



COMMON ASSAULT IN CANADA

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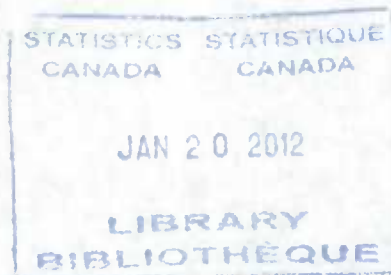
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Integration and Analysis Program
Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics

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HIGHLIGHTS

Time series data from the aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey indicate that:

- Violent offences represent 10 percent of all Criminal Code offences, while common assault offences comprise 56 percent of violent offences.
- The number of reported common assault offences doubled between 1974 and 1992. However, almost all of this increase occurred after the introduction of Bill C127 in 1983, which changed Criminal Code assault provisions.
- The rate of adults charged with common assault almost tripled during the reference period. Some of this growth is linked to changes in charging practices. During the reference period, the proportion of assault offences cleared by charge doubled, progressing from 25 percent to 48 percent of reported offences.
- In the second half of the 1980's, the pace of growth in the rate of youths charged with Criminal Code offences began to slow down, while the pace of growth in the common assault rate increased rapidly.

Data from the incident based UCR survey (representing one third of all offences) show that:

- More than half (52%) of all common assaults take place in private homes or dwellings.
- Common assaults occur most frequently between 3:00 PM and 12:00 AM.
- Males are the victims in 46 percent of common assault incidents, but are the accused in 86 percent of incidents. Correspondingly, females are victims in 54 percent of common assault incidents and the accused in 14 percent of incidents.
- Family members are the accused in 38 percent of common assaults. Casual acquaintances are the accused in 25 percent of assaults, while close friends and business relations are the accused 15 percent of the time. Strangers are the accused in only 22 percent of common assault incidents.
- Females are most likely to be assaulted in their own home by someone they know, most often a spouse, while males are more likely to be assaulted at locations outside of the home by a non-family member.

The report concludes that some proportion of the increases in violent offence rates may be linked to increased reporting, as well as to changes in the definition of assault and related changes in police charging practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Objectives:

Over the past decade, Canada has experienced a dramatic increase in the rate of common assault offences. This trend is of particular consequence because common assaults represent more than half of all violent offences, and as a result, have a major impact on the perceived level of violence within society. Opinion surveys report increased public concern about violent crime. For example, in response to the 1988 General Social Survey, Canadians indicated that an attack or incidents involving the threat of violence were the type of crime of greatest concern. Indeed, 43 percent of respondents identified violent assault as the crime they feared the most. Also, a variety of recent public opinion polls indicate that a majority of Canadians believe that crime, and especially violent crime, is on the increase.

The objective of this study is to analyze the major trends and characteristics of police reported common assaults. In addition to gaining an understanding of the circumstances surrounding common assault offences, this study also attempts to explore the factors which might be influencing rising assault offence rates. Of particular interest is the question: what proportion of the increase in assault rates can be attributed to an actual increase in the level of violence within society, and what proportion can be attributed to increases in public reporting?

1.2 Definition of Common Assault:

A person commits an assault when, without the consent of another person, he intentionally applies force, or attempts or threatens, to apply force to another person. And while physical violence is not necessary, there must be a threatening act or gesture, as words alone do not constitute an assault. Common assault is distinguished from more serious assaults by the degree of physical injury. The Criminal Code establishes three levels of assault: First level or common assault; Second level or assault causing bodily harm; and Third level or aggravated assault. A threatened assault, or an actual assault that did not produce a serious physical injury would be categorized as a common assault. The more serious second level assault requires the use or threatened use of a weapon, or the presence of injuries such as broken bones, cuts and bruises. However, a flushing cheek which quickly fades that was caused by a slap across the face would not constitute bodily harm. For an assault to be categorized as level 3 or aggravated, the complainant must be wounded, maimed, disfigured, or have his life endangered.

Section 266 of the Criminal Code states that everyone who commits an assault is guilty of an indictable offence, or an offence punishable on summary conviction. This new section (introduced in 1983 under Bill C127) replaces what formerly was known as "common assault".

