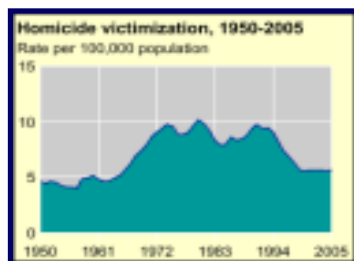




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See also:

[Homicide trends for States and large cities](#)



## Homicide trends in the United States

by James Alan Fox, The Lipman Family Professor of Criminal Justice, Northeastern University and Marianne W. Zawitz, BJS Statistician

This site contains a series of charts that describe homicide patterns and trends in the United States since 1976.

Homicide is of interest not only because of its severity but also because it is a fairly reliable barometer of all violent crime. At a national level, no other crime is measured as accurately and precisely.

The data on this site may differ slightly from previously published figures because of updates to the data files after publication and the imputation methods used.

The latest updates and additions:  
[What's new in Homicide Trends](#)

The Supplemental Homicide Reports that are the primary data source for this presentation are available at the:

### Contents

- [Overview](#)
- [Long term trends and patterns](#)
- [Demographic trends by](#)
  - [Age](#)
    - [Infanticide](#)
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- [Victim/offender relationship](#)
  - [Initmate homicide](#)
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- [Law enforcement officers killed](#)
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- [Trends by city size](#)

**National Archive of  
Criminal Justice Data**

- **Clearances**
- **Justifiable homicides**
- **About the data**

Additional violent crime  
information:

- **Key Facts at a Glance**
- **Crime and Victims**

 **Print version** PDF format (1.1M)

Production assistance for this website was provided by Timothy Kearley and Priscilla Middleton of BJS. Erica Smith, BJS statistician, provided the statistical review.

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## ***Homicide trends in the U.S.***

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### **What's new in Homicide Trends**

All charts, tables and other information have been updated with the 2004 final and 2005 preliminary Supplementary Homicide Reports data and the 2005 Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted data. Due to refinements in the analysis and applying new imputation procedures, some data presented may differ from previous editions.

Just added to the site:

- [Victim/offender relationship](#)
- [Family homicide](#)

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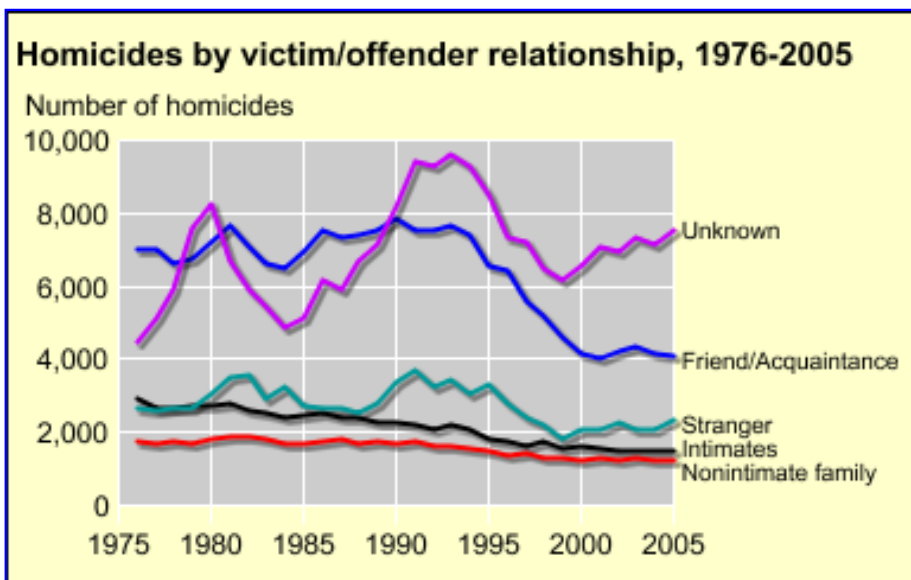
## *Homicide trends in the U.S.*

### Victim/offender relationship

# Most homicides with known victim/offender relationships involved people who knew each other

- The number of homicides where the victim/offender relationship was undetermined has been increasing since 1999 but has not reached the levels experienced in the early 1990s.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Note: Intimate includes spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriends, girlfriends, and homosexual relationships. Friend/Acquaintance includes neighbor, employee, employer, and other known.

These data are grouped from the original categories. For the detailed categories see the following tables:

[Weighted](#) | [Unweighted](#)

## In 14% of all murders, the victim and the offender were strangers.

- Spouses and family members made up about 15% of all victims.
- About one-third of the victims were acquaintances of the assailant.
- The victim/offender relationship was undetermined in over one-third of homicides.

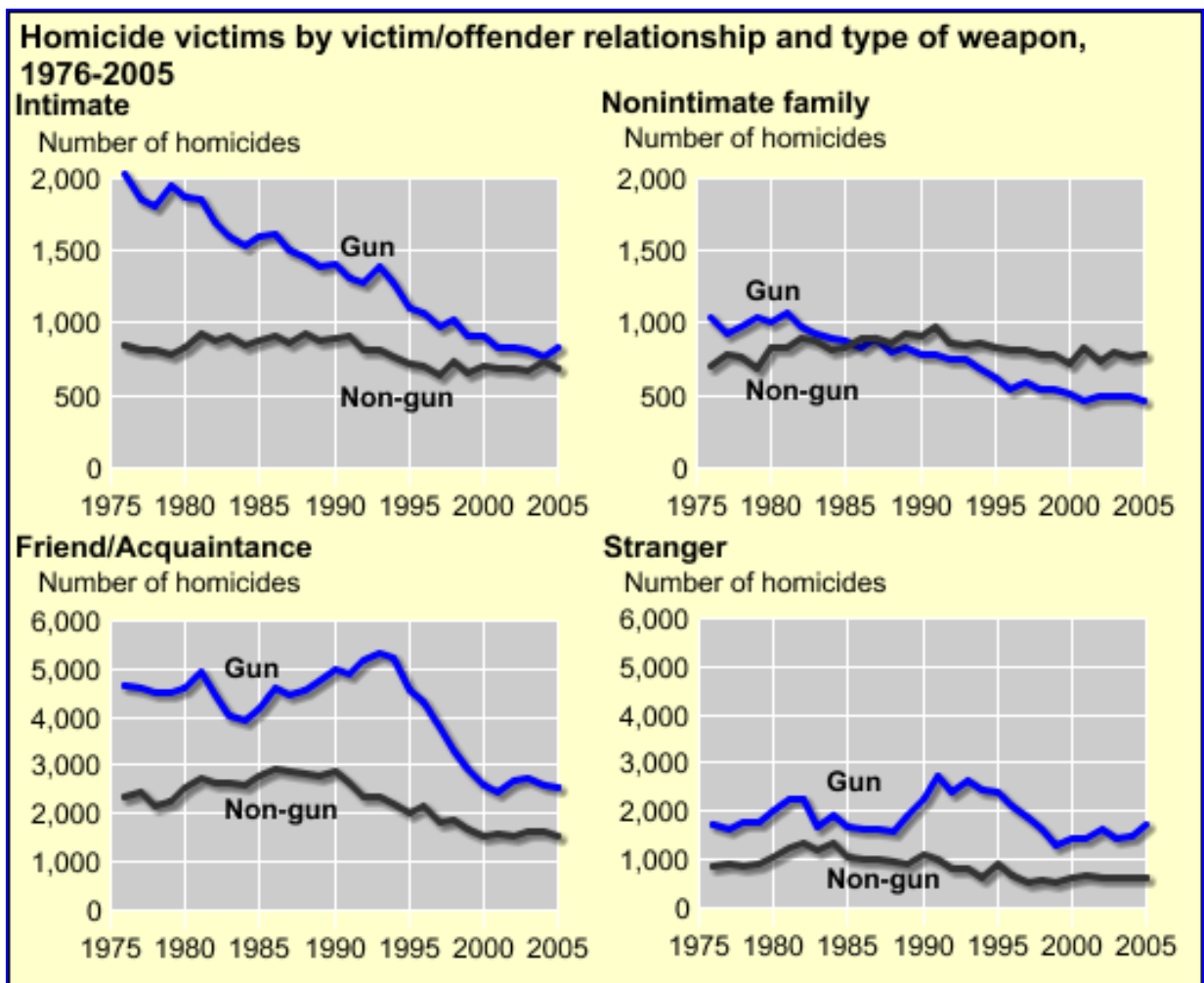
**Victim/Offender Relationship, 1976-2005**

**All homicides,  
1976-2005**

	Percent	Number
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	594,276
Stranger	13.9%	82,428
Nonstranger		
Spouse	7.0%	41,700
Other family	8.0%	47,358
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	3.8%	22,829
Other Acquaintance	32.1%	190,767
Relationship undetermined	35.2%	209,194

**Homicides committed by friends/acquaintances and strangers are more likely to involve guns than those committed by intimates or family members**

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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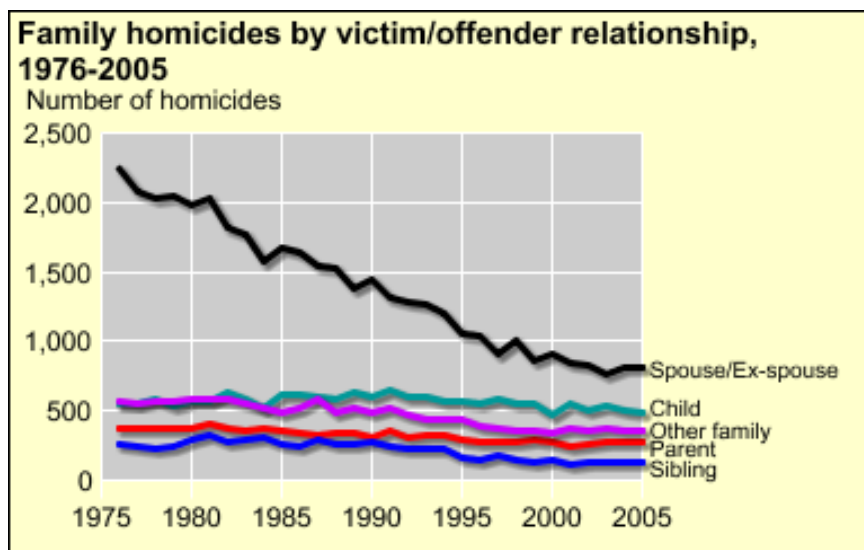
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**Homicide trends in the U.S.**  
**Family homicides****Family homicides most often involve spouses or ex-spouses although such crimes declined recently**

- After spousal killing, children killed by their parents are the most frequent type of family homicide.
- Siblings are murder victims less often than other family members.

To view data, click on the chart.

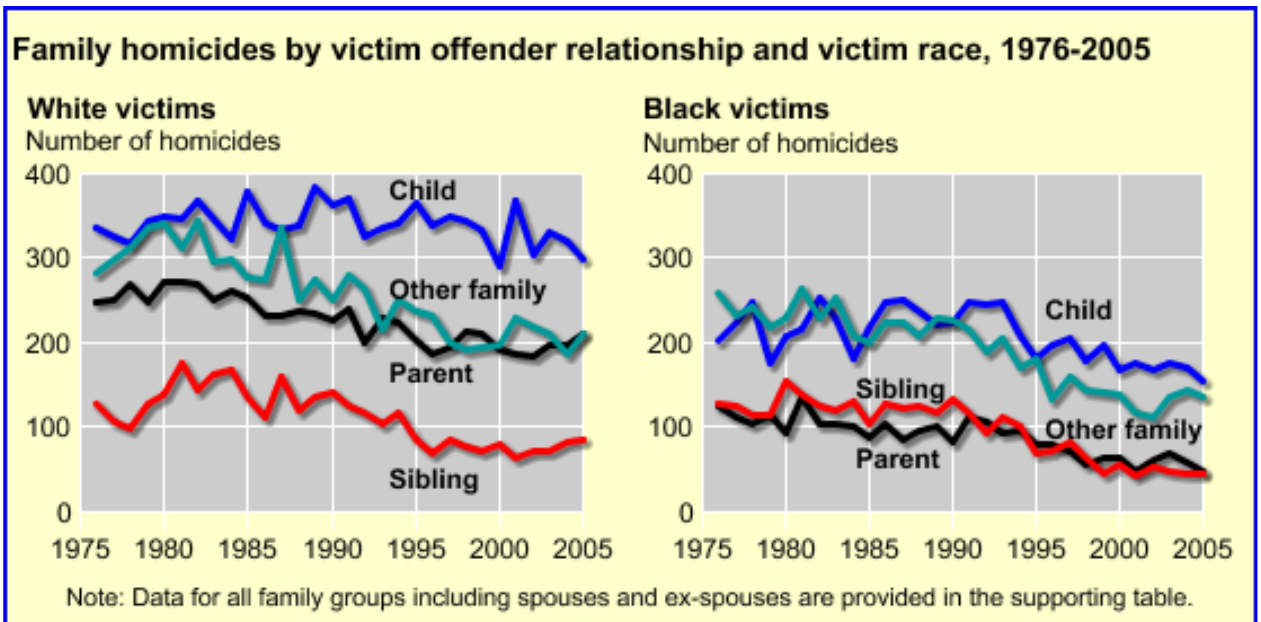


[D]

For additional detail on spousal homicides, see [Intimate homicides](#).

**For blacks and whites, homicides involving all family relationships have been declining.**

To view data, click on the chart.

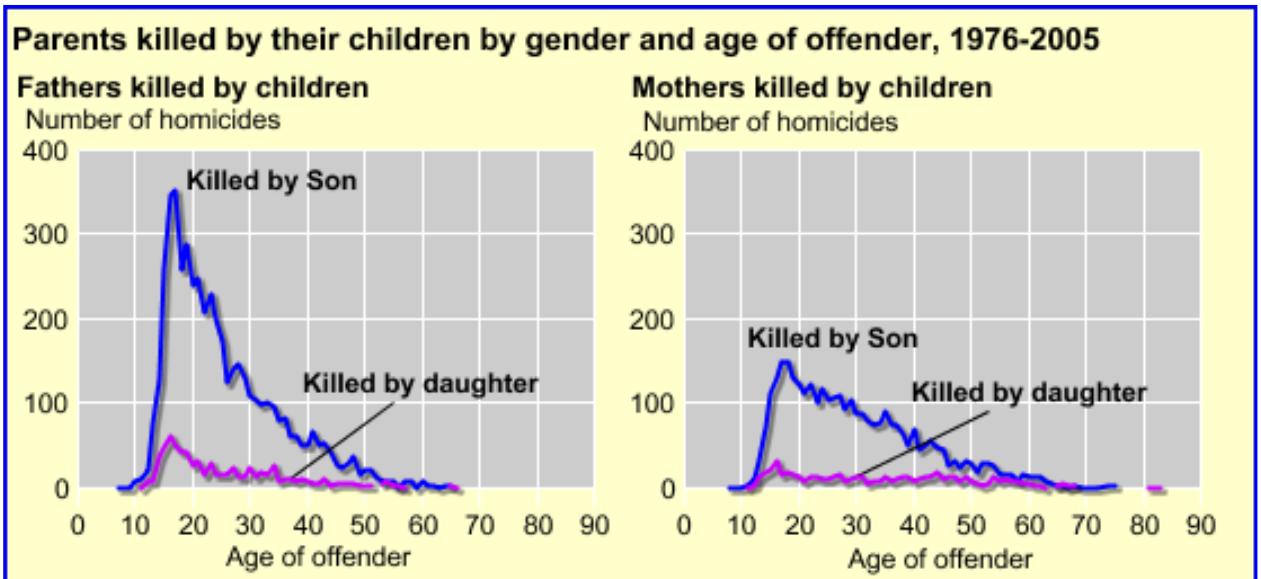


[D]

### Fathers are more likely than mothers to be killed by their children

Teenage sons are most often the perpetrator in parental killings.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

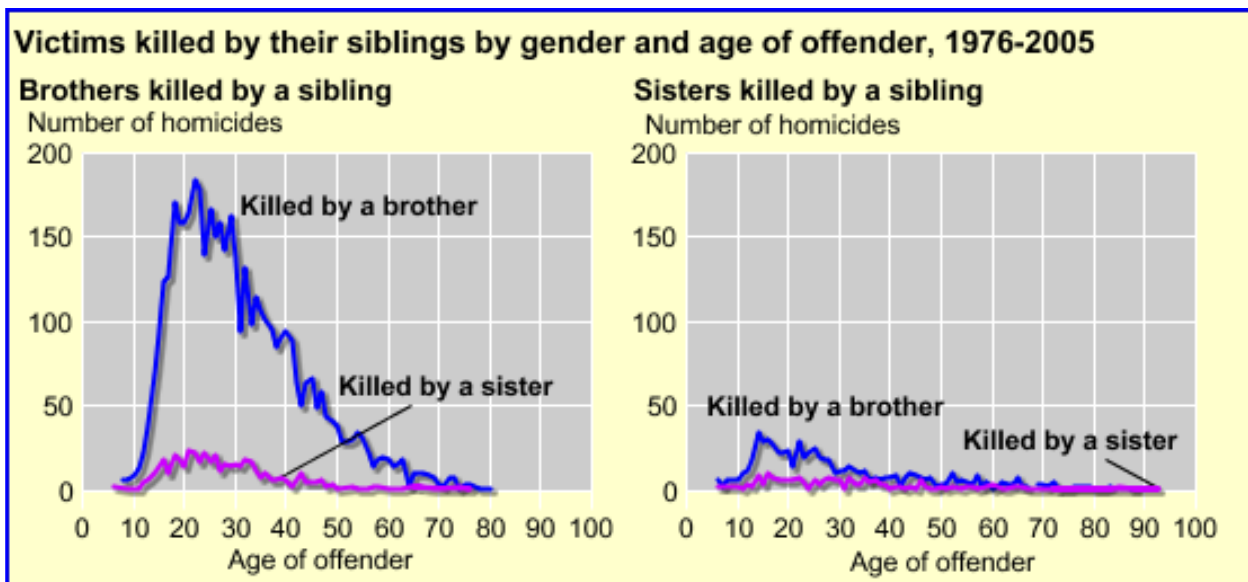
### Brothers are more likely than sisters to kill a sibling

Older teen and young adult males are most often the perpetrator in killings of brothers. Males who kill their sisters tend to be younger than males who kill their brothers.

Sisters rarely kill their siblings.

To view data, click on the chart.





[D]

Note: Includes only single victim homicides.

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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## Homicide trends in the U.S.

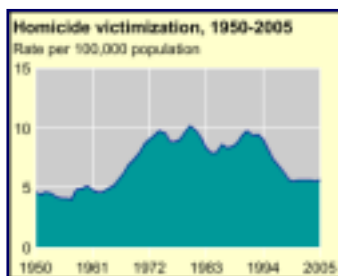
### Overview

- Long term trends
- Demographic trends by
  - Age
    - Infanticide
    - Eldercide
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Age, gender, and race
- Victim/offender relationship
  - Intimates
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- Regional trends
- Trends by city size
- Clearances
- Justifiable homicides
- Additional information about the data

Link to full size versions of the graphics, additional findings, and links to the data:

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### Long term trends



Homicide rates recently declined to levels last seen in the late 1960's

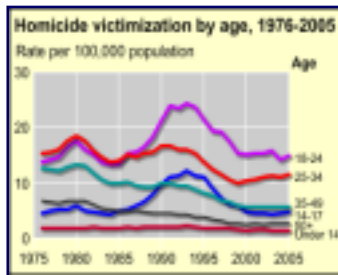
- [Homicide victimization rates, 1950-2005](#)
- [Number of homicides, 1950-2005](#)

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### Demographic trends

## Age

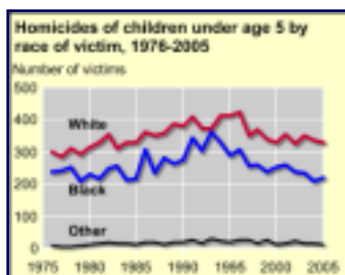


**Older teens and young adults have the highest homicide victimization and offending rates**

- Homicide victimization rates by age, 1976-2005
- Homicide offending rates by age, 1976-2005
- Average age of homicide victims and offenders, 1976-2005
- Homicide victimization rates by age, 1980-2004, an animation
- Homicide offending rates by age, 1980-2004, an animation
- Percent of homicides in which the offender was known to the victim, 1976-2005 aggregate

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## - Infanticide



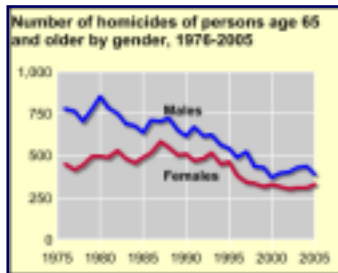
**The number of homicides of children under age 5 increased through the mid 1990's, but declined recently**

- The number of homicides of children under age 5 by race, 1976-2005
- Homicide victimization rates for children under age 5 by race, 1976-2005
- The number of homicides of children under age 5 by age of victim, 1976-2005
- Homicides of children under age 5 by relationship to the offender, 1976-2005
- Homicides of children under age 5 by gender of victim and offender, 1976-2005

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## - Eldercide



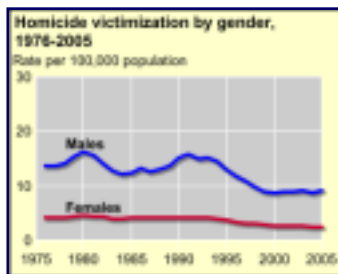
For persons age 65 or older, both the number of homicides and homicide victimization rates declined through 2000 and then stabilized

- Homicides of persons age 65 and older by gender of victim, 1976-2005
- Homicide victimization and offending rates for persons age 65 and older, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides committed during a felony by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate

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## Gender



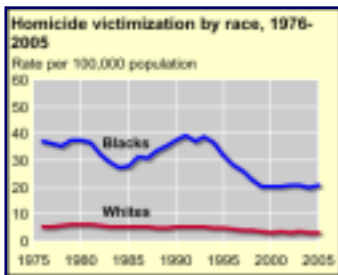
Most victims and perpetrators in homicides are male

- Homicide victimization rates by gender, 1976-2005
- Homicide offending rates by gender, 1976-2005

