

Research



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Bulletin

Major trends in Chicago homicide: 1965 - 1994

In the early 1900s, Chicago gained an uneclipsed reputation for corruption and violence. At the height of the Roaring '20s—the era of Mayor “Big” Bill Thompson, Al Capone and the St. Valentine’s Day Massacre—Chicago’s homicide rate of 10.6 per 100,000 population exceeded that of other northern U.S. cities. Though murder rates in Chicago declined through the mid-1940s, they began to rise again in the ‘60s, peaking at 30.5 per 100,000 people in 1974 and 29.5 in 1981 (Figure 1). This time, however, Chicago was not the national exception. In the mid-1980s, high homicide rates became the rule for most cities, while Chicago’s rates were relatively low. In fact, at the same time that Washington, D.C., New York City and Miami were experiencing some of the highest murder rates in history, the 661 homicides (23 per 100,000) recorded in 1988 in Chicago were the lowest in 20 years.

These relatively low homicide levels have now come to an abrupt end (see Figure 1). Murders in Chicago rose more than 42 percent—from 661 in 1988 to 939 in 1992—and remained high at 928 in 1994. As of August, the Chicago Police Department had recorded 544 homicides in 1995. Though the numbers in 1992 and 1994 were slightly lower than the peak in 1974, the risk

of being murdered reached unprecedented levels (34 per 100,000) in 1992 and was showing no sign of decline for 1994. This is happening at the same time that national trends, especially the

About this Bulletin

Most major cities across the country have experienced an alarming increase in lethal violence in recent years. In Chicago, murders rose from 661 in 1988 to 928 in 1994. And although the number of murders in Chicago recorded during the first eight months of 1995 (544) declined 15 percent compared to the same period last year (637), the recent escalation in violence continues to be a major concern.

If we are to identify and implement effective strategies for combatting lethal violence, we must have an accurate understanding of the problem. Homicide research conducted by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is designed to address this issue; by conducting basic and applied homicide research, we hope to enhance our theoretical understanding of lethal violence and build a practical foundation for saving lives.

Our research suggests that homicide is not one type of event, but many, and that different types of homicide require different strategies for prevention. In this bulletin, we examine long-term trends in Chicago homicide — patterns that have developed over almost 30 years. These patterns identify the risk of becoming either a victim or offender, as well as specific types of homicide for the population as a whole and for specific high-risk groups.

We hope this information can serve as a foundation for developing effective intervention strategies.

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the large recent increase in homicide victimization among males aged 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 (CDC, 1994; Bastian & Taylor, 1994; Blumstein, 1995), are alarming citizens, policymakers, law enforcement officials and public health analysts. The important questions, both in Chicago and nationwide, are: why is this murder wave happening, and how can it be stopped?

Conventional wisdom tells us that homicides cannot be prevented. To the contrary, however, a growing body of research suggests that many can. (For a review, see C.R. Block & R. Block, 1991.) People who think homicides cannot be prevented often have misconceptions about the crime. They think that they occur randomly and are all alike. They also tend to focus only on the unusual case—homicides committed by a stranger to gain drugs or money, for example—and ignore other types that cause many more deaths, such as homicides of intimate partners. Actually, homicide is not one type of event but many. Almost all acts of lethal violence begin as another confrontation that then escalates to death—a spousal argument, a fight or brawl between acquaintances, a robbery, an act of sexual violence, a street gang confrontation. Homicides that begin as different types of confrontations have different characteristics, occur in different areas of the city, affect different segments of the population, and therefore, have different strategies for prevention.

Reducing levels of death and injury from violence requires a two-step process: first, we must identify the specific problem causing the violence; and second, we must focus intervention strategies on that specific problem. To forge successful programs to prevent lethal violence, we must identify the people who are most at risk, the neighborhoods most at risk, and the types of violence that are the greatest threat to these groups and neighborhoods. With this information, we can then target intervention strategies where they would save the most lives: first on specific groups who are at the highest risk of becoming victims or of becoming offenders, and on the specific neighborhoods where the risk of being murdered is especially high; second, on the specific homicide syndromes (types of homicide) that are the most dangerous for these groups and neighborhoods and have the highest chance of successful prevention; and third, on specific situations (for example, firearm use or liquor and drug involvement) that may place these groups or neighborhoods at high risk of certain homicide syndromes (see sidebar for an explanation of homicide syndromes).

Identifying high-risk groups, places and situations requires analysis of individual data, spatial distribution patterns and trends over time. Effective intervention strategies will be based on a foundation of focused information about specific types of violence

(lethal and non-lethal) and the particular groups and areas of the city that are most at risk of each type. But to understand recent trends in the people and neighborhoods at risk of different types of homicide, it is important to understand past trends. In this bulletin, we place the recent sharp homicide increase in perspective against long-term trends in Chicago homicide—patterns over almost 30 years in the risk of becoming a victim or an offender in specific types of homicide, for the population as a whole and for specific high-risk groups. We then examine possible causes of the increase in light of these historical patterns.

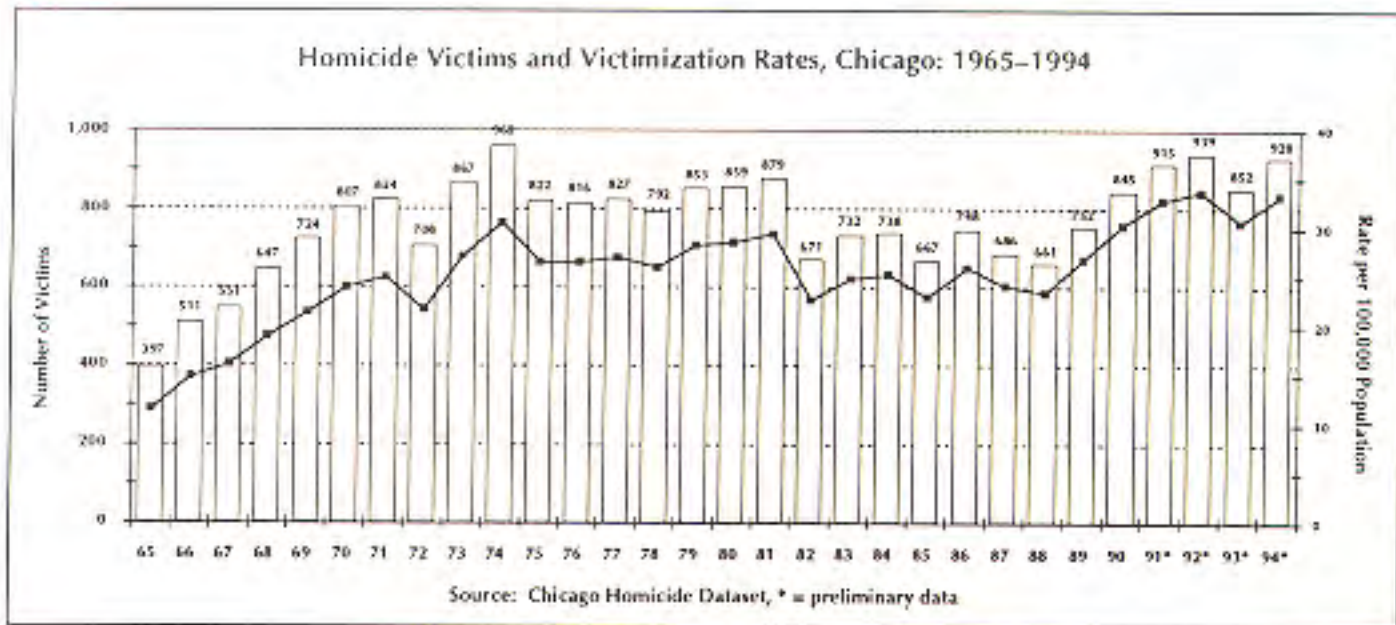
This paper contains the first presentation of results from the updated and expanded Chicago Homicide Dataset, including the recent peak years. (For a bibliography of the many earlier reports on the dataset, see Block and Block, 1993a.) Collected with the close cooperation of the Chicago Police Department and containing detailed information on every homicide recorded by the police from 1965 to 1994 (more than 22,000), the Chicago Homicide Dataset is the largest, most detailed dataset on violence available in the United States.² With this resource, we can answer questions about patterns of risk for specific groups in the population, in specific areas of the city, and for specific types of lethal violence. To the degree that trends around the country reflect trends in Chicago, the Chicago experience will tell us something about the reasons for the nationwide surge in homicide rates and suggest intervention strategies for reducing the current high levels of risk.³

Trends in the risk of becoming a homicide victim or offender

Not everyone is at the same risk of violence, whether lethal or non-lethal. In the United States, certain demographic groups are much more likely to be involved in violence than others (CDC, 1986; Sampson, 1985; Reidel, *et al.*, 1985; Hawkins, 1983, 1985, 1987; Rose, 1986, 1979; Rose & McClain, 1981), and the effects of gender, age and race/ethnicity are not simple but interact with each other. For example, the effect of gender or age in the Latino community is not the same as in the non-Latino black or non-Latino white communities (Block, 1988b; Leyba, 1988; Rodriguez, 1988).⁴

Patterns in Chicago mirror national trends (Figures 2 and 3). The risk of being murdered has been far higher for males than females and generally higher for non-Latino blacks than for Latinos or non-Latino whites.⁵ However, the risk of homicide has not been static over time, and the trends have differed for each racial/ethnic and gender group. Though male Latino and non-Latino black victimization risks were equal in 1979, since then the Latino rate declined while the black rate increased (Figure 2). After declining from

FIGURE 1



171 deaths (81 per 100,000) in 1979 to 85 (37 per 100,000) in 1982, Latino male victimization fluctuated around a stable level for a decade (39 per 100,000). In contrast, black male victimization was stable through the 1980s but increased sharply in the early 1990s, reaching almost 130 deaths per 100,000 population. In 1992, 627 African-American men were murdered in Chicago (127.5 per 100,000), far higher than the previous peak in 1974 (552 deaths; 105 per 100,000).⁶

The risk of becoming a homicide offender (Figures 4 and 5) followed patterns over the 24 years that were very similar to victimization risk patterns.⁷ Both rates were stable for non-Latino white males throughout the period. Rates for Latino males peaked in 1979, then declined and stabilized at about 40 per 100,000 through the late 1980s and early 1990s. In contrast, though the risk of becoming an offender for non-Latino black males had been falling steadily for 15 years, the trend reversed to a sharp increase from 1985 to 1991. The African-American homicide offender rate in Chicago increased 112 percent from 73 per 100,000 (382 offenders) in 1985 to 155 per 100,000 (762 offenders) in 1991, surpassing the previous peak of 151 per 100,000 (767 offenders) in 1970. The most recent years, however, have declined just as sharply, to 135 per 100,000 (662 offenders) in 1992 and 118 per 100,000 (582 offenders) in 1993.

During the same period, the risk for a Chicago woman of either becoming a homicide victim (Figure 3) or becoming a homicide offender (Figure 5) was much lower and also changed much less over time. Rates for non-Latino white and Latino females were stable over the 24 years. Though trends for non-Latino black females were much more stable than trends for males,

there was a gradual increase in victimization risk in the 1980s, with 1993 approaching the mid-1970s levels (Figure 3). However, there was no pattern of increase in the risk of offending for African-American females (Figure 5). The offender rate declined in the 1970s and then oscillated around a stable rate in the '80s and '90s.

These trends over time in Chicago victimization and offender rates, particularly the trends in male Latino and non-Latino black victimization rates (figures 2 and 4), exemplify the need for caution about generalizing from only one year of data. Relative rates in 1979, for example, were clearly different from relative rates in 1992, and it would be misleading to choose rates in either year as representing the general pattern. Describing trends over time may be more complex than looking only at one year, but it is a necessary complexity if we are to obtain an accurate assessment of risk. This analysis shows that the recent surge in homicide victimization occurred only in the African-American community, particularly among males. Similarly, the risk of becoming a homicide offender fell in the late 1980s for every group except for African-American males. However, the sharp decline in the last two years may be an encouraging sign of a reversal in that trend.

Young bear the brunt of violence

What about age? Again, Chicago trends provide no exception to the national pattern. Increases in victimization rates for only three age groups accounted for the rapid increases in total homicides in the late '80s and early '90s. The victimization risk for young people increased sharply from 1988 to 1993 (Figure 6)—154 percent (from 4.8 to 12.2 per 100,000) for 10- to 14-year-olds, 95 percent (from 45 to 88) for 15- to 19-year-olds, and 67 percent (from 42 to 71) for 20- to

24-year-olds. At the same time, the risk of being murdered either declined or remained stable for every older age group (calculated at five-year intervals from age group 25 to 29 to age 75 and older) and every younger age group (birth to 4 and 5 to 9). Comparing the victimization trends for age group 15 to 24 and for the total of all older ages (Figure 7), it is clear that the increased risk of being murdered in the early '90s was confined to these young victims.

Trends in the risk of becoming an offender (Figures 8 and 9) were similar to trends in victimization risk.⁸ After being stable or declining slightly from 1970 to 1988, the risk of becoming an offender then rose sharply for youth aged 10 through 24 (Figure 8), while it continued to be stable for older ages (Figure 9). Though the decline in offender risk in 1992 and 1993 might be a hopeful sign, the risk of victimization for young people generally remained high or even increased in the early '90s.

It is clear, then, that the recent increase in Chicago homicides reflects an increase in homicides of young victims and homicides committed by young offenders. Further, the increase in victimization after 1988 occurred primarily for young African-American males. For example, the homicide death rate for young black men aged 15 to 19 rose from 84 (44 deaths) in 1987 to 274 (130 deaths) per 100,000 population in 1992, and remained at 243 (115 deaths) in 1993 (Figure 10). Victimization rates for black males aged 10 to 14 tripled from 1987 to 1992 (from 10 to 30 per 100,000) and rates for black males aged 20 to 24 more than doubled over the same period (from 156 to 360 per 100,000). Though the risk of death for Latino male teens also increased in the early '90s, the increase was much less than for black teens and tended to occur in spurts from year to year.

African-American homicide rates explode

Both victimization and offending trends for non-Latino whites were flat in Chicago throughout the 24 years, even for these teen-age males (Figures 10 and

11). From 1977 to 1981, there was a surge in homicide victimization of young Latino men (Figure 10). During this period, Latino teen-agers were at higher risk than non-Latino black teen-agers. In fact, both victimization and offending rates for African-American teens fell steadily from 1970 into the '80s. Beginning in the late '80s, however, trends in both rates exploded. The risk of a black teen being murdered in 1992 was 226 percent greater than the 84 per 100,000 in 1987.

Though the risk of offending rose sharply for Af-

What is a homicide syndrome?

Homicide syndromes combine two important aspects of fatal violence: 1) the expressive versus instrumental continuum of the assailant's motive, and 2) lethal and non-lethal sibling offenses.

Expressive versus instrumental: The expressive/instrumental continuum describes the primary, immediate motive of the offender in a violent situation. In instrumental violence, the assailant's dominant motive is to acquire money or property. In expressive violence, the assailant's dominant motive is violence itself.

Sibling offenses: Almost all homicides (aside from gangland hits or contract murder) correspond to a sibling offense—similar incidents in which a fatal outcome did not occur. Expressive homicides, had they not had a fatal outcome, would have been assaults, and instrumental homicides would have been a robbery or a burglary. To develop successful intervention strategies for homicide, we need to know why some—and only some—violent situations become fatal. The answer differs for sibling offenses that occupy different points on the expressive-instrumental continuum.

Examples of homicide/violence syndromes: In practice, we have found the following homicide/violence syndromes, which combine sibling offenses with expressive versus instrumental orientation, fundamentally useful in describing homicide patterns and in developing models and intervention strategies.

- Spousal. Confrontations

between spouses, ex-spouses, commonlaw and ex-common-law spouses, boyfriend/girlfriend, ex-boyfriend/girlfriend, and homosexual domestic couples.

- Child abuse. Includes only abuse by a caretaker, not a child being killed in another situation, such as burglary or street gang crossfire.
- Other family. Expressive confrontations between other relatives; for example, elder abuse and fights between siblings.
- Acquaintance. Includes expressive confrontations between friends, neighbors, co-workers, and so on.
- Expressive; Stranger. Includes expressive attacks on strangers, such as barroom brawls, hate crimes, and "random" shootings.
- Instrumental. The assailant's immediate and primary goal is to obtain money or property; for example, robbery, burglary, arson for profit, contract killing or gangland "hits," or murder to protect a drug market or other enterprise.
- Rape. Assailant's goal is sexual assault (any kind) of a male or female victim.
- Street gang. The goal of the violent incident is related to a street gang function, such as representing, recruitment, defense of turf, or promotion of a gang enterprise. (Street gangs may specialize in expressive or instrumental violence; see C.R. Block & R. Block, 1993b.)
- Other. Rare situations such as murder-suicide pacts and mercy killings.

FIGURE 2

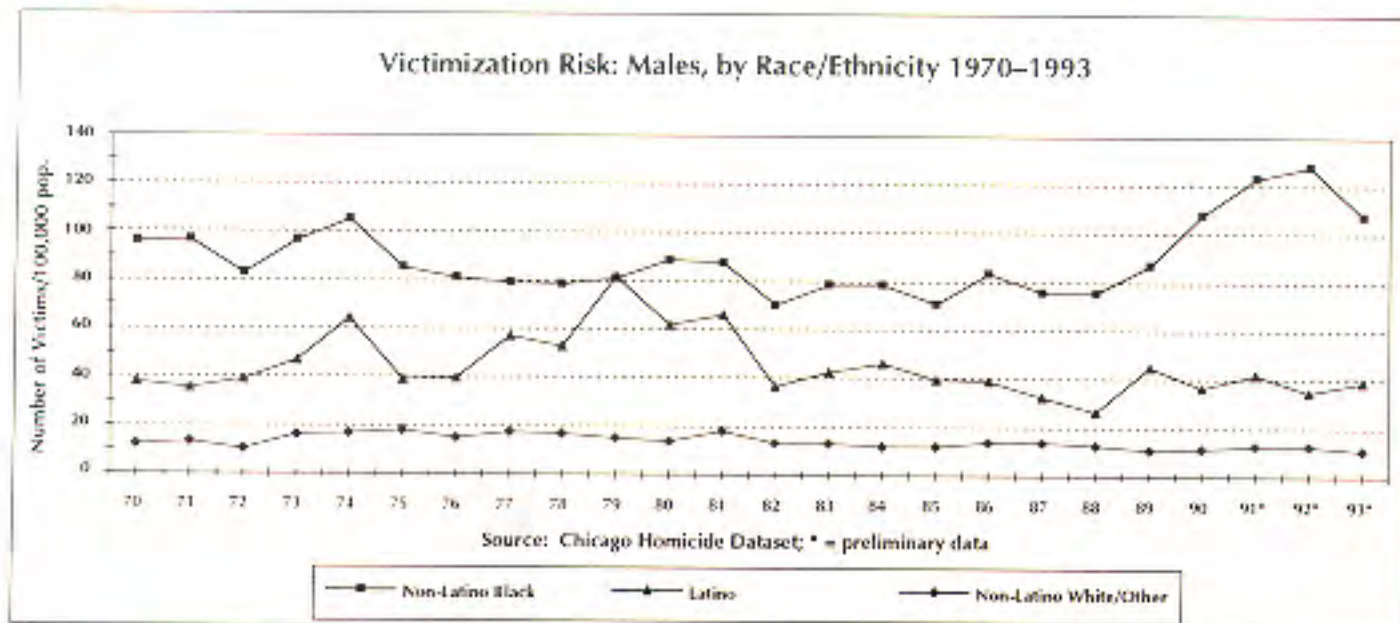
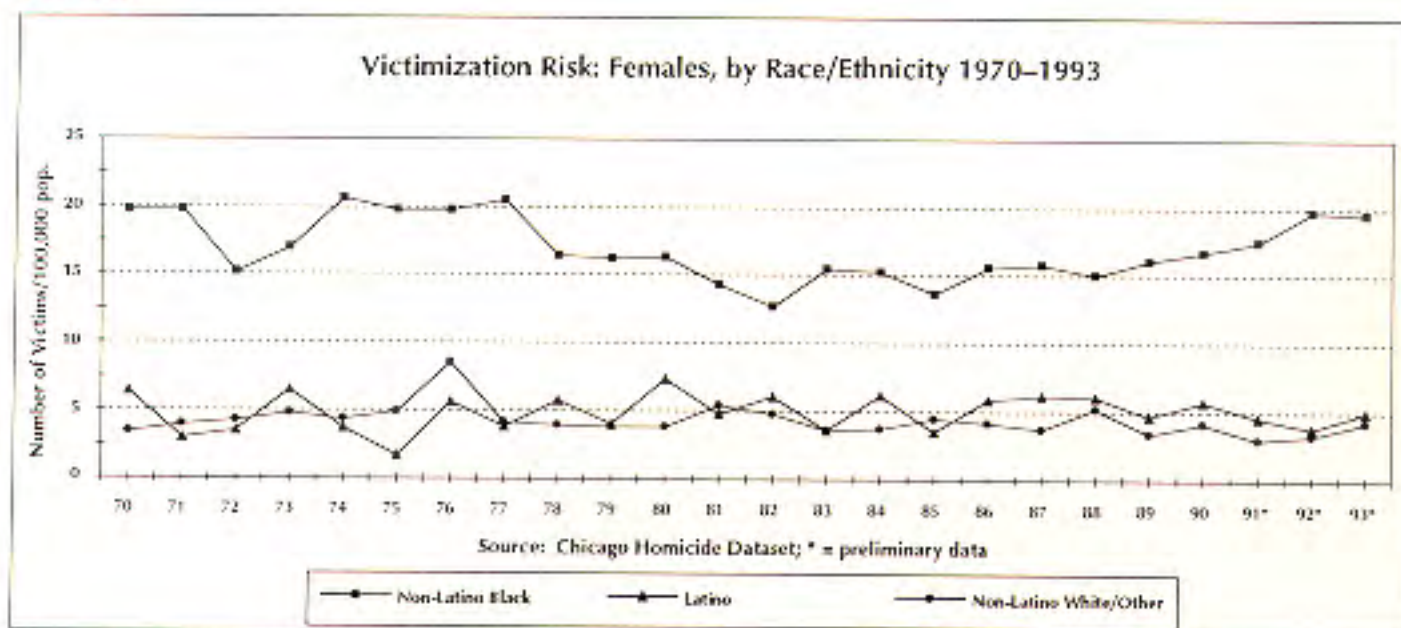


FIGURE 3



frican-American teen-agers in the late '80s and early '90s, it was generally steady for Latino and non-Latino white teen-agers (Figure 11). Again, the decrease in 1992 and 1993 may be a hopeful sign of a downward trend. From 220 per 100,000 (111 offenders) in 1988, the risk of becoming a homicide offender rose 189 percent to 635 per 100,000 (301 offenders) in 1991. In contrast, the Latino offender rate in 1993, 220 per 100,000 males aged 15 to 19, equaled the rate in 1981 (221 per 100,000). The same recent increase occurred for non-Latino black males ages 20 to 24 (not shown) as for their teen-age counterparts. The risk of becoming a homicide offender for black males aged 20 to 24 was 548 per 100,000 (218 offenders) in 1991 and 405 (161 offenders) in 1993, compared to 214 per 100,000 (100

offenders) in 1987.

There is one exception to the general pattern that the recent increase in victimization and offending was confined to teen-agers and young adults. The relatively small but steady increase in victimization risk among African-American females (Figure 4) occurred largely because of an increase in deaths of women aged 30 to 49 (not shown). In 1981, there were only 20 murders of black women in this age group (13 per 100,000), but in 1993 there were 47 (29 per 100,000).

In summary, almost all of the sharp increase in Chicago homicide victimizations in recent years occurred because of a specific increase in victimizations of 10- to-24-year-old African-American males, togeth-

FIGURE 4

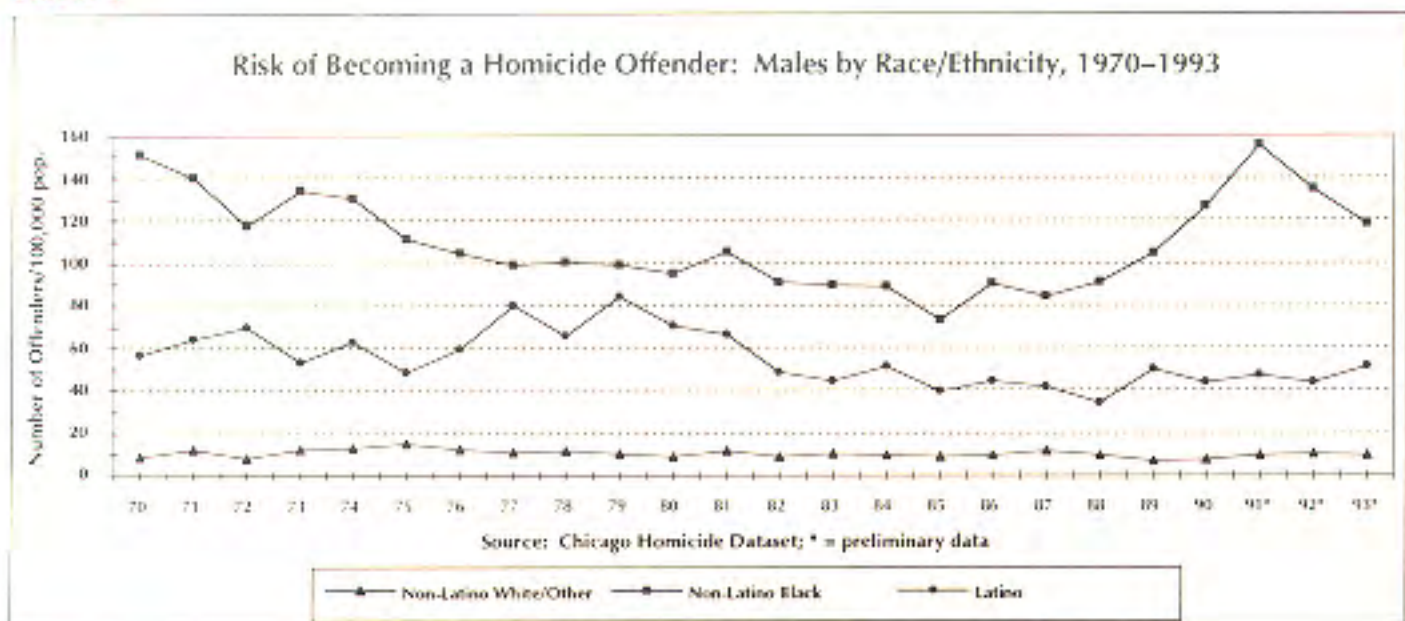
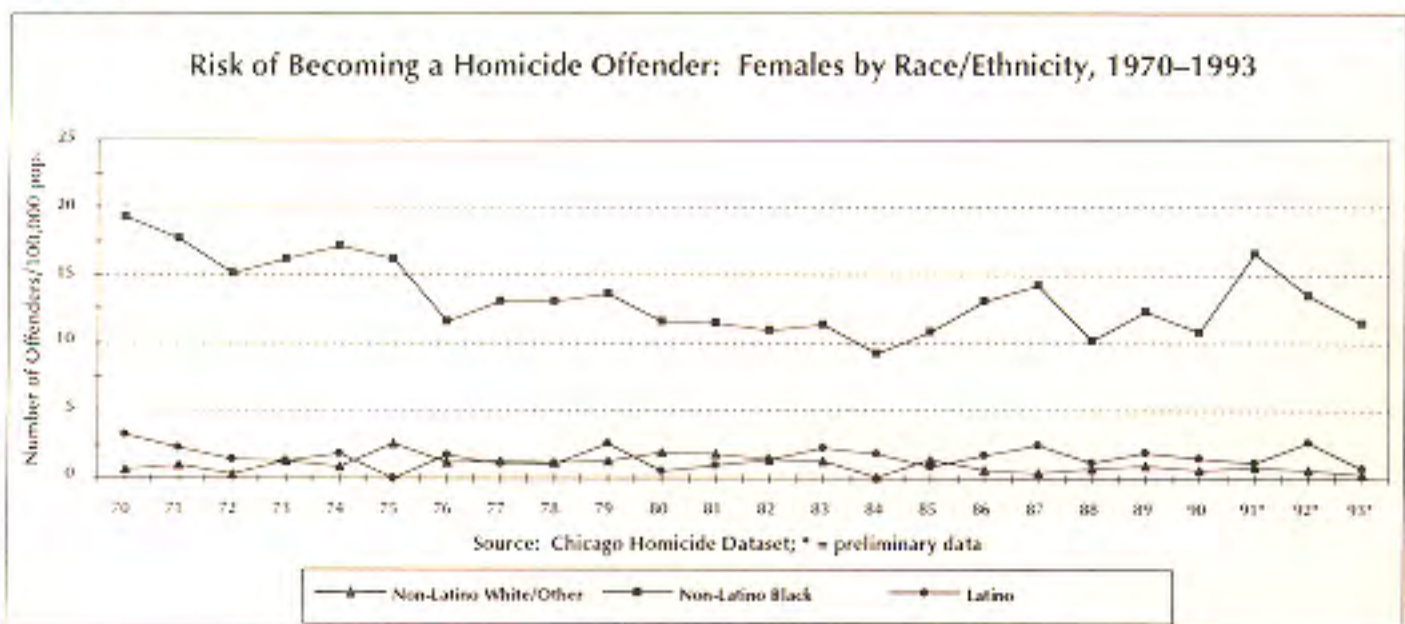


FIGURE 5



er with a slight increase in victimizations of Latino male teens and African-American women aged 30 to 49. Further, the sharp increase and 1992-1993 decline in offender rates reflected specific trends in offender rates of young black males. This time series specification (C.R. Block, 1986) does not tell us why these changes occurred or suggest strategies for prevention. It merely tells us where we must look for an explanation—specific types of homicide and situations that had a great effect on young African-American men. This is what we do in the next section by asking: Did the recent increase in Chicago homicides occur in a specific homicide syndrome?

