



# Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report

*National Crime Victimization Survey*

August 1995, NCJ-154348

## Violence against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey

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Estimating rates of violence against women, particularly sexual assault and other incidents which are perpetrated by intimate offenders, continues to be a difficult task. Many factors inhibit women from reporting these victimizations both to police and to interviewers, including the private nature of the event, the perceived stigma associated with one's victimization, and the belief that no purpose will be served in reporting it.

### The redesign of the National Crime Victimization Survey

After an extensive 10-year redesign project, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) has been revised. A redesigned questionnaire was in wide use by January 1992. One goal of the redesign was to produce more accurate reporting of incidents of rape and sexual assault and of any kind of crimes committed by intimates or family members.

The new NCVS questionnaire encourages reporting of incidents in several ways. *Questions were added* to let respondents know that the interviewer

is interested in a broad spectrum of incidents, not just those involving weapons, severe violence, or violence perpetrated by strangers. *New methods of cuing* respondents about potential experiences with victimizations

increased the range of incident types that are being reported to interviewers. And *behavior-specific wording* has replaced criminal justice terminology to make the questions more understandable.

### Highlights

- Women age 12 or older annually sustained almost 5 million violent victimizations in 1992 and 1993. About 75% of all lone-offender violence against women and 45% of violence involving multiple-offenders was perpetrated by offenders whom the victim knew. In 29% of all violence against women by a lone offender, the perpetrator was an intimate (husband, ex-husband, boyfriend, or ex-boyfriend).
- Women were about 6 times more likely than men to experience violence committed by an intimate.
- Women annually reported about 500,000 rapes and sexual assaults to interviewers. Friends or acquaintances of the victims committed over half of these rapes or sexual assaults. Strangers were responsible for about 1 in 5.
- Women of all races and Hispanic and non-Hispanic women were about equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate.
- Women age 19 to 29 and women in families with incomes below \$10,000 were more likely than other women to be victims of violence by an intimate.
- Among victims of violence committed by an intimate, the victimization rate of women separated from their husbands was about 3 times higher than that of divorced women and about 25 times higher than that of married women. Because the NCVS reflects a respondent's marital status at the time of the interview, which is up to 6 months after the incident, it is possible that separation or divorce followed the violence.
- Female victims of violence by an intimate were more often injured by the violence than females victimized by a stranger.

A side-by-side comparison of the new and old screening questions as they relate to types of activities and types of situations and offenders is on page 8.

This report presents the first release of 1992-93 estimates of violence against women resulting from the new NCVS methodology. To illustrate how

patterns of victimization differ by the sex of the victim, the first section of the report provides rates of violence for both women and men.

Later sections contain more detailed information about the specific types and contextual characteristics of violence against women and the types of offenders most likely to victimize women. Definitions of terminology appear in *Methodology* on pages 6-7.

### Rates of violence for women and men, 1992-93

Women annually reported about 500,000 rapes and sexual assaults, almost 500,000 robberies, and about 3.8 million assaults to NCVS interviewers (table 1). (As used in this report, *women* and *men* refer to persons age 12 or older.) Per capita rates of reported rapes and other sexual assaults against women were about 10 times higher than equivalent rates against men. The rates of robbery and aggravated assault against men were about double those against women.

Offenders acted alone in most violent victimizations (table 2). A greater percentage of victimizations against males than females were committed by multiple offenders. Multiple offenders committed 27% of the violent victimizations against men and 16% of those against women.

For both sexes, robberies were more likely than other offenses to involve multiple offenders: 34% of the robberies of women and 54% of the robberies of men. Among women, the lowest percentages of multiple offenders occurred for rape or sexual assault (10%) and for simple assault (13%). A fifth of the simple assaults of males involved more than one offender.

Violent victimizations against men involving multiple offenders were predominately committed by strangers (table 3). There was no significant difference between the extent to which multiple-offender victimizations against women involved known and unknown offenders. When considered by offense and the sex of the victim, simple assaults against women by multiple offenders involved a higher percentage of known offenders (57%) than strangers (43%). In contrast, simple assaults against men involving multiple offenders were more likely to be perpetrated by strangers (61% versus 39% known).

