New York City memorializes the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on September 11, 2011, at the World Trade Center site.
**INTRODUCTION**

One often hears on the news or reads in the newspaper about crime, such as that crime is increasing or decreasing in various communities, cities, or the country. Often, these reports are based on official crime statistics, or data on crime that has come to the attention of law enforcement. There are instances when crimes do not come to the attention of law enforcement or some other criminal justice agency. These undetected, or unreported, crimes are referred to as the dark figure of crime or, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, the iceberg. Later in this chapter, we will cover one approach to addressing these undetected or unreported crimes—surveying victims of crime.

When thinking further about this dark figure of crime, one may ask, “Do we truly want to know every crime that has been committed?” To do so may require “giving up” other aspects of our lives, such as privacy and freedom. Currently, there are millions of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras installed in streets and businesses worldwide. The major impetus of CCTVs is to reduce crime while increase public safety. However, some civil liberties groups have expressed concern (e.g., that they are susceptible to abuse). There is a growing area of research focusing on the evaluation of CCTVs and reducing crime. This illustrates the continuing growth of our technological abilities to track, watch, and locate different types of activity and behavior. Given these technological advances, do we also want to improve our ability to detect and count crime? By improving these abilities, would we be willing to “give up” our privacy?

Measuring crime is necessary for various reasons. Some of these reasons include describing crime, explaining why crime occurs, and evaluating programs and policies. It is important to legislators, as well as concerned citizens, that crime statistics are available to describe, or gauge, criminal activity that can influence community well-being. Measuring crime is also needed for risk assessment of different social groups, including their potential for becoming offenders or victims. Another purpose of measuring crime is explanation. Identifying causes requires that differences in crime rates can be related to differences in people and their situations. Counting crime is also used to evaluate and justify programs and policies that try to address criminal activity (e.g., rehabilitation, incapacitation, deterrence).

This chapter examines various data collection methods used to enhance our understanding of criminal behaviors and patterns. The first portion describes various statistics collected by law enforcement agencies. The next portion provides an overview of the National Crime Victimization Survey. We then present a few examples of self-report surveys. The last portion summarizes additional approaches used to collect crime data, such as the National Youth Gang Survey and spatial analyses of crime.

**CRIME DATA FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Law enforcement agencies throughout the United States gather a number of crime statistics. In this section, we look at five methods used to accomplish this.
On September 11, 2001, there were a total of 3,047 victims from the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Somerset County, Pennsylvania. In the 2001 report, *Crime in the United States*, it was decided that the victims of 9/11 would not be included in the general report as victims of murder. Rather, the Federal Bureau of Investigation provided a special report that focused on the terrorist attacks. This special report included summaries of the victims, including their race/ethnicity, sex, age, and location (i.e., the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, or Somerset County, Pennsylvania). Included with these victims were the 71 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty:

- 37 officers with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Police Department
- 23 officers with the New York Police Department
- 5 officers with the New York Office of Tax Enforcement
- 3 officers with the State of New York Unified Court System
- 1 fire marshal with the New York City Fire Department
- 1 agent with the U.S. Secret Service
- 1 agent with the FBI

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the reason for not including these victims was, in part, as follows:

The statistics of September 11 are not a part of the traditional *Crime in the United States* publication because they are different from the day-to-day crimes committed in this country. Additionally, combining these statistics with our regular crime report would create many difficulties in defining and analyzing crime as we know it.

Further, it was argued that the murder count was so large that if one were to combine this with what is considered traditional crime statistics, it would have what is called an outlier effect. An outlier is an extreme value that significantly differs from the rest of the distribution.

Some have argued that this was not an appropriate decision. In 2002, Dr. Paul Leighton, a professor of criminology, argued that “mass murder is still murder.” He maintains that while it was reported that homicide increased just 3% from 2000 to 2001, it actually increased by 26%. Dr. Leighton contends that if the FBI had chosen to include the victims of 9/11, the various people who refer to the Uniform Crime Reports (e.g., bureaucrats, students, reporters) would have a visual reminder of the impact those terrorist attacks had on the country. Interestingly, the FBI had previously included the victims of other terrorist attacks (e.g., the first World Trade Center bombing and the bombing of Oklahoma City’s Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building).

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

Do you think that the victims of 9/11 should have been included in the *Crime in the United States* report?
They are the Uniform Crime Reports, the Supplementary Homicide Reports, the National Incident-Based Reporting System, Hate Crime Statistics, and the Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted Statistics.

**Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)**

**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW.** Between 1830 and 1930, the collection of crime statistics involved various agencies. Individual cities, regions, and states collected crime statistics for their respective regions in an effort to guide policy making. This resulted in the collection process being somewhat haphazard. There was an interest in developing a crime reporting system among police chiefs. During the 1927 meeting of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), efforts were made to collect crime statistics in a consistent and uniform manner. As a result, seven main classifications of crime were selected to assess fluctuations in crime rates. These classifications were later identified as Part I crimes. In 1930, only 400 agencies submitted their crimes reports; it was difficult during the beginning stages of the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Program to assess the crime rate for the entire country. In 2014, the FBI reported that over 18,000 city, university, college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies voluntarily report data on those crimes brought to their attention.

In 1960, these Part I crimes were termed the Crime Index. Part I crimes were those crimes most likely to be reported to the police, including murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, larceny, burglary, and motor vehicle theft. Information was collected on
additional categories of crimes, ranging from sex offenses to parking violations; these are designated as Part II crimes. In 1979, by congressional mandate, the offense of arson was added as a Part I offense. In 2013, human trafficking/commercial sex acts and human trafficking/involuntary servitude were added as Part I offenses. Since 1929, *forcible rape* was defined as “the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.” The modified definition of rape was changed prior to data collection in 2013. The definition is as follows:

Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.

Table 2.1 provides a list of Part I and Part II offenses.

### Table 2.1: Part I and Part II Offenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART I OFFENSES</th>
<th>PART II OFFENSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal homicide</td>
<td>Larceny-theft (except motor vehicle theft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>Motor vehicle theft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>Arson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated assault</td>
<td>Human trafficking, commercial sex acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>Human trafficking, Involuntary servitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other assaults (simple)</td>
<td>Gambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgery and counterfeiting</td>
<td>Offenses against the family and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>Driving under the influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embezzlement</td>
<td>Liquor laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stolen property: buying, receiving, possessing</td>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>Disorderly conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons: carrying, possessing, etc.</td>
<td>Vagrancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution and commercialized vice</td>
<td>All other offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex offenses (except rape and prostitution offenses)</td>
<td>Suspic ion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug abuse violations</td>
<td>Curfew and loitering laws (persons under age 18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE UCR PROGRAM. The primary objective of the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) is to generate a consistent (or reliable) set of crime statistics that can be used in law enforcement administration, operation, and management. Over the years, however, the UCR has become one of the country’s foremost indicators of crime. The UCR has provided information on fluctuations in the level of crime for criminologists, sociologists, legislators, municipal planners, and the media—information that has subsequently been used for both research and planning purposes (see Figure 2.2).13

The UCR has been used for a number of criminal justice studies, such as assessing the influence of gender equality on female homicide victimization;14 evaluating the effect of home foreclosures on crime in Indianapolis, Indiana;15 investigating the relationship between firearm ownership and violent crime;16 comparing the influence of community policing in large and small law enforcement agencies on crime rates;17 and assessing Weed and Seed Program effects on Part I offenses.18

In 2004, the FBI discontinued use of the Crime Index. The Crime Index had often been used to detect overall changes in crime across the country:

The Crime Index and the Modified Crime Index were not true indicators of the degrees of criminality because they were always driven upward by the offense with the highest number, typically larceny-theft. The sheer volume of those offenses overshadowed more serious but less frequently committed offenses, creating a bias against a jurisdiction with a high number of larceny-thefts but a low number of other serious crimes such as murder and forcible rape.19

The FBI emphasizes that classifying and scoring crimes are the two most important functions of agencies participating in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program. Classifying is defined as determining the appropriate crime category in which to report an offense in the UCR. This is based on information resulting from an agency’s investigation of the crime.20 An important step in classification has been referred to as the hierarchy rule. Specifically, when more than one Part I offense is classified in a multiple-offense situation, the law enforcement agency must locate the offense that is highest on the hierarchy list and score that offense but not any of the other offenses.21 There are some exceptions

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**Uniform Crime Reports**: an annual report published by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the U.S. Department of Justice. It is meant to estimate most of the major street crimes in the United States.
to this hierarchy rule. For example, the rule does not apply to arson, human trafficking/commercial sex acts, and human trafficking/involuntary servitude; these offenses are always reported, even in multiple-offense situations. See Table 2.2 for examples on how to classify multiple-offense situations.