Trends in homicide syndromes

To prevent lethal violence, we must first under-

stand it; to understand it, we must learn why some, but only some, violent events become lethal. The reasons are different for different types of violence. Contrary to popular opinion, homicide is not one type of event but many. A homicide that began as a domestic assault is more like a non-lethal domestic assault than a homicide that began as a robbery. Similarly, homicides that began as child abuse, homicides that began as robberies, homicides that began as street gang confrontations, and homicides that began as barroom brawls all have different risk patterns and tend to follow different trends over time. Intervention strategies successful for one type will not necessarily be successful for another.

Homicide syndromes (see sidebar) categorize ho-

FIGURE 6

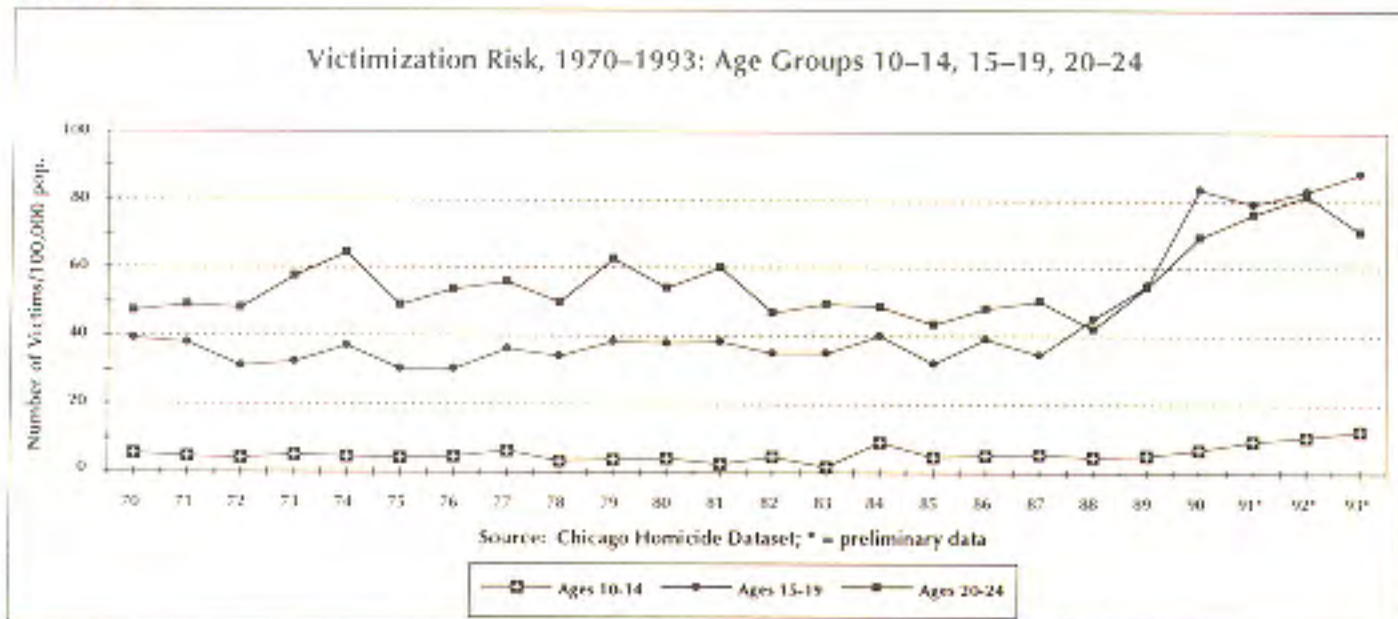
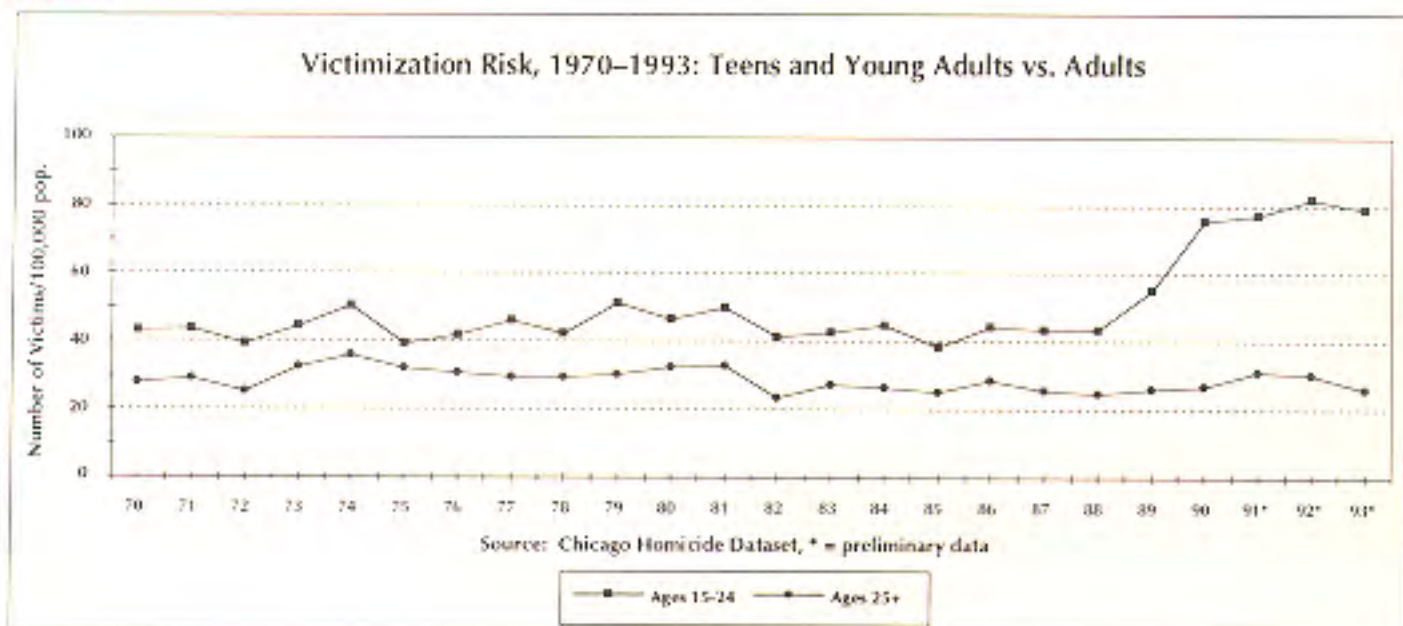


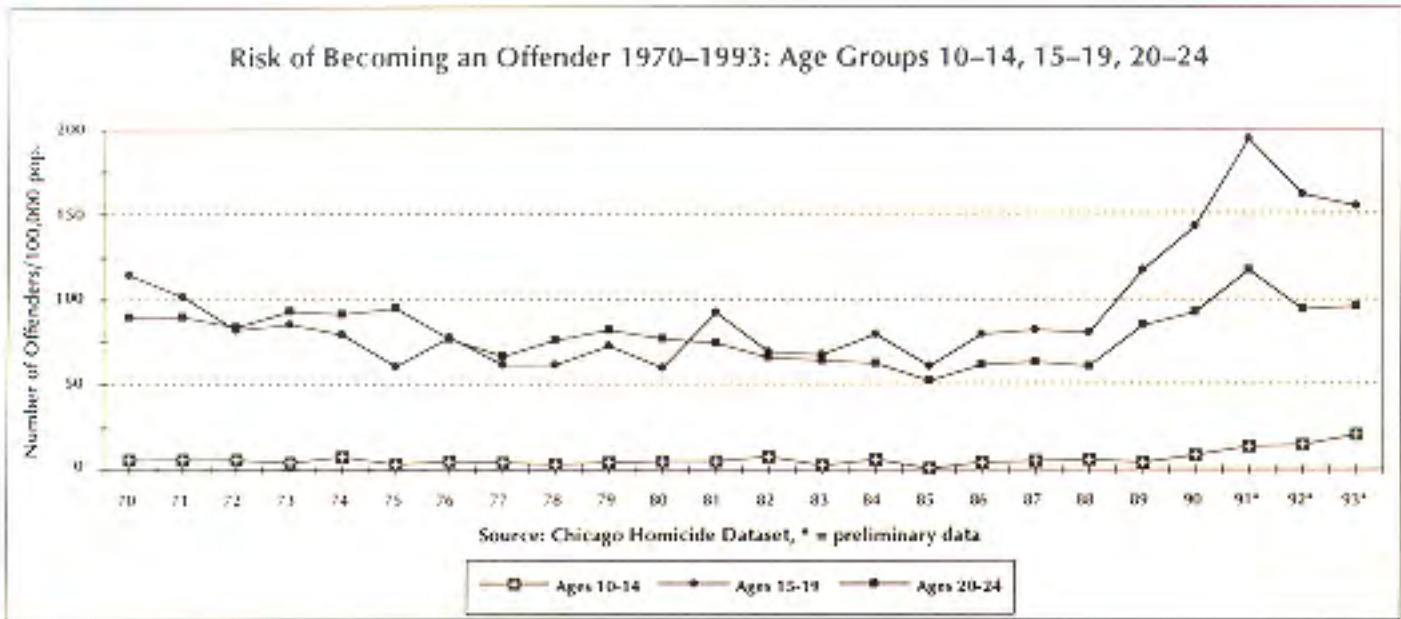
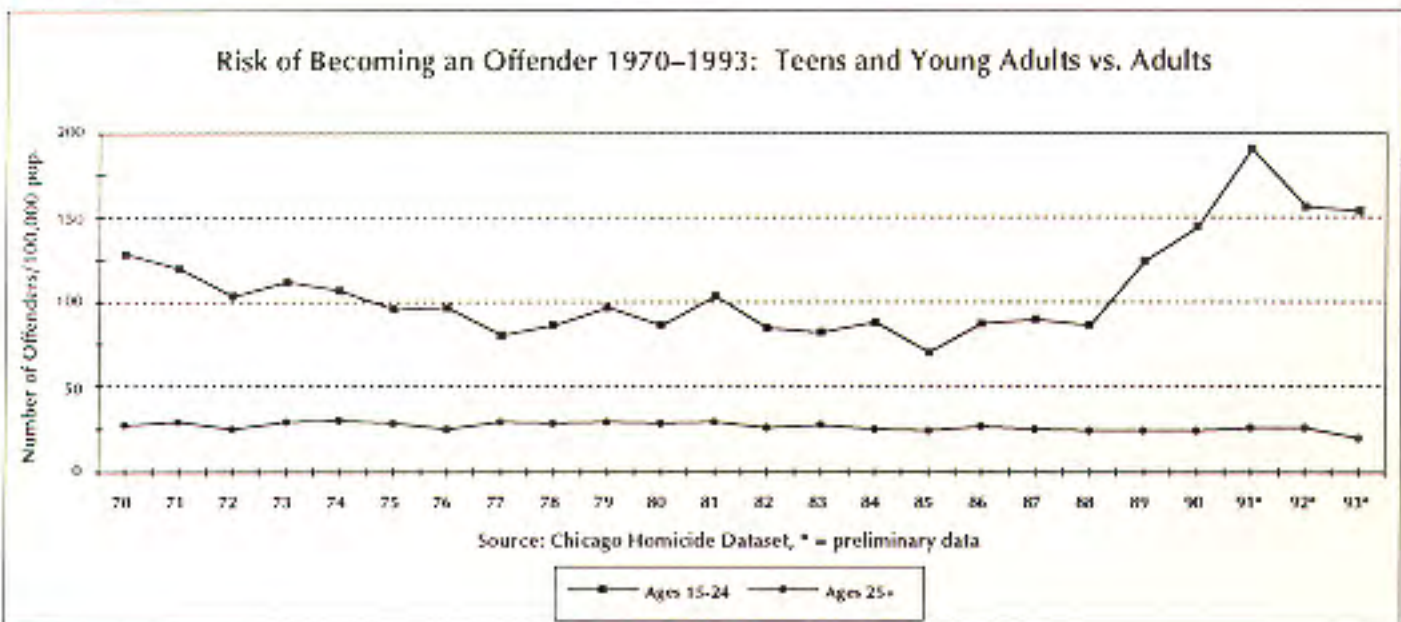
FIGURE 7



homicides according to the offender's primary motive or goal at the immediate time of the incident.⁸ Each homicide syndrome corresponds to a non-lethal sibling offense, and these lethal and non-lethal events are linked because they occupy the same position on an expressive versus instrumental continuum. In an expressive violent confrontation, the primary goal is violence itself; other motives are secondary. In contrast, the primary purpose of an act of instrumental violence is not to injure or kill, but to acquire money or property (see Berkowitz, 1986). Empirical evidence strongly suggests that expressive and instrumental violence (whatever the lethality of outcome) differ greatly, whether the criterion of comparison is a characteristic of the individual case (Block & Zimring, 1973), pattern

of change over time (R. Block, 1977; Block, McKie & Miller, 1983; C.R. Block, 1985), or spatial distribution (Rose, 1986, 1979; Block & Block, 1993b).

The expressive/instrumental extremes are "ideal types" that seldom occur in their pure form in reality. For example, the acquisition of money or property may occur as an afterthought in expressive violence, or it may be used as an additional way of hurting the victim. In the same way, hurting the other person may be a secondary goal in instrumental violence; in some cases, there may be emotional gratification in achieving the other's death. However, we have found that the offender's primary, immediate motive can be determined in most cases, lethal or non-lethal. Although

FIGURE 8**FIGURE 9**

motives for violence are often complex, research indicates that homicides beginning as interpersonal confrontations differ greatly from homicides that begin as predatory attacks. They differ in victim-offender interaction, risk patterns, escalation patterns, patterns of change over time, spatial distribution, and other characteristics. Thus, a primary task in identifying reasons for the recent surge in Chicago homicides is to look at trends in each homicide syndrome.¹⁰

Homicide syndrome patterns over time

Although total Chicago homicides followed the pattern shown in Figure 1 from 1965 to 1993, different homicide syndromes followed different trends (figures 12 through 15). Homicide syndromes change over time

following different patterns because each type of homicide responds differently to social changes in the urban community (see for example, Block, 1981, 1987b; BJS, 1988:4; Maxfield, 1989). Specifically, two types of homicide increased sharply in recent years. Street gang-related homicides and expressive homicides of friends, acquaintances or strangers (non-family expressive homicides) climbed rapidly during the late '80s and early '90s, while others types of homicide did not (Figures 12 and 13).¹¹

The most striking recent increase in any type of Chicago homicide occurred in street gang-related homicides (Figure 12). Usually, street gang violence (whether fatal or not) has not followed a smooth trend.

FIGURE 10

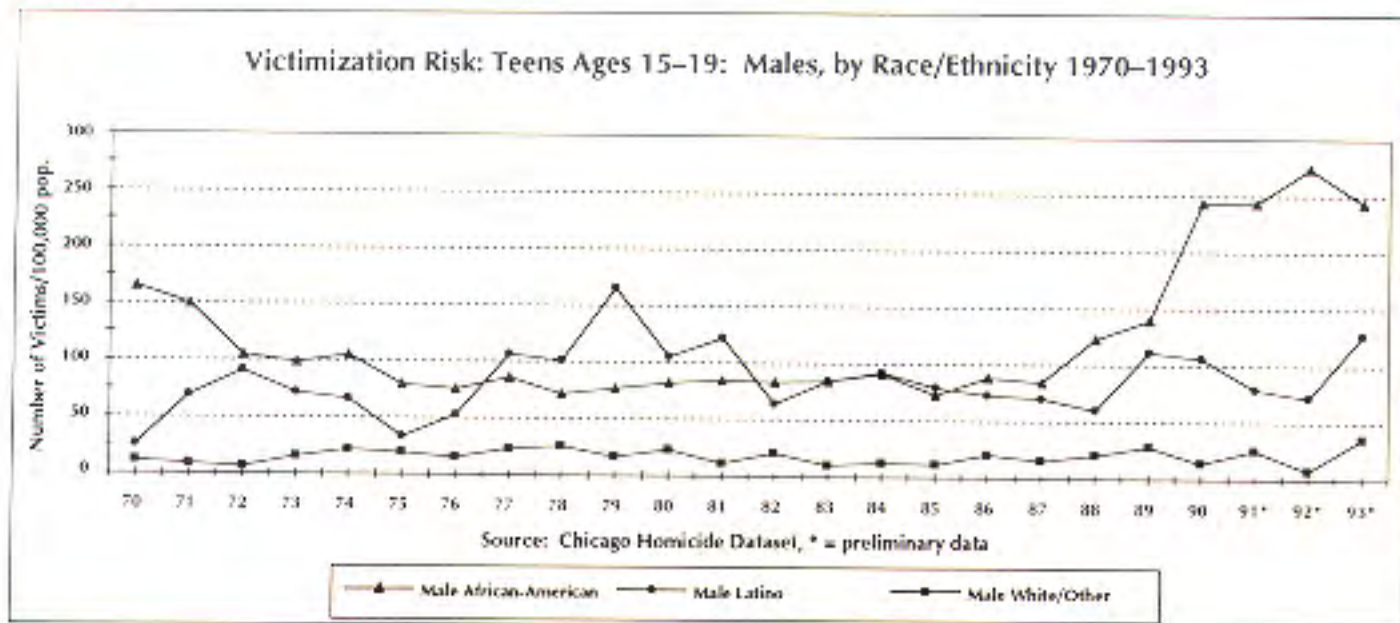
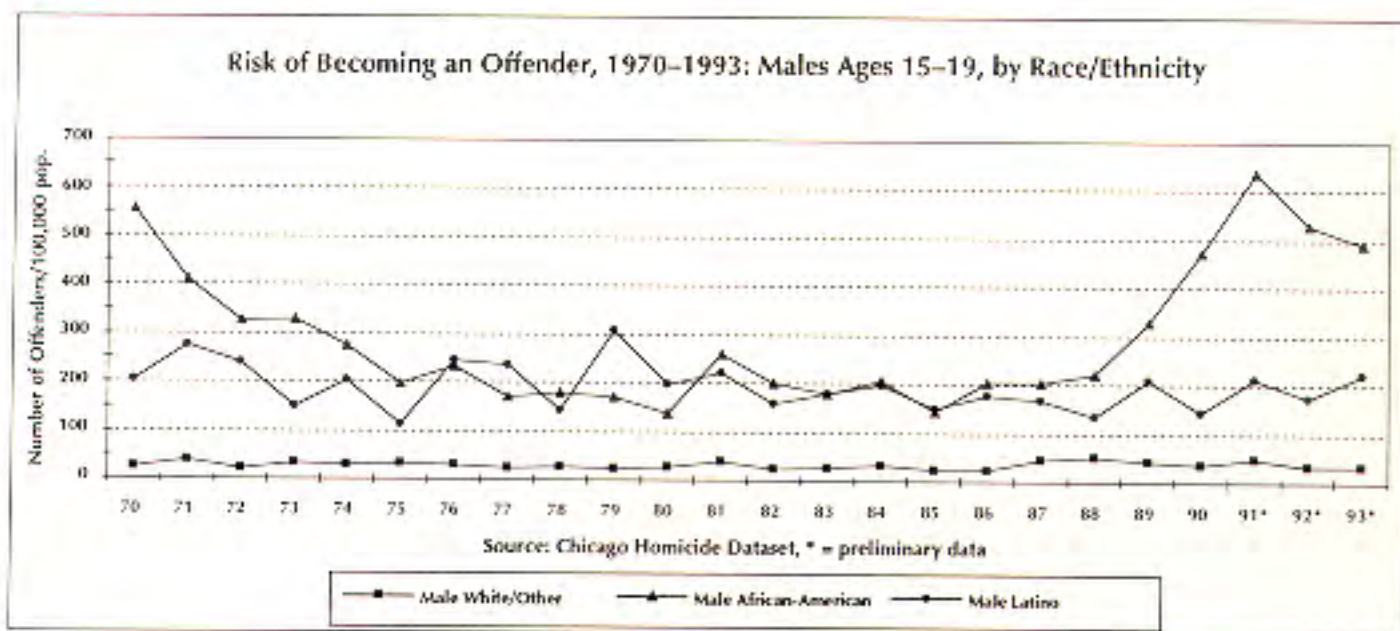


FIGURE 11

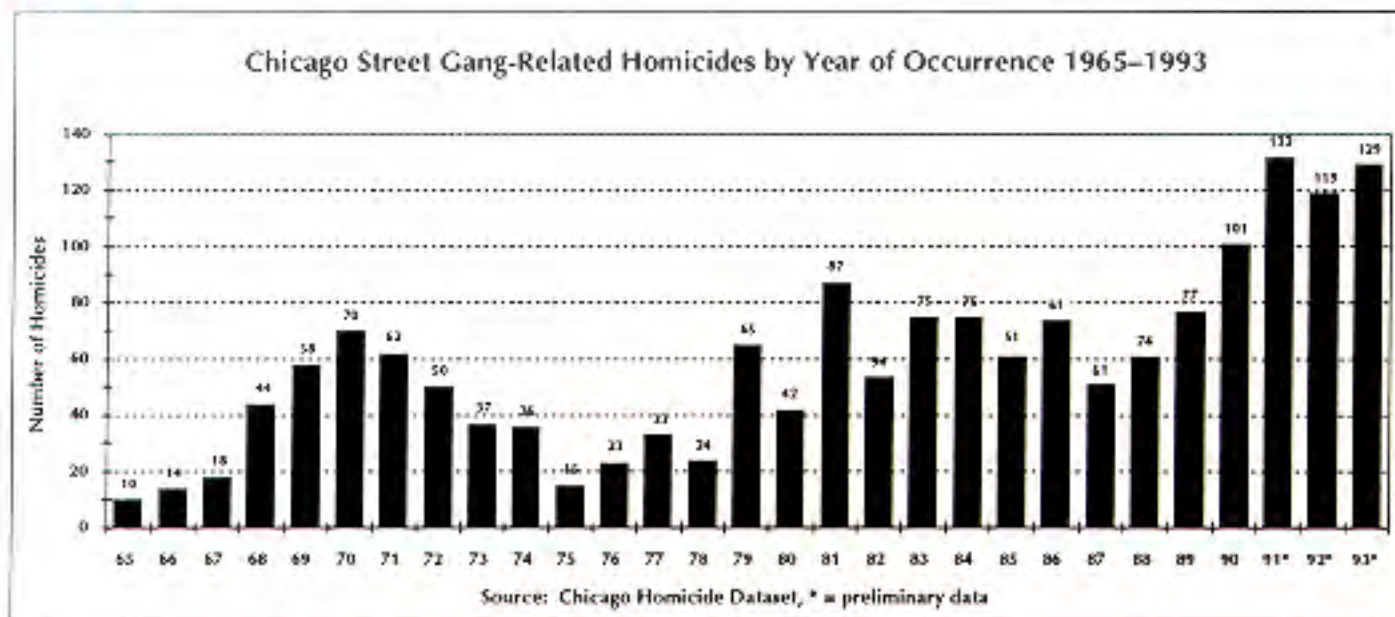


Instead, it has increased and decreased in “spurts” of violence, often reflecting an escalating series of confrontations between specific gangs fighting over a specific territory of the city (Block, 1993). From 1990 to 1993, however, the number of street gang-related murders in Chicago escalated far more than ever before. Compared to the years 1980 to 1989, when street gang murders averaged 65.7 annually and were never higher than 87 in a year, 1991 saw 132 street gang-related homicides, and the number remained high with 119 in 1992 and 129 in 1993.

The 7,455 non-family expressive homicides from 1965 to 1990 included 1,323 (18 percent) between friends, 4,074 (55 percent) between acquaintances, 410

(5.5 percent) between neighbors, 311 (4 percent) between work or professional associates and 1,418 (19 percent) between strangers.¹² Although only preliminary data are available for years after 1990, early trends in these expressive homicides indicate an 18 percent increase from the 255 murders in 1988 to 301 in 1990 (Figure 13). However, the 1990 level was still much lower than the previous peak in 1979 (350 deaths), and it remains to be seen whether the increase in these expressive confrontations continued into the ‘90s. Non-family expressive homicides have some of the same characteristics as street gang homicides, and may be seen as “confrontational competitions,” in which the participants engage in a character contest about saving face (Wilson & Daly, 1985; Luckenbill, 1977). They were

FIGURE 12



overwhelmingly male-on-male (83 percent), and many began as a street fight (36 percent) or a barroom brawl (8 percent). By comparison, 90 percent of street gang-motivated homicides were male-on-male, and 64 percent began as a street fight and 1 percent as a barroom brawl.

Instrumental homicides stable in '90s

In contrast to trends in street gang-motivated homicide and non-intimate expressive homicide, instrumental homicides (those beginning as a robbery, a burglary, drug business dispute, or another profit-motivated predatory attack) did not increase in the '90s (Figure 14). Seventy-seven percent (2,638) of the 3,435 instrumental homicides from 1965 to 1990 were armed robbery, but 281 (8 percent) were strong-arm robbery; 208 (6 percent) were drug-related; 90 (3 percent) were burglary; 53 (1.5 percent) involved organized crime or other illegal business; 50 (1.5 percent) were blackmail, ransom, retaliation, contract killing or contract arson; 31 (0.9 percent) involved theft or allegations of theft; and the other 84 were miscellaneous predatory circumstances. Though instrumental homicides were extremely high in the mid-1970s and accounted for much of the 1974 peak (Figure 14), they were not responsible for the increase in the '90s. The highest number in recent years, 129 incidents occurring in 1990, was dwarfed by the 237 in 1974 and far lower than the number in every year from 1970 through 1981.

Intimate partner homicide continues decline

The pattern over time of homicides between intimate partners in Chicago, defined as spouses (37 percent of the 2,371 intimate partner homicides from 1965 to 1990), ex-spouses (2.5 percent), common-law (31 percent), ex-common-law (1.3 percent), boyfriend/

girlfriend (23 percent), ex-boyfriend/girlfriend (3.2 percent) and gay domestic couples (1.9 percent), is very different from the patterns over time in other homicide syndromes (Figure 15). The peak number, 133 deaths in 1968, occurred very early and was followed by a steady decline to only 63 in 1982, a period when most other types of homicide were high. Though the numbers fluctuated from year to year, most years during the '80s had at least 70 intimate partner homicides. In 1992, however, when other Chicago homicides were reaching new highs, intimate partner homicide reached a new low. The 55 recorded that year represented the lowest number of intimate homicides on record, and the 57 in 1993 was a close second.

None of the other homicide syndromes can account for the tremendous increase in Chicago homicide in the late '80s and early '90s. Though child abuse homicide (not shown) climbed steadily throughout the 29-year period, there were too few of them to account for the increase in total homicide. The 17 children murdered by a caretaker in 1993 comprised only 2 percent of the 852 recorded murders. Sexual assault homicides (not shown) also were relatively infrequent compared to other homicide syndromes. Unlike child abuse murders, they generally declined beginning in the '70s, from a high of 21 in 1971 to only four in 1990. Expressive homicides between non-intimate relatives, such as siblings, uncles or aunts, grandparents, parents killing grown children, children killing parents, and so on, accounted for very few homicides and did not vary over time. The most in any single year was 44 in 1987, 6 percent of the 1987 total.

