's and 1950's. But the trend during 1960-72 was again clearly upward--4.7 deaths per 100,000 for 1960 to 9.4 deaths for 1972.

Provisional figures for 1973 (based on a 10 percent sample of deaths occurring in that year) show that the number of homicides reached an estimated 20,518, representing a death rate for this cause of 9.8 deaths per 100,000 population. This rate is the highest ever recorded for homicide for the nation. The next highest rate occurred over forty years ago--in 1933, for which year the rate reached 9.7 deaths per 100,000.

Also for each of the four color-sex groups the death rate for homicide increased from about 1900-33. Then through the 1940's and 1950's all four rates declined slowly (except for the steep drop in the death rate for homicide for the male population during the years of World War II). But the rates turned upward again during 1960-72 (figure 2).

As measured by age-adjusted death rates the relative increase of 98.1 percent in the total Homicide rate between 1960 and 1972 reflects the following increases for the four color-sex groups: white male, 110.3 percent; other male, 98.3 percent; white female, 60.0 percent; and other female, 32.1 percent (figure 3).

Despite the larger relative increase in the age-adjusted death rate for Homicide for white persons, the 1972 rate for other persons was 11.2 times the corresponding rate for white persons.

For 1972 the age-adjusted death rate for Homicide for male persons was 4.20 times the corresponding rate for female persons.

For over 68 percent of the victims of homicide the means of injury were firearms and explosives, mostly firearms. For the first time in 1971 firearms and explosives were used more often to destroy another person than to destroy one's self.

When all means of injury are considered, there are still more suicides in the United States (25,004 suicides in 1972) than there are homicides (19,638 homicides in 1972). But the gap between the two types of violent deaths is closing rapidly.

Whereas for 1972 over half of the victims of homicide were among persons of races other than white, about 93 percent of the suicides were among white persons.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation reports an increase from 60 percent for 1966 of all homicides through use of firearms to 66 percent of all homicides for 1972. For 1972 the breakdown by type of firearm used was: handgun, 54 percent; rifle, 5 percent; and shotgun, 7 percent. Cutting or stabbing weapons were used in 19 percent of the homicides.

Increases in population between 1960 and 1972 for the following three age groups raised the death rate for homicide for 1972 higher than it would have been without these increases: 15-19 years, 20-24 years, and 25-29 years. These three age groups had by far higher death rates for homicide in 1972 than in 1962 (table C). Moreover these young persons born in the last years of World War II and in the post-war "baby boom" years (1943-57) included 59.2 percent of all persons arrested for homicide in 1972.

By age, the particular section of the population most involved in the upturn in homicide during 1962-72, with both the greatest number of persons arrested for homicide and the greatest number of victims of homicide in 1972, were young persons--at ages 20-24 years. This group was born in 1948-52. In 1972, 17.0 percent of all victims of homicide and an estimated 23.7 percent of all persons arrested for homicide were in this age group. There were only 10,800,761 persons at ages 20-24 years in 1960, but by 1972, owing to the large birth cohort of 1948-52, the number at ages 20-24 years had increased to 17,733,000.

Almost as dominant a role was enacted in 1972 by persons from the cohort born in 1943-47, who were at ages 25-29 years. Persons at these ages included 14.5 percent of the victims of homicide and an estimated 16.9 percent of all those arrested for homicide.

The death rate for homicide in 1972 for this group at ages 25-29 years (172.1 deaths per 100,000) was much higher than that for those at ages 20-24 years. But those at ages 25-29 years included smaller proportions of the victims and of those arrested for homicide. Part of the explanation for the fact is that those at ages 25-29 years numbered about 2,739,000 fewer persons in 1972 than did those at ages 20-24 years.

Even more disturbing is the pattern emerging for the cohort born in 1953-57, the last years of the rising live birth rate in the United States. In 1972 these young people were at ages 15-19 years. Already in 1972 they included 9.0 percent of all the victims and an estimated 18.5 percent of all those arrested for homicide. This young cohort born in 1953-57 numbered 20,110,000 in 1972-- a larger cohort by far than either of the other two critical cohorts born in 1948-52 or 1943-47.

An examination of the mortality pattern for age-specific death rates for homicide for each year of the period 1933-72 (beginning with the first year that all of the first 48 States were in the death registration area) shows that with few exceptions for any given year for each of the four color-sex groups the age group 25-34 years has a death rate that is considerably higher than the death rates for any other age group in that year. This pattern holds both for years in periods when mortality from homicide is falling and for years in periods when mortality from homicide is rising.

Peaking of the death rate for Homicide for male persons of races other than white is greater than that for any other color-sex group. To illustrate the steep peaking pattern for these men the

mortality curves for age-specific rates for four calendar years, at 10-year intervals, are shown in figure 4. Two of these years are in a period of rising mortality from homicide (1962-1972); and two, in a period of falling mortality from this cause (1942 and 1952).

It must be feared, therefore, that unless the ongoing upturn in homicide is reversed, each of the four color-sex groups in the large cohort born in 1953-57 will have a higher death rate for homicide in 1977, when they will be at ages 20-24 years, than they had in 1972 at ages 15-19 years.

Although the greatest absolute increase in the death rate for homicide occurred for men of races other than white at ages 25-29 years, no age group was spared in the ongoing upturn in mortality from homicide.

The rise in the death rate for homicide for older people may be associated with the change in pattern of what the Federal Bureau of Investigation describes as "murder circumstance":

"Felony murder is defined as those killings resulting from robbery, sex motive, gangland slaying and other felonious activities. Felony type and suspected felony type murders in 1972 constituted 27 percent of all murder, whereas these two categories accounted for 22 percent of total murder in 1966."

In 1972 the victims of felony type murder were 61 percent white, 38 percent Negro, and the remaining 1 percent of other race or race not reported.

The percent of murders in the family (spouse killing spouse, parent killing child, and other family killings) decreased from 28.8 for 1966 to 24.3 for 1970.

The pattern of upturn in mortality from homicide beginning about 1962 for all cohorts is even more pronounced for white men than for men of other races (figure 5). Although the death rates for homicide are still considerably lower for white men than for men of other races, the relative increases in mortality from this cause during 1962-72, as shown in figure 5, was greater for white men. For five cohorts of white men (A, B, C, D, and E in figure 5) the death rate for homicide reached a level at older ages in 1972 that was higher than the first peak rate reached at about age 30 years.

Moreover, for these cohorts of white men, the relative increases between the first peak death rate for homicide and the rate for 1972 are markedly greater than the corresponding increases for the parallel cohorts of men of races other than white. Consider the

experience of the cohort of white men who were born in 1923-27 and were at ages 45-49 years in 1972.

Inasmuch as this cohort of white men lived its first 34 years in a period of downturn in mortality it had its first peak death rate at younger ages (20-24 years) than the ages at which the peak death rate occurs in the annual schedules of age-specific death rates for homicide. As mentioned above, in these annual schedules of age-specific death rates, the highest death rate for homicide occurs for the age group 25-34 years. After reaching in 1947 its first peak rate of 6.5 deaths per 100,000 at ages 20-24 years, the death rate for homicide for this cohort declined until sometime between 1957-62. It was during this period that the ongoing upturn in mortality from homicide began for the nation.

After dropping to a low in 1957 of 5.3 deaths per 100,000 at ages 30-34 years, the homicide rate for this cohort turned upward: the rate reached 10.5 deaths per 100,000 at ages 45-49 years in 1972. The relative increase between the first peak rate in 1947 (6.5 deaths per 100,000) and the rate in 1972 (10.5 deaths per 100,000) amounts to 66.7 percent. This is a much larger relative increase than that between the first peak rate and the rate in 1972

for the parallel cohort of men of races other than white. For them the relative increase between the first peak rate in 1947 (108.4 deaths per 100,000) and the rate in 1972 (109.0 deaths per 100,000) amounts to an increase of only 1.3 percent.

Death rates by State ranged in 1972 from a low of 0.9 per 100,000 population for North Dakota to a high of 21.2 for Georgia.

For 1970 among the twenty largest cities the following five had the highest death rates for homicide: St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit, Dallas, and Washington, D. C. For Washington, D. C. (the only city for which 1972 population figures are available), the death rate for homicide rose from 26.4 per 100,000 for 1970 to 33.5 for 1972.

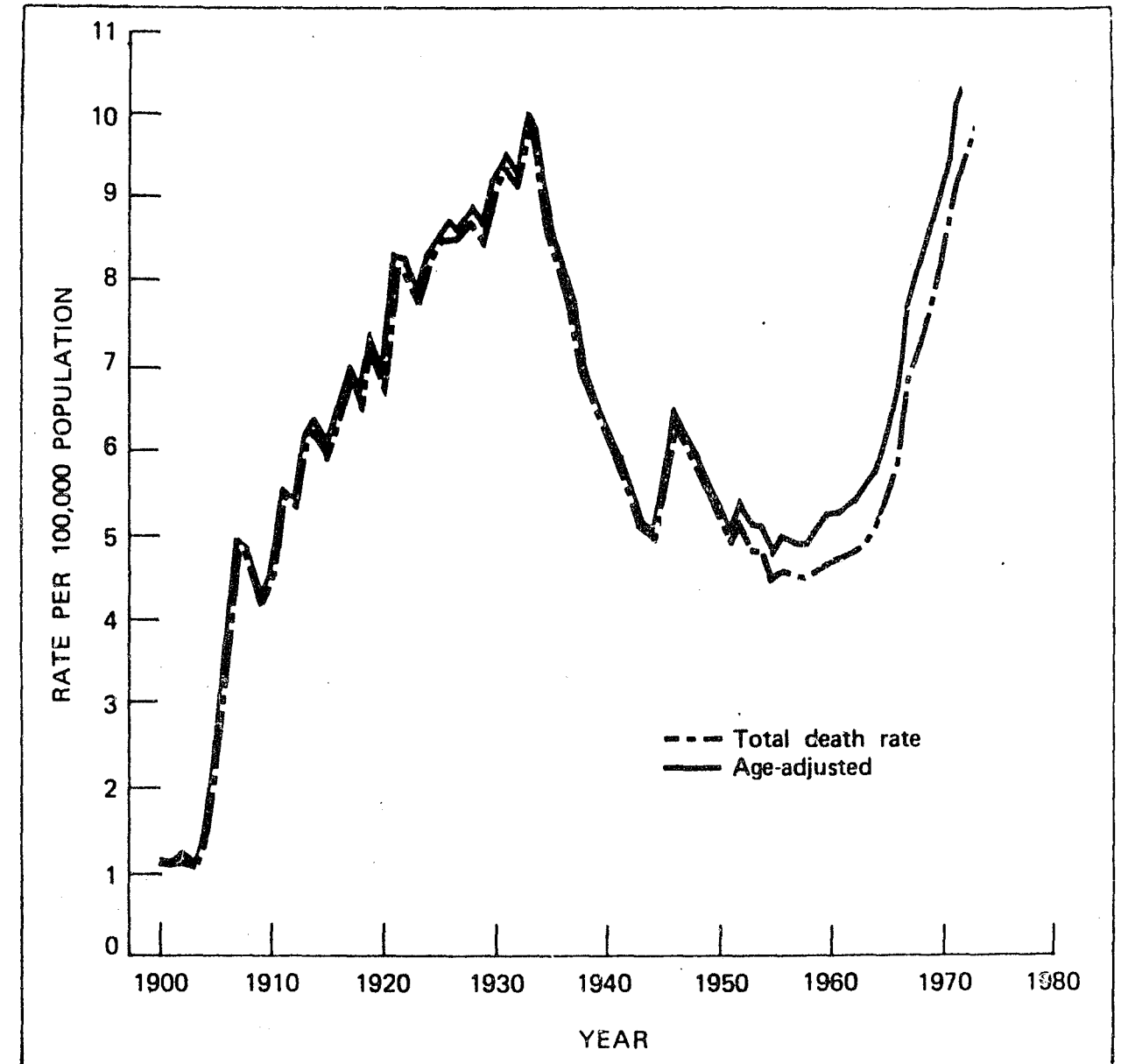


Figure 1. Death rates for homicide (total and age adjusted): United States, 1900-1973.

