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Perceptions of Neighborhood Crime, 1995

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In 1995 the percentage of U.S. households identifying crime as a neighborhood problem remained about 7%, according to the American Housing Survey.¹ The percentage of households identifying crime as a problem had reached 7.4% in 1991 and was fairly constant afterwards.

Somewhat similar to the Nation's general pattern of violent victimization rates, household perceptions of crime as a problem rose during the late 1980's and early 1990's and then leveled off. Nevertheless, differences between perception and actual victimization are found. As crime later dropped sharply from 1994 to 1995, perceptions of crime remained relatively stable.

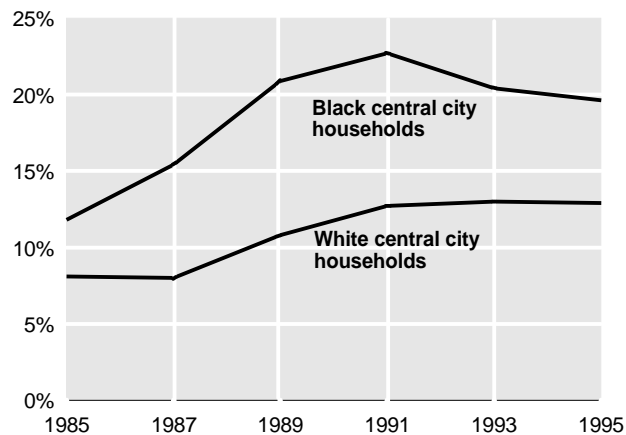
As a general matter, the gap between perceptions of crime and actual experience of crime varied among different subpopulations. For example, in 1995 the percentage of black households indicating a crime problem was almost 2.5 times greater than the percentage of white households. This difference was not nearly as large

¹"Household" refers to occupants of a housing unit. A household representative provided information for the entire unit.

Highlights

Among central city households from 1985 to 1995, a higher percentage of black than white households cited crime as a problem

Percent of central city households



- In 1995, 7% of U.S. households identified crime as a neighborhood problem. Over the 1985-95 period the percentage of households saying that crime was a problem reached 7.4% in 1991 and remained relatively constant through 1995.
- Black, central city, and renter households were more likely than other types of households to identify crime as a neighborhood problem.
- Twenty-five percent of black public housing households and 13% of white public housing households reported crime as a neighborhood problem in 1995.
- Perceptions of crime vulnerability generally reflected actual relative likelihood of criminal victimization. From 1992 to 1995 a higher percentage of black households than white households had experienced nonlethal violent crime.
- In 1995 about 9% of black urban households were victimized by violent crime compared to 7% of white urban households.
- In 1995, 8% of public housing households were victimized by violent crime compared to 6% of non-public housing households.

Table 1. Households identifying crime as a neighborhood problem, 1985-95

Type of household	Percent of households identifying crime as a problem					
	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995
All households	4.7%	4.8%	6.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.3%
White	4.0	3.8	5.1	6.0	6.1	6.1
Black	8.5	11.0	15.4	16.5	15.2	14.4
Hispanic ^a	7.7	8.4	11.2	12.1	12.2	11.5
Elderly	3.2	3.1	3.4	4.4	4.3	4.1
Place of residence						
Central city	9.1%	9.7%	13.1%	15.0%	14.8%	14.5%
Suburban	2.9	2.9	3.9	4.6	4.8	4.9
Rural	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.9	2.1	2.2
Home ownership						
Owner	3.1%	2.9%	3.6%	4.6%	4.7%	4.7%
Renter	7.4	8.0	11.3	12.3	12.3	12.1
Type of structure						
One-unit detached	3.1%	2.8%	3.7%	4.6%	4.7%	4.8%
Multiunit	8.6	9.5	12.8	13.9	13.9	13.5
Number of households (in millions) ^b	86.8	88.8	91.5	91.0	92.8	95.0

Note: Excludes missing data and those occupied units not considered in a neighborhood, ranging from 1% to 4% of units in subpopulations. One-unit detached structures exclude row houses and mobile homes. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

^aHispanic includes persons from all races.