The principal change is that the new section creates a dual procedure offence whereas the former section was a summary conviction offence. One reason this change was made was so police could arrest a person where they have "reasonable and probable grounds" to believe an assault was committed. Under the old section, the police could not arrest unless they found the person committing the assault. For example, under the old section, when the police attended at the scene of a domestic dispute where the husband had assaulted his wife, they did not have a power of arrest unless they had actually witnessed the assault or the wife had suffered "bodily harm". Consequently, in some cases police officers left the scene of a domestic dispute unable to convince one or the other spouse to leave the home, knowing that a further or a more serious assault was likely to happen and that they were unable to prevent it. Under the new section, police are able to arrest the aggressor, thereby avoiding further assaults after they leave the scene.

1.3 Methodology:

Analysis of the crime data is split into two components. The first part is a time series analysis looking at common assault, violent offences, and total Criminal Code offences. The data used for this part of the report are from the aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey. A 19 year period is examined, 1974 to 1992. The time series begins with 1974 because that is the year in which a new expanded offence classification scheme replaced the older UCR classification scheme, and 1992 is the most recent year for which data are available. Taking the longer view of changes in offence rates is intended to provide perspective on how current trends compare to previous periods, and to highlight points at which major new trends begin.

Taking the longer view does impose some difficulties, the most serious being breaks in the data. In terms of the present study, there is a small break in the common assault data in 1983. On January 3, 1983, Bill C127 came into force, and redefined the former Criminal Code categories of "sexual offences" and "physical assaults". To accommodate these new offence definitions, the CCJS established new UCR violent offence categories. Of particular relevance to the present study was the change to the content of old UCR "Other Assaults" category which had been composed of C.C. Section 245 - Common Assault, and Section 246 - Assault with intent to resist arrest, and rescue of goods seized. The newly created UCR category included the new common assault offence, but did not retain Section 246 assaults. The Section 246 offences, which appeared to represent approximately 4 percent of the offences within the old assault category, were put into a new "other assaults" category. Together, these changes to the assault categories produced a small decrease in the number of reported assault offences in 1983.

Pre-1983 UCR Category "OTHER ASSAULTS"

Post-1983

Common Assault S.245 CC ----->	UCR Cat. "ASSAULT LEVEL 1"
Assault With Intent S.246 CC ----->	UCR Cat. "OTHER ASSAULTS"

A second and more significant break occurred in the time series in 1984 with the introduction of the Young Offenders Act (YOA). During that year, 12 years of age became the minimum for charges under the YOA, while a maximum age of 17 was established in April of 1985. Because of these changes, the analysis of data from before and after these transition years is made more complicated. However, the main impact of the YOA change was to produce higher offence rates by changing the size of the youth population base. This occurred, in part, because 7 to 11 year olds were removed from the population base which is used to calculate youth offence rates. Prior to 1984, 7 to 11 year olds were charged in about 2 percent of total offences, but represented 50 percent of the youth population. Thus, removing them from the database had the effect of reducing the population base without any real decrease in the offences. Also, raising the maximum age to 17 helped to increase youth assault rates because 16 and 17 year olds tend to be much more criminally active than younger age groups. For instance, while 17 year olds represent only about 16 percent of the total youth population, they account for more than 30 percent of youths charged. To accommodate this major break in the data, analysis of youth charge rates is broken into two time components, the pre-YOA period from 1974 to 1983 and the post-YOA period from 1986 to 1992. Rates for 1984 and 1985, the YOA transition years, are not included in the analysis.