In summary, we can specify the type of homicide that accounted for the unprecedented escalation in Chicago in recent years. The increase occurred in

FIGURE 13

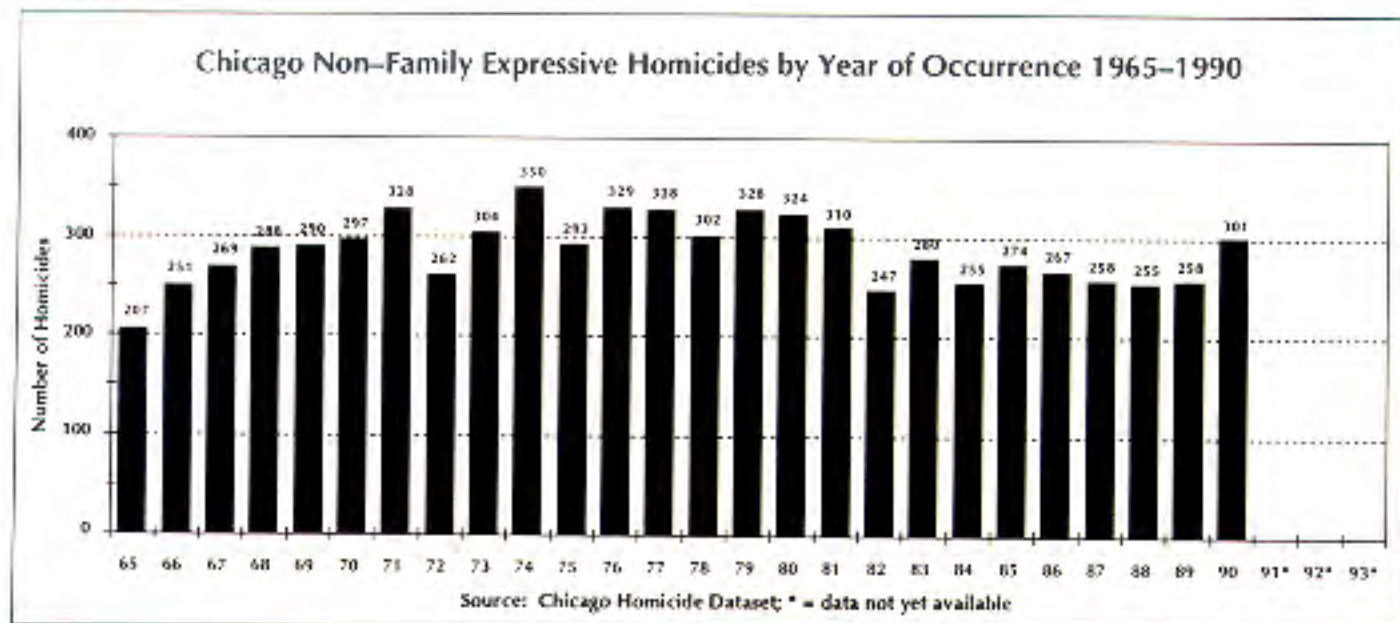
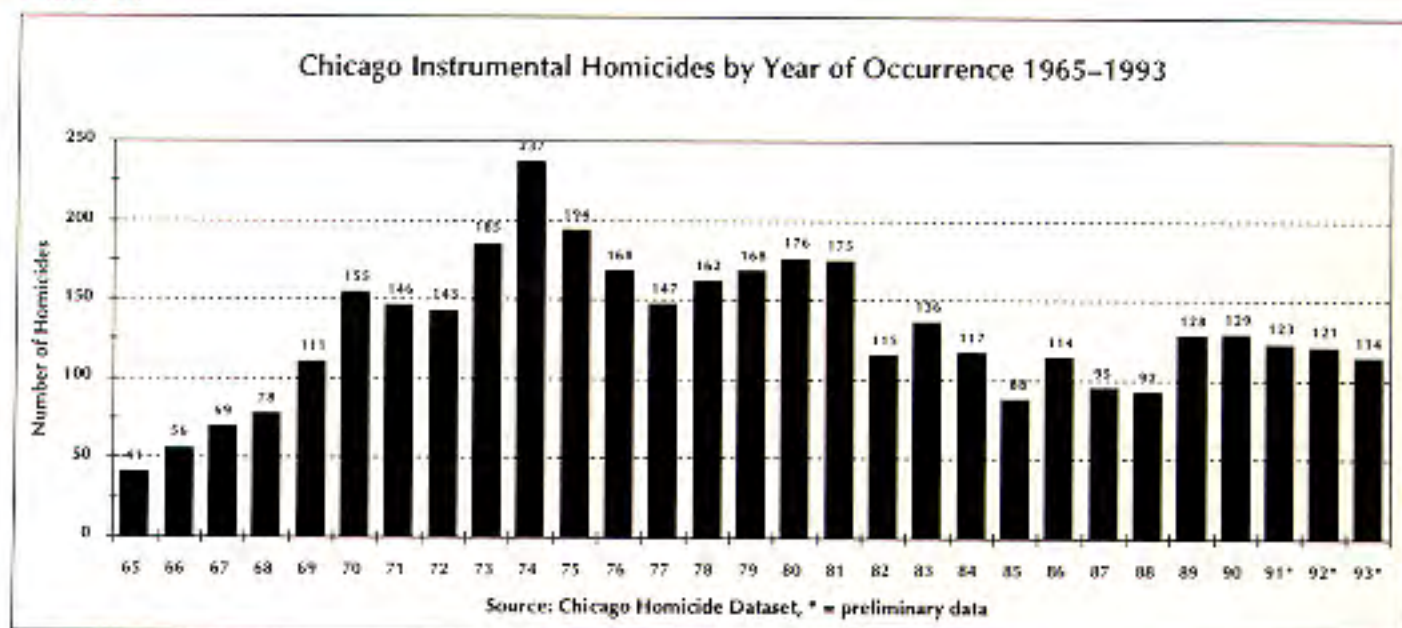


FIGURE 14



homicides motivated by street gang activity or membership, and possibly also in non-family fights and brawls. Other homicide syndromes either increased slightly (instrumental homicide; child abuse homicide), declined (intimate homicide; sexual assault homicide), or did not change (expressive homicide between other relatives). In the previous section, we saw that the recent escalation occurred only for specific groups in the population. Since different population groups are more vulnerable to different kinds of homicide, the next question to explore is whether recent Chicago homicide trends occurred in specific homicide syndromes involving specific groups. Further, since different Chicago neighborhoods are differentially vulnerable to the various types of homicide, was the recent increase

limited to specific parts of the city? The next section will examine these issues.

Homicide syndromes: Differential risks for individuals and neighborhoods

The most frequent type of homicide in Chicago from 1965 to 1990, constituting 30 percent of the total, was an expressive confrontation between friends, acquaintances, neighbors, business partners, or other people who knew each other but who were not related (Figure 16).¹⁵ Eighteen percent of the people murdered in Chicago over the 26 years of available data were killed in a robbery or another instrumental crime; 12 percent in an attack by a spouse or other intimate partner; 7 percent in a street gang-motivated confrontation;

FIGURE 15

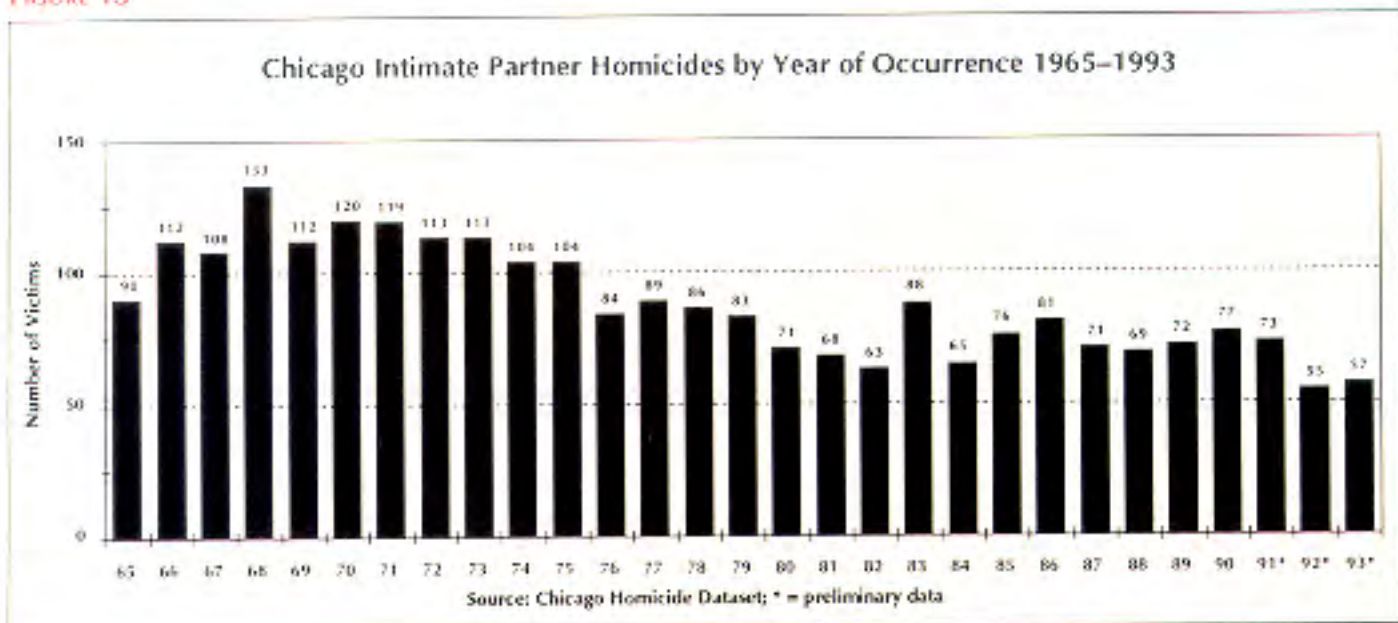
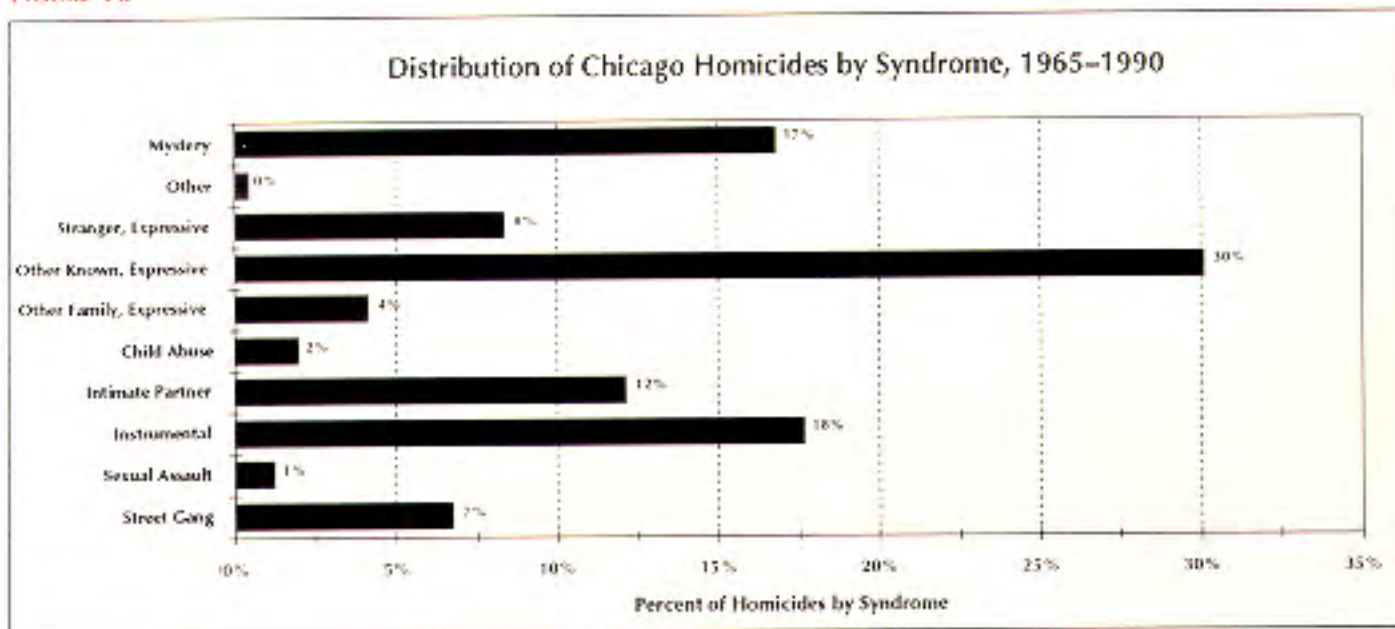


FIGURE 16



2 percent in child abuse; and 1 percent in a sexual assault. However, as figures 12 to 15 clearly show, these overall percentages mask considerable fluctuation from year to year. In some years, for example, street gang-motivated homicides accounted for a much higher proportion of the total than in other years, ranging from a low of 2 percent in 1975 to 16 percent in 1993. Similarly, instrumental homicides varied from 10 percent in 1965 to 25 percent in 1974.

These totals also mask specific risk patterns for population groups. The risk of becoming a victim or offender of a specific type of homicide can be high for particular age, gender or racial/ethnic groups, even though that homicide syndrome may constitute only a small proportion of the total. The relative risk of ex-

pressive versus instrumental violence in general, and of being murdered in a particular homicide syndrome, tends to differ by demographic group (see, for example, Block, 1985a; Golden & Messner, 1987).

Finally, these totals may mask differences by neighborhood. The risk of different kinds of violence may be very different across the city (C.R. Block & R. Block, 1993b; R. Block & C.R. Block, 1992; Roncek, Block & Ewalt, 1988). An area may be high in street gang homicide but low in intimate partner homicide, while another area may experience the opposite pattern. For example, in the years 1988 to 1990, the annual risk of street gang-related homicide in District 12 was 11 deaths per 100,000 per year, the highest in the city. However, the risks of instrumental and intimate part-

FIGURE 17

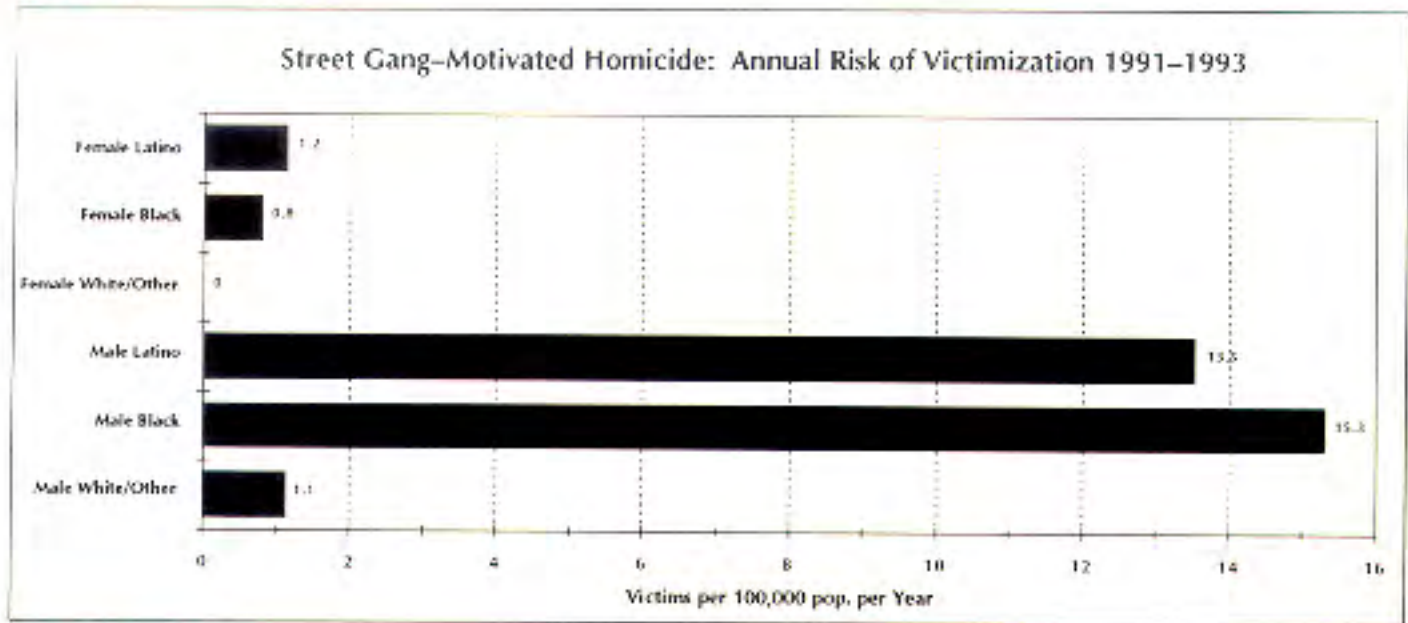
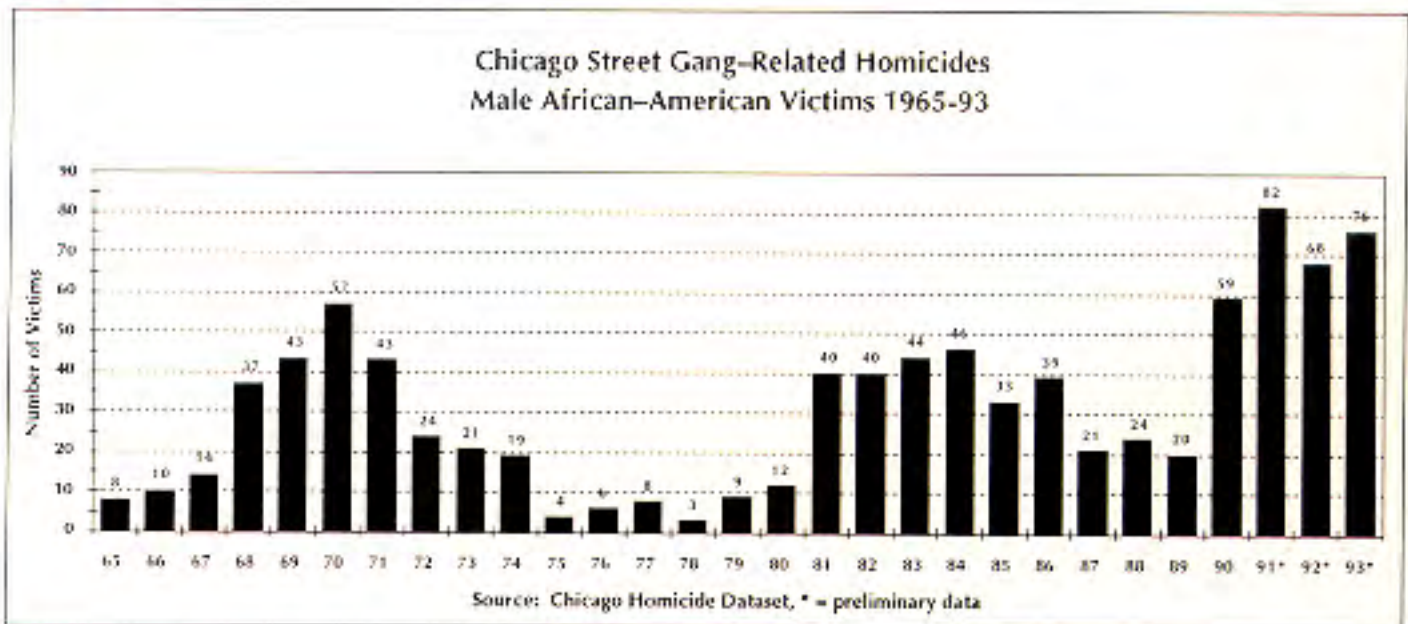


FIGURE 18



ner homicide (fewer than six and four per 100,000 per year, respectively) were relatively low in District 12. During the same period, District 2 had the highest rates for both instrumental and intimate partner homicide (19 and 11 per 100,000 per year, respectively) but a lower rate of street gang-related homicide (five) than many other districts. District 15 had a relatively high rate of instrumental homicide (nine) but was comparatively low in intimate partner homicide and street gang-related homicide (both two deaths per 100,000 per year). What this showed was that just because an area of the city had a high risk of one kind of homicide, we cannot assume that its risk was high for every kind of homicide.

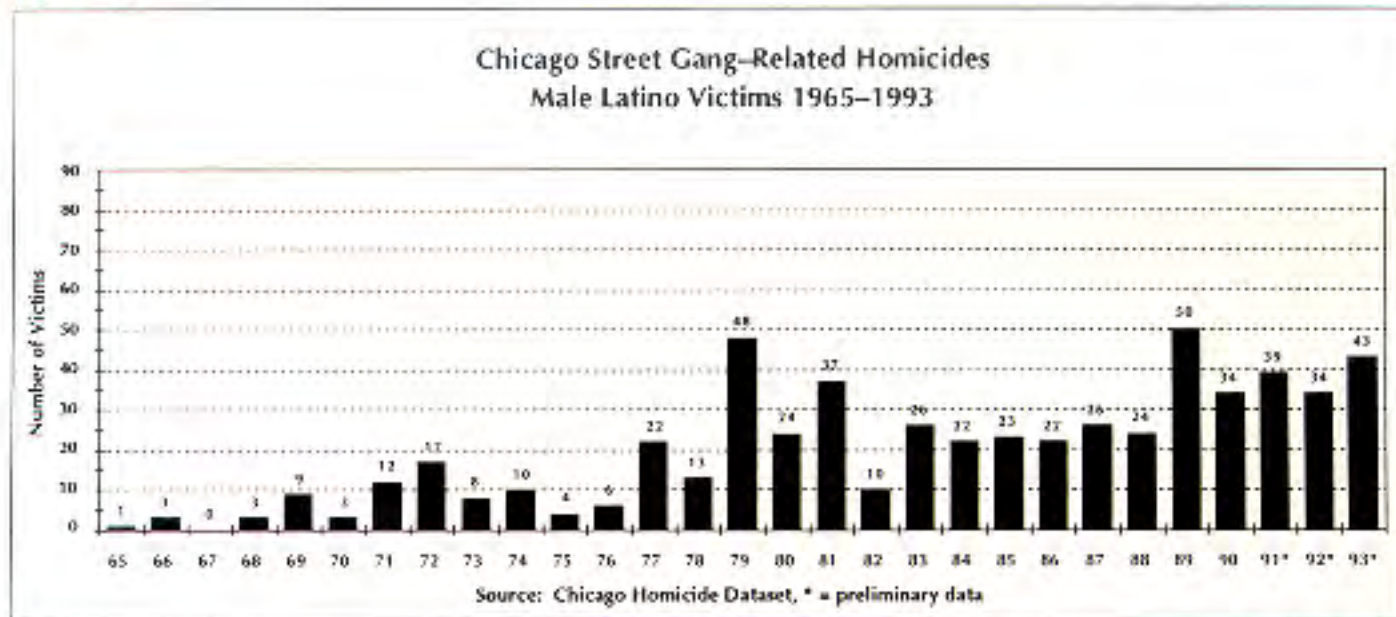
Each neighborhood is unique in its pattern of vio-

lence, so changes over time differ from district to district. Therefore, the recent homicide escalation did not occur citywide, but only in certain Chicago police districts. In many districts, homicide declined or remained stable, while in others, homicide increased sharply. The number of homicides in District 4 almost tripled from 25 in 1989 to 70 (49 per 100,000) in 1993. Similar increases occurred in Districts 5, 6, 11 and 25. In District 7 (Englewood), homicides peaked at 99 (92 per 100,000) in 1991, a threefold increase over the 33 in 1985. They declined to 66 by 1993 in Englewood.

Street gang-related killings vary by population group, neighborhood

The risk of being killed in a Chicago street gang-

FIGURE 19



motivated homicide has always been concentrated in a few demographic groups. In the early 1990s, for example, the annual risk of being killed in a street gang–motivated confrontation was extremely high for young African–American and Latino men but low for others (Figure 17). The victimization risk was 15.3 and 13.5 per 100,000 per year for non–Latino black and Latino men, respectively. Specific rates for young men (graph not shown) were even higher. The risk of a street gang death from 1991 to 1993 was 66 per 100,000 per year for black men aged 15 to 24, and 47 per 100,000 per year for Latino men in the same age group. Overall during the years 1991 to 1993, street gang–motivated homicide accounted for 13 percent and 35 percent of all non–Latino black and Latino male murder victims, respectively, and for 23 percent and 53 percent of those victims who were aged 15 to 24.

However, the risk patterns of street gang–motivated homicide can change drastically from year to year (see Figure 12). In fact, they are better characterized as following a pattern of spurts rather than a smooth trend. The spurts usually are not citywide but occur in specific neighborhoods and involve specific street gangs. In Chicago, this means that street gang victimization patterns differ by racial/ethnic group (Figures 18 and 19). Each peak tends to correspond to a series of escalating confrontations, usually over control of territory (either traditional street gang turf or an entrepreneurial drug market). Thus, overall trends in Chicago street gang homicides since 1965 (Figure 12) were a composite of separate patterns of individual gangs and neighborhoods.

For male African–American victims (Figure 18), the street gang homicide spurt that began in 1990 and lasted at least through 1993 reached unprecedented

levels. The toll in 1991 was 82 deaths, much higher than in previous peak years (57 in 1970; 46 in 1984), and the numbers were almost as high in 1992 and 1993. In contrast, Chicago’s Latino community (Figure 19) experienced a surge of street gang homicide in 1989, the same year that street gang–related homicides of young black men were unusually low (20). The 1989 peak in Latino street gang homicides surpassed the earlier record of 48 deaths in 1979, which had also occurred in a year when non–Latino black street gang deaths were low (nine).

These patterns are reflected in the homicide trends in District 7 (Englewood) and District 4 (South Chicago). Englewood experienced a sharp escalation of homicide from 1989 to 1991—much of it due to a battle between two black street gangs for control of the crack market—and then a decline in 1992 and 1993. All types of homicide did not increase, however. The 1991 peak in Englewood homicide was due to an increase in street gang homicides, and according to preliminary data, to non–intimate expressive homicides. The wave of street gang homicide in South Chicago was timed differently. It began in 1989 and continued at least through 1993. However, like homicides in Englewood, the escalation in South Chicago consisted of increases in two types of homicide—street gang and (according to preliminary data) fights and brawls between friends, acquaintances or strangers.

Non–family expressive homicides, which are similar to street gang–motivated homicides in many ways, were similarly concentrated in specific police districts. The highest annual risk of expressive homicides between friends and acquaintances from 1988 to 1990 was 32.5 per 100,000 per year in District 2. Only three other districts had annual rates of more than 15 per 100,000—

FIGURE 20

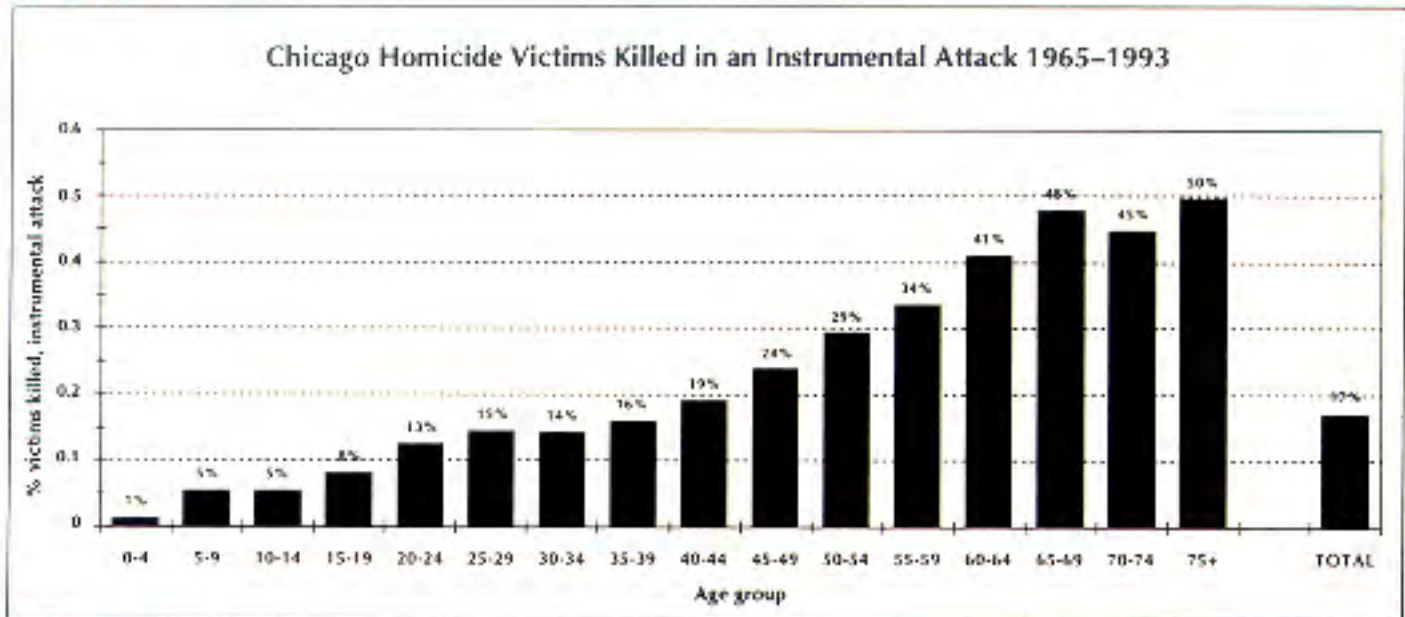
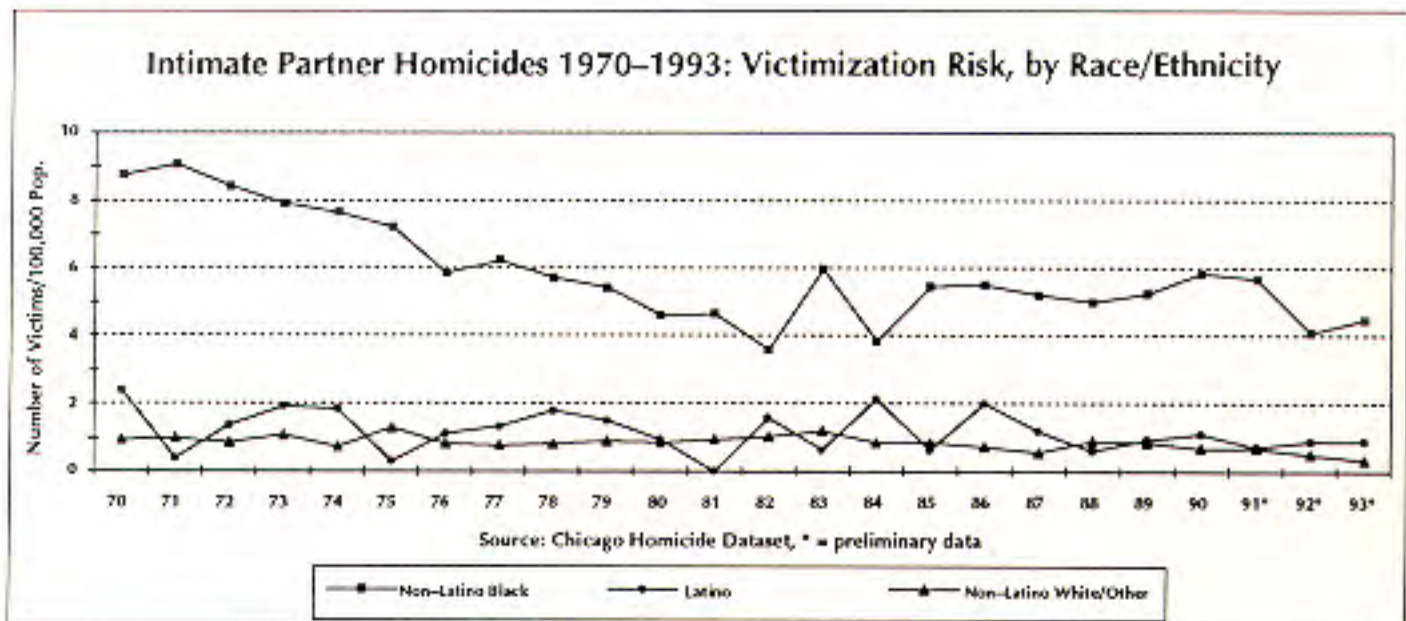