^bThe estimates for total number of households reporting they live in a neighborhood in 1991, 1993, and 1995 are based on the 1990 census and are not directly comparable to prior-year estimates that are based on the 1980 census.

Question: "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?"

Source: American Housing Survey 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995.

when examining actual victimization. In 1995, 27% of black households and 23% of white households were victimized by one or more crimes.

Perceptions of neighborhood crime

During 1985-95 perceptions of crime as a neighborhood problem have varied by household race, location, tenure, and type of housing structure. For example, in 1995, 14% of black households compared to 6% of white households said crime was a neighborhood problem (table 1). Central city (15%) households were more likely to cite crime as a neighborhood problem than either suburban (5%) or rural (2%) households. Likewise, crime was more frequently cited as a problem for renter (12%) households than owner (5%) households. Households in multiunit structures (14%) cited crime as a problem more often than households in single-unit structures (5%) .

Central city households

In 1995, 47% of black households in central cities indicated having some kind of neighborhood problems (table 2). Among black central city households, crime remained the most often mentioned problem, followed by "people," "noise," and "litter." In 1989, 1991, and 1995, crime was the most frequently mentioned neighborhood problem reported by black central city households.

About 45% of white central city households indicated having some kind of neighborhood problem in 1995. Among white central city households, 15% reported "people" as a neighborhood problem, and 13% reported crime (not shown in a table).

Table 2. Black central city households identifying neighborhood problems, 1985-95

	Percent of black central city households					
	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995
No problem	55.4%	52.1%	50.2%	50.2%	50.6%	53.1%
Problems	44.6%	47.9%	49.9%	49.8%	49.4%	46.9%
Crime	11.8	15.4	20.9	22.7	20.3	19.6
People ^a	18.6	17.7	17.2	17.6	18.8	16.8
Noise	10.1	10.0	10.0	12.1	12.0	11.4
Litter/housing deterioration	9.5	10.1	8.5	7.7	7.5	7.9
Traffic	5.2	5.7	5.6	6.2	6.2	6.9
Poor city/county services	3.3	3.0	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.0
Undesirable commercial property	2.0	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.5	1.9
Other	8.0	8.3	9.7	8.5	10.5	9.8
Number of households (in millions) ^b	5.9	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5

Note: Excludes missing data and those occupied units not considered in a neighborhood, an estimated 84,000 in 1985, 161,000 in 1987, 151,000 in 1989, 144,000 in 1991, 142,000 in 1993, and 167,000 in 1995. Detail may not add to totals because more than one category may apply to a housing unit. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

^aThe category "people" includes responses such as disliking neighbors, too many people in the neighborhood, and people loitering in the neighborhood.

^bThe estimates for the total number of households reporting they live in a neighborhood in 1991, 1993, and 1995 are based on the 1990 census and are not directly comparable to prior-year estimates that are based on the 1980 census.

Question: "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?"

Source: American Housing Survey 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Type of housing

In 1995, 14% of households living in a multiunit structure compared to 5% of households in single-unit detached structures identified crime as a problem (table 3). Over the period 1985-95 the percentage of households living in multiunit structures and identifying crime as a neighborhood problem has been at least double that of households living in single-unit, detached structures. This difference also

exists when examining central city households.

Regardless of the type of housing structure, black households cited crime as a neighborhood problem more often than white households. In 1995, 11% of black households living in single-family housing reported crime

as a problem compared to 4% of white households in the same type of structure. In the central city 22% of black households compared to 17% of white households in multiunit structures reported crime as a problem.

Location of households, 1985 and 1995

Between 1985 and 1995 the percentages of black and white households living in central cities decreased slightly. In 1995, 57% of black households and about 27% of white households resided in central cities.

	1985		1995	
	White	Black	White	Black
Percent of households				
Central city	30%	61%	27%	57%
Suburbs	47	25	50	30
Rural	23	15	24	14
Number of households (in millions)*	75	10	80	12

Note: Detail may not sum to 100% because of rounding. Data are for households with a neighborhood. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

*The estimates for the number of black and white households reporting they live in a neighborhood in 1995 are based on the 1990 census and are not directly comparable to the 1985 estimates that are based on the 1980 census.