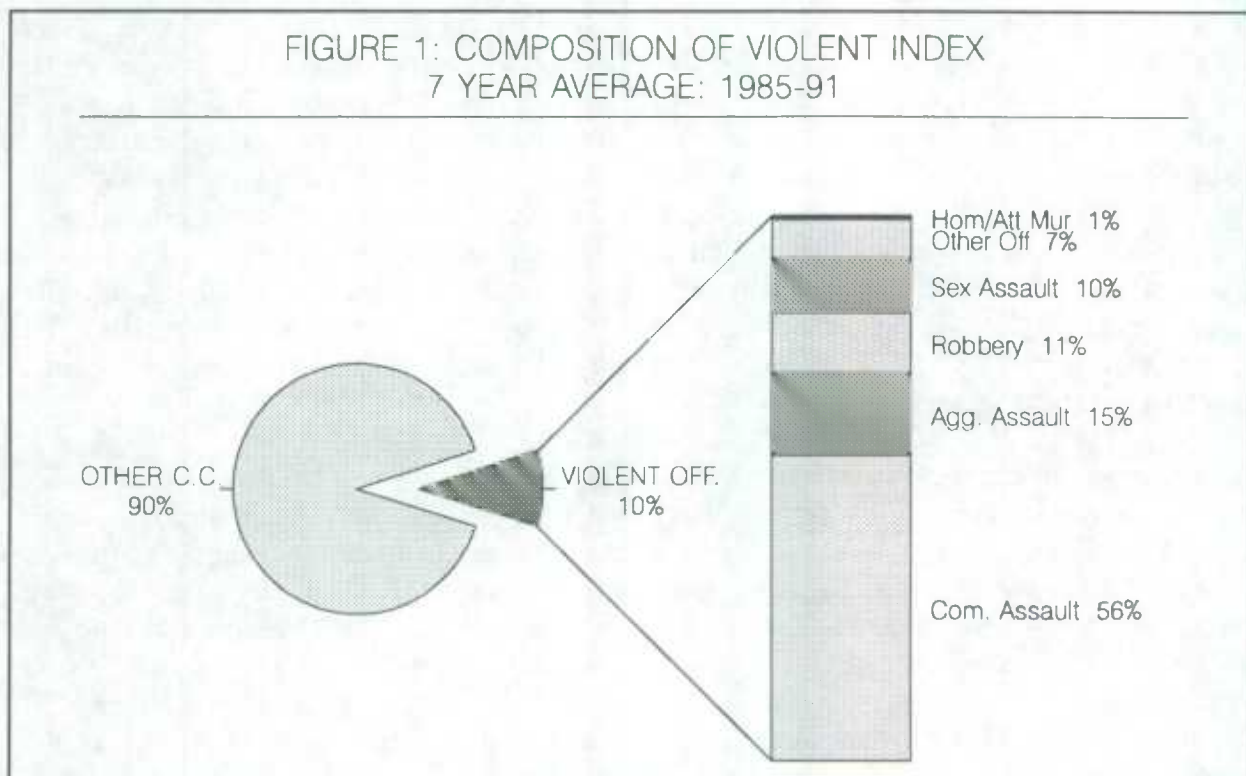
The second part of the study looks at the characteristics of common assault offences for the year 1992. These micro-data are from the Incident-Based UCR Survey. Because the Incident-Based UCR is a micro-data survey, it is possible to look at a range of offence characteristics such as age of accused and victim, sex of accused and victim, location of incident, time of the incident, drug and alcohol involvement and relationship of accused to victim. The 1992 database contains data for 50 respondents including the Sureté du Québec, Metro Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal Urban Community, representing approximately one third of total offences. These 50 respondents do not constitute an unbiased sample and therefore may not be reflective of the national experience.

The reader should also keep in mind that all of the UCR crime data are based on official police reports that do not include unreported crime. As such, UCR data represent a subset of all crimes in Canada. Indeed, a victimization survey conducted as part of the General Social Survey in 1988 found that only 40 percent of the criminal incidents revealed by respondents were reported to the police.

The data used in all of the report's charts are presented in Appendix A, with all table numbers corresponding to Figure numbers. For example, the data used to produce Figure 3 can be found in Table 3. To assist the reader in more fully understanding the content of the tables, additional related data which were not included in the report's charts have been included where appropriate. Also, definitions for the headings and terms used in the tables and figures can be found in the Glossary in Appendix B.

2. TIME SERIES ANALYSIS

2.1 Actual Offences:



Before looking at changes in offence rates over time, it is necessary to establish a broad context within which to view the data. Figure 1 is intended to highlight the status of common assault offences within the overall composition of violent offences. For example, over a 7 year period, violent offences as a group averaged 237,301 offences per year, or about 10 percent of an average of 2,452,966 Criminal Code offences. Within the violent offence group, common assault offences averaged 132,167 offences per year, or about 56 percent of all violent offences. The remainder of the violent index is composed of a variety of offences including homicide, attempted murder, robbery, sexual assault, and aggravated assault. However, common assault offences are almost four times more prevalent than aggravated assaults, the next largest offence category within the violent index. From these data, it can be concluded that violent offences make up a small proportion of all Criminal Code offences, and that common assault is the major offence within the violent offence group or index.