FIGURE 21



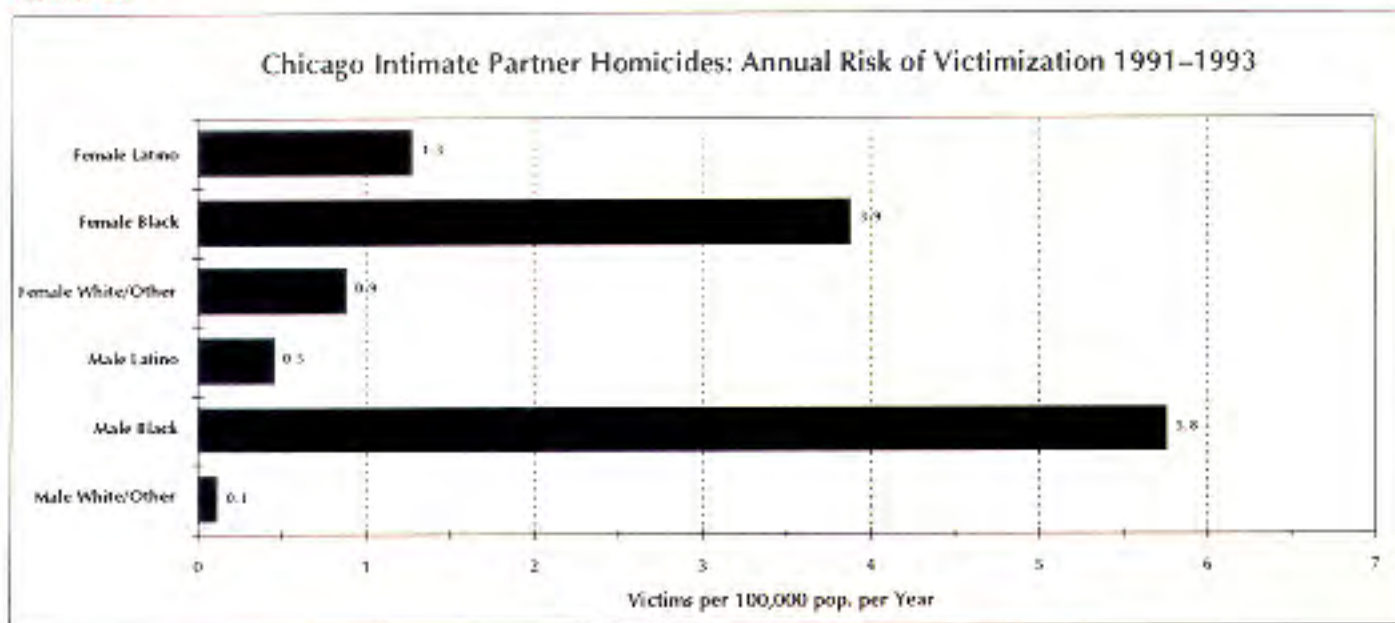
districts 11, 15 and 7, with 22.5, 18 and 16 per 100,000 per year, respectively. Rates in 18 of Chicago's 25 police districts were fewer than 10 per 100,000. Expressive homicides against a stranger were also concentrated spatially, with the highest risk, again, in District 2 (11 per 100,000 per year) and only one other district having a rate more than six (District 7, with 9.0 per 100,000 per year). Unlike street gang-motivated homicide, non-family expressive homicide in Chicago has not increased and decreased in spurts, but has generally followed a relatively smooth trend over time (see Figure 13). Preliminary data indicate that the numbers were stable in recent years in the police district with the highest risk, District 2, and in one other high-risk district, District 15. On the other hand, in Districts 7

and 11—the other two districts where the risk of non-family expressive homicide was highest—it seems to have accounted for much of the recent increase in total homicides. Thus, while trends in non-family expressive homicide may be smooth in the city as a whole, they may account for rapid increases in specific neighborhoods.

Age increase instrumental homicide percents

Although the number of instrumental homicides (those in which the primary motive of the offender was to acquire money or property) changed very little in recent years (see Figure 14 above), analysis by the age of the victim reveals patterns that may be surprising (Figure 20). The percent of victims within any age group

FIGURE 22



who were killed in an instrumental attack such as a robbery was progressively higher with age, from less than 1 percent of victims aged birth to 4 to half of victims aged 75 and older. Even though the overall risk of being murdered may be low for the elderly, those elderly people who were killed were much more likely to be murdered in a predatory situation than were younger victims. This is consistent with a previous analysis of Chicago homicide data (Block, 1987a), which found higher death rates for robbery homicide at older ages, particularly for women, and with analysis linking lethal and non-lethal robbery data at the national level (Fox & Levin, 1991), which found that the elderly are less likely to be robbed but more likely to be killed if they are robbed. Therefore, to develop a homicide intervention strategy for older people, it would be important to take into account the large proportion who are killed in an instrumental attack.

Intimate killings vary by race, gender

Race and ethnicity play a strong role in the patterns of both fatal and non-fatal violence within the family, not only according to the Chicago Homicide Dataset but also according to evidence in police-reported assault data, victim surveys and self-report surveys (see United Way, 1992, for a review). In Chicago, intimate partner homicide rates have been highest for African-American couples since 1970 but declined sharply from 1970 to 1982 for non-Latino black men and women, while they generally remained stable for Latino and non-Latino white men and women (Figure 21). In the 1980s and 1990s, rates for all three groups were stable, but the difference between the groups was not as high as it was in the 1970s.

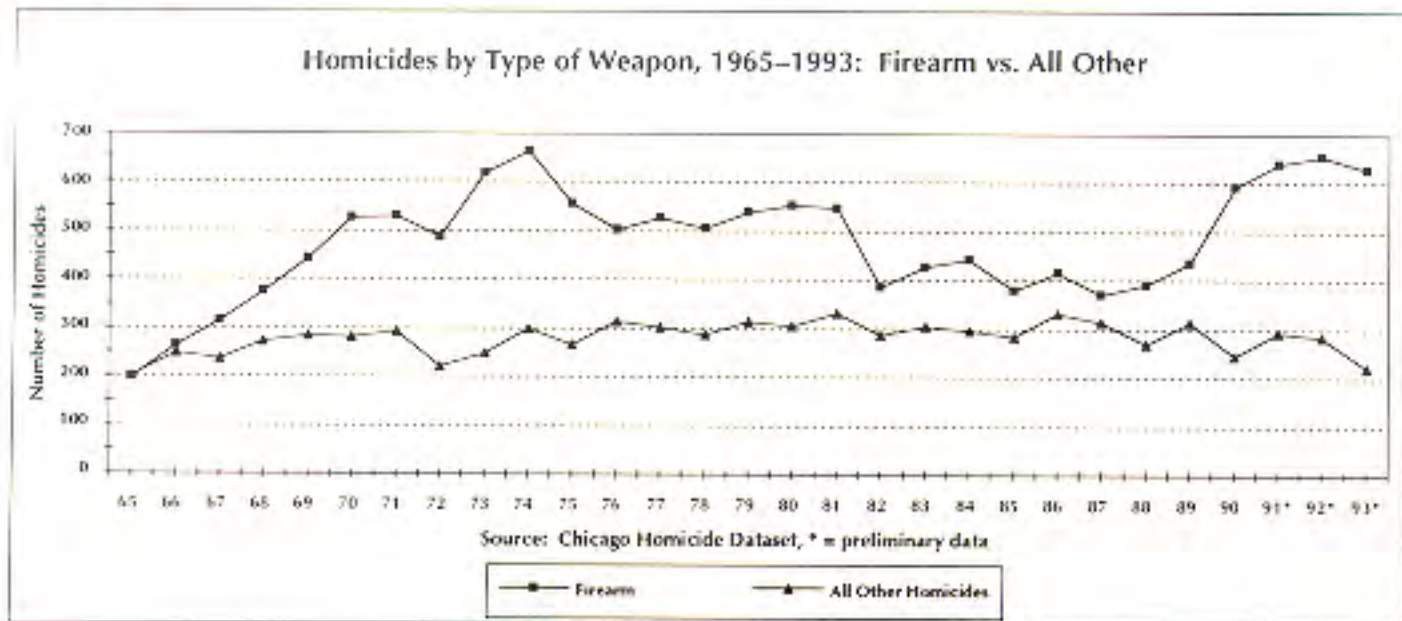
Gender also plays a role in intimate partner homi-

cide. Repeated analysis of the Chicago dataset over the years has found the proportion of male to female offenders to be roughly equal in intimate partner homicides, and for non-Latino black couples, the proportion of female offenders to be higher (Zimring, *et al.* 1983; Block 1987a: 132-133, 1987b, 1993). Wilson and Daly (1992) found that this is also true for other United States cities (Detroit, Houston, Miami and Philadelphia), but that it is *not* true of homicides outside of the United States in any country for which data are available, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, England/Wales, Scotland, India, and six African countries. In Chicago from 1991 to 1993, for example, the annual risk of being killed by an intimate partner was higher for women than for men overall, but for African-Americans, the risk was higher for men than for women (Figure 22). The decline in the 1970s (Figure 21), occurred for both male and female victims. Despite the decline, intimate homicide still accounts for a considerable proportion of the total risk of homicide death of non-Latino black middle-aged males as well as females (Block, 1993). It is, therefore, an important factor in the extremely high lifetime risk of homicide victimization among black males.

Trends in homicide situation: Weapon, drug, or alcohol use

So far, the recent sharp increase in Chicago homicide has been traced to increases in the risk of homicide victimization and offending of certain groups in the population in certain areas of the city, of specific homicide syndromes. Additionally, the pattern of trends over time may be related to situational factors—circumstances such as the weapons used or whether the participants used alcohol or drugs during

FIGURE 23



the incident. Situational factors can affect the likelihood that a violent confrontation will become lethal. Because they may operate differently in each homicide syndrome—and may be related to the age, gender or race/ethnicity of the participants—situational factors can play a role in the pattern of homicide over time.

The availability of a weapon is likely to have a different effect on the escalation of a violent confrontation if the predominant motive is expressive rather than instrumental. Instrumental violence tends to be rationally planned, with the offender deciding to use a weapon if it furthers the goal of obtaining money or property; expressive violence tends to happen at the spur of the moment, with the offender using whatever weapon is at hand. Similarly, the disinhibiting effects of drug or liquor use may affect expressive and instrumental homicides differently. Homicides committed to promote or protect a drug business would be considered instrumental.

Population groups most vulnerable to becoming a victim or offender of different kinds of homicide would thus be affected by these situational factors in different ways. In the end, the network of all of these interrelationships between people, types of homicide and situations will produce different trends over time in different kinds of homicide.

Trends in firearm homicide

An early analysis of the Chicago Homicide Dataset from 1965 through 1979 (Block & Block, 1980) found that the major trends—a tremendous increase in total homicides from 1965 to 1974 and a subsequent decrease in the late 1970s—occurred only in homicides committed with a firearm. This “time series

specification” did not *explain* the pattern of change in homicides with a firearm, but it specified where we must look if we want an explanation: homicides committed with a gun.

Trends through 1993 continue to confirm this earlier finding (Figure 23). The major patterns over time in Chicago homicide—including not only the sharp increase from 1965 to 1974 but also the surge in recent years and the intervening decline—reflect the trend of those homicides committed with a firearm. In contrast, homicides that were not committed with a firearm fluctuated around a generally stable level over the 29-year period. No type of homicide other than firearm homicide increased over the 29 years or in recent years (data not shown). Homicides with a knife or sharp instrument, which accounted for more deaths than any other single weapon except firearms, may even have declined slightly from 1981 to 1993. Thus, the recent (and earlier) trend in Chicago homicides can be specified by weapon; the recent increase occurred only in homicides committed with a firearm.

But trends in Chicago firearm homicides can be specified even further (Figure 24). If firearm homicides are divided by type of firearm, it becomes clear that there were two distinct trends operating to produce the overall pattern of change from 1965 to 1993: first, the rapid increase from 1965 to 1975, and second, the recent increase from 1988 to 1993. These two trends were specified by patterns in two different types of firearm homicide. An increase in homicides committed with a non-automatic handgun accounted for the rapid climb from the mid-’60s to the mid-’70s. In 1965, there were only 95 Chicago homicides committed with a non-automatic handgun, but by 1973 there were 376—nearly a

FIGURE 24

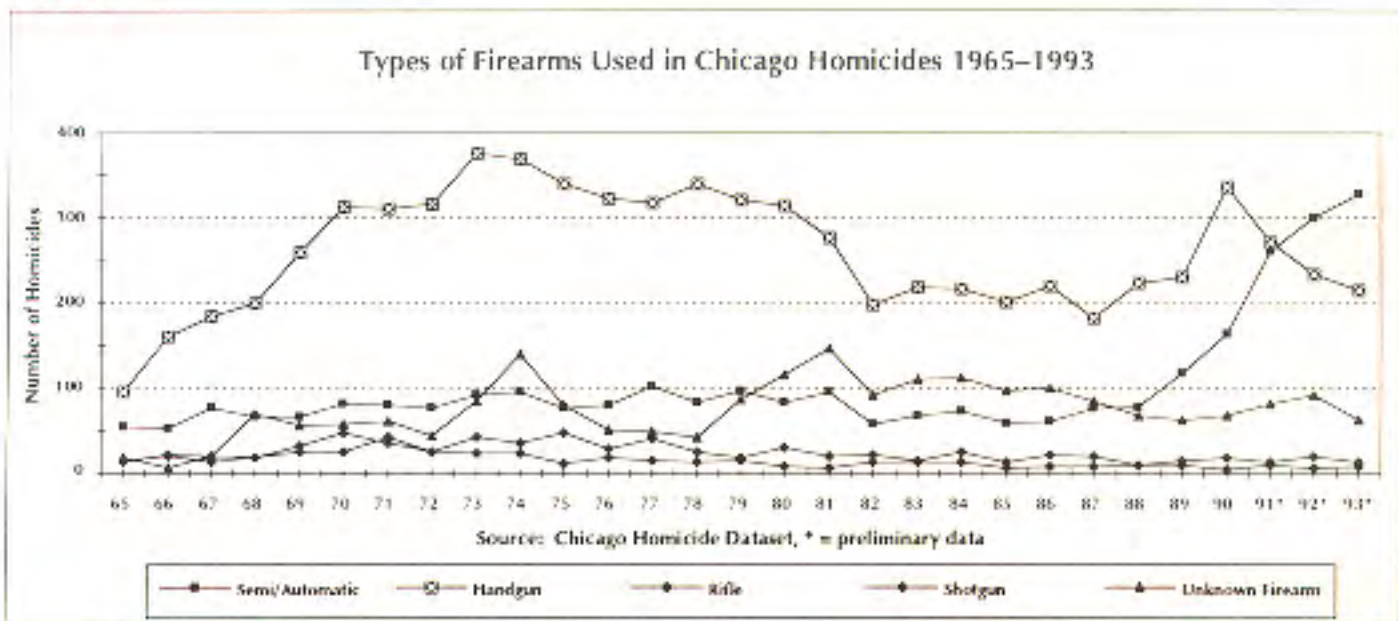
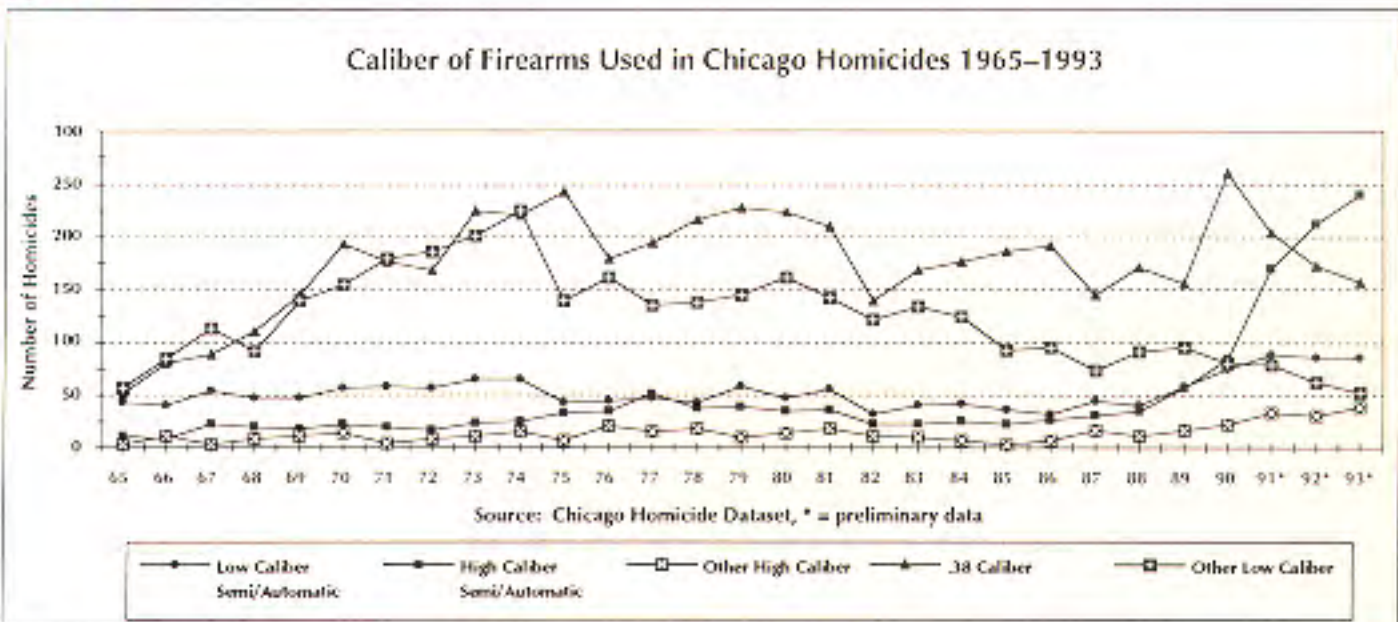


FIGURE 25



threefold increase. Firearm homicides in which the specific type of firearm was not known also increased sporadically during this period.¹¹ Homicides with other types of firearm did not increase. In contrast, the rapid increase in firearm homicides in recent years was specified by an increase in homicides committed with semi- or fully-automatic weapons. Though Chicago homicides with a non-automatic handgun jumped in 1990, they declined sharply thereafter. In contrast, homicides with a semi- or fully-automatic weapon climbed from 78 in 1988 to 328 in 1993—a 321 percent increase.

The story does not stop there. Dividing firearm homicide by caliber (Figure 25) shows that homicides committed with low caliber weapons (under .38) de-

clined steadily after 1974, due to a drop in low caliber revolver homicides from 142 in 1972 to 26 in 1993. During the same period, homicides with a .38 revolver fluctuated around a high level (about 175 per year) with a spurt past 250 in 1990. In contrast, homicides committed with an automatic or semi-automatic weapon or with a non-automatic high caliber (over .38) weapon accounted for the recent increase in homicide. The greatest increase was in homicides with a high caliber semi- or fully-automatic weapon, which fluctuated from 22 to 52 deaths a year between 1973 and 1988, but then escalated to 240 in 1993.

It is possible that these trends indicate a substitution in the weapon of choice for Chicago offenders and

FIGURE 26

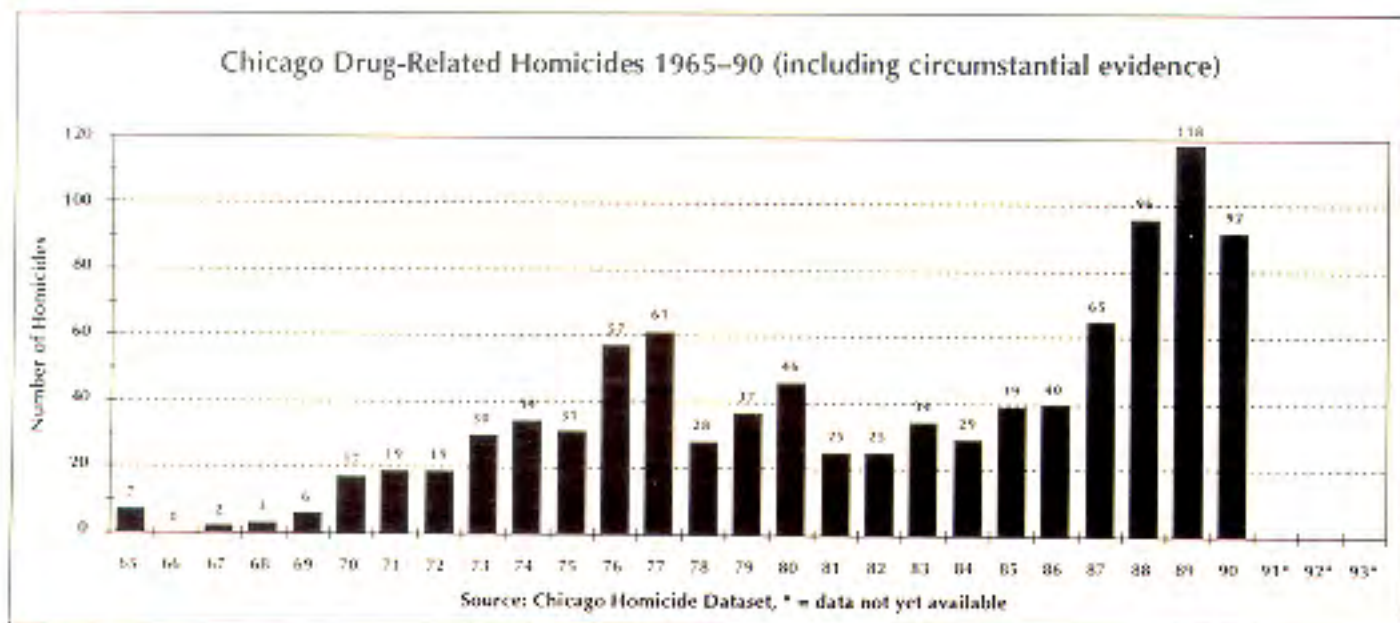
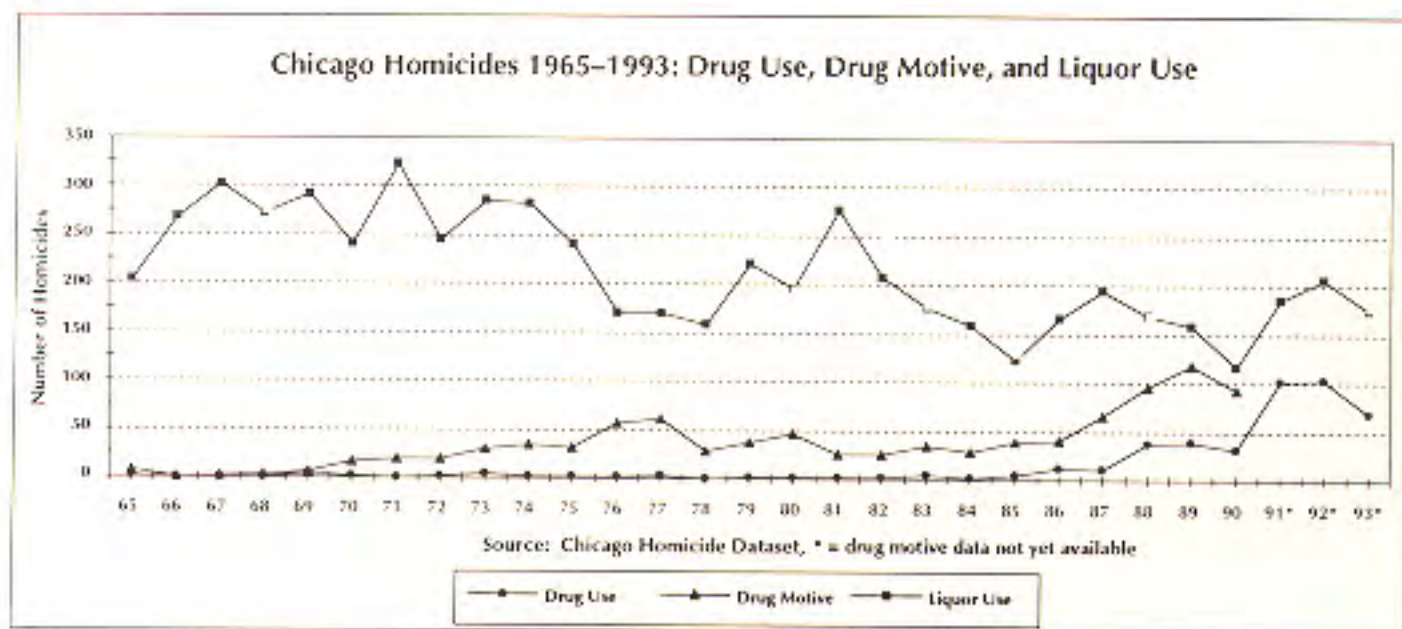


FIGURE 27



possibly a change in firearm availability. The 1990 spurt in homicides with a .38 revolver coincides with the beginning of the recent homicide escalation in Chicago and further coincides with the beginning of the battle over the crack market in some Chicago communities. The rapid decline in homicides with a .38 coupled with the rapid increase in homicides with a high caliber or semi- or fully-automatic weapon indicates, perhaps, that the firepower provided by a .38 was not sufficient, and the crack battle then became the mechanism for escalating the lethality of weaponry used in Chicago street gang confrontations and defense of drug markets. In addition, it may be an ominous sign for the future that, while many other types of Chicago homicide decreased in 1992 and 1993, homicides

with a high caliber weapon continued to climb, and those with a high caliber semi- or fully-automatic weapon climbed precipitously.