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## Race



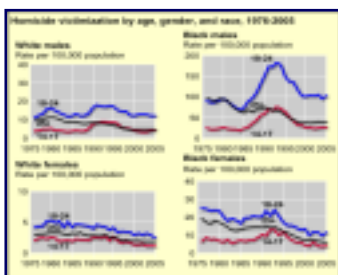
## Racial differences exist, with blacks disproportionately represented among homicide victims and offenders

- Homicide victimization rates by race, 1976-2005
- Homicide offending rates by race, 1976-2005
- Homicides by race of victim and offender, 1976-2005
- Stranger and acquaintance homicides by race of victim and offender, 1976-2005

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## Age, gender, and race



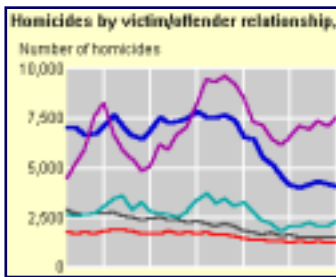
## Patterns of victimization and offending vary by age, gender, and racial group

- Homicide victimization rates by age, gender, and race, 1976-2005
- Homicide offending rates by age, gender, and race, 1976-2005
- Young males as a proportion of the population, homicide victims, and homicide offenders by race, 1976-2005

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## Victim/offender relationship

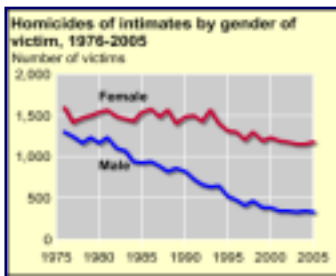


**Most homicides with known victim/offender relationships involved people who knew each other**

- The number of homicides by victim/offender relationship, 1976-2005
- The number of homicides by victim/offender relationship and weapon use, 1976-2005

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## - Intimates



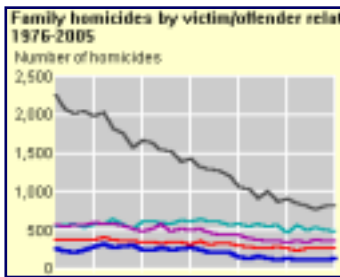
**There has been a decline in homicide of intimates, especially male victims**

- Homicides of intimates by gender of victim, 1976-2005
- Homicides of intimates by gender and race of victim, 1976-2005
- Proportion of all homicides involving intimates by gender of victim, 1976-2005
- Number of homicides of intimates by relationship of the victim to the offender, 1976-2005
- Intimate homicide rates by race, gender and relationship, 1976-2005
- Intimate homicides by type of weapon and gender of victim, 1976-2005

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## - Family



**Family homicides most often involve spouses or ex-spouses although such crimes declined recently**

- Family homicides by relationship, 1976-2005
- Family homicides by relationship and race of victim, 1976-2005
- Number of homicides of parents by gender of victim and offender and age of offender, 1976-2005
- Number of homicides of siblings by gender of victim and offender and age of offender, 1976-2005

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## Law enforcement officers



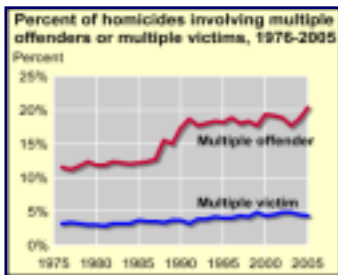
**The number of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty has declined since the early 1970's**

- Law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty, 1973-2005
- Law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty by weapon type, 1973-2005

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## Multiple victims and offenders



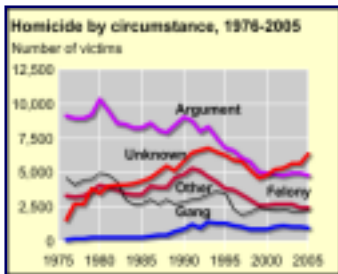
## Few homicides involve multiple offenders and fewer involve multiple victims

- Percent of homicides involving multiple offenders or multiple victims, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides involving multiple victims by number of victims, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides involving multiple offenders by age of offender, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides involving guns by number of victims, 1976-2005

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## Circumstances



## The mix of circumstances surrounding homicides has changed over the last two decades

- Number of homicides by circumstance, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides involving guns by circumstance, 1976-2005

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## Weapons trends



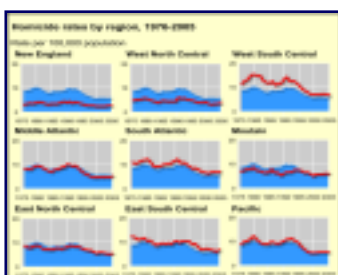


**Homicides are most often committed with guns, especially handguns**

- Homicides by weapon type, 1976-2005
- Homicide offending by weapon type and age of offender, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides involving guns by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate

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## Regional trends

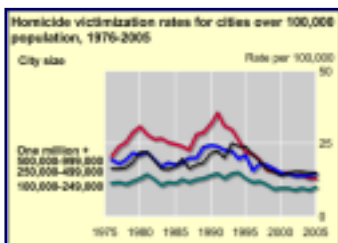


**In recent years, all regions have experienced a decline in homicide rates**

- Homicide victimization rates by region, 1976-2005
- Gun homicide victimization rates by region, 1976-2005
- Teen homicide offending rates by region, 1976-2005

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## Trends by city size



**Changes in homicide trends have been driven by changes in the number of homicides in large American cities**

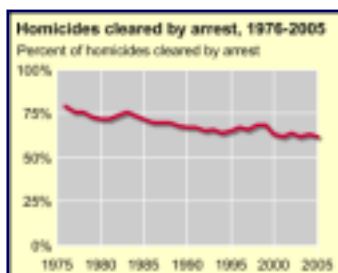
- Number of homicides in urban, suburban, and rural areas, 1976-2005
- Homicide victimization rates by size of city, 1976-2005
- Homicide offending rates by size of city, 1976-2005
- Percent of all homicides involving intimates by urban, suburban, and

## rural area, 1976-2005

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### Clearances



The percentage of homicides cleared by arrest has been declining

- Percent of homicides cleared by arrest, 1976-2005
- Percent of homicides cleared by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate

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### Justifiable homicides



The number of justifiable homicides has been declining

- Number of justifiable homicides by police and citizens, 1976-2005
- Number of justifiable homicides by police and citizens by circumstance, 1976-2005
- Percent of justifiable homicides by police and citizens by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate

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### Additional information about the data

Data sources, methodology, and related sites

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
Long term trends and patterns

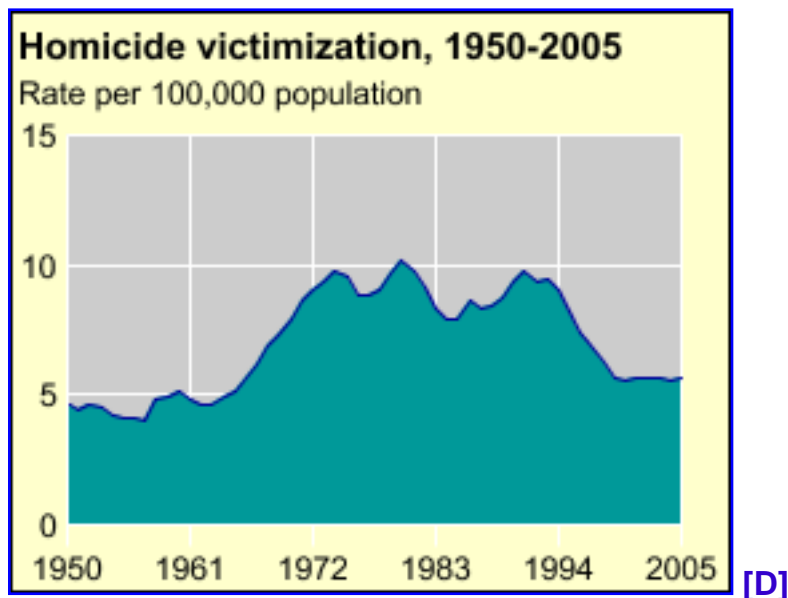
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## Homicide rates recently declined to levels last seen in the late 1960's

- The homicide rate nearly doubled from the mid 1960's to the late 1970's.
- In 1980, it peaked at 10.2 per 100,000 population and subsequently fell off to 7.9 per 100,000 in 1984.
- It rose again in the late 1980's and early 1990's to another peak in 1991 of 9.8 per 100,000.
- From 1992 to 2000, the rate declined sharply. Since then, the rate has been stable.

To view data, click on the chart.

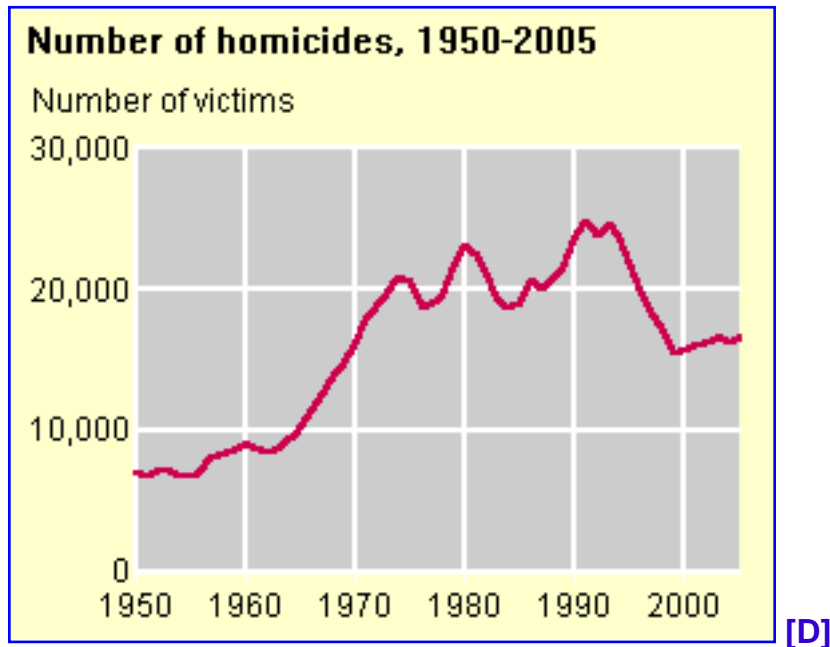


Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, 1950-2005

See also **Key Facts at a Glance** chart on **Homicide victimization rates since 1900** based on data from the Vital Statistics of the United States.

## After falling rapidly in the mid to late 1990's, the number of homicides began increasing in 1999 but remain at levels below those experienced in the early 1970's

To view data, click on the chart.



Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, 1950-2005

## The demographic characteristics of homicide victims and offenders differ from the general population

Based on data for the years 1976-2005 -

- Blacks are disproportionately represented as both homicide victims and offenders. The victimization rates for blacks were 6 times higher than those for whites. The offending rates for blacks were more than 7 times higher the rates for whites.
- Males represent 77% of homicide victims and nearly 90% of offenders. The victimization rates for males were 3 times higher than the rates for females. The offending rates for males were 8 times higher than the rates for females.
- Approximately one-third of murder victims and almost half the offenders are under the age of 25. For both victims and offenders, the rate per 100,000 peaks in the 18-24 year-old age group.

Victims and Offenders by Demographic Group, 1976-2005

	Percent of -			Rate per 100,000 population	
	Victims	Offenders	Population	Victims	Offenders
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	7.8	8.7
<b>Age</b>					
<b>Under 14</b>	4.8%	.5%	20.5%	1.8	.2
<b>14-17</b>	5.0%	10.4%	6.1%	6.4	14.9
<b>18-24</b>	23.9%	36.6%	10.8%	17.0	29.3
<b>25-34</b>	28.8%	28.4%	15.7%	14.2	15.8
<b>35-49</b>	22.8%	17.3%	20.5%	8.6	7.3
<b>50-64</b>	9.3%	5.1%	14.2%	5.1	3.1
<b>65+</b>	5.3%	1.7%	12.3%	3.4	1.2
<b>Gender</b>					
<b>Male</b>	76.5%	88.8%	48.8%	12.3	15.8
<b>Female</b>	23.5%	11.2%	51.2%	3.6	1.9
<b>Race</b>					
<b>White</b>	50.9%	45.8%	83.7%	4.7	4.8
<b>Black</b>	46.9%	52.2%	12.3%	29.6	36.9
<b>Other</b>	2.1%	2.0%	4.0%	4.1	4.4

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional Information about the Data](#).

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Age trends**

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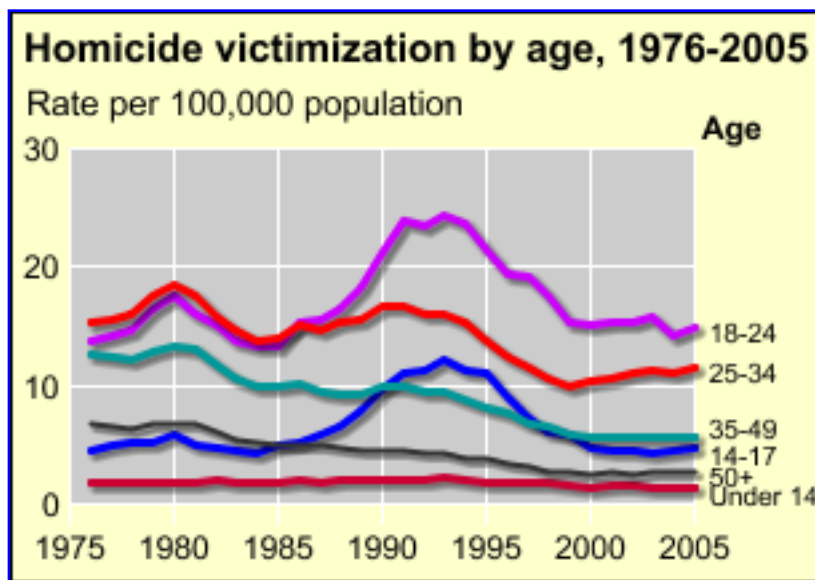
## **Young adults have the highest homicide victimization and offending rates**

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### **Homicide victimization rates for teens and young adults increased rapidly in the late 1980's while rates for older age groups declined; after the early 1990's rates declined for all age groups**

- For children under age 14, homicide victimization rates are the lowest of all age groups. Their homicide victimization rates declined to the lowest level recorded in 2000 and have remained stable since then.
- For young teens (14-17 years old), the homicide victimization rate increased almost 150% from 1985 to 1993. Since 1993 the victimization rates for young teens have declined to levels similar to those experienced from 1976-85.
- Older teens and young adults (18-24 years old) experienced the highest homicide victimization rates, a change from the late 1970's when 25-34 year-olds had the highest rates. Since 1993 their victimization rates have declined but still remain higher than the levels of the mid-1980's.
- For adults ages 35-49 and 50 and older, homicide victimization rates have remained stable in recent years.
- 25-34 year-olds experienced an increase in homicide victimization rates since 1999 when it was the lowest ever recorded.

**To view data, click on the chart.**



[D]

View an [animation of homicide victimization rates by age from 1980 to 2004](#).

Additional detail is available about homicides of children under age 5, **infanticide**, and homicides of persons age 65 and older, **eldercide**.

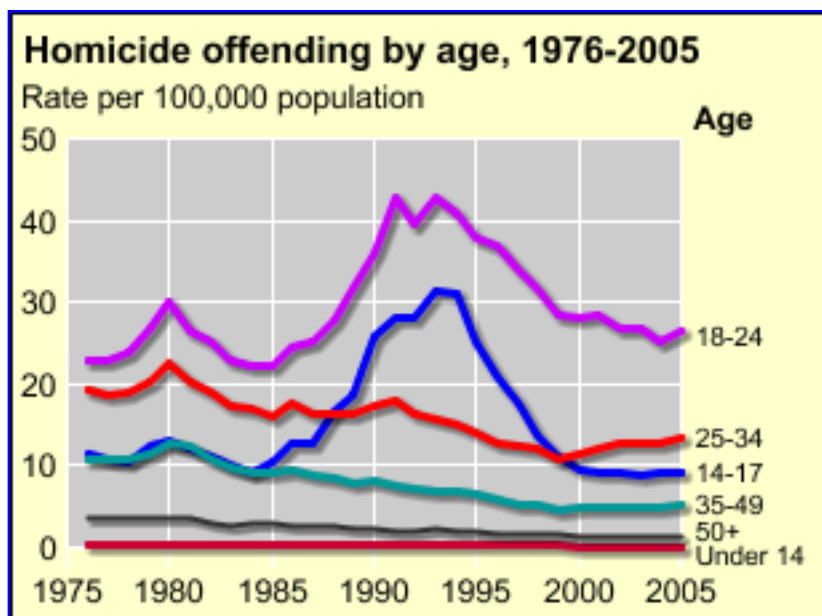
For more information about age patterns in violent victimization see [Key Facts at a Glance](#).

## Homicide offending rates followed a similar pattern

- Offending rates for teens (14-17 years old) and young adults (18-24 years old) increased dramatically in the late 1980's while rates for older age groups declined.
- Offending rates for children under age 14 increased in the late 1980's and early 1990's, but fell to the lowest level recorded in 2003.
- Young adults (18-24 years -old) have historically had the highest offending rates and their rates nearly doubled from 1985 to 1993. Since 1993 offending rates for 18-24 year-olds have declined but remain slightly higher than levels prior to the mid 1980's.
- Offending rates of teens (14-17 years old) increased rapidly after 1985, surpassing the rates of 25-34 year-olds. After 2000, the offending rates for young teens reached the lowest levels recorded and fell below those for 25-34 year-olds.
- Offending rates for 25-34 year-olds fell from 1991 through 1999 but have increased since 1999.



To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

View an [animation of homicide offending rates by age from 1980 to 2004](#).

For more information about age patterns in violent offending see [Key Facts at a Glance](#).

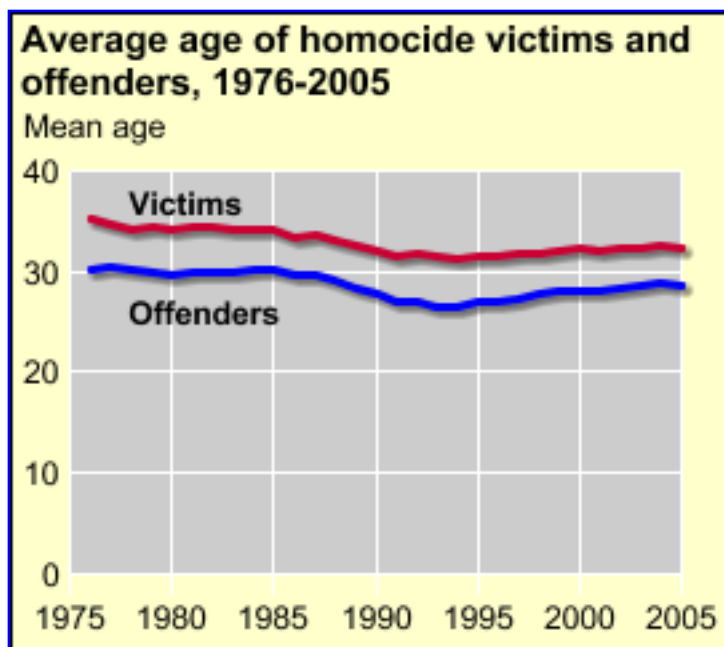
**After many years of decline, the average age of both victims and offenders has leveled off**

The average age of --

- victims is greater than that of offenders and fell from 35.2 years in 1976 to 31.3 years in 1994
- offenders fell from about 30.3 years in 1976 to 26.4 years in 1994
- both offenders and victims has increased slightly in recent years yet remains lower than it was prior to the mid-1980's

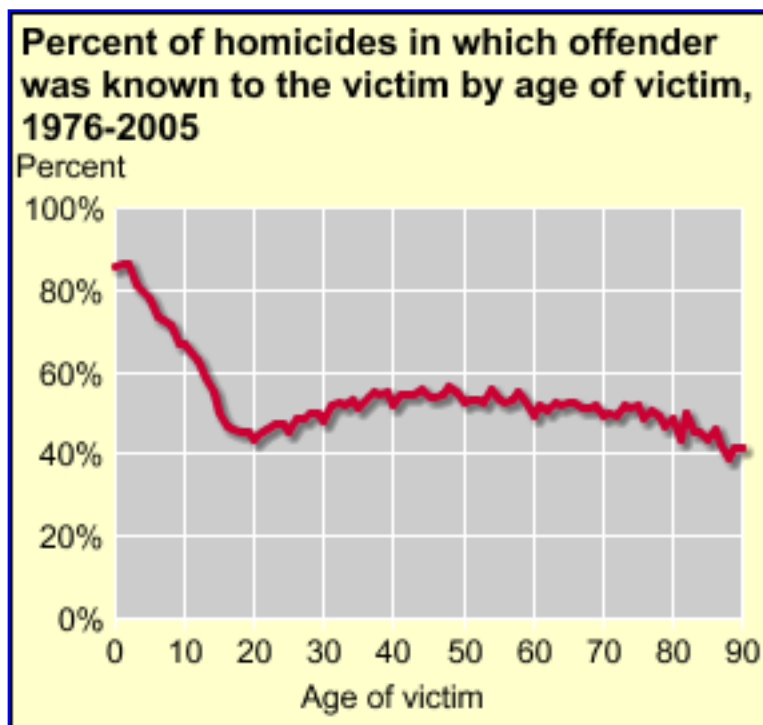
To view data, click on the chart.

[D]



**Young victims were more likely to know the offender than older victims**

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

**The age distribution of homicide victims and offenders differs by type of homicide**

For the years 1976-2005 combined -

- Almost one-quarter of the victims of gang-related killings were under the age of 18. Juveniles were also unusually involved as victims of family members, sex-related homicides, and homicide by arson or poison.
- Felony-murder, workplace murder, arson, and poison homicides claimed a relatively large percentage of older victims (ages 50 and over).