These data also show that within the violent offence group, common assault and sexual assault offences (both redefined by Bill C127) experienced the fastest and most consistent pace of growth. Only the offence of "discharging a firearm with intent" saw a larger increase over the 1985 to 1991 period. However, with only 308 occurrences in 1991, this offence would have almost no effect on the overall violent offence rate. (See Table 1).

FIGURE 2: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES
AS A PERCENT OF VIOLENT OFFENCES

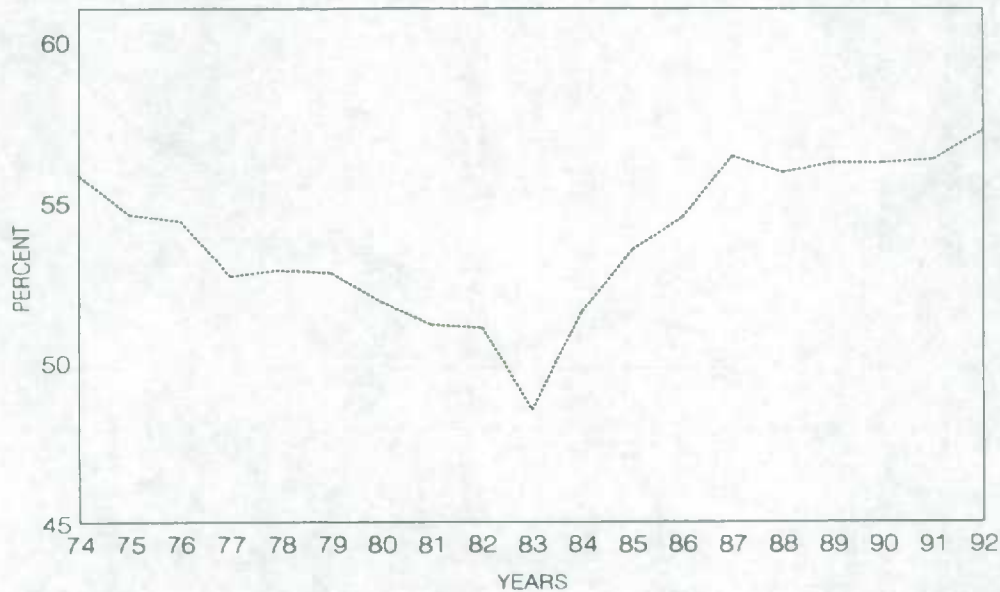
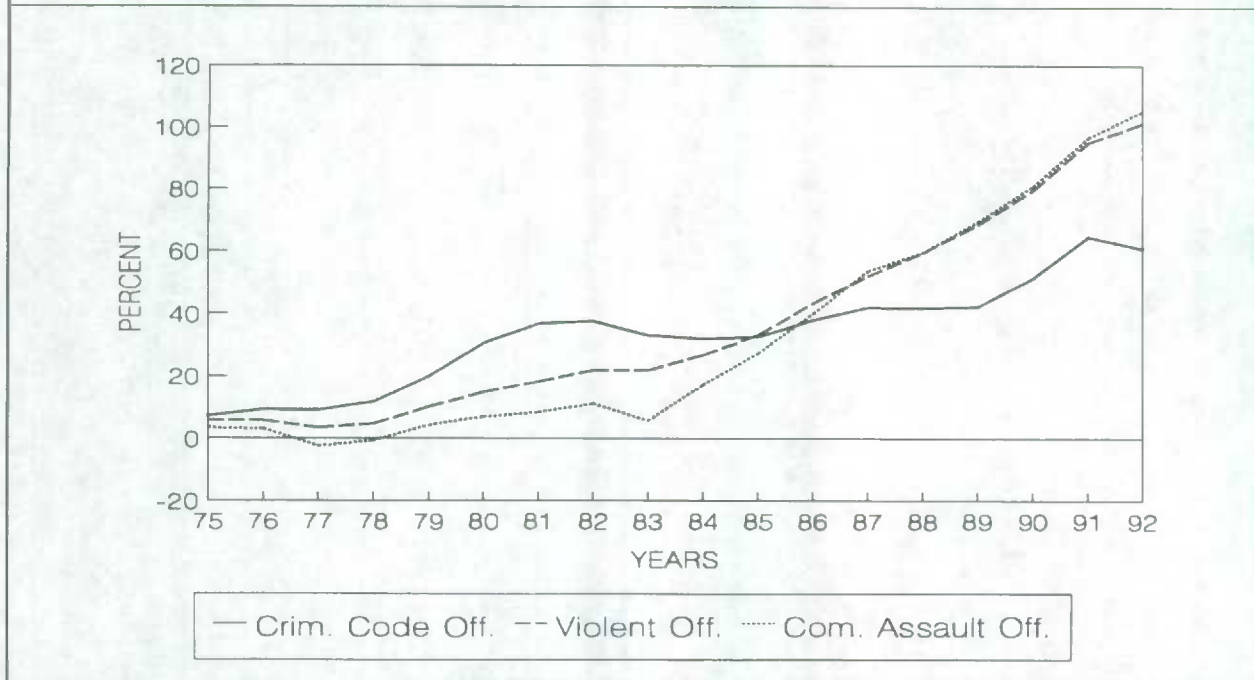