Trends in drug-/liquor-related homicide

Was the recent sharp increase in Chicago homicides related to an increase in drug-related or alcohol-related homicides? Preliminary trends indicate that, indeed, there was a sharp increase in drug-related homicides in Chicago after 1987, and that 1989 was a particularly high year (Figure 26).¹⁵ Specifically, the 1989 increase occurred in drug business homicides, which increased from nine in 1986 to 49 in 1989; drug arguments, which increased from two in 1986 to 19 in 1989; and homicides to acquire drugs, which increased

FIGURE 28

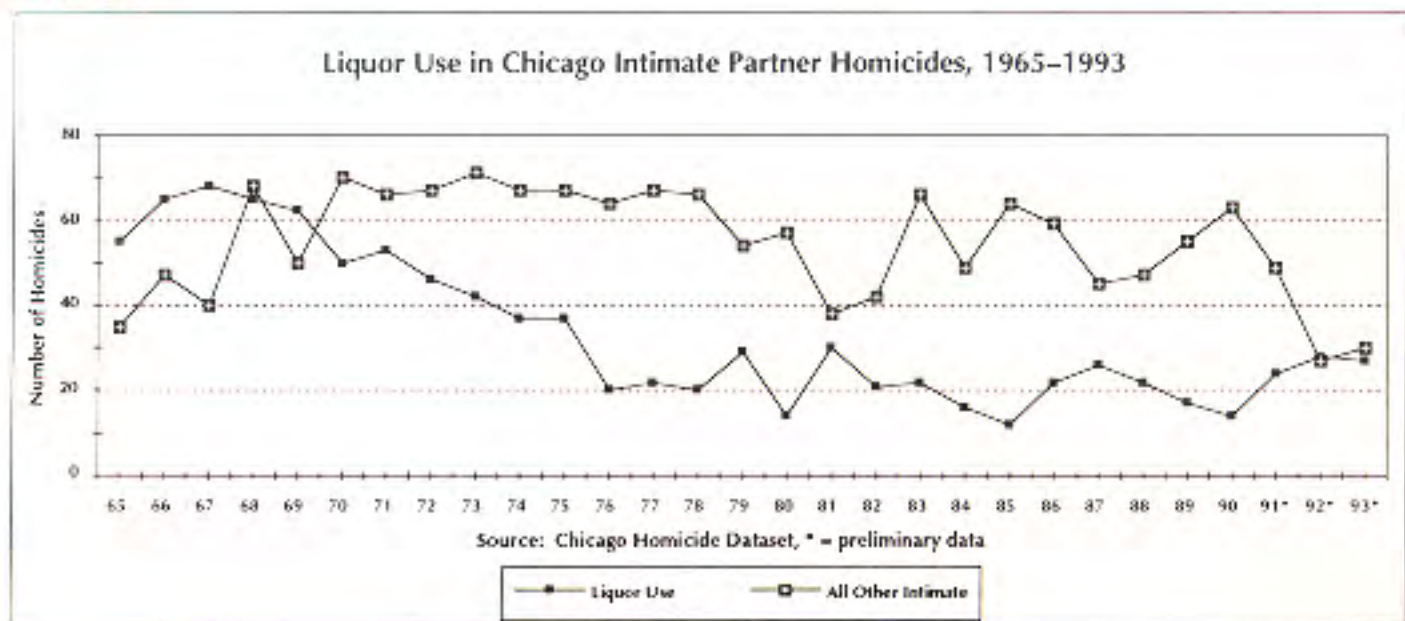
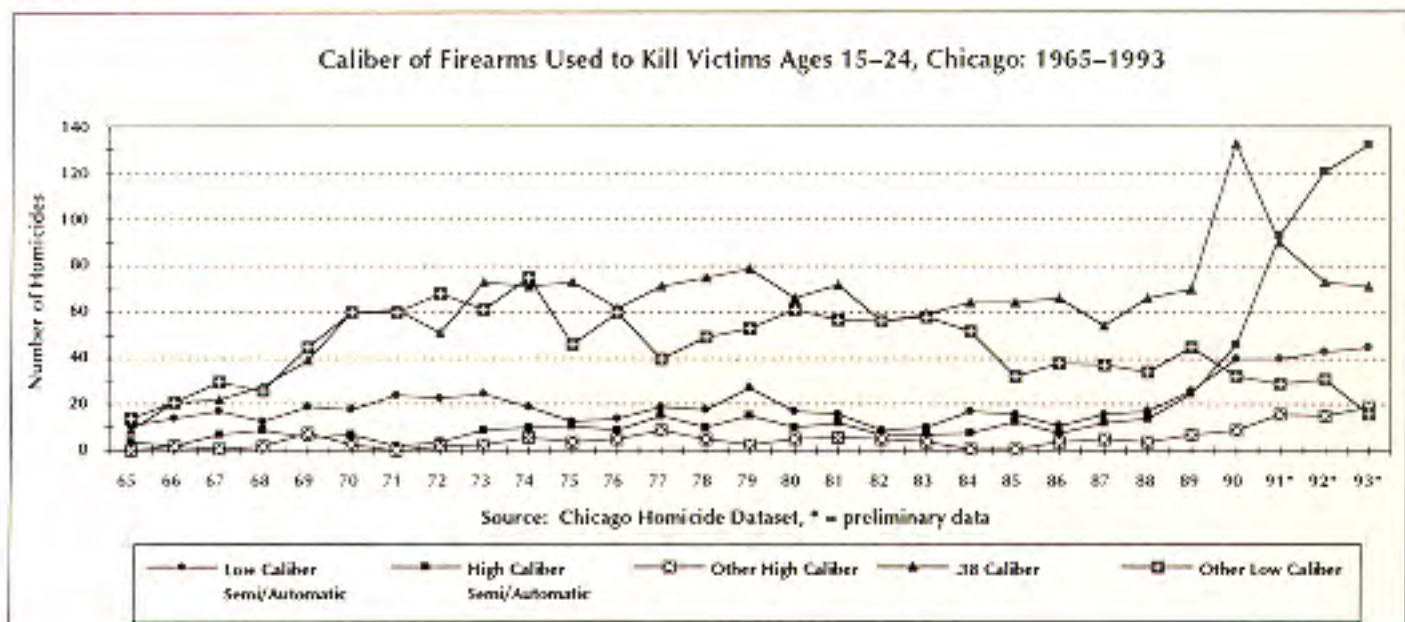


FIGURE 29



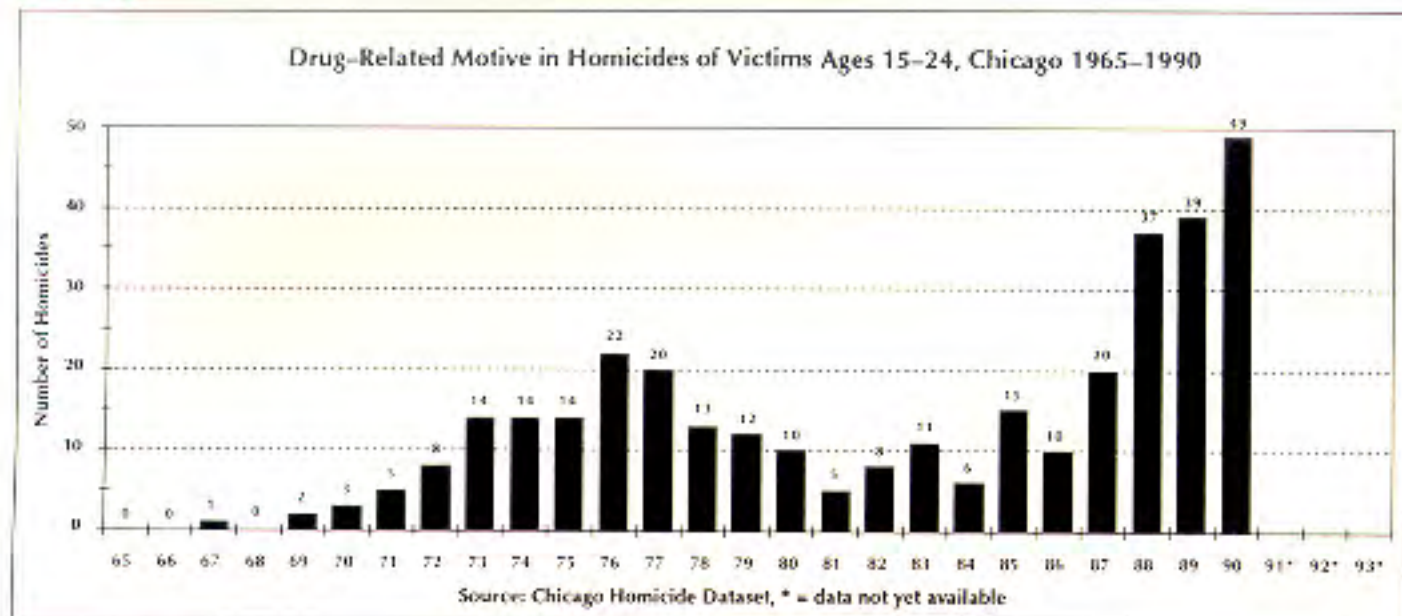
from zero in 1986 to 21 in 1989. Thus, although total instrumental homicides did not increase in Chicago in recent years (see Figure 14), those instrumental homicides with a drug motive did increase, from 12 in 1986 to 75 in 1989 and 48 in 1990.

The level of homicides involving drug use on the part of offender or victim was not high in 1990 but did increase in 1991 and 1992 (Figure 27). Preliminary data indicate that this increase occurred specifically in instrumental homicides (from four in 1990 to 46 in 1993). On the other hand, homicides involving alcohol use have fluctuated widely around a fairly steady level since 1982.¹⁶

Thus, preliminary data show that drug-motivated

homicides and homicides involving drug use both increased in the '90s but that homicides involving liquor use did not. However, trends in liquor use homicides did account for trends in one specific homicide syndrome, homicides of intimate partners (Figure 28). The decline in Chicago intimate partner homicides from 1967 to 1980 was specified by liquor use. Only intimate partner homicides in which one or both partners were drinking declined. This was true for all three racial/ethnic groups and regardless of whether the male or female partner was killed in the homicide. However, just as the specification of recent homicide trends by weapon type does not tell us why the increase occurred, so the specification of earlier intimate homicide trends by

FIGURE 30



liquor use does not tell us why these liquor-related homicides declined.

Summary

We have seen that the rapid increase in Chicago homicides in the late 1980s and early 1990s reflects an extremely sharp increase in the victimization risk of young non-Latino black males and that the increase occurred only in street gang-related homicides, and possibly in expressive confrontations outside of the family circle. These are the specific types of homicide of which teen-agers and young adults, especially males, are at much greater risk than other population groups. In addition, two situational factors, the weapon used and whether the incident was drug-related, were closely related to these trends.

The recent homicide escalation specifically affected young victims and occurred with homicides committed with high caliber or semi- or fully-automatic weapons. For victims aged 15 to 24, the increase in the numbers being killed with a high-caliber (semi-) automatic weapon was extremely rapid (Figure 29). From only 14 in 1988, the number of deaths rose more than ninefold to 132 in 1993. During the same period, homicides with other high-caliber weapons rose from four to 19, and homicides with low caliber (semi-) automatics rose from 17 to 45, for victims in this young adult age group. No other type of firearm homicide of young victims increased, except for a one-year spike in homicides with a .38 revolver. There were 133 homicides of young victims committed with a .38 in 1990 but only 71 by 1993. This is consistent with a recent study of street gang-related violence in Chicago (C.R. Block & R. Block, 1993), which found an increase in gang homicides but not in street gang assaults and con-

cluded that the lethality (deaths per incident) of assaults had been increasing. Similarly, homicides of these young adults were increasingly drug-related (Figure 30), with much of this increase due to the business of drugs. ■

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Notes

¹The research for this bulletin would not have been possible without the continuing help and cooperation of the Chicago Police Department and the support of the Joyce Foundation. We would also like to thank Patrick Baldwin, whose dedication and expertise were instrumental in the advancement of the Chicago Homicide Dataset in 1994, and Robert Weidner and Jonathon Harmenting, who also contributed to the Chicago Homicide Dataset Project.

²Beginning in 1970 with the collection of 1965 data and continuing today, the Crime Analysis Unit of the Chicago Police Department has assisted and advised Richard Block, Carolyn Block and others in the Chicago Homicide Dataset Project. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority has supported and maintained the Dataset since 1979. The Joyce Foundation currently is supporting collection and archiving of 1991-1994 data. Funding for earlier data collection and analysis was provided by the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Loyola University Chicago, the Ford Foundation, the University of Chicago, the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Institute of Mental Health. Data from 1965 through 1990 are available on CD-ROM from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data, Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research. For details of the dataset, see Block and Block (1993a).

³There is some evidence that trends in Chicago are similar to trends in other northern urban places (see Block, 1987a).

⁴*Latino* in this bulletin includes Mexican, Puerto Rican and "other" Latino groups. In some years, the police record distinguishes between Mexican, Puerto Rican and other Latino, but this usage changed from year to year. In this bulletin, we have aggregated the three categories to produce codes that are consistent throughout the 29 years: Latino, non-Latino black and non-Latino white.

⁵Because comparable population estimates are not available by race/ethnicity prior to the 1970 Census, rate figures in this bulletin do not include the 1960s. There are a number of anomalies and problems in the 1980 Census data for racial/ethnic groups (Passel & Word, 1987; Chilton & Sutton, 1986; Chilton, 1987), particularly affecting counts of non-Latino whites and Latinos. Additionally, there apparently was a large undercount in the 1990 Census, especially in black neighborhoods (see R. Block, 1994); this may affect recent trends in rates. In this bulletin, we use the most recently corrected population estimates available, from the City of Chicago Department of Planning. We greatly appreciate the help of Chicago demographer Marie Bousfield.

⁶Note that this may be due in part to undercounted 1990 population data.

⁷Offender-based rates in this bulletin are calculated by counting all offenders known to the police (whether or not arrested). For example, an offender who commits suicide would be counted. The number of male offenders (Figure 4) is, generally, greater than the number of male victims (Figure 2) because there may be more than one offender per incident and because men kill women more than women kill men.

⁸The higher risk of becoming an offender for young people is due, in part, to the tendency of teenagers to do everything in groups, even commit homicide (Zimring, 1979, 1981). Though the number of young offenders may be high compared to the number of older offenders, the number of people victimized by young offenders may not be proportionately high. For a detailed discussion, see C.R. Block (1993) and R. Block and C.R. Block (1993:73).

⁹The offender's *intended* victim or *intended* goal is the relevant consideration for homicide syndrome categorization, even when the actual consequences differ from the intended consequences. For example, if a bystander instead of the in-

tended victim were killed in a street gang-motivated altercation, the homicide syndrome still would be "street gang."

¹²In the analysis reported here, the occasional incident involving both expressive and instrumental aspects (for example, an argument in which money was stolen) and where it could not be determined which was the primary motive, was counted as instrumental, and cases of rape-robbery-homicide and rape-burglary-homicide were counted as rape homicide.

¹³*Non-family Expressive* homicides are the total of expressive homicides between strangers and between friends, neighbors and other acquaintances.

¹⁴The three personal confrontations between members of the same street gang that were not motivated by the gang were included in this category.

¹⁵Figure 16 includes data through 1990, because the count of expressive homicides for 1991 to 1993 is still preliminary. However, data currently available for other homicide syndromes through 1993 show that these percents are the same for intimate partner, street gang, sexual assault and child abuse homicides, and drop to 17 percent for instrumental homicides. *Mystery* homicides are cases in which there is no information as to motive.

¹⁶The spurts in the numbers of "unknown" firearm type in certain years may be due in part to the large number of cases in those years, which creates an unusually heavy load of cases for firearm investigation and testing.

¹⁷The Chicago Homicide Dataset contains information to measure separately and distinguish between 1) liquor use by participants, 2) drug use by participants, and 3) drug-related motive for the incident. In a drug-related motive incident, there was positive evidence that drugs formed a motivation or cause of the incident, including the business of drugs (a dealer putting out a contract on another dealer; a fight over control of a drug market), an argument over drugs (such as an argument over possession or quality), acquiring drugs (robbery of drugs or robbery to get money to buy drugs), or other types of drug involvement (such as a baby starving to death because the parents were high). Incidents in which there was circumstantial, but not positive, evidence

Research Bulletin

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority publishes research bulletins on topics of interest to criminal justice professionals, researchers and the public.

This bulletin was written by Authority research analysts Carolyn Rebecca Block and Antigone Christakos. An earlier version was published in the Proceedings of the 1994 meeting of the Homicide Research Working Group.

It was edited and illustrated by Sharon Bond and Ben Hulse. Publication design by Ben Hulse.

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that drugs were a motive, such as a known dealer being found dead with no other evidence, were coded in a separate category.

¹⁸Homicides involving both drug use and liquor use are included twice in this graph, under both "liquor use" and "drug use."



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**Updated Graphs
Major Trends in Chicago Homicide: 1965-1995**

by

Carolyn Rebecca Block
Christine Martin

Statistical Analysis Center

January 2, 1997

Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, compiled and maintained by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority and Loyola University Chicago with the close cooperation and assistance of the Crime Analysis Unit of the Chicago Police Department. The current analysis was supported in part by the Joyce Foundation.

Note: The attached figures are updated versions of the figures in the September 1995 Research Bulletin *Major trends in Chicago homicide: 1965-1994*. If you would like a copy of the report, please contact one of the authors at the above phone number.

The Chicago Homicide Dataset: An Overview

The Chicago Homicide Dataset, one of the largest and most detailed datasets on violence ever collected in the United States, contains information on every homicide in police records from 1965 to 1994 – over 100 variables and nearly 23,000 homicides. Unburdened by many of the limitations inherent in national statistics (the Supplementary Homicide Reports of the UCR), the Chicago Homicide Dataset is organized so that questions about victims, offenders, or incidents (and inter-relationships between them) can be answered. For example, it is possible to conduct an analysis of the risk of death and the risk of becoming an offender for a specific type of homicide (such as street gang-related, spousal, or instrumental), for specific racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups, and within specific neighborhoods, and to follow these patterns for 30 years.

This unique set of data has been compiled over many years by Carolyn Rebecca Block of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority and Richard L. Block of Loyola University Chicago, working in close cooperation with the Chicago Police Department. Initially, the data collection was established by Richard Block and Franklin Zimring of the University of Chicago Law School, working with the Chicago Police Department. Margo Wilson and Martin Daly of McMaster University also have contributed to data collection, and numerous researchers and policy makers have used the data for policy analysis or causal modeling. Since 1979, the Chicago Homicide Dataset has been maintained by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Support for the Chicago Homicide Project has been provided over the years by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago and the University of Chicago Law School under grants from the National Institute of Justice, Ford Foundation, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Mental Health, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, and the Joyce Foundation. The 1965 through 1994 dataset has been deposited in the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), University of Michigan, and will soon be accessible on the Internet and available for purchase from the Archive. The 1965 through 1990 dataset is currently available from the Archive, and is contained in the National Institute of Justice Violence Data CD-ROM. An updated edition of the NIJ Violence Data CD-ROM, currently under production, will contain the Chicago Homicide Data through 1994.

Recent reports based on the Chicago Homicide Dataset include *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide: 1965-1994*, and *Intimate Partner Homicide in Chicago over 29 Years*. A related project, "Early Warning System for Street Gang Violence Crisis Areas," is combining the homicide data with nonlethal street gang data and community information, and using computer mapping to identify potential neighborhood crisis areas, areas that are at high risk for suffering a spurt of serious violence and homicide, while there is still time to intervene and save lives.

Suggested Attribution (for tables, figures, maps, etc.):

Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, and Loyola University Chicago.

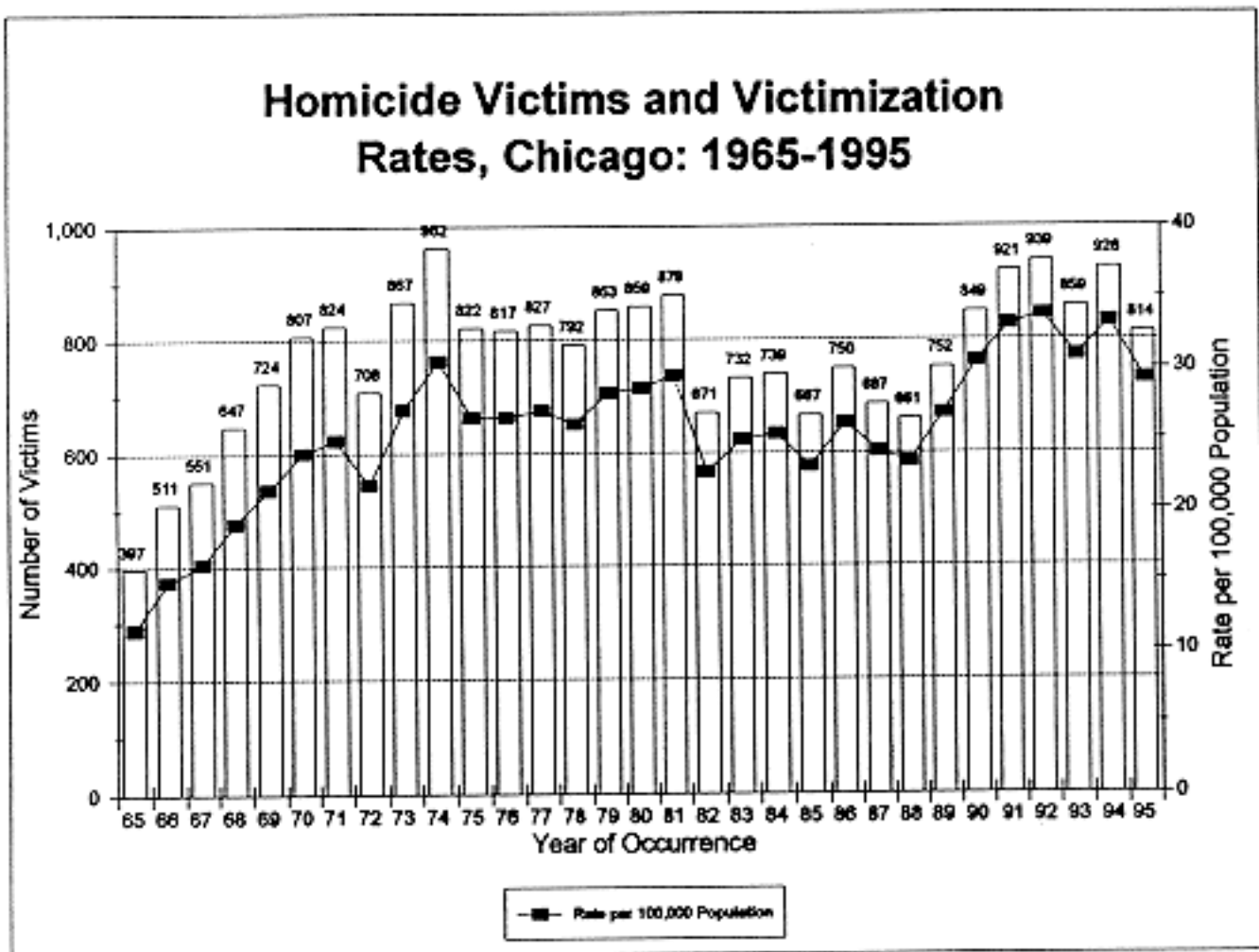
THE CHICAGO HOMICIDE PROJECT: A SHORT HISTORY

The Chicago Homicide Dataset was established by Frank Zimring and Richard Block, who collected data from 1965 to 1978 under a series of grants to the University of Chicago Law School from the Ford Foundation and the National Institute of Mental Health. In 1984, under a grant from the Bureau of Justice Statistics to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (project director: Carolyn Rebecca Block), three years were added to the data (1979 to 1981), the years from 1971 to 1978 were updated, and a comprehensive codebook to the total dataset was published. Data from 1982 through 1989 were added to the file in 1989 and 1990, supported by a grant from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation to MacMaster University (co-directors: Margo Wilson, Martin Daly, Richard Block and Carolyn Block). At the same time, identification problems with 1965 to 1970 data were resolved, making it possible to clean and update those cases, and a number of variables -- such as the Drug Use and Drug-Related variables, specific circumstances of domestic altercations, and variables indicating Expressive versus Instrumental motive -- were tested, checked for coder reliability, and coded or recoded consistently throughout the 25 years.

In 1991 and 1992, under a grant from the National Institute of Justice to Loyola University of Chicago (co-directors: Richard Block and Carolyn Block), 1990 data were collected, the entire 26 year/20,000 case dataset was geocoded, the dataset was combined from smaller yearly files into one large file, and an NIJ *Research in Brief* on street gang-related homicide was written. In 1993, as part of a project on convenience store violence organized by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Authority staff cleaned and updated the location data for all years.

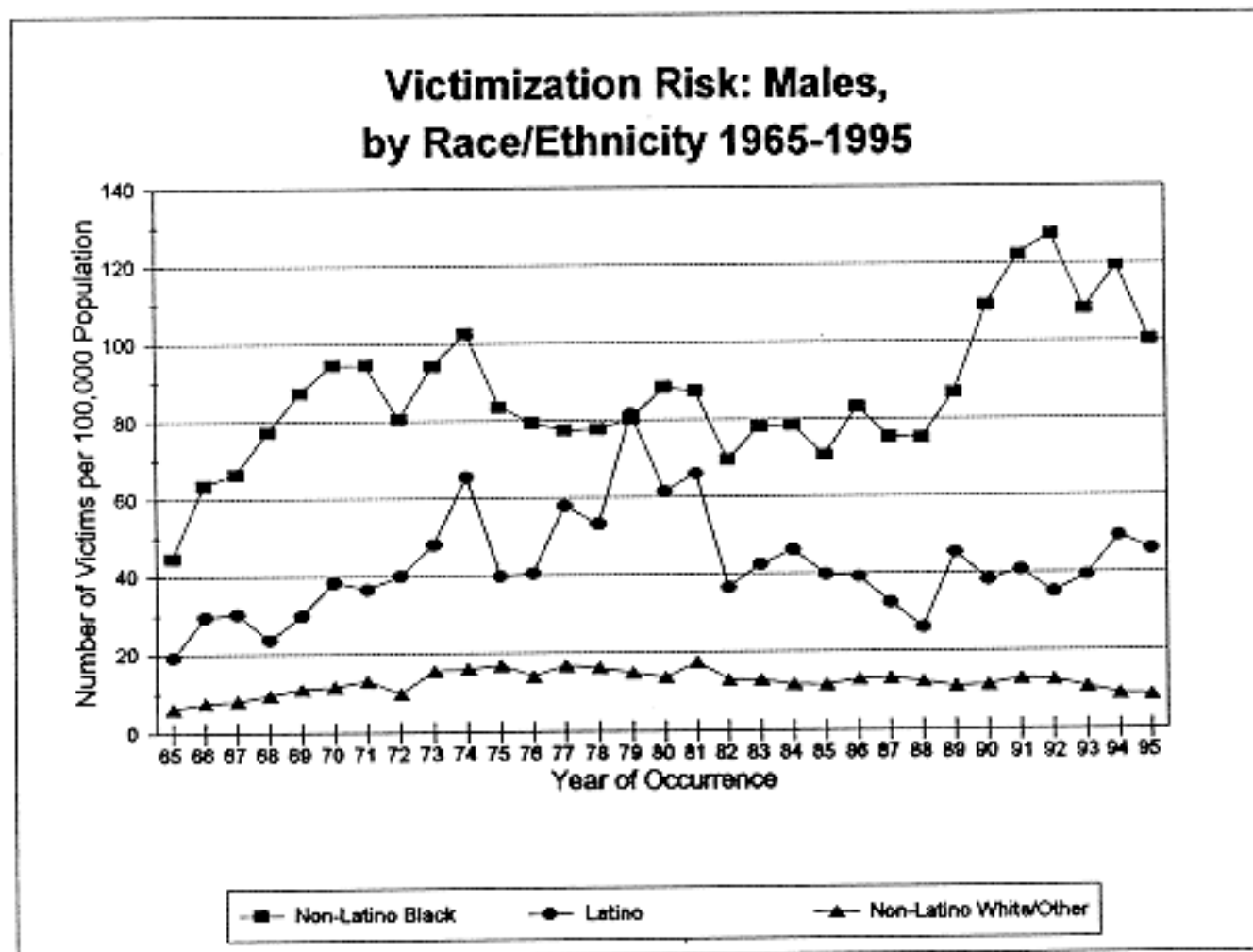
Under a 1994-1995 grant from the Joyce Foundation to the Authority, staff have cleaned and updated all of the data for 1965 to 1990, completed detailed documentation, added data from 1991 to 1994, archived the entire dataset, and written a completely revised codebook. In addition, project staff have developed an offender-based file, which has made the calculation of rates much easier and more accurate, and written two summary reports, a review of "Major Trends" over 30 years, and a detailed analysis of the intimate violence cases.