Scoring is defined as counting the number of offenses after they have been classified. The two rules for scoring Part I crimes pertain to the two types of crimes involved (i.e., crimes against persons and crimes against property). For crimes against persons, one offense is scored for each victim. For crimes against property, one offense is scored for each distinct operation or attempt.22

### Table 2.2: Examples of the Hierarchy Rule

The following scenarios illustrate the proper application of the hierarchy rule in reporting a multiple-offense incident.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENARIO</th>
<th>CRIMES COMMITTED</th>
<th>CRIME REPORTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two women broke into a new car dealership after closing hours. They took the cash from the dealership’s office safe and two new automobiles from the garage.</td>
<td>1. A Burglary (Forcible Entry) 2. Motor Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>Following the hierarchy rule, only the Burglary (Forcible Entry), the highest of the offenses on the list of Part I offenses, must be scored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A burglar broke into a home, stole several items, and placed them in a car belonging to the owner of the home. The homeowner returned and surprised the thief, who in turn knocked the owner unconscious by hitting him over the head with a chair. The burglar drove away in the homeowner’s car.</td>
<td>1. A Burglary (Forcible Entry) 2. Robbery (Other Dangerous Weapon) 3. Aggravated Assault (Other Dangerous Weapon) 4. Motor Vehicle Theft (Auto)</td>
<td>After classifying the offenses, the reporting agency scores only one offense—Robbery (Other Dangerous Weapon)—the crime appearing first in the list of Part I offenses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A white female, aged 23, was being arrested on charges of soliciting for prostitution. During the arrest, she pepper-sprayed the arresting officer’s face. The officer’s search incident to the arrest resulted in the recovery of a credit card belonging to an individual who had previously reported it stolen. There was no indication that the card had been used fraudulently.</td>
<td>1. Prostitution and Commercialized Vice 2. Stolen Property (Buying, Receiving, Possessing) 3. Aggravated Assault (Other Dangerous Weapon)</td>
<td>Following the hierarchy rule, only the Part I offense, Aggravated Assault (Other Dangerous Weapon), must be classified and scored. The Part II offenses are ignored in using the hierarchy rule.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exceptions to the Hierarchy Rule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENARIO</th>
<th>CRIMES COMMITTED</th>
<th>CRIME REPORTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone stole a pickup truck that had a camper containing camping equipment attached to it. The police recovered the truck and camper but not the equipment.</td>
<td>1. Motor Vehicle Theft 2. Larceny-Theft</td>
<td>Motor Vehicle Theft is a special type of Larceny-Theft. It is a separate classification because of the volume of such thefts and the prevailing need of law enforcement for specific statistics on this offense. Therefore, when classifying, the reporting agency chooses between Larceny-Theft and Motor Vehicle Theft. In cases such as this, the agency classifies and scores the offense as Motor Vehicle Theft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of arson in an apartment building, six persons were found dead.</td>
<td>1. Murder 2. Arson</td>
<td>The Part I crimes of Murder and Arson are involved in this multiple-offense situation. The reporting agency counts six Criminal Homicide offenses (one for each victim) and Arson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIMITATIONS OF THE UCR. As early as 1931, there were criticisms concerning the UCR, and some of these still apply to the current UCR. Even with these criticisms, the UCR continues to be a major source of information pertaining to crime in the United States.24 Below is a brief overview of the criticisms and limitations concerning the UCR:

1. Some crimes do not come to the attention of those responsible for collecting this information. In reference to the UCR, this pertains to law enforcement agencies. As stated above, these unknown crimes constitute the dark figure of crime.25 Potential problems with not counting these “unreported” crimes have been outlined by Wesley Skogan:
   - It restricts the deterrent capability of the criminal justice system by shielding offenders from police action.
   - It contributes to the misallocation of resources such as police manpower and equipment.
   - It can influence the police role when officers do not recognize certain types of criminal activity in their own environment. As a result, officers might overlook addressing these problems.
   - It can have a negative influence on victims of crimes who do not become “officially known” to the criminal justice system; for instance, these victims are ineligible for many supportive benefits from both public and private agencies.
   - It can influence the perceived “socialized” costs of crime; this misperception can influence private insurance premiums and the public cost of victim compensation programs.26

2. The UCR concentrates on conventional street crime (e.g., assaults, robbery) but does not adequately include other serious types of offenses such as corporate crime. This is illustrated by the priority given to the investigation and prosecution of such crimes within the federal government, including the collection of crime statistics.27

3. Crime statistics, such as the UCR, can be used for political purposes. Some argue that official crime statistics are a social construction.28 In this vein, these statistics are perceived as an objective reality for program and policy purposes.29 When these claims are stated and supported by powerful groups, this can influence public perceptions, which can then result in policy changes. One historical example are the efforts to warn individuals of marijuana use in the 1930s (see Photo 2.3).

4. Some law enforcement agencies may submit incomplete or delinquent reports. These incomplete or delinquent reports can be due to such reasons as: (a) an agency may have experienced a natural disaster that prevented the timely submission of the crime data; (b) due to budgetary restrictions, some police agencies may have had to limit some routine clerical activities, including the collection of crime statistics; and (c) changes in personnel experienced in preparing UCR data (as a result of, e.g., retirement, promotion) may result in problems with data reporting if the individual is replaced by someone who is not adequately trained and/or experienced with these activities.30
Some Exploratory Studies on Child Abuse in Other Countries

Unfortunately, there is no systematic global data collection regarding child abuse; however, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2002) estimated that there were about 57,000 homicides of children under 15 in just the year 2000. This study also found that perpetrators of child abuse had witnessed violence against their mothers when they were young. This is consistent with studies that repeatedly find links between childhood exposure to domestic violence and violent offending at older ages (see discussion in Van Dijk, 2008, p. 88). This phenomenon is commonly referred to as the “cycle of violence.”

Van Dijk (2008) points out that perhaps the most comprehensive studies of child abuse in modern times were done in Germany, surveying more than 11,000 teenagers about their experiences with domestic violence. One consistent finding was that children of immigrants reported significantly higher rates/percentages of violence against mothers, with extremely high rates among those from Turkey (32%), Yugoslavia (25%), and Russia (20%). Another interesting pattern was that the immigrant families that had resided in Germany for longer periods had higher rates of domestic violence, which Van Dijk claimed suggested “growing tensions between spouses after a longer exposure of women to German norms and values concerning gender equality” (p. 88).

Also notable, WHO (2004) estimated that annual economic costs in the United States due to child abuse totaled about $94 billion. And although traditionally rare, there is a growing trend to punish much more severely parents and caretakers who abuse children, which also adds to the costs in terms of processing and incarcerating offenders. For example, in October 2012, a 23-year-old Texas woman was sentenced to 99 years in prison for such abuses as gluing her daughter’s hands to the wall and beating her as punishment for potty-training setbacks. (Read more about this story here: http://abcnews.go.com/US/texas-mom-glued-daughtershands-wall-99-years/story?id=17436643.)

THINK ABOUT IT:

1. In the 2008 German study of teenagers discussed in this section, what types of youths were consistently found to have higher rates of exposure to violence in the household?

2. What did this study show regarding living in Germany over time did to such rates, and what did the authors provide as an explanation for this trend?