Figure 2 displays common assault offences as a proportion of all violent offences. The chart shows that in 1974, common assaults made up 55.8 of all violent offences, declined to 48.5 percent by 1983, and then began to rise to the 1992 proportion of 57.2 percent. This represents a 9 percentage point increase in post 1983 common assaults as a proportion of all violent offences, and demonstrates that after 1983, common assault became an increasingly important component within the violent offence group. This occurred because during the 1983 to 1992 period, common assault offences grew much more quickly than most other violent offences. The reader should note that some of the decrease in assault rates in 1983 may have been caused by a change in the Criminal Code definition of assault and a corresponding change in the UCR assault offence categories.

Figure 3, on the next page, highlights the percent change in actual offence rates from 1974. Between 1974 and 1992, the Criminal Code rate grew 60 percent, advancing from 6516 offences per 100,000 members of the population to 10,391 offences per 100,000. During the same period, the rate of violent offences doubled, going from 564 offences per 100,000 members of the population to 1122 offences per 100,000. Common assault offences also doubled during the reference period, growing from 315 offences per 100,000 members of the population to 641 offences. Again, it should be noted that some of the 1983 decrease in assault rates is likely the result of changes in Criminal Code assault definitions and related changes to the UCR assault category.

FIGURE 3: ACTUAL OFFENCES
PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN RATES FROM 1974



The above chart shows that prior to 1983, the rate of common assaults was increasing at a slower pace than both the violent offence rate and the Criminal Code rate. In 1984, there was a sharp increase in the common assault rate, at which point the common assault rate began to grow at a faster pace than the overall Criminal Code offence rate. This chart demonstrates that increases in the common assault rate are helping to drive increases in the violent offence rate. These results clearly illustrate that a significant change occurred in the common assault offence rate after 1983, and that this phenomenon continues to affect the data. One of the main influences on the level of reported assaults may be related to increased publicity and decreased public tolerance surrounding spousal assaults. With the introduction of Bill C127 in 1983, governments at all levels increasingly issued directives to police forces to lay assault charges where there were reasonable and probable grounds to believe an assault had occurred in spousal assault cases.

Appendix C presents a chronology of the main events which would have increased public awareness of family violence issues, and which may have led to an increase in the reporting of spousal assaults. In addition to a variety of related milestones, the chronology indicates the year in which various jurisdictions issued directives for police to lay charges in spousal assault cases. These include: 1982 - Ontario and Saskatchewan; 1983 - Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and the RCMP in the Northwest Territories and Yukon; 1984 - RCMP in the rest of Canada; 1987 - Quebec and Newfoundland; 1988 - Nova Scotia; 1989 - New Brunswick; 1990 - Alberta. As the preceding list shows, the charging directives were not issued all at once, but were introduced intermittently throughout the decade.

