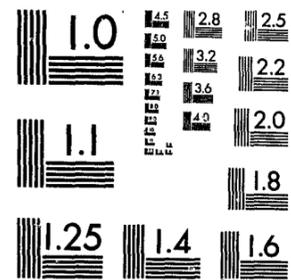


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Violent Crime in California



May 1982

DEPARTMENT OF THE YOUTH AUTHORITY
Division of Research

Violent Crime in California
Violent crime in California has become a major problem for the state. The Department of the Youth Authority is conducting a study to determine the causes of this problem and to develop effective programs to reduce it. The study will focus on the areas of law enforcement, the courts, and the corrections system. The results of the study will be used to guide the development of future programs and policies. The Department of the Youth Authority is committed to the goal of reducing violent crime in California and to providing the best possible care for the youth in the state's custody.

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Violent Crime in California

Much attention is being focused on the issue of violent crime by law enforcement, lawmakers, and the general public. According to reports of the news media, violent crime has increased by alarming proportions, particularly among young people. What, in fact, do the data show? Has violent crime increased? If so, has violent crime increased disproportionately among young people?

To seek the answers to such questions, we referred to data from the California Bureau of Criminal Statistics (BCS), the primary source of statewide data on crime. We obtained figures on crimes reported to the police and official arrests. The definition of violent crime was the standard one used by BCS, i.e., the four major crimes against persons: homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The data were examined to answer the following questions:

1. Has the number of reported violent crimes increased?
2. Have arrests for violent crimes increased?
3. Have arrests for violent crimes increased more among juveniles than adults?
4. Have various types of violent crime increased more than others?
5. What age group commits the greatest number or percentage of violent crimes?
6. What impact has an increase in violent crimes had on the number of persons processed at other points in the criminal justice system?

1. Has the number of reported violent crimes increased?

The figures for reported crimes reflect the number of reports of crimes received by law enforcement agencies and for which official reports were completed. These reports are submitted through the Uniform Crime Reporting System to BCS, which then submits the information to the FBI.

Table 1 shows the number of reported crimes against persons (i.e., violent crimes) in each year from 1975 to 1980. Table 2 shows reported crimes as rates per 100,000 population. It can be seen in Table 1 that the actual number of reports of all four types of crimes against persons

TABLE 1

Reported Crimes Against Persons in California
1975 to 1980

Year	Total	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	138,400	2,196	8,787	59,747	67,670
1976	143,507	2,214	9,552	59,132	72,609
1977	152,827	2,481	10,715	62,207	77,424
1978	164,751	2,601	11,249	67,920	82,981
1979	183,704	2,941	12,199	75,649	92,915
1980	209,903	3,405	13,661	90,282	102,555
% Incr. 1975 to 1980	51.7	55.1	55.5	51.1	51.6

Source: Crime & Delinquency in California, 1980. Bureau of Criminal Statistics.

Note: Crimes against persons are the general categories of homicide, rape, robbery, and assault.

increased by more than 50% since 1975. Even when population growth is taken into account (Table 2), the rates of reported crimes against persons increased by 37.6%, a figure that is higher than the increase in the rate of reported property crimes (20.7%).

In considering the size of the increase in reported crimes, there are several qualifications that should be kept in mind. It is not known how much of the increase is due to: 1) improvements in record-keeping and reporting procedures by law enforcement agencies; 2) increases in the number of agencies reporting; and 3) a greater willingness on the part of victims to report crimes to the police.

TABLE 2

Reported Crimes Against Persons, Rates per
100,000 Population, 1975 to 1980

Year	Total	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	642	10.2	40.8	277	314
1976	654	10.1	43.5	269	331
1977	683	11.1	47.9	278	346
1978	721	11.4	49.2	297	363
1979	789	12.6	52.4	325	399
1980	883	14.3	57.5	380	431
% Incr. 1975 to 1980	37.6	40.2	41.0	37.0	37.4

Note.--Population data are taken from Report E-150, Population Research Unit, State Department of Finance.

For example, the 1979 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics provides an estimate of the percent of personal victimizations not reported to the police in 1973 and 1977. The percentage of unreported crimes decreased for rape, from 51% in 1973 to 42% in 1977; for robbery, from 46% to 44%; and for personal larceny with contact, from 66% to 62%. There was no change in the percentage of unreported assaults, being 55% in both years. Although these data represent national figures (separate figures for California were not available), there is no reason to believe that findings for California would differ to any extent. These figures, therefore, offer some support to the assumption that there is an apparently increasing willingness on the part of the public to report crimes.

Studies of criminal victimization do not seem to parallel or support the above noted increase in reported crimes of violence. A national study¹ report provides victimization rates (once again, separate figures for California were not available). To obtain victimization rates, the researchers canvassed a random sample of households and asked if any members of the household had been victims of a crime during the past year. Rates were developed showing the number of households (per 1,000 households) that claimed one or more members had been victims of crime. The victimization rate for crimes of violence was 33.0 in 1974 and 33.7 in 1978. This small increase was due solely to an increase in simple assaults, from 14.4 to 17.2. Aggravated assault decreased from 10.4 to 9.7 and robbery decreased from 7.2 to 5.9. An explanation for these contrary trends between victimization rates and reported crime rates is not self-evident.