5. Problems with the collection of UCR data can also occur because of clerical and data-processing errors. Based on his experience as a senior analyst in the New York Division of Criminal Justice Services, Henry Brownstein described how accuracy can be compromised due to clerical error.31

6. Changes in the legal code can influence subsequent crime reports and make later comparisons difficult. Thus, when a previously acceptable behavior is later criminalized or when a classification is altered (e.g., from misdemeanor to felony, or the reverse), this will likely result in a change in reported crimes.32 For instance, some have argued that there are increasing efforts to criminalize homelessness. Some cities have implemented laws that make it illegal to sleep, eat, or sit in public spaces.33

It is essential to note that the UCR is a “summary-based system.” These data are a summary, or total count, of crimes based on the reporting agencies. Thus, disaggregation of UCR data can occur only on the reporting agency level. The units of analysis are groups (i.e., reporting agencies). The UCR data are limited to the totals reported by each participating agency. The best-known summary UCR measures are numbers of Part I and
As mentioned in Chapter 1, throughout this text, we are presenting what some may consider “high-profile” crimes or crimes that have received a great deal of media attention, either due to the individuals involved or the outrageous nature of the offense. When reading or hearing about these crimes, many of us may ask ourselves, “Why do they do it?” For this particular chapter, however, we have decided to present what many may consider “odd” or “strange” types of offenses. While these crimes may not be as highly publicized as other offenses in later sections, they often evoke the same question, “Why do they do it?”

CONTAMINATED METH
The Granite Shoals (Texas) Police department posted the following to Facebook:

Breaking News: Area Meth and Heroin Supply Possibly Contaminated With Ebola. Meth and Heroin recently brought in to Central Texas as well as the ingredients used to make it could be contaminated with the life threatening disease Ebola. If you have recently purchased meth or heroin in Central Texas, please take it to the local police or sheriff department so it can be screened with a special device. DO NOT use it until it has been properly checked for possible Ebola contamination! Contact any Granite Shoals PD officer for testing. Please share in hopes we get this information to anyone who has any contaminated meth or heroin that needs tested.

A few days later, Chastity Hopson brought her drugs to the Granite Shoals police station so it could be tested for Ebola. Subsequently, she was arrested and charged with possession of a controlled substance. The Facebook posting was a hoax.36

HOMEMADE LICENSE PLATE
Amanda Schweickert, of Buffalo, New York, was pulled over by Erie County Sheriff’s officers. The officers noticed that there was something odd about her license plate. Upon further inspection, they noticed that she had painted a piece of cardboard in an attempt to make it look like a New York license plate. They also discovered that she was driving with a suspended license and no insurance. Ms. Schweickert was charged with possession of a forged instrument, driving with a suspended registration, and three traffic offenses.37

BEER-BATTERED FISH DEFENSE
John Przybyla, 75, was a serial drunk driver in Adams County, Wisconsin. He had nine previous charges of operating a vehicle while intoxicated. On October 12, 2015, he was pulled over for the 10th time. However, he explained to the officers that he had eaten some beer-battered fish and that that was the reason his blood alcohol level was above the legal limit.38

USHER STEALS OFFERINGS
Deputies from the Marion County Sheriff’s Office (Florida) received a call from officials at the Blessed Trinity Catholic Church. The church officials had some suspicions that one of their ushers was stealing money. The deputies set up surveillance cameras in the church. The cameras caught Mario Condis, a 60-year-old church usher, stealing money from the church offering baskets while the congregation was in prayer. He would take the money from the baskets and place it in his pockets. Condis was arrested on one count of grand theft and three counts of petit theft.39

So, “why do they do it?” Do you think it may be due to mental illness? Alcohol abuse? Substance abuse? In the following chapters, we will present theories that try to understand and explain criminal behavior from various perspectives (e.g., sociological, psychological, biosocial). As you continue with the text, you will learn how criminologists throughout the centuries have attempted to understand and explain what is considered criminal behavior.
Part II offenses. Additional summary data can include property recovered and weapons used in specific types of offenses as well as summary totals of arrests, classified by sex, race, and age grouping of offenders.  

Using UCR data, one can obtain total counts of crimes on a county level and move upward to a state or regional level. One cannot obtain information on individual crimes, offenders, or victims. The U.S. Department of Justice sponsors two types of crime measures that are based on incidents, rather than reporting agencies, as the units of analysis. The first crime measure is the Supplementary Homicide Reports; the second crime measure is the National Incident-Based Reporting System.  

**Supplementary Homicide Reports**  
Homicides are less likely to be underreported compared to other crimes counted in the UCR. Homicides are also more likely to result in an arrest or to be cleared than other offenses. Finally, compared to other offenses such as forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, homicide offense reports are more likely to have details about the incident, such as the victims and/or offenders.  

Thus, in the 1960s, the FBI developed the **Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR)**. Since 1976, these data have been archived at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD), which is maintained by the University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).  

In the **Summary Reporting System (SRS) User Manual**, SHR collects additional information pertaining to the incident, including details of the murder victim and offender, their relationship to one another, the weapon used, and the circumstances in each criminal homicide.  

For offenses of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter as well as manslaughter by negligence, reporting agencies include information such as the following: single or multiple victims; single, multiple, or unknown offenders; age, sex, race, and ethnicity of the victim and offender; description of the weapon and how it was used (e.g., if a bottle was used in the commission of a murder, the reporting agency must note whether the person was killed by beating, cutting, or stabbing); relationship of the victim to the offender (e.g., in a murder incident where a wife is killed by her husband, the relationship must be reported as “wife”); and circumstances (e.g., lover’s quarrel, drunkenness, argument over money, revenge, narcotics, gangland killings).  

Modifications of the SHR have been put in place when unusual incidents reveal such a need. For instance, the underlying data structure of the SHR allows up to 11 victims and 11 offenders for each record. In those unusual incidents where a crime involves more than 11 homicides, the victim information is repeated over more than one record. If an individual does not have any knowledge of the specific incident, it may be difficult to determine the separate records involving the same incident:  

In April, 1995, an explosion at the Federal Building in Oklahoma City killed 168 individuals. At the time information was reported to the Supplementary Homicide Reporting Program, law enforcement believed three offenders were responsible for this act. Following reporting guidelines, the information on this incident in the FBI’s 1995 SHR data file was spread over 16 records (15 containing 11 victims and the last containing 3 victims) with 3 offenders noted on each record.
Without extraordinary knowledge of this incident, an analysis of these records would yield 168 victims and 48 offenders. The data files underlying this analysis package have been adjusted to accurately reflect an incident with 168 victims and 3 offenders.44

In addition to the SHR, another national data collection system administered in the United States to collect detailed information on homicides is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). They developed the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS). When comparing the SHR and the NVSS, there is substantial overlap in homicide reporting (see Table 2.3). Overall, the NVSS consistently demonstrates a higher number of homicides than the SHR. This is probably due to the variations in coverage and score as well as the voluntary versus mandatory reporting requirements.45

The SHR has been key in developing policy related to homicide, especially since these data include not only the number of homicides but also factors associated with these crimes (e.g., characteristics of the victims and offenders).46 The SHR has also been used to enhance our understanding of patterns and trends pertaining to homicides, including the following: exploring sibling homicide, or siblicide;47 examining choice of weapon in male sexual homicides;48 comparing and understanding lethal violence in Finland and the United States;49 and suggesting improvements of the SHR for collecting data on workplace homicides.50 The SHR can also be considered the forerunner to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), since it provided additional information about incidents.51

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**Table 2.3** Comparing the NVSS Fatal Injury Reports and the UCR Supplementary Homicide Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NVSS</th>
<th>SHR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Track all deaths</td>
<td>Track crime statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reporting source</strong></td>
<td>State vital registrars</td>
<td>Law enforcement agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial report</strong></td>
<td>Death certificate</td>
<td>Police report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Report responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Medical examiners and coroners</td>
<td>Law enforcement officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homicide definition</strong></td>
<td>Injuries inflicted by another person with intent to injure or kill by any means</td>
<td>Willful killing of one human being by another; includes murders and nonnegligent manslaughters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reporting is:</strong></td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data collection methods</strong></td>
<td>Manner/cause of death determined by medical examiners/coroners; demographic information is recorded by funeral directors on death certificates</td>
<td>In most states, reports from individual law enforcement agencies are compiled monthly by state-level agencies and then forwarded to the FBI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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The bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 10, 1995. What challenges do horrific incidents like this pose for the reporting of crime statistics?
The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

**THE NIBRS PROGRAM.** Initially, the UCR was considered primarily a tool for law enforcement agencies. By the 1980s, it was evident that these data were being used by other entities involved with social planning and policy. Thus, there was a need to collect more detailed information on these data. The FBI, the Department of Justice Statistics (the agency responsible for funding criminal justice information projects), and other agencies and individuals from various disciplines were involved with setting in place the changes needed to update the program for collecting crime data. After various stages of development and pilot programs, the FBI developed a draft of guidelines for this enhanced UCR Program, which is named the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

By the end of the 1980s, NIBRS was operational. By 2013, NIBRS was collecting data on each incident and arrest within 23 offense categories comprising 49 specific crimes (i.e., Group A). There are 10 Group B offenses for which only arrest data are collected (see Table 2.4). As of 2013, approximately 33% of law enforcement agencies reported data in the NIBRS format.