### Homicide Type by Age, 1976-2005

	Victims				Offenders			
	Under 18	18-34	35-49	50+	Under 18	18-34	35-49	50+
<b>All homicides</b>	9.8%	52.7%	22.8%	14.7%	10.9%	65.0%	17.3%	6.8%
<b>Victim/offender relationship</b>								
<b>Intimate</b>	1.5%	46.7%	34.3%	17.5%	1.0%	46.2%	34.9%	17.9%
<b>Family</b>	19.6%	31.9%	26.4%	22.1%	6.0%	49.1%	28.1%	16.8%
<b>Infanticide</b>	100.0%				7.9%	81.3%	9.7%	1.1%
<b>Eldercide</b>				100.0%	10.3%	49.2%	19.1%	21.4%
<b>Circumstances</b>								
<b>Felony murder</b>	7.6%	46.9%	21.8%	23.8%	14.8%	72.9%	10.3%	2.0%
<b>Sex related</b>	19.6%	45.1%	16.6%	18.7%	10.7%	73.6%	13.7%	2.0%
<b>Drug related</b>	5.4%	71.4%	19.9%	3.3%	10.6%	76.9%	11.3%	1.2%
<b>Gang related</b>	24.2%	68.4%	6.1%	1.3%	28.9%	69.2%	1.6%	.3%
<b>Argument</b>	5.5%	56.1%	26.3%	12.2%	6.9%	60.2%	23.1%	9.7%
<b>Workplace</b>	.5%	28.0%	32.0%	39.5%	3.7%	53.1%	27.6%	15.5%
<b>Weapon</b>								
<b>Gun homicide</b>	7.4%	59.3%	22.4%	10.9%	11.9%	64.8%	15.8%	7.5%
<b>Arson</b>	28.3%	27.0%	19.2%	25.5%	11.5%	57.7%	23.8%	7.0%
<b>Poison</b>	28.0%	23.3%	16.5%	32.2%	4.5%	50.9%	26.2%	18.5%
<b>Multiple victims or offenders</b>								
<b>Multiple victims</b>	18.2%	46.3%	19.1%	16.4%	9.5%	66.1%	18.5%	5.9%
<b>Multiple offenders</b>	11.3%	55.5%	19.7%	13.5%	18.2%	73.1%	7.5%	1.2%

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional Information about the Data](#).

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

### Related charts on this site

- [Percent of homicides committed during a felony by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate](#)
- [Percent of homicides involving multiple offenders by age of offender, 1976-2005](#)
- [Homicide offending by weapon type and age of offender, 1976-2005](#)
- [Percent of homicides involving guns by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate](#)
- [Teen homicide offending rates by region, 1976-2005](#)
- [Percent of homicides cleared by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate](#)

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***

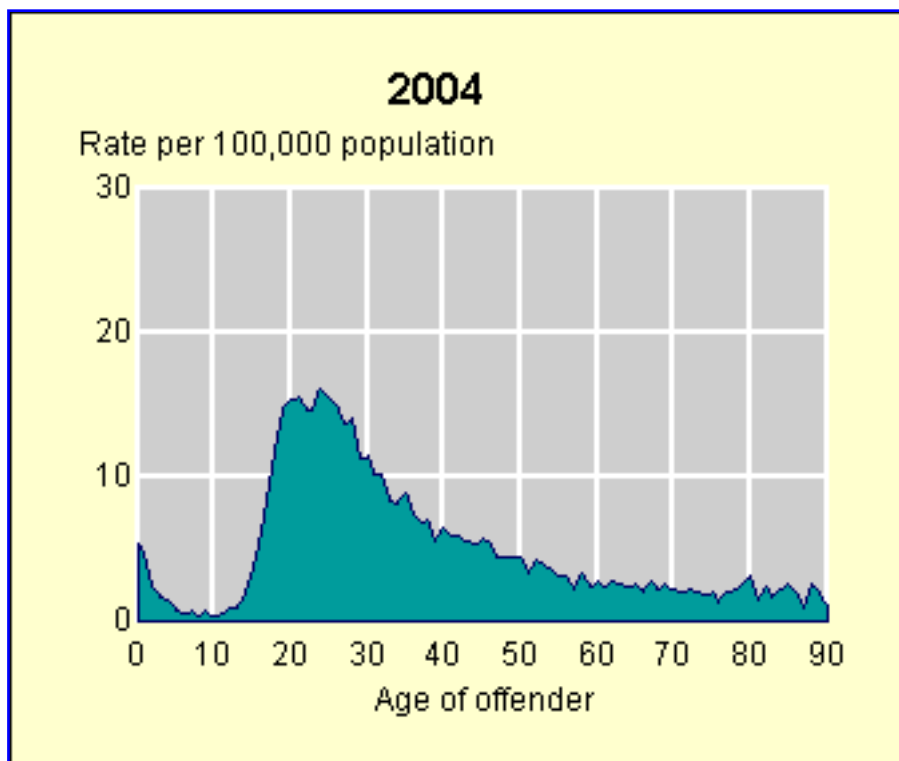
**Age trends - victimization rates animation**

[Contents of Homicide trends in the U.S.](#)

To view this animation again, select reload or refresh on your browser.

To view the data click on the chart.

[Back to age trends](#)



[D]

In general -

- homicide victimization rates are higher for very young children than older children who have the lowest rates of all age groups
- older teens and young adults have the highest rates of victimization
- after age 25, victimization rates decline with age

In the mid 1980's, the pattern in homicide victimization rates by age changed as the rates for teens and young adults increased rapidly. By 1991, the rates for older teens and those in their early 20's greatly exceeded those for all other age groups. Since 1993, victimization rates have shown a similar pattern by age despite declines in the rates.

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1980-2004

See also [Additional information about the data](#) for details on weighting

and imputation.

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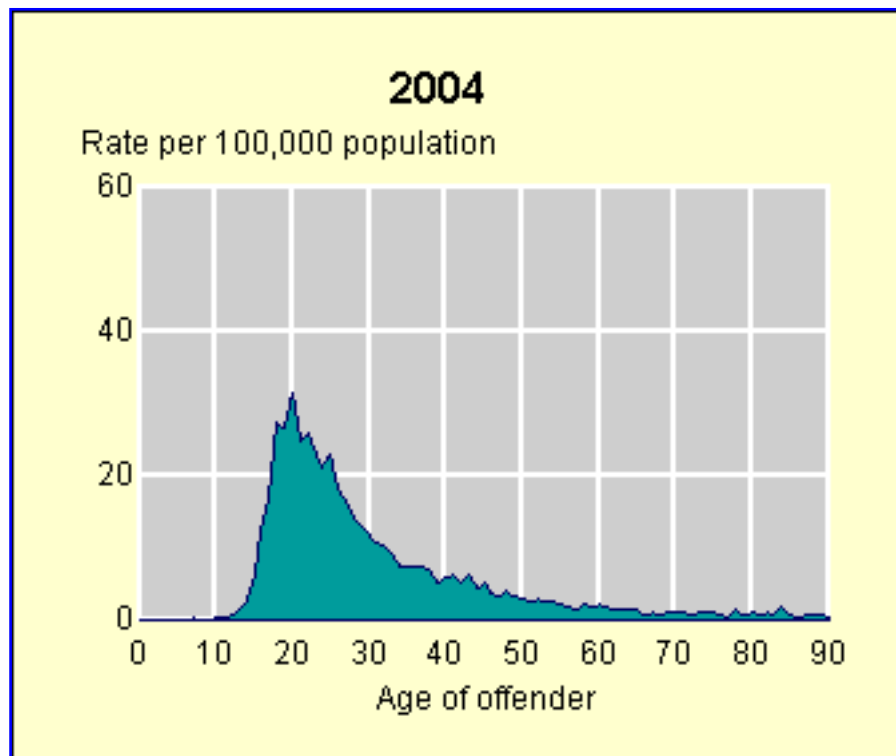
***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Age trends - offending rates animation**

[Contents of Homicide trends in the U.S.](#)

To view this animation again, select reload or refresh on your browser.

To view the data click on the chart.

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[D]

In general -

- older teens have the highest offending rates of all age groups
- after the teenage years, the rates decline with age

In the mid 1980's the rates for teens and young adults increased rapidly until after 1993 when the rates began to decline. Throughout the entire period, the rates for older teens and young adults have been the highest of all ages.

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1980-2004

See also **Additional information about the data** for details on weighting and imputation.

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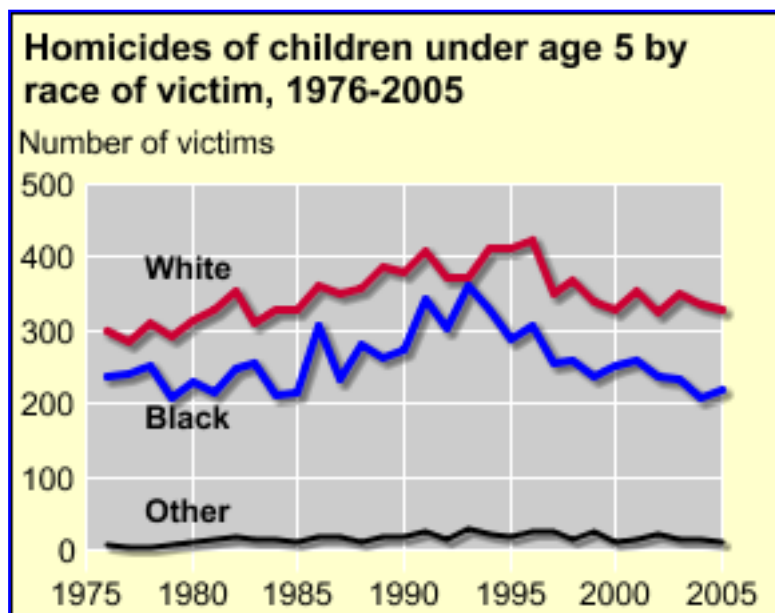
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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.* Infanticide

### The number of homicides of children under age 5 increased through the mid 1990's, but declined recently

To view data, click on the chart.



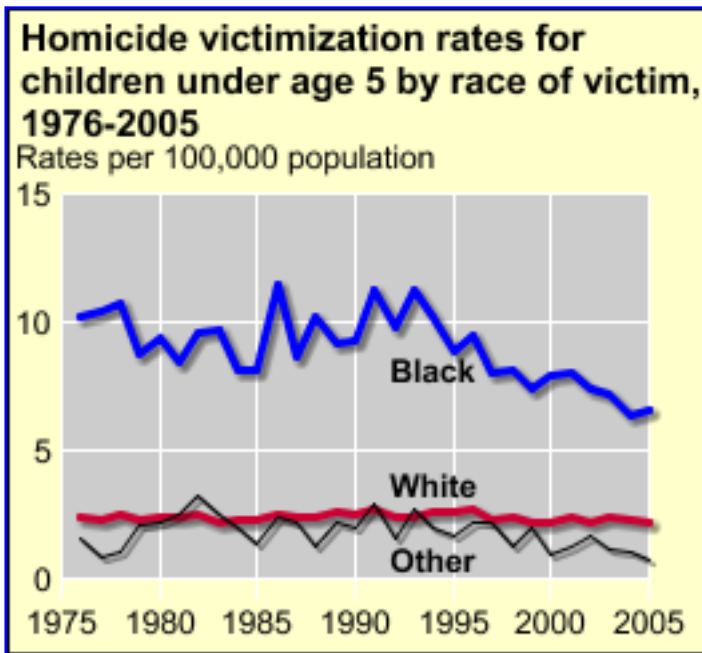
[D]

### The infanticide rates have remained fairly stable or declined for all racial groups

Infanticide rates for --

- black children have recently declined, reaching the lowest level recorded in 2004
- white children have remained relatively stable
- children of other racial groups have remained relatively stable.

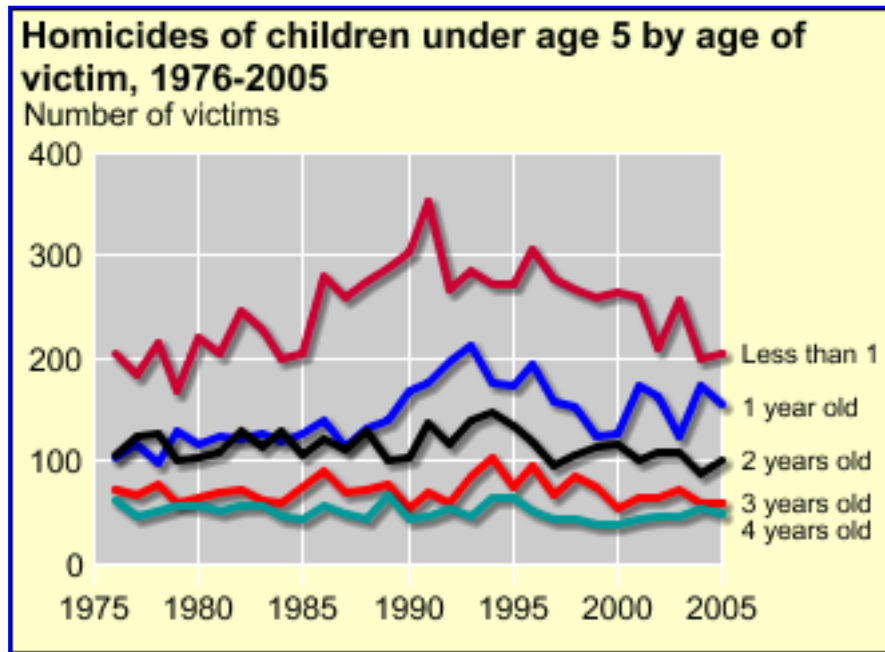
To view data, click on the chart.



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### The younger the child, the greater the risk for infanticide

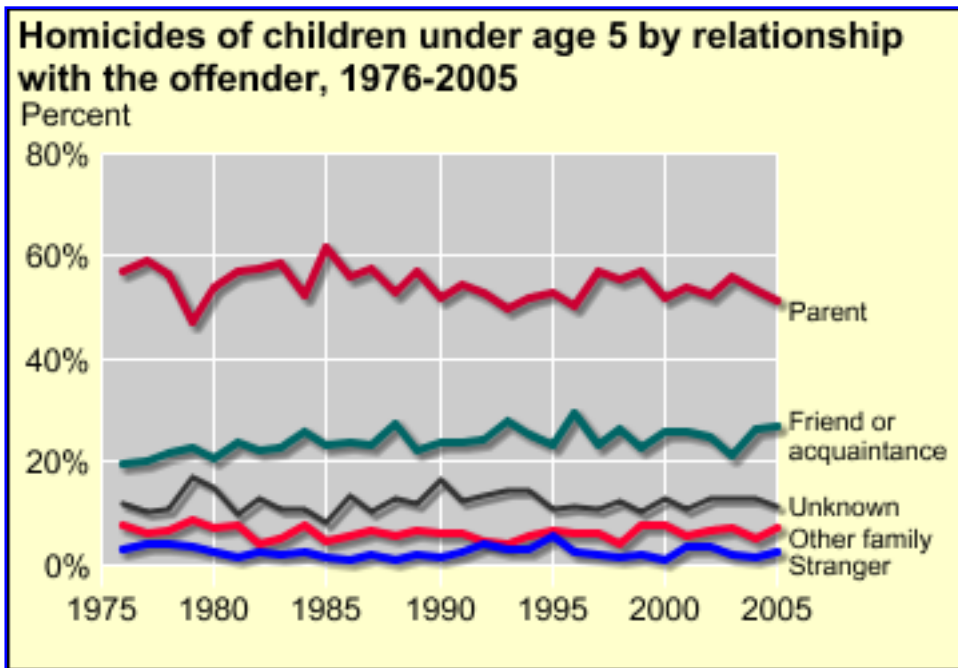
To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

### A parent is the perpetrator in most homicides of children under age 5

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Note: Parents includes stepparents.

Of all children under age 5 murdered from 1976-2005 --

- 31% were killed by fathers
- 29% were killed by mothers
- 23% were killed by male acquaintances
- 7% were killed by other relatives
- 3% were killed by strangers

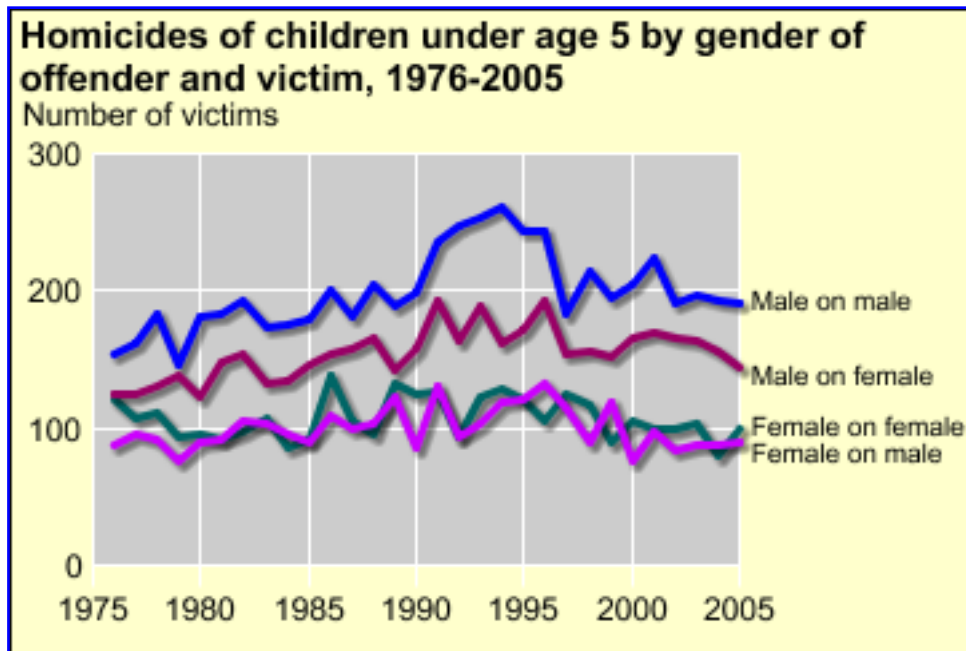
Of those children killed by someone other than their parent, 81% were killed by males.

**Relationship, 1976-2005**

Gender of offender	Parent	Other family	Friend/ Acquaintance	Stranger	Unknown
<b>Male</b>	5,273	757	3,825	438	328
<b>Female</b>	4,947	416	728	24	101

**Most of the children killed are male and most of the offenders are male**

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

For additional statistical information on this topic, see the BJS publication [Child Victimizers: Violent Offenders and Their Victims.](#)

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Eldercide**

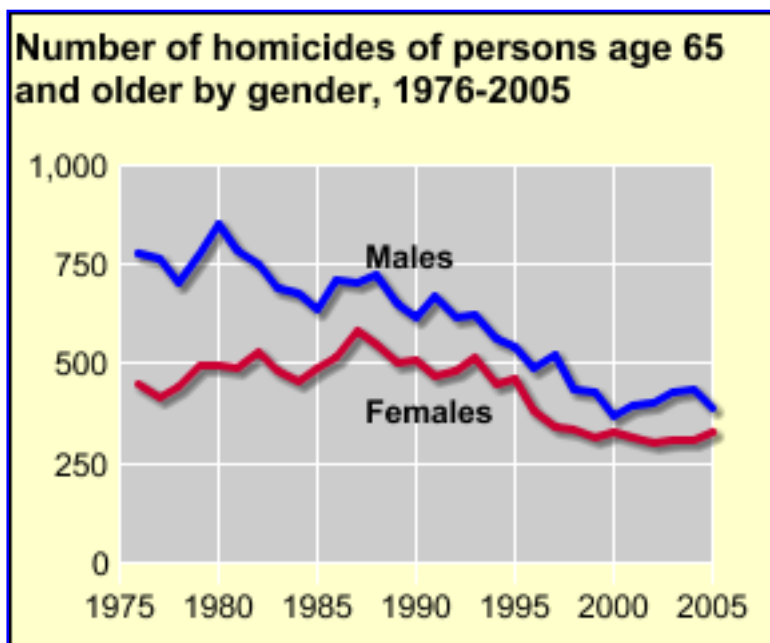
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**For persons age 65 or older, both the number of homicides and homicide victimization rates declined through 2000 and then stabilized**

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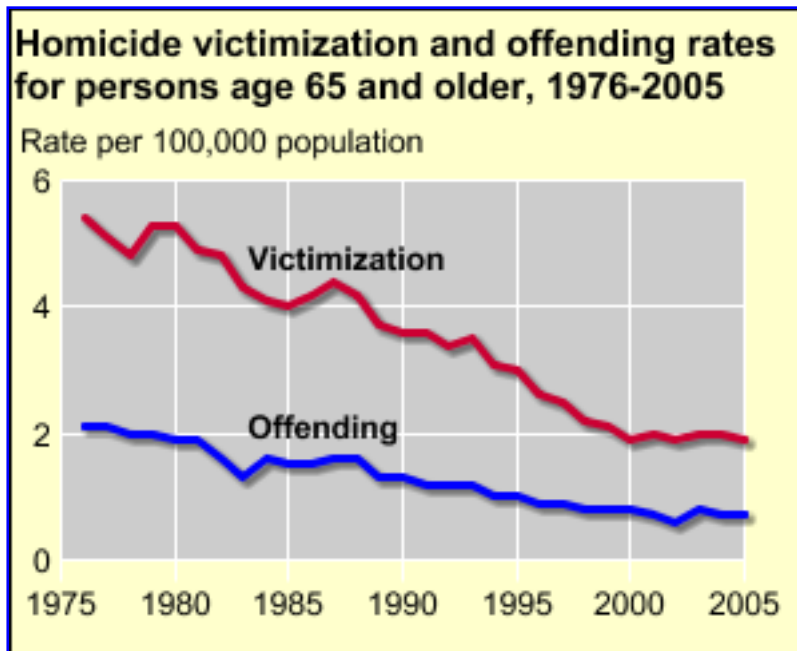
- About 5% of all homicides were of persons age 65 or older.
- More males age 65 or older were homicide victims than females of the same age.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

To view data, click on the chart.