**Table 1. Average annual rate of violent crime and number of violent victimizations, by sex of victim and type of crime, 1992-93**

Type of crime	Average annual rate per 1,000 persons age 12 or older		Average annual number of incidents	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Crimes of violence	43.7	64.9	4,748,500	6,602,100
Homicide	.04	.16	4,700	17,100
Rape/Sexual assault	4.6	.5	500,200	48,500
Robbery	4.4	8.6	475,900	870,800
Aggravated assault	8.0	16.9	863,000	1,715,400
Simple assault	26.7	38.8	2,904,700	3,950,400

Note: Average annual numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100. Homicides are not measured in the victimization survey; see the box on page 4 for the source.

**Table 2. Violent victimization of females and males by lone or multiple offenders, by type of crime, 1992-93**

Type of crime	Average annual percent of victimizations			
	Female victims		Male victims	
	Lone offender	Multiple offenders	Lone offender	Multiple offenders
Crimes of violence	84%	16%	73%	27%
Rape/Sexual assault	90	10	93	*
Robbery	66	34	46	54
Aggravated assault	79	21	69	31
Simple assault	87	13	80	20

Note: Excludes homicide; see the box on page 4. Excludes incidents in which the number of offenders was not ascertained.  
\*Ten or fewer sample cases.

**Table 3. Multiple-offender violent victimization of females and males involving known or unknown offenders, by type of crime, 1992-93**

Type of crime	Average annual percent of multiple-offender victimizations			
	Female victims		Male victims	
	Victim knew at least one offender	Victim knew none of the offenders	Victim knew at least one offender	Victim knew none of the offenders
Crimes of violence	45%	55%	31%	69%
Rape/Sexual assault	37	63	*	*
Robbery	20	80	20	80
Aggravated assault	46	54	29	71
Simple assault	57	43	39	61

Note: Excludes homicide; see the box on page 4.  
\*Ten or fewer sample cases.

### Victim-offender relationship for lone-offender victimizations

Among victims of offenders acting alone, men were just as likely to be victimized by a stranger as by someone they knew (table 4). By contrast, women were more likely to be victim-

ized by known offenders than by strangers. About three-quarters of all lone-offender violence against women was perpetrated by an offender whom the victim knew. In 29% of all violence against women by a lone offender, the perpetrator was a husband, ex-husband, boyfriend,

or ex-boyfriend — an intimate. Compared to men, women were about 6 times more likely to experience violence committed by an intimate.

Violence at the hands of an intimate involved about 9 in 1,000 women annually (table 5). This rate translates into about 1 million women who became the victims of such violence every year.

Men were about twice as likely as women to experience acts of violence by strangers. Men were victims of almost 2 million acts of stranger-perpetrated violence annually, while women experienced about 800,000.

**Table 4. Victim-offender relationship and sex of victim, by type of violent victimization committed by lone offenders, 1992-93**

Victim-offender relationship	Average annual percent of victimizations				
	Total	Rape/Sexual assault	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Simple assault
<b>Female victims</b>					
Intimate	29%	26%	28%	28%	29%
Spouse	9	5	6	5	11
Ex-spouse	4	5	5	5	4
Boy/girlfriend (or ex-)	16	16	18	17	15
Other relative	9	3	5	7	11
Acquaintance/friend	40	53	19	36	41
Stranger	23	18	48	30	19
<b>Male victims</b>					
Intimate	4%	*	3%	5%	3%
Spouse	1	*	*	1	1
Ex-spouse	1	*	*	*	1
Boy/girlfriend (or ex-)	2	*	2	3	1
Other relative	3	*	2	4	3
Acquaintance/friend	44	54	26	40	49
Stranger	49	46	69	51	45

Note: Excludes homicide. Intimate includes spouse or ex-spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend, and ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.  
\*Ten or fewer sample cases.

**Table 5. Average annual rate of violent victimization, by sex of victim, victim-offender relationship, and type of crime committed by lone offenders, 1992-93**

Type of crime	Average annual rate per 1,000 persons age 12 or older			
	Intimate	Other relative	Acquaintance/friend	Stranger
<b>Female victims</b>				
Crimes of violence	9.3	2.8	12.9	7.4
Rape/Sexual assault	1.0	.1	2.0	.7
Robbery	.7	.1	.5	1.2
Aggravated assault	1.5	.4	2.0	1.6
Simple assault	6.1	2.2	8.5	3.9
Annual average number of violent crimes	1,008,000	304,500	1,402,500	802,300
<b>Male victims</b>				
Crimes of violence	1.4	1.2	17.2	19.0
Rape/Sexual assault	*	*	.2	.2
Robbery	.1	.1	.9	2.4
Aggravated assault	.5	.4	3.8	4.8
Simple assault	.8	.7	12.4	11.6
Annual average number of violent crimes	143,400	122,000	1,754,000	1,933,100

Note: Excludes homicide. Intimate includes spouse or ex-spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend, and ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend. Average annual numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.