Figure 1



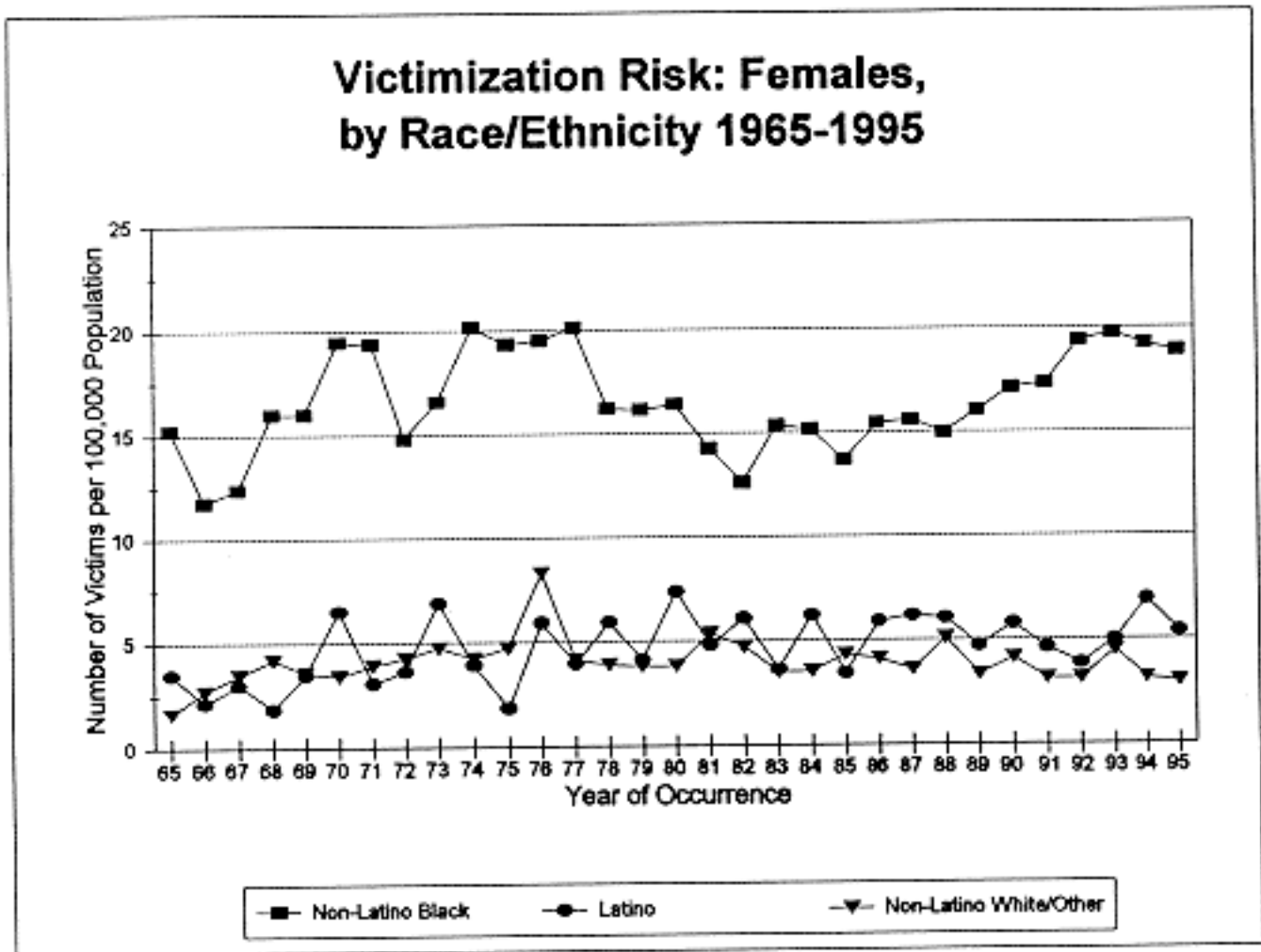
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 2



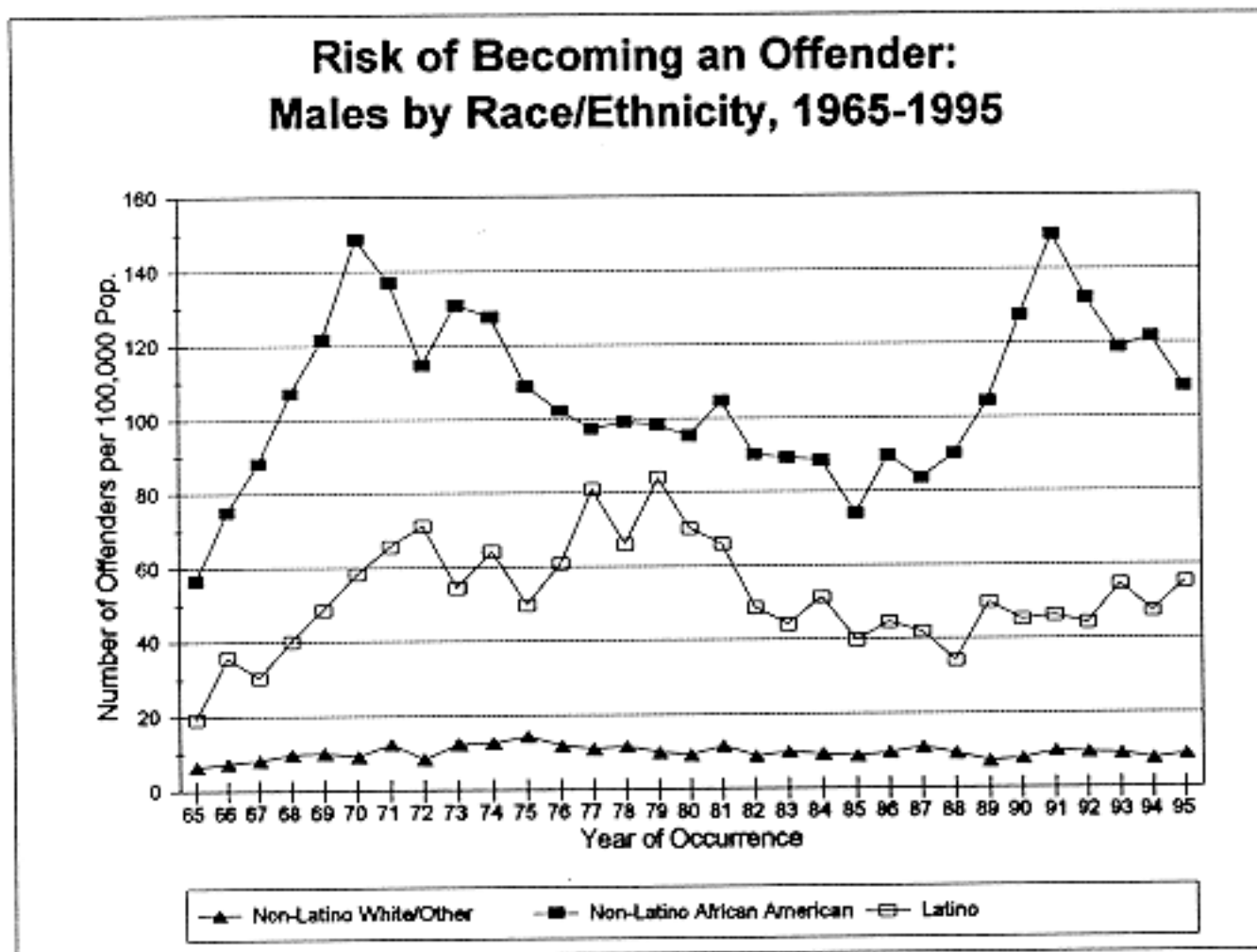
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 3



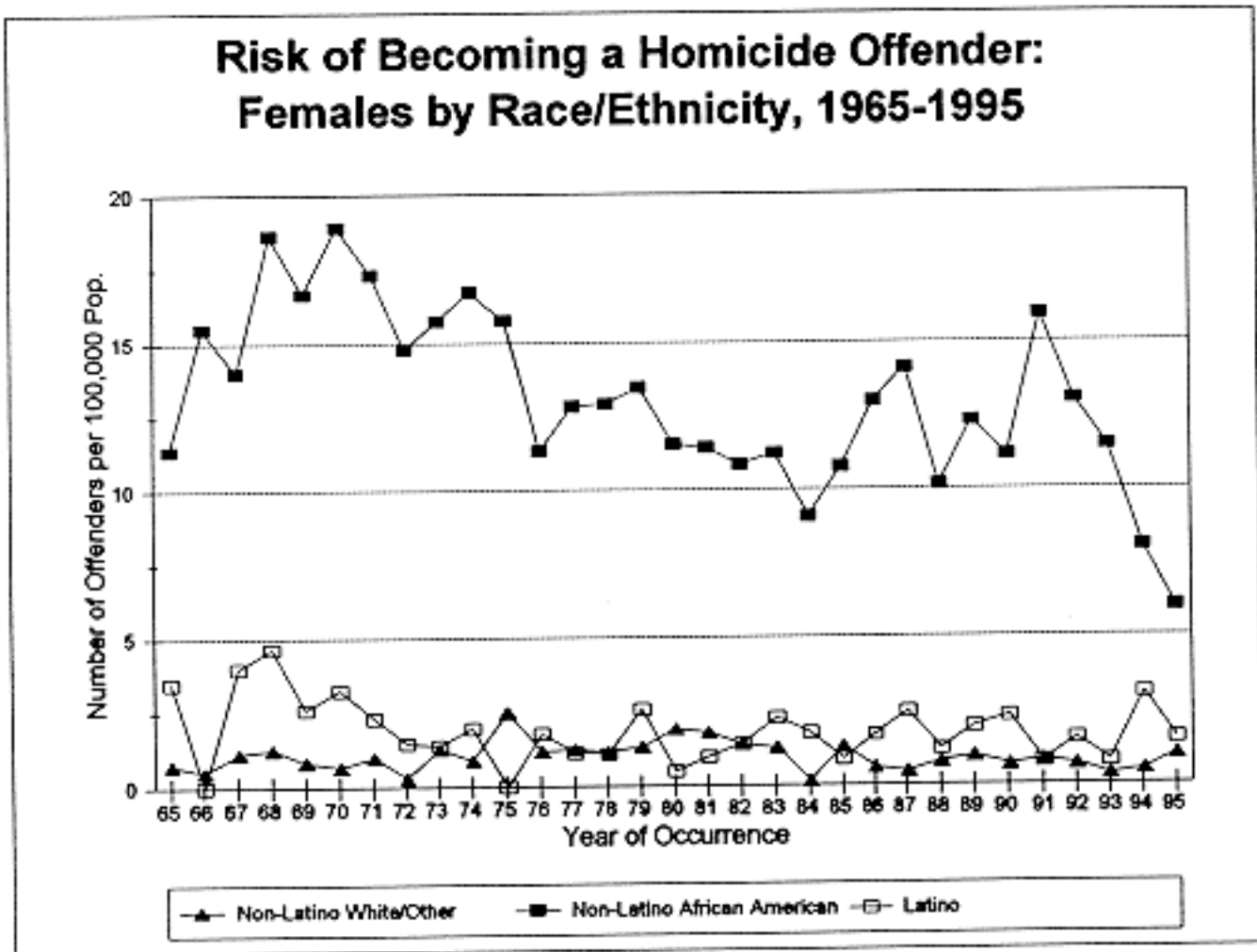
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 4



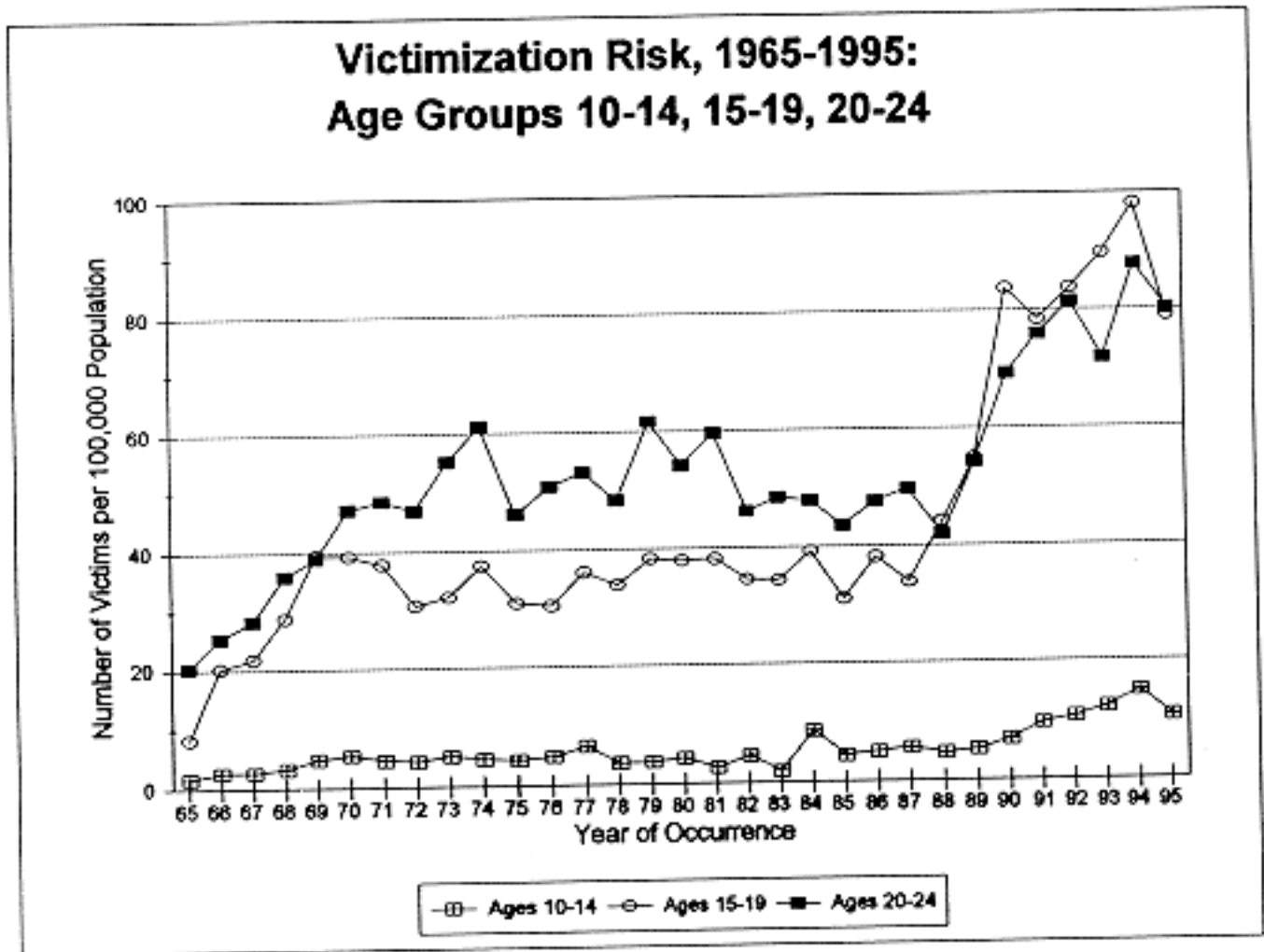
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 5



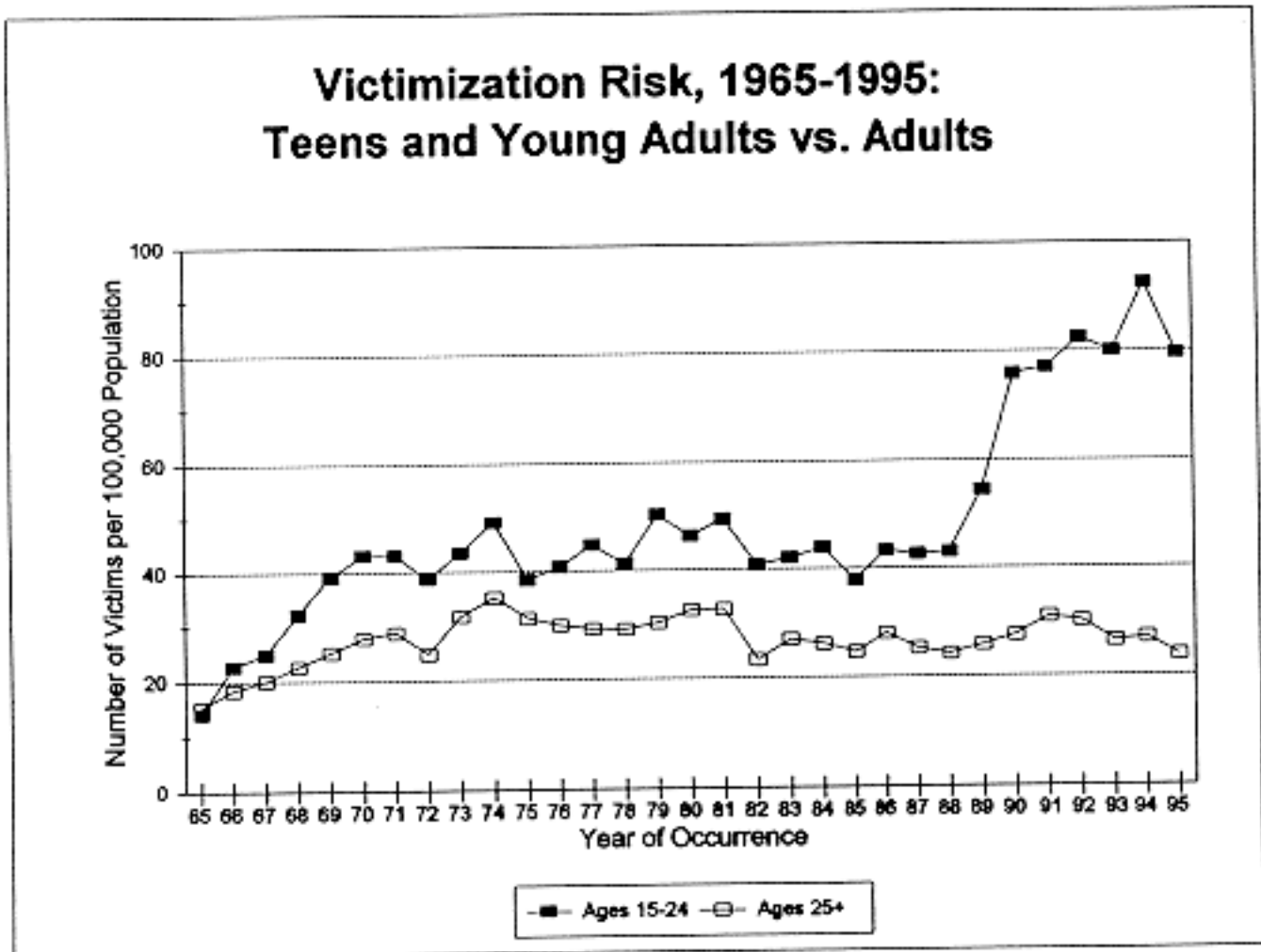
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 8



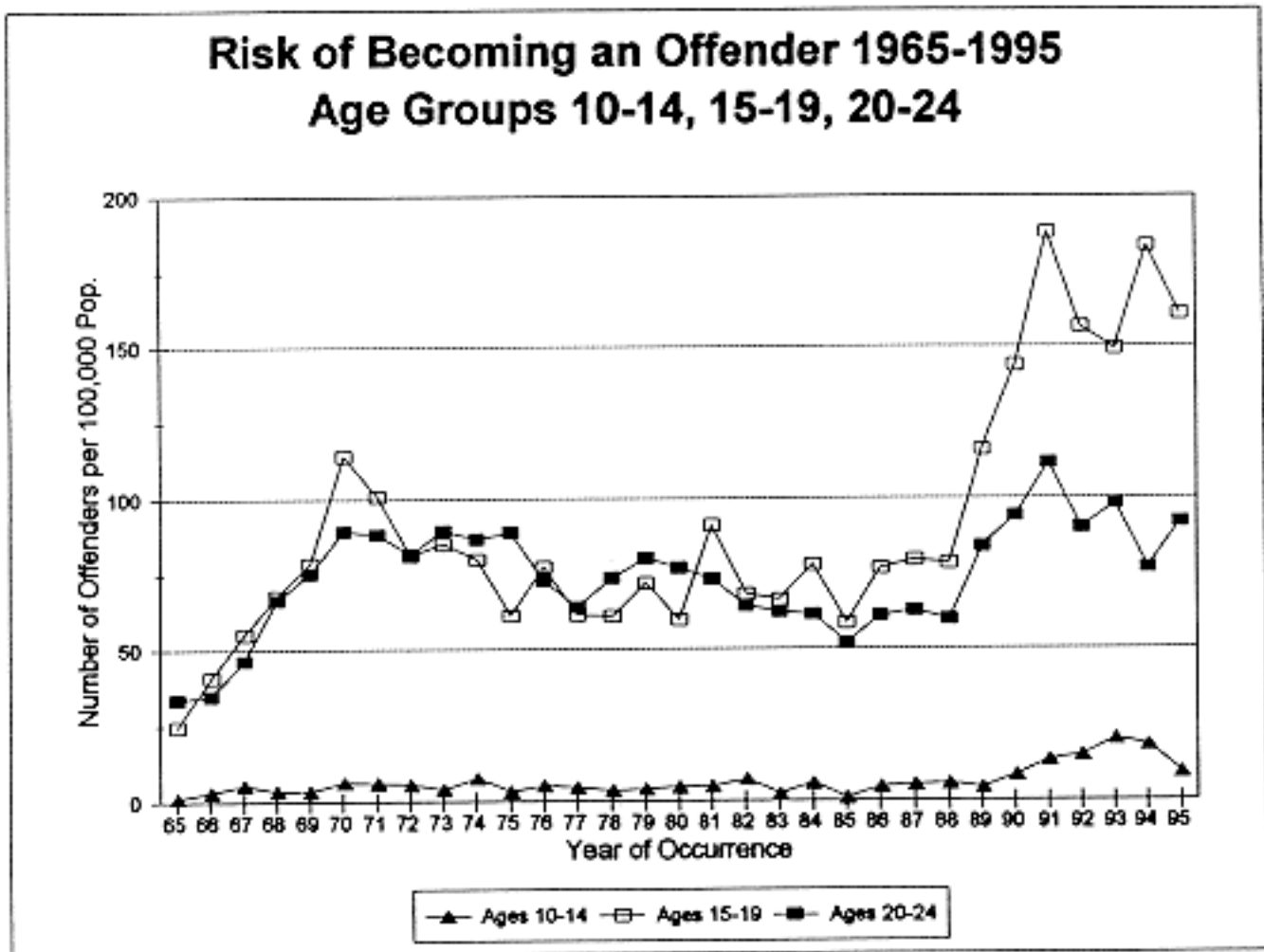
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 7



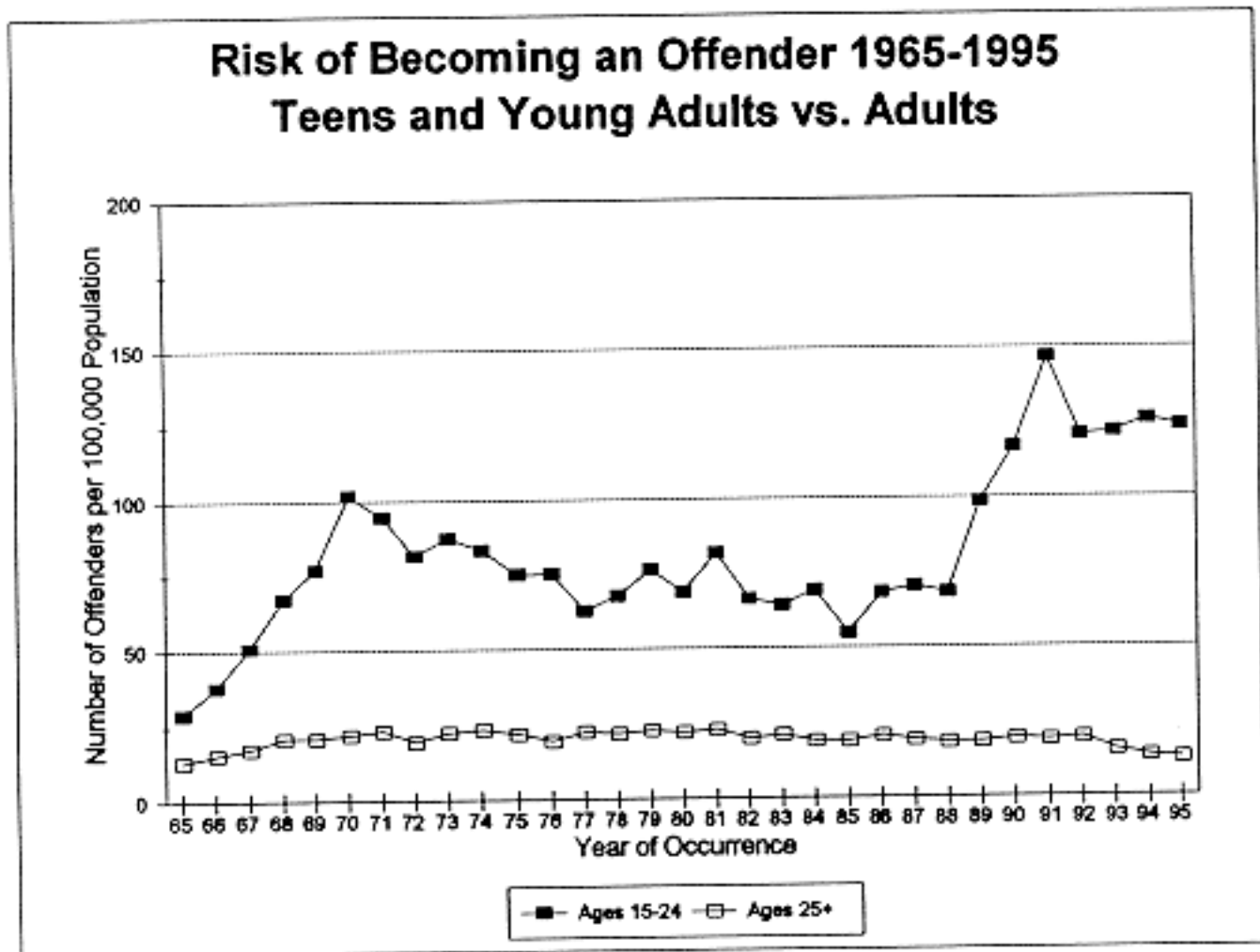
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 8



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyole University Chicago.

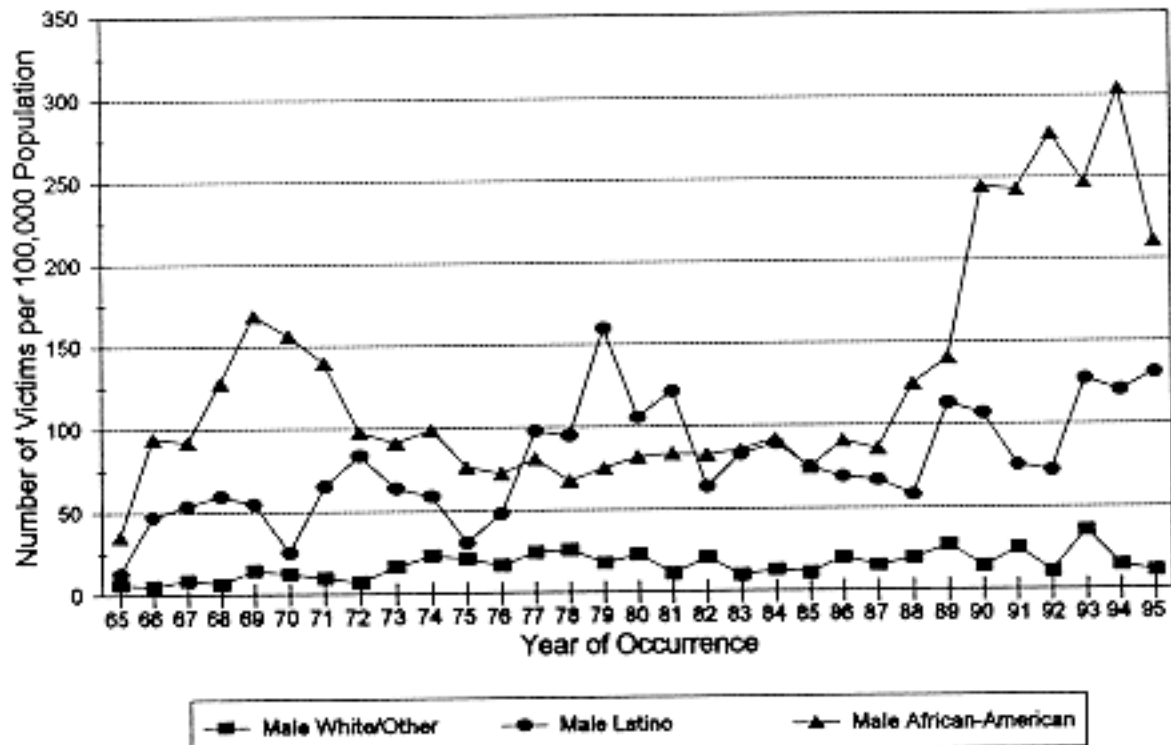
Figure 9



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

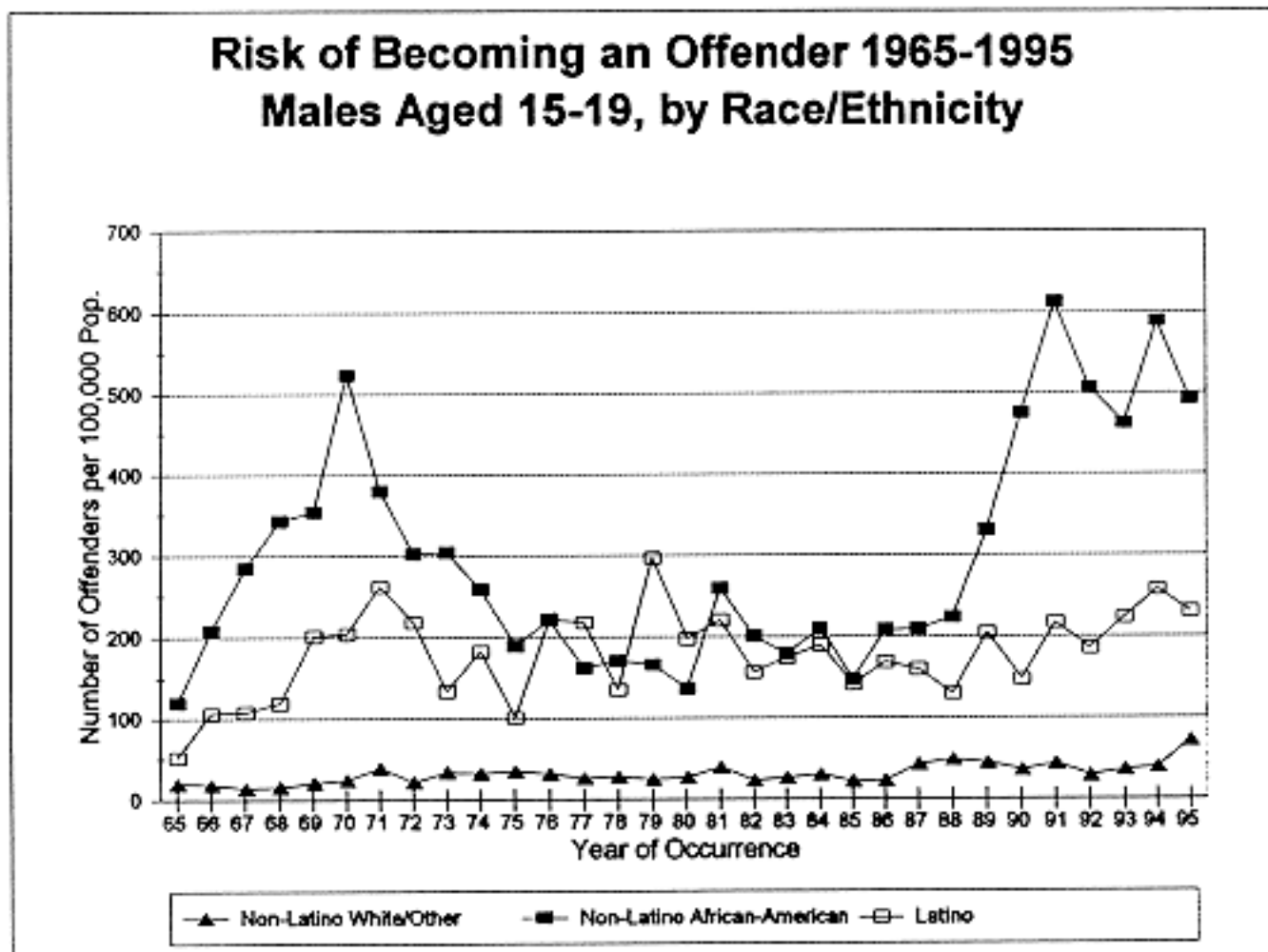
Figure 10

Victimization Risk: Teens Aged 15-19 Males, by Race/Ethnicity 1965-1995



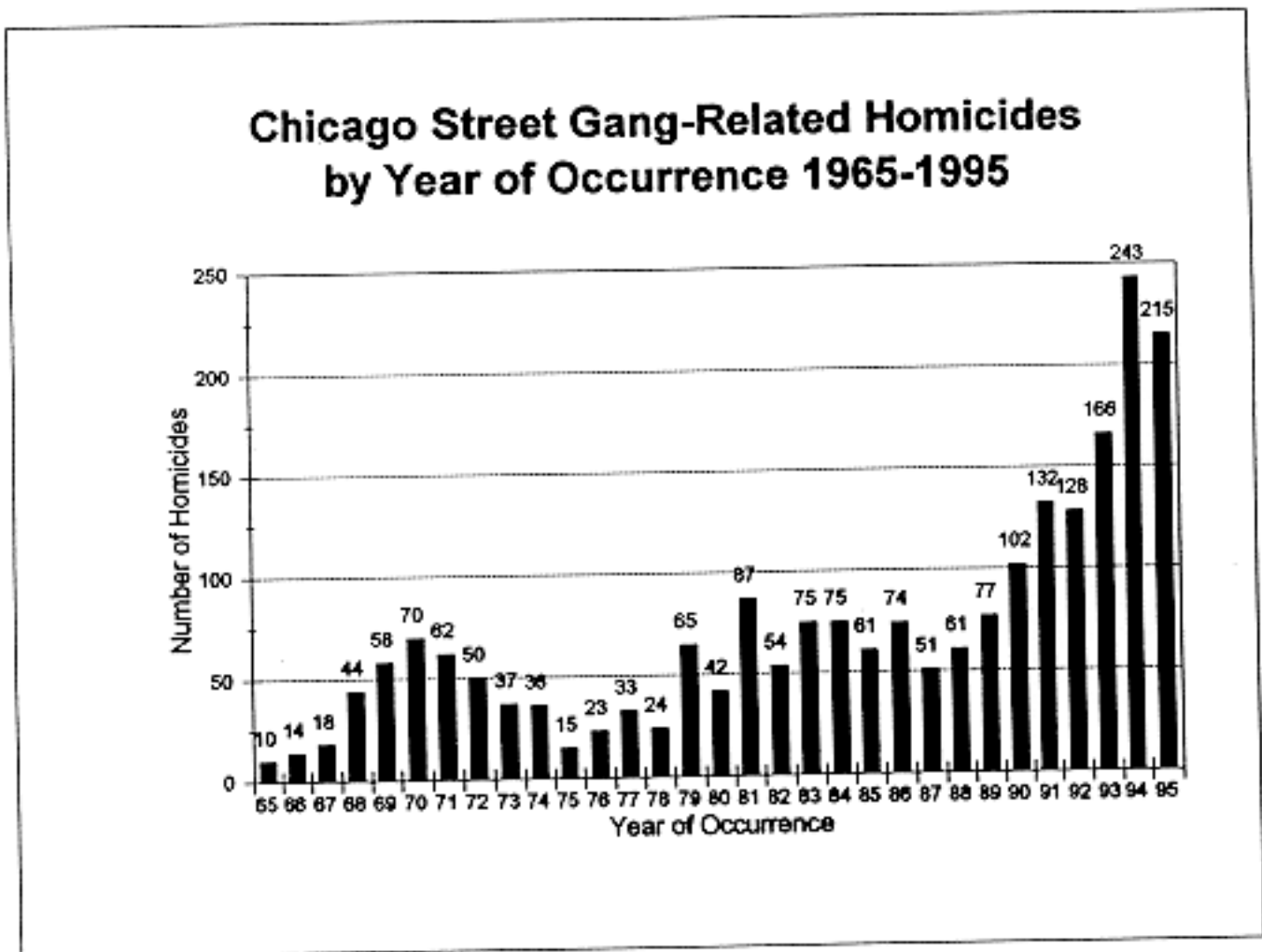
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 11



