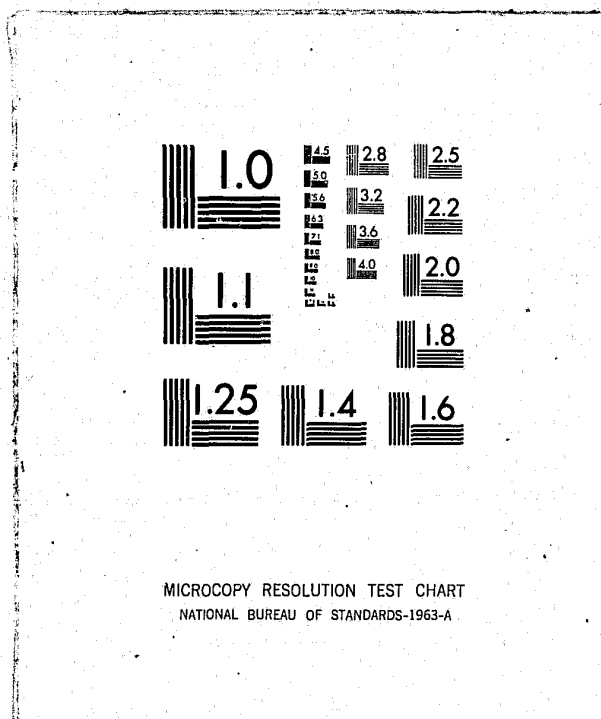


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National Institute of Justice  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C. 20531

Date Filmed

OCTOBER 13, 1980

61711

**METROPOLITAN ORGANIZATION  
TO COUNTER SEXUAL ASSAULT**

**Evaluation**

**No. 78-DF-AX-0037**

**1. West 40th Street, Suite 104  
Kansas City, Missouri 64111**

61711

SEP 27 1979

# EVALUATION

# ACQUISITIONS

As a measure of the effect of adding MOCSA to the existing agencies of police, prosecution, hospital emergency room and mental health centers, the change in the rate of victim dropout from the criminal justice system was selected. Since the increase in reporting rate would likely obscure a decrease in the actual occurrence of sexual assault, the Uniform Crime Reports is not a valid measure of system effectiveness over so short a period as three years.

Victim Declining to:	1978	1975
Take Further Action with Police	22.0%	49.8%
Prosecute with Prosecutor	7.8%	18.4%
Appear for Preliminary Hearing/ Grand Jury	1.2%	12.8%
Appear for Trial	0.0%	11.1%
Number of Reports	395	328

These figures are expressed in percentages of attacks occurring within the jurisdiction of the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department. MOCSA services extend to the eight counties located in the metropolitan bi-state area surrounding Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas which includes 114 communities, 89 law enforcement agencies, 8 court systems, 8 community mental health centers and a population of 1.4 million people. Tracking for Kansas City, Missouri cases was selected to be consistent with data collected for the "Ecology of Rape".

It should be noted that the intervening passage in Missouri of a "sunshine law" that mandates destruction of records after one year if no conviction is obtained made it impossible to retrieve some of the data regarding magistrate court disposition in 1975 for comparison in 1978.

Another statistic of interest is that although the charging rate on these cases within the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office of Ralph Martin is calculated as:

$$\text{No of cases charged} / \text{No. of cases presented} = \text{charging rate}$$
  
and rose from 35.5% in 1975, based on 328 cases, to 52.9% in 1978, based on 395 cases (indicating not only the increased quality of cases produced by the sex crimes investigative unit, but also the increased willingness of the prosecutor to accept more marginal cases) the corresponding trial conviction rate as charged increased slightly from 63.1% in 1975 to 64.7% in 1978. It was the prosecutor's experience during 1976 and 1977 during which time grant funds paid for two special prosecutors for sexual assault cases, that the plea rate as charged rose dramatically. Rape, instead of being an almost 100% trial case as was true in 1975, was a charge pled to without reduction. This is attributed to the increase in physical evidence back-up, the forging of unbroken chains of custody as well as the willingness of the victim to stick with the system. The defense in 90% of these cases was handled by the highly experienced criminal lawyers of the public defenders office. It is interesting to note that in the face of these changes in sexual assault prosecution the public defender now frequently interjects into questioning of both victims and jurors the role of MOCSA in the community.

Sexual assaults are now handled by the prosecutors as general assignment cases. The use of special prosecutors was eliminated with the cessation of funding and resulted in no noticeable loss of overall efficiency. The lack of vertical prosecution is bridged



by having one victim advocate who is familiar with the various levels of jurisdiction and the prosecutors assigned to handle the case at that level.

We would hasten to add that the special prosecutors were essential to the system "turn-around" both in relation to office attitudes as well as defense strategies. It is simply that now the myth that rape is a "no-win" situation for prosecution has been retired through demonstration, these cases flow through without special treatment. This not true in the smaller offices within the service area in which the change of office head determines policy regarding sexual assault cases.