There are two goals of the NIBRS data collection program: (1) to enhance the quantity, quality, and timeliness of crime statistical data collected by law enforcement entities; and (2) to improve the methodology used for compiling, analyzing, auditing, and publishing the collected crime data. As a result of providing more “detailed, accurate, and meaningful data than those produced by the traditional UCR Program,” NIBRS data have also been used to enhance criminological research. Examples of studies using NIBRS include the following: analyzing victims’ injuries in robbery incidents; examining elder abuse; studying offender, victim, and incident characteristics of sibling sexual abuse; comparing three hypotheses about intimate partner violence; and examining sibling violence.

**Data Collection**

To illustrate how NIBRS data are collected, this section includes some of the major differences between NIBRS and the UCR Program.

- While the UCR Program collects counts on the number of criminal incidents involving eight offenses (i.e., Part I offenses), NIBRS expands the types of offenses reported (i.e., Group A and Group B).
- Since NIBRS uses an incident-based reporting system, it includes a greater degree of detail in reporting (see Figure 2.3). The unit of analysis for the UCR is the reporting agency. For NIBRS data, however, there are six possible “units of analysis.” Specifically, NIBRS data consist of six segments pertaining to the crime incident: administrative, offense, property, victim, offender, and arrestee. Within each segment, various information is collected on each incident. Examples of the various items collected for each segment include the following: administrative—incident number, incident date/hour; offense—attempted/completed, type of location, type of weapon or force involved; property—type of property loss, value of property; victim—type of injury, victim relationship to offender; offender—age, sex; arrestee—armed with weapon, resident status.
- An incident can consist of multiple offenses. For NIBRS reporting procedures, the FBI defined an incident “as one or more offenses committed by the same offender, or group of offenders acting in concert, at the same time and place.” Acting in concert was defined as follows: “[A]ll of the offenders to actually commit or assist in the commission of all of the crimes in an incident. The offenders must be aware of and consent to the commission of all of the offenses; or even...
### TABLE 2.4 NIBRS Offense Categories

#### GROUP A OFFENSES (REPORTED FOR ALL INCIDENTS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Offense Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Arson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Assault offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Aggravated assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Simple assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Intimidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bribery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Burglary/breaking and entering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Counterfeiting/forgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Destruction/damage/vandalism of property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Drug/narcotic offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Drug/narcotic violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Drug equipment violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Embezzlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Extortion/blackmail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Fraud offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- False pretenses/swindle/confidence game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Credit card/automatic teller machine fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Impersonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Welfare fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wire fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Gambling offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Betting/wagering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Operating/promoting/assisting gambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gambling equipment violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sports tampering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Homicide offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Negligent manslaughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Justifiable homicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Human trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Human trafficking, commercial sex acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Human trafficking, involuntary servitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Kidnapping/abduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Larceny/theft offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pocket-picking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Purse-snatching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shoplifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Theft from building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Theft from co-operated machine or device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Theft from motor vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Theft of motor vehicle parts or accessories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- All other larceny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Motor vehicle theft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Pornography/obscene material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Prostitution offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Prostitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assisting or promoting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Purchasing prostitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Sex offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Rape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sodomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sexual assault with an object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fondling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Sex offenses, nonforcible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Incest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Statutory rape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Stolen property offenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Weapon law violation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### GROUP B OFFENSES (REPORTED FOR INCIDENTS PRODUCING ARRESTS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Offense Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bad checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Curfew/loitering/vagrancy violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Disorderly conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Driving under the influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Family offenses, nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Liquor law violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Peeping tom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Runaway*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Trespass of real property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>All other offenses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In January 2011, the FBI discontinued the collection of arrest data for runaways. Law enforcement agencies can continue to collect and report data on runaways, but the FBI will no longer use or publish the data.


Thus, all of the offenders in an incident are considered to have committed all the offenses that made up the incident. If one or more of the offenders, however, did not act in concert, then there is more than one incident.

- As mentioned in the previous section, the UCR Program uses the hierarchy rule with some exceptions. NIBRS does not use the hierarchy rule. Thus, if more than one crime was committed by the same person(s) and the time and space distinguishing these crimes were insignificant, all the crimes are reported within the same incident.

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Limitations of NIBRS

There are some limitations to NIBRS. Some of these limitations have slowed its widespread adoption. A few of these limitations are listed below:

1. As with the UCR Program, NIBRS data include only crimes reported to law enforcement; unreported and unrecorded crimes are not included in NIBRS.

2. Since the NIBRS specifications were developed by a federal agency, participating local agencies may find it difficult to work with inflexible specifications and impose problems with reporting procedures.

3. Various organizations may have different goals and incentives. While the FBI and other national agencies are interested in a national monitoring system and national-level research applications, local and state agencies may have different organizational interests. For instance, local and state agencies may be more interested in local data collection requirements and analyses to support local operations, such as the deployment of law enforcement areas in certain problem areas.

4. While NIBRS data include more detailed information than the UCR Program, this is also a drawback. With this detailed information, the NIBRS record structure is more complex; researchers and analysts may find collecting this detailed information quite a challenge.

5. Currently, little is known about the extent of the errors made when collecting NIBRS data. While some errors can be addressed, other types of errors will be noted only after the NIBRS data collection program is adopted on a more widespread basis.

Hate Crime Data

On April 23, 1990, the president signed into law the “Hate Crime Statistics Act of 1990.” This was due to increasing concern regarding these types of offenses. As part of the UCR
Program, the attorney general is required to develop guidelines and collect data about crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. The UCR Program’s first publication was titled *Hate Crime Statistics, 1990: A Resource Book.* This report was a collection of hate crime data from 11 states that compiled these data and volunteered to submit their data as a prototype. There have been significant changes to hate crime data collection since this time.

- The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 amended the Hate Crime Statistics Act to include crimes committed against people with physical or mental disabilities that should also be viewed as hate crimes.
- The Church Arson Prevention Act was signed into law in 1996.
- The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009 was passed. This amendment included the collection of data for crimes motivated by any bias against gender or gender identity.
- In 2012, system modifications were implemented that allowed agencies to report up to four additional bias motivations per offense type.
- In 2013, bias types in the religion category were expanded to include all of those identified by the Pew Research Center and the U.S. Census Bureau. The program also started collecting data on anti-Arab bias.
- In 2015, law enforcement agencies were allowed to submit the following religious bias types: anti-Buddhist, anti-Eastern Orthodox (Greek, Russian, etc.), anti-Hindu, anti-Jehovah’s Witness, anti-Mormon, anti–other Christian, and anti-Sikh. Also, the program started to collect data on race and ethnicity bias under the category of Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry.66

**Data Collection**

To develop procedures for collecting national hate crime data, many emphasized avoiding any new data-reporting responsibilities on those law enforcement agencies participating in the UCR Program. Thus, the collection of hate crime data provides additional information on traditional UCR collection:

Hate crimes are not separate, distinct crimes, but rather traditional offenses motivated by the offender’s bias. For example, an offender may commit arson because of his/her racial bias. It is, therefore, unnecessary to create a whole new crime category. To the contrary, hate crime data can be collected by merely capturing additional information about offenses already being reported to UCR.67

Thus, if a traditional offense has been motivated by the offender’s bias, the reporting agency is to complete the “Hate Crime Incident Report.” Table 2.5 provides two examples of how hate crimes would be reported. Figure 2.4 provides a breakdown of hate crimes reported in 2014. When examining the bias for these single incidents, 47% are classified as racial bias.
The FBI also collects data on the number of law enforcement officers killed and assaulted in the United States each year. This is important information that has been used for several reasons, including estimates of the risk involved in police work and analyses of what influences assaults against, and killings of, police officers. The UCR Program began gathering these data in 1972.68

**Data Collection**

**Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA)** is a supplementary data collection program of the UCR. LEOKA collects data from participating agencies on officer line-of-duty deaths and assaults. Information obtained from these data assist agencies in developing policies to enhance officer safety.