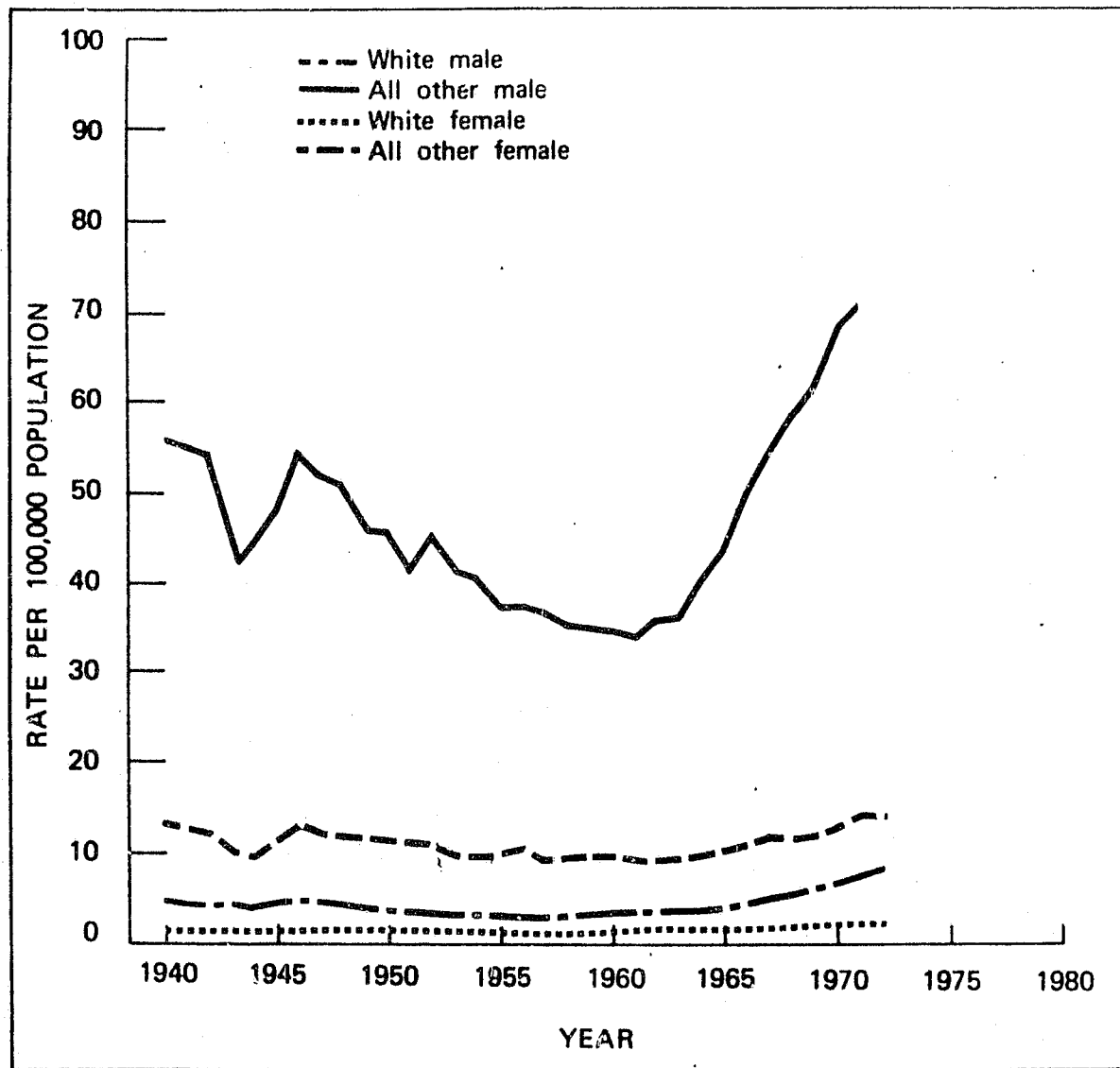


Figure 2. Homicide rates, by color and sex: United States, 1940-72.

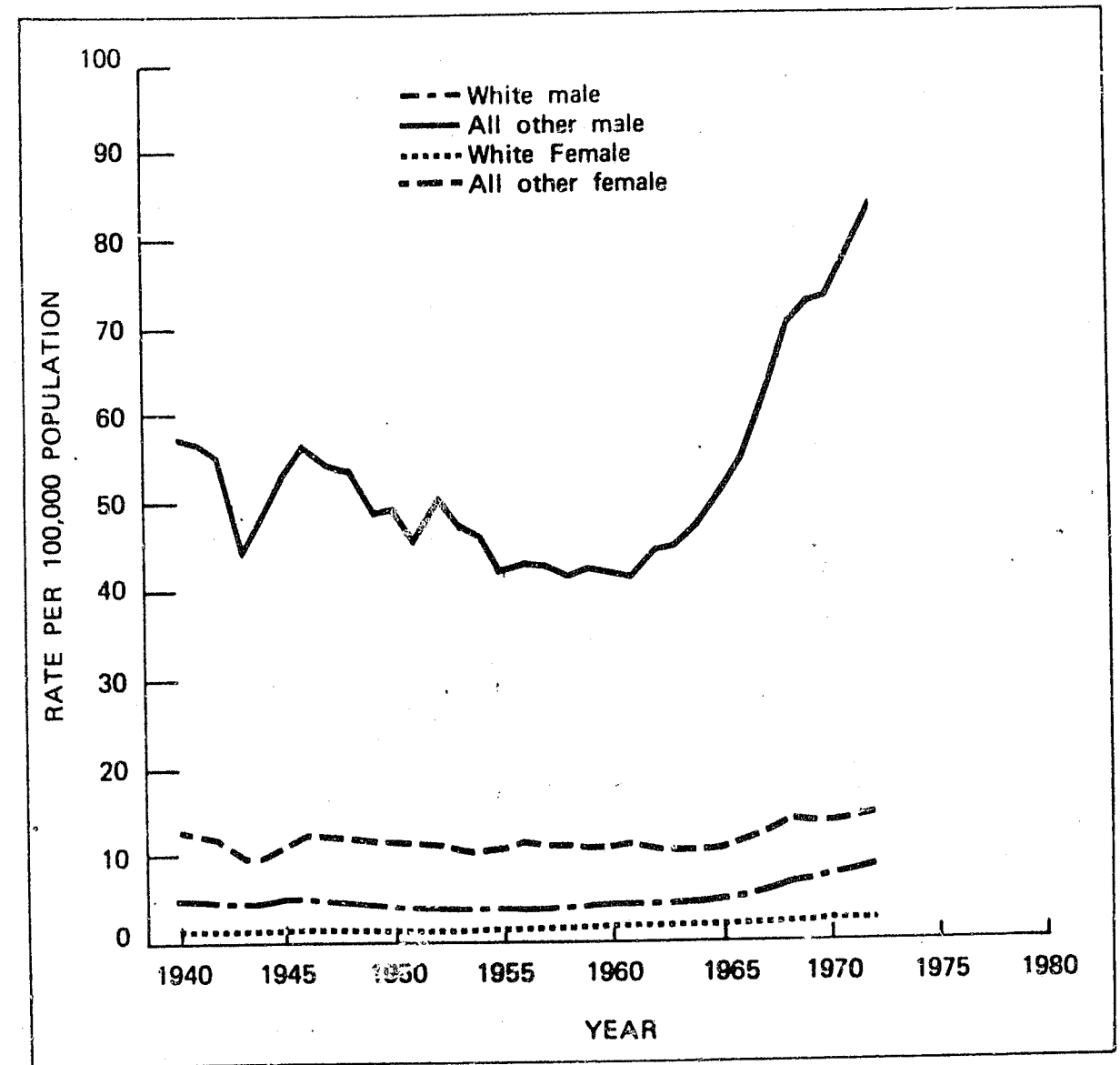


Figure 3. Age-adjusted homicide rates, by color and sex: United States, 1940-72.