¹National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, U.S. Dept. of Justice, October 1979.

Based on BCS data, there appears to have been a 51.7% increase in reported crimes of violence between 1975 to 1980. Other data indicate that some of this increase may be artificial, that is, the result of other factors, such as better and more comprehensive reporting of the data. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that there has indeed been an increase in crimes against persons, although probably not to the full extent indicated by the 51.7% increase as per BCS data.

2. Have arrests for violent crimes increased?

Has the increase in reported crimes against persons been accompanied by a similar increase in arrests for crimes against persons? Table 3 shows that these arrests increased 18.8% (homicide arrests increased the most, 27.4%, and robbery the least, 11.4%). Therefore, arrests for CAP have increased, but not at the same high rate as reported CAP (18.8% vs. 51.7%).

TABLE 3
Arrests for Crimes Against Persons
1975 through 1980

Year	Total	Homicide ^a	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	72,119	2,561	3,718	23,986	40,614
1976	69,828	2,554	3,547	22,094	40,447
1977	71,679	2,561	3,637	22,311	41,802
1978	73,427	2,676	3,613	22,359	43,011
1979	81,687	3,047	4,433	24,569	47,515
1980	85,672	3,263	4,508	26,715	48,955
% Incr. 1975 to 1980	18.8	27.4	21.2	11.4	20.5

^aIncludes manslaughter.

Do these figures imply that more violent crimes are occurring, but that fewer of the perpetrators are being arrested? To a very limited extent, the answer may be yes. For instance, in 1975, of all reported CAP, a clearance was made in 43.5% of the cases. In 1980 the clearance rate decreased slightly to 41.1%².

3. Have arrests for violent crimes increased more among juveniles than adults?

An inspection of the arrest data showed that arrests for violent crimes increased among adults from 1975 to 1980 while the number of such arrests decreased slightly among juveniles. Table 4 shows that the number of juveniles arrested for CAP decreased 4.3%. Robbery arrests decreased 7.9%. Arrests for rape increased by 1.2%, but this represents a numerical increase of only 8 cases in 5 years. Homicide arrests, on the other hand, increased by 39.4%.

TABLE 4

Number of Juveniles Arrested for Crimes Against Persons
1975 to 1980

Year	Total	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	17,742	348	664	7,981	8,749
1976	16,398	327	547	6,588	8,936
1977	16,141	357	573	6,373	8,838
1978	15,521	345	538	6,301	8,337
1979	16,898	418	675	6,889	8,916
1980	16,980	485	672	7,354	8,469
% Change 1975 to 1980	-4.3	39.4	1.2	-7.9	-3.2

Source: Crime & Delinquency in California, 1980.

²As reported by BCS. A reported crime is "cleared" when at least one person is arrested.

Changes in arrest rates per 100,000 juveniles ages 12 to 17 show a similar pattern. Table 5 indicates that there has been a negligible change in the rates of arrest for the various crimes, except homicide, for which there was a 45.6% increase (from 14.7 to 21.4). The juvenile arrest rate for total CAP increased from 747.5 to 750.0, a 0.3% change.

TABLE 5

Juveniles Arrested for Crimes Against Persons:
Rates per 100,000 Population Ages 12 to 17
1975 to 1980

Year	Total	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	747.5	14.7	28.0	336.3	368.6
1976	688.4	13.7	23.0	276.6	375.1
1977	678.9	15.0	24.1	268.0	371.7
1978	659.2	14.7	22.8	267.6	354.1
1979	729.9	18.1	29.2	297.6	385.1
1980	750.0	21.4	29.7	324.8	374.1
% Change 1975 to 1980	0.3	45.6	6.1	-3.4	1.5

An inspection of the figures for Total CAP arrests in Tables 4 and 5 reveals a U-shaped trend. From 1975 to 1976, there was a considerable decrease in both arrests and arrest rates. The figures continued to decrease through 1977 and 1978. The figures then increased in 1979 and 1980. If we were to use the low point in the curve (1978) as a base year to calculate the percentage change to 1980, the result would be a 9.4% increase in arrests and a 13.8% increase in the arrest rate for total CAP over the past two years. These data might represent the beginning of a trend for increasing arrests of juveniles for CAP. We will need to wait for data for two or three

additional years to determine if the trend for an increase will continue. However, at this point at least, the data indicate that the incidence of juvenile arrests for CAP in 1980 was no greater than it was in 1975 (except for homicide).³

We also found that the 1975-1980 increase in arrests (18.8%) is not as large as the 1971-75 increase of 32.5%. This indicates that violent crime is increasing at a lower rate than it was several years ago. The exception is again homicide, which increased 25.3% from 1971 to 1975, and increased 27.4% from 1975 to 1980.

Tables 6 and 7 show the number of adults arrested for CAP and the arrest rates per 100,000 persons of ages 18 to 64. Total arrests of adults for CAP increased by 26.3% from 1975 to 1980. The arrest rate increased 13.7% during the same time period. A trend for increasing arrests for CAP is clearly shown in the tables.