The UCR Program provided the following definitions to distinguish between line-of-duty, felonious, and accidental deaths:

- **Line-of-duty death**: This type of death occurs when the officer is on or off duty and acting in an official capacity while reacting to a situation that would ordinarily fall within the scope of his or her official duties as a law enforcement officer. Suicides and deaths caused by heart attacks or other natural causes as well as deaths occurring while the officer is acting in a military capacity are not included in this definition.

- **Felonious death**: This type of death occurs when an officer is killed because of or while performing his or her official duties and as a direct result of a criminal act by a subject.

- **Accidental death**: This type of death occurs when an officer dies as a result of an accident he or she is involved in while performing his or her duties (e.g., an officer is struck by a vehicle while directing traffic or drowns during a rescue attempt).69

Participating law enforcement agencies are required to report on officers who are killed or assaulted and meet the following criteria: (1) working in an official capacity, (2) having full arrest powers, (3) wearing a badge (ordinarily), (4) carrying a firearm (ordinarily), and (5) being paid from governmental funds allocated for payment of sworn law enforcement representatives. These officers are usually employed by local, county, state, tribal, or federal entities and working in occupations such as municipal or county police, constables, state police, highway patrol officers, sheriffs or deputies, marshals, or special agents. Officers usually not included are those involved with protective, prosecutorial, or confinement activities, such as federal judges, U.S. attorneys, probation officers, corrections officers, jailers, and prison officials.

The UCR Program includes a special form used to collect information on those incidents involving line-of-duty felonious or accidental killing of an officer or assault of an officer.

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**Bias Breakdown**

Analysis of the 5,462 single-bias incidents reported by law enforcement during 2014 revealed the following biases:

- Ethnicity: 11.9%
- Gender identity: 1.8%
- Disability: 1.5%
- Gender: 0.6%
- Racial: 47.0%
- Religious: 18.6%
- Sexual orientation: 18.6%

The following scenarios offer guidance on how to report hate crime. Based on the facts available, explanations after each scenario provide, as applicable, the known offense(s) and the bias type(s) that law enforcement would report. The number of victims has been added to some of the incidents for clarification.

### SCENARIO OFFENSES REPORTING

**An African-American man had just finished a midnight riverboat cruise with his fiancée and friends and was escorting his blind, male friend by the arm into a restroom while holding his girlfriend’s purse. Inside the restroom, another man shouted anti-black and anti-gay insults at the men. The perpetrator followed them out of the restroom, continuing his verbal harassment. He then went to his car, retrieved a gun, returned to confront the men, and said, “Now what have you got to say?” The perpetrator fired the gun, killing one of the men.**

- Murder (1 victim)
- Aggravated Assault (1 victim)

This incident should be reported with an Anti-Black African-American Racial Bias and Anti-Gay (Male) Sexual Orientation Bias because the perpetrator used exclusively anti-black and anti-gay slurs and also acted on his mistaken perception that the victim was gay.

**An assailant ran by a Sikh pedestrian, shoved him to the ground, forcibly pulled his Dastaar (Sikh turban), and said, “Take that thing off your head—we don’t want your kind in this neighborhood!” In the process of the attack, the victim suffered a concussion. When law enforcement responded to the scene, a witness to the attack recognized the offender as a clerk at a local convenience store near a predominantly Sikh community.**

- Aggravated Assault

This incident should be reported with an Anti-Sikh Religious Bias because the evidence indicates that the victim was targeted due to his Dastaar and the assailant’s ongoing dealings with the Sikh community.


In reference to officer assaults, the UCR emphasizes that reporting agencies must count all assaults. Even those incidents that involve more than verbal abuse or minor resistance to an arrest but do not result in the officer being injured need to be reported.70

### CRIME DATA FROM VICTIMS OF CRIME: THE NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMIZATION SURVEY

While Canada and some European counties have surveyed individuals regarding their experiences of being victims of crimes, the United States has the longest and most extensive background with such surveys. Unofficial measures of crime, such as the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), further broaden our understanding of crime with information from official measures of crime (e.g., Uniform Crime Reports).

The primary purpose of these data is to provide additional insight into what was referred to at the beginning of this chapter as the dark figure of crime (e.g., crimes unreported to law enforcement). Some of the reasons that victims failed to report these crimes to law enforcement include: (1) the victim believed nothing could be done about the incident; (2) the victim felt that the crime incident was not important enough to report to the police; (3) the victim perceived the incident was too private or personal; and (4) the victim thought that the police would not want to be inconvenienced with the crime incident.71 The NCVS is also intended to (1) identify portions of the population at risk of victimization, (2) estimate multiple victimization rates, (3) provide data needed to evaluate
crime prevention programs, and (4) allow for comparisons of patterns, amounts, and locations of crime with the Uniform Crime Reports.72

The NCVS is used by various groups who are concerned about crime and crime prevention. Community groups and government agencies use these data to develop neighborhood watch programs as well as victim assistance and compensation programs. Law enforcement agencies use the NCVS for (1) enhancing citizen cooperation with officials in deterring and detecting crime, (2) establishing special police strike forces to combat those crimes that the NCVS reported as being most prevalent, and (3) developing street and park lighting programs in those areas with high reported crime rates. The print and broadcast media also use NCVS findings when reporting on various crime-related topics.73

Researchers also use the NCVS to prepare reports, to make policy recommendations, to provide testimony before Congress, and to present documentation in court.74 The NCVS has also been used for various criminal justice research, such as examining the seasonal variation (i.e., the school calendar) in violent victimization;75 exploring routine activity theory and lifestyle-exposure theory in terms of demographic characteristics and victimization risk;76 investigating the epidemiology of self-defense gun use; 77 and studying the dynamics of elder victimization.78

From January 1971 to July 1972, the Census Bureau implemented the first nationwide victimization survey. The survey was included as a supplement to the existing Quarterly Household Survey (QHS). In July 1972, the National Crime Survey (NCS) evolved into a separate national sample survey. Due to a mandate, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) was the first sponsor of the NCS. This mandate required that data be collected, evaluated, published, and disseminated regarding the progress of law enforcement in the United States.79 In 1979, the NCS was moved to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Various groups have had some serious reservations about collecting these data:

Groups supportive of police-based crime statistics were already suspicious of this new data collection system. Academics began to raise questions about a multimillion-dollar data collection with few variables that could be used in testing theories of crime and that could not produce estimates for local jurisdictions. They also worried that this new data collection would take funds away from criminological research.80

To address these concerns, in the mid-1970s, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration commissioned the Committee on Social Statistics of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council (NRC) to evaluate the victim surveys.81 From 1979 to 1985, experts in criminology, survey design, and statistics conducted a detailed study of the NCS. Their findings recommended a redesign of the victim survey that would (1) increase the reporting of crime victimization and (2) include additional information on specific crime incidents. These recommendations were implemented in a two-stage process and were completed by July 1993. In addition to these changes, in 1991, BJS renamed the NCS the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS).
Chapter 2: Measuring Crime

These major changes included the following:

1. The new questionnaire uses detailed cues to assist respondents in recalling and reporting incidents. These new questions and cues also encourage responses that include a broad continuum of incidents rather than just those involving weapons, severe violence, or strangers.