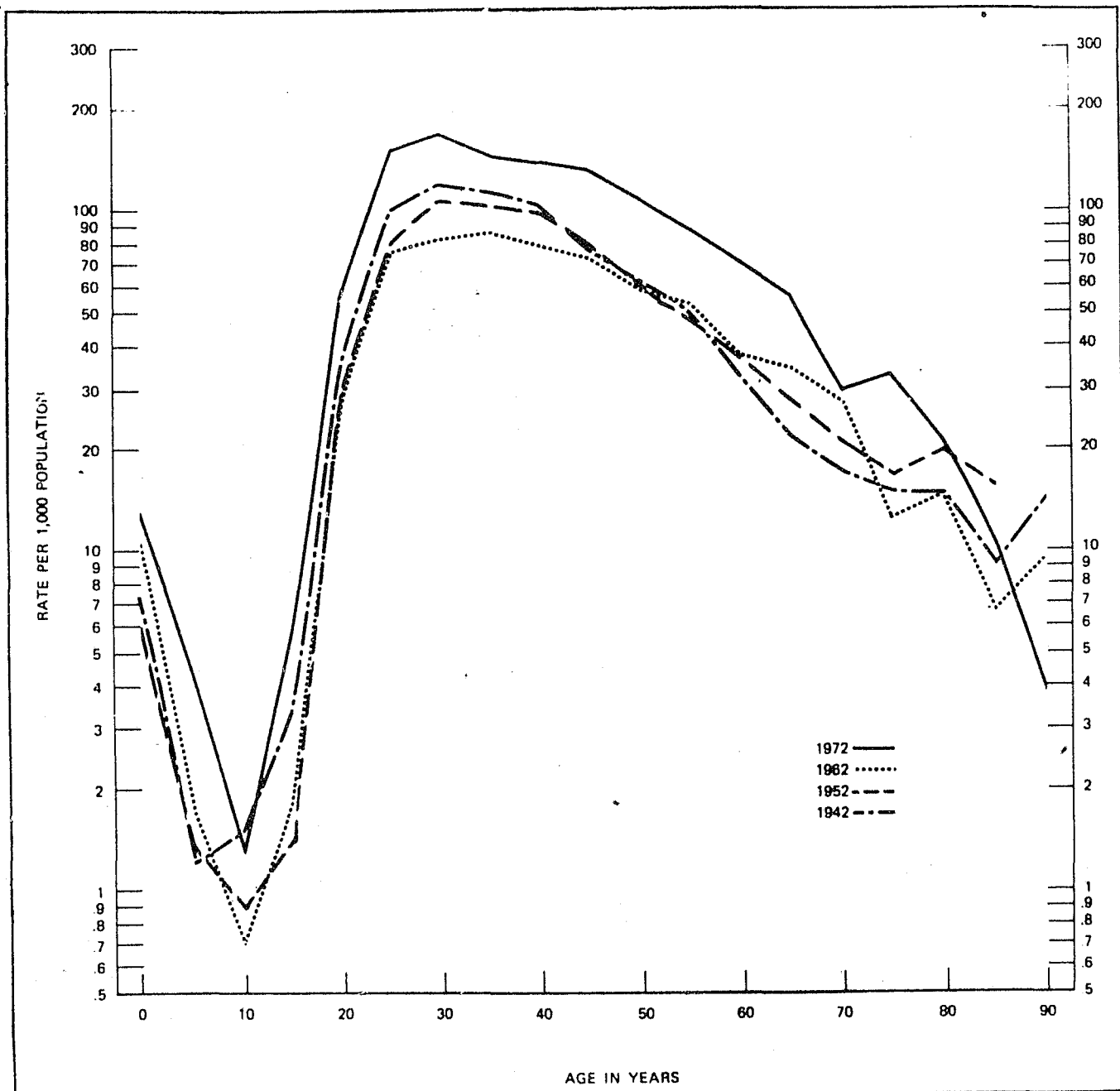


Figure 4. Death rates for homicide, for male persons of races other than white, by age: United States, at 10 year intervals during 1942-72.

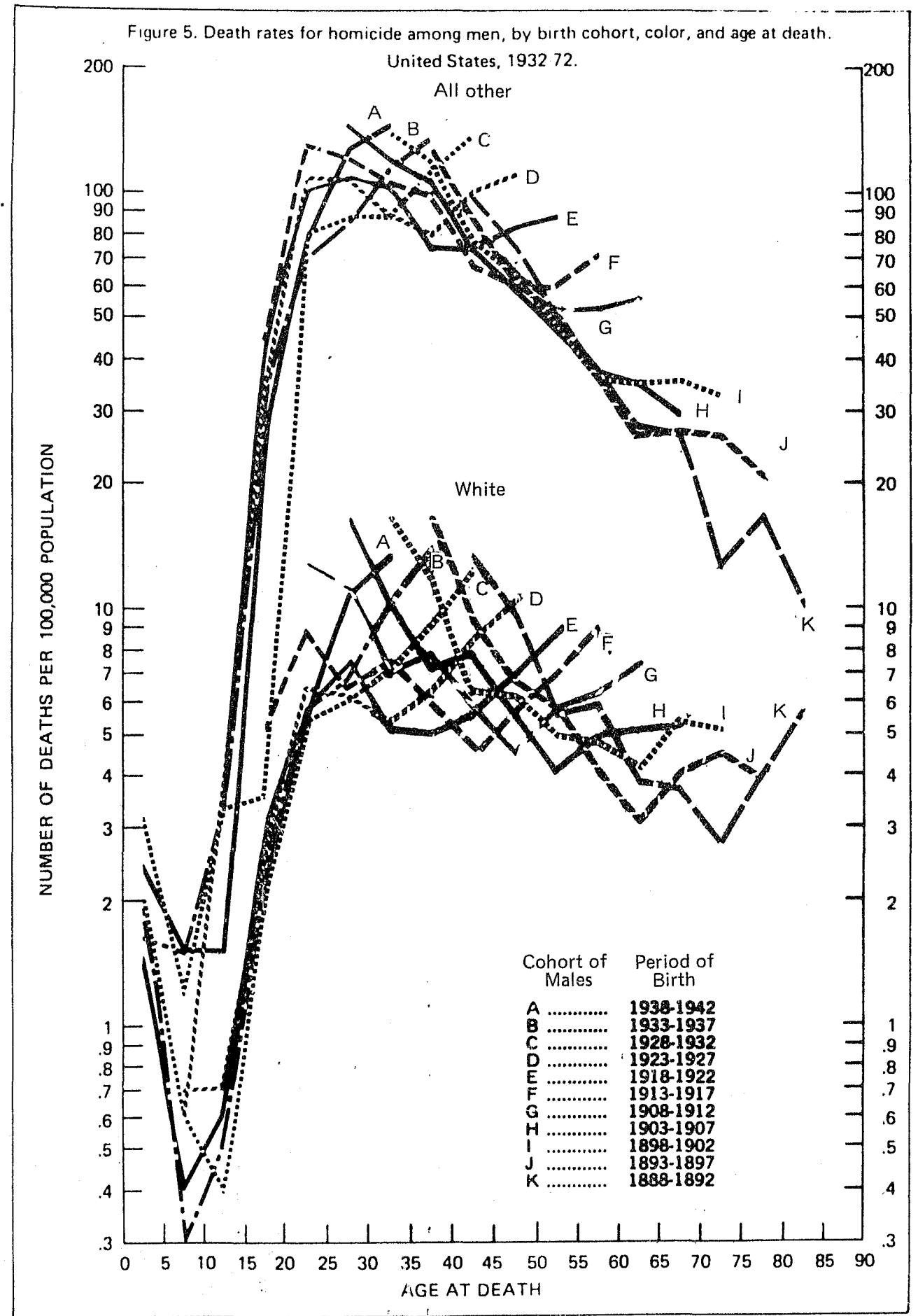


Figure 5. Death rates for homicide among men, by birth cohort, color, and age at death. United States, 1932-72.

Table A. Number of victims of Homicide, by age, color, and sex: United States, 1972.

[Deaths are those assigned to category numbers E950-E978 of the Eighth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Adapted for Use in the United States, adopted in 1965.]

Age in years	Total			White			All other		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
All ages-----	19,638	15,642	3,996	8,976	6,820	2,156	10,662	8,822	1,840
Under 1-----	172	92	80	102	58	44	70	34	36
1-4-----	246	138	108	154	88	66	92	50	42
5-9-----	94	44	50	58	24	34	36	20	16
10-14-----	268	166	102	130	72	58	138	94	44
15-19-----	1,762	1,356	406	790	554	236	972	802	170
20-24-----	3,332	2,716	616	1,296	1,010	286	2,036	1,706	330
25-29-----	2,838	2,360	478	1,162	944	218	1,676	1,416	260
30-34-----	2,190	1,774	416	886	710	176	1,304	1,064	240
35-39-----	1,884	1,562	322	818	660	158	1,066	902	164
40-44-----	1,798	1,470	328	792	622	170	1,006	848	158
45-49-----	1,484	1,200	284	696	544	152	788	656	132
50-54-----	1,128	930	198	574	444	130	554	486	68
55-59-----	868	698	170	496	388	108	372	310	62
60-64-----	630	508	122	358	280	78	272	228	44
65-69-----	334	252	82	212	156	56	122	96	26
70-74-----	256	178	78	164	108	56	92	70	22
75-79-----	142	84	58	106	56	50	36	28	8
80-84-----	114	56	58	96	48	48	18	8	10
85+-----	74	44	30	66	42	24	8	2	6
Not stated---	24	14	10	20	12	8	4	2	2

Table B. Age-adjusted death rates for Homicide, by color and sex: United States, 1950-72.

[For 1968-72 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E960-E978 of the Eighth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Adapted for Use in the United States, adopted in 1965; for 1950-67 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E964, E980-E985 of the Sixth and Seventh Revisions adopted, respectively, in 1948 and 1955. For method of age adjustment, see appendix 2.]

Year	Total			White			All other		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
	Rate per 100,000 population								
1972	10.3	16.8	4.0	5.2	8.2	2.4	46.6	83.1	14.8
1971	10.0	16.3	4.1	5.1	7.9	2.4	45.9	80.8	15.5
1970	9.1	14.9	3.7	4.7	7.3	2.2	41.3	72.8	13.7
1969	8.6	13.9	3.5	4.3	6.6	2.1	41.3	72.4	13.8
1968	8.2	13.4	3.4	4.2	6.5	2.0	39.6	68.9	13.6
1967	7.7	12.1	3.5	3.9	5.9	2.0	36.9	62.7	14.0
1966	6.7	10.4	3.2	3.4	4.9	1.9	32.4	54.8	12.4
1965	6.2	9.8	2.9	3.2	4.8	1.7	30.1	50.7	11.7
1964	5.7	8.9	2.7	3.0	4.3	1.7	27.9	47.1	10.6
1963 ¹	5.5	8.5	2.6	2.9	4.2	1.6	26.7	44.8	10.5
1962 ¹	5.4	8.3	2.6	2.9	4.1	1.7	26.5	44.4	10.3
1961	5.2	8.0	2.6	2.7	3.9	1.6	25.0	41.5	10.1
1960	5.2	7.9	2.6	2.7	3.9	1.5	25.7	41.9	11.2
1959	5.1	7.7	2.5	2.6	3.8	1.5	25.8	42.3	*10.7
1958	4.9	7.5	2.5	2.5	3.6	1.4	25.3	41.6	10.5
1957	4.9	7.6	2.4	2.4	3.5	1.4	25.9	43.1	10.3
1956	5.0	7.6	2.4	2.4	3.5	1.3	26.5	43.2	11.3
1955	4.8	7.5	2.3	2.4	3.5	1.3	25.7	42.6	*10.3
1954	5.1	8.0	2.4	2.5	3.6	1.4	27.4	46.2	*10.3
1953	5.1	8.0	2.3	2.5	3.6	1.3	27.4	46.5	*10.2
1952	5.4	8.5	2.4	2.6	3.8	1.3	29.9	50.4	11.3
1951	5.0	7.8	2.4	2.5	3.6	1.4	27.5	45.3	11.1
1950 ²	5.4	8.4	2.5	2.6	3.9	1.4	29.5	49.1	*11.5

¹ Figures by color exclude data for residents of New Jersey because this State did not require reporting of the item for these years.