³The BCS report "Crime and Delinquency in California, 1981 Advance Release" indicates that arrests of juveniles for crimes against persons decreased by 3.7% in 1981. Arrests in 1981, compared to 1980, decreased 13.1% for forcible rape, 1.3% for robbery, and 6.6% for assault. However, arrests for homicide increased 22.1% from 485 in 1980 to 592 in 1981.

TABLE 6

Number of Adults Arrested for Crimes Against Persons
1975 to 1980

Year	Total*	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	54,377	2,213	3,054	16,005	31,865
1976	53,430	2,227	3,000	15,506	31,511
1977	55,538	2,204	3,064	15,938	32,964
1978	57,906	2,331	3,075	16,058	34,674
1979	64,789	2,629	3,750	17,680	38,599
1980	68,692	2,778	3,836	19,361	40,486
% Change 1975 to 1980	26.3	25.6	20.9	20.9	27.1

* Includes kidnapping, which is not shown separately in table because BCS does not include kidnapping in CAP count for juveniles.

Source: Crime & Delinquency in California, 1980.

TABLE 7

Adults Arrested for Crimes Against Persons:
Rates per 100,000 Population 18 to 64
1975 to 1980

Year	Total	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault
1975	423.0	17.2	23.8	124.5	247.9
1976	406.4	16.9	22.8	117.9	239.7
1977	413.6	16.4	22.8	118.7	245.5
1978	422.3	17.0	22.4	117.1	252.9
1979	462.8	18.8	26.8	126.3	275.7
1980	480.9	19.4	26.9	135.5	283.4
% Change 1975 to 1980	13.7	12.8	13.0	8.8	14.3

The changes in the numbers of CAP arrests are quite different for juveniles and adults. Table 8 presents the number of CAP arrests for juveniles and adults in 1975 and 1980, and also shows the percentage change. Also shown, for comparative purposes, are arrest data for burglary, theft, and a category which includes all nonviolent felonies, excluding drug offenses. Arrests for drug offenses have been excluded because of changes in the laws which reduced some drug offenses to misdemeanors.

The data in Table 8 show that CAP arrests decreased 4.3% for juveniles while increasing 26.3% for adults. Arrests in the all non-CAP felony category decreased 10.4% for juveniles and increased 24.9% among adults. Thus, although total arrests for CAP increased more than total arrests for non-CAP crimes (18.8% vs. 11.0%), the increase occurred exclusively among adults.

According to the data, crimes against persons increased more than other types of felonies. However, the figures may be somewhat misleading. The number of offenses listed in arrest reports varies by type of crime committed. For personal crimes (i.e., crimes against persons) the number of listed offenses equals the number of persons injured. Thus, if a person were to enter a bar and assault six patrons, this might be counted as six assaults. For property crimes, if a person burglarized six homes, it would be listed in arrest tables as one burglary.⁴

⁴Reiss, A. J. "Measurement of the Nature and Amount of Crime," Studies in Crime and Law Enforcement in Metropolitan Areas, Vol. I. Washington, D.C., 1967, pp. 1-183.

TABLE 8

Changes in Number of Crimes 1975 to 1980
Crimes Against Persons Compared to Other
Crimes, Among Juveniles and Adults

		1975	1980	% Change
Crimes Against Persons	Juv.	17,742	16,980	- 4.3
	Adult	54,377	68,692	+ 26.3
	Total	72,119	85,672	+ 18.8
Burglary	Juv.	47,866	36,814	- 23.1
	Adult	42,903	47,346	+ 10.4
	Total	90,769	84,160	- 7.3
Theft	Juv.	10,586	15,233	+ 43.9
	Adult	26,073	35,814	+ 37.4
	Total	36,659	51,047	+ 39.2
All Non-CAP Felonies, Excl. Drugs	Juv.	80,593	73,017	- 10.4
	Adult	118,870	148,440	+ 24.9
	Total	199,463	221,457	+ 11.0

4. Have various types of violent crimes increased more than others?

Thus far, violent crimes have been grouped into the four general categories of homicide, rape, robbery, and assault. In this section violent crimes have been broken into more specific categories, and several additional offenses that qualify as violent crimes have been added. The purpose is to determine whether the increase in violent crime has been general or limited to certain types.

Table 9 lists arrests in various categories of violent (or potentially violent) crimes that occurred in 1977 and 1980, along with the percentage change between the two years. Data for 1975 or 1976 were not used in this analysis because the arrest data file (on computer tapes) provided by BCS contained only 60-80% of the arrests reported for those years.

Data are shown separately for juveniles and adults. In Table 9 juveniles are defined as those youths 13- to 17-years-old and adults are those between the ages of 18 and 64 years. Arrests of persons 12 years and younger and those 65 years and older have been excluded because of the low frequency of arrest of persons of those ages. Those 12 and under represent 1.7% of all arrests (including misdemeanor and status offenses) and those over age 64 represent less than one percent.