2. The NCVS includes multiple questions and cues on crimes committed by family members, intimates, and acquaintances.

3. Previously, only the categories of rape and attempted rape were measured in the survey. The NCVS broadened the scope of sexual incidents to include sexual assault (other than rape), verbal threats of rape or sexual assault, and unwanted sexual contact without force but involving threats or some type of harm to the victim.

Other changes have been made to the NCVS, including a series of hate crime questions as well as a series of identity theft questions. Also, in 2006, the NCVS converted to a computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) environment.

Any individual living in the United States and 12 years of age or older is eligible for participation in the NCVS. The households are selected by using scientific sampling methods. The NCVS collects data on individuals who have been the victims of crimes, whether or not these crimes were reported to law enforcement. The NCVS estimates the proportion of the various crime types reported to law enforcement; it also provides information as to why victims reported or did not report these crimes to law enforcement. The NCVS provides various information, including data about the victims (e.g., age, sex, race, ethnicity, marital status, income, and educational level), the offenders (e.g., sex, race, approximate age, and victim–offender relationship), and the crimes (e.g., time and place of occurrence, use of weapons, nature of the injury, and economic consequences). The victims are also asked about their experiences with the criminal justice system, if they used any self-protective measures, and possible substance abuse by offenders.

Limitations of the NCVS

1. Crimes such as prostitution, drug dealing, and gambling are not often revealed in interviews for obvious reasons. Further, since murder victims cannot be interviewed, the most serious criminal offense is not included in the NCVS. The NCVS also does not incorporate those situations when an individual is being victimized by drunkenness, disturbances of the peace, impaired driving, drug abuse, or sexual solicitation or procuring. The surveys cannot measure those situations where individuals are unaware they have been victimized, such as various types of fraud.

2. Since the NCVS surveys only households, crimes committed against commercial businesses (e.g., stores) are not included. Thus, data on crimes such as burglaries, robberies, and vandalism are not collected.

3. The validity of the NCVS is also an issue. Validity refers to whether an instrument is measuring what it intends to measure. The validity of the NCVS refers to whether it is measuring individuals who have been victims of crimes. Two different procedures have been used to test the validity of the participants’ responses: forward record checks and reverse record checks. A forward record check begins with victims’ reports, and these are subsequently checked against crimes known to police. A reverse record check starts with police records and then traces these back to victims to determine whether these crimes were reported to NCVS interviewers.
Comparing the NCVS With the UCR

Since the NCVS was developed to complement the UCR, both data collection programs are similar in some respects. They both collect data on the same types of serious crimes; they collect information on rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. The definitions of rape, robbery, theft, and motor vehicle theft are practically the same for both programs. However, prior to 2013, the UCR measured rape as a crime against women only, while the NCVS measures rape as a crime against both sexes.

There are some meaningful differences between the UCR and the NCVS. First, each program was developed to serve different purposes. The UCR’s primary purpose was to provide reliable criminal justice data for law enforcement administration, operation, and management. The purpose of the NCVS was to collect information that was previously unavailable on crime (e.g., crimes unreported to the police), victims, and offenders.

Second, while both programs collect information on overlapping types of crimes, these types of crimes are not necessarily identical. As mentioned previously, the NCVS collects data on crimes that were both reported and unreported to law enforcement. The UCR collects information on homicides, arson, commercial crimes, and crimes against children under the age of 12, whereas the NCVS does not collect these data.

Third, the UCR and the NCVS programs use different methods to collect crime data. Thus, for some crimes, they use different definitions. For instance, the UCR defines burglary as the unlawful entry or attempted entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft. Since the NCVS surveys individuals, it is difficult for the victims to ascertain offender motives; burglary is defined as the entry or attempted entry of a residence by a person who had no right to be in that residence.

Fourth, the two programs use different bases to calculate rates for certain crimes. For property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft), the UCR calculates rates using a per-capita rate based on 100,000 persons. The NCVS calculates rates for these crimes using a per-1,000-household rate. If the number of households does not grow at the same rate each year compared to the population, trend data for property crimes rates for these two programs may not be comparable.

Fifth, since the UCR and the NCVS implement different sampling procedures, there may be variations in estimates of crime. Estimates from the NCVS are obtained from interviews; thus, these data are susceptible to a margin of error. The NCVS uses rigorous statistical methods to calculate confidence intervals around all survey estimates. Trend data in the NCVS reports are listed as genuine only if there is at least a 90% certainty that the measured changes are not due to sampling variation. The UCR data are based on actual counts of those crimes reported by law enforcement agencies. There are instances when UCR data are estimated for nonparticipating jurisdictions or those jurisdictions reporting only partial data.

Thus, the UCR and the NCVS have unique strengths. One needs to realize the strengths and limitations of these programs to obtain a greater understanding of crime trends as well as the nature of crime in the United States.88

CRIME DATA FROM SELF-REPORT SURVEYS

Generally, surveys address four broad classes of questions: (1) the prevalence of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors; (2) changes in these attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors over time; (3) differences between groups of people in their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors; and (4) causal propositions about these attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.89 Self-report surveys collect data by asking respondents to provide information about themselves, usually as
to whether they have engaged in certain forms of illegal behavior. Self-report information can be collected either through written questionnaires or through in-person interviews.

The earliest self-report studies were conducted in the 1940s. In 1946, a researcher wanted to compare male college students’ involvement in illegal behavior with that of alleged juvenile delinquents. He compared the court records of these delinquents with the self-reported behavior of male college students enrolled at a southwestern university. The study revealed that all of the respondents in the college sample had been involved in at least one of the 55 offenses listed in the self-report questionnaire. He concluded that these college students had been involved in offenses that were as serious as those of these alleged delinquents, although these students may not have engaged in these behaviors as frequently as the juveniles.

Research has continued to examine juveniles’ involvement in delinquent behavior by using self-reporting procedures. Self-report studies have also been administered to measure drug and alcohol use: for example, evaluating the Minnesota D.A.R.E. Plus Project; examining drug use and violent offending; and exploring the relationship between substance use and weapons aggression. Research focusing on physical and sexual abuse has also used self-reporting procedures: examining the relation between dating violence and marijuana use; investigating the correlation between abuse and other adverse childhood experiences among low-income women; and exploring the prevalence of women’s offending behavior and experiences with intimate partner violence.

While there are no nationwide surveys implemented to collect self-report surveys of all types of crime, various types of self-report surveys have been implemented to collect data on specific types of behaviors. In addition to focusing on certain types of behavior, these surveys sometimes just focus on certain groups (e.g., juveniles). Three self-report surveys are discussed below: Monitoring the Future, the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, and the National Youth Survey—Family Study.

**Monitoring the Future**

Substance abuse by adolescents continues to be an issue, not only because it is itself illegal and can pose a health risk, but also because it may be linked to other types of criminal activity. In 1975, the National Institute on Drug Abuse sponsored the annual self-report survey *Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of Lifestyles and Values of Youth*. It is sometimes referred to as *Monitoring the Future* (MTF). The MTF collects information to measure substance and alcohol use patterns among youths. While the survey initially sampled just 12th-grade students, in 1991, 8th- and 10th-grade students were also included in the annual survey.

Currently, the MTF survey of 12th-grade students contains about 1,400 variables. The survey measures use of drugs such as tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, hashish, LSD, hallucinogens, amphetamines, Ritalin, Quaaludes, barbiturates, cocaine, crack cocaine, GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate), and heroin. The MTF also collects information on students’ attitudes and beliefs about drugs, drug availability, and the social meanings of drug use. In addition to measuring issues of substance and alcohol use, the survey asks students about their attitudes on topics such as education, work and leisure, sex roles and family, population concerns (overpopulation and birth control), conservation, religion, politics, interpersonal relationships, race relations, and happiness.