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 12



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 13

Chicago Non-Family Expressive Homicide by Year of Occurrence 1965-1995

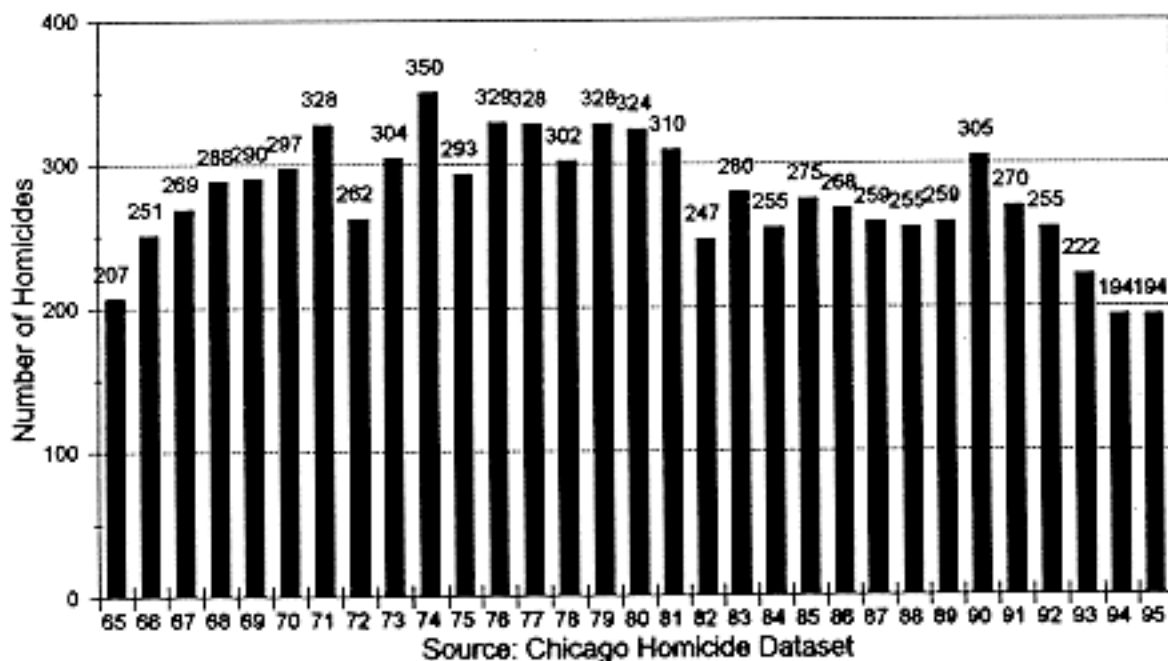
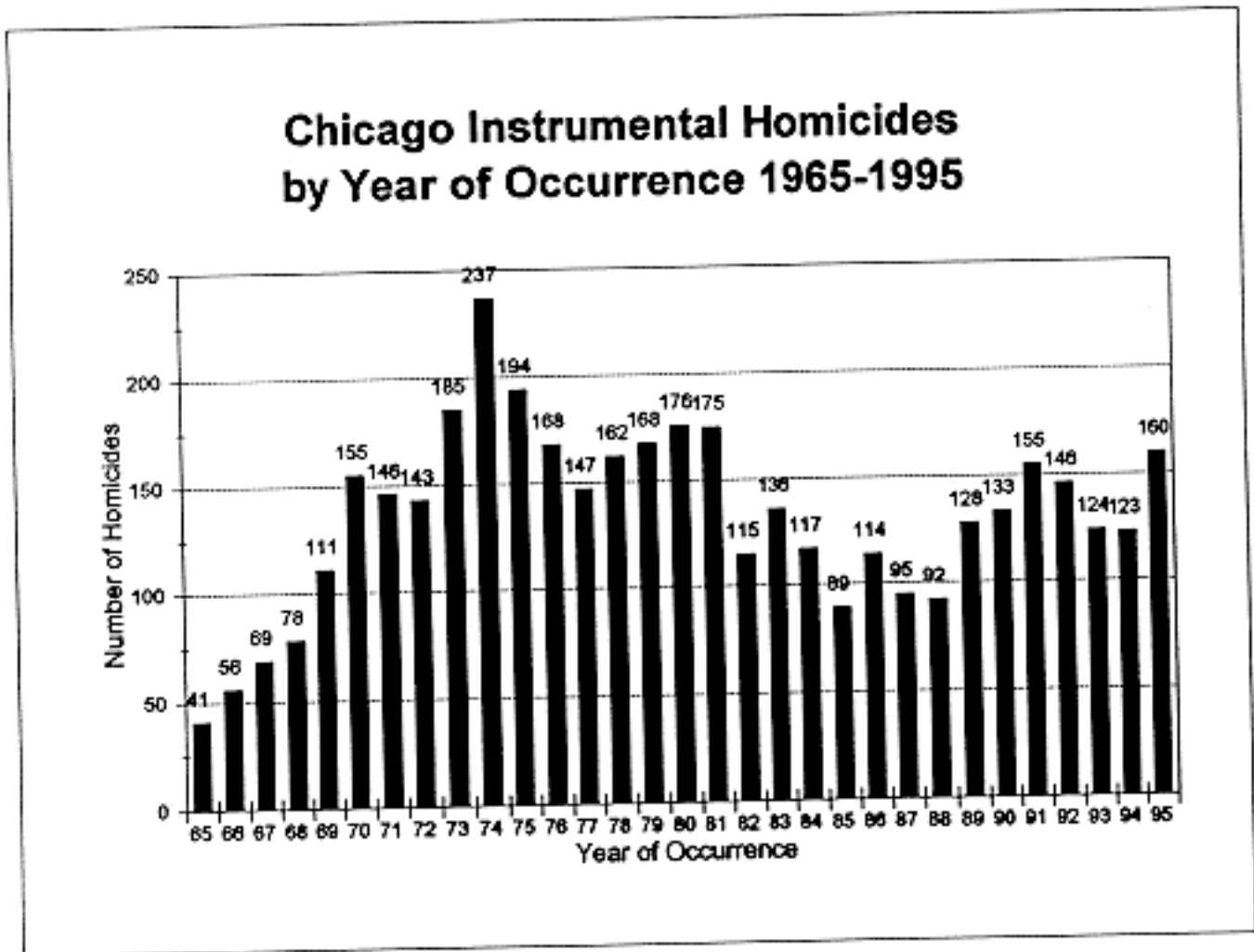


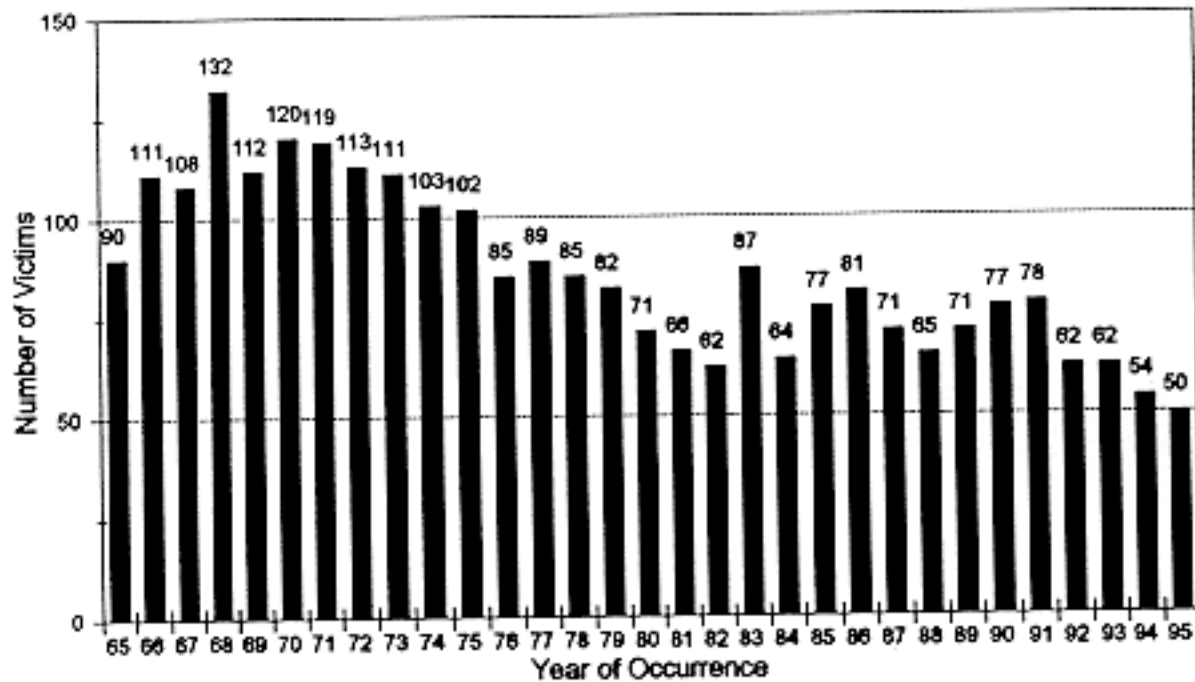
Figure 14



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

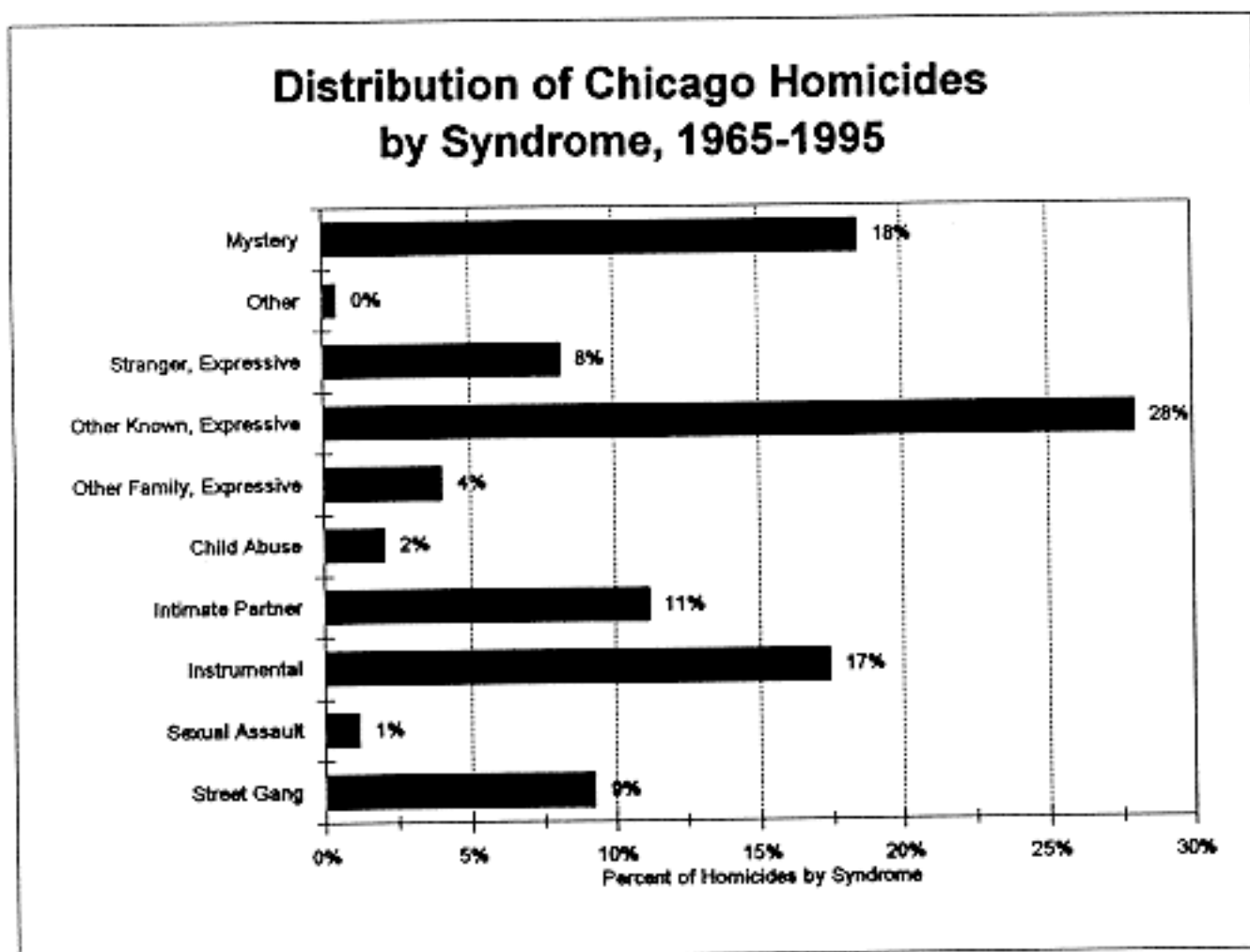
Figure 15

Chicago Intimate Partner Homicides by Year of Occurrence 1965-1995



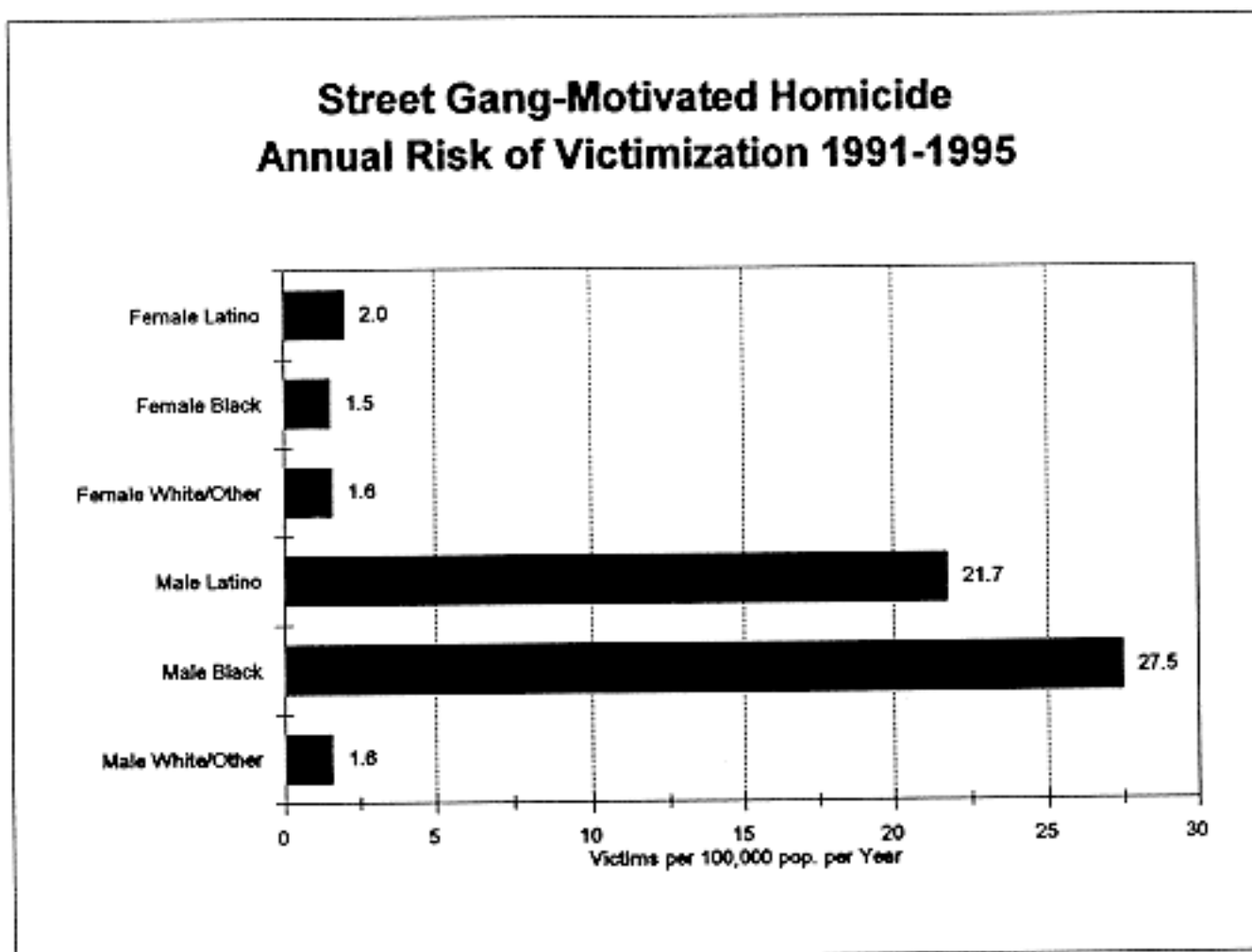
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 18



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

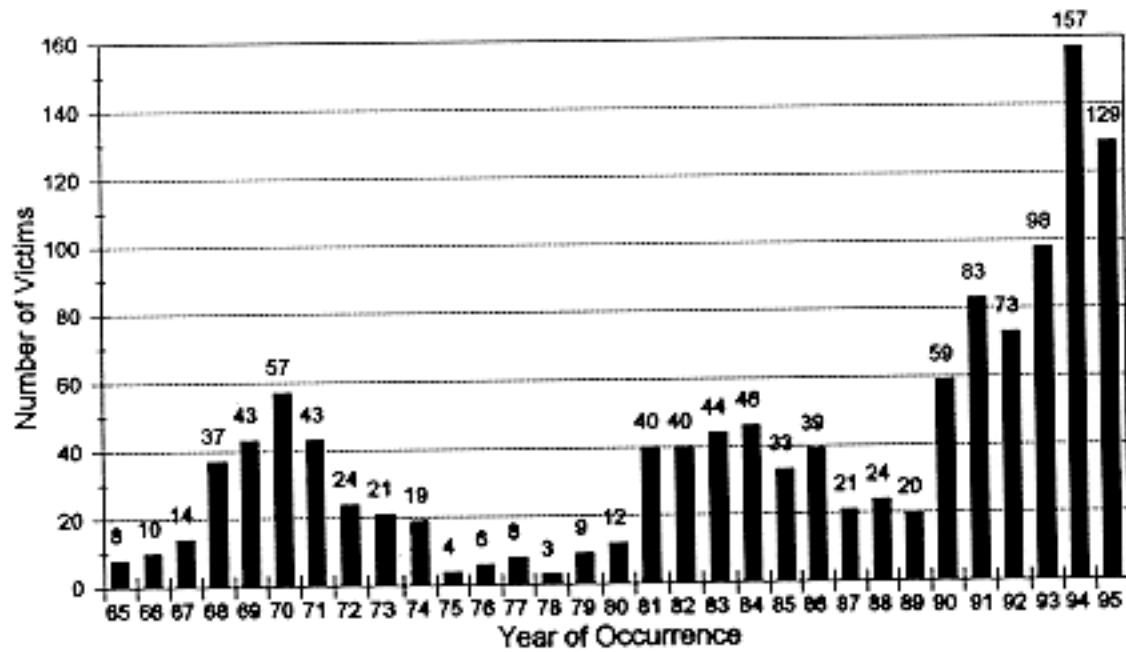
Figure 17



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 18

Chicago Street Gang-Related Homicides Male African-American Victims 1965-95



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 19

Chicago Street Gang-Related Homicides Male Latino Victims 1965-1995

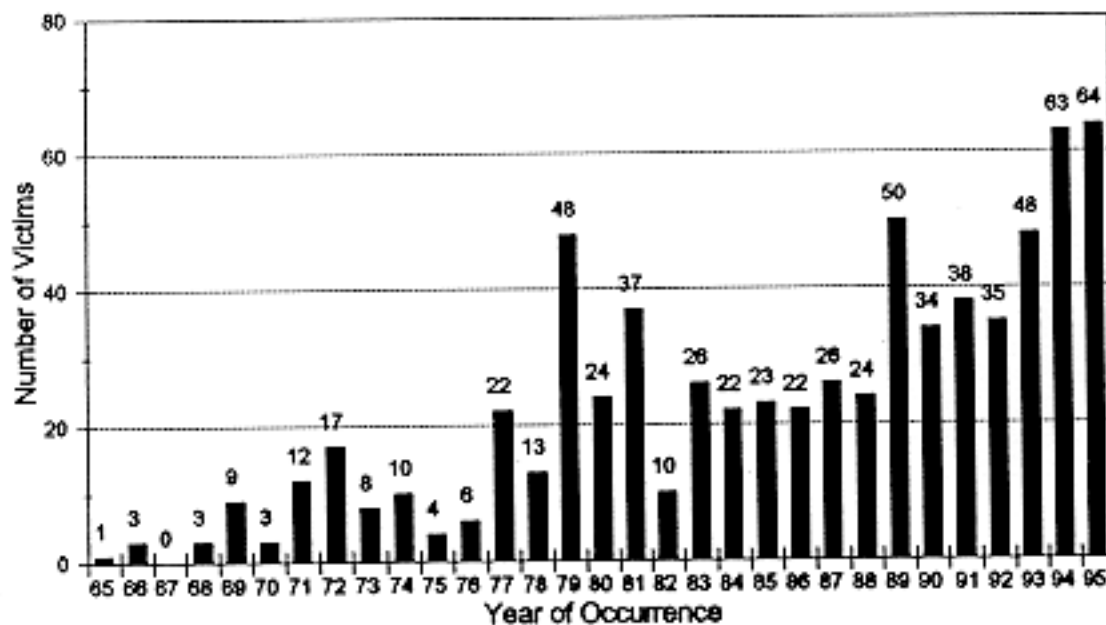


Figure 20

Chicago Homicide Victims Killed in an Instrumental Attack 1965-1995

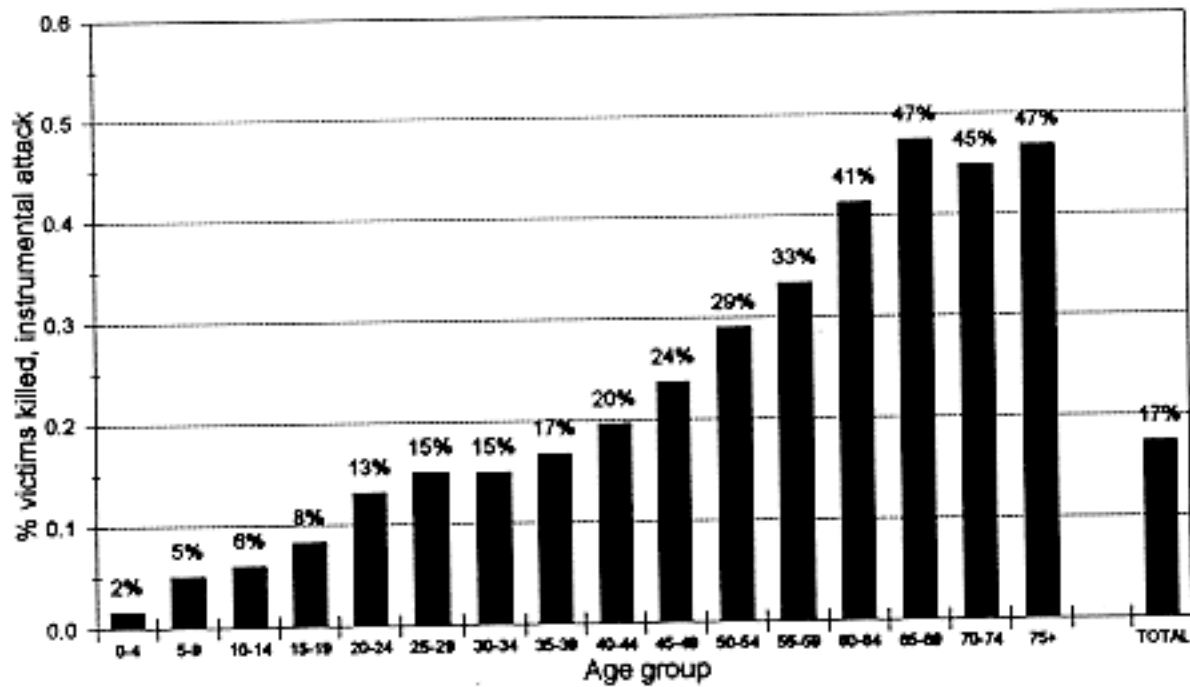
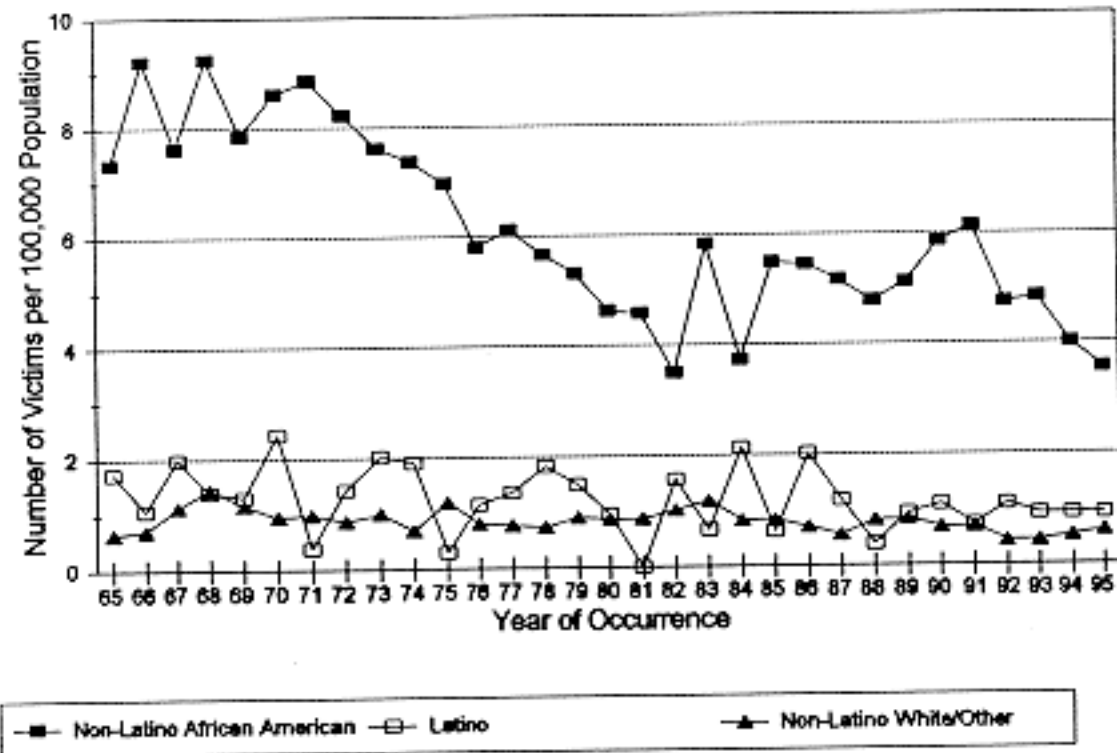