² Based on enumerated population adjusted for age bias in the population of races other than white.

NOTE: Asterisk indicates age-adjusted rates where more than half of the age-specific rates are based on fewer than 20 deaths.

Table C. Death rates for Homicide for three cohorts of young persons born 1943-47, 1948-52, and 1953-57, by age, color, and sex: United States, five-year intervals 1943-72.

Period of birth of cohort	Age at death (in years)	Year of death	Death rate per 100,000 population			
			White male persons	All other male persons	White female persons	All other female persons
1953-1957	Under 5	1957	0.9	2.4	0.8	2.5
	5-9	1962	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.8
	10-14	1967	0.5	3.8	0.4	1.7
	15-19	1972	6.3	55.5	2.8	11.7
1948-1952	Under 5	1952	1.3	2.1	1.0	1.9
	5-9	1957	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.4
	10-14	1962	0.5	1.8	0.6	0.8
	15-19	1967	4.3	43.8	1.6	9.3
	20-24	1972	13.2	152.7	3.7	26.6
1943-1947	Under 5	1947	1.8	2.2	1.6	0.8
	5-9	1952	0.3	0.9	0.2	0.8
	10-14	1957	0.5	2.7	0.3	0.8
	15-19	1962	2.6	27.0	1.3	6.3
	20-24	1967	8.7	105.8	2.9	24.7
	25-29	1972	14.3	172.1	3.3	27.2

Table D. Number and percent distribution of (1) victims of homicide, and (2) persons arrested for homicide, by specified age: United States, 1972.

Age (in years)	Number	Percent
1. Victims of homicide		
All ages	19,638	100.0
Under 15	780	4.0
15-29	7,932	40.4
(15-19)	(1,762)	(9.0)
(20-24)	(3,332)	(17.0)
(25-29)	(2,838)	(14.5)
30 years and over	10,926	55.6
2. Persons arrested for homicide ¹		
All ages	15,049	100.0
Under 15	221	1.5
15-29	8,907	59.2
(15-19)	(2,785)	(18.5)
(20-24)	(3,572)	(23.7)
(25-29)	(2,550)	(16.9)
30 years and over	5,921	39.3

¹Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 1972*, issued by Clarence M. Kelley, Director, Washington, D.C., August 1973. These data are limited to 6,195 agencies, covering an estimated population of 160,416,000 for 1972.

Table E. Homicide rates for geographic divisions: United States, 1972

[Rates per 100,000 population residing in specified area.]

Area	Homicide rate	
	1972	1959-61
UNITED STATES	9.4	4.7
GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS:		
New England	3.6	1.4
Middle Atlantic	8.8	3.0
East North Central	8.5	3.6
West North Central	4.6	2.6
South Atlantic	14.5	8.2
East South Central	13.0	8.3
West South Central	12.5	7.3
Mountain	7.2	4.4
Pacific	8.1	3.8

Table F. Number of Homicides and rates for 20 largest cities, together with rank of homicide rate: 1970

City	Population	Number of homicides	Homicide rate per 100,000 population	Rank of homicide rate
St. Louis, Mo.	622,236	248	39.9	1
Cleveland, Ohio	750,903	259	34.5	2
Detroit, Michigan	1,511,482	521	34.5	2
Dallas, Texas	844,401	246	29.1	4
Washington, D. C.	756,510	200	26.4	5
Baltimore, Md.	905,759	234	25.8	6
Houston, Texas	1,232,802	317	25.7	7
Chicago, Ill.	3,366,957	834	24.8	8
New Orleans, La.	593,471	129	21.7	9
Philadelphia, Pa.	1,948,609	389	20.0	10
Memphis, Tenn.	623,530	101	16.2	11
Los Angeles, Cal.	2,816,061	426	15.1	12
San Francisco, Cal.	715,674	106	14.8	13
New York, N.Y.	7,894,862	1,147	14.5	14
Boston, Mass.	641,071	87	13.6	15
San Antonio, Texas	654,153	85	13.0	16
Phoenix, Arizona	581,562	64	11.0	17
Indianapolis, Ind.	744,624	71	9.5	18
Milwaukee, Wisc.	717,099	60	8.4	19
San Diego, Calif.	696,769	34	4.9	20

Table 4. Death rates for Homicide, by color, sex, birth cohort, and age at death: United States, 5-year intervals during 1932-72.

[Rates per 100,000 population in specified age-color-sex group. For 1968-72 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E960-E978 of the Eighth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Adapted for Use in the United States, adopted in 1965; for 1949-1967, category numbers E964, E980-E985 of the Sixth and Seventh Revisions, adopted, respectively, in 1948 and 1955; for 1939-1948 category numbers 165-168 of the Fifth Revision, adopted in 1938; for 1930-38, category numbers 172-175 of the Fourth Revision, adopted in 1929.]

Color, sex, and age (in years)	PERIOD OF BIRTH OF COHORT																							
	1953-1957	1948-1952	1943-1947	1938-1942	1933-1937	1928-1932	1923-1927	1918-1922	1913-1917	1908-1912	1903-1907	1898-1902	1893-1897	1888-1892	1883-1887	1878-1882	1873-1877	1868-1872						
Total	8.8	6.1	3.7	3.7	4.2	4.0	4.5	5.5	6.3	9.9	13.9	15.5	17.2	16.1	12.2	11.3	8.5	8.8	7.5	5.0	2.6	2.6	2.9	2.7
White Male	6.3	4.3	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.7	3.3	5.0	8.8	12.8	16.2	16.4	13.0	13.1	11.1	8.0	11.9	9.3	6.8	3.4	3.4	4.4	3.4
All Other Male	55.5	43.8	27.0	26.9	34.7	34.8	35.8	44.0	45.0	121.7	145.9	136.1	126.4	97.7	80.3	44.8	44.1	50.4	25.0	14.9	13.6	15.4		
White Female	2.8	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.1	0.9	0.9	2.0	1.9	3.4	3.7	3.2	3.2	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.5	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
All Other Female	11.7	9.3	6.3	6.9	9.0	10.1	15.4	14.0	14.2	32.4	35.8	36.6	22.1	10.6	8.5	7.9	12.0	3.6	5.8	3.4	3.4	3.4	8.5	8.5

NOTE: The first figure in each row, moving from left to right, is the death rate for 1972; the second figure, for 1967; the third figure, for 1962, etc.

Table 5. Death rates for Homicide: United States, Each Division and State, 1972

[Rates per 100,000 population residing in specified area.]

Area	Homicide rate	Area	Homicide rate
United States	9.4		
Geographic Division:			
New England	3.6	South Atlantic:	
Middle Atlantic	8.8	Delaware	10.9
East North Central	8.5	Maryland	12.4
West North Central	4.6	District of Columbia	33.5
South Atlantic	14.5	Virginia	10.5
East South Central	13.0	West Virginia	5.7
West South Central	12.5	North Carolina	14.1
Mountain	7.2	South Carolina	15.6
Pacific	8.1	Georgia	21.2
		Florida	14.2
New England:		East South Central:	
Maine	3.7	Kentucky	9.4
New Hampshire	1.8	Tennessee	14.0
Vermont	2.2	Alabama	13.7
Massachusetts	4.3	Mississippi	15.2
Rhode Island	2.3		
Connecticut	3.2	West South Central:	
		Arkansas	9.5
Middle Atlantic:		Louisiana	15.4
New York	11.0	Oklahoma	7.8
New Jersey	7.2	Texas	13.2
Pennsylvania	6.5		
East North Central:		Mountain:	
Ohio	8.1	Montana	5.3
Indiana	6.4	Idaho	3.4
Illinois	9.1	Wyoming	2.9
Michigan	11.9	Colorado	7.5
Wisconsin	3.2	New Mexico	9.5
		Arizona	9.1
West North Central:		Utah	3.7
Minnesota	2.7	Nevada	12.4
Iowa	2.1		
Missouri	9.2	Pacific:	
North Dakota	0.9	Washington	4.2
South Dakota	3.2	Oregon	5.5
Nebraska	3.1	California	9.1
Kansas	3.8	Alaska	9.8
		Hawaii	7.6

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Mortality Trends for Homicide,
by Age, Color, and Sex:
United States, 1960-1972
(With Glances at the Statistical Profiles
of the Victims during 1900-59 and 1973)

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A total of 19,638 men, women and children died in the United States in 1972 from injuries inflicted by another person or persons with intent to injure or kill.

An examination of the death rates for Homicide during this century shows that both the total rate and the age-adjusted rate increased from 1900 to about 1933 (figure 1). Then both rates declined slowly (except for the steep drop in the death rate for Homicide during the years of World War II) through the 1940's and 1950's. But the trend during 1960-72 was again clearly upward--4.7 deaths per 100,000 for 1960 to 9.4 deaths for 1972.

Provisional figures for 1973 (based on a 10 percent sample of deaths occurring in that year) show that the number of homicides reached an estimated 20,518, representing a death rate for this cause of 9.8 deaths per 100,000 population. This rate is the highest ever recorded for homicide for the nation. The next highest rate occurred over forty years ago--in 1933, for which year the rate reached 9.7 deaths per 100,000.

Also for each of the four color-sex groups the death rate for homicide increased from about 1900-33. Then through the 1940's and 1950's all four rates declined slowly (except for the steep drop in the death rate for homicide for the male population during the years of World War II). But the rates turned upward again during 1960-72 (figure 2).

As measured by age-adjusted death rates the relative increase of 98.1 percent in the total Homicide rate between 1960 and 1972 reflects the following increases for the four color-sex groups: white male, 110.3 percent; other male, 98.3 percent; white female, 60.0 percent; and other female, 32.1 percent (figure 3).

Despite the larger relative increase in the age-adjusted death rate for Homicide for white persons, the 1972 rate for other persons was 11.2 times the corresponding rate for white persons.

For 1972 the age-adjusted death rate for Homicide for male persons was 4.20 times the corresponding rate for female persons.

For over 68 percent of the victims of homicide the means of injury were firearms and explosives, mostly firearms. For the first time in 1971 firearms and explosives were used more often to destroy another person than to destroy one's self.

When all means of injury are considered, there are still more suicides in the United States (25,004 suicides in 1972) than there are homicides (19,638 homicides in 1972). But the gap between the two types of violent deaths is closing rapidly.

Whereas for 1972 over half of the victims of homicide were among persons of races other than white, about 93 percent of the suicides were among white persons.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation reports an increase from 60 percent for 1966 of all homicides through use of firearms to 66 percent of all homicides for 1972. For 1972 the breakdown by type of firearm used was: handgun, 54 percent; rifle, 5 percent; and shotgun, 7 percent. Cutting or stabbing weapons were used in 19 percent of the homicides.