One limitation to the MTF research design is that it does not survey those youth who drop out of high school. This is a problem because certain behaviors, such as illegal drug use, occur at a higher-than-average rate in this group of individuals. However, it would be difficult to survey these individuals. Each spring, the data from students involve approximately 420 public and private high schools and middle schools. Within each school, up
to 350 students may be selected to participate in the survey. The surveys are administered by local Institute for Social Research representatives and their assistants. The questionnaires are group-administered in classrooms during a normal class period whenever possible.100

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Since 1971, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH; formerly, the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse) has been used to collect information annually on the use of illegal drugs by individuals in the United States. The NSDUH is currently sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services; the data collection is conducted by RTI International (formerly the Research Triangle Institute).101 The NSDUH is one of the largest surveys of drug use ever conducted in the United States.

The primary goal of NSDUH is to provide national as well as state-level estimates on the following:

- the level and patterns of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substance use and abuse;
- trends in the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other types of drugs;
- the consequences of substance use and abuse; and
- groups at high risk for substance use and abuse.

These data are used by various government agencies, private organizations, and researchers as well as the public at large.102 Numerous studies have used the NSDUH to examine issues pertaining to crime and criminal behavior: identifying the prevalence and correlates of group fighting among youths;103 exploring the relationship between alcohol use and violence;104 comparing the prevalence of externalizing behaviors (e.g., crime, violence, and drug use) and migration-related factors between immigrant and U.S.-born individuals;105 and examining the extent of substance use, mental health issues, and criminal behavior among high school dropouts.106

National Youth Survey—Family Study

A major shortcoming of earlier juvenile delinquency research was that it concentrated on those youths who were already in the juvenile justice system. (This will be discussed in later chapters in reference to developing theories based on these data.) One reason that these data were used for such studies was that their records (e.g., police, juvenile hall) were easily accessible to researchers. The problem was that this research focused only on those juveniles who were formally processed in the system. Usually, these juveniles came from disadvantaged backgrounds and were more likely to come to the attention of the system, whereas juveniles from middle- or upper-class backgrounds were more likely to be diverted from the system.107

Implementing self-report surveys is one approach to addressing problems associated with studying only those juveniles formally in the system. In 1977, researchers at the

There are often severe and tragic consequences associated with underage drinking and DUI-related automobile accidents.
University of Colorado implemented the National Youth Survey (NYS) with an initial sample of 1,725 male and female juveniles born between 1959 and 1965. Each respondent, along with his or her parents/legal guardians, was asked about various events and behaviors that had occurred the previous year. The study is ongoing. Thus, in 2011, the respondents were aged 46 to 55. In 1993, the partners and children of the original respondents were interviewed. As a result, in 2000, the name of the survey was changed to the National Youth Survey—Family Study.\textsuperscript{108}

The NYS includes items that measure a respondent’s involvement in criminal activity. It measures over 40 offenses that represent the full range of offenses reported in the UCR. The NYS also measures respondents’ attitudes on issues such as level of community involvement, educational aspirations, employment skills, pregnancy, abortion, neighborhood problems, and the use of drugs and alcohol. The National Youth Survey—Family Study includes additional questions that cover the respondent’s family, family relationships, educational attainment, and careers.

In regard to comparing data collected only on those youths who have come to the attention of the criminal justice system (i.e., official statistics) with self-report studies, researchers have cautioned that “to abandon either self-report or official statistics in favor of the other is ‘rather shortsighted; to systematically ignore the findings of either is dangerous, particularly when the two measures provide apparently contradictory findings.”\textsuperscript{109} Thus, to obtain a full understanding of delinquent behavior, one should use both self-report surveys and official record research.

\section*{Additional Approaches to Collecting Crime Data}

In this section, additional approaches to collecting crime data are briefly covered. It is important for those involved in the criminal justice field to realize that there are various types of data collection programs other than the UCR and NCVS. These additional data collection efforts are usually for a more specific purpose or target a more specific population. The National Youth Gang Survey and spatial analyses of crime are reviewed below.

\subsection*{The National Youth Gang Survey}

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of gangs and gang-related crime:

Previous national surveys suggested growth in the number of cities, towns, and counties with gang problems, but there was no single source of uniform data that could be used to compare changes and trends over time.\textsuperscript{110}

In response to this growing concern, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Institute for Intergovernmental Research established the National Youth Gang Center (NYGC). One of NYGC’s primary tasks was to implement periodic national surveys to collect data on problems associated with youth gangs. The first \textbf{National Youth Gang Survey} was conducted in 1995. For this initial survey, NYGC wanted to collect basic information concerning the gang problem in different jurisdictions. The survey was mailed to 4,120 police and sheriff’s departments across the United States. Approximately 83\% of the participating agencies responded to the survey.\textsuperscript{111}

A key aspect to any research on gangs is how a “gang” is defined. The NYCG requires that participants report information for any “group of youths or young adults in your jurisdiction that you or other responsible persons in your agency or community are
As noted previously, the UCR Program collects information on both single-bias and multiple-bias hate crimes. Law enforcement agencies are required to note at least one bias motivation. A single-bias incident is "an incident in which one or more offense types are motivated by the same bias." A multiple-bias incident is "an incident in which one or more offense types are motivated by two or more biases."114

In 2014, over 15,000 law enforcement agencies participated in the Hate Crime Statistics Program. Of these, 1,666 reported 5,479 hate crime incidents involving 6,418 offenses. Recall that hate crimes are not separate or distinct crimes; rather, they are traditional offenses but considered hate crimes when they are motivated by the offender’s bias. Among the 6,418 hate crime offenses, 63.1% were crimes against persons and 36.1% were crimes against property. The remaining offenses were considered crimes against society (see Table 2.6).

As noted previously, in 2009, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act was passed. It was named after Matthew Shepard, a gay college student who was tortured and killed in 1998. His murder was motivated by the offenders’ bias against gay men. James Byrd Jr., an African-American, was chained to a pickup truck and dragged to his death, also in 1998. His murder was motivated by the offenders’ bias against African-Americans. The act expanded the definition of hate crimes to include violence based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.115 In terms of sexual-orientation bias, law enforcement agencies reported 1,178 hate crime offenses based on sexual orientation bias in the 2014 Hate Crime Statistics. Of these offenses:

- 23.6% were classified as anti-lesbian, -gay, - bisexual, or transgender (mixed-group) bias.
- 14.3% were classified as anti-lesbian bias.
- 2.6% were classified as anti-bisexual bias.
- 1.5% were classified as anti-heterosexual bias.

One example of a violent offense that was subsequently considered a hate crime occurred in June 2015 in Sacramento, California. Timothy Brownell was accused of attacking three area musicians because they wore skinny jeans. Brownell allegedly yelled a homophobic slur at the musicians and subsequently assaulted them with a knife because of their skinny jeans. Later, he turned himself in at the county jail. Brownell’s initial arrest was on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon and possessing a firearm. However, the police later issued an arrest warrant when the attack was reclassified as a hate crime. One of the three victims, Alex Lyman, stated that Brownell approached him without any provocation. Next, Brownell called him a homophobic slur and then began to stab him just because he was wearing skinny jeans.117

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

1. After examining the factors associated with this incident, such as "no provocation" and using a homophobic slur, what do you think would cause him to react in this manner?

2. What are some key factors that would indicate this offense should be classified as a “hate crime”?

As noted in the previous chapter, throughout this text we will attempt to apply key points of the theories to either real or hypothetical situations. For this particular example, it is essential to realize that while this offense was initially considered an assault, law enforcement later realized that motivation was a key aspect of this offense—Timothy Brownell had a bias toward what he perceived were gay men because they were wearing skinny jeans.
TABLE 2.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFENSE TYPE</th>
<th>INCIDENTS(^a)</th>
<th>VICTIMS(^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,479</td>
<td>6,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes against persons:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape (revised definition)(^c)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape (legacy definition)(^d)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated assault</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple assault</td>
<td>1,307</td>
<td>1,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimidation</td>
<td>1,378</td>
<td>1,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other(^e)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes against property:</td>
<td>2,317</td>
<td>2,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny-theft</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicle theft</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction/damage/vandalism</td>
<td>1,694</td>
<td>1,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other(^e)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes against society(^e)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) The actual number of incidents is 5,479. However, the column figures will not add to the total because incidents may include more than one offense type, and these are counted in each appropriate offense category.