Source: American Housing Survey 1985 and 1995. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 3. Households identifying crime as a problem, by type of housing structure, 1985-95

Type of structure and household	Percent of households identifying crime as a problem					
	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995
One-unit detached structures						
All households	3.1%	2.8%	3.7%	4.6%	4.7%	4.8%
White	2.8	2.3	3.1	3.9	4.1	4.1
Black	5.9	6.9	9.5	12.1	10.8	10.6
All central city households	6.2	6.2	8.4	10.8	10.5	11.0
White	5.6	5.3	7.3	9.4	9.5	9.9
Black	8.8	10.5	13.8	17.6	15.1	15.6
Number of households (in millions)*	54.1	55.2	56.9	56.1	57.7	59.2
Multiunit structures						
All households	8.6%	9.5%	12.8%	13.9%	13.9%	13.5%
White	7.6	7.9	10.8	11.8	12.2	12.0
Black	11.9	16.1	21.2	22.3	20.2	19.2
All central city households	12.2	13.5	18.3	19.5	19.3	18.4
White	11.2	11.5	15.7	17.0	17.7	17.2
Black	14.3	19.3	25.6	26.6	24.0	22.1
Number of households (in millions)*	24.1	23.7	24.4	24.1	24.3	24.4

Note: Excludes missing data and those occupied units not considered in a neighborhood, ranging from 1% to 4% of units in subpopulations. One-unit detached structures exclude row houses and mobile homes. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

*The estimates for total number of households reporting they live in a neighborhood in 1991, 1993, and 1995 are based on the 1990 census and are not directly comparable to prior-year estimates that are based on the 1980 census.

Question: "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?"

Source: American Housing Survey 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Central city neighborhood characteristics

In 1995 about 25 million, or 26% of U.S. households, lived in multiunit structures. Over half (53%) of these households were located in a central city. The American Housing Survey contains detailed information for central city households in multiunit structures on neighborhood characteristics (for example, presence of abandoned buildings or bars on windows). This permits a comparison of neighborhood conditions between households that identify crime as a problem and those without the problem. Most (87%) households in multiunit structures in the central city are renters, and the information presented below is limited to this group.

The renter households in multiunit structures in the central city who identified crime as a problem were more likely to have nearby an abandoned building, a building with barred windows, and a major accumulation of trash compared to those renter households not reporting a crime problem.

Of renter households citing crime as a problem, black households were more likely to have abandoned buildings, buildings with bars on the windows, litter or trash, and a road nearby in need of major repair compared to white households with a crime problem.

Black renter households that did not report crime as a problem also were more likely than their white counterparts to live in neighborhoods with abandoned buildings and buildings with barred windows. For renter households in multiunit structures in the central city who did not report crime as a problem, 12% of black households compared to 4% of white households had abandoned buildings in their neighborhood, and 28% of black households compared to 15% of white households had buildings with barred windows.

For a discussion about the impact of neighborhood conditions on crime, see James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows," *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 1982, pp. 29-38, and George L. Kelling and Catherine M. Coles, *Fixing Broken Windows*, New York: The Free Press, 1996.

Profile of renter households in multiunit structures in central cities, 1995

Characteristic	Renter households responding that crime is a neighborhood problem			Renter households responding that crime is not a neighborhood problem		
	All	White	Black	All	White	Black
At least one abandoned building within 300 feet of structure	12.5%	9.7%	18.3%	5.9%	3.6%	12.0%
At least one building with bars on window within 300 feet of structure	35.0	29.0	41.1	19.8	14.9	28.3
Major repair of road needed within 300 feet of structure	3.5	2.3	5.6	2.2	1.7	3.7
Major accumulation of trash/litter within 300 feet of structure	6.8	4.5	10.7	2.7	1.1	6.0
Number of renter households in multiunit structures in central city (in millions)*	2.1	1.2	.7	9.1	5.8	2.3

Note: Data for characteristics are based on interviewer observation and are only complete for multiunit structures. The table excludes missing data and households without a neighborhood. For 1995 the characteristics exclude missing data ranging from 0% to 6% of black and white units where crime is a problem and from 0% to 7% of black and white units where crime is not a problem. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

*All renter households in multiunit structures in central city includes other racial categories not presented in the table.