\*Ten or fewer sample cases.

**Table 6. Average annual rate of violent victimizations of women by a lone offender, by victim characteristics and victim-offender relationship, 1992-93**

Victim characteristic	Average annual rate of violent victimizations per 1,000 females age 12 or older				
	Total	Intimate	Other relative	Acquaintance/friend	Stranger
<b>Crimes of violence</b>	36.1	9.3	2.8	12.9	7.4
<b>Race</b>					
White	35.2	9.1	2.6	12.5	7.1
Black	44.6	10.9	3.5	17.2	9.5
Other	27.8	6.5	4.5	8.4	5.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Hispanic	33.9	7.3	3.2	10.0	9.0
Non-Hispanic	36.3	9.4	2.8	13.2	7.2
<b>Age</b>					
12-18	74.6	9.6	6.1	39.1	11.9
19-29	63.7	21.3	4.7	18.2	13.9
30-45	37.5	10.8	2.8	12.4	7.4
46-64	12.5	2.2	1.2	4.1	3.7
65 or older	4.8	1.2	0.3	1.1	1.2
<b>Education</b>					
Some high school or less	47.7	9.9	4.7	20.5	7.5
High school graduate	27.9	9.2	2.2	8.8	4.9
Some college or more	35.9	8.7	2.1	11.6	9.6
<b>Annual family income</b>					
\$9,999 or less	57.1	19.9	6.1	18.5	7.8
\$10,000-\$14,999	46.8	13.3	4.0	14.1	9.1
\$15,000-\$19,999	42.2	10.9	3.1	17.3	7.0
\$20,000-\$29,999	38.0	9.5	2.7	14.8	7.9
\$30,000-\$49,999	30.6	5.4	1.8	11.5	8.4
\$50,000 or more	24.8	4.5	1.8	9.7	6.3
<b>Marital status</b>					
Married	16.9	2.7	1.6	5.7	4.9
Widowed	10.4	1.9	0.6	3.6	2.5
Divorced	61.8	23.1	4.2	19.5	10.2
Separated	123.5	82.2	10.0	19.9	7.4
Never married	63.9	12.0	4.6	27.2	12.9
<b>Location of residence</b>					
Urban	45.4	10.7	3.0	15.9	10.8
Suburban	33.6	9.2	2.7	11.5	7.1
Rural	29.5	7.7	2.7	12.2	3.7

Note: Rates of violence for this table include rapes, sexual assaults, robberies, and aggravated and simple assaults from the NCVS. Rates exclude homicide victimizations. Relationship-specific rates do not add to the total because some victims did not identify their relationship to the offender.

### Demographic and contextual characteristics of violence against women

Violence against women perpetrated by intimates was consistent across racial and ethnic boundaries. No statistically significant differences existed between these groups. Black and white women and Hispanic and non-Hispanic women sustained about the same amount of violence by intimate partners (table 6).

Compared to all other age groups, women age 19 to 29 reported more violence by intimates. Women age 12 to 18 were more likely than women older than 18 to report violence against them by friends or acquaintances. In general, women age 65 or older were the least likely to experience an act of violence.

Women with an annual family income under \$10,000 were more likely to report having experienced violence by an intimate than those with an income of \$10,000 or more.

Among victims of violence committed by an intimate, the victimization rate of women separated from their husbands was about 3 times higher than that of divorced women and about 25 times higher than that of married women. Because the NCVS reflects a respondent's marital status at the time of the interview, it is not possible to determine whether a woman was separated or divorced at the time of

### Homicide of men and women

Because the NCVS is a survey of individuals about their victimization experiences, it does not gather data on homicides. The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, provides the number of homicides known to police.

The 1992 UCR reported the victim-offender relationship for 61% of the homicide incidents. The reported patterns of intimate perpetration for men and women were similar to those for other types of victimizations collected by the NCVS.