Even in the relatively brief span of time from 1977 to 1980, arrests for violent crimes of all types increased 27.9%. Violent sex (other than forcible rape) showed the greatest increase, 305%, but this is based on small numbers. Kidnapping increased 62.1%; shooting at dwellings, 52%; wife and child beating, 46.3%; weapons offenses, 45.5%, murder, 32.1%; and assault with intent to kill or maim, 31.2%.

TABLE 9
Arrests for Violent Crimes in 1977 and 1980
By Type of Violent Crimes

Type of Violent Crime	Total Arrests ^a			Juveniles 13 to 17			Adults 18 to 64		
	1977	1980	% Chg.	1977	1980	% Chg.	1977	1980	% Chg.
Murder	2,368	3,128	+32.1	311	428	+37.6	2,032	2,675	+31.6
Manslaughter	105	94	-10.5	11	12	c	94	79	c
Robbery, Unspecified	20,570	26,186	+27.3	5,788	6,874	+18.8	14,447	18,917	+30.9
Robbery, Armed/GBI ^b	518	471	- 9.1	83	66	c	428	391	- 8.6
Assault to Kill/Maim	2,522	2,308	+31.2	472	490	+ 3.8	2,006	2,789	+39.0
Assault Deadly Weapon	25,160	30,288	+20.4	5,099	5,262	+ 3.2	19,546	24,453	+25.1
ADW on Peace Officer	3,552	3,564	+ 0.3	652	450	-31.0	2,879	3,100	+ 7.7
Serious Assault	5,895	6,701	+13.7	998	805	-19.3	4,857	5,851	+20.5
Wife/Child Beating	1,992	2,914	+46.3	65	68	c	1,910	2,798	+46.5
Shoot at Dwelling	542	824	+52.0	143	148	+ 3.5	392	654	+66.8
Weapons Offenses	19,717	28,695	+45.5	4,289	5,991	+39.7	15,144	22,319	+47.4
Violent Rape	2,718	3,465	+27.5	438	498	+13.7	2,256	2,952	+30.9
Violent Sex	37	150	+305.4	2	14	c	35	131	c
Kidnapping	1,538	2,493	+62.1	186	258	+38.7	1,349	2,228	+65.2
Other Injurious Felonies	1,523	1,708	+12.1	824	768	- 6.8	569	846	+48.7
Misd. Assault Battery	25,750	32,419	+25.9	7,243	7,745	+ 6.9	17,459	23,579	+35.1
Grand Total	114,507	146,408	+27.9	26,604	29,877	+12.3	85,403	113,770	+33.2

^aFor all ages.

^bGBI = Great Bodily Injury.

^cPercentage change not calculated due to small numbers involved.

Arrests for this expanded list of violent crimes increased 12.3% among juveniles and 33.2% among adults. Increases for specific categories were higher for adults in each case, except for homicide. The largest increases for juveniles were for homicide, weapons offenses, and kidnapping. For adults the largest increases were for shooting at occupied dwellings, kidnapping, other injurious felonies⁵, weapons offenses, and wife and child beating. This last category may be a prime example of where much of the increase is a result of more willingness to report the offense.

5. What age group commits the greatest number of percentage of violent crimes?

The data in Table 10 show the number and rate of arrests for the expanded list of violent crimes among four age groups: juveniles 13 to 17, young adults 18 to 24, mid-adults 25 to 39, and older adults 40 to 64. For example, in 1980 the highest rate for murder was shown for young adults (47.7). The largest increase in number of arrests for murder also occurred among young adults (41.7%). In general, the rate of arrest for all CAP offenses was highest among young adults, whereas the largest increase in number of arrests generally occurred for the mid-adult group (ages 25 to 39).

Violent crime arrest rates for the year 1980 are shown in Figure 1 and Table 11 among a greater breakdown of age groups. The rate of arrest reaches its highest point for 16- to 17-year-olds, and remains as high for 18- to 20-year olds. As age progresses, the arrest rate decreases sharply.

⁵Possibly injurious felonies include threatening probation officers, possession of explosive devices, throwing substances at vehicles, false bomb reports, train wrecking, and burglary with explosives.

TABLE 10
Number and Rate of Arrests for Violent Crimes in 1977 and 1980,
By Type of Crime and Age of Arrestee

Offense	Year	Juveniles 13-17		Young Adults 18-24		Mid Adults 25-39		Older Adults 40-64	
		n	rate ^a	n	rate ^a	n	rate ^a	n	rate ^a
Murder	1977	322	16.1	962	34.8	917	18.0	247	4.4
	1980	440	22.5	1,363	47.7	1,085	19.2	306	5.2
	% Change	+36.6		41.7		18.3		+23.9	
Robbery	1977	5,871	294.3	9,006	326.1	5,202	102.0	667	12.0
	1978	6,940	354.8	11,743	410.7	6,701	118.7	872	14.7
	% Change	+18.2		30.4		28.8		+30.7	
Assault	1977	7,286	365.2	14,258	516.3	12,657	248.1	4,283	76.9
	1978	7,075	361.7	16,977	593.7	16,973	300.5	5,041	85.2
	% Change	- 2.9		19.1		34.1		+17.7	
Rape/Sex	1977	440	22.1	1,054	38.2	1,020	20.0	217	3.9
	1980	512	26.2	1,386	48.5	1,428	25.3	269	4.5
	% Change	+16.4		31.5		40.0		+24.0	
Other CAP	1977	5,442	272.8	8,652	313.3	6,511	127.6	2,291	41.2
	1978	7,165	366.3	13,023	455.5	10,114	179.1	2,910	49.2
	% Change	+31.7		50.5		55.3		+27.0	
Grand Total	1977	19,361	970.5	33,932	1,288.6	26,307	515.8	7,705	138.4
	1980	22,132	1,131.6	44,492	1,556.0	36,301	642.8	9,398	158.8
	% Change	+14.3		31.1		38.0		+22.0	