Source: American Housing Survey 1995. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Crime so objectionable, households wishing to move

In 1995, 7% of the households surveyed reported crime as a neighborhood problem. Of those households 44% — about 3% of all households — said the problem was so objectionable that they wished to move (table 4).

Three percent of all white households and 7% of black households reported wishing to move because of crime.

About 3% of all households (34% of the 7% reporting a crime problem on table 1) indicated crime to be a neighborhood problem but that they did not wish to move.

In 1995 among the central city households who indicated crime as a neighborhood problem, 6% of white households (43% of 13%) and 10% of black households (49% of 20%) reported that crime was so objectionable that they wished to move.

Criminal victimization

Perceptions of neighborhood crime among different types of households generally reflected actual crime victimization experiences as recorded by the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which measures as personal crimes the offenses of rape, sexual assault, robbery, simple and aggravated assault, and personal theft. The NCVS measures the property crimes of household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft.

From 1992 to 1995 black households were more likely to be victimized, especially by nonlethal violent crime, than their white counterparts (figure 1). For example, in 1995, 27% of black households compared to 23% of white households experienced one or more crimes. A slightly larger percentage of black households (8%) than white households (6%) experienced a violent

Table 4. Households identifying crime as a problem and wishing to move, 1989-95

	Percent of households responding that crime was so objectionable they wished to move				Percent of households responding that crime was objectionable, but they did not wish to move			
	1989	1991	1993	1995	1989	1991	1993	1995
All	2.8%	3.3%	3.4%	3.2%	2.3%	2.6%	2.4%	2.5%
White	2.1	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.2
Black	7.5	8.7	8.4	7.1	4.0	4.6	3.7	4.1
All central city	6.0%	7.3%	7.4%	6.5%	4.6%	5.0%	4.5%	4.9%
White	4.6	5.7	5.9	5.6	4.1	4.6	4.6	4.6
Black	10.4	12.3	12.0	9.6	5.6	6.2	4.8	5.7

Note: Excludes missing data for an estimated 46,000 households in 1989, 44,000 households in 1991, 42,000 households in 1991, and 61,000 in 1995 who initially identified crime as a neighborhood problem. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

"If yes, does the condition bother you? If it bothers you, is it so objectionable that you would like to move from the neighborhood?"
Source: American Housing Survey 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Question: Initially respondents were asked, "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?" They were subsequently asked, "Does the neighborhood have neighborhood crime?"

Table 5. Households victimized, by type of crime, locality of residence, and race of head of household, 1995

	Total	Percent of households					
		White			Black		
		Urban	Suburban	Rural	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Total crime	23.4%	27.7%	22.7%	17.4%	29.7%	25.2%	18.6%
Personal crime ^a	6.5%	7.6%	6.4%	4.5%	9.1%	7.3%	5.6%
Crimes of violence ^b	6.3	7.2	6.2	4.5	8.6	6.9	5.5
Serious violent crime ^c	2.6	3.2	2.3	1.5	4.9	3.5	2.9
Rape/attempted rape	.2	.2	.2	.1	.4	.1	.3
Sexual assault	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1	0	0
Robbery	.9	1.1	.7	.3	2.6	1.3	1.0
Assault	5.4	6.2	5.4	4.2	6.2	5.9	4.5
Aggravated assault	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.0	2.1	2.3	1.8
Simple assault	4.3	4.8	4.4	3.4	4.4	4.0	3.0
Personal theft ^d	.3	.5	.3	.1	.6	.6	.3
Property crime	19.9%	23.8%	19.2%	14.8%	24.7%	20.8%	15.5%
Household burglary	4.1	4.7	3.5	3.8	5.7	4.4	4.1
Motor vehicle theft	1.5	2.2	1.2	.6	2.9	2.9	.6
Theft	16.1	19.3	16.1	11.8	18.9	15.7	12.3
Number of households (in millions) ^e	101.5	23.7	42.0	20.4	6.8	3.6	1.8

Note: Detail does not add to total because of overlap in households experiencing various crimes.