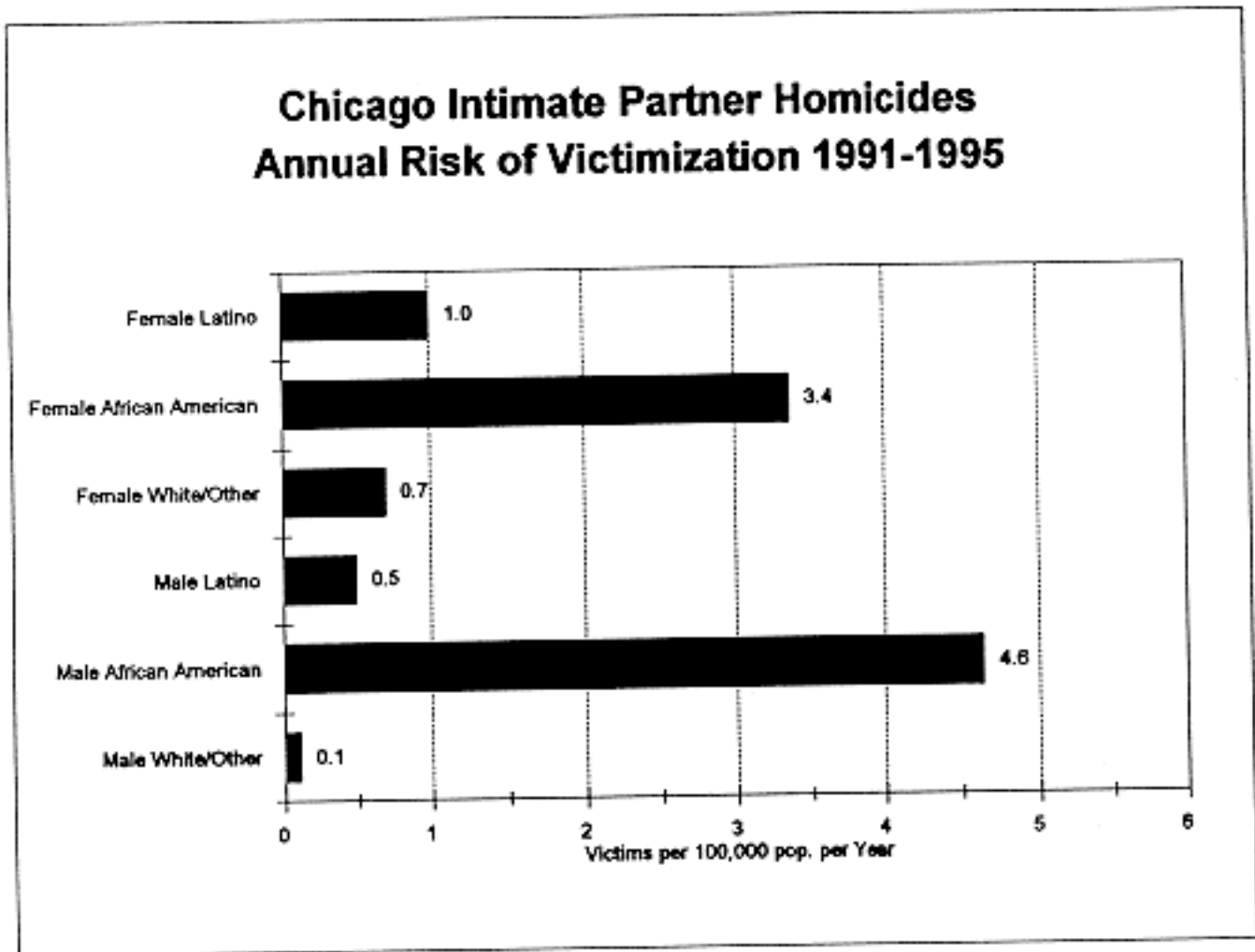
Figure 21

Intimate Partner Homicides 1965-1995 Victimization Risk, by Race/Ethnicity



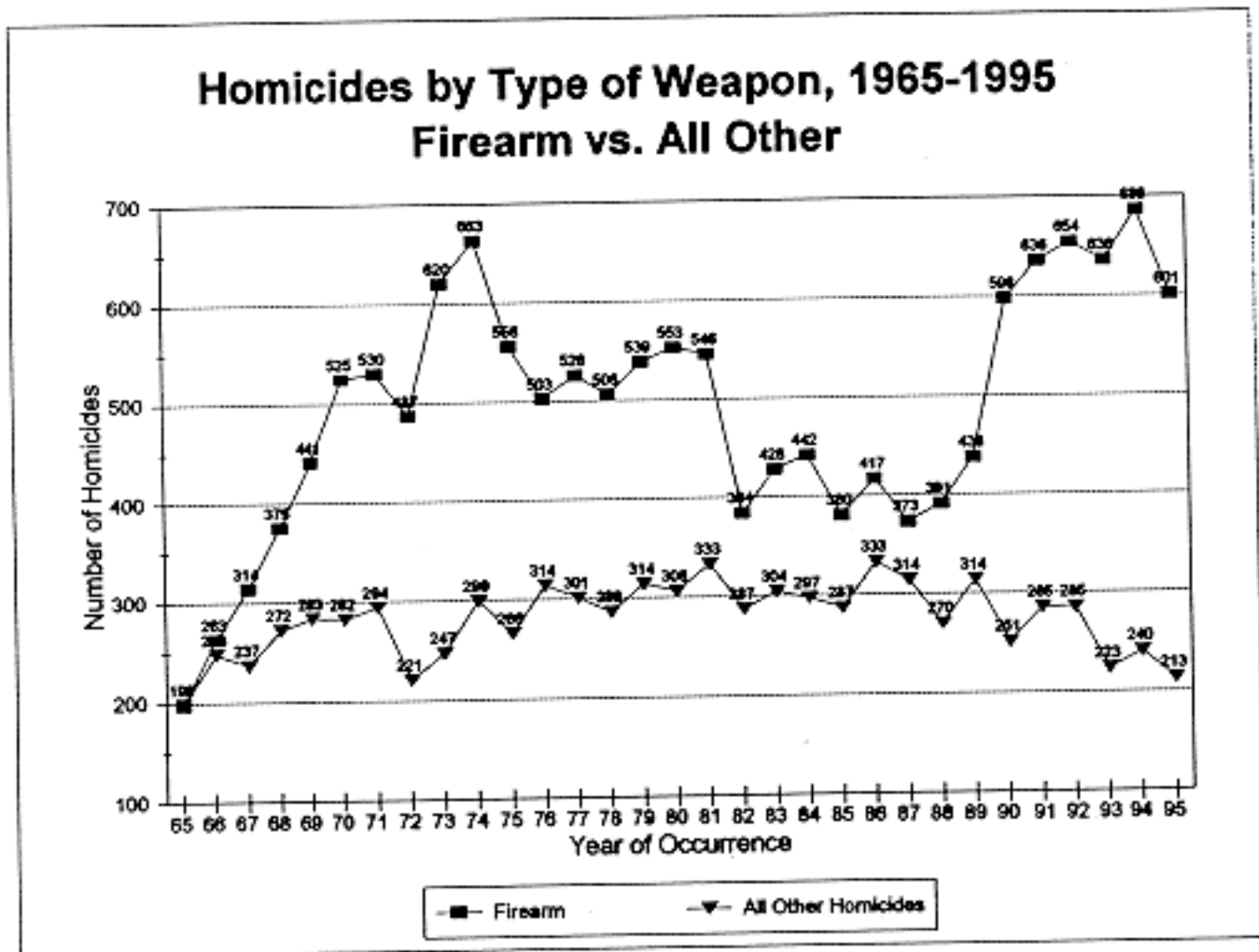
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 22



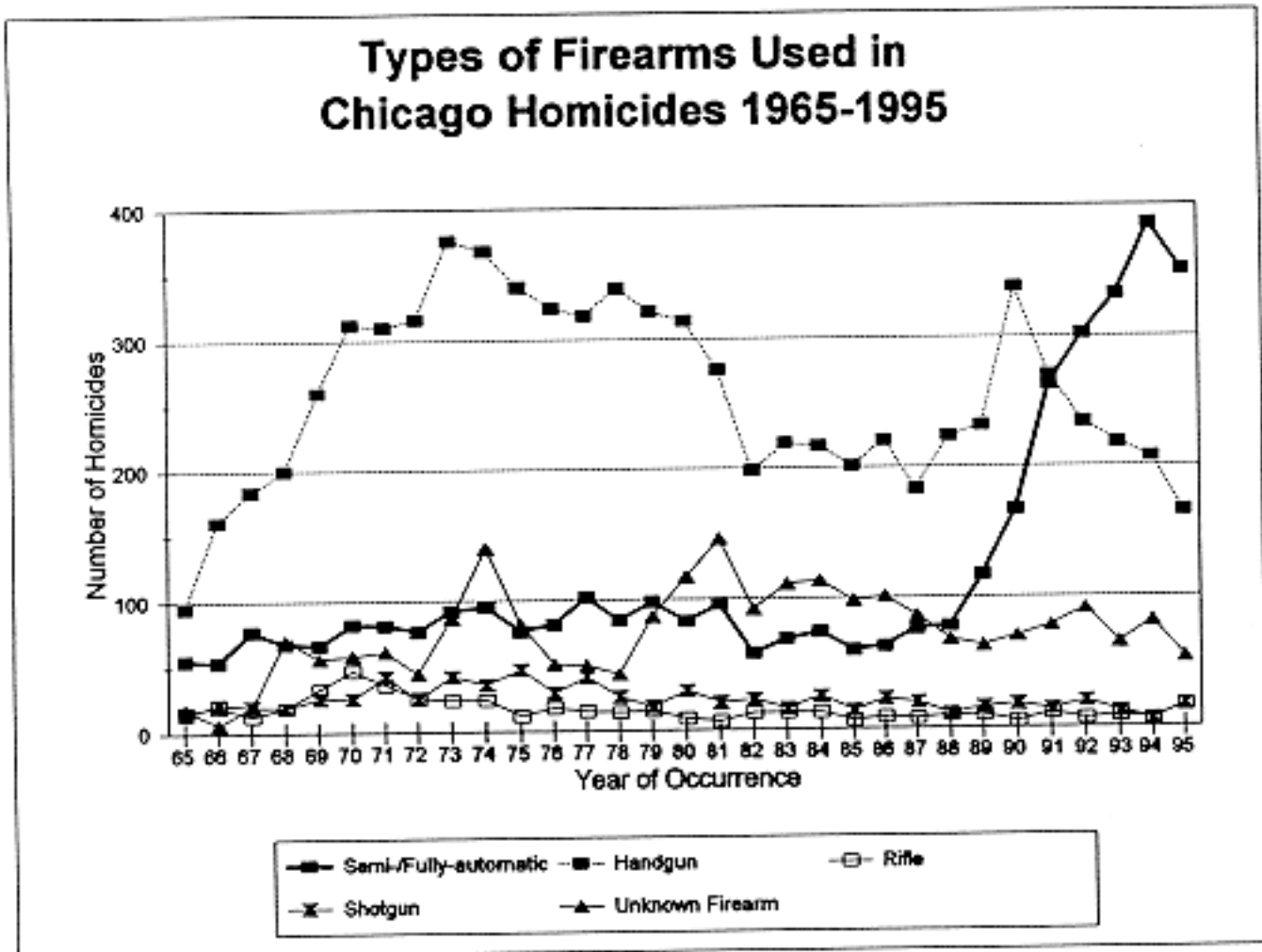
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 23



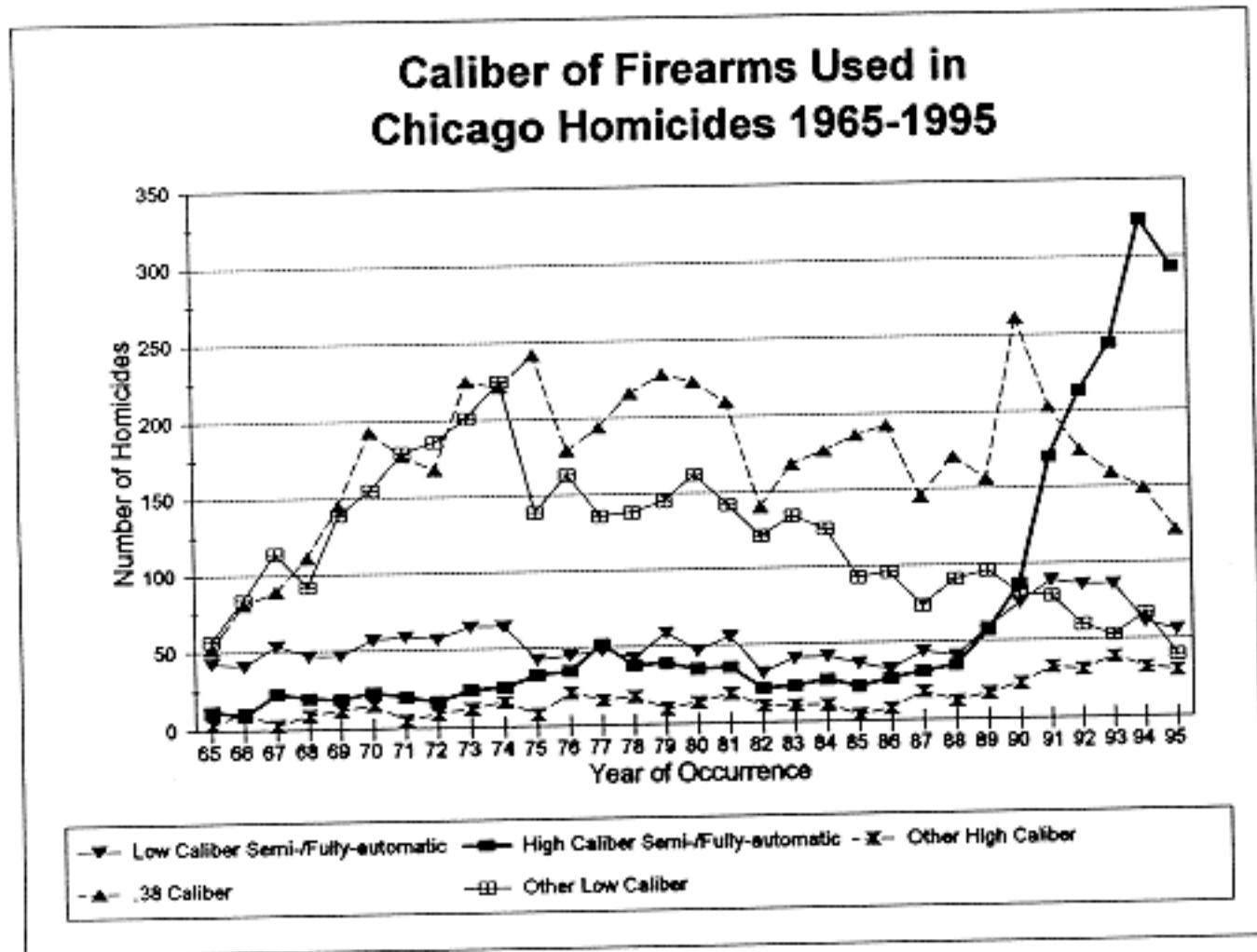
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 24



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

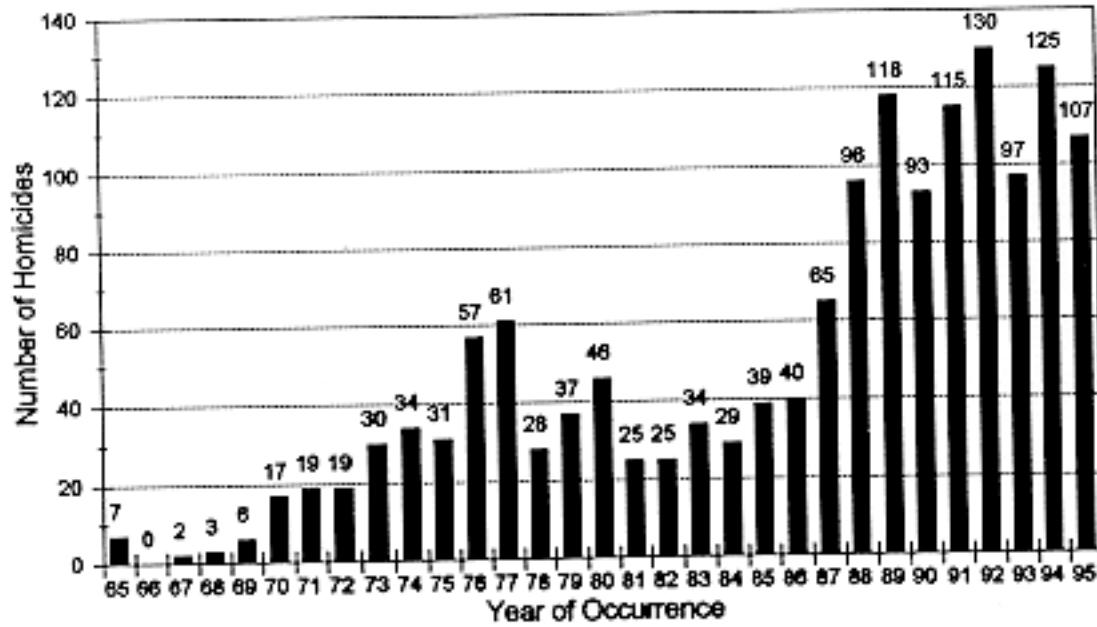
Figure 25



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

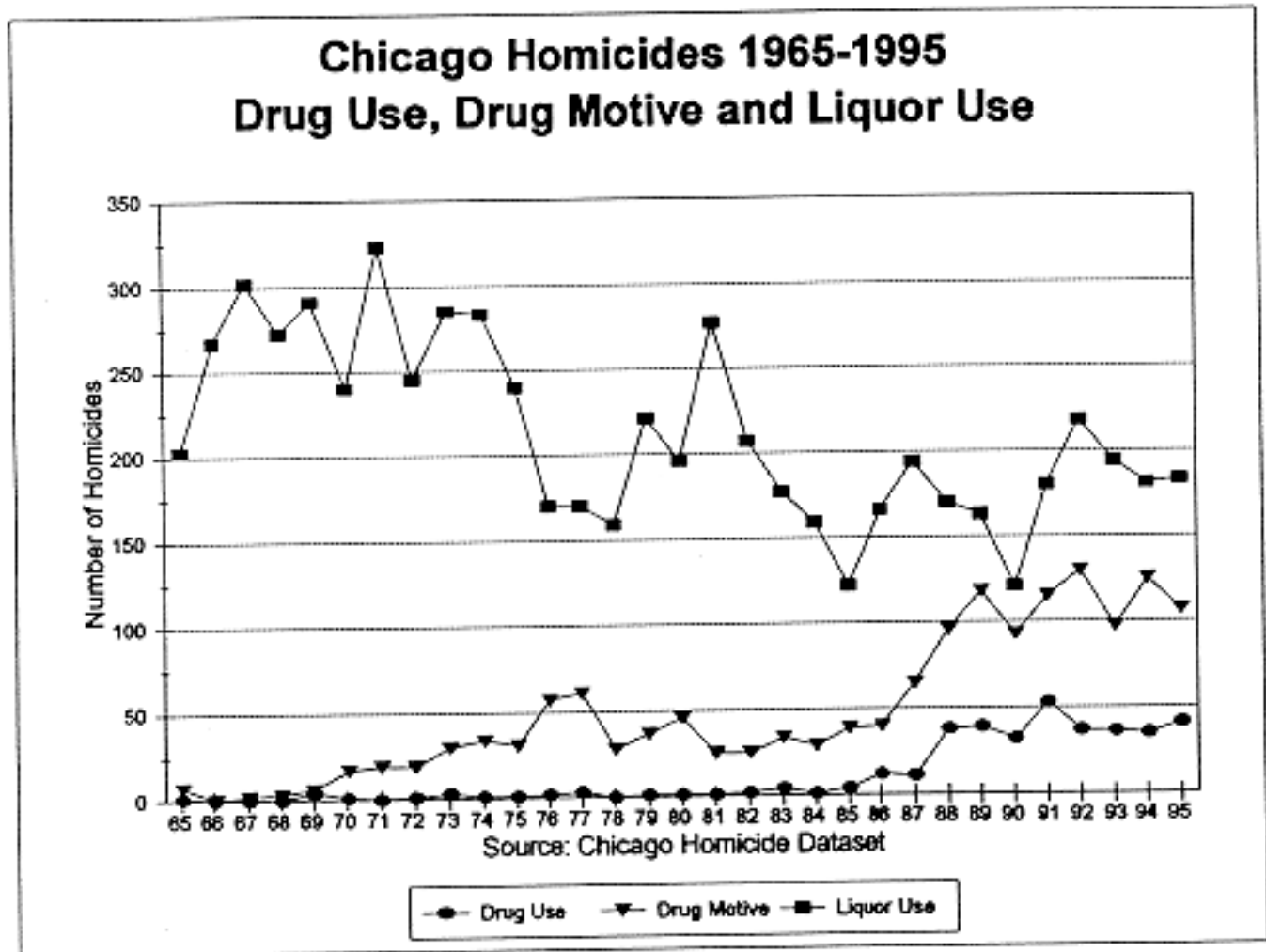
Figure 26

Chicago Drug-Related Homicides 1965-95 (including circumstantial evidence)



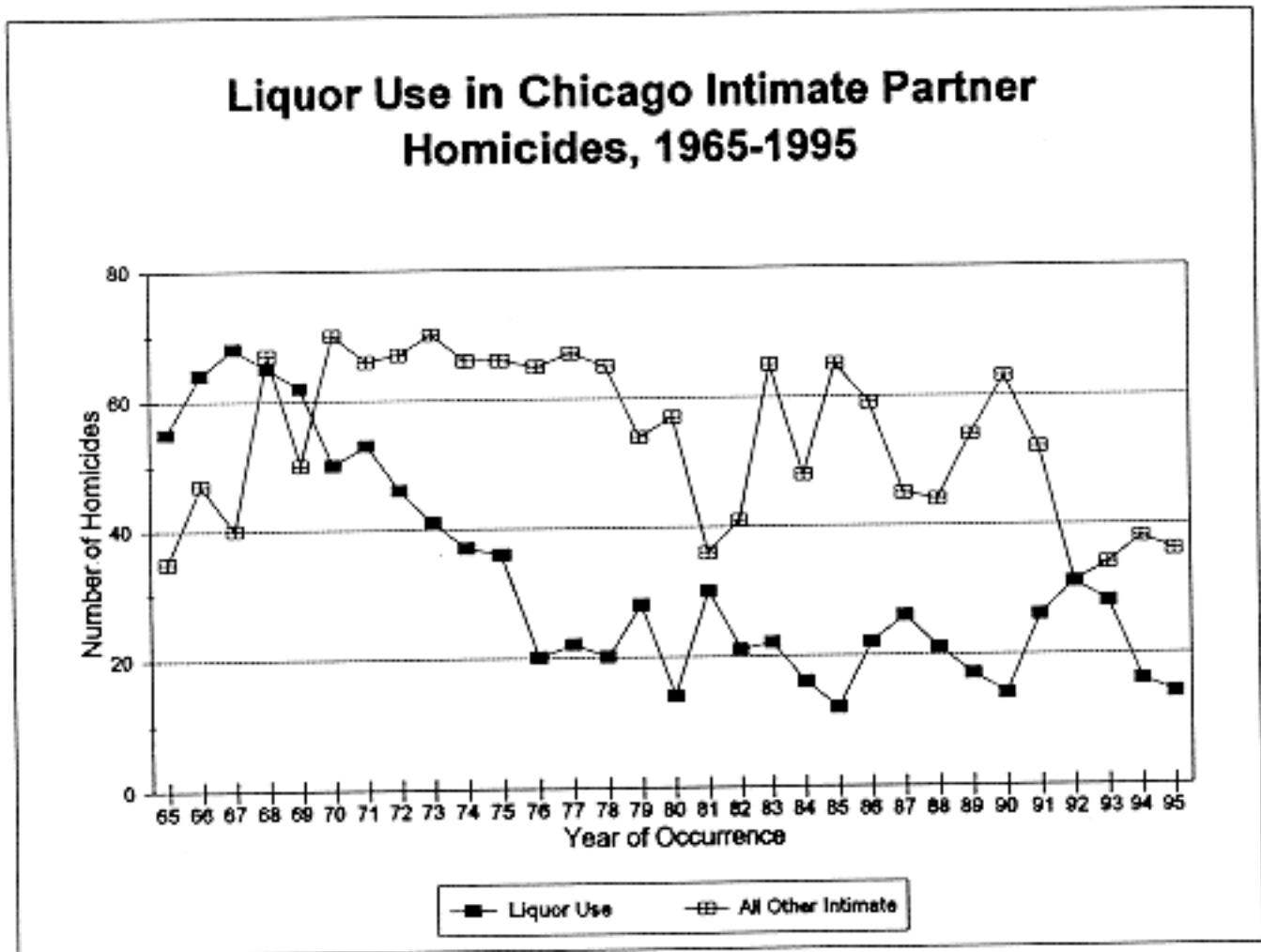
Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 27



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

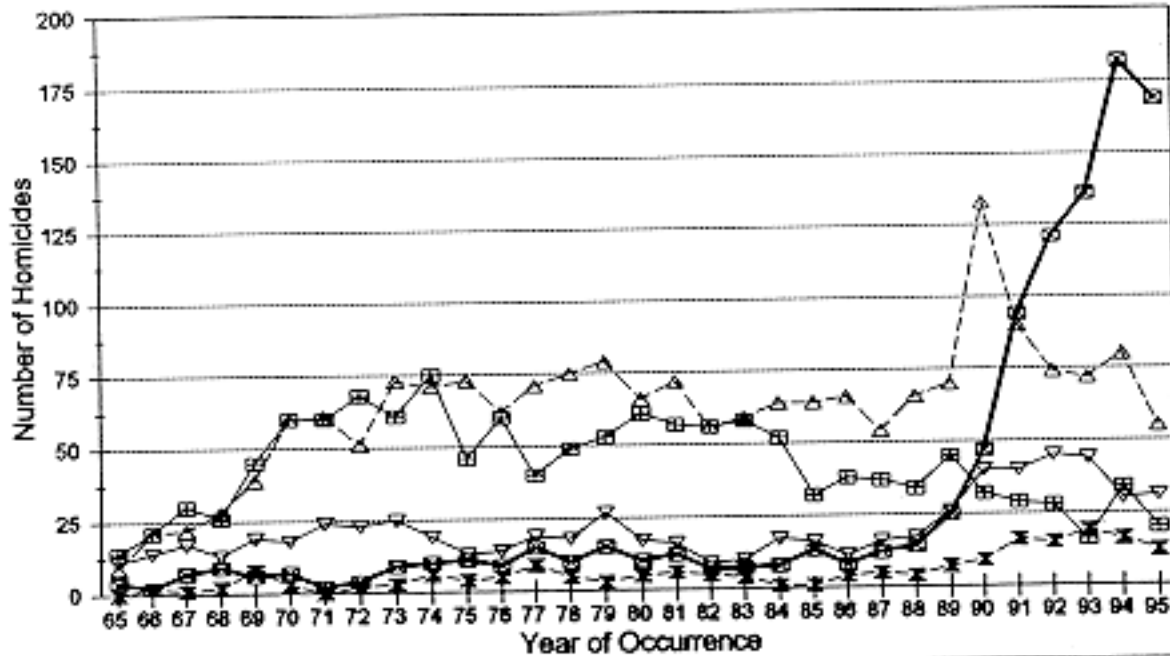
Figure 28



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset, a collaborative project of the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Loyola University Chicago.

Figure 29

Caliber of Firearms Used to Kill Victims Aged 15-24, Chicago: 1965-1995



—▽— Low Caliber Semi-Fully-automatic —■— High Caliber Semi-Fully-automatic —x— Other High Caliber
—△— .38 Caliber —○— Other Low Caliber

Figure 30

Drug-Related Motive in Homicides of Victims Ages 15-24, Chicago: 1965-1995