^aRate per 100,000 persons in the specific age group in the total population.

Note.--misdemeanor assault and battery excluded. Table 10 includes felonies only.

Figure 1

Violent Crime Arrest Rates in 1980, by Age Groups

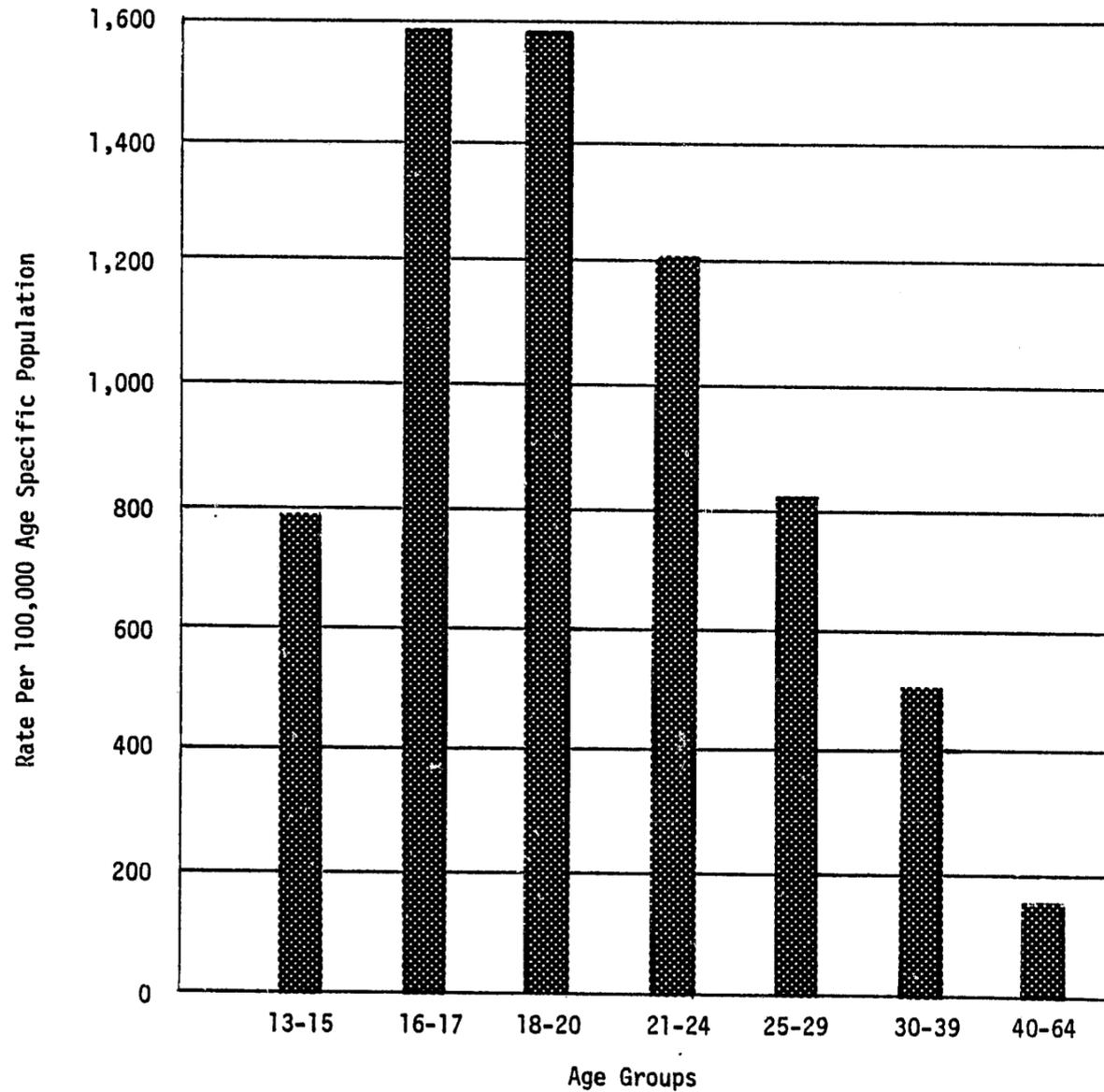


TABLE 11

1980 Arrest Rates for Violent Crimes and Percentage of Violent Crime Arrests, by Age Groups

Age Group	Arrest Rate	Percent of Arrests ^a	Percent of Population ^a
13-15	791	7.9	7.7
16-17	1,584	11.8	5.2
18-20	1,583	19.2	7.8
21-24	1,213	20.4	10.1
25-29	821	16.3	12.6
30-39	504	16.0	20.5
40-64	159	8.4	36.1