Female victims of homicide were significantly more likely to be killed by a husband, ex-husband, or boyfriend than male victims were to be killed by their wife, ex-wife, or girlfriend. In 1992 approximately 28% of female victims of homicide (1,414 women) were known to have been killed by their husband, ex-husband, or boyfriend. In contrast, just over 3% of male homicide victims (637 men) were known to have been killed by their wife, ex-wife, or girlfriend.

Homicide	Percent of all homicides in 1992	
	Female victims	Male victims
<b>Victim-offender relationship</b>		
Spouse/ex-spouse	18.0%	2.2%
Boy/girlfriend	10.3	1.4
Other relative	10.2	5.5
Acquaintance/friend	22.0	34.6
Stranger	8.6	15.0
Relationship not identified	30.9	41.3
<b>Number of incidents</b>		
Relationship identified	3,454	10,351
Relationship not identified	1,547	7,824
Total number of incidents	5,001	17,635

Note: Because in 41% of male homicides and 31% of female homicides the victim-offender relationship was not identified, readers are urged to use caution in interpreting these estimates.

Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, 1992.

the violence or whether separation or divorce followed the violence.

In general, there was little variation in the extent to which women living in urban, suburban, and rural locations experienced violence by intimates. However, urban women were more likely than either suburban or rural women to experience violence by strangers.

### Weapons and violence against women

About a fifth of all lone-offender violence against women involved a weapon. Compared to known offenders, violent offenders who were strangers to the female victim were more likely to carry or use a weapon.

	Percent of violent victimizations against women involving weapons
<b>All lone-offender violent crimes</b>	20%
<b>Victim-offender relationship</b>	
Intimate	18%
Other relative	17
Acquaintance/friend	16
Stranger	30

### Injured female victims of crime

Women were more likely to be injured in violent incidents committed by intimates than in incidents committed by strangers. However, there was no significant difference across relationship categories in the extent to which injured victims required medical care. This lack of difference may reflect less severe injuries for intimate victims or may reflect factors which keep some women from seeking medical care.

	Female victims	
	Sustaining injury	Percent of injured who required medical care
<b>All lone-offender violent crimes</b>	33%	41%
<b>Victim-offender relationship</b>		
Intimate	52%	41%
Other relative	38	35
Acquaintance/friend	26	43
Stranger	20	37

### Women's injury and reporting to police

Compared to violence without injury, a higher percentage of violence against women involving injury was reported to police. Victimization that resulted in injury were equally likely to be reported to police regardless of the relationship between the victim and offender.

	Percent of violent victimizations against women reported to police
<b>All lone-offender violent crimes</b>	
Injured	54%
Not injured	39
<b>Victim-offender relationship</b>	
Intimate	
Injured	55%
Not injured	46
Other relative	
Injured	52
Not injured	39
Acquaintance/friend	
Injured	50
Not injured	33
Stranger	
Injured	56
Not injured	42

### Rapes and other sexual assaults against women

The redesigned NCVS now obtains information on a broad scope of sexual assaults, ranging in severity from a completed rape to a verbal threat of sexual assault. Sexual assaults other than rape were not measured in the earlier victimization survey.

A completed rape is a report of a respondent physically forced or psychologically coerced to engage in sexual intercourse. Intercourse is an act of vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by the offender(s), including penetration by a foreign object. (For more information on NCVS methodology as it relates to rape and sexual assault, see *Methodology* on pages 6-7. Also see the forthcoming *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1993*, NCJ-151657, Appendix.)

Victimizations not involving completed or attempted sexual intercourse but having some form of sexual behavior forced on the victim were categorized as sexual assault. These crimes in-

**Table 7. Number and rate of rapes and sexual assaults of female victims age 12 or older, by type of assault, 1992-93**

Type of victimization	Average annual number of incidents	Percent of all rapes/sexual assaults	Average annual rate per 1,000 females age 12 or older
Rape/Sexual assault	500,200	100%	4.6
Completed rape	172,400	34	1.6
Attempted rape	141,200	28	1.3
Sexual assault with serious injury	23,600	5	0.2
Sexual assault with minor injury	20,700	4	0.2
Sexual assault without injury	75,800	15	0.7
Verbal threat of rape	29,200	6	0.3
Verbal threat of sexual assault	37,300	7	0.3

Note: Detailed numbers and percentage distribution may not add to total because of rounding. Average annual numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100. This table does not include sexual contact without force.