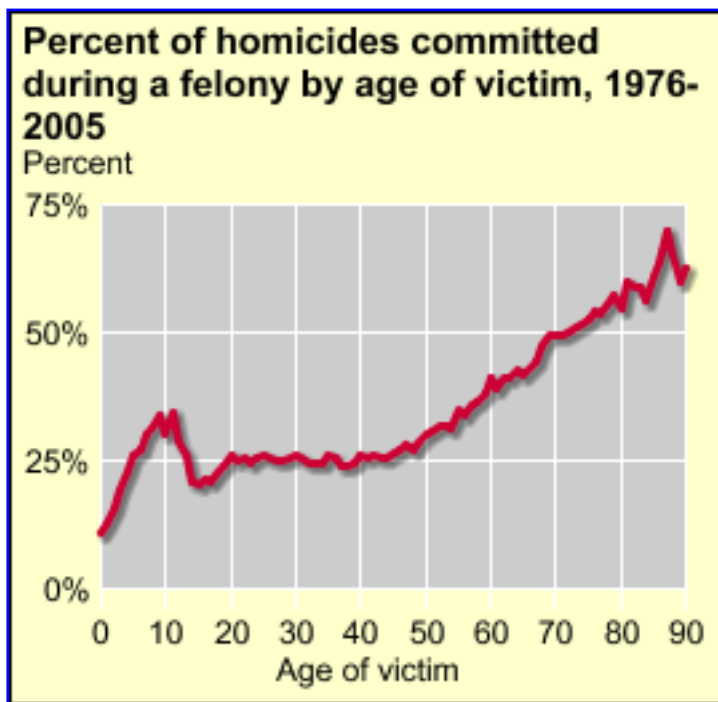


[D]

For additional statistical information on this topic, see the BJS publication [Crimes against persons age 65 or older, 1993-2002](#).

### Older homicide victims were more likely to have been killed during a felony than younger victims

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional information about the data](#).

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Trends by gender**

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## Most victims and perpetrators in homicides are male

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Male offender/Male victim	65.3%
Male offender/Female victim	22.7%
Female offender/Male victim	9.6%
Female offender/Female victim	2.4%

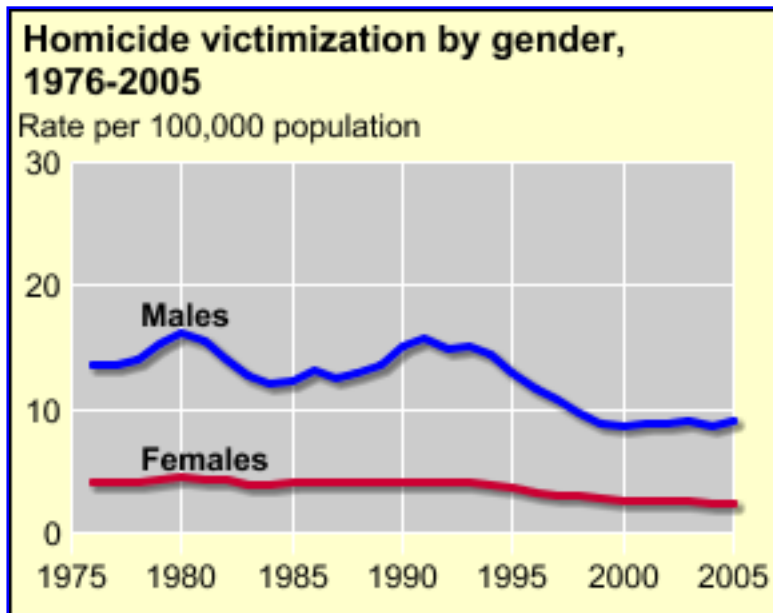
Both male and female offenders are more likely to target male victims than female victims.

### Victimization rates for both males and females have declined in recent years

- Males were almost 4 times more likely than females to be murdered in 2005.
- In 2005 rates for females reached their lowest point recorded; rates for males increased slightly from the low point recorded in 2000.

To view data, click on the chart.





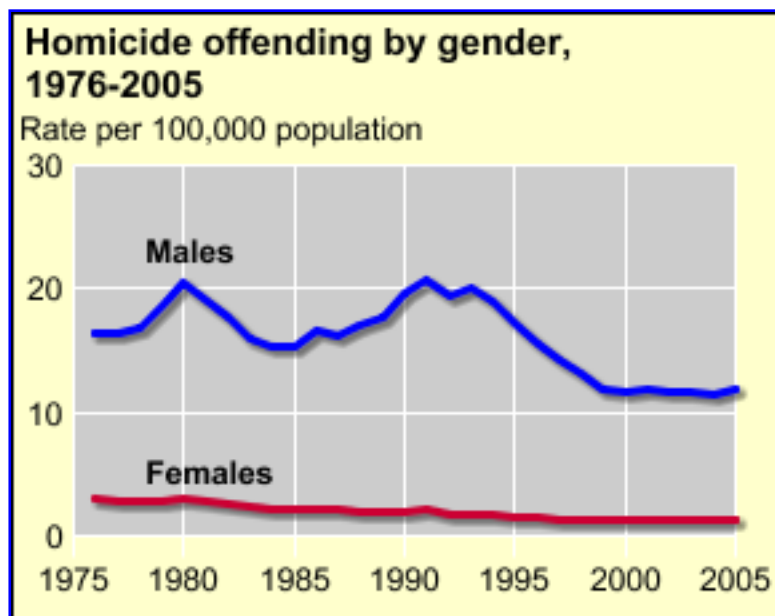
[D]

For more information about gender patterns in violent victimization see [Key Facts at a Glance](#).

### Offending rates for both males and females followed the same pattern as victimization rates

- Males were almost 10 times more likely than females to commit murder in 2005.
- The offending rates for females declined since the early 1980's but stabilized after 1999. Offending rates for males peaked in the early 1990's, fell to record lows, and stabilized in recent years.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

## The gender distribution of homicide victims and offenders differs by type of homicide

For the years 1976-2005 combined, among all homicide victims, females are particularly at risk for intimate killings and sex-related homicides.

### Homicide Type by Gender, 1976-2005

	Victims		Offenders	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
All homicides	76.5%	23.5%	88.8%	11.2%
<b>Victim/offender relationship</b>				
Intimate	35.2%	64.8%	65.5%	34.5%
Family	51.5%	48.5%	70.8%	29.2%
Infanticide	54.6%	45.4%	61.8%	38.2%
Eldercide	58.1%	41.9%	85.2%	14.8%
<b>Circumstances</b>				
Felony murder	78.4%	21.6%	93.2%	6.8%
Sex related	18.8%	81.2%	93.6%	6.4%
Drug related	90.2%	9.8%	95.5%	4.5%
Gang related	94.7%	5.3%	98.3%	1.7%
Argument	77.8%	22.2%	85.6%	14.4%
Workplace	79.1%	20.9%	91.3%	8.7%
<b>Weapon</b>				
Gun homicide	82.7%	17.3%	91.3%	8.7%
Arson	56.4%	43.6%	79.1%	20.9%
Poison	55.3%	44.7%	63.5%	36.5%
<b>Multiple victims or offenders</b>				

Multiple victims	63.3%	36.7%	93.5%	6.5%
Multiple offenders	85.6%	14.4%	91.6%	8.4%

## The relationship between the victim and the offender differs for female and male victims

- Female victims are more likely than male victims to be killed by an intimate or family member.
- Male victims are more likely than female victims to be killed by acquaintances or strangers.

### Victim Offender Relationship by Victim Gender, 1976-2005

Victim/Offender relationship	Percent of homicide victims by gender	
	Male	Female
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Intimate</b>	5.0%	30.0%
Spouse	3.0	18.3
Ex-spouse	0.2	1.4
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	1.8	10.4
<b>Other family</b>	6.8%	11.8%
Parent	1.3	2.8
Child	2.1	5.4
Sibling	1.2	0.9
Other family	2.2	2.8
<b>Acquaintance/Known</b>	35.3%	21.8%
Neighbor	1.1	1.3
Employee/er	0.1	0.1
Friend/Acquaintance	29.4	17.0
Other Known	4.6	3.4
<b>Stranger</b>	15.5%	8.7%
<b>Undetermined</b>	37.4%	27.6%

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional Information about the Data](#).

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

## Related charts on this site

- [Homicides of children under age 5 by gender of victim and offender, 1976-2005](#)
- [Homicides of persons age 65 and older by gender of victim, 1976-2005](#)
- [Homicides of intimates by gender of victim, 1976-2005](#)
- [Homicides of intimates by gender and race of victim, 1976-2005](#)
- [Proportion of all homicides involving intimates by gender of victim, 1976-2005](#)
- [Intimate homicide rates by race, gender and relationship, 1976-2005](#)
- [Intimate homicides by type of weapon and gender of victim, 1976-2005](#)

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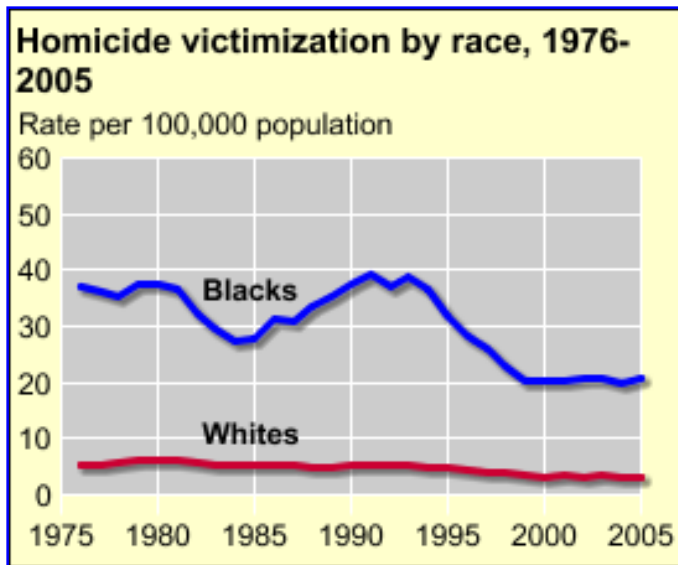
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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.* Trends by race

### **Racial differences exist, with blacks disproportionately represented among homicide victims and offenders**

**In 2005, homicide victimization rates for blacks were 6 times higher than the rates for whites.**

To view data, click on the chart.

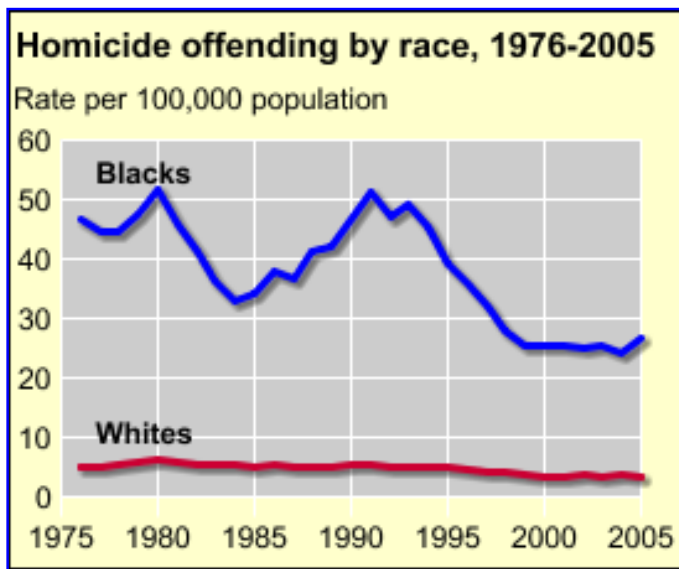


[D]

For more information about racial patterns in violent victimization see [Key Facts at a Glance](#).

**In 2005, offending rates for blacks were more than 7 times higher than the rates for whites**

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

### The race distribution of homicide victims and offenders differs by type of homicide

For the years 1976-2005 combined -

- Black victims are over represented in homicides involving drugs. Compared with the overall involvement of blacks as victims, blacks are less often the victims of sex-related homicides, workplace killings, and homicide by poison.
- Race patterns among offenders are similar to those among victims.

#### Homicide Type by Race, 1976-2005

	Victims			Offenders		
	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other
<b>All homicides</b>	50.9%	46.9%	2.1%	45.8%	52.2%	2.0%
<b>Victim/offender relationship</b>						
Intimate	56.6%	41.2%	2.2%	54.4%	43.4%	2.2%
Family	60.7%	36.9%	2.4%	59.2%	38.5%	2.3%
Infanticide	55.9%	41.6%	2.5%	55.4%	42.1%	2.5%
Eldercide	69.2%	29.1%	1.6%	54.5%	43.8%	1.6%
<b>Circumstances</b>						
Felony murder	54.7%	42.7%	2.6%	39.1%	59.3%	1.6%
Sex related	66.9%	30.5%	2.5%	54.7%	43.4%	1.9%
Drug related	37.4%	61.6%	.9%	33.9%	65.0%	1.1%
Gang related	57.5%	39.0%	3.5%	54.3%	41.2%	4.4%
Argument	48.6%	49.3%	2.1%	46.8%	51.1%	2.2%
Workplace	84.6%	12.2%	3.2%	70.5%	26.7%	2.8%

**Weapon**

Gun homicide	47.2%	50.9%	1.9%	41.9%	56.4%	1.7%
Arson	58.9%	38.1%	2.9%	55.7%	42.0%	2.3%
Poison	80.6%	16.9%	2.5%	79.8%	18.4%	1.8%

**Multiple victims or offenders**

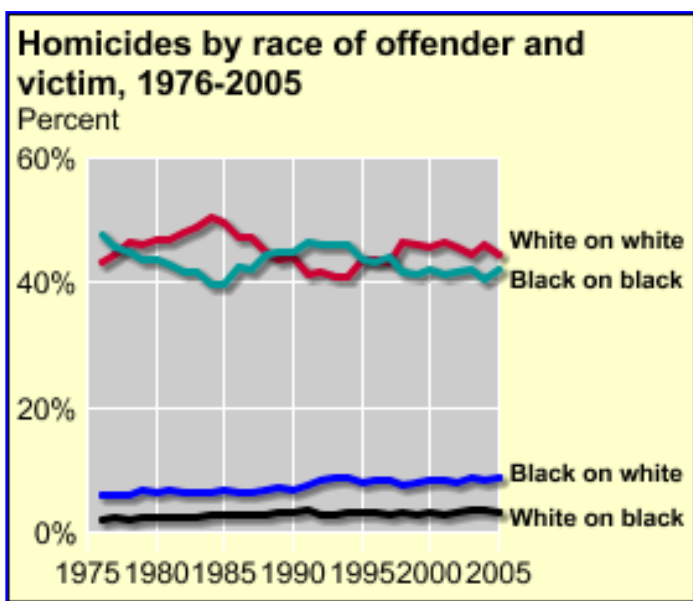
Multiple victims	63.4%	33.2%	3.3%	55.7%	40.8%	3.5%
Multiple offenders	54.8%	42.5%	2.7%	44.6%	53.0%	2.4%

**Although slightly less true now than before, most murders are intraracial**

From 1976 to 2005 --

- 86% of white victims were killed by whites
- 94% of black victims were killed by blacks

To view data, click on the chart.



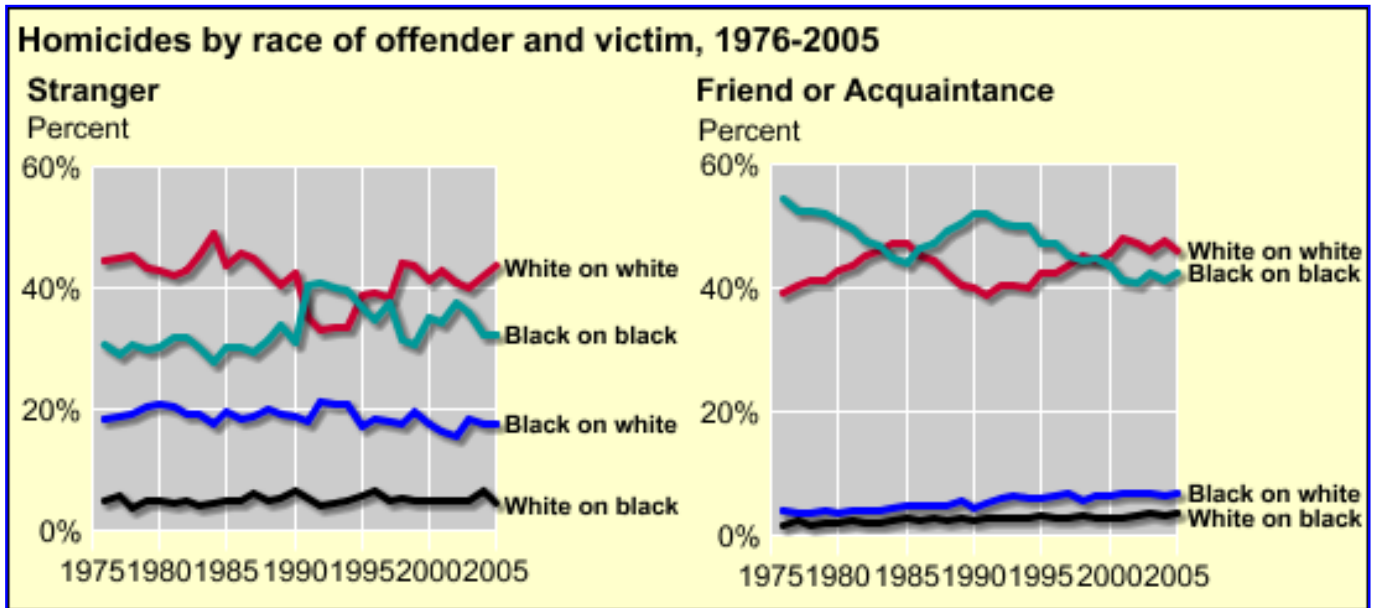
[D]

**Stranger homicides are more likely to cross racial lines than those that involve friends or acquaintances**

For homicides committed by --

- a friend or acquaintance of the victim, less than one-tenth (8%) were interracial
- a stranger to the victim, one-quarter were interracial

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

#### Related charts on this site

- [The number of homicides of children under age 5 by race, 1976-2005](#)
- [Homicide victimization rates for children under age 5 by race, 1976-2005](#)
- [Homicides of intimates by gender and race of victim, 1976-2005](#)
- [Intimate homicide rates by race, gender and relationship, 1976-2005](#)

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Age, gender, and race trends**

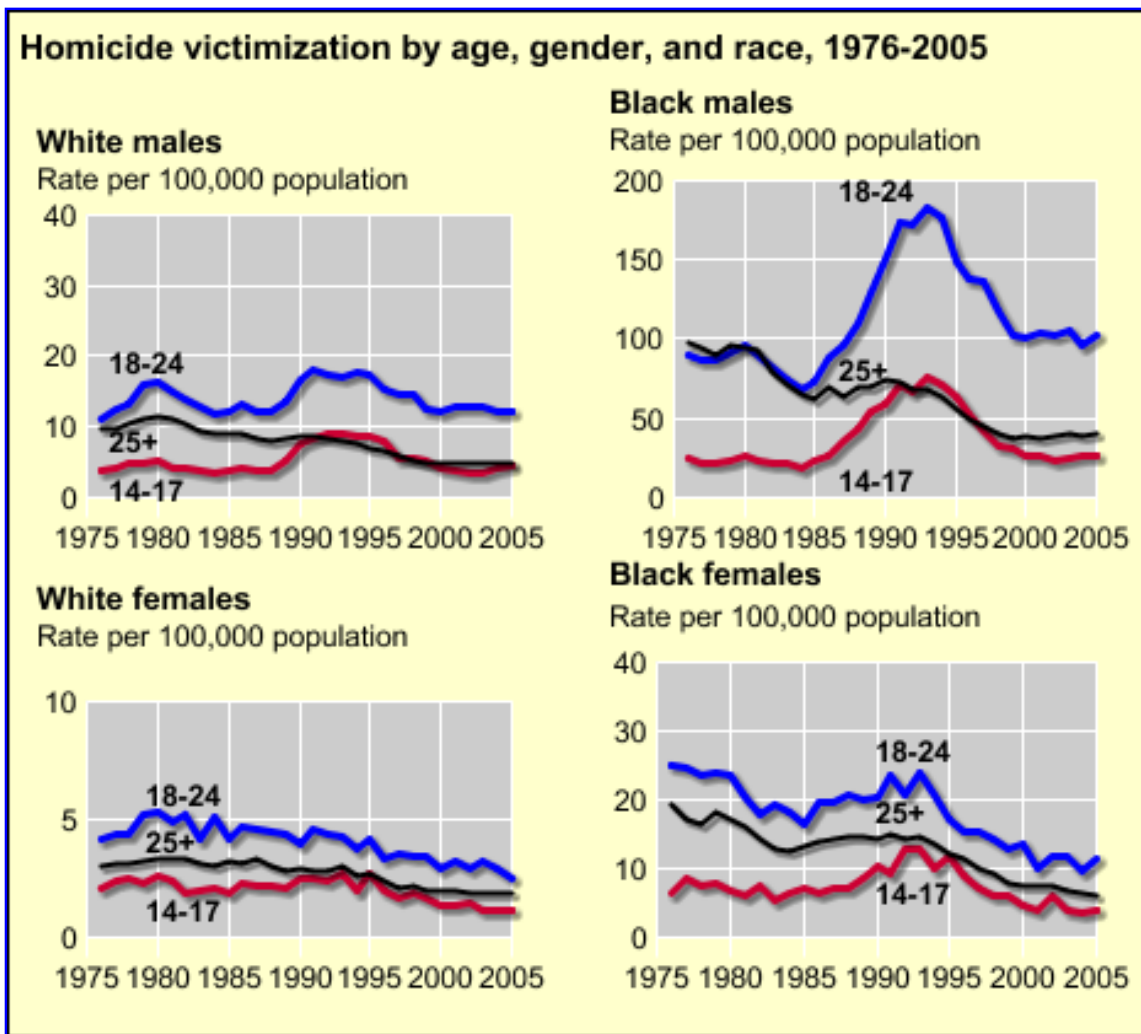
## **Patterns of victimization and offending vary by age, gender, and racial group**

**During the late 1990's, homicide victimization rates dropped for all groups. In recent years, rates for most groups stabilized.**

In 2005 --

- Black males 18-24 years old had the highest homicide victimization rates. Their rates were more than double the rates for black males age 25 and older and almost 4 times the rates for black males 14-17 years old.
- Although much lower than the rates experienced in the late 1980's and early 1990's, rates for black males ages 18-24 remain higher in 2005 than in earlier periods.
- After increases in the early 1990's, both white and black 14-17 year old males experienced homicide victimization rates in 2005 that were about the same as those of the early 1970's.
- Young adults (18-24 years old) have the highest victimization rates in each racial and gender group.
- For white females of all ages, victimization rates have declined. Since 1993, rates for black females have also declined in all age groups.