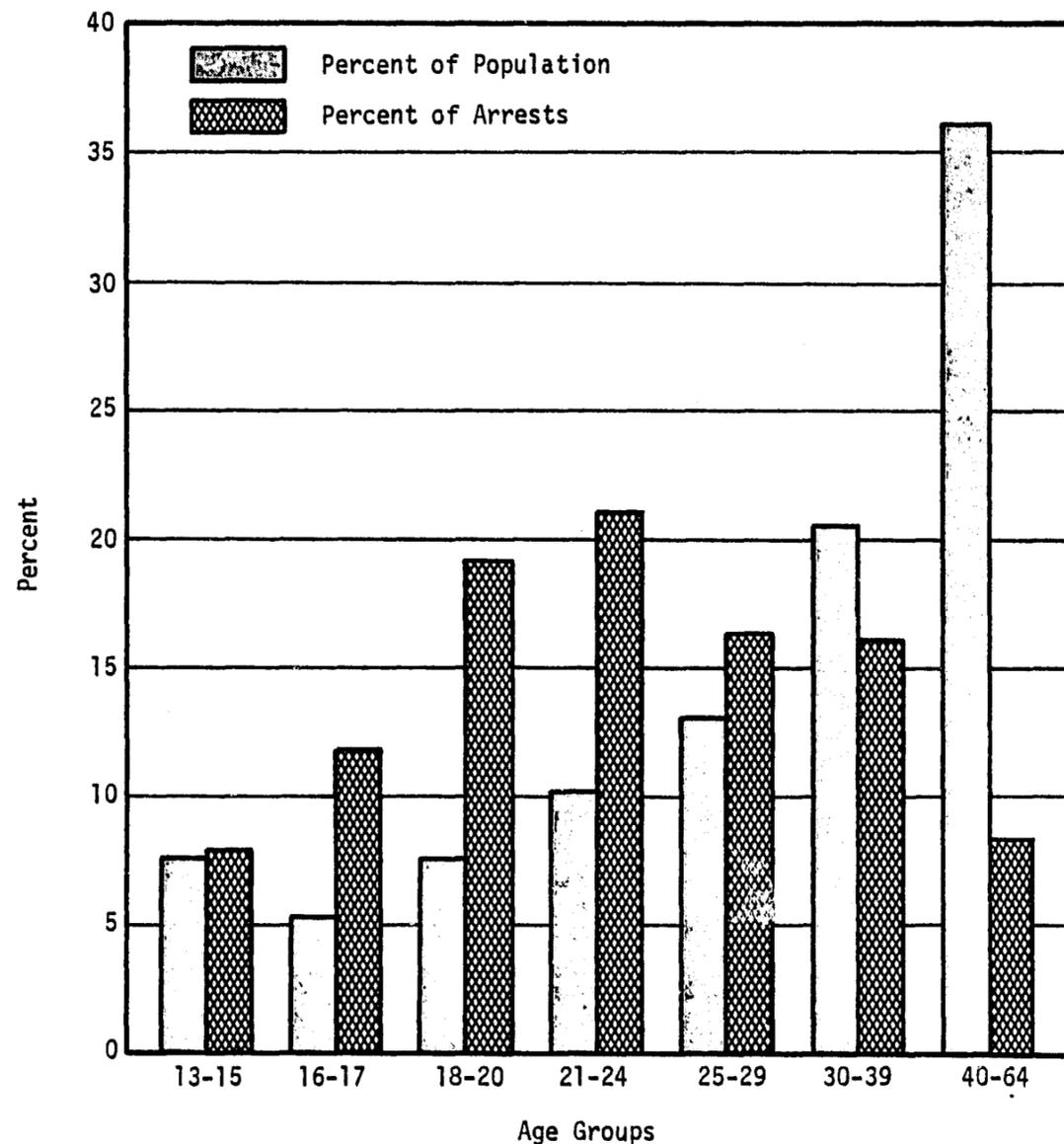
^aPercentages based on persons ages 13 to 64.

Table 11 also includes the percentage of total arrests for violent crimes attributable to each age group, along with the percentage of the population represented by the age group. In terms of number of arrests for violent crimes, the age group with the highest percentage was the 21- to 24-year olds (20.4%). The 18- to 20-year olds had the next highest percentage (19.2%), followed by 25- to 29-year olds (16.3%), 30- to 39-year olds (16.0%), 16- to 17-year olds (11.8%), 40- to 64-year olds (8.4%), and 13- to 15-year-olds (7.9%).

Figure 2 graphically compares the percentage of total arrests for each age group with the age group's percentage within the population. This shows that the younger age groups are highly overrepresented among violent crime arrests.