^aThe NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

^bViolent crime includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault, and aggravated and simple assault. Attempted crimes are included.

^cSerious violent crime includes rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and sexual assault.

^dPersonal theft includes pocket picking, purse snatching, and attempted purse snatching.

^eThe number of total households includes other racial categories not presented in the table.

Source: 1995 National Crime Victimization Survey.

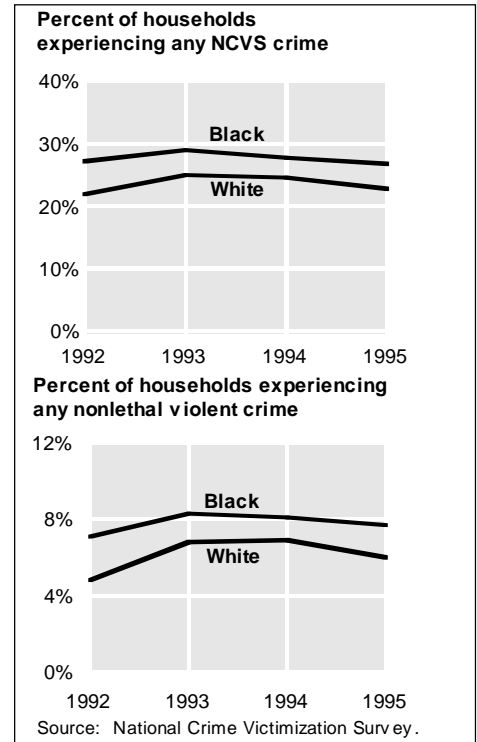


Figure 1

crime. As measured by the NCVS, violent crime includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Murder is not measured by the NCVS because of the inability to interview murder victims.

In 1995 a higher percentage of black urban households were victimized by

nonlethal violent crime than their white counterparts (table 5). About 9% of black urban households compared to 7% of white urban households had a member experience a nonlethal violent crime. Black urban households experienced more crime than black households located in either suburban or rural areas.

Perceptions of crime in public housing

In 1995 about 2.4 million households said they lived in public housing units, according to the household respondent.² (See the box on page 8 for a discussion of the actual number of public housing households.) Over 18% of these households reported that crime was a neighborhood problem (table 6). In 1991 and 1993 over 20% of public housing households reported crime as a neighborhood problem. About 25% of black households compared to 13% of white households in public housing reported crime as a neighborhood problem. About a third of public housing households were headed by a person age 65 or older. Of these households 9% reported crime as a neighborhood problem.

In 1995 over 10% (55% of the 18%) who indicated crime as a neighborhood problem in public housing households indicated that crime was so objectionable they wished to move (table 7). Among black public housing households that specifically indicated crime as a problem, nearly 15% (57% of the 25%) responded that they wished to move because crime was so objectionable. About 4% (23% of the 18%) of public housing households that specifically identified crime as a neighborhood problem reported that crime was objectionable but they did not want to move.

²Public housing includes a variety of types of units and locations. For a complete description of the kinds of public housing in the Nation, see *Characteristics of HUD-Assisted Renters and Their Units in 1993*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, May 1997.

Table 6. Public housing households identifying crime as a problem, 1985-95

	Percent of public housing households identifying crime as a problem					
	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995
All public housing households	13.7%	13.6%	18.7%	20.6%	20.6%	18.4%
White	10.1	9.2	12.1	13.7	11.8	12.7
Black	16.0	18.4	25.8	30.0	31.1	25.4
Hispanic ^a	20.7	22.6	24.7	26.0	24.7	21.3
Elderly	7.7	5.8	10.0	10.1	11.4	9.1
Number of households (in millions) ^b	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.4

Note: Excludes missing data and those occupied units not considered in a neighborhood ranging from 1% to 5% in subpopulations. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

^aHispanic includes persons from all races.