Increases in population between 1960 and 1972 for the following three age groups raised the death rate for homicide for 1972 higher than it would have been without these increases: 15-19 years, 20-24 years, and 25-29 years. These three age groups had by far higher death rates for homicide in 1972 than in 1962 (table C). Moreover these young persons born in the last years of World War II and in the post-war "baby boom" years (1943-57) included 59.2 percent of all persons arrested for homicide in 1972.

By age, the particular section of the population most involved in the upturn in homicide during 1962-72, with both the greatest number of persons arrested for homicide and the greatest number of victims of homicide in 1972, were young persons--at ages 20-24 years. This group was born in 1948-52. In 1972, 17.0 percent of all victims of homicide and an estimated 23.7 percent of all persons arrested for homicide were in this age group. There were only 10,800,761 persons at ages 20-24 years in 1960, but by 1972, owing to the large birth cohort of 1948-52, the number at ages 20-24 years had increased to 17,733,000.

Almost as dominant a role was enacted in 1972 by persons from the cohort born in 1943-47, who were at ages 25-29 years. Persons at these ages included 14.5 percent of the victims of homicide and an estimated 16.9 percent of all those arrested for homicide.

The death rate for homicide in 1972 for this group at ages 25-29 years (172.1 deaths per 100,000) was much higher than that for those at ages 20-24 years. But those at ages 25-29 years included smaller proportions of the victims and of those arrested for homicide. Part of the explanation for the fact is that those at ages 25-29 years numbered about 2,739,000 fewer persons in 1972 than did those at ages 20-24 years.

Even more disturbing is the pattern emerging for the cohort born in 1953-57, the last years of the rising live birth rate in the United States. In 1972 these young people were at ages 15-19 years. Already in 1972 they included 9.0 percent of all the victims and an estimated 18.5 percent of all those arrested for homicide. This young cohort born in 1953-57 numbered 20,110,000 in 1972--a larger cohort by far than either of the other two critical cohorts born in 1948-52 or 1943-47.

An examination of the mortality pattern for age-specific death rates for homicide for each year of the period 1933-72 (beginning with the first year that all of the first 48 States were in the death registration area) shows that with few exceptions for any given year for each of the four color-sex groups the age group 25-34 years has a death rate that is considerably higher than the death rates for any other age group in that year. This pattern holds both for years in periods when mortality from homicide is falling and for years in periods when mortality from homicide is rising.

Peaking of the death rate for Homicide for male persons of races other than white is greater than that for any other color-sex group. To illustrate the steep peaking pattern for these men the

mortality curves for age-specific rates for four calendar years, at 10-year intervals, are shown in figure 4. Two of these years are in a period of rising mortality from homicide (1962-1972); and two, in a period of falling mortality from this cause (1942 and 1952).

It must be feared, therefore, that unless the ongoing upturn in homicide is reversed, each of the four color-sex groups in the large cohort born in 1953-57 will have a higher death rate for homicide in 1977, when they will be at ages 20-24 years, than they had in 1972 at ages 15-19 years.

Although the greatest absolute increase in the death rate for homicide occurred for men of races other than white at ages 25-29 years, no age group was spared in the ongoing upturn in mortality from homicide.

The rise in the death rate for homicide for older people may be associated with the change in pattern of what the Federal Bureau of Investigation describes as "murder circumstance":

"Felony murder is defined as those killings resulting from robbery, sex motive, gangland slaying and other felonious activities. Felony type and suspected felony type murders in 1972 constituted 27 percent of all murder, whereas these two categories accounted for 22 percent of total murder in 1966."

In 1972 the victims of felony type murder were 61 percent white, 38 percent Negro, and the remaining 1 percent of other race or race not reported.

The percent of murders in the family (spouse killing spouse, parent killing child, and other family killings) decreased from 28.8 for 1966 to 24.3 for 1970.

The pattern of upturn in mortality from homicide beginning about 1962 for all cohorts is even more pronounced for white men than for men of other races (figure 5). Although the death rates for homicide are still considerably lower for white men than for men of other races, the relative increases in mortality from this cause during 1962-72, as shown in figure 5, was greater for white men. For five cohorts of white men (A, B, C, D, and E in figure 5) the death rate for homicide reached a level at older ages in 1972 that was higher than the first peak rate reached at about age 30 years.

Moreover, for these cohorts of white men, the relative increases between the first peak death rate for homicide and the rate for 1972 are markedly greater than the corresponding increases for the parallel cohorts of men of races other than white. Consider the

experience of the cohort of white men who were born in 1923-27 and were at ages 45-49 years in 1972.

Inasmuch as this cohort of white men lived its first 34 years in a period of downturn in mortality it had its first peak death rate at younger ages (20-24 years) than the ages at which the peak death rate occurs in the annual schedules of age-specific death rates for homicide. As mentioned above, in these annual schedules of age-specific death rates, the highest death rate for homicide occurs for the age group 25-34 years. After reaching in 1947 its first peak rate of 6.5 deaths per 100,000 at ages 20-24 years, the death rate for homicide for this cohort declined until sometime between 1957-62. It was during this period that the ongoing upturn in mortality from homicide began for the nation.

After dropping to a low in 1957 of 5.3 deaths per 100,000 at ages 30-34 years, the homicide rate for this cohort turned upward: the rate reached 10.5 deaths per 100,000 at ages 45-49 years in 1972. The relative increase between the first peak rate in 1947 (6.5 deaths per 100,000) and the rate in 1972 (10.5 deaths per 100,000) amounts to 66.7 percent. This is a much larger relative increase than that between the first peak rate and the rate in 1972

for the parallel cohort of men of races other than white. For them the relative increase between the first peak rate in 1947 (108.4 deaths per 100,000) and the rate in 1972 (109.0 deaths per 100,000) amounts to an increase of only 1.3 percent.

Death rates by State ranged in 1972 from a low of 0.9 per 100,000 population for North Dakota to a high of 21.2 for Georgia.

For 1970 among the twenty largest cities the following five had the highest death rates for homicide: St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit, Dallas, and Washington, D. C. For Washington, D. C. (the only city for which 1972 population figures are available), the death rate for homicide rose from 26.4 per 100,000 for 1970 to 33.5 for 1972.

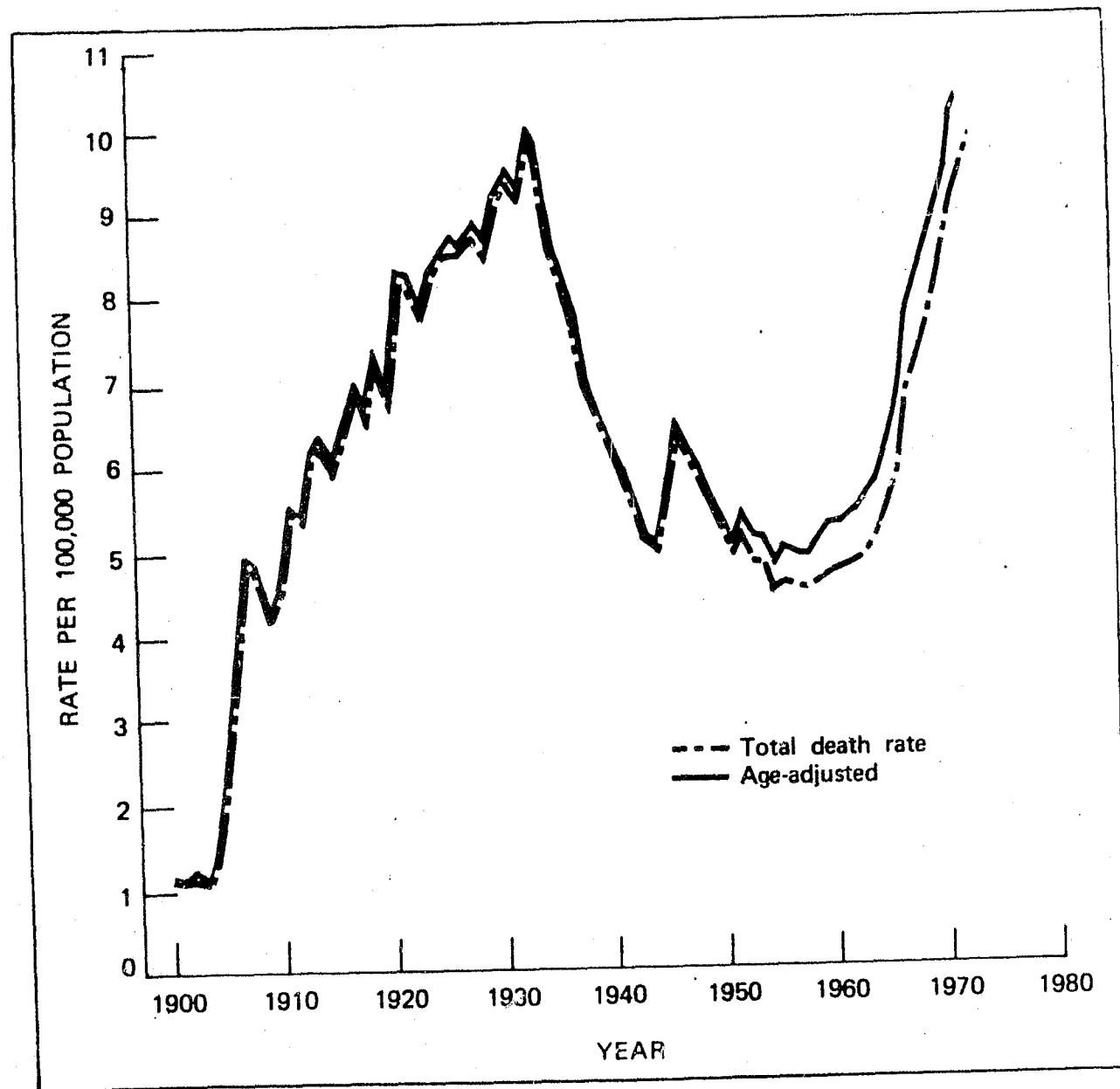


Figure 1. Death rates for homicide (total and age adjusted): United States, 1900-1973.