**To view data, click on the chart.**

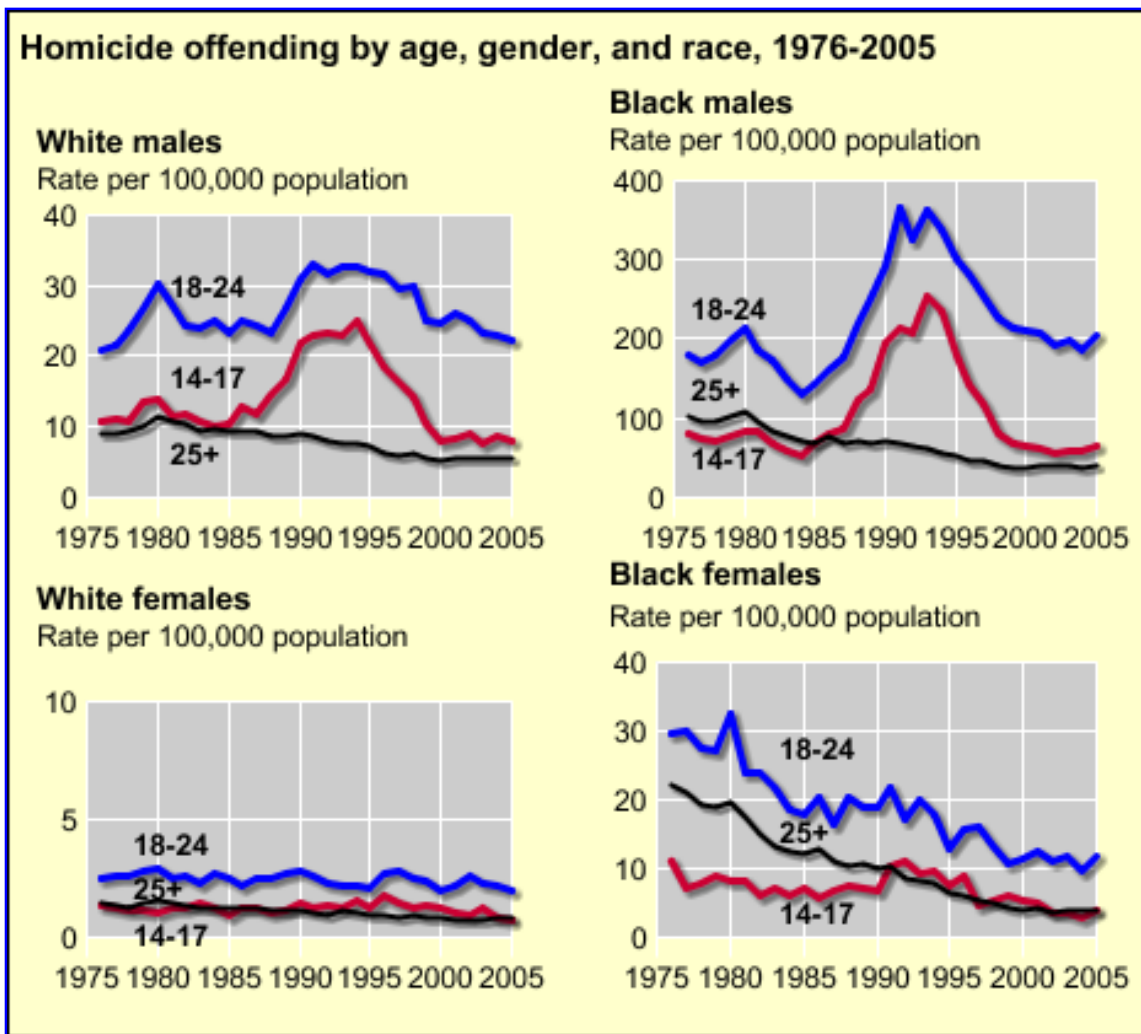


[D]

## Homicide offending patterns are similar to victimization patterns

- Black males 18-24 years old have the highest homicide offending rates. Their rates are more than 3 times the rates of black males 14-17 years old and almost 5 times the rates of black males age 25 and older.
- Young adults (18-24 years old) have the highest offending rates in each racial and gender group.
- For black males 18-24 years old, offending rates declined after 1993 reaching a low in 2004. The rate increased in 2005.
- For black male teens (14-17 years old), offending rates have increased since 2002 but remain relatively low compared to earlier periods.
- For white male young adults (18-24 years old), offending rates fell to an alltime low in 2005.
- For black females of all age groups, offending rates declined since the early 1990's.
- White females of all age groups experience the lowest offending rates.

To view data, click on the chart.

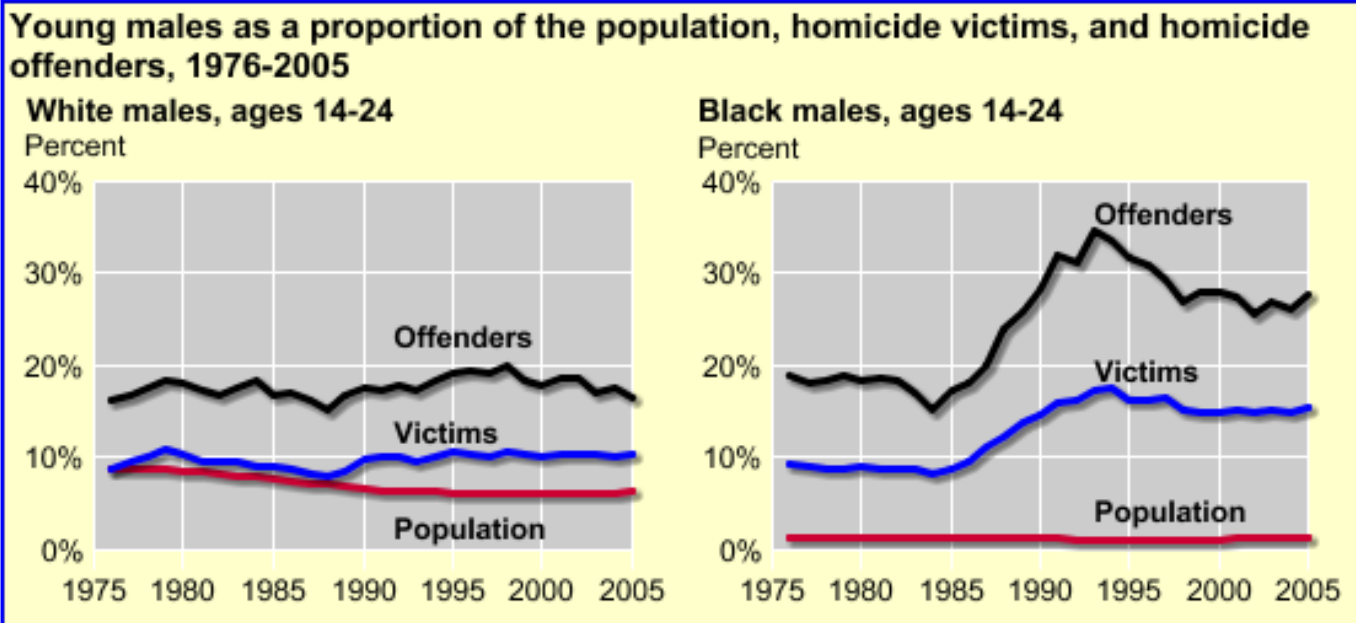


[D]

**Young males, particularly young black males, are disproportionately involved in homicide compared to their share of the population**

- For young white males, their proportion of the population increased slightly since 2001, while their proportion of homicide victims has been stable and their proportion of offenders has declined.
- For young black males, their proportion of the population has remained at about 1%. After 1993, their proportion of homicide victims declined slightly before stabilizing in recent years. Their proportion of homicide offenders increased rapidly from the mid 1980's to the early 1990's and then declined slightly remaining at over one-quarter of all offenders..

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.*

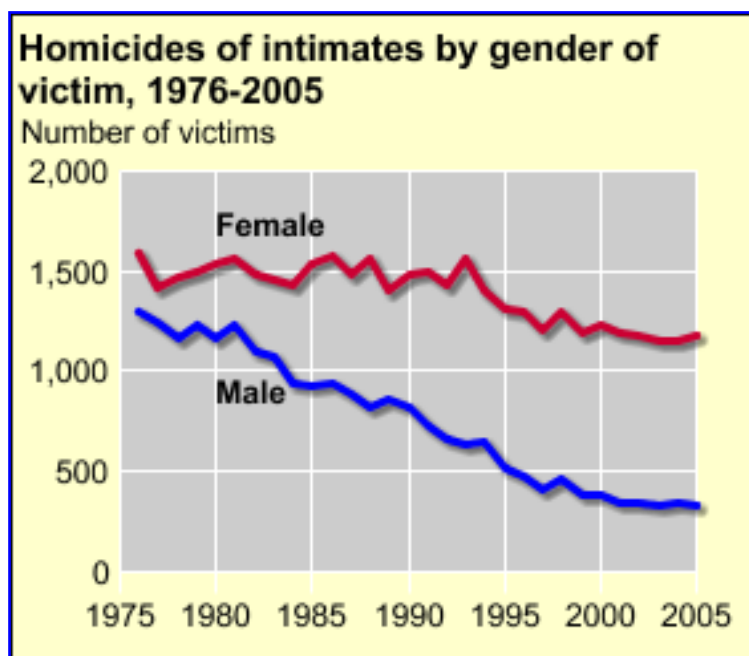
### Intimate homicide

## There has been a decline in homicide of intimates, especially male victims

Intimates are defined to include spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriends, and girlfriends.

- The number of men murdered by intimates dropped by 75% since 1976.
- The number of women killed by intimates was stable for nearly two decades. After 1993, the number declined reaching the lowest level recorded in 2004.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

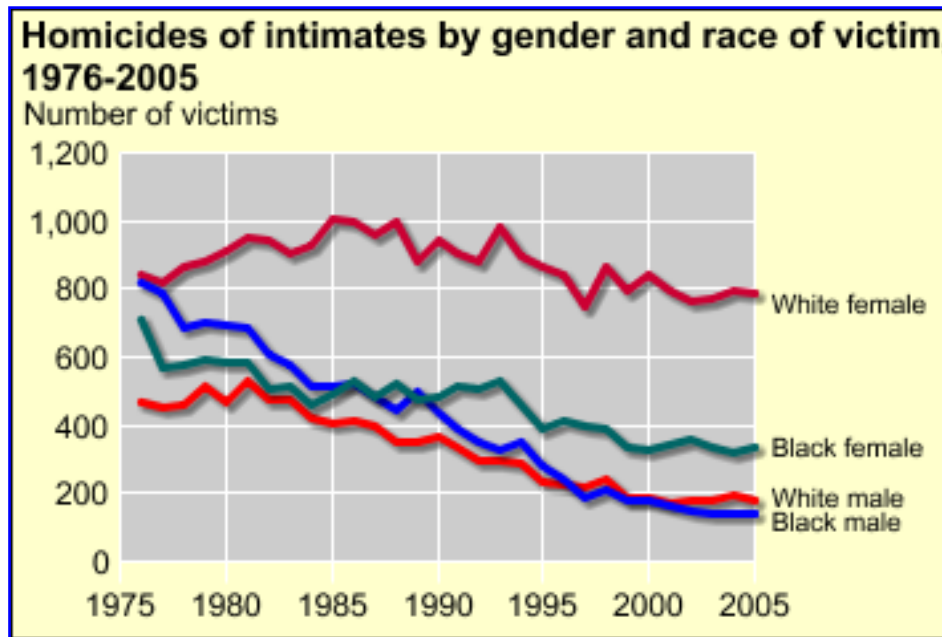
## In general, the number of intimate victims in each race and gender group declined

Between 1976 and 2005 --

- the number of white females killed by intimates rose in the mid-1980's, then declined after 1993 reaching the lowest recorded in 2002. The number fluctuated slightly after 2002.

- the number of intimate homicides for all other race and gender groups declined over the period; the number of black males killed by intimates dropped by 83%, white males by 61%, black females by 52%, and white females by 6%.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

**About 11% of murder victims were determined to have been killed by an intimate**

**Victim/Offender Relationship, 1976-2005**

	All homicides, 1976-2005	
	Percent	Number
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	594,276
Intimate	10.9%	64,529
Non-intimate	53.9%	320,554
Undetermined	35.2%	209,194

For additional detail, see [Victim/offender relationship](#).

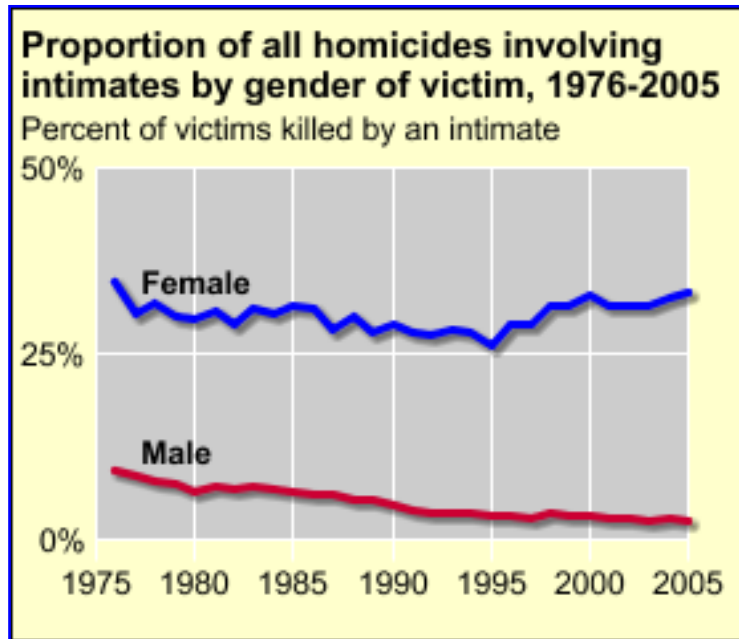
**Female murder victims are substantially more likely than male murder victims to have been killed by an intimate**

In recent years -

- About one third of female murder victims were killed by an intimate.

- About 3% of male murder victims were killed by an intimate.
- Of all female murder victims, the proportion killed by an intimate has been increasing.
- Of male murder victims, the proportion killed by an intimate has dropped.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

**For every age group female murder victims are more likely than male victims to have been killed by an intimate**

Percent of all murders by intimates, 1976-2005

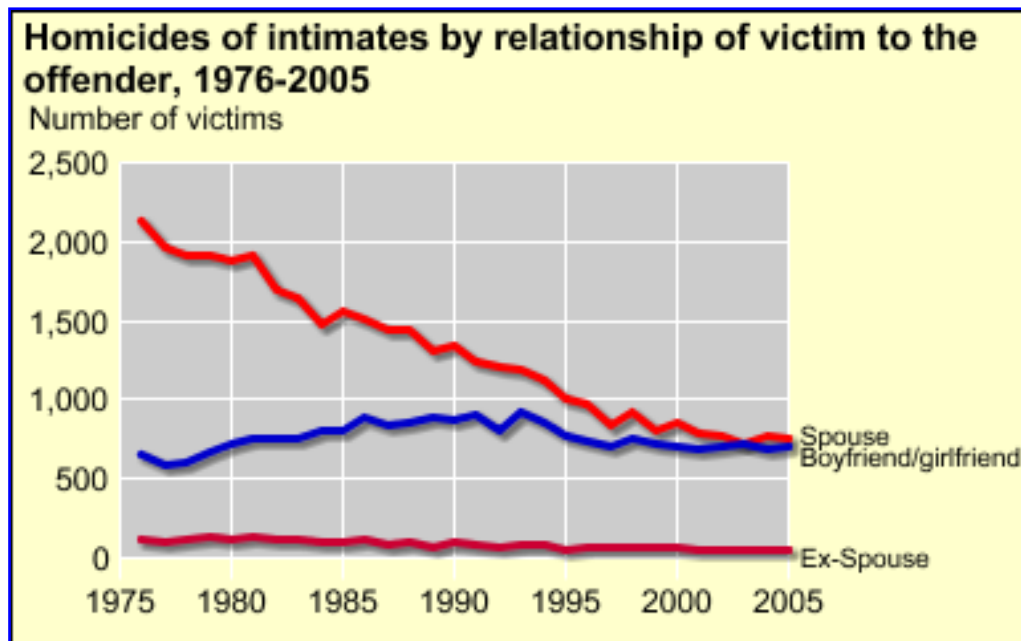
	Male victims	Female victims
12-17	--	5%
18-24	2%	29
25-29	4	37
30-34	6	41
35-39	8	43
40-44	9	42
45-49	10	40
50-59	10	32
60+	6	21

-- Less than 0.5%

**Most intimate homicides involved spouses, although in recent years the number of deaths by boyfriends and girlfriends was about the**

same

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

**The intimate homicide rate has fallen for blacks in every gender and relationship category while the rate for whites has not declined for all categories**

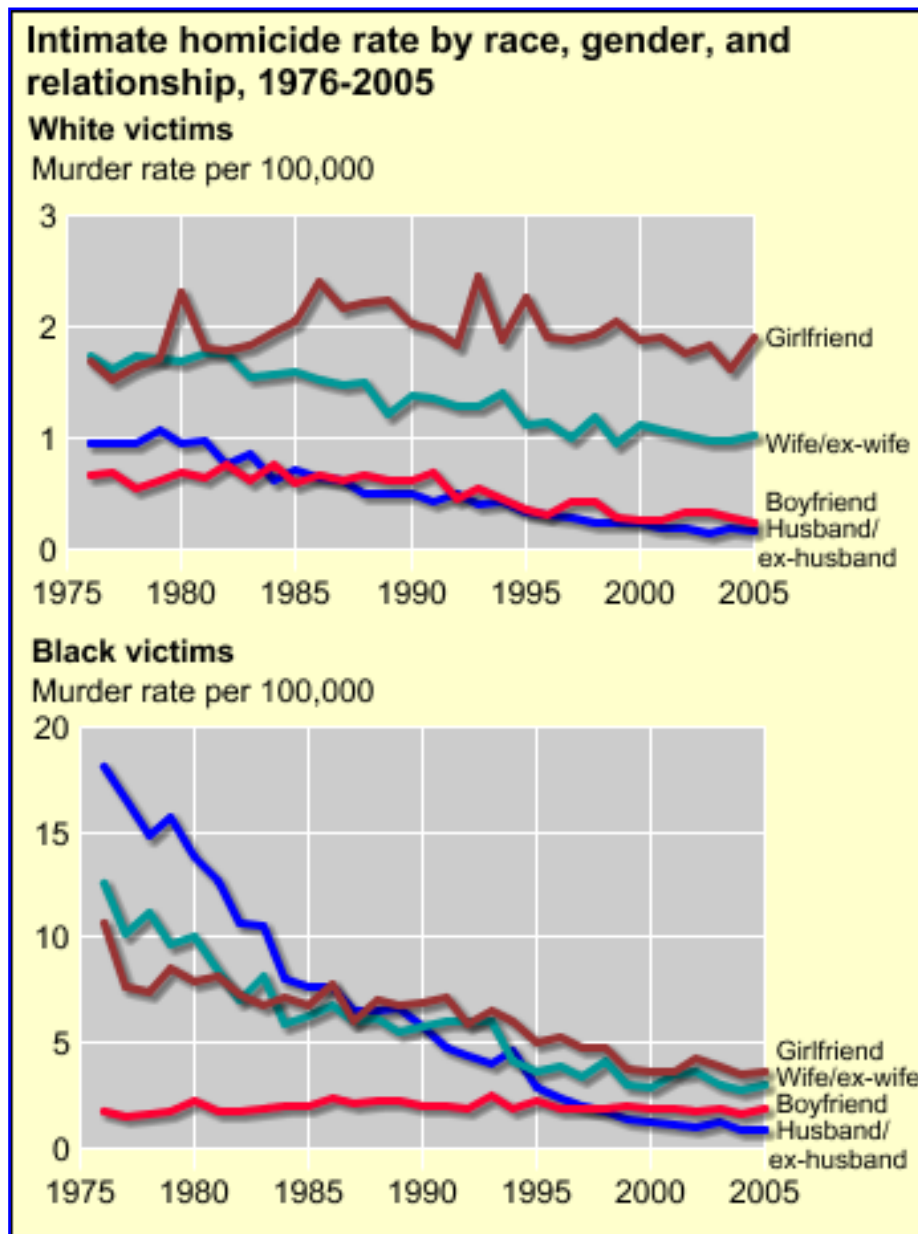
The intimate homicide rate --

- for white girlfriends was higher in 2005 than it was in 1976
- for white wives and ex-wives has declined but not as much as that for white husbands and ex-husbands
- for black husbands and ex-husbands was 20 times greater in 1976 than it was in 2005
- is higher for black girlfriends than any other group in 2005, although it has declined 66% since 1976.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]



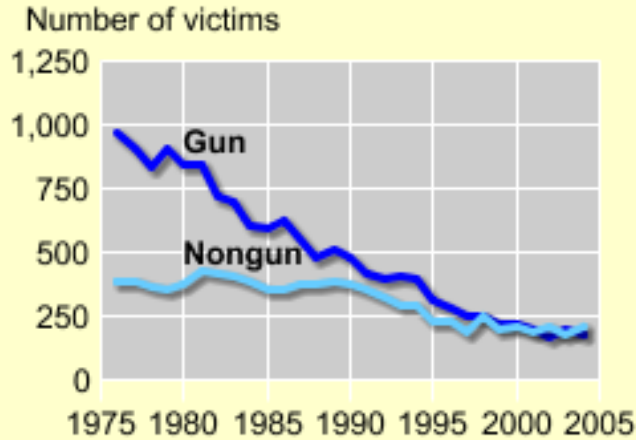
Note: This chart refers to persons ages 20-44. The number of married or divorced persons is the population base used to calculate spouse and ex-spouse rates and the number of never married or widowed persons is the population base used to calculate boyfriend/girlfriend rates.