Figure 2

Percentage of Arrests for Violent Crimes Compared To Percentage of Persons in Population, by Age Group, 1980.



It is possible that arrest and arrest rate data may not similarly measure the number of crimes attributable to young persons and older persons. It has been found that crimes committed by young persons are more likely to be committed by groups, while crimes by adults are more likely to be solo undertakings. For instance, one study⁶ found that only one-third of the robberies committed by offenders under 21 involved lone offenders, compared to two-thirds of those committed by older offenders. This would tend to indicate that the number of crimes attributable to younger offenders would be somewhat less than the number of arrests shown in the statistics.

6. What impact has an increase in violent crimes had on the number of persons processed at other points in the criminal justice system?

To determine what impact the increase in violent crime had on the number of cases handled by the justice system and the kinds of dispositions made, we examined data on the number of referrals to juvenile probation, juvenile court petitions, superior court convictions, and commitments to CYA and CDC.

Referrals and Petitions. Table 12 shows the number of referrals to juvenile probation and the number of juvenile court petitions in 1975 and 1980. The data are shown by major CAP offense category. Also shown, for comparative purposes, are the numbers for selected non-violent felony offenses.

The number of referrals for CAP generally increased, with the exception of robbery. Total CAP referrals showed a greater increase than referrals

⁶Greenwood, P., Petersilia, J., to Zimring, F.E. Age, Crime, and Statistics: The Transition from Juvenile to Adult Court. R-2642-NIJ, The Rand Corp., 1980.

TABLE 12

Referrals to Juvenile Probation and Petitions Processed in Juvenile Court, by Type of Offense, 1975 and 1980

Offense	Referrals to Probations			Juvenile Court Petitions		
	1980	1980	Change	1975	1980	Change
Homicide/ Manslaughter	147	185	+28.5	142	198	+39.4
Robbery	2,220	2,154	- 3.0	2,167	2,055	- 5.2
Assault	2,547	3,522	+38.3	1,951	2,678	+37.3
Rape	186	249	+33.9	173	211	+22.0
Total CAP	5,100	6,110	+19.8	4,433	5,142	+16.0
Burglary	16,733	17,031	+ 1.8	11,808	12,508	+ 5.9
Theft	4,838	7,464	+54.3	2,847	4,703	+65.2
Other Felonies (excl. drugs)	7,923	8,817	+11.3	5,037	5,260	+ 4.4

Note. -- does not include L.A. County.

for burglary or other types of felonies. An exception was referrals for theft, which increased more than CAP referrals (54.3% vs. 19.8%). While referrals for total CAP offenses increased 19.8%, juvenile court petitions increased at the lower rate of 16.0%. Petitions for other felonies, except theft, increased at a lower rate than petitions for crimes against persons.

Superior Court Convictions. Convictions for violent crimes increased 23.7% from 1975 to 1980, at about the same rate as burglary (26.9%) and theft (22.1%), but at a higher rate than other felonies, which decreased 18.0%. These data are shown in Table 13.

TABLE 13

Felony Convictions in Superior Court 1975 and 1980

Offense	Superior Court Convictions		
	1975	1980	Change
Homicide/Mansl.	885	993	+ 12.2
Robbery	3,270	3,905	+ 19.4
Assault	2,723	3,561	+ 30.8
Rape	441	598	+ 35.6
Total CAP	7,319	9,057	+ 23.7
Burglary	6,587	8,360	+ 26.9
Theft	5,164	6,304	+ 22.1
Other Felonies (excl. drugs)	16,545	13,563	- 18.0

Commitments to the State. Table 14 shows the number of commitments to CDC and CYA. The CYA commitments are divided into those from juvenile and adult courts. In general, the largest increases in commitments are those of adults to CDC..

The total number of commitments to CDC for crimes against persons increased 93.1% during the period 1975-1980; adult court commitments to CYA increased 43.1%; and juvenile court commitments to CYA increased only 14.4%. There are numerous variations in the magnitude and direction of change in the number of commitments of the three types. For instance,

robbery commitments increased 9.9% in juvenile court while adult court CDC commitments increased 84.8%. On the other hand, theft commitments went up 245.9% in juvenile court and went down 23.1% among adult court CYA commitments. Homicide/manslaughter CYA commitments decreased 23.3% in juvenile court and increased 150% in adult court. This latter difference is due to the fact that about 40% of the juvenile court petitions for homicide resulted in a remand to adult court, where the disposition was most likely to be a CYA commitment⁷.

TABLE 14

First Commitments to Youth Authority and Department of Corrections, 1975 and 1980

Offense	CYA Juv. Ct.			CYA Adult Ct.			CDC		
	1975	1980	Change	1975	1980	Change	75/76 ^a	80/81 ^a	Change
Homicide/ Manslaughter	116	89	- 23.3	40	100	+150.0	663	1,068	+ 61.1
Robbery	375	412	+ 9.9	482	611	+ 26.8	1,438	2,657	+ 84.8
Assault	283	374	+ 32.2	123	189	+ 53.7	481	1,145	+138.0
Rape	48	65	+ 35.4	28	63	+125.0	239	576	+141.0
Total CAP	822	940	+ 14.4	673	963	+ 43.1	2,821	5,446	+ 93.1
Burglary	308	581	+ 88.6	433	433	0.0	1,091	2,698	+147.3
Theft	37	128	+245.9	104	80	- 23.1	508	1,188	+133.9
All Other (excl. drugs)	601	506	- 15.8	272	244	- 10.3	839	1,926	+130.0

^aAvailable by fiscal year.