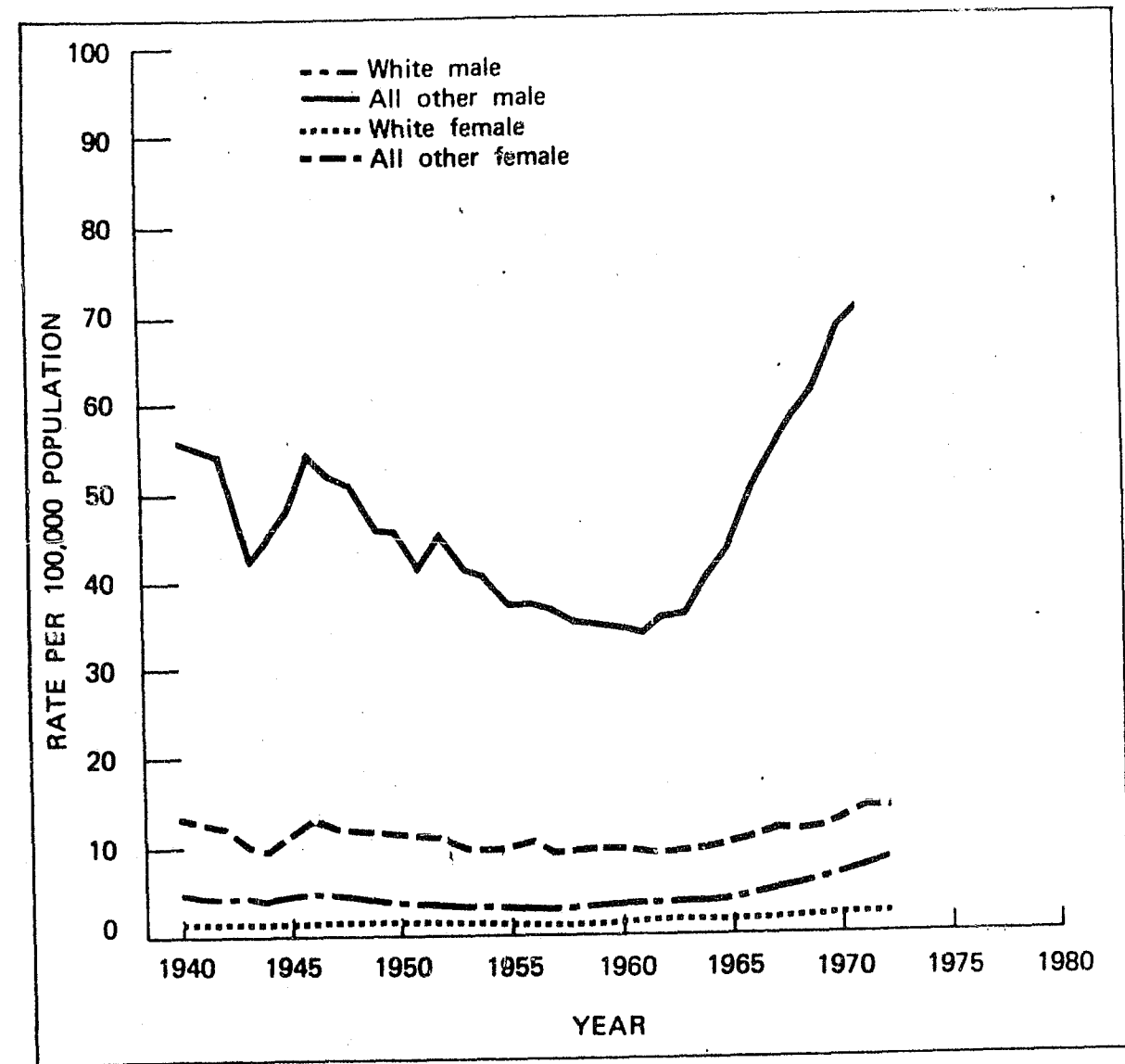


Figure 2. Homicide rates, by color and sex: United States, 1940-72.

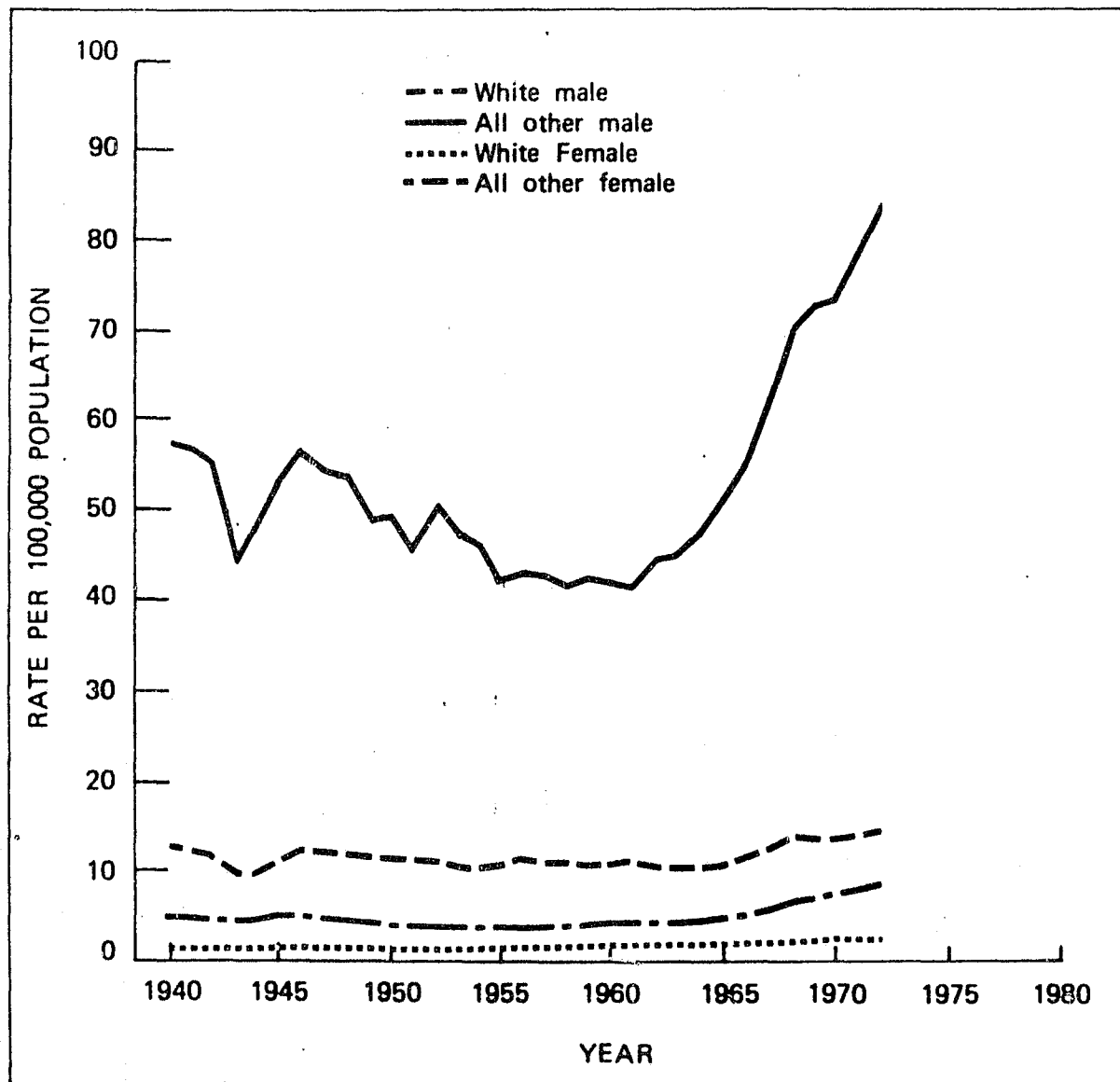


Figure 3. Age-adjusted homicide rates, by color and sex: United States, 1940-72.

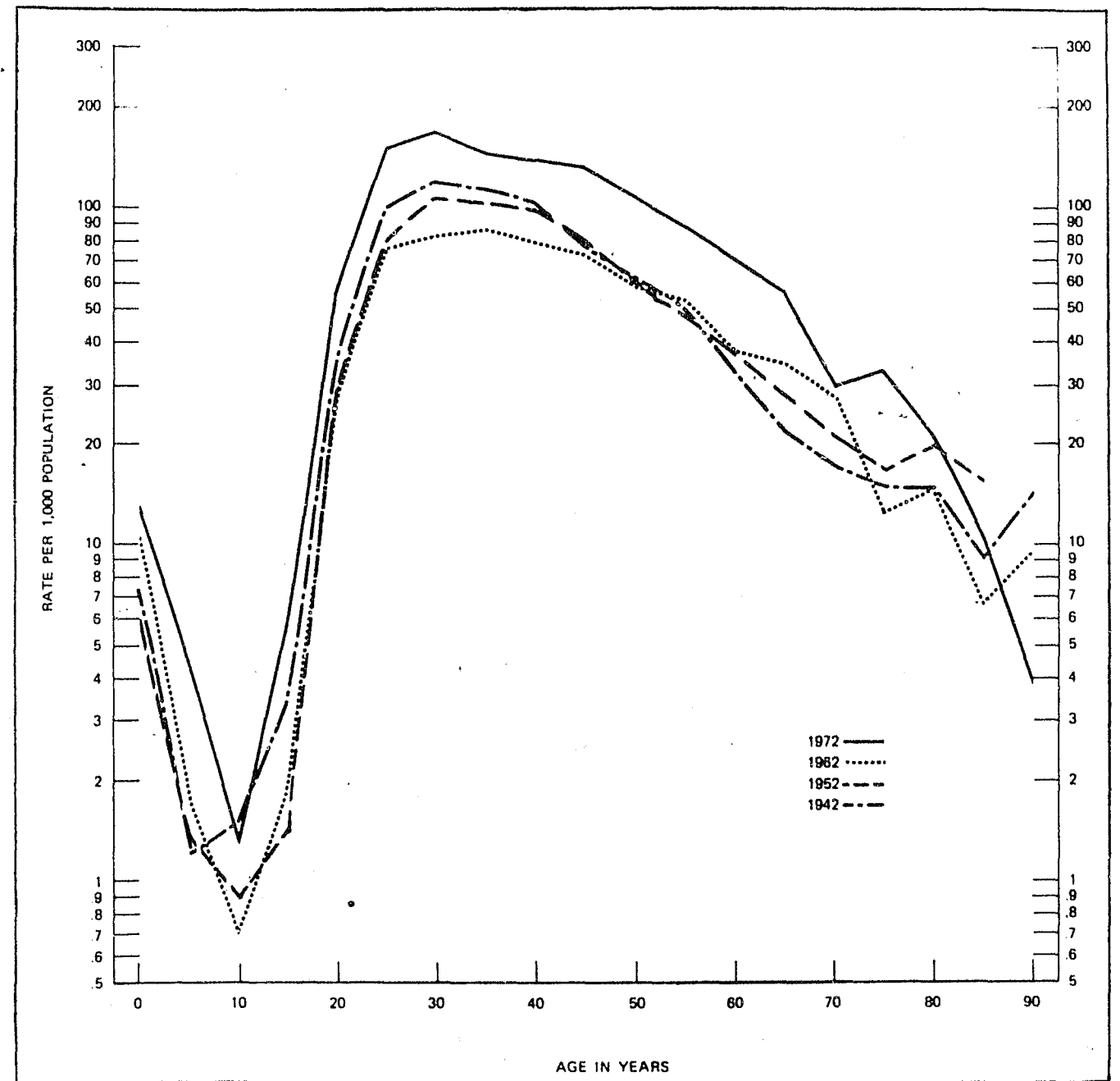


Figure 4. Death rates for homicide, for male persons of races other than white, by age: United States, at 10 year intervals during 1942-72.