**The number of male and female intimate victims killed with guns has fallen.**

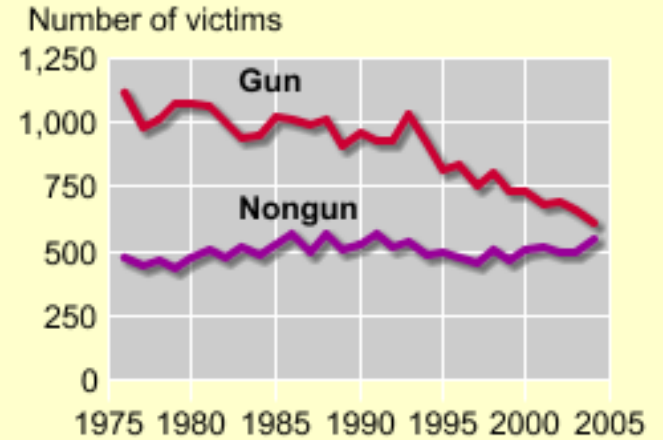
To view data, click on the chart.

### Intimate homicide victims by type of weapon, 1976-2005

#### Male victims



#### Female victims



[D]

In general, guns are most often used in intimate homicide but weapon type varies by relationship. From 1990 to 2005 --

- Over two-thirds of the spouse and ex-spouse victims were killed by guns.
- Boyfriends were more likely to be killed by knives than any other group of intimates.
- Girlfriends were more likely to be killed by force than any other group of intimates.

Homicides by relationship and weapon type, 1990-2005

Relationship of victim to offender	Total	Gun	Knife	Blunt object	Force	Other weapon
Husband	100%	69%	26%	2%	1%	3%
Ex-husband	100	86	10	1	0	3
Wife	100	68	14	5	10	4
Ex-wife	100	77	12	3	5	3
Boyfriend	100	45	47	3	3	3
Girlfriend	100	56	20	5	14	5

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis. Due to refinements in the analysis, the data presented may differ from previous editions.

See also: [Intimate Partner Violence](#)

**Related charts on this site**

- [Percent of all homicides involving intimates by urban, suburban, and rural area, 1976-2005](#)
- [Victim offender relationship by victim gender, 1976-2005](#)

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***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Law enforcement officers killed**

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## The number of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty has declined since the early 1970's

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Between 1996 and 2005, of the 575 officers killed --

- 26% were in arrest situations
- 18% were in ambush situations
- 18% were making traffic pursuits/stops
- 17% were on disturbance calls
- 12% were investigating suspicious persons/circumstances
- 10% were in other situations

Of the 662 assailants identified in the killing of law enforcement officers from 1996-2005 --

- more than half had a prior conviction
- 2 out of 5 had a prior arrest for a violent crime.

To view data, [click on the chart.](#)



[D]

**Most law enforcement officers are killed with firearms,**

## particularly handguns

The greatest proportion of the recent decline in murders of law enforcement officers is attributable to the decline in handgun murders.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 1973-2005

**Additional information** about the data used in *Homicide trends in the U.S.*

See also *Policing and Homicide, 1976-98: Justifiable Homicide of Felons by Police and Murder of Police by Felons*

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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.* Multiple victims and offenders

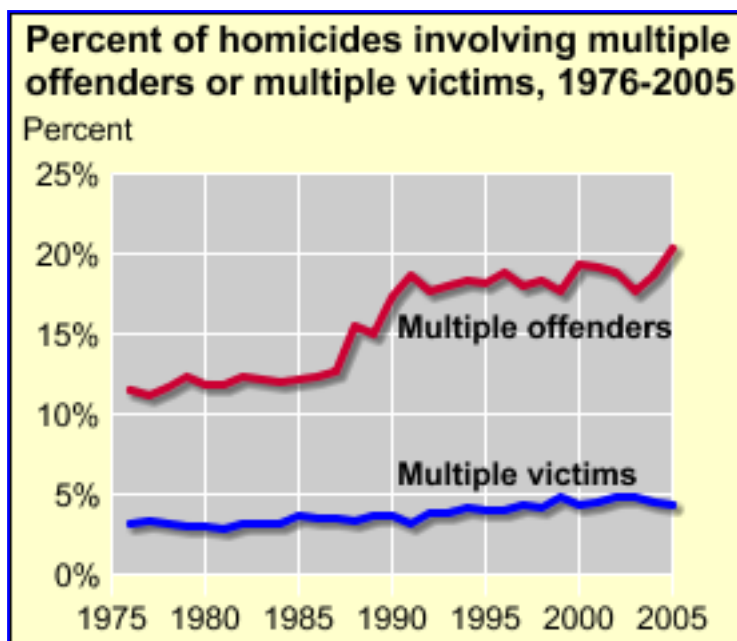
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# Few homicides involve multiple offenders and fewer involve multiple victims

- Homicides are more likely to involve multiple offenders than multiple victims.
- The proportion of homicides involving multiple offenders rose dramatically in the late 1980's and early 1990's and remains high; it was 11.5% in 1976 and 20.3% in 2005.
- The proportion of homicides involving multiple victims increased gradually during the last two decades from 3.1% of all homicides in 1976 to 4.4% in 2005.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

About 1 percent of all homicide incidents are known to have both multiple victims and multiple offenders

**Offenders**

---

## Victims Single Multiple Unknown

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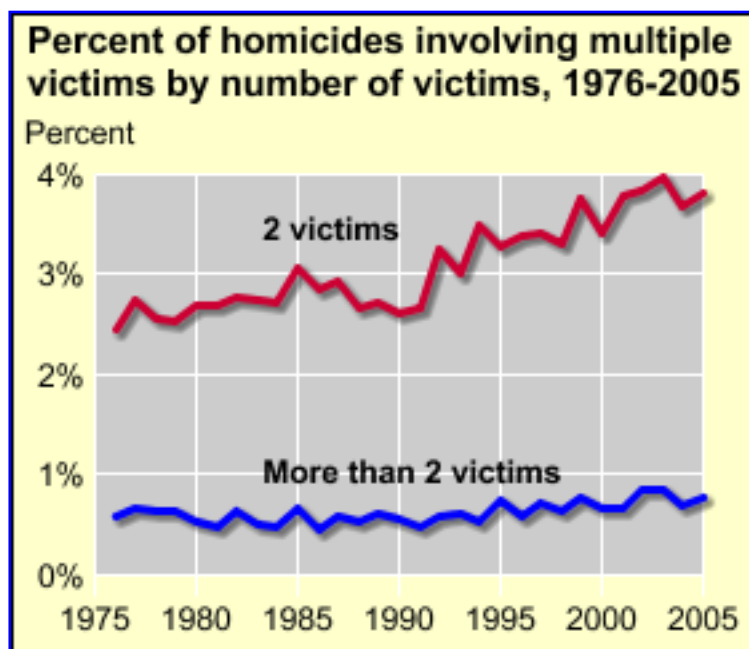
<b>Single</b>	58%	10%	29%
<b>Multiple</b>	2%	1%	1%

### The proportion of homicides involving two or more victims has increased

In 2005, of all homicide incidents--

- 4% involved 2 victims
- .6% involved 3 victims
- .1% involved 4 victims
- .05% involved 5 or more victims

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

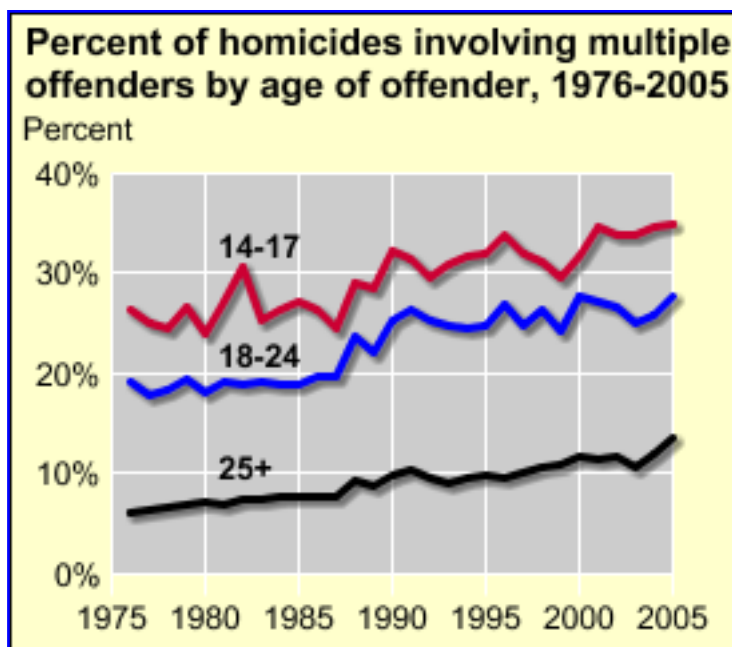
### Homicides committed by younger offenders are more likely to involve multiple offenders

In 2005 homicides involving multiple offenders represented --

- 35% of the homicides committed by offenders 14-17 years old
- 28% of the homicides committed by offenders 18-24 years old
- 14% of the homicides committed by offenders age 25 or older

To view data, click on the chart.

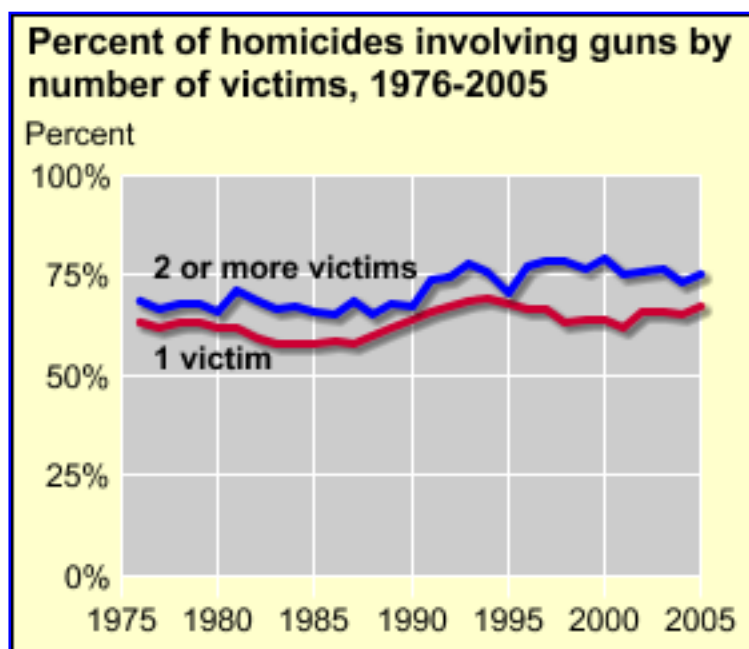
[D]



## Multiple victim homicides are more likely to involve guns than single victim homicides

To view data, click on the chart.

[D]



Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, 1976-2005

**Additional information** about the data used in *Homicide trends in the U.S.*

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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.* Homicide circumstances

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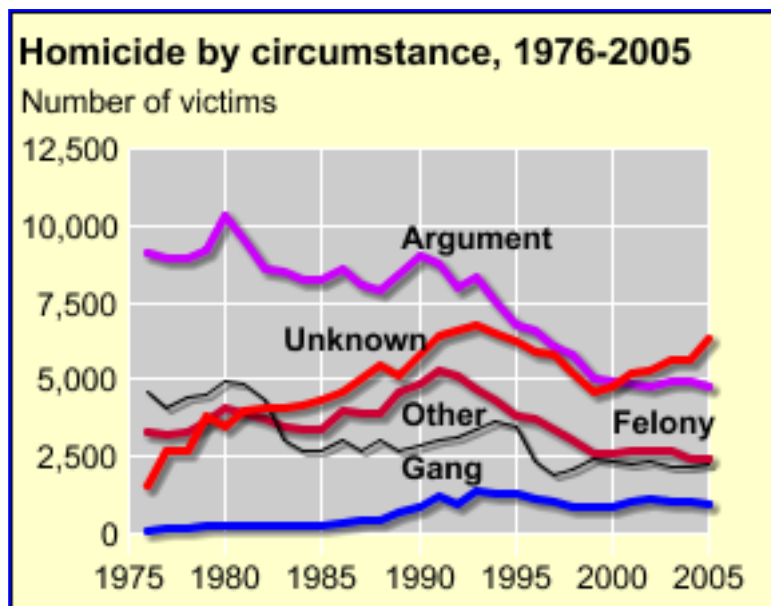
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# The mix of circumstances surrounding homicides has changed over the last two decades

The number of homicides --

- in which the circumstances were unknown is greater than any known category of circumstances
- resulting from arguments declined in recent years but remains the most frequently cited circumstance of the known circumstances
- that occurred during the commission of another felony like a robbery or burglary declined since 1991 but stabilized in recent years
- involving adult or juvenile gang violence increased almost 8 fold since 1976.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Note: Arguments include brawls due to the influence of narcotics or alcohol, disagreements about money or property and other arguments.

Felony types include homicides committed during a rape, robbery,

burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, arson, and violations of prostitution and commercial vice laws, other sex offenses, narcotic drug laws, and gambling laws.

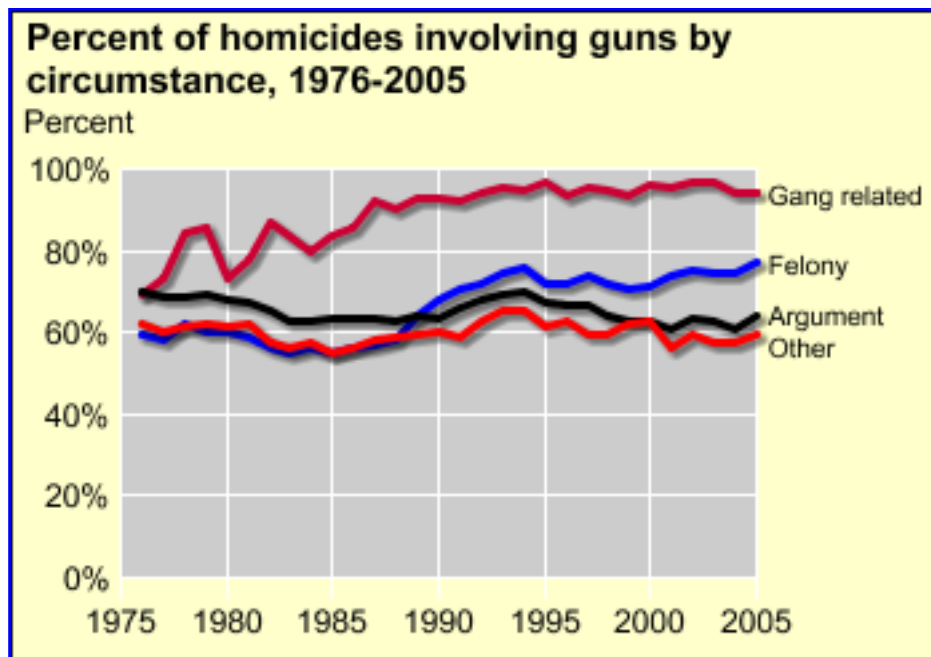
Gang homicides include gangland killings and juvenile gang killings.

## The proportion of homicides involving guns differs by circumstance

Gun involvement --

- in gang related homicides increased after 1980
- in homicides that occurred during the commission of a felony increased from 55% in 1985 to 77% in 2005.
- in homicides resulting from arguments declined to the lowest levels recorded recently
- in homicides resulting from other circumstances remained relatively constant

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this

analysis.

### Related charts on this site

- [Percent of homicides committed during a felony by age of victim, 1976-2005 aggregate](#)

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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.*

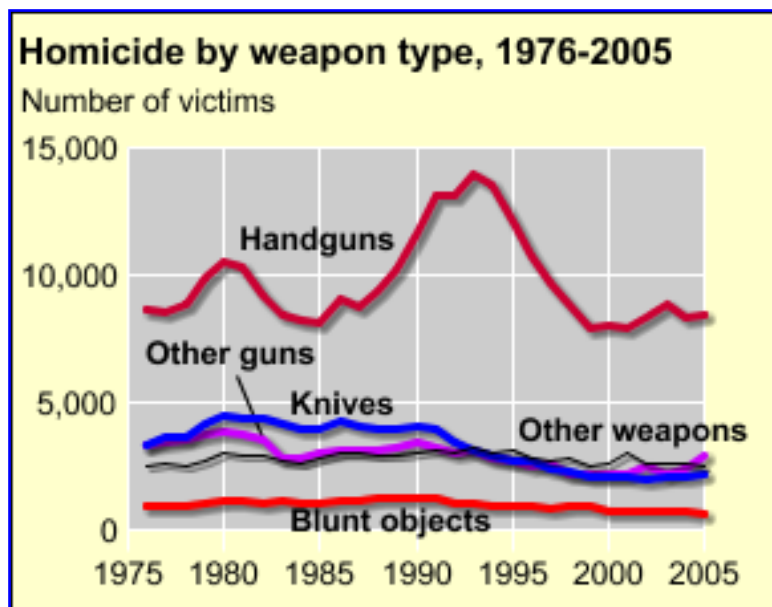
### Weapons used

## Homicides are most often committed with guns, especially handguns

Like the homicide rate generally, gun-involved incidents increased sharply in the late 1980's and early 1990's before falling to a low in 1999. The number of gun-involved homicides increased after that to levels experienced in the mid 1980's.

During this same time period, homicides involving weapons other than firearms have declined slightly.

To view data, click on the chart.



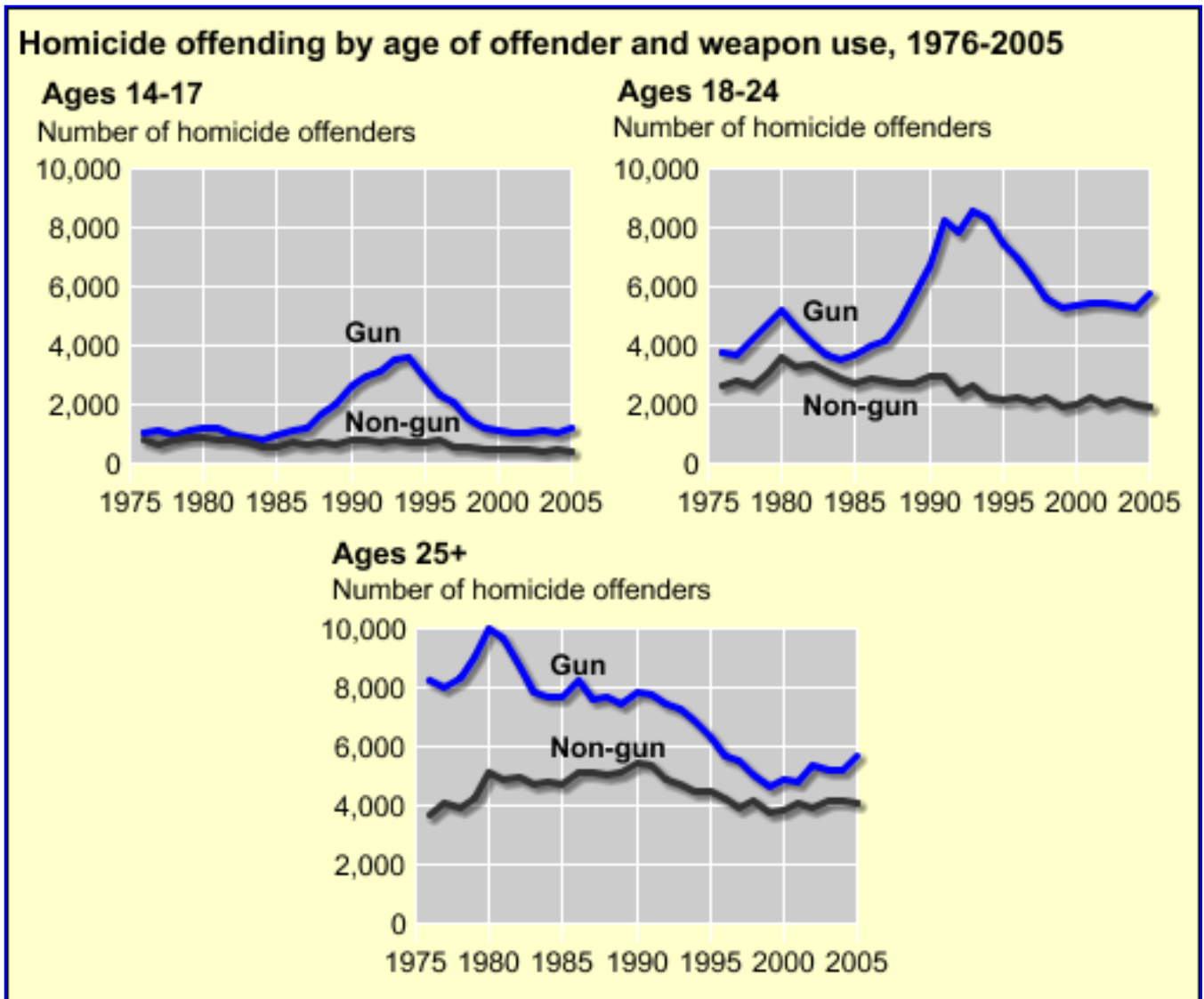
[D]

## Gun homicides by teens and young adults rose sharply beginning with the mid-1980's and fell after the early 1990's

- Gun homicides by persons 18-24 years old declined after the peak in 1993 but have not returned to the levels seen prior to the mid 1980's.
- The trend in nongun homicides shows little change, declining or fluctuating slightly for all age groups.

- Gun homicides by adults 25 and older declined through 1999, but have increased since then.
- The sharp increase in homicides from the mid-1980's through the early 1990's and much of the subsequent decline is attributable to gun violence by juveniles and young adults.

To view data, click on the chart.