2.2 Adults Charged:

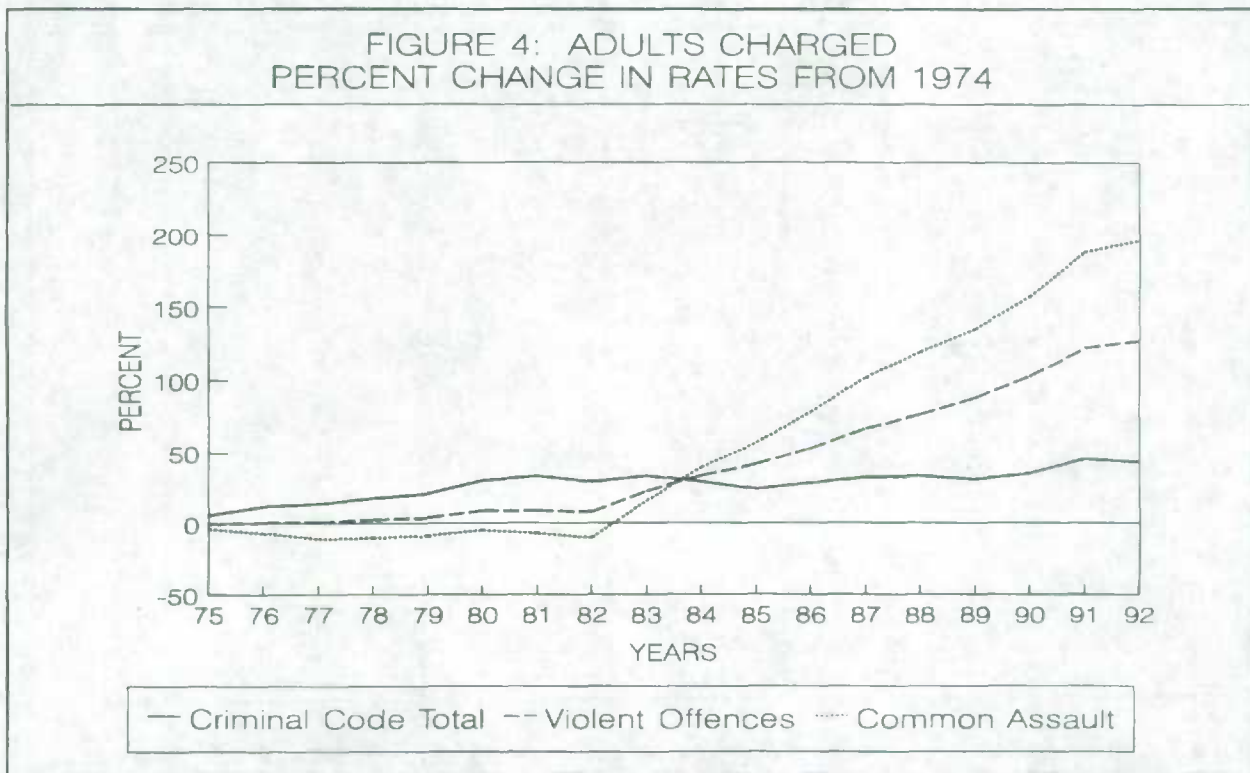


Figure 4 shifts attention from actual offences to adults charged. It shows that between 1974 and 1992, the rate of adults charged with Criminal Code offences increased 41 percent, growing from 1636 adults charged per 100,000 members of the adult population to 2310 adults charged per 100,000 adults. Adults charged with violent offences increased 125 percent, rising from 272 adults charged per 100,000 adults to 612 adults charged per 100,000 adults. This was surpassed by the rate of adults charged with common assault which surged 194 percent, progressing from 116 adults charged per 100,000 adults to 342 adults charged per 100,000 adults.

The above results show that the rate of adults charged with violent offences and common assault offences grew at a slower pace than the overall Criminal Code charge rate until 1983, at which point they began to grow much more quickly. Second, the pace of growth in the rate of adults charged with common assault is much faster than the pace of growth in the rate of common assault offences presented in Figure 3. The difference in the pace of growth between actual offences and persons charged suggests that more charges are being laid in common assault cases.