Figure 5. Death rates for homicide among men, by birth cohort, color, and age at death.

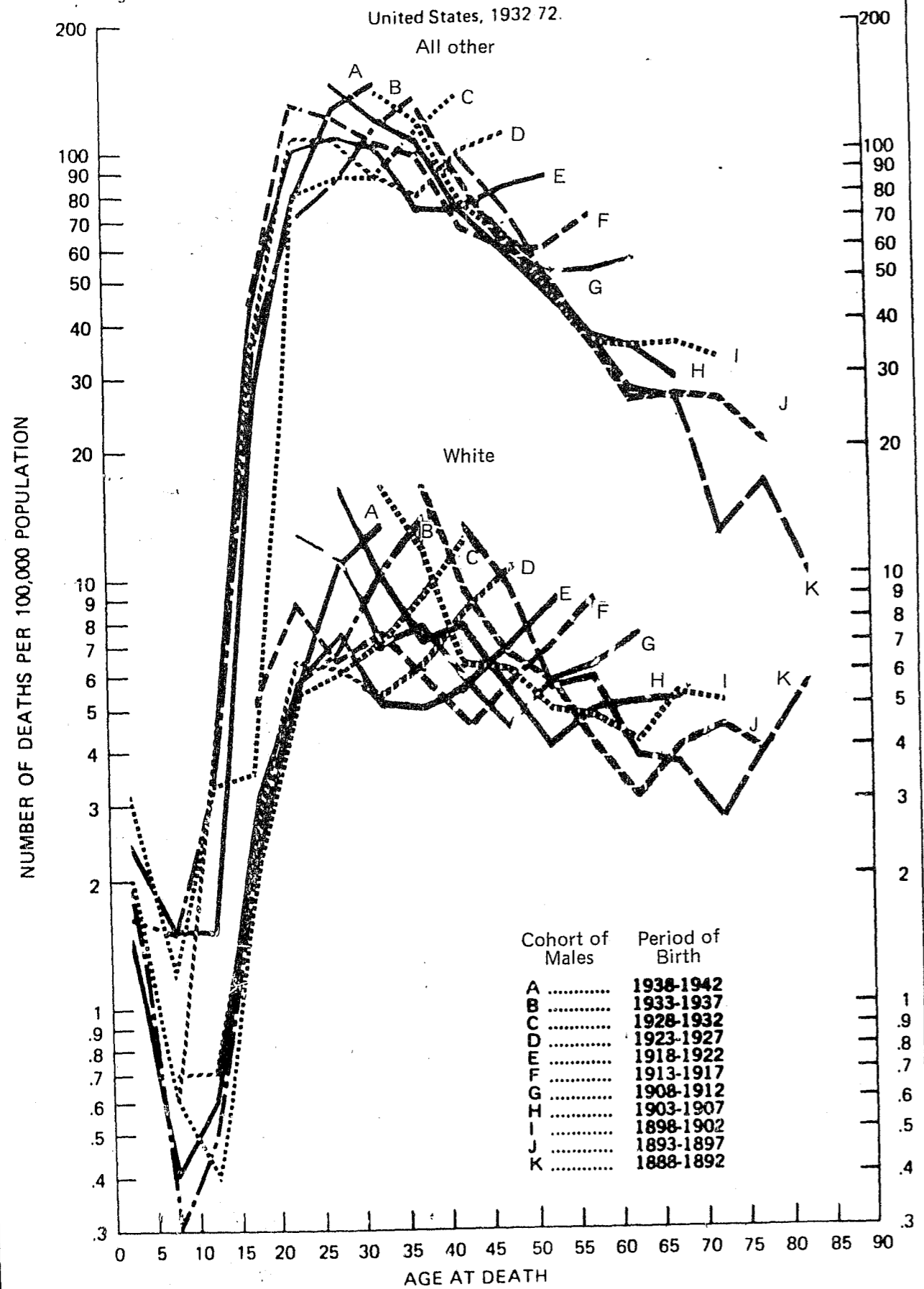


Table A. Number of victims of Homicide, by age, color, and sex: United States, 1972.

[Deaths are those assigned to category numbers E950-E978 of the Eighth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Adapted for Use in the United States, adopted in 1965.]

Age in years	Total			White			All other		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
All ages----	19,638	15,642	3,996	8,976	6,820	2,156	10,662	8,822	1,840
Under 1-----	172	92	80	102	58	44	70	34	36
1-4 -----	246	138	108	154	88	66	92	50	42
5-9 -----	94	44	50	58	24	34	36	20	16
10-14 -----	268	166	102	130	72	58	138	94	44
15-19 -----	1,762	1,356	406	790	554	236	972	802	170
20-24 -----	3,332	2,716	616	1,296	1,010	286	2,036	1,706	330
25-29 -----	2,838	2,360	478	1,162	944	218	1,676	1,416	260
30-34 -----	2,190	1,774	416	886	710	176	1,304	1,064	240
35-39 -----	1,884	1,562	322	818	660	158	1,066	902	164
40-44 -----	1,798	1,470	328	792	622	170	1,006	848	158
45-49 -----	1,484	1,200	284	696	544	152	788	656	132
50-54 -----	1,128	930	198	574	444	130	554	486	68
55-59 -----	868	698	170	496	388	108	372	310	62
60-64 -----	630	508	122	358	280	78	272	228	44
65-69 -----	334	252	82	212	156	56	122	96	26
70-74 -----	256	178	78	164	108	56	92	70	22
75-79 -----	142	84	58	106	56	50	36	28	8
80-84 -----	114	56	58	96	48	48	18	8	10
85+ -----	74	44	30	66	42	24	8	2	6
Not stated---	24	14	10	20	12	8	4	2	2

Table B. Age-adjusted death rates for Homicide, by color and sex: United States, 1950-72.

[For 1968-72 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E960-E978 of the Eighth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Adapted for Use in the United States, adopted in 1965; for 1950-67 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E964, E980-E985 of the Sixth and Seventh Revisions adopted, respectively in 1948 and 1955. For method of age adjustment, see appendix 2.]

Year	Total			White			All other		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
	Rate per 100,000 population								
1972	10.3	16.8	4.0	5.2	8.2	2.4	46.6	83.1	14.8
1971	10.0	16.3	4.1	5.1	7.9	2.4	45.9	80.8	15.5
1970	9.1	14.9	3.7	4.7	7.3	2.2	41.3	72.8	13.7
1969	8.6	13.9	3.5	4.3	6.6	2.1	41.3	72.4	13.8
1968	8.2	13.4	3.4	4.2	6.5	2.0	39.6	68.9	13.6
1967	7.7	12.1	3.5	3.9	5.9	2.0	36.9	62.7	14.0
1966	6.7	10.4	3.2	3.4	4.9	1.9	32.4	54.8	12.4
1965	6.2	9.8	2.9	3.2	4.8	1.7	30.1	50.7	11.7
1964	5.7	8.9	2.7	3.0	4.3	1.7	27.9	47.1	10.6
1963 ¹	5.5	8.5	2.6	2.9	4.2	1.6	26.7	44.8	10.5
1962 ¹	5.4	8.3	2.6	2.9	4.1	1.7	26.5	44.4	10.3
1961	5.2	8.0	2.6	2.7	3.9	1.6	25.0	41.5	10.1
1960	5.2	7.9	2.6	2.7	3.9	1.5	25.7	41.9	11.2
1959	5.1	7.7	2.5	2.6	3.8	1.5	25.8	42.3	*10.7
1958	4.9	7.5	2.5	2.5	3.6	1.4	25.3	41.6	10.5
1957	4.9	7.6	2.4	2.4	3.5	1.4	25.9	43.1	10.3
1956	5.0	7.6	2.4	2.4	3.5	1.3	26.5	43.2	11.3
1955	4.8	7.5	2.3	2.4	3.5	1.3	25.7	42.6	*10.3
1954	5.1	8.0	2.4	2.5	3.6	1.4	27.4	46.2	*10.3
1953	5.1	8.0	2.3	2.5	3.6	1.3	27.4	46.5	*10.2
1952	5.4	8.5	2.4	2.6	3.8	1.3	29.9	50.4	11.3
1951	5.0	7.8	2.4	2.5	3.6	1.4	27.5	45.3	11.1
1950 ²	5.4	8.4	2.5	2.6	3.9	1.4	29.5	49.1	*11.5

¹ Figures by color exclude data for residents of New Jersey because this State did not require reporting of the item for these years.

² Based on enumerated population adjusted for age bias in the population of races other than white.

NOTE: Asterisk indicates age-adjusted rates where more than half of the age-specific rates are based on fewer than 20 deaths.

Table C. Death rates for Homicide for three cohorts of young persons born 1943-47, 1948-52, and 1953-57, by age, color, and sex: United States, five-year intervals 1943-72.

Period of birth of cohort	Age at death (in years)	Year of death	Death rate per 100,000 population			
			White male persons	All other male persons	White female persons	All other female persons
1953-1957	Under 5	1957	0.9	2.4	0.8	2.5
	5-9	1962	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.8
	10-14	1967	0.5	3.8	0.4	1.7
	15-19	1972	6.3	55.5	2.8	11.7
1948-1952	Under 5	1952	1.3	2.1	1.0	1.9
	5-9	1957	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.4
	10-14	1962	0.5	1.8	0.6	0.8
	15-19	1967	4.3	43.8	1.6	9.3
1943-1947	20-24	1972	13.2	152.7	3.7	26.6
	Under 5	1947	1.8	2.2	1.6	0.8
	5-9	1952	0.3	0.9	0.2	0.8
	10-14	1957	0.5	2.7	0.3	0.8
1943-1947	15-19	1962	2.6	27.0	1.3	6.3
	20-24	1967	8.7	105.8	2.9	24.7
	25-29	1972	14.3	172.1	3.3	27.2

Table D. Number and percent distribution of (1) victims of homicide, and (2) persons arrested for homicide, by specified age: United States, 1972.

Age (in years)	Number	Percent
1. Victims of homicide		
All ages	19,638	100.0
Under 15	780	4.0
15-29	7,932	40.4
(15-19)	(1,762)	(9.0)
(20-24)	(3,332)	(17.0)
(25-29)	(2,838)	(14.5)
30 years and over	10,926	55.6
2. Persons arrested for homicide¹		
All ages	15,049	100.0
Under 15	221	1.5
15-29	8,907	59.2
(15-19)	(2,785)	(18.5)
(20-24)	(3,572)	(23.7)
(25-29)	(2,550)	(16.9)
30 years and over	5,921	39.3

¹Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime in the United States, 1972, issued by Clarence M. Kelley, Director, Washington, D.C., August 1973. These data are limited to 6,195 agencies, covering an estimated population of 160,416,000 for 1972.