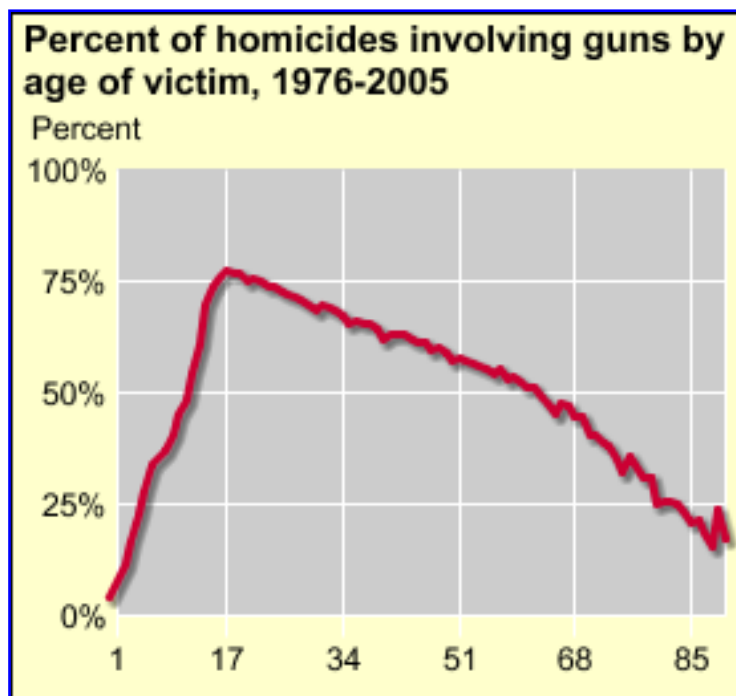


[D]

## Homicides of teens and young adults are more likely to be committed with a gun than homicides of persons of other ages

The percentage of homicide victims killed with a gun increases with age up to age 17 and declines thereafter.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

#### Related charts on this site

- [Intimate homicides by type of weapon and gender of victim, 1976-2005](#)
- [Law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty by weapon type, 1973-2005](#)
- [Percent of homicides involving guns by circumstance, 1976-2005](#)
- [Gun homicide victimization rates by region, 1976-2005](#)

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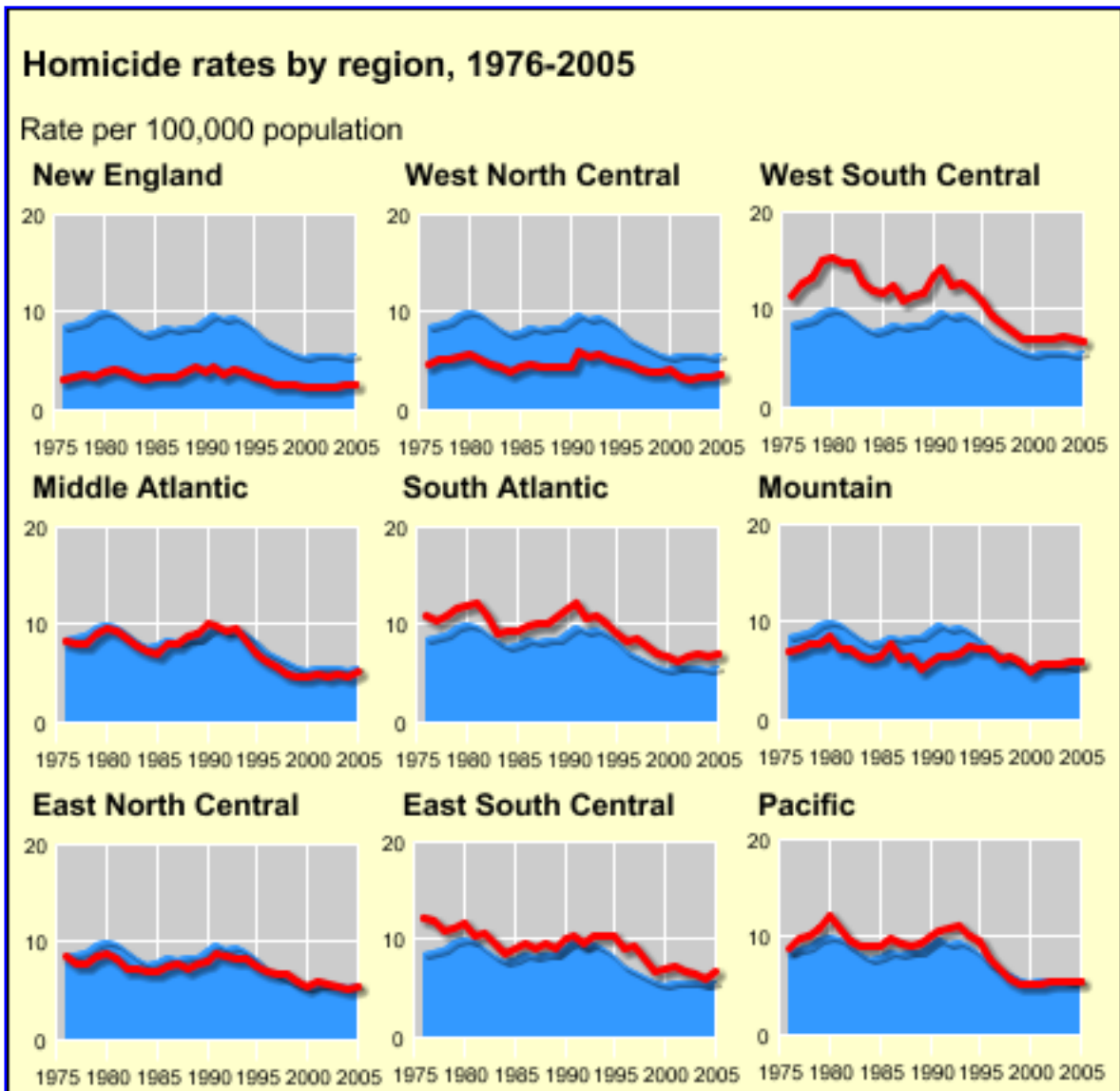
***Homicide trends in the U.S.***  
**Regional trends**

## **In recent years, all regions have experienced a decline in homicide rates**

- Rates of murder, and especially those involving guns, are higher in southern regions of the United States--in the **East South Central**, **West South Central**, and the **South Atlantic** regions.
- For over 20 years, the rates in the **Pacific** region were above average; in 1998 they fell below the national norm.
- The rates of the **Middle Atlantic** and **East North Central** regions were closest to the national average of all regions.
- Relatively low rates exist in the **New England**, **Mountain**, and **West North Central** regions. Rates in the mountain region have moved from below the national average to slightly above in recent years.

**To view data, click on the chart.**



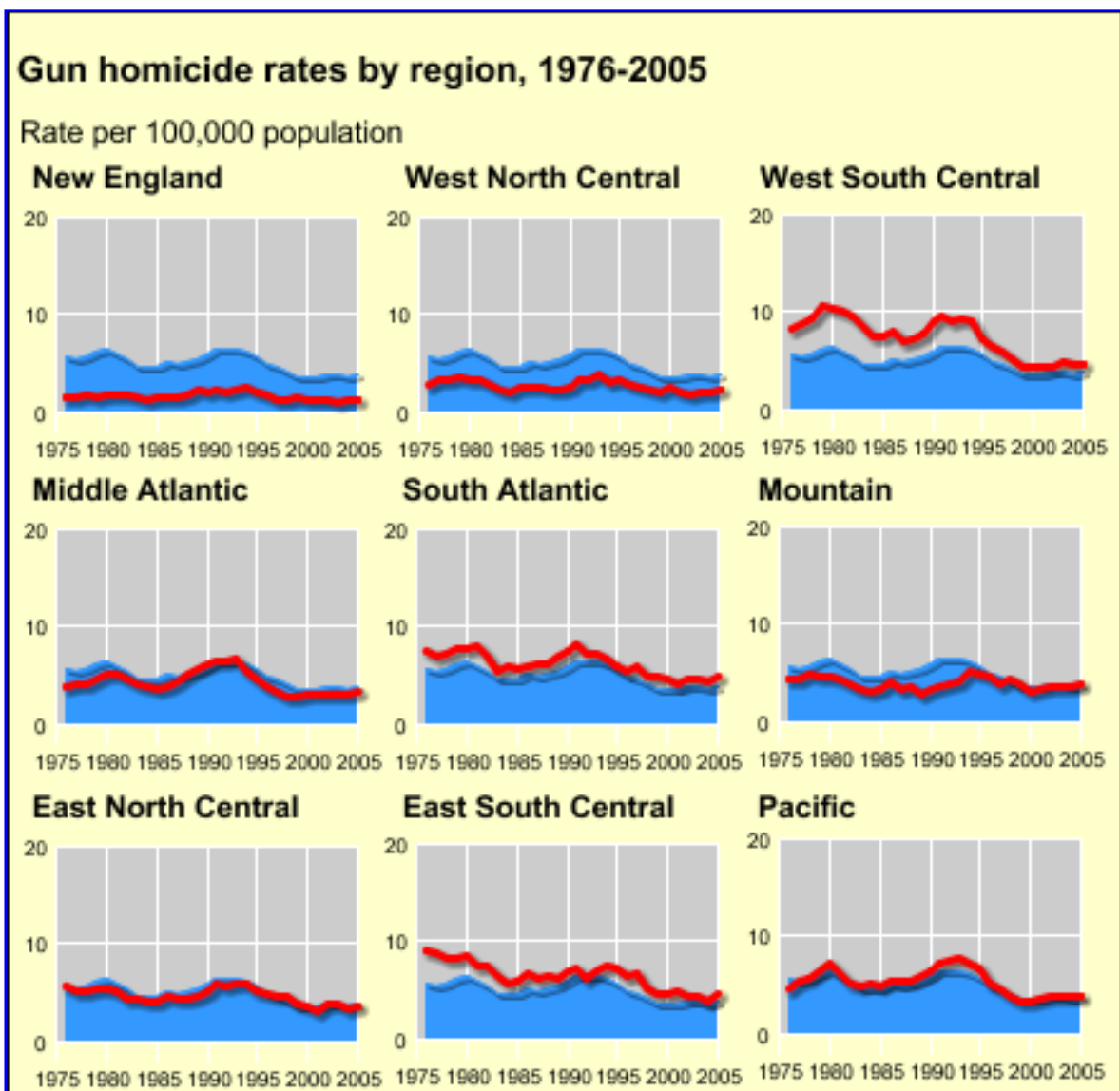


[D]

Note: The solid area (in blue) represents the trend for the entire United States while the lines (in red) are the trends for each region.

### Trends in gun homicides follow patterns similar to those for all homicides

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Note: The solid area (in blue) represents the trend for the entire United States while the lines (in red) are the trends for each region.

### In many regions, trends in firearms-related homicide offending rates for teens differ from the general firearms-related homicide offending pattern

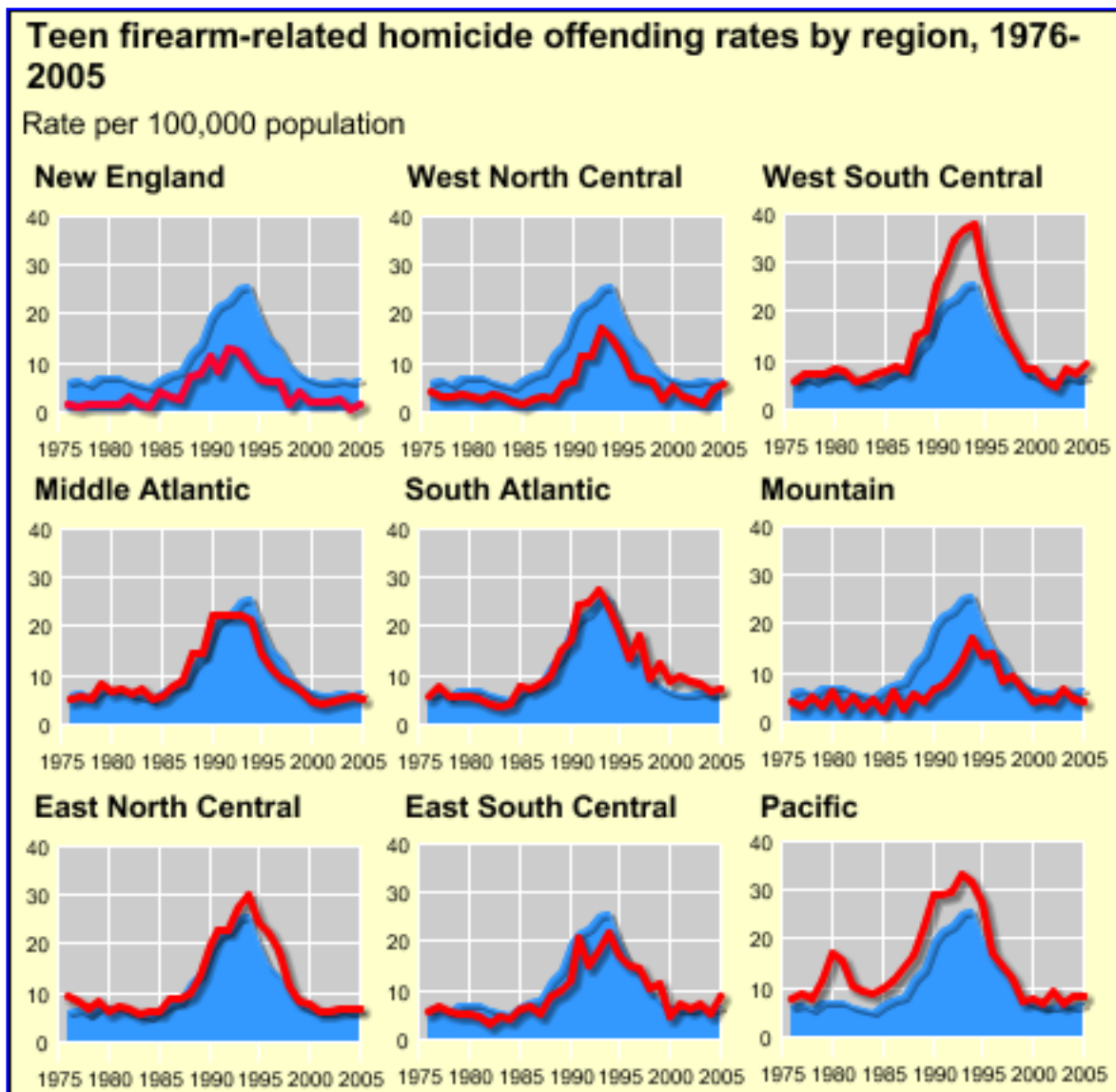
For all regions, teen firearms-related homicide offending rates climbed from the mid-1980's and through the early 1990's have subsequently fallen. However, the upswing and subsequent downturn occurred at different times in different regions.

Teen offending rates started their steep ascents after--

- 1984 in the Middle Atlantic and Pacific regions
- 1985 in the East North Central region
- 1986 in the South Atlantic region

- 1987 in the New England, East South Central, and West South Central regions
- 1988 in the West North Central region
- 1989 in the Mountain region

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Note: The solid area (in blue) represents the trend for the entire United States while the lines (in red) are the trends for each region.

States in the regions listed above:

Region	States
--------	--------

<b>New England</b>	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
<b>Middle Atlantic</b>	New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
<b>East North Central</b>	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
<b>West North Central</b>	Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
<b>South Atlantic</b>	Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia
<b>East South Central</b>	Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee
<b>West South Central</b>	Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas
<b>Mountain</b>	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
<b>Pacific</b>	Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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## Homicide trends in the U.S.

### Trends by city size

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# Changes in homicide trends have been driven by changes in the number of homicides in large American cities

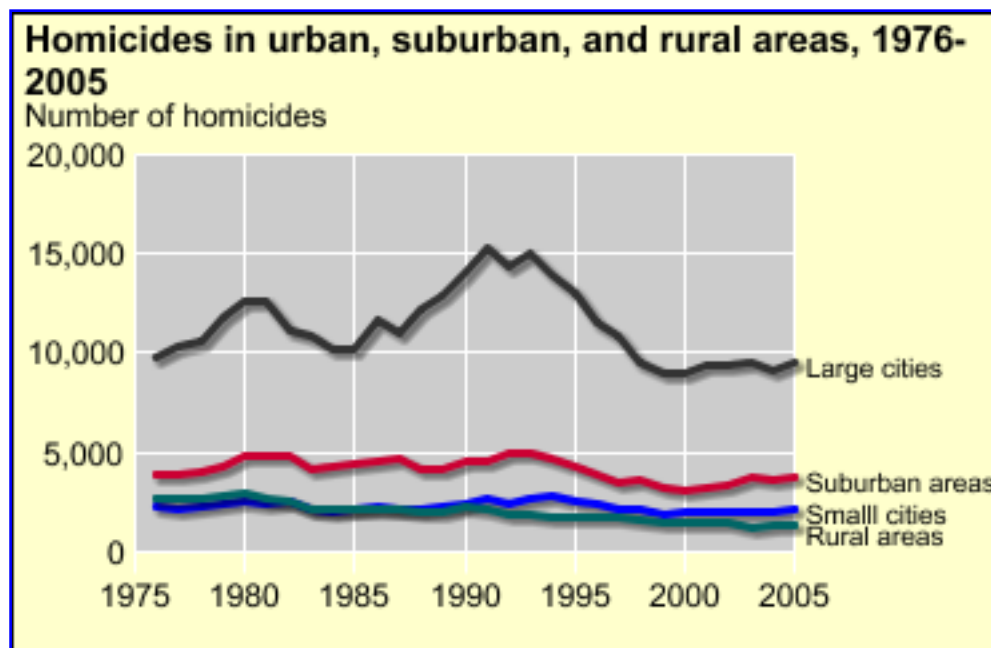
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From 1976-2005 --

- over half of the homicides occurred in cities with a population of 100,000 or more
- almost one-quarter of the homicides occurred in cities with a population of over 1 million.

 [To large city data](#)

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Note: Large cities have a population of 100,000 or more while small cities have a population of less than 100,000.

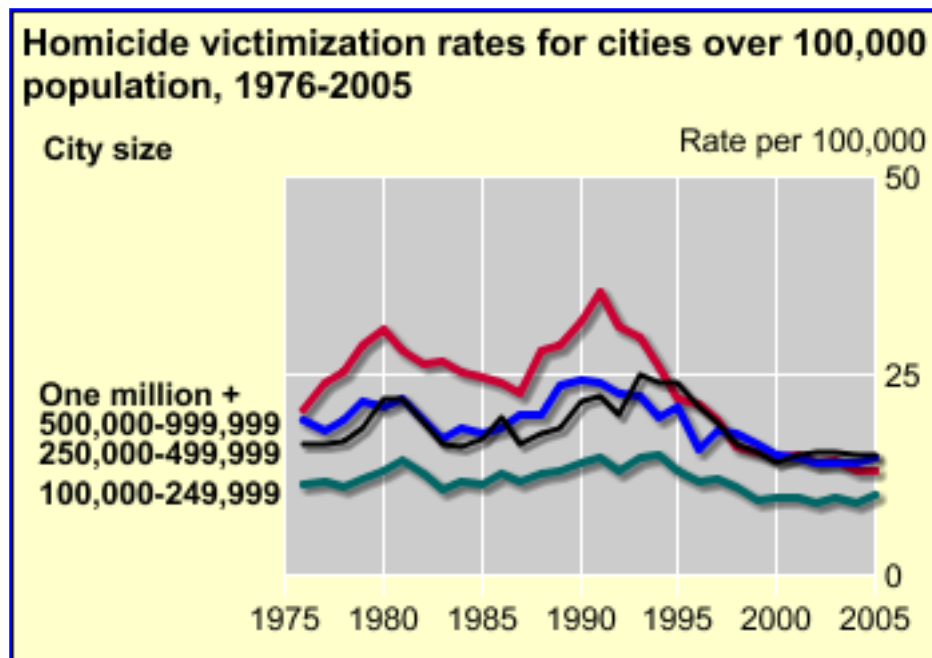
## Until recently, homicide rates for large American cities varied by size

The homicide victimization rates of cities with a population of --

- one million or more have plummeted, reaching the lowest level in the past two decades
- 100,000 to 249,999 are the lowest rates among large cities.

Since 2003, homicide rates for cities with populations of 250,000 to 499,999 and 500,000 to 999,999 have remained stable.

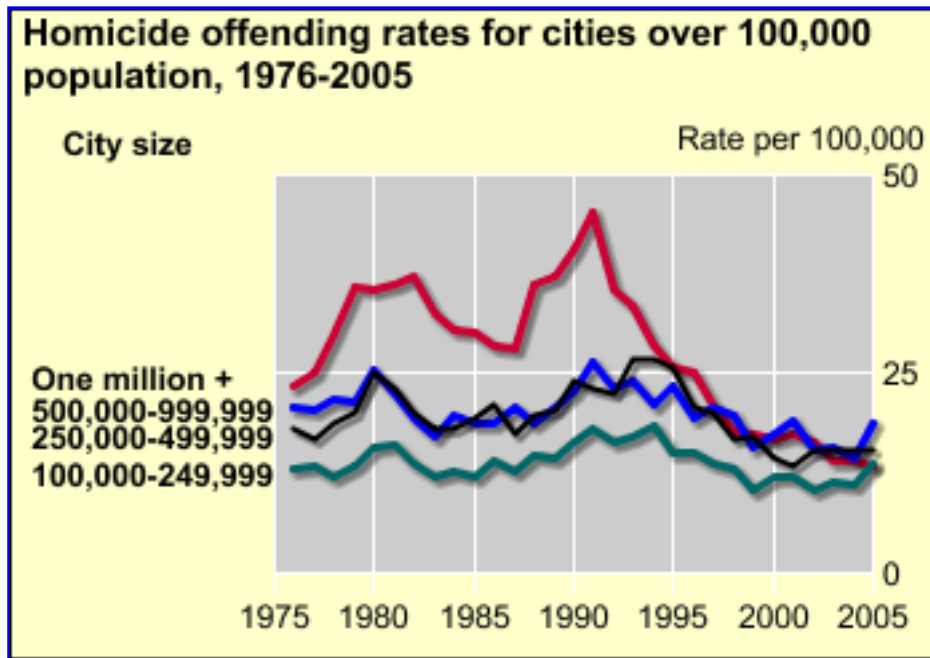
To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

**Trends in homicide offending rates of cities show patterns similar to their victimization rates**

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

### Certain homicide types vary by size of place

For the years 1976-2005 combined, large cities are -

- much more commonly the site of drug-related and gang-related killings
- relatively less likely to be the location of family-related and work-related homicides.