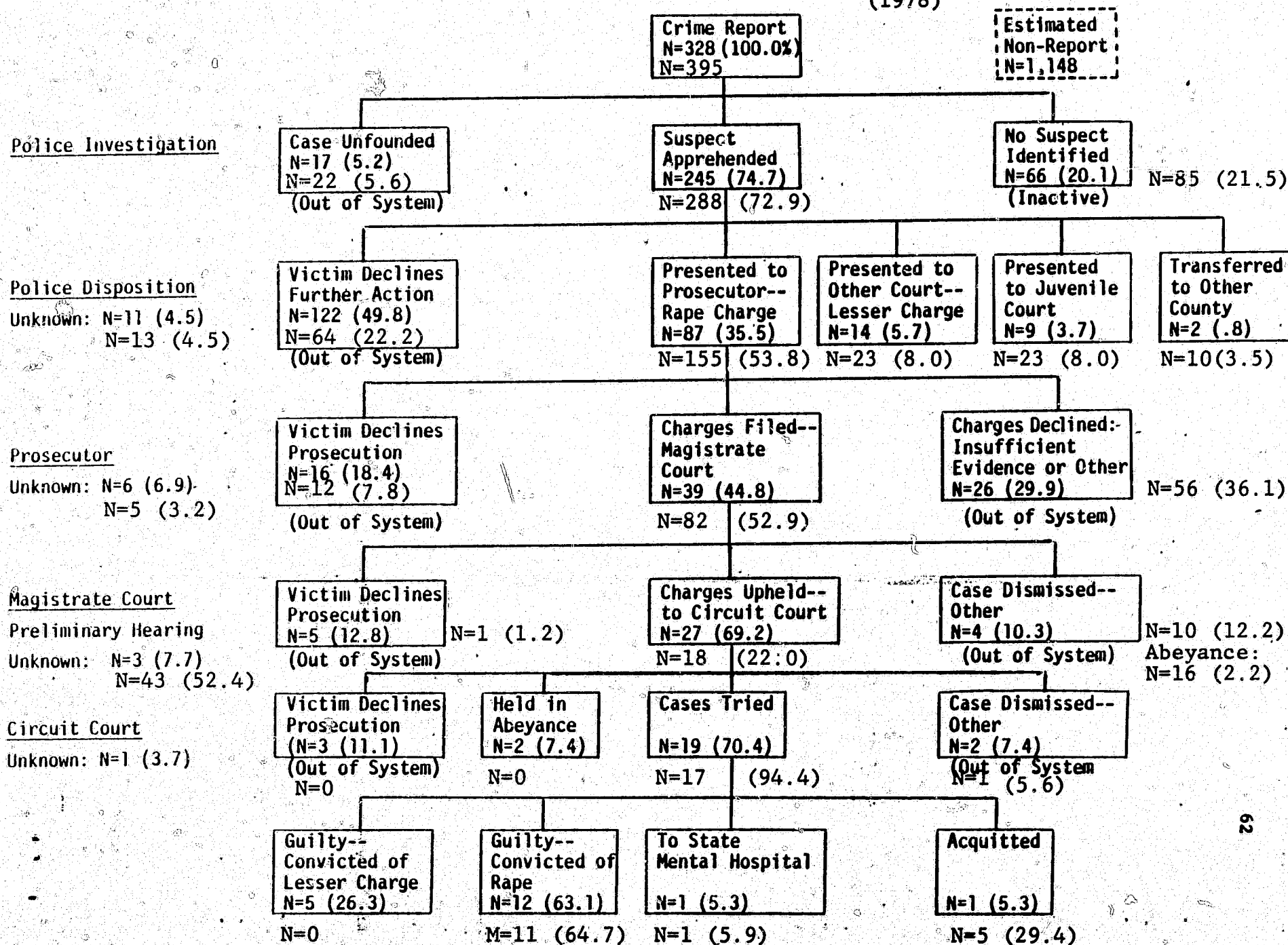
Finally, the question of determining actual incidence of rape versus reported incidence must be addressed. Assistance in this area is forthcoming from a project currently in the making in the Research Department of the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department under a grant from the National Center for Rape Treatment and Prevention. Building on the incidence and MO factors of the "Ecology of Rape", a computerized system of victim and offender profiles is being developed. We have perceived intuitively that the higher the reporting rate, the more chance there is statistically that a given suspect will be the focus of more than one incident report. This has been the experience of the sex crimes unit. In fact, the collation of reports in which the MO of the rapist precluded eyewitness identification of the assailant, but indicated the mode of a single perpetrator, have in two cases yielded enough information so that surveillance led to successful identification and conviction of the rapist, caught in the act.

Based on the increase of multiple reports of the activities of a single rapist and the increase in third party reports, an informed estimate by MOCSA is that the reporting rate has doubled over the last five years to 30%.

The failure of the absolute number of convictions to increase is an indication that the limiting factor is jury attitude. This can only be modified by intensive general education in sexual assault. It was observed by the evaluators that the system lag prevents an accurate reflection of assaults occurring in 1978. The court cases tracked originated in 1976 and 1977.

Figure 5

Overview of Official Actions, Kansas City, Missouri, 1975  
(1978)





**END**