The fact that police began to lay more charges in spousal assault cases may also have had the effect of increasing public reporting of common assaults. Victimization studies show that one of the main reasons that victims do not report crimes is that they do not feel that the police can do anything about them. However, if there is evidence that police are addressing issues, (ie. laying more charges in spousal assault cases) then victims should be more likely to report such incidents. In this way, visible evidence of increased charging in spousal assaults may have helped establish a pattern of greater victim reporting.

FIGURE 5: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES CLEARED BY CHARGE AND OTHERWISE - PERCENT DISTRIBUTION

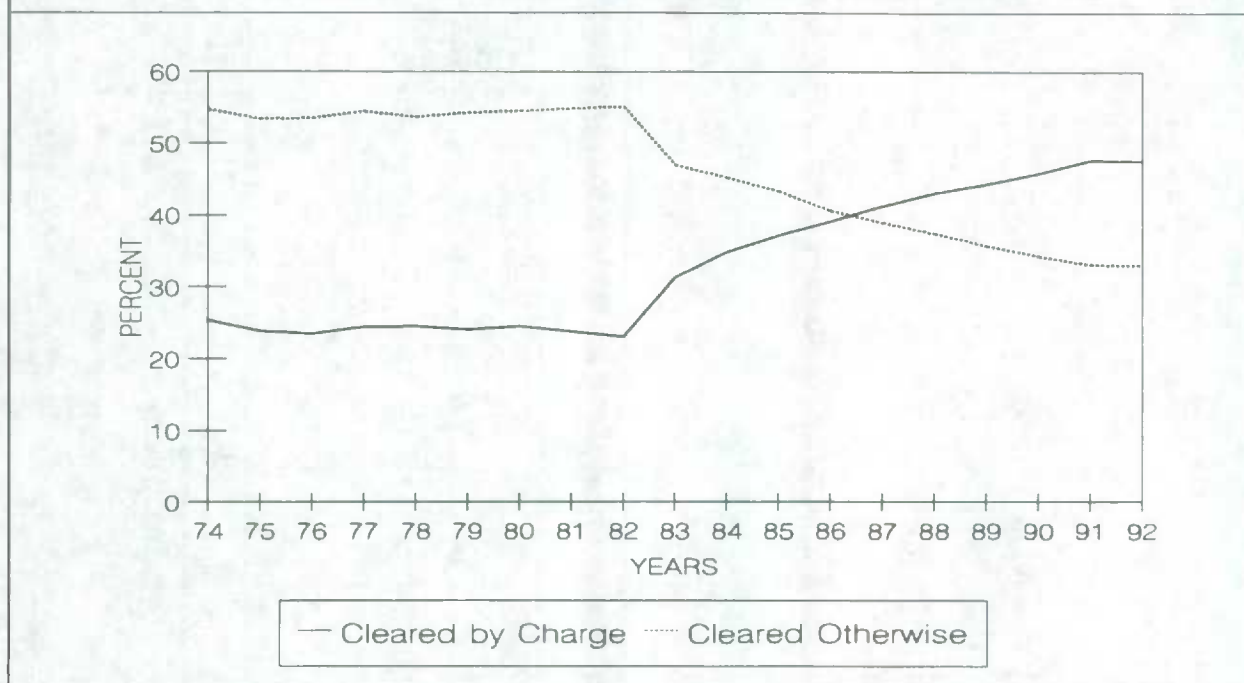


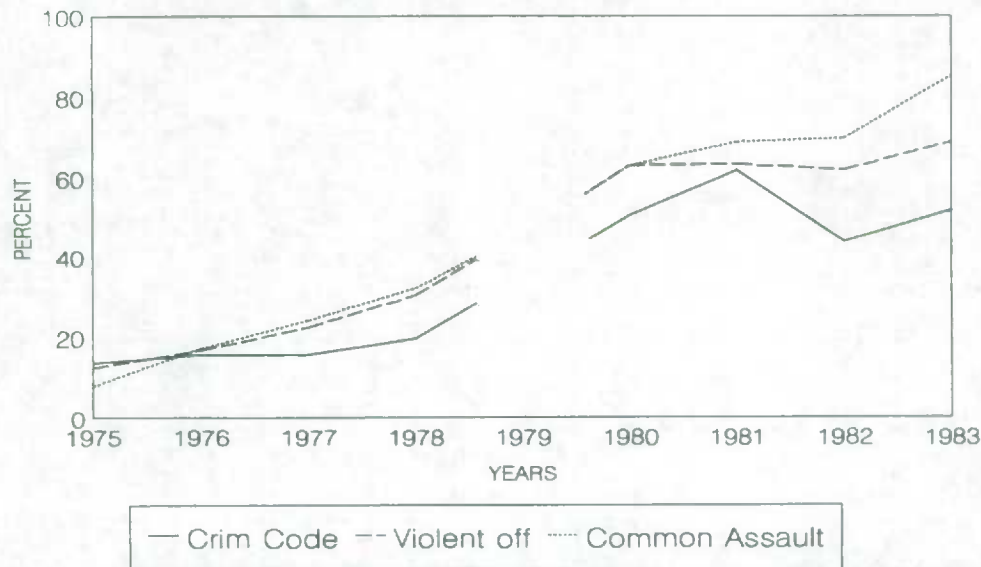
Figure 5 examines trends in charging patterns by comparing the proportion of common assault offences cleared by charge to the proportion of common assault offences cleared otherwise. It demonstrates that there has been a significant increase in the proportion of common assault offences cleared by charge, and a corresponding decrease in those cleared otherwise. Prior to 1983, the proportion of common assault offences cleared by charge remained quite consistent at about 25 percent. In 1983 this proportion jumps to 31 percent and then continued to increase until in 1992 when 48 percent of all common assault offences were cleared by charge.

Because increases in the proportion of common assault offences cleared by charge correspond to the introduction of Bill C127 and associated changes to Criminal Code treatment of assault offences, it is reasonable to assume that some portion of the increase in the rate of adults charged with common assault is directly related to this legislation and related policy changes. For example, if we apply the 1974 to 1982 assault charge rate (when approximately 25% of common assault offences were cleared by charge) to the post 1982 charge data, it produces a common assault rate of 186 adults charged per 100,000 adults in 1992, a rate that is 46 percent lower than the 342 adults charged per 100,000 adults reported on the previous page. As such, it can be argued that as much as 46 percent of the increase in the rate of adults charged with common assault can be attributed to the above described change in charging patterns.