\(^b\) The term victim may refer to a person, business, institution, or society as a whole.

\(^c\) The figures shown in the rape (revised definition) row include only those reported by law enforcement agencies that used the revised Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) definition of rape.

\(^d\) The figures shown in the rape (legacy definition) row include only those reported by law enforcement agencies that used the legacy UCR definition or rape.

\(^e\) Includes additional offenses collected in the National Incident-Based Reporting System.


willing to identify as a ‘gang.’” Further, participating agencies are required to report such groups as motorcycle gangs, hate or ideology groups, prison gangs, and adult gangs.\(^{112}\)

The 2012 NYGS consisted of two groups: (1) all police departments serving cities with a population of 50,000 or more and all suburban county police and sheriff’s departments; and (2) a randomly selected sample of police departments serving cities with a population between 2,500 and 50,000 and a randomly selected sample of rural county police
Introduction to Criminology

and sheriff’s departments. Approximately 87% of the selected agencies responded to the survey. Key findings from this survey are as follows:

- Approximately 30% of all responding law enforcement agencies reported gang activity.
- Compared to 2011, slightly fewer jurisdictions had experienced gang activity (3,100 versus 3,300).
- Gang activity remained essentially concentrated in urban areas, with indications that it was occurring more than in previous years.
- Gang-related homicides had increased overall nationally, partly due to increased reporting by agencies.113

Spatial Analyses of Crime

Spatial analyses of crime focus on crime places. This interest in crime places “spans theory from the perspective of understanding the etiology of crime, and practice from the perspective of developing effective criminal justice interventions to reduce crime.”118 Thus, rather than attempting to understand crime from an individual perspective, spatial analysis also incorporates where and when crimes occur. This perspective can then assist in efforts to reduce future criminal activity.

Mapping crimes can provide such information as location, distance, direction, and pattern. Location is considered the most important piece of information. Understanding where crimes have occurred or what crimes may occur in the future is essential, especially when considering how to allocate police personnel and community resources. Distance is also a crucial element. For instance, distance can answer such questions as, “How far did the victim live from the place where she was attacked?” Direction is most helpful when considered along with distance. Usually, direction is referred to in a broader context, in statements such as, “Serial robberies are moving southeast” or “The east side is becoming a high-crime area.” Finally, pattern is what crime analysts attempt to develop when using place-based crime data. Patterns are usually designated as random, uniform, clustered, or dispersed.119

Attempting to understand crime through location is not new. Law enforcement agencies have considered crime location to be an important component of crime control. In fact, the use of maps can be traced as far back as 1900 by the New York City Police Department.120 Police departments would place pins on maps to represent crimes that occurred in various locations (see Photo 2.9). Thanks to technological advances, they now have more sophisticated and responsive ways to track this information (see Figure 2.5). Criminologists have also explored whether there is a relationship between criminal activity and location. These criminologists attempt to understand crime with what are called social ecological theories.121 These criminologists examine how ecological conditions such as housing standards, poverty, and transient populations influence criminal activity.
Since the 1990s, there have been major advances in the methods available for analyzing place-based crime data. These advances are primarily due to technological improvements, especially with computer capabilities. In addition to these computer capabilities, there have been major contributions from geographic information systems (GIS). GIS is a system made up of not only hardware but also incorporating computer software and data that are later used to analyze and describe information (e.g., crime). This information is then linked to spatial location. Further, law enforcement agencies continue to enhance the computerization of police records management systems as well as computer-aided dispatch systems (i.e., citizen calls to police).

Not only does spatial analyses of crime assist law enforcement, but researchers have also used these analyses to further our understanding of crime, such as by examining the relationship between school vicinity and criminal activity; exploring community factors (e.g., poverty, ethnic diversity) and residents' perceptions of bias crime; comparing the changes in the spatial patterns of automotive theft; and examining the effects of population displacement after the demolition of an urban housing project.

FIGURE 2.5
The San Jose Police Department Interactive Crime Map

Visit the San Jose Police Department interactive crime map: http://www.sjpd.org/CrimeStats/CrimeReports.html

LEARNING CHECK 2.3

1. The ___________ survey collects information on substance and alcohol use patterns among youths.
2. The ___________ started with an initial sample of youths born between 1959 and 1965.
3. A key aspect of the National Youth Gang Survey is how the term ___________ is defined.
4. ___________ focuses on crime places.
CONCLUSION

This chapter began by reviewing various data collection procedures using law enforcement statistics. The Uniform Crime Reports Program is one of the best-known and most established data collection programs used to measure crime in the United States. The UCR Program also incorporates supplementary data procedures to collect information on homicides, hate crimes, and law enforcement officers who are killed and assaulted in the line of duty. To further enhance our understanding of crime in the United States, the National Incident-Based Reporting System was developed to provide additional information, especially pertaining to crime incidents and victims, that was not available with the UCR Program.

A major drawback to understanding crime using law enforcement statistics is that not all crimes come to the attention of police. In recognition of this “dark figure of crime,” the National Crime Victimization Survey was developed in the 1970s. The NCVS collects data from individuals who were victims of crime, regardless of whether or not they reported these crimes to law enforcement. The UCR and the NCVS are the two major data collection programs used to measure crime in the United States. While they have some similarities, there are also key differences. It is essential to stress that both data collection programs are necessary to understanding patterns and trends of criminal activity in the United States.

We also covered more specific data collection methods. These various methods are used primarily to collect data on certain issues related to criminal justice (e.g., Monitoring the Future and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health) or to collect data on certain populations (e.g., the National Youth Gang Survey). Finally, we briefly discussed a new technique, spatial analyses of crime, which is being explored not only for law enforcement purposes but for criminal justice research endeavors as well.

KEY TERMS

- hate crime data, 43
- Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 44
- Monitoring the Future, 49
- National Crime Victimization Survey, 45
- National Incident-Based Reporting System, 40
- National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 50
- National Youth Gang Survey, 51
- Spatial Analyses of Crime, 54
- Supplementary Homicide Reports, 38
- Uniform Crime Reports, 33

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How are the UCR collect data?
2. What are some key limitations to the UCR data, and how have these limitations been addressed?
3. How does the UCR collect information on homicides?
4. How does the UCR collect information on hate crimes?
5. How does the UCR collect information on law enforcement officers killed or assaulted in the line of duty?
6. What are some key differences between the UCR and NIBRS?
7. How does the NCVS attempt to measure the amount of crime that is not reported to law enforcement?
8. What are some similarities and differences between the UCR and the NCVS?
9. How do the various self-report surveys differ from the UCR and other types of law enforcement statistics?
10. What data collection program should be considered the source for understanding crime in the United States?

WEB RESOURCES

The FBI Uniform Crime Reporting website includes reports from various sources, such as the Uniform Crime Reports, Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, and Hate Crime Data.

https://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats

The National Crime Victimization Survey can be located on the Bureau of Justice Statistics website, which provides information (such as methodology), questionnaires, and publications regarding this data source.

http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=245

The Monitoring the Future website provides information regarding their survey, such as press releases, publications, and tables and figures.

http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/

The National Gang Center website provides resources such as publications, training, as well as their newsletter.

https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/survey-analysis

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FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION AND APPLICATION, VISIT THE STUDENT STUDY SITE:

- FBI: Murders Up Nearly 11 Percent in 2015; Violent Crime Rose Slightly
- Historians Mine 400 Years of Crime Data at the Old Bailey
- Shooting for accuracy: Comparing data sources on mass murder.
- Missing data and imputation in the Uniform Crime Reports and the effects on National estimates
- Assessing the practice of hot spots policing: Surveying results from a national convenience sample of local police agencies
- Janet Lauritsen (1 of 3): What is the National Crime Victimization Survey
- What is a Hate Crime?
- Crime Statistics: The Dark Figure
- Study Highlights a New Epidemic of Drug Abuse that is a Growing Problem Among US Teens
- Not there for your children? Gangs will be
- Federal Bureau of Prisons - Inmate Statistics
- NIBRS
- Crime Mapping
- Prison Overcrowding
- Crime in the United States

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