**Table 8. Victim-offender relationship in rapes and sexual assaults of female victims age 12 or older, by type of assault, 1992-93**

Type of victimization	Percent of lone-offender victimizations against females				
	Total	Intimate	Other relative	Acquaintance/friend	Stranger
Rape/Sexual assault	100%	26%	3%	53%	18%
Completed rape	100	39	*	50	8
Attempted rape	100	24	*	49	23
Sexual assault with injury	100	23	*	42	28
Sexual assault without injury	100	13	*	75	*
Verbal threat of rape or sexual assault	100	*	*	53	42

Note: This table does not include sexual contact without force. Percentage distributions may not total 100% because some victims did not identify the offender's relationship to them and because of rounding.

\*Ten or fewer sample cases.

cluded assaults and threats, and they generally involved sexual contact, such as the offender's grabbing or fondling of the victim.

Sexual assaults also included incidents in which the offender's motive was not clear. If victims reported that they had been sexually attacked but could not or would not say that it was a rape or an attempted rape, the incident was classified as a sexual assault. (For more information about screening questions, see *Methodology* and the comparisons on page 8.)

Each year an estimated 500,000 women were the victims of some form of rape or sexual assault (table 7). Thirty-four percent of these victimizations were completed rapes, and an additional 28% were attempted rapes.

Women were more likely to report being raped or sexually assaulted by friends or other acquaintances than by intimates, relatives, or strangers (table 8). Friends and acquaintances committed about half of all rapes and sexual assaults. Intimates committed an additional 26%. Altogether, offenders known to the victim accounted for about three-quarters of all rapes and sexual assaults against women. Strangers committed 18% of such assaults.

## Methodology

Except for homicide data provided by the Uniform Crime Reports, the tables in this report include data from the redesigned National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) for 1992 and 1993. The NCVS obtains information about crimes, including incidents not reported to police, from a continuous, nationally representative sample of households in the United States. Approximately 50,000 households and 100,000 individuals age 12 or older are interviewed for the survey annually. References in this report to "women" or "females" include adolescents, but not children under age 12. For more information about the NCVS sample, see *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1993*, NCJ-151657, forthcoming, published in an annual series by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

This report includes data on series victimizations. A series crime incident is defined by the NCVS as a crime in which a respondent experienced at least six similar victimization incidents during the given reference period (previous 6 months) but could not report the date and details of each clearly enough to report them separately. These incidents are recorded as one series incident and included in all tables. The characteristics of the incident are based on those represented in the last incident in the series.

### *The redesigned screening instrument*

A goal of the NCVS redesign was to produce more accurate reporting of incidents of rape and sexual assault and other crimes committed by intimates and family members. The new NCVS methodology encourages respondents to report incidents of this nature in a number of ways. Questions were added to let respondents know that the interviewer is interested in a broad spectrum of incidents, not just those involving weapons, severe violence, or violence perpetrated by strangers. In addition to the new questions, new methods of cuing respondents about potential experiences with victimizations have also been added. For example, instead of the yes/no question-and-answer format of the previous screener, the new screener provides an extended list of cues regarding crime victimizations and situations in which victimizations might have occurred. (See page 8.) Another general change in the new screener has been the replacement of criminal justice terms with more behavior-specific language.

### *The redesign's enhanced ability to measure sexual assaults and intimate-perpetrated violence*

To more accurately capture sexual assaults and intimate-perpetrated violence, two frames of reference have been added or more explicitly defined in the NCVS screener. The first relates to crimes being committed by someone the respondent knows, and the second relates to possible locations of a crime or activities the respondent may have been involved in.

In addition, explicit cuing for rape and other sexual assault is included in the new screening instrument.

### *Definitions of relationships*

*Intimates:* Includes spouses or ex-spouses, boyfriends and girlfriends, or ex-boyfriends and ex-girlfriends.

*Other relatives:* Parents or step-parents, children or stepchildren, brothers or sisters, or some other relative.

*Acquaintances/friends:* Friends or former friends, roommates or boarders, schoolmates, neighbors, someone at work, or some other known nonrelative.

*Strangers:* Anyone not known previously by the victim.