Finally, figures 3 through 5 indicate that Bill C127 had a marked effect. However, it cannot be characterized as a "classical intervention effect" where there is a sharp and sudden change to the level of a phenomenon which then continues on at the newly established level. In this regard, the pattern of intermittent introduction of spousal assault charging directives described in Appendix C may help explain why the rapid pace of growth in charge rates persisted throughout the latter part of 1980's, and into the 1990's.

2.3 Youths Charged:

FIGURE 6: YOUTHS CHARGED - 1974 TO 1983
PERCENT CHANGE IN SELECTED OFFENCE RATES FROM 1974



NOTE: 1979 data points not shown due to data quality concerns.

As discussed in section 1.3, youth charge rates must be analyzed in two separate components to accommodate a major change in the youth population base resulting from the introduction of the YOA. Figure 6 examines the percentage change in the rate of youths charged in the pre-YOA period of 1974 to 1983. During the reference period, the Criminal Code offences rates increased 52 percent, growing from 1427 youths charged per 100,000 youths to 2167 youths charged per 100,000 youths. The violent offence rate increased 69 percent, rising from 76 youths charged per 100,000 youths to 128 youths charged per 100,000 youths. During the same period, the common assault rate grew by 85 percent, progressing from 20 youths charged per 100,000 youths to 38 youths charged per 100,000 youths.

To help in the interpretation of the above data, two key observations about the 1974 to 1983 trend lines are offered. First, figure 6 shows that all offence rates increased substantially during the pre-YOA period. Also, the common assault and violent rates increased at a roughly similar pace and pattern to the overall Criminal Code rate.

Note: Because of data quality problems associated with a change in reporting procedures for juveniles not charged, data points for 1979 have been removed from Figure 6.

FIGURE 7: YOUTHS CHARGED - 1986 TO 1992
PERCENT CHANGE IN SELECTED OFFENCE RATES FROM 1986