^bThe estimates for total number of households reporting they live in a neighborhood in 1991, 1993, and 1995 are based on the 1990 census and are not directly comparable to prior-year estimates that are based on the 1980 census.

Question: "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?" To determine public housing households, respondents were asked, "Is the building owned by a public housing authority?" The responses to this question resulted in an overestimate in the number of public housing households. See the box on page 8.

Source: American Housing Survey 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 7. Public housing households identifying crime as a problem and wishing to move, 1989-95

	Percent of households responding that crime was so objectionable they wished to move				Percent of households responding that crime was objectionable, but they did not wish to move			
	1989	1991	1993	1995	1989	1991	1993	1995
All	10.6%	13.8%	13.2%	10.2%	4.2%	3.5%	3.1%	4.3%
White	6.4	7.3	7.1	6.3	2.3	3.8	2.8	3.8
Black	15.6	22.0	20.7	14.5	5.5	3.7	3.7	4.8

Note: Excludes missing data for an estimated 5,500 in 1989 and 2,300 in 1995 who initially identified crime as a neighborhood problem. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

Question: Initially respondents were asked, "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?" They were subsequently asked, "Does the neighborhood have neighborhood crime? If yes, does the condition bother you? If it bothers you, is it so objectionable that you would like to move from the neighborhood?"

To determine public housing households, respondents were asked, "Is the building owned by a public housing authority?" The responses to this question resulted in an overestimate in the number of public housing households. See box on page 8.

Source: American Housing Survey 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995. U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Criminal victimization in public housing

In 1995 households who reported they lived in public housing experienced slightly more personal crime, particularly violent crime, than their non-public housing counterparts. Eight percent of public housing households reported one or more nonlethal violent crimes compared to 6% of non-public housing households (table 8).

Among public housing households, 6% of black households compared to 2% of white households were victimized by serious violent crime, which includes rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Black public housing households (6%) were also more likely to be burglarized than their white counterparts (4%).

When compared by geographical area, there was no difference in personal and property crime experienced between urban public housing households and urban non-public housing households.

In 1995 among urban public housing households, black households were more likely to have a household member victimized by robbery than white households (table 9). Five percent of black urban public housing households reported one or more robberies compared to 2% of white urban public housing households. Black urban public housing households (7%) also were victimized by burglary more often than either white urban public housing households (3%) or non-public housing households (5%).

Table 8. Public and non-public housing households victimized, by type of crime and race of head of household, 1995

NCVS victimization	Percent of public housing households victimized			Percent of non-public housing households victimized		
	Total	White	Black	Total	White	Black
Total crime	23.8%	21.2%	26.9%	23.4%	22.9%	26.8%
Personal crime ^a	8.6%	8.1%	9.8%	6.5%	6.3%	7.9%
Crimes of violence ^b	8.1	7.7	9.1	6.2	6.0	7.5
Serious violent crime ^c	3.5	1.9	5.6	2.6	2.3	4.0
Rape/attempted rape	.5	.7	.2	.2	.2	.3
Sexual assault	.2	.1	.2	.1	.1	0
Robbery	2.0	.7	3.7	.9	.7	1.8
Assault	6.3	6.9	5.8	5.4	5.3	5.9
Aggravated assault	1.5	.8	2.2	1.5	1.4	2.1
Simple assault	5.0	6.5	3.6	4.2	4.3	4.1
Personal theft ^d	.5	.4	.8	.3	.3	.5
Property crime	19.0%	16.9%	21.1%	19.9%	19.5%	22.4%
Household burglary	4.7	3.7	6.4	4.1	3.9	4.9
Motor vehicle theft	1.4	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.3	2.7
Theft	15.0	13.9	15.2	16.2	16.0	17.2
Number of households (in millions) ^e	2.7	1.5	1.2	98.8	84.6	11.1

Note: Detail does not add to total because households could experience more than one type of crime.

^aThe NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

^bViolent crime includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault, and aggravated and simple assault. Attempted crimes are included.

aggravated assault, and sexual assault.

^dPersonal theft includes pocket picking, purse snatching, and attempted purse snatching.

^eThe number of total households includes other racial categories not presented in the table.