Table E. Homicide rates for geographic divisions: United States, 1972

[Rates per 100,000 population residing in specified area.]

Area	Homicide rate	
	1972	1959-61
UNITED STATES	9.4	4.7
GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS:		
New England	3.6	1.4
Middle Atlantic	8.8	3.0
East North Central	8.5	3.6
West North Central	4.6	2.6
South Atlantic	14.5	8.2
East South Central	13.0	8.3
West South Central	12.5	7.3
Mountain	7.2	4.4
Pacific	8.1	3.8

Table F. Number of Homicides and rates for 20 largest cities, together with rank of homicide rate: 1970

City	Population	Number of homicides	Homicide rate per 100,000 population	Rank of homicide rate
St. Louis, Mo.	622,236	248	39.9	1
Cleveland, Ohio	750,903	259	34.5	2
Detroit, Michigan	1,511,482	521	34.5	2
Dallas, Texas	844,401	246	29.1	4
Washington, D. C.	756,510	200	26.4	5
Baltimore, Md.	905,759	234	25.8	6
Houston, Texas	1,232,802	317	25.7	7
Chicago, Ill.	3,366,957	834	24.8	8
New Orleans, La.	593,471	129	21.7	9
Philadelphia, Pa.	1,948,609	389	20.0	10
Memphis, Tenn.	623,530	101	16.2	11
Los Angeles, Cal.	2,816,061	426	15.1	12
San Francisco, Cal.	715,674	106	14.8	13
New York, N.Y.	7,894,862	1,147	14.5	14
Boston, Mass.	641,071	87	13.6	15
San Antonio, Texas	654,153	85	13.0	16
Phoenix, Arizona	581,562	64	11.0	17
Indianapolis, Ind.	744,624	71	9.5	18
Milwaukee, Wisc.	717,099	60	8.4	19
San Diego, Calif.	696,769	34	4.9	20

Table I. - Number of homicides and rates, by sex, and by means of injury: United States, 1900-1972.

[Rates per 100,000 population. Death Registration Area, 1900-1932, and United States 1933-1972. For 1968-72 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E960-E978 of the Eighth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases, Adapted for Use in the United States, adopted in 1965; for 1949-67 rates are based on deaths assigned to category numbers E964, E980-E985 of the Sixth and Seventh Revisions adopted, respectively, in 1948 and 1955; for 1939-48, on deaths assigned to category numbers 165-168, 198 of the Fifth Revision, adopted in 1938; for 1930-38, on deaths assigned to category numbers 172-175, 198 of the Fourth Revision, adopted in 1949; for 1921-29, on deaths assigned to category numbers 197-200, and part of 202 of the Third Revision, adopted in 1920; for 1910-20 on category numbers 182-184 of the Second Revision, adopted in 1909; and for 1900-1909, on part of category number 176 of the First Revision, adopted in 1900.]

Year	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of homicides, by sex			Number of homicides, by means of injury			
		Total	Male	Female	Assault by firearm and explosive	Assault by cutting and piercing instruments	Injury by intervention of police and execution	Assault by other means
1972	9.4	19,638	15,642	3,996	13,382	3,196	300	2,760
1971	9.1	18,787	14,812	3,975	12,423	3,237	412	2,715
1970	8.3	16,848	13,278	3,570	11,213	2,780	333	2,522
1969	7.7	15,477	12,166	3,311	10,174	2,726	354	2,223
1968	7.2	14,686	11,523	3,163	9,425	2,626	350	2,285
1967	6.8	13,425	10,236	3,189	8,332	2,467	387	2,239
1966	5.9	11,606	8,729	2,877	6,855	2,330	298	2,123
1965	5.5	10,712	8,148	2,564	6,158	2,292	271	1,991
1964	5.1	9,814	7,367	2,447	5,474	2,108	278	1,954
1963	4.9	9,225	6,921	2,304	5,126	1,990	246	1,863
1962	4.8	9,013	6,707	2,306	4,954	1,978	187	1,894
1961	4.7	8,578	6,346	2,232	4,753	1,819	237	1,769
1960	4.7	8,464	6,269	2,195	4,627	1,836	245	1,756
1959	4.6	8,159	6,068	2,091	4,457	1,804	227	1,671
1958	4.5	7,815	5,804	2,011	4,230	1,765	229	1,591
1957	4.5	7,641	5,739	1,902	4,010	1,867	228	1,536
1956	4.6	7,629	5,705	1,924	4,039	1,854	226	1,510
1955	4.5	7,418	5,630	1,788	3,807	1,826	227	1,558
1954	4.8	7,735	5,886	1,849	4,115	1,793	244	1,583
1953	4.8	7,640	5,828	1,812	4,013	1,837	255	1,535
1952	5.7	8,054	6,202	1,852	4,244	1,986	256	1,568
1951	4.9	7,495	5,669	1,826	3,898	1,787	227	1,583
1950	5.3	7,942	6,089	1,853	4,179	1,879	282	1,602
1949	5.4	8,033	6,214	1,819	4,235	1,869	277	1,652
1948	5.9	8,654	6,769	1,985	4,894	2,074	(NA)	1,686
1947	6.1	8,708	6,858	1,850	4,922	1,981	(NA)	1,805
1946	6.4	8,913	7,012	1,901	4,966	2,159	(NA)	1,788
1945	5.7	7,547	5,969	1,578	4,029	1,837	(NA)	1,681
1944	5.0	6,675	5,251	1,424	3,449	1,741	(NA)	1,485
1943	5.1	6,823	5,363	1,460	3,444	1,849	(NA)	1,530
1942	5.9	7,890	6,266	1,624	4,204	2,120	(NA)	1,564
1941	6.0	8,048	6,408	1,640	4,525	2,034	(NA)	1,489
1940	6.3	8,329	6,647	1,682	4,655	2,064	(NA)	1,610
1939	6.4	8,394	6,657	1,737	4,799	2,048	(NA)	1,547
1938	6.8	8,799	6,935	1,864	5,055	2,018	(NA)	1,726
1937	7.6	9,811	7,731	2,080	5,701	2,192	(NA)	1,918
1936	8.0	10,232	8,134	2,098	6,016	2,151	(NA)	2,065
1935	8.3	10,587	8,554	2,033	6,506	2,018	(NA)	2,063
1934	9.5	13,055	9,850	2,205	7,702	2,122	(NA)	2,231
1933	9.7	12,134	9,874	2,250	7,863	2,065	(NA)	2,196
1932	9.0	10,722	8,646	2,076	7,252	1,578	(NA)	1,892
1931	9.2	10,862	8,761	2,101	7,335	1,662	(NA)	1,865
1930	8.8	10,331	8,233	2,098	6,995	1,553	(NA)	1,783
1929	8.4	9,637	7,644	1,993	6,362	1,539	(NA)	1,736
1928	8.4	9,780	7,889	1,891	6,668	1,409	(NA)	1,703
1927	8.4	8,997	7,168	1,829	6,004	1,376	(NA)	1,617
1926	8.4	8,740	7,037	1,683	6,015	1,239	(NA)	1,666
1925	8.1	3,440	6,823	1,617	5,908	1,130	(NA)	1,407
1924	8.1	8,014	6,408	1,606	5,736	920	(NA)	1,358
1923	7.8	7,557	6,096	1,461	5,422	884	(NA)	1,251
1922	8.0	7,381	5,996	1,385	5,430	763	(NA)	1,388
1921	8.1	7,090	5,682	1,408	5,178	687	(NA)	1,225
1920	6.8	5,815	4,661	1,154	4,178	587	(NA)	1,050
1919	7.2	5,973	4,820	1,153	4,247	632	(NA)	1,094
1918	6.5	5,113	4,107	1,006	3,475	603	(NA)	1,035
1917	6.9	4,754	3,904	960	3,205	621	(NA)	1,038
1916	6.3	4,237	3,419	818	2,708	546	(NA)	983
1915	5.9	3,633	2,829	804	2,213	483	(NA)	937
1914	6.2	3,776	3,000	776	2,366	511	(NA)	899
1913	6.1	3,521	2,818	703	2,123	492	(NA)	906
1912	5.4	2,938	2,305	636	1,775	417	(NA)	746
1911	5.5	2,978	2,385	593	1,743	478	(NA)	757
1910	4.6	2,161	1,670	491	1,174	289	(NA)	698
1909	4.2	1,857	1,400	457	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1908	4.8	1,858	1,421	437	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1907	4.9	1,701	1,334	367	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1906	3.9	1,310	1,013	297	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1905	2.1	463	339	124	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1904	1.3	283	193	90	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1903	1.1	236	175	61	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1902	1.2	255	168	87	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1901	1.2	233	150	83	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
1900	1.2	230	167	63	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

Table 5. Death rates for Homicide: United States, Each Division and State, 1972

[Rates per 100,000 population residing in specified area.]

Area	Homicide rate	Area	Homicide rate
United States	9.4		
Geographic Division:			
New England	3.6	South Atlantic:	
Middle Atlantic	8.8	Delaware	10.9
East North Central	8.5	Maryland	12.4
West North Central	4.6	District of Columbia	33.5
South Atlantic	14.5	Virginia	10.5
East South Central	13.0	West Virginia	5.7
West South Central	12.5	North Carolina	14.1
Mountain	7.2	South Carolina	15.6
Pacific	8.1	Georgia	21.2
		Florida	14.2
New England:			
Maine	3.7	East South Central:	
New Hampshire	1.8	Kentucky	9.4
Vermont	2.2	Tennessee	14.0
Massachusetts	4.3	Alabama	13.7
Rhode Island	2.3	Mississippi	15.2
Connecticut	3.2		
Middle Atlantic:			
New York	11.0	West South Central:	
New Jersey	7.2	Arkansas	9.5
Pennsylvania	6.5	Louisiana	15.4
		Oklahoma	7.8
		Texas	13.2
East North Central:			
Ohio	8.1	Mountain:	
Indiana	6.4	Montana	5.3
Illinois	9.1	Idaho	3.4
Michigan	11.9	Wyoming	2.9
Wisconsin	3.2	Colorado	7.5
		New Mexico	9.5
		Arizona	9.1
West North Central:			
Minnesota	2.7	Utah	3.7
Iowa	2.1	Nevada	12.4
Missouri	9.2	Pacific:	
North Dakota	0.9	Washington	4.2
South Dakota	3.2	Oregon	5.5
Nebraska	3.1	California	9.1
Kansas	3.8	Alaska	9.8
		Hawaii	7.6

END