⁷BCS data for 1980 show superior court dispositions for 39 16- and 17-year-olds who had been remanded to adult court for any offense and were still under age 18 at time of disposition. Of these 39 cases, 30 were committed to CYA, 4 to CDC, 4 to a local jail, and 1 was not convicted.

The impact on the number of state commitments does not appear to be totally commensurate with the previously discussed changes in arrests for violent crime. Table 15 presents the percentage change in criminal justice actions at various levels from 1975 to 1980, by type of violent crime, for juveniles. Table 16 presents similar data for adults.

For juveniles, total CAP arrests decreased 4.3%, but referrals to probation increased 19.8%, and juvenile court petitions went up 16.0%, with the end result of a 14.4% increase in juvenile court commitments to CYA. This would seem to indicate the violent crimes by juveniles have begun to receive more serious dispositions.

The evidence for more serious dispositions for violent crimes is even more evident in the adult data seen in Table 16. Arrests increased 26.3% and superior court convictions 23.7%, but CYA commitments increased 43.1% and CDC commitments 93.1%. In the case of assaults, a 27.1% increase in arrests had led to a five-fold (138%) increase in state prison commitments.

TABLE 15

Increases in Criminal Justice Actions for Violent Crimes Among Juveniles

Offense	Percentage Change from 1975 to 1980			
	Arrests	Referrals to Probation	Juvenile Court Petitions	Commitments to CYA
Homicide/Mansl.	+39.4	+28.5	+39.4	-23.3
Robbery	- 7.9	- 3.0	- 5.2	+ 9.9
Assault	- 3.2	+38.3	+37.3	+32.2
Rape	+ 1.2	+33.9	+22.0	+35.4
Total CAP	- 4.3	+19.8	+16.0	+14.4

TABLE 16

Increases in Criminal Justice Actions
for Violent Crimes Among Adults

Offense	Percentage Change from 1975 to 1980			
	Arrests	Superior Court Convictions	Comm. to CYA	Comm. to CDC
Homicide/Mansl.	25.6	12.2	150.0	61.1
Robbery	20.9	19.4	26.8	84.8
Assault	27.1	30.8	53.7	138.0
Rape	25.6	35.6	125.0	141.0
Total CAP	26.3	23.7	43.1	93.1

Summary

In this paper, we have attempted to determine the extent to which violent crimes have increased in California, and whether the incidence of violent crime has been higher among youthful offenders.

As measured by reports of crime recorded by law enforcement, the violent crime rate increased 37.6% from 1975 to 1980. In comparison, the reported property crime rate increased 20.7%. The size of the increase in reported violent crimes may be spuriously high, since some of the increase may be due to improvements in record-keeping and reporting procedures, and an increased willingness by the public to report crimes to the police. Data from victimization surveys show that violent crime increased only marginally, from 33.0 violent crimes per 1,000 households in 1974 to 33.7 in 1978.

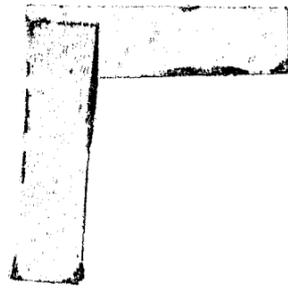
Total arrests for violent crimes increased 18.8% from 1975 to 1980. Arrests of juveniles, as a group (13- to 17-years-old), decreased 4.3%,

while arrests of adults (18- to 64-years-old) increased 26.3%. A closer look at the ages of those arrested for violent crimes showed the highest arrest rate to be among those 16- to 17-years-old (1,584 per 100,000) and 18- to 20-year olds (1,583 per 100,000). The rate of arrest decreased as age processed.

While the arrest rate for violent crimes was highest among young persons, the actual numbers of arrests increased at a greater pace among older persons. Arrests increased 14.3% among 13- to 17-year-olds, but they increased 38.0% among the group of 25- to 39-years-old.

The increase in violent crime has resulted in an increase in serious dispositions being meted out within the justice system. While violent crime arrests of persons 18 years and older increased 26.3%, adult court commitments to CYA increased by 43.1% and CDC commitments increased 93.1%. Within the juvenile justice system, greater numbers of violent offenders were sentenced to CYA (juvenile court commitments increased 14.4%), even though arrests of juveniles for violent crimes were down 4.3%.

In recapitulation of the main findings of this study, the incidence of violent crime has increased since 1975; the highest rate of arrest for violent crimes occurred among those 16- to 20-years old; the largest numerical increase in violent crime arrests was found to be among 25- to 39-year olds; and a larger percentage of violent crime offenders were sentenced to state institutions in 1980 than they were in 1975.



END