Source: 1995 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Table 9. Public and non-public housing households victimized, by type of crime, locality of residence, and race of head of household, 1995

Selected NCVS victimization	Percent of public housing households					
	White			Black		
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Total crime ^a	24.4%	21.6%	13.2%	27.9%	19.2%	28.4%
Crimes of violence ^b	8.8%	9.1%	2.5%	10.0%	3.4%	9.0%
Robbery	1.5	0	0	5.0	0	0
Assault ^c	7.1	9.2	2.5	5.6	3.4	9.0
Property crime ^d	20.2%	15.4%	11.6%	22.3%	14.3%	20.7%
Household burglary	2.8	4.1	5.0	7.3	6.4	1.0
Number of public housing households (in millions)	.7	.5	.3	.9	.1	.2
Selected NCVS victimization	Percent of non-public housing households					
	White			Black		
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Total crime ^a	27.8%	22.7%	17.5%	30.0%	25.4%	17.6%
Crimes of violence ^b	7.2%	6.1%	4.5%	8.5%	7.0%	5.1%
Robbery	1.1	.7	.4	2.2	1.4	1.1
Assault ^c	6.2	5.3	4.2	6.3	6.0	4.0
Property crime ^d	23.9%	19.2%	14.8%	25.1%	21.0%	15.0%
Household burglary	4.7	3.5	3.8	5.5	4.3	4.5
Number of non-public housing households (in millions)	23.0	41.5	20.1	6.0	3.5	1.6

Note: Detail does not add to total because households could experience more than one type of crime.

^aThe NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

^bViolent crime includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault, and aggravated and simple assault. Attempted crimes are included.

^cAssault includes aggravated and simple assault.

^dProperty crime includes household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft from the household.

Source: 1995 National Crime Victimization Survey.

Methodology

The American Housing Survey, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, collects data on the Nation's housing, including single-family houses and apartments, housing and neighborhood quality, housing costs, and the size of the housing unit. National data are collected every other year from a fixed sample of 50,000 housing units plus newly constructed units each year. The AHS data are available from the HUDUSER at 1-800-245-2691. The 1995 AHS data can be obtained from the HUDUSER Web site at <http://www.huduser.org/data/other/ahs.html>

The National Crime Victimization Survey, sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, measures personal and household offenses, including crimes not reported to the police, by interviewing all occupants age 12 and older of housing units that have been selected to comprise a representative sample. NCVS data are available through the BJS Internet Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/> or the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the University of Michigan, 1-800-999-0960.

The data presented in this report are for households touched by crime. In prior years BJS published annual NCVS data on households touched by crime in a separate report, *Crime and the Nation's Households*. Currently, NCVS data are only published as rates per 100,000 persons or households.

Sampling error

Since the AHS and NCVS data in this report came from samples, a sampling error (standard error) is associated with each reported number.

All the differences discussed in the text of this report were statistically significant at or above the 90-percent confidence level.

Verified public housing units

In both the American Housing Survey and the National Crime Victimization Survey, respondents are asked whether they live in public housing. Based on actual household responses, the answer to this question is not always accurate. In some cases the respondents incorrectly identified their rental unit as being owned by public housing authorities. For example, in the 1993 AHS, an estimated 2.2 million households reported that they lived in public housing. When verified by the Bureau of the Census through mailing addresses obtained from public

housing authorities, only half, or 1.1 million households, actually lived in public housing units. The remaining households most likely received some kind of public assistance for housing, such as a Section 8 certificate or voucher that is not considered conventional public housing as defined by HUD.

In 1989, 1991, and 1993, the percentage of verified public housing households indicating crime as a problem was significantly higher than the percentage for nonverified public housing households (see table 6).

Verified public housing households identifying crime as a problem, 1989-93

	1989	1991	1993
All verified public housing households	22.0%	26.6%	27.5%
White	--	19.0	12.7
Black	26.4	32.9	38.2
Hispanic	29.4	35.9	25.6
Elderly	11.3	11.0	14.3
Number of public housing households (in millions)*	1.3	1.1	1.1

Note: Excludes missing data and those occupied units not considered in a neighborhood. The respondent defines the neighborhood. The estimates for number of public housing households reporting they live in a neighborhood in 1991 and 1993 are based on the 1990 census and are not directly comparable to the 1989 estimate that is based on the 1980 census.