Homicide Type by Urbanicity, 1976-2005

	Percent of all homicides			
	Large city	Small city	Suburban	Rural
<b>All homicides</b>	57.3%	11.5%	21.0%	10.2%
<b>Victim/offender relationship</b>				
Intimate	40.7%	14.5%	28.0%	16.8%
Family	38.7%	13.2%	29.1%	19.0%
Infanticide	47.9%	15.0%	25.5%	11.6%
Eldercide	46.9%	13.5%	24.2%	15.3%
<b>Circumstance</b>				
Felony murder	61.0%	11.1%	20.3%	7.7%
Sex related	48.4%	12.2%	27.2%	12.2%
Drug related	67.4%	9.9%	18.1%	4.5%
Gang related	69.3%	13.1%	16.9%	0.7%

Argument	53.4%	12.7%	21.0%	12.9%
Workplace	31.4%	13.4%	37.2%	17.9%
<b>Weapon</b>				
Gun homicide	59.3%	10.6%	19.8%	10.4%
Arson	54.8%	13.1%	21.7%	10.4%
Poison	38.9%	15.7%	29.3%	16.0%
<b>Multiple victims or offenders</b>				
Multiple victims	47.4%	11.9%	27.0%	13.7%
Multiple offenders	61.7%	10.2%	19.1%	8.9%

## The proportion of homicides that are intimate homicides differs by type of area

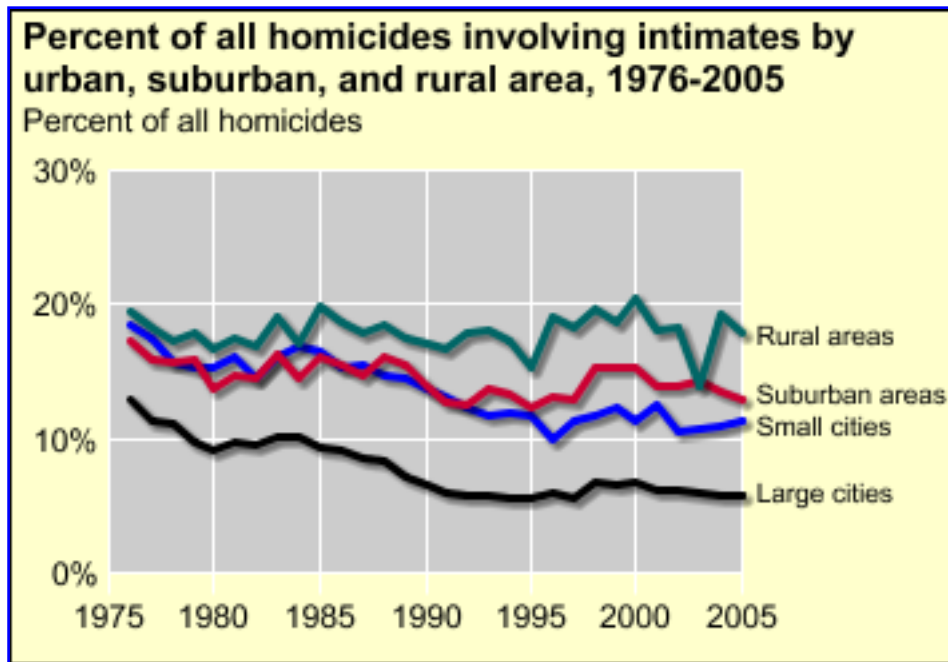
Intimate homicides (spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriends, and girlfriends) made up a larger percentage of murders in rural areas than in suburban or urban areas.

Intimate homicides declined in all types of places. From 1976 to 2005, the number of intimate murders --

- in large cities fell by more than half, while the number of nonintimate murders increased slightly
- in small cities dropped by more than 40%, although the number of nonintimate homicides increased slightly
- in rural areas dropped by 55%, while nonintimate homicides dropped by 50%
- in suburban areas declined by 29%, while nonintimate homicides declined by 1%.

To view data, click on the chart.





[D]

Note: Large cities have a population of 100,000 or more while small cities have a population of less than 100,000.

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data](#).

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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## ***Homicide trends in the U.S.*** Clearances

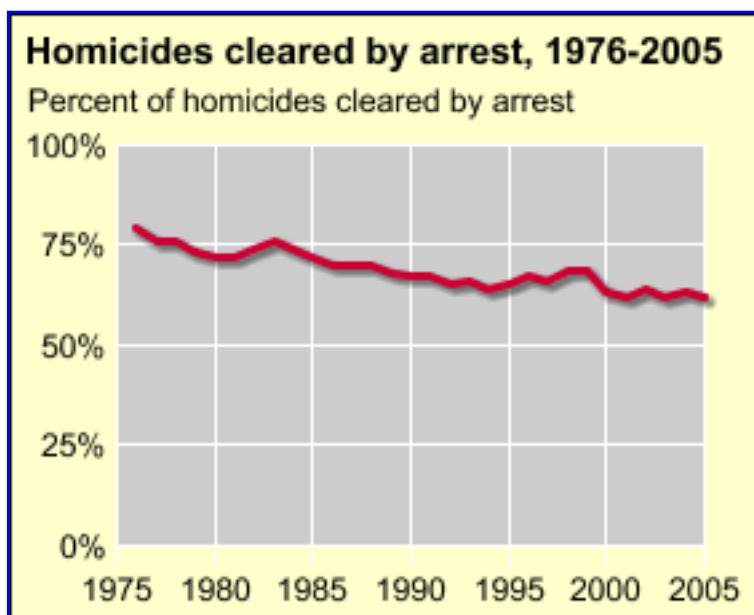
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# The percentage of homicides cleared by arrest has been declining

- In 2005, 62% of all homicides were cleared compared to 79% in 1976.
- Homicide has the highest clearance rate of all serious crimes.

To view data, [click on the chart.](#)

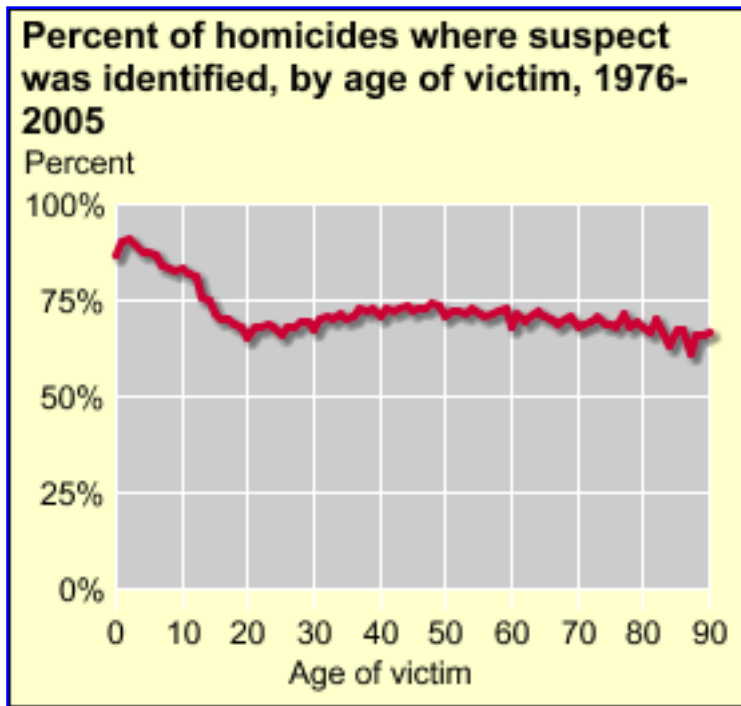


[D]

Note: Law enforcement agencies clear or solve an offense when at least one person is arrested, charged with the commission of the offense, and turned over to the court for prosecution. Law enforcement agencies may also clear a crime by exceptional means such as when an identified offender is killed during apprehension or commits suicide.

## **Police are more likely to identify a suspect if the victim is a child**

To view data, [click on the chart.](#)



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.  
See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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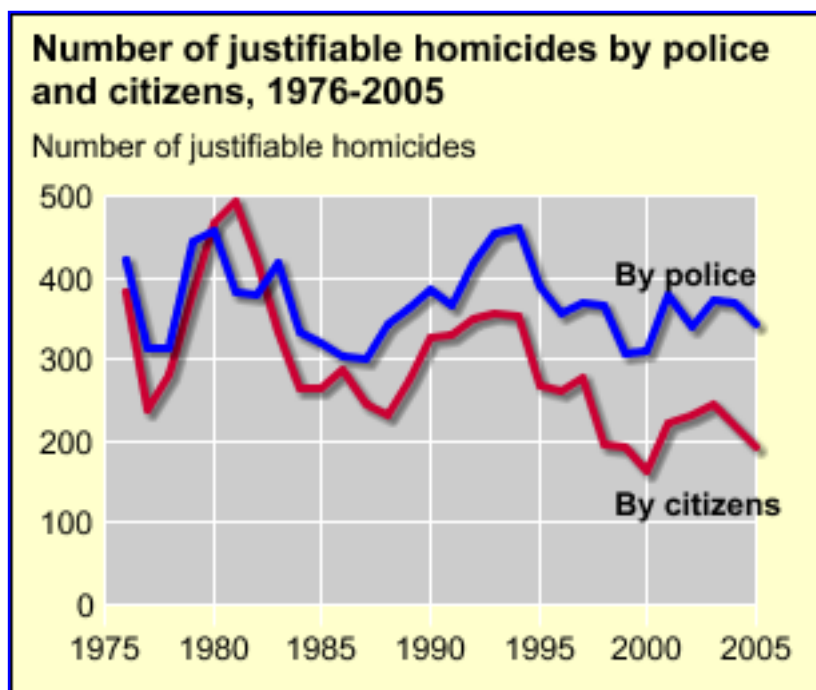
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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.* Justifiable homicides

### The number of justifiable homicides has been declining

- Generally, the number of justifiable homicides committed by police exceeded the number committed by citizens.
- In the last 10 years, the number of justifiable homicides has declined 13%.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

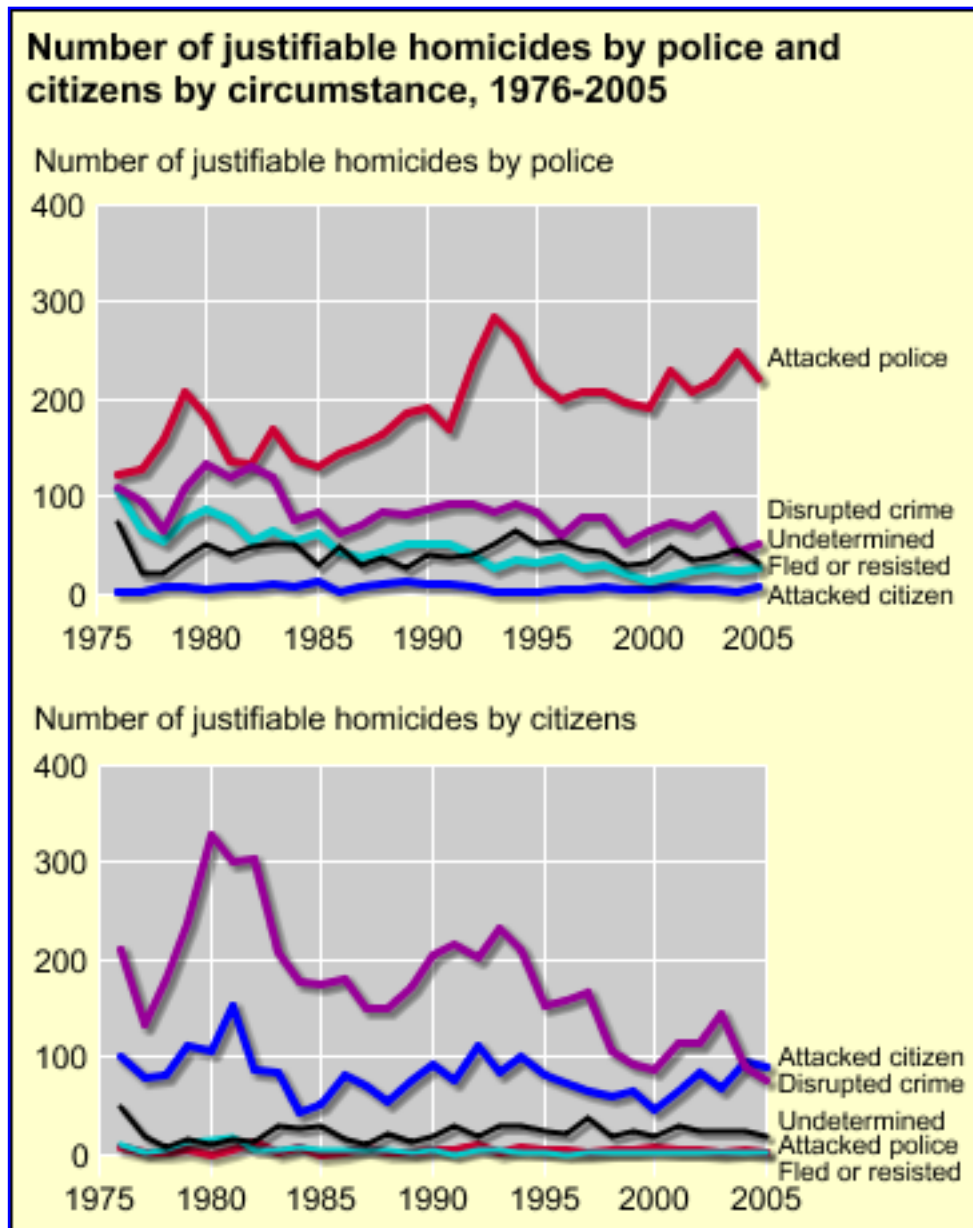
Note: Justifiable homicides are defined as the killing of a felon by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty or the killing of a felon during the commission of a felony by a private citizen.

**The circumstances surrounding justifiable homicides differ for those committed by police and those committed by citizens.**

- Most justifiable homicides by police are the result of attacks on officers.

- The most frequent circumstances cited for justifiable homicides by citizens is to disrupt a crime while in progress or when a citizen was attacked.

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

### Most justifiable homicides are intraracial

- In incidents involving citizens, three-quarters involved citizens and felons of the same race.
- In incidents involving police, two-thirds involved police officers and felons of the same race.

### Percent of justifiable homicides

Race of citizen who killed felon

Race of felon	White	Black	Other	Total
White	36 %	3 %	1 %	40 %
Black	17	40	1	59
Other	1	--	1	1
Total	54	43	3	100

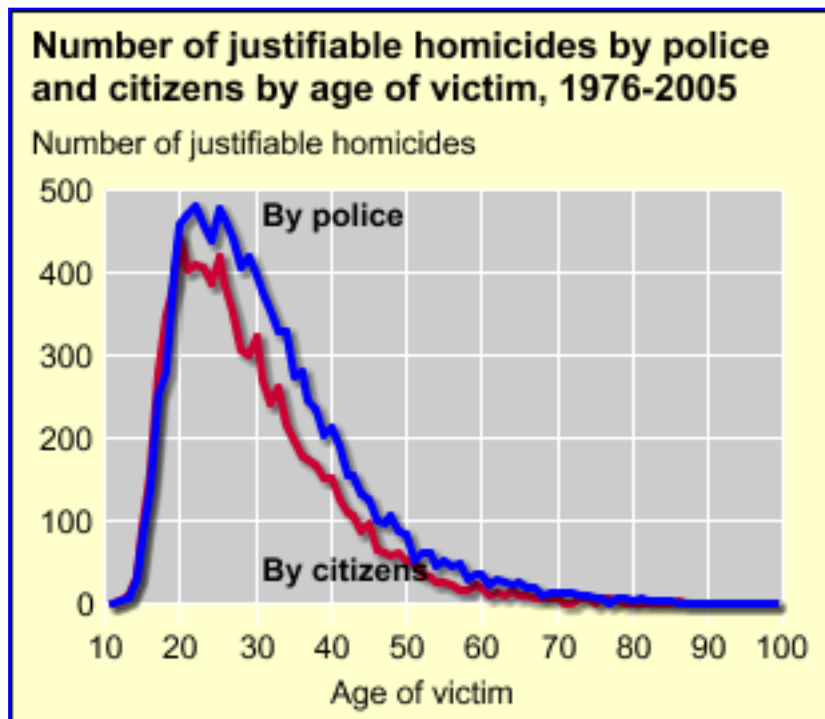
Race of officer who killed felon

Race of felon	White	Black	Other	Total
White	55 %	3 %	--	59 %
Black	28	11	--	39
Other	2	--	--	2
Total	85	14	1 %	100

-- Less than 0.5%

The age distribution of the felons killed by police is slightly older than that for felons killed by citizens

To view data, click on the chart.



[D]

Source: FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005.

See also [Additional information about the data.](#)

Note: The victims of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks are not included in this analysis.

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## *Homicide trends in the U.S.*

### Additional information about the data

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#### Data Sources

#### The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR)

Launched over 70 years ago, the Uniform Crime Reporting Program collects and publishes criminal offense, arrest, and law enforcement personnel statistics. Under the UCR program, law enforcement agencies submit information to the FBI monthly. Offense information is collected on the eight Index offenses of homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Information on the the number of persons arrested includes many additional crime types such as drug abuse violations and driving under the influence. The FBI annually publishes data from the UCR in *Crime in the United States*. The UCR is one of the two major national indicators about crime. For more information about these two indicators, see *The Nation's Two Crime Measures*.

The UCR program collects only those data which come to the attention of law enforcement through victim reports or observation. Of all the crimes included in the UCR, homicide is the most complete. Homicide counts suffer from a minimal level of underreporting. In addition, the number of crimes where law enforcement makes an arrest or clears the offense is the highest for homicide compared to the other serious offenses collected by the UCR. Other offenses including forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault are currently available only in summary count form without details about the incident, victims, or offenders. Homicide information -- through the Supplementary Homicide Reports data -- is available in incident form.

#### FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR)

Most of the data used here are from the Supplementary Homicide Reports which is a part of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. Supplemental data about homicide incidents are submitted monthly with detail on location, victim, and offender characteristics. These reports include information on the month and year of an offense, on the reporting agency and its residential population, county and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) codes,



geographic division, and population group, on the age, race, and sex of victims and offenders, and on the victim/offender relationship, weapon use, and circumstance of the crime. For the years 1976-2005, contributing agencies provided supplemental data for 538,210 of the estimated 594,277 murders. Supplemental data were also reported for 597,359 of the estimated 659,862 offenders.

## **Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA)**

Also a part of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, LEOKA utilizes data from several sources including the Uniform Crime Reports. Once notified of a line-of-duty death, the FBI contacts the employing agency to obtain additional details. LEOKA includes data about Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers who were killed feloniously or by accidents or who were assaulted. An **annual report** is published by the FBI.

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## **Methodology**

Homicide as defined here includes murder and nonnegligent manslaughter which is the willful killing of one human being by another. The general analyses excluded deaths caused by negligence, suicide, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempts to murder. Justifiable homicides based on the reports of law enforcement agencies are analyzed separately. Deaths from the terrorist attacks of 9/11/01 are not included in any of the analyses although they are available on the data file on which the analyses are based. These data are based solely on police investigation, as opposed to the determination of a court, medical examiner, coroner, jury, or other judicial body.

Not all agencies which report offense information to the FBI also submit supplemental data on homicides. About 91% of homicides reported in the UCR are included in the SHR. To account for the total number of homicides, this analysis weighted the SHR data to match national and State estimates prepared by the FBI. All victim-based analyses are adjusted in this manner.

While many agencies report supplemental data on homicides, much of the data concerning offenders may not be reported because no suspects were identified. The most significant problem in using SHR data to analyze offender characteristics is the sizable and growing number of unsolved homicides contained in the data file. Ignoring unsolved homicides, of course, would seriously understate calculated rates of offending by particular subgroups of the population, distort trends over time among these same subgroups, and bias observed patterns of offending to the extent that the rate of missing offender data is associated with offender characteristics.

To adjust for unsolved homicides, a method for offender imputation has been devised, using available information about the victims murdered in both solved and unsolved homicides. Through this imputation algorithm, the demographic characteristics of unidentified offenders are inferred on the basis of similar homicide cases -- similar in terms of the victim's demographic profile, circumstances of the homicide such as felony or argument, location of the homicide (region and urbaness), gun involvement, and year of the offense -- that had been solved. In other words, offender profiles for unsolved crimes are estimated based on the offender profiles in solved cases matched on victim age, sex, and race; circumstances of the homicide; location of the homicide; and gun involvement; as well as year. All offender-based estimates were imputed using this procedure.

### [To more detail on the weighting and imputation procedures](#)

The data file analyzed is available from the [National Archive of Criminal Justice Data](#) (NACJD).

To analyze these data online, go to the [NACJD Data Analysis System](#).

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### Related sites

#### Bureau of Justice Statistics

- [Homicide Trends and Characteristics](#) by State and local agency for jurisdictions with more than 250,000 population data is available from [Data Online](#).
- [Crime and Victims Page](#)
- [Key Facts at a Glance](#)
- [Trends in Juvenile Violence](#) including 1997 update by James Alan Fox, Professor of Criminal Justice, Northeastern University
- [Bridging Gaps in Police Crime Data](#) a discussion paper on the FBI's UCR program including the SHR prepared by Michael D. Maltz, University of Illinois at Chicago under the BJS Visiting Fellows Program
- [Policing and Homicide, 1976-98: Justifiable Homicide of Felons by Police and Murder of Police by Felons](#) presents annual trends from 1976 to 1998 in two types of homicide: justifiable homicides of felons by police, and murders of police officers by felons.

**Federal Bureau of Investigation - Uniform Crime Reports**

**National Institute of Justice - *Homicide in Eight U.S. Cities*** (Acrobat file)

***Statistical Briefing Book*** from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

**National Archive of Criminal Justice Data**

**Analyze Homicide Data Online**

**Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics**

**National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)**

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