

# MURDER AND NONNEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER

## DEFINITION

Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, as defined in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, is the willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another.

The classification of this offense, as for all other Crime Index offenses, is based solely on police investigation as opposed to the determination of a court, medical examiner, coroner, jury, or other judicial body. Not included in the count for this offense classification are deaths caused by negligence, suicide, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempts to murder or assaults to murder, which are scored as aggravated assaults.

| <i>Year</i>    | <i>Number of offenses</i> | <i>Rate per 100,000<br/>inhabitants</i> |
|----------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1999           | 15,522                    | 5.7                                     |
| 2000           | 15,517                    | 5.5                                     |
| Percent change | Less than 0.1 percent     |   |

The estimated number of persons murdered in the United States in 2000 was 15,517, virtually no change from the 1999 estimate. The national estimate for 2000 fell 21.0 percent below the 1996 estimate and 37.2 percent below that of 1991. (See Table 1.)

Collectively, the Nation's cities registered a 0.7-percent increase in murder as compared to 1999 figures. The greatest rise, 11.7 percent, was recorded by cities with less than 10,000 inhabitants. Collectively, cities with populations of 250,000 or more had a decline of 0.3 percent. Among the Nation's counties, murder volumes declined 3.8 percent in suburban counties and 3.5 percent in rural counties.

By region, 44.0 percent of murders occurred in the South, the country's most populous region. Murders in the Midwest comprised 21.2 percent of the total; the West, 21.0 percent; and the Northeast, 13.9 percent. Two of the Nation's four regions showed increases in the number of murders when 2000 data are compared to 1999. The South and the Northeast each recorded increases of 2.4 percent, and the West and the Midwest showed decreases of 3.4 and 2.9 percent, respectively. (See Tables 3 and 4.)

Considering the volume of monthly occurrence for 2000, murder was committed most frequently in July and least often in February. (See Table 2.3.)

Table 2.3

#### Murder by Month

Percent distribution, 1996-2000

| Month     | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| January   | 8.7  | 8.7  | 9.1  | 8.8  | 8.6  |
| February  | 7.8  | 7.3  | 7.2  | 7.1  | 7.0  |
| March     | 7.5  | 8.5  | 8.3  | 7.6  | 7.5  |
| April     | 7.5  | 7.6  | 7.7  | 7.7  | 7.8  |
| May       | 8.3  | 7.9  | 8.4  | 8.3  | 8.4  |
| June      | 8.8  | 8.7  | 8.4  | 8.1  | 8.7  |
| July      | 8.8  | 9.0  | 8.7  | 9.1  | 9.5  |
| August    | 9.1  | 8.7  | 9.2  | 9.1  | 9.4  |
| September | 8.1  | 8.2  | 8.3  | 8.7  | 8.3  |
| October   | 8.5  | 8.6  | 8.3  | 8.4  | 8.7  |
| November  | 8.0  | 8.2  | 7.6  | 8.2  | 7.6  |
| December  | 8.9  | 8.6  | 8.8  | 8.8  | 8.7  |

#### Rate

The national murder rate for 2000, down 3.1 percent from the 1999 rate, was the lowest since 1965, 5.5 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. Trends for 5 and 10 years show that the 2000 rate was 25.6 percent lower than in 1996 and 43.7 percent lower than in 1991.

Among the Nation's regions, the South had a rate of 6.8 victims per 100,000 inhabitants; both the West and the Midwest, 5.1 per 100,000; and the Northeast, 4.0 per 100,000. Murder rates declined in all four of the geographic areas in comparison to 1999 figures. The West registered a decrease of 6.5 percent; the Midwest, 4.7 percent; the Northeast, 1.6 percent; and the South, 1.5 percent. (See Table 4.)

Collectively, metropolitan areas throughout the country had a rate of 5.9 murders per 100,000 inhabitants for 2000. Both rural counties and cities outside metropolitan areas reported murder rates of 3.8 per 100,000 inhabitants.

#### Nature

In 2000, contributing agencies submitted supplemental homicide data for 12,943 of the estimated 15,517 murders. These supplemental data provide the age, sex, and race of both victims and offenders; the types of weapons used; the relationships of the victims to the offenders; and the circumstances surrounding the murders.

Table 2.4

#### Murder Victims

by Race and Sex, 2000

| Race of victim             | Total  | Sex of victim |        |         |
|----------------------------|--------|---------------|--------|---------|
|                            |        | Male          | Female | Unknown |
| Total white victims        | 6,263  | 4,453         | 1,809  | 1       |
| Total black victims        | 6,193  | 5,049         | 1,144  | —       |
| Total other race victims   | 319    | 230           | 89     | —       |
| Total unknown race         | 168    | 108           | 34     | 26      |
| Total victims <sup>1</sup> | 12,943 | 9,840         | 3,076  | 27      |

<sup>1</sup> Total number of murder victims for whom supplemental homicide data were received.

According to 2000 supplemental homicide data, males comprised 76.0 percent of the murder victim total. By age, the greatest percentage of victims, 89.7 percent, were persons aged 18 or older. Of all victims, 45.1 percent were 20 to 34 years old. Of the victims for whom race was known, 49.0 percent were white, 48.5 percent were black, and persons of others races accounted for the remaining 2.5 percent.

Regarding offender data, supplemental homicide figures were available for 14,697 murder offenders in 2000 with males accounting for 90.2 percent of those for whom gender was known. Of the murder offenders for whom age was known, 91.3 percent were persons aged 18 or older. Of all offenders, 69.1 percent were persons aged 17 through 34. Blacks accounted for 51.4 percent of those offenders for whom race was known, whites for 46.1 percent, and persons of other races for the remainder.

Based on supplemental homicide data, the racial correlation of murder victims to murder offenders is usually intraracial. Figures based on one victim/one offender incidents in 2000 indicate that 93.7 percent of black murder victims were killed by black offenders, and 86.2 percent of white murder victims were slain by white offenders.

Supplemental homicide data reveal that males were most often murdered by males in 2000. Both victim and offender were male in 88.5 percent of single-victim/single-offender incidents. In addition, the data show that 90.8 percent of female victims were murdered by males.