--Data were not available for white public housing households in 1989 or for all public housing units in 1995.

Source: *Characteristics of HUD-Assisted Renters and Their Units, 1989, 1991, and 1993*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development using HUD Form 951 database. The Bureau of the Census made a special computer run to obtain data on white public housing households in 1991 and 1993.

Questionnaire methodology: Attitudes about neighborhood crime measured by use of different wording

The American Housing Survey asked households about crime using two different types of questions with slightly different wording. The first question asked was, "Is there anything about the neighborhood that bothers you?" (See tables 1 and 6 and the attendant discussions.)

Using this question the respondent had to provide the response that crime was a problem. The second question asked, "Does the neighborhood have neighborhood crime?"

The question that asked directly households about crime in their neighborhood stimulated a larger percentage of households to report a crime problem compared to when asked more generally if anything in their neighborhood bothered them.

When neighborhood crime is directly asked in the question, 36% of black households and 20% of white households indicated crime existed in their neighborhood. Twelve percent of black households and 5% of white households reported the neighborhood crime was so objectionable they wished to move.

Likewise, when directly asked about crime in their neighborhood, a larger percentage of public housing households responded affirmatively. When asked directly about crime, about half of black public housing households and a third of white public housing households reported that crime existed in their neighborhood. About 24% of black public housing households and 13% of white public housing households indicated that crime was so objectionable they wished to move.

Households — 1995

Question: "Does the neighborhood have neighborhood crime? If yes, does the condition bother you? If it bothers you, is it so objectionable that you would like to move from the neighborhood?"

	Percent of households		
	All*	White	Black
Neighborhood has crime	22.4%	20.3%	35.5%
Crime exists, not a bother	6.6	6.0	10.8
Crime exists, bother not answered	.2	.2	.3
Crime bothersome, move not answered	.1	0	.1
Crime objectionable, wish to move	6.0	5.0	12.1
Crime objectionable, do not wish to move	9.5	9.1	12.1
Neighborhood does not have crime	77.6%	79.7%	64.5%
Number of households (in millions)*	94.3	78.8	11.3

Note: Excludes missing data and those households without a neighborhood, an estimated 1,200,000 units in 1995. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

*All households includes other racial categories not presented in the table.

Source: American Housing Survey 1995. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Public housing households — 1995

Question: "Does the neighborhood have neighborhood crime? If yes, does the condition bother you?"

If it bothers you, is it so objectionable that you would like to move from the neighborhood?"

	Percent of households		
	All*	White	Black
Neighborhood has crime	42.3%	34.2%	50.8%
Crime exists, not a bother	13.1	11.8	14.9
Crime exists, bother not answered	.3	0	.7
Crime bothersome, move not answered	.2	0	.4
Crime objectionable, wish to move	18.1	12.7	24.3
Crime objectionable, do not wish to move	10.9	9.7	10.5
Neighborhood does not have crime	57.4%	65.8%	49.2%
Number of public housing households (in millions)*	2.3	1.2	1.0

Note: Excludes missing data and those households without a neighborhood, an estimated 32,000 units in 1995. The respondent defines the neighborhood.

*All households includes other racial categories not presented in the table.

Source: American Housing Survey 1995. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Additional information on the public's attitude toward crime

The *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, 1996*, published by BJS, presents various information on the public's attitude toward crime and other criminal-justice-related topics. The information was compiled from national opinion surveys such as the Gallup Poll, the Harris Poll, and the General Social Survey.

The latest edition of the *Sourcebook* (NCJ-165361) is available through the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 1-800-732-3277. Information from the *Sourcebook* can also be obtained via the Internet at the *Sourcebook* Web site: <http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/>

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

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This report and other reports and criminal justice/victimization data are available from the BJS Internet site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>

The *Sourcebook* can also be accessed through the BJS Web site.