### *Definitions of violent crimes*

*Rape:* Carnal knowledge through the use of force or threat of force, including attempts; attempted rape may consist of verbal threats of rape. It includes male as well as female victims.

The definition from the NCVS interviewer's manual is as follows: "Rape is forced sexual intercourse and includes both psychological coercion as well as physical force. Forced sexual intercourse means vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by the offender(s). This category also includes incidents where the penetration is from a foreign object such as a bottle."

Respondents are asked a series of questions about attacks, rapes, attempted rapes, sexual attacks, and forced or coerced unwanted sex. These questions are asked directly and are accompanied by cues about the offender (casual acquaintance, co-worker, neighbor, friend, relative, and so on). If the respondent replies in the affirmative to any of these questions or cues, an Incident Report is filled out to gather details. In gathering these details, interviewers are instructed to ask "Do you mean forced or coerced sexual intercourse?" to determine whether the incident should be re-corded as a rape. If the respondent requests clarification of the terms

"rape" or "sexual intercourse," interviewers may read the above definition from the interviewer's manual.

**Assault:** An unlawful physical attack, whether aggravated or simple, on a person. It includes attempted assaults with or without a weapon, but excludes rape, attempted rape, and attacks involving theft or attempted theft (classified as robbery). Severity of assaults are classified into two major subcategories:

1. **Simple assault:** An attack without a weapon resulting either in minor injury (that is, bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, or swelling) or in undetermined injury requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization. It also includes attempted assault without a weapon and verbal threats of assault.

2. **Aggravated assault:** An attack or attempted attack with a weapon regardless of whether an injury occurred as well as an attack without a weapon when serious injury results. Serious injury includes broken bones, loss of teeth, internal injuries, loss of consciousness, and any injury requiring 2 or more days of hospitalization.

**Sexual assault:** A wide range of victimizations, separate from rape or attempted rape. These crimes include attacks or attempted attacks generally involving (unwanted) sexual contact between victim and offender. Sexual assaults may or may not involve force and include such things as grabbing or fondling. Sexual assault also includes verbal threats.

**Robbery:** Completed or attempted theft, directly from a person, of property or cash by force or threat of force, with or without a weapon.

#### *Definitions of locations*

To define the location categories, this report utilizes the Office of Management and Budget's concept of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA's) and classifies units of analysis into three segments based on their relationship to an MSA: central city, outside central city, and nonmetropolitan area—labeled in this report as urban, suburban, and rural. A more detailed description of these areas follows:

**Urban:** The largest city, or grouping of cities, in an MSA. In this report, city areas are categorized as those portions of metropolitan areas located in "central cities."

**Suburban:** A county or group of counties containing a central city, plus any contiguous counties that are linked socially and economically to the central city. In this report, suburban areas are categorized as those portions of Metropolitan Statistical Areas situated "outside central cities."

**Rural:** A county or group of counties not located inside a Metropolitan Statistical Area. This category includes a variety of localities, including smaller cities with populations less than 50,000; however, it is primarily comprised of sparsely populated areas.

#### *Definition of weapons*

Items such as guns (pistols, revolvers, rifles, and shotguns) and knives are always considered weapons. Other objects are considered weapons when they are used as weapons or when respondents felt threatened by them.

#### *Calculation of NCVS rates*

The rates in this report were annual average rates for 1992-93. The numerator of a given rate was the sum of the estimated victimizations that occurred both years for each respective demographic group; the denominator was the sum of the annual population totals for these same years and demographic groups.

#### *Application of standard errors*

The results presented in this report were tested to determine whether the observed difference between groups was statistically significant. Most comparisons mentioned in the report passed a hypothesis test at the .05 level of statistical significance (or the 95-percent confidence level), meaning that the estimated difference between comparisons was greater than twice the standard error of that difference. However, some comparisons were significant at the 90-percent confidence level only. These comparisons

were qualified by phrases such as "somewhat" or "some evidence of a difference." Comparisons that failed the 90-percent hypothesis test were not considered statistically significant.

Although the data in this report were collected over a 2-year period, some estimates were based on a relatively small number of sample cases, particularly for certain demographic groups. The data tables note when estimates were based on 10 or fewer unweighted sample cases. Because standard errors cannot be accurately computed for such estimates, it is inadvisable to compare them to other estimates. Furthermore, caution should be used when comparing estimates not discussed in the text because since seemingly large differences may not be statistically significant at the 95-percent or even the 90-percent confidence level.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D., is the director.