FIGURE 2.6

# MURDER AND NONNEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER

PERCENT CHANGE  
from 1996

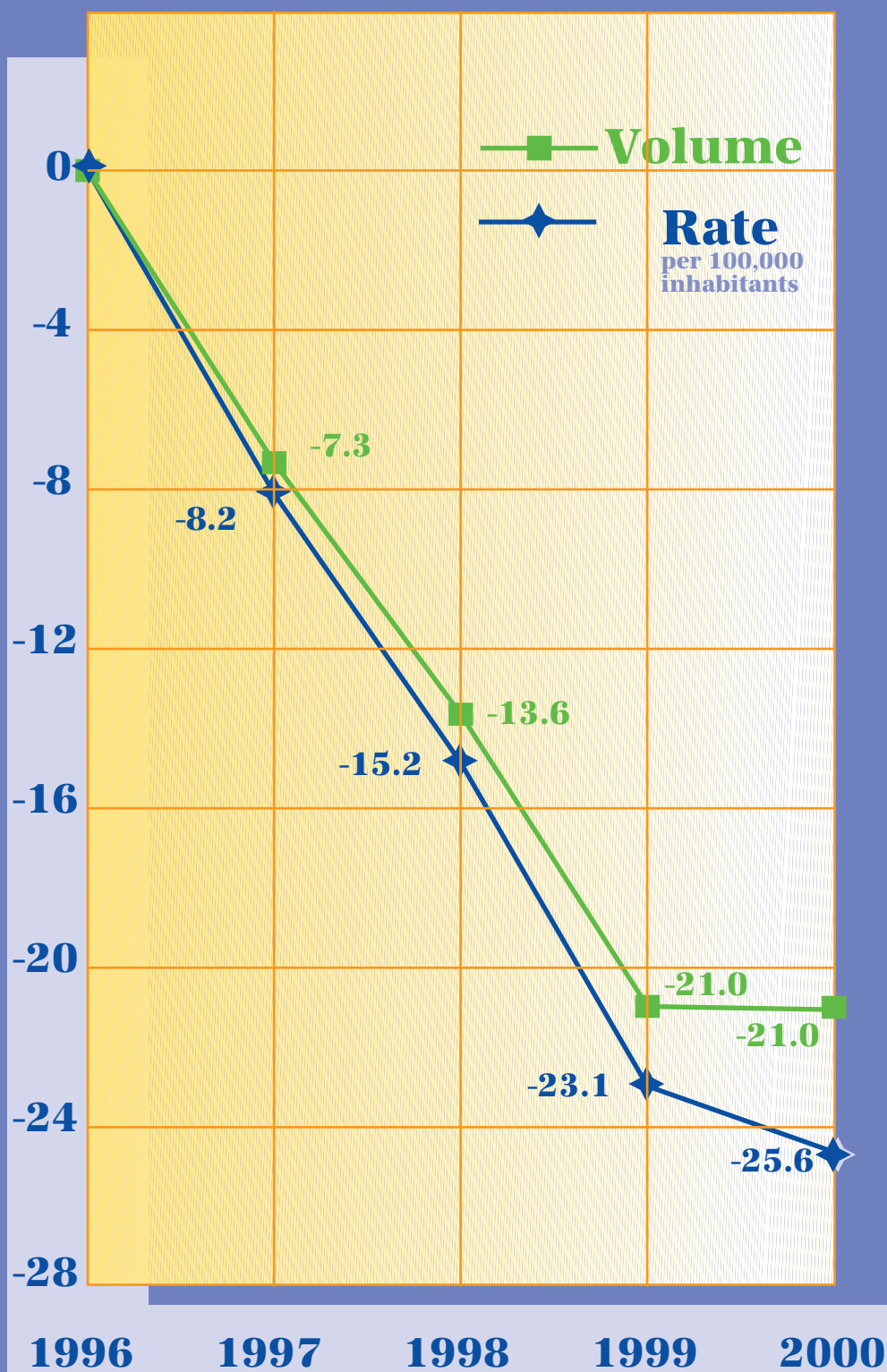


Table 2.5

**Murder Victims**  
 by Age, Sex, and Race, 2000

| Age                               | Total  | Sex   |        |         | Race  |       |       |         |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|---------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
|                                   |        | Male  | Female | Unknown | White | Black | Other | Unknown |
| Total                             | 12,943 | 9,840 | 3,076  | 27      | 6,263 | 6,193 | 319   | 168     |
| Percent distribution <sup>1</sup> | 100.0  | 76.0  | 23.8   | 0.2     | 48.4  | 47.8  | 2.5   | 1.3     |
| Under 18 <sup>2</sup>             | 1,300  | 879   | 420    | 1       | 667   | 589   | 28    | 16      |
| Under 22 <sup>2</sup>             | 3,247  | 2,523 | 723    | 1       | 1,470 | 1,678 | 69    | 30      |
| 18 and over <sup>2</sup>          | 11,380 | 8,791 | 2,587  | 2       | 5,484 | 5,513 | 288   | 95      |
| Infant (under 1)                  | 217    | 121   | 95     | 1       | 121   | 86    | 3     | 7       |
| 1 to 4                            | 279    | 155   | 124    | —       | 148   | 122   | 7     | 2       |
| 5 to 8                            | 84     | 44    | 40     | —       | 51    | 30    | 2     | 1       |
| 9 to 12                           | 61     | 34    | 27     | —       | 38    | 22    | 1     | —       |
| 13 to 16                          | 367    | 278   | 89     | —       | 174   | 183   | 7     | 3       |
| 17 to 19                          | 1,192  | 1,005 | 187    | —       | 532   | 620   | 29    | 11      |
| 20 to 24                          | 2,388  | 2,041 | 347    | —       | 929   | 1,403 | 43    | 13      |
| 25 to 29                          | 1,845  | 1,528 | 317    | —       | 732   | 1,047 | 51    | 15      |
| 30 to 34                          | 1,486  | 1,150 | 335    | 1       | 685   | 759   | 35    | 7       |
| 35 to 39                          | 1,249  | 883   | 366    | —       | 619   | 583   | 30    | 17      |
| 40 to 44                          | 1,140  | 815   | 325    | —       | 628   | 469   | 32    | 11      |
| 45 to 49                          | 757    | 540   | 217    | —       | 425   | 300   | 26    | 6       |
| 50 to 54                          | 486    | 367   | 119    | —       | 296   | 169   | 16    | 5       |
| 55 to 59                          | 338    | 251   | 87     | —       | 210   | 112   | 11    | 5       |
| 60 to 64                          | 217    | 154   | 63     | —       | 147   | 58    | 8     | 4       |
| 65 to 69                          | 153    | 85    | 68     | —       | 97    | 49    | 5     | 2       |
| 70 to 74                          | 156    | 96    | 60     | —       | 114   | 39    | 3     | —       |
| 75 and over                       | 265    | 123   | 141    | 1       | 205   | 51    | 7     | 2       |
| Unknown                           | 263    | 170   | 69     | 24      | 112   | 91    | 3     | 57      |

<sup>1</sup> Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to total.<sup>2</sup> Does not include unknown ages.

Table 2.6

**Murder Offenders**  
 by Age, Sex, and Race, 2000

| Age                               | Total  | Sex   |        |         | Race  |       |       |         |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|---------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
|                                   |        | Male  | Female | Unknown | White | Black | Other | Unknown |
| Total                             | 14,697 | 9,562 | 1,039  | 4,096   | 4,809 | 5,361 | 270   | 4,257   |
| Percent distribution <sup>1</sup> | 100.0  | 65.1  | 7.1    | 27.9    | 32.7  | 36.5  | 1.8   | 29.0    |
| Under 18 <sup>2</sup>             | 832    | 751   | 81     | —       | 345   | 444   | 35    | 8       |
| Under 22 <sup>2</sup>             | 3,378  | 3,134 | 242    | 2       | 1,382 | 1,856 | 107   | 33      |
| 18 and over <sup>2</sup>          | 8,785  | 7,861 | 919    | 5       | 4,261 | 4,232 | 229   | 63      |
| Infant (under 1)                  | —      | —     | —      | —       | —     | —     | —     | —       |
| 1 to 4                            | 1      | —     | 1      | —       | —     | 1     | —     | —       |
| 5 to 8                            | 2      | 1     | 1      | —       | —     | 2     | —     | —       |
| 9 to 12                           | 13     | 12    | 1      | —       | 9     | 3     | —     | 1       |
| 13 to 16                          | 415    | 370   | 45     | —       | 171   | 226   | 16    | 2       |
| 17 to 19                          | 1,651  | 1,540 | 109    | 2       | 651   | 922   | 61    | 17      |
| 20 to 24                          | 2,571  | 2,397 | 174    | —       | 1,064 | 1,427 | 58    | 22      |
| 25 to 29                          | 1,481  | 1,342 | 139    | —       | 647   | 796   | 30    | 8       |
| 30 to 34                          | 947    | 811   | 136    | —       | 510   | 408   | 26    | 3       |
| 35 to 39                          | 792    | 664   | 127    | 1       | 462   | 294   | 31    | 5       |
| 40 to 44                          | 629    | 507   | 122    | —       | 359   | 253   | 11    | 6       |
| 45 to 49                          | 426    | 367   | 58     | 1       | 260   | 152   | 13    | 1       |
| 50 to 54                          | 270    | 232   | 37     | 1       | 168   | 92    | 6     | 4       |
| 55 to 59                          | 140    | 114   | 26     | —       | 101   | 31    | 7     | 1       |
| 60 to 64                          | 93     | 86    | 7      | —       | 68    | 24    | —     | 1       |
| 65 to 69                          | 59     | 54    | 5      | —       | 37    | 22    | —     | —       |
| 70 to 74                          | 42     | 37    | 5      | —       | 31    | 9     | 2     | —       |
| 75 and over                       | 85     | 77    | 8      | —       | 68    | 14    | 3     | —       |
| Unknown                           | 5,080  | 951   | 38     | 4,091   | 203   | 685   | 6     | 4,186   |

<sup>1</sup> Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to total.<sup>2</sup> Does not include unknown ages.

Available weapon data indicate that 65.6 percent of murder weapons in 2000 were firearms, making them the most frequently used weapons in the commission of murder. By firearm type, handguns accounted for 51.7 percent of the murder total; shotguns, 3.6 percent; rifles, 3.1 percent; and other or unknown types of firearms, another 7.3 percent. Knives or cutting instruments were employed in 13.5 percent of murders; personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) in 7.0 percent; blunt objects (clubs, hammers, etc.) in 4.7 percent; and other dangerous weapons (poison, explosives, etc.) in the remainder. (See Table 2.10.) Table 20 furnishes a state-by-state breakdown of weapons used in connection with murder.

Supplemental homicide data for relationships between victims and offenders in 2000 indicate that 44.3 percent of all murder victims knew their offenders: 30.9 percent of victims were acquainted with their assailants and 13.4 percent were related to them. Husbands or boyfriends murdered 33.0 percent of female victims, and wives or girlfriends killed 3.2 percent of male victims. Thirteen percent of all murder victims were slain by strangers. Relationships were not known for 42.6 percent of the murders. (See Table 2.12.)

When examining circumstance data, arguments were the circumstance attributed to 29.4 percent of the murders in 2000. Felonious activities such as robbery, arson, etc., occurred in conjunction with 16.7 percent, and 0.5 percent of homicides were suspected to have been the result of a felonious activity. Table 2.14 examines murder circumstances for the past 5 years, 1996-2000.

Table 2.7

**Murder Victim/Offender Relationship**  
by Age, 2000  
[Single Victim/Single Offender]

| Age of victim | Total | Age of offender |             |         |
|---------------|-------|-----------------|-------------|---------|
|               |       | Under 18        | 18 and over | Unknown |
| Total         | 6,514 | 374             | 5,662       | 478     |
| Under 18      | 737   | 117             | 589         | 31      |
| 18 and over   | 5,686 | 256             | 5,002       | 428     |
| Unknown       | 91    | 1               | 71          | 19      |

**Law Enforcement Response**

Typically, murder is cleared at a higher rate than any other Crime Index offense. In 2000, law enforcement agencies nationwide recorded a 63.1 percent clearance rate for the crime. The highest clearance rate, 77.6 percent, was reported by cities with populations under 10,000. Cities with populations of 250,000 and over cleared 56.1 percent, and cities collectively cleared 61.0 percent. Law enforcement agencies in the Nation's rural counties cleared 76.8 percent of reported murders, and in suburban counties, 66.9 percent. (See Table 25.)

Regionally, the Northeastern States registered the highest murder clearance rate at 72.8 percent. The Southern States recorded a clearance rate of 65.0 percent. The Midwestern and Western States followed with clearance rates of 59.2 percent and 57.6 percent, respectively.

Table 2.8

**Murder Victim/Offender Relationship**  
by Race and Sex, 2000  
[Single Victim/Single Offender]

| Race of victim     | Total | Race of offender |       |       |         | Sex of offender |        |         |
|--------------------|-------|------------------|-------|-------|---------|-----------------|--------|---------|
|                    |       | White            | Black | Other | Unknown | Male            | Female | Unknown |
| White victims      | 3,352 | 2,860            | 417   | 40    | 35      | 2,985           | 332    | 35      |
| Black victims      | 2,927 | 178              | 2,723 | 5     | 21      | 2,565           | 341    | 21      |
| Other race victims | 169   | 43               | 22    | 103   | 1       | 150             | 18     | 1       |
| Unknown race       | 66    | 30               | 19    | 1     | 16      | 48              | 2      | 16      |

| Sex of victim  | Total | Race of offender |       |       |         | Sex of offender |        |         |
|----------------|-------|------------------|-------|-------|---------|-----------------|--------|---------|
|                |       | White            | Black | Other | Unknown | Male            | Female | Unknown |
| Male victims   | 4,542 | 2,004            | 2,397 | 100   | 41      | 3,983           | 518    | 41      |
| Female victims | 1,906 | 1,077            | 765   | 48    | 16      | 1,717           | 173    | 16      |
| Unknown sex    | 66    | 30               | 19    | 1     | 16      | 48              | 2      | 16      |

Table 2.9

**Murder, Types of Weapons Used**  
 Percent distribution by region, 2000

| Region              | Total all weapons <sup>1</sup> | Firearms | Knives or cutting instruments | Unknown or other dangerous weapons | Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) <sup>2</sup> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Total               | 100.0                          | 65.6     | 13.5                          | 14.0                               | 7.0  |
| Northeastern States | 100.0                          | 62.2     | 17.0                          | 12.8                               | 8.0  |
| Midwestern States   | 100.0                          | 65.3     | 10.9                          | 16.1                               | 7.7  |
| Southern States     | 100.0                          | 66.5     | 12.8                          | 14.3                               | 6.4  |
| Western States      | 100.0                          | 66.7     | 14.4                          | 12.5                               | 6.5  |

<sup>1</sup> Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to total.<sup>2</sup> Pushed is included in personal weapons.

Table 2.10

**Murder Victims**  
 by Weapon, 1996-2000

| Weapons  | 1996   | 1997   | 1998   | 1999   | 2000   |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total  | 16,967 | 15,837 | 14,276 | 13,011 | 12,943 |
| Total firearms:  | 11,453 | 10,729 | 9,257  | 8,480  | 8,493  |
| Handguns   | 9,266  | 8,441  | 7,430  | 6,658  | 6,686  |
| Rifles   | 561    | 638    | 548    | 400    | 396    |
| Shotguns   | 685    | 643    | 633    | 531    | 468    |
| Other guns   | 20     | 35     | 16     | 92     | 51     |
| Firearms, type not stated                                | 921    | 972    | 630    | 799    | 892    |
| Knives or cutting instruments                            | 2,324  | 2,055  | 1,899  | 1,712  | 1,743  |
| Blunt objects (clubs, hammers, etc.)                     | 792    | 724    | 755    | 756    | 604    |
| Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) <sup>1</sup> | 1,037  | 1,010  | 964    | 885    | 900    |
| Poison   | 8      | 6      | 6      | 11     | 8      |
| Explosives   | 15     | 8      | 10     | —      | 9      |
| Fire   | 170    | 140    | 132    | 133    | 128    |
| Narcotics  | 33     | 37     | 35     | 26     | 20     |
| Drowning   | 24     | 34     | 28     | 28     | 15     |
| Strangulation  | 248    | 224    | 213    | 190    | 166    |
| Asphyxiation   | 92     | 88     | 101    | 106    | 89     |
| Other weapons or weapons not stated                      | 771    | 782    | 876    | 684    | 768    |

<sup>1</sup> Pushed is included in personal weapons.

Table 2.11

**Murder Victims by Age**  
 by Weapon, 2000

| Age                               | Total  | Weapons  |                               |                                      |  |        |            |      |           |               |              |  |
|-----------------------------------|--------|----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------|------------|------|-----------|---------------|--------------|--|
|                                   |        | Firearms | Knives or cutting instruments | Blunt objects (clubs, hammers, etc.) | Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) <sup>1</sup> | Poison | Explosives | Fire | Narcotics | Strangulation | Asphyxiation | Other weapon or weapon not stated <sup>2</sup> |
| Total                             | 12,943 | 8,493    | 1,743                         | 604                                  | 900  | 8      | 9          | 128  | 20        | 166           | 89           | 783  |
| Percent distribution <sup>3</sup> | 100.0  | 65.6     | 13.5                          | 4.7                                  | 7.0  | 0.1    | 0.1        | 1.0  | 0.2       | 1.3           | 0.7          | 6.0  |
| Under 18 <sup>4</sup>             | 1,300  | 616      | 103                           | 63                                   | 300  | 1      | 4          | 34   | 5         | 22            | 32           | 120  |
| Under 22 <sup>4</sup>             | 3,247  | 2,163    | 308                           | 98                                   | 344  | 1      | 4          | 45   | 7         | 43            | 37           | 197  |
| 18 and over <sup>4</sup>          | 11,380 | 7,750    | 1,611                         | 527                                  | 575  | 7      | 4          | 87   | 15        | 141           | 56           | 607  |
| Infant (under 1)                  | 217    | 12       | 9                             | 16                                   | 117  | 1      | 1          | —    | 3         | 3             | 16           | 39   |
| 1 to 4                            | 279    | 26       | 11                            | 33                                   | 139  | —      | 2          | 13   | —         | 5             | 10           | 40   |
| 5 to 8                            | 84     | 30       | 9                             | 2                                    | 15   | —      | —          | 11   | 1         | 1             | 2            | 13   |
| 9 to 12                           | 61     | 30       | 11                            | 3                                    | 6  | —      | —          | 1    | —         | 3             | 2            | 5  |
| 13 to 16                          | 367    | 286      | 30                            | 7                                    | 14   | —      | —          | 6    | —         | 10            | 2            | 12   |
| 17 to 19                          | 1,192  | 954      | 122                           | 18                                   | 31   | —      | 1          | 9    | 2         | 6             | 2            | 47   |
| 20 to 24                          | 2,388  | 1,906    | 251                           | 42                                   | 58   | 1      | —          | 12   | 2         | 23            | 6            | 87   |
| 25 to 29                          | 1,845  | 1,458    | 199                           | 35                                   | 44   | 1      | —          | 7    | 1         | 14            | 6            | 80   |
| 30 to 34                          | 1,486  | 1,051    | 204                           | 40                                   | 73   | 1      | 2          | 10   | 1         | 18            | 4            | 82   |
| 35 to 39                          | 1,249  | 791      | 225                           | 50                                   | 77   | —      | 2          | 13   | 1         | 16            | 10           | 64   |
| 40 to 44                          | 1,140  | 645      | 219                           | 75                                   | 87   | 1      | —          | 12   | 4         | 22            | 6            | 69   |
| 45 to 49                          | 757    | 427      | 117                           | 66                                   | 62   | 2      | —          | 9    | 2         | 10            | 6            | 56   |
| 50 to 54                          | 486    | 267      | 85                            | 44                                   | 42   | 1      | —          | 5    | —         | 9             | 1            | 32   |
| 55 to 59                          | 338    | 179      | 65                            | 38                                   | 23   | —      | —          | 5    | —         | 6             | 2            | 20   |
| 60 to 64                          | 217    | 109      | 42                            | 27                                   | 16   | —      | —          | 3    | 1         | 3             | 1            | 15   |
| 65 to 69                          | 153    | 68       | 29                            | 23                                   | 11   | —      | —          | —    | 2         | 3             | 2            | 15   |
| 70 to 74                          | 156    | 55       | 30                            | 31                                   | 21   | —      | —          | —    | —         | 1             | 2            | 16   |
| 75 and over                       | 265    | 72       | 56                            | 40                                   | 39   | —      | —          | 5    | —         | 10            | 8            | 35   |
| Unknown                           | 263    | 127      | 29                            | 14                                   | 25   | —      | 1          | 7    | —         | 3             | 1            | 56   |

<sup>1</sup> Pushed is included in personal weapons.<sup>2</sup> Includes drowning.<sup>3</sup> Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to total.<sup>4</sup> Does not include unknown ages.

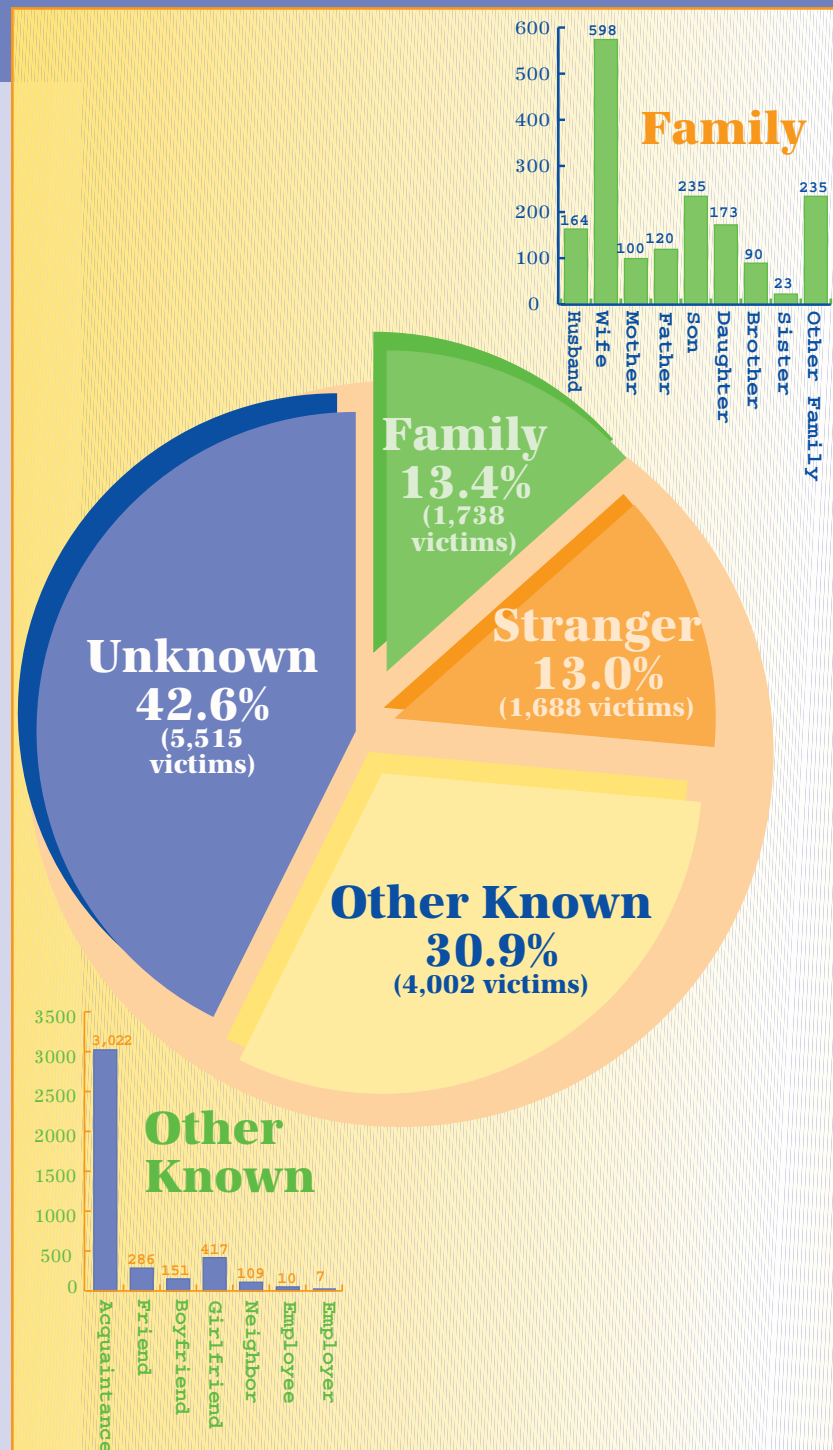
Table 2.12

**Murder Circumstances**  
 by Relationship<sup>1</sup>, 2000

| Circumstances                        | Total  | Husband | Wife | Mother | Father | Son | Daughter | Brother | Sister | Other family | Acquaintance | Friend | Boyfriend | Girlfriend | Neighbor | Employee | Employer | Stranger | Unknown |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|------|--------|--------|-----|----------|---------|--------|--------------|--------------|--------|-----------|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| Total <sup>2</sup>                   | 12,943 | 164     | 598  | 100    | 120    | 235 | 173      | 90      | 23     | 235          | 3,022        | 286    | 151       | 417        | 109      | 10       | 7        | 1,688    | 5,515   |
| Felony type total:                   | 2,157  | 4       | 7    | 9      | 7      | 20  | 30       | 3       | 6      | 29           | 552          | 30     | 2         | 21         | 17       | 1        | 2        | 551      | 866     |
| Rape                                 | 58     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | 2        | —       | 1      | 1            | 12           | 1      | —         | 3          | —        | —        | —        | 14       | 24      |
| Robbery                              | 1,048  | —       | —    | —      | 3      | —   | 1        | 2       | 3      | 9            | 195          | 11     | 1         | 4          | 7        | 1        | —        | 376      | 435     |
| Burglary                             | 73     | —       | 1    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | 3            | 16           | 1      | —         | 4          | 2        | —        | —        | 15       | 31      |
| Larceny-theft                        | 23     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | 1            | 7            | —      | —         | 1          | —        | —        | —        | 5        | 9       |
| Motor vehicle theft                  | 22     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | —            | 1      | —         | 2          | —        | —        | 1        | 13       | 5       |
| Arson                                | 81     | 1       | 2    | 4      | 2      | 3   | 3        | —       | 2      | —            | 21           | 1      | —         | 1          | 1        | —        | —        | 2        | 38      |
| Prostitution and commercialized vice | 5      | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 1            | —      | —         | —          | —        | —        | —        | 4        | —       |
| Other sex offenses                   | 10     | —       | —    | —      | 1      | —   | —        | —       | —      | 2            | 2            | —      | —         | —          | —        | —        | —        | 3        | 2       |
| Narcotic drug laws                   | 572    | —       | —    | 2      | —      | —   | —        | 1       | —      | 5            | 230          | 12     | —         | 1          | 3        | —        | —        | 69       | 249     |
| Gambling                             | 11     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 8            | —      | —         | —          | —        | —        | —        | 3        | —       |
| Other - not specified                | 254    | 3       | 4    | 3      | 1      | 17  | 24       | —       | —      | 8            | 60           | 3      | 1         | 5          | 4        | —        | 1        | 47       | 73      |
| Suspected felony type                | 60     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 8            | —      | —         | —          | 1        | —        | —        | 1        | 50      |
| Other than felony type total:        | 6,696  | 145     | 538  | 75     | 98     | 197 | 123      | 75      | 14     | 183          | 2,076        | 221    | 135       | 332        | 77       | 9        | 5        | 868      | 1,525   |
| Romantic triangle                    | 122    | 1       | 10   | —      | 1      | 2   | —        | 1       | —      | 1            | 74           | 5      | 2         | 10         | 1        | 1        | —        | 8        | 5       |
| Child killed by babysitter           | 30     | —       | —    | —      | —      | 1   | —        | —       | —      | 3            | 24           | —      | —         | —          | —        | 1        | —        | —        | 1       |
| Brawl due to influence of alcohol    | 181    | —       | 3    | 2      | 2      | —   | —        | 1       | —      | 4            | 79           | 26     | 1         | 2          | 1        | —        | —        | 35       | 25      |
| Brawl due to influence of narcotics  | 97     | 1       | 1    | 2      | 1      | —   | —        | —       | —      | 6            | 49           | 3      | —         | 3          | —        | —        | —        | 10       | 21      |
| Argument over money or property      | 206    | 1       | 3    | 5      | 4      | 3   | —        | 1       | —      | 12           | 111          | 5      | 1         | 1          | 7        | 1        | —        | 19       | 32      |
| Other arguments                      | 3,475  | 117     | 364  | 38     | 59     | 34  | 25       | 63      | 8      | 103          | 1,129        | 137    | 114       | 249        | 48       | 4        | 4        | 449      | 530     |
| Gangland killings                    | 63     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 23           | —      | —         | —          | —        | —        | —        | 13       | 27      |
| Juvenile gang killings               | 650    | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 187          | 3      | —         | —          | —        | —        | —        | 129      | 331     |
| Institutional killings               | 10     | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 7            | —      | —         | —          | —        | —        | —        | 1        | 2       |
| Sniper attack                        | 8      | —       | —    | —      | —      | —   | —        | —       | —      | —            | 1            | —      | —         | —          | 1        | —        | —        | —        | 6       |
| Other - not specified                | 1,854  | 25      | 157  | 28     | 31     | 157 | 98       | 9       | 6      | 54           | 392          | 42     | 17        | 67         | 19       | 2        | 1        | 204      | 545     |
| Unknown                              | 4,030  | 15      | 53   | 16     | 15     | 18  | 20       | 12      | 3      | 23           | 386          | 35     | 14        | 64         | 14       | —        | —        | 268      | 3,074   |

<sup>1</sup>Relationship is that of victim to offender.<sup>2</sup>Total murder victims for whom supplemental homicide data were received.

# FIGURE 2.7 MURDER BY RELATIONSHIP<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Relationship is that of victim to offender.

<sup>2</sup>Due to rounding, the percentages do not add to 100.0.

Figures are based on 12,943 murder victims for whom Supplementary Homicide Report data were received.



Table 2.13

**Murder Circumstances**  
 by Weapon, 2000

| Circumstances                        | Total murder victims | Total firearms | Hand-guns | Rifles | Shot-guns | Other guns or type not stated | Knives or cutting instruments | Blunt objects (clubs, hammers, etc.) | Personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) | Poison | Pushed or thrown out window | Explosives | Fire | Narcotics | Drown-ing | Strangu-lation | Asphyxia-tion | Other |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|--------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------|-----------------------------|------------|------|-----------|-----------|----------------|---------------|-------|
| Total <sup>1</sup>                   | 12,943               | 8,493          | 6,686     | 396    | 468       | 943                           | 1,743                         | 604                                  | 892   | 8      | 8                           | 9          | 128  | 20        | 15        | 166            | 89            | 768   |
| Felony type total:                   | 2,157                | 1,478          | 1,246     | 57     | 55        | 120                           | 205                           | 116                                  | 127   | –      | –                           | 2          | 85   | 6         | 2         | 33             | 21            | 82    |
| Rape                                 | 58                   | 5              | 3         | –      | –         | 2                             | 16                            | 6                                    | 19  | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 6              | 1             | 5     |
| Robbery                              | 1,048                | 771            | 663       | 21     | 25        | 62                            | 112                           | 64                                   | 43  | –      | –                           | 1          | 1    | –         | –         | 11             | 7             | 38    |
| Burglary                             | 73                   | 42             | 29        | 3      | 6         | 4                             | 13                            | 8                                    | 2   | –      | –                           | –          | 1    | –         | –         | 1              | 2             | 4     |
| Larceny-theft                        | 23                   | 14             | 12        | –      | –         | 2                             | 4                             | 1                                    | 2   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | –              | –             | 2     |
| Motor vehicle theft                  | 22                   | 11             | 9         | 1      | –         | 1                             | 5                             | 1                                    | –   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 1              | –             | 4     |
| Arson                                | 81                   | 1              | 1         | –      | –         | –                             | –                             | 2                                    | 2   | –      | –                           | –          | 70   | –         | –         | –              | 2             | 4     |
| Prostitution and commercialized vice | 5                    | –              | –         | –      | –         | –                             | 2                             | –                                    | –   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 3              | –             | –     |
| Other sex offenses                   | 10                   | 1              | 1         | –      | –         | –                             | 2                             | 3                                    | 2   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 1              | –             | 1     |
| Narcotic drug laws                   | 572                  | 503            | 432       | 18     | 16        | 37                            | 27                            | 9                                    | 9   | –      | –                           | 1          | –    | 5         | 1         | 5              | 3             | 9     |
| Gambling                             | 11                   | 11             | 10        | –      | 1         | –                             | –                             | –                                    | –   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | –              | –             | –     |
| Other - not specified                | 254                  | 119            | 86        | 14     | 7         | 12                            | 24                            | 22                                   | 48  | –      | –                           | –          | 13   | 1         | 1         | 5              | 6             | 15    |
| Suspected felony type                | 60                   | 46             | 34        | 3      | 1         | 8                             | 6                             | 1                                    | 2   | –      | –                           | –          | 1    | –         | –         | 2              | –             | 2     |
| Other than felony type total:        | 6,696                | 4,239          | 3,373     | 258    | 311       | 297                           | 1,116                         | 285                                  | 584   | 7      | 6                           | 3          | 24   | 11        | 11        | 75             | 42            | 293   |
| Romantic triangle                    | 122                  | 85             | 67        | 4      | 9         | 5                             | 27                            | 2                                    | 3   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | –              | 1             | 4     |
| Child killed by babysitter           | 30                   | –              | –         | –      | –         | –                             | –                             | 2                                    | 23  | –      | –                           | –          | –    | 1         | –         | 1              | 3             | –     |
| Brawl due to influence of alcohol    | 181                  | 93             | 76        | 10     | 5         | 2                             | 57                            | 6                                    | 15  | –      | 1                           | –          | 1    | –         | 1         | –              | –             | 7     |
| Brawl due to influence of narcotics  | 97                   | 58             | 44        | 3      | 7         | 4                             | 20                            | 4                                    | 7   | 1      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 2              | –             | 5     |
| Argument over money or property      | 206                  | 136            | 95        | 12     | 13        | 16                            | 31                            | 14                                   | 17  | 1      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 2              | 1             | 4     |
| Other arguments                      | 3,475                | 2,124          | 1,677     | 117    | 171       | 159                           | 780                           | 162                                  | 241   | 1      | 4                           | –          | 9    | 3         | –         | 37             | 10            | 104   |
| Gangland killings                    | 63                   | 58             | 47        | 5      | 3         | 3                             | 2                             | 2                                    | 1   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | –              | –             | –     |
| Juvenile gang killings               | 650                  | 613            | 535       | 38     | 18        | 22                            | 20                            | 2                                    | 1   | –      | –                           | 1          | –    | –         | –         | 1              | –             | 12    |
| Institutional killings               | 10                   | –              | –         | –      | –         | –                             | 4                             | 3                                    | 2   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | 1              | –             | –     |
| Sniper attack                        | 8                    | 8              | 7         | 1      | –         | –                             | –                             | –                                    | –   | –      | –                           | –          | –    | –         | –         | –              | –             | –     |
| Other - not specified                | 1,854                | 1,064          | 825       | 68     | 85        | 86                            | 175                           | 88                                   | 274   | 4      | 1                           | 2          | 14   | 7         | 10        | 31             | 27            | 157   |
| Unknown                              | 4,030                | 2,730          | 2,033     | 78     | 101       | 518                           | 416                           | 202                                  | 179   | 1      | 2                           | 4          | 18   | 3         | 2         | 56             | 26            | 391   |

<sup>1</sup> Total murder victims for whom supplemental homicide data were received.

Table 2.14

**Murder Circumstances, 1996-2000**

| Circumstances                        | 1996   | 1997   | 1998   | 1999   | 2000   |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total <sup>1</sup>                   | 16,967 | 15,837 | 14,276 | 13,011 | 12,943 |
| Felony type total:                   | 3,186  | 2,968  | 2,514  | 2,215  | 2,157  |
| Rape                                 | 70     | 67     | 62     | 47     | 58     |
| Robbery                              | 1,618  | 1,509  | 1,244  | 1,057  | 1,048  |
| Burglary                             | 123    | 101    | 92     | 81     | 73     |
| Larceny-theft                        | 24     | 16     | 17     | 14     | 23     |
| Motor vehicle theft                  | 23     | 18     | 17     | 12     | 22     |
| Arson                                | 105    | 92     | 83     | 66     | 81     |
| Prostitution and commercialized vice | 8      | 7      | 15     | 8      | 5      |
| Other sex offenses                   | 27     | 23     | 20     | 19     | 10     |
| Narcotic drug laws                   | 843    | 802    | 682    | 581    | 572    |
| Gambling                             | 12     | 19     | 12     | 17     | 11     |
| Other - not specified                | 333    | 314    | 270    | 313    | 254    |
| Suspected felony type                | 74     | 153    | 104    | 65     | 60     |
| Other than felony type total:        | 8,597  | 7,666  | 7,232  | 6,880  | 6,696  |
| Romantic triangle                    | 189    | 176    | 187    | 137    | 122    |
| Child killed by babysitter           | 29     | 24     | 23     | 34     | 30     |
| Brawl due to influence of alcohol    | 256    | 239    | 213    | 203    | 181    |
| Brawl due to influence of narcotics  | 195    | 106    | 117    | 127    | 97     |
| Argument over money or property      | 328    | 287    | 241    | 213    | 206    |
| Other arguments                      | 4,719  | 4,476  | 4,129  | 3,471  | 3,475  |
| Gangland killings                    | 84     | 86     | 73     | 122    | 63     |
| Juvenile gang killings               | 858    | 783    | 628    | 580    | 650    |
| Institutional killings               | 13     | 19     | 15     | 13     | 10     |
| Sniper attack                        | 8      | 8      | 16     | 5      | 8      |
| Other - not specified                | 1,918  | 1,462  | 1,590  | 1,975  | 1,854  |
| Unknown                              | 5,110  | 5,050  | 4,426  | 3,851  | 4,030  |

<sup>1</sup> Total number of murder victims for whom supplemental homicide data were received.

Table 2.15

**Murder Circumstances by Victim's Sex, 2000**

| Circumstances                        | Total murder victims <sup>1</sup> | Male  | Female | Unknown |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|
| Total <sup>1</sup>                   | 12,943                            | 9,840 | 3,076  | 27      |
| Felony type total:                   | 2,157                             | 1,716 | 439    | 2       |
| Rape                                 | 58                                | 2     | 56     | —       |
| Robbery                              | 1,048                             | 908   | 140    | —       |
| Burglary                             | 73                                | 49    | 24     | —       |
| Larceny-theft                        | 23                                | 15    | 8      | —       |
| Motor vehicle theft                  | 22                                | 16    | 6      | —       |
| Arson                                | 81                                | 27    | 53     | 1       |
| Prostitution and commercialized vice | 5                                 | —     | 5      | —       |
| Other sex offenses                   | 10                                | 2     | 8      | —       |
| Narcotic drug laws                   | 572                               | 522   | 50     | —       |
| Gambling                             | 11                                | 11    | —      | —       |
| Other - not specified                | 254                               | 164   | 89     | 1       |
| Suspected felony type                | 60                                | 47    | 13     | —       |
| Other than felony type total:        | 6,696                             | 4,914 | 1,779  | 3       |
| Romantic triangle                    | 122                               | 92    | 30     | —       |
| Child killed by babysitter           | 30                                | 19    | 11     | —       |
| Brawl due to influence of alcohol    | 181                               | 163   | 18     | —       |
| Brawl due to influence of narcotics  | 97                                | 77    | 20     | —       |
| Argument over money or property      | 206                               | 172   | 34     | —       |
| Other arguments                      | 3,475                             | 2,498 | 977    | —       |
| Gangland killings                    | 63                                | 60    | 3      | —       |
| Juvenile gang killings               | 650                               | 620   | 29     | 1       |
| Institutional killings               | 10                                | 10    | —      | —       |
| Sniper attack                        | 8                                 | 7     | 1      | —       |
| Other - not specified                | 1,854                             | 1,196 | 656    | 2       |
| Unknown                              | 4,030                             | 3,163 | 845    | 22      |

<sup>1</sup> Total number of murder victims for whom supplemental homicide data were received.

Measured by clearances, the proportion of juvenile involvement in criminal activity was lower for murder than for any other Index crime in 2000. Persons under 18 years of age were responsible for 5.3 percent of the willful killings cleared nationally. By population groupings, 6.0 percent of murder clearances in rural counties involved juveniles; 5.4 percent in the Nation's cities collectively; and 4.6 percent in suburban counties.

Nationally, law enforcement agencies made an estimated 13,227 arrests for murder in 2000. Of those arrested, 51.3 percent were under 25 years of age, and the 18- to 24-year-old age group accounted for 42.0 percent of the murder arrest total. (See Table 38.)

By gender, 89.4 percent of those arrested for murder were males, and 10.6 percent were female. Blacks accounted for 48.8 percent of the total; whites, 48.7 percent; and other races, the remainder.

In 2000, total arrests for murder decreased 7.5 percent when compared to the 1999 arrest figures. Arrests of persons aged 18 and over decreased by 6.9 percent, and arrests of those younger than 18 (juveniles) fell by 13.4 percent. During the same time period, murder arrests of males were down 7.3 percent, and arrests of females decreased 9.1 percent. Regarding persons under age 18, male juvenile arrests dropped 15.5 percent in 2000, but female juvenile arrests increased 9.0 percent.

Five- and 10-year trends show the 2000 murder arrest total is 24.2 percent below the 1996 figure and 41.3 percent below the 1991 figure.

### Justifiable Homicide

Based on the findings of law enforcement investigation, some willful killings are classified as justifiable or excusable. For UCR purposes, justifiable homicide is defined as, and limited to, the killing of a felon by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty, or the killing of a felon, during the commission of a felony, by a private citizen. These offenses are tabulated independently and are not included in murder counts.

Supplemental data were provided by contributing agencies for 460 justifiable homicides in 2000. According to those data, 297 felons were justifiably slain by law

enforcement officers, and 163 felons were justifiably killed by private citizens. Firearms were used in all of the justifiable homicides involving law enforcement, 89.2 percent of which specifically involved a handgun. Of the justifiable homicides by private citizens, 84.0 percent involved firearms; 89.1 percent of these involved handguns. Justifiable homicides by private citizens also involved knives or cutting instruments, 9.2 percent; personal weapons, 1.8 percent; and other weapons, 4.9 percent. (See Tables 2.16 and 2.17.)

Table 2.16

#### Justifiable Homicide

by Weapon, Law Enforcement,<sup>1</sup> 1996-2000

| Year | Total | Total fire-arms | Hand-guns | Rifles | Shot-guns | Fire-arms, type not stated | Knives or cutting instruments | Other dangerous weapons | Personal weapons |
|------|-------|-----------------|-----------|--------|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1996 | 357   | 354             | 326       | 10     | 10        | 8                          | —                             | 1                       | 2                |
| 1997 | 366   | 363             | 315       | 14     | 20        | 14                         | —                             | 1                       | 2                |
| 1998 | 369   | 367             | 322       | 15     | 18        | 12                         | —                             | —                       | 2                |
| 1999 | 308   | 305             | 274       | 11     | 15        | 5                          | —                             | 1                       | 2                |
| 2000 | 297   | 297             | 265       | 13     | 12        | 7                          | —                             | —                       | —                |

<sup>1</sup> The killing of a felon by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty.

Table 2.17

#### Justifiable Homicide

by Weapon, Private Citizen,<sup>1</sup> 1996-2000

| Year | Total | Total fire-arms | Hand-guns | Rifles | Shot-guns | Fire-arms, type not stated | Knives or cutting instruments | Other dangerous weapons | Personal weapons |
|------|-------|-----------------|-----------|--------|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1996 | 261   | 222             | 184       | 12     | 18        | 8                          | 28                            | 7                       | 4                |
| 1997 | 280   | 238             | 197       | 16     | 14        | 11                         | 28                            | 6                       | 8                |
| 1998 | 196   | 170             | 150       | 6      | 14        | —                          | 17                            | 5                       | 4                |
| 1999 | 192   | 158             | 137       | 5      | 10        | 6                          | 18                            | 9                       | 7                |
| 2000 | 163   | 137             | 122       | 4      | 7         | 4                          | 15                            | 8                       | 3                |

<sup>1</sup> The killing of a felon, during the commission of a felony, by a private citizen.