BJS Special Reports address a specific topic in depth from one or more datasets that cover many topics.

Ronet Bachman, Ph.D., BJS, and Linda E. Saltzman, Ph.D., Family and Intimate Violence Prevention Team, Division of Violence Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, wrote this report. Tom Hester and Tina Dorsey edited the report. Marilyn Marbrook, assisted by Jayne Robinson and Yvonne Boston, administered production.

August 1995, NCJ-154348

## Appendix: Comparison of new and old screener questions

### Screener questions for violent crimes

#### New (beginning January 1992)

1. Has anyone attacked or threatened you in any of these ways—
  - a. With any weapon, for instance, a gun or knife—
  - b. With anything like a baseball bat, frying pan, scissors, or stick—
  - c. By something thrown, such as a rock or bottle—
  - d. Include any grabbing, punching, or choking,
  - e. Any rape, attempted rape or other type of sexual assault—
  - f. Any face to face threats—

OR

  - g. Any attack or threat or use of force by anyone at all?  
Please mention it even if you were not certain it was a crime.
2. Incidents involving forced or unwanted sexual acts are often difficult to talk about. Have you been forced or coerced to engage in unwanted sexual activity by—
  - a. Someone you didn't know before
  - b. A casual acquaintance OR
  - c. Someone you know well.

#### Old (1972-92\*)

1. Did anyone take something directly from you by using force, such as by a stickup, mugging, or threat?
2. Did anyone TRY to rob you by using force or threatening to harm you?
3. Did anyone beat you up, attack you, or hit you with something, such as a rock or bottle?
4. Were you knifed, shot at, or attacked with some other weapon by anyone at all?
5. Did anyone THREATEN to beat you up or THREATEN you with a knife, gun, or some other weapon, NOT including telephone threats?
6. Did anyone TRY to attack you in some other way?

\*During 1992 half of the sampled households responded to the old questionnaire, and half to the redesigned survey.

### Screener questions for all types of crimes

#### New

1. Were you attacked or threatened OR did you have something stolen from you—
  - a. At home including the porch or yard—
  - b. At or near a friend's relative's, or neighbor's home—
  - c. At work or school—
  - d. In place such as a storage shed or laundry room, a shopping mall, restaurant, bank or airport—
  - e. While riding in any vehicle—
  - f. On the street or in a parking lot—
  - g. At such places as a party, theater, gym, picnic area, bowling lanes, or while fishing or hunting.

OR

  - h. Did anyone ATTEMPT to attack or attempt to steal anything belonging to you from any of these places?
2. People often don't think of incidents committed by someone they know. Did you have something stolen from you OR were you attacked or threatened by—
  - a. Someone at work or school—
  - b. A neighbor or friend—
  - c. A relative or family member—
  - d. Any other person you've met or known?
3. Did you call the police to report something that happened to YOU which you thought was a crime?
4. Did anything happen to you which you thought was a crime, but did NOT report to the police?

#### Old

1. Was anything stolen from you while you were away from home, for instance, at work, in a theater or restaurant, or while traveling.
2. Did you call the police to report something that happened to YOU that you thought was a crime?
3. Did anything happen to YOU that you thought was a crime, but did NOT report to the police?

The table below compares results from this report, based on the redesigned NCVS methodology, with results from an earlier report, using data from the old questionnaire (*Violence against Women*, NCJ-145325, January 1994).

The new survey instrument captures more incidents of violence across all categories than did the old questionnaire. The extent of increase, however, does vary according to the sex of the victim and the victim-offender relationship.

	Average annual rate of violent victimizations per 1,000 persons	
	Female	Male
<b>Old survey methodology, 1987-91</b>		
Intimate	5.4	.5
Other relative	1.1	.7
Acquaintance/friend	7.6	13.0
Stranger	5.4	12.2
<b>New NCVS methodology, 1992-93</b>		
Intimate	9.3	1.4
Other relative	2.8	1.2
Acquaintance/friend	12.9	17.2
Stranger	7.4	19.0

The rates presented in this table are based on different time periods; however, analysis of data for overlapping periods confirms these patterns. (See *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1993*, NCJ-151657, Appendix, forthcoming, by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.)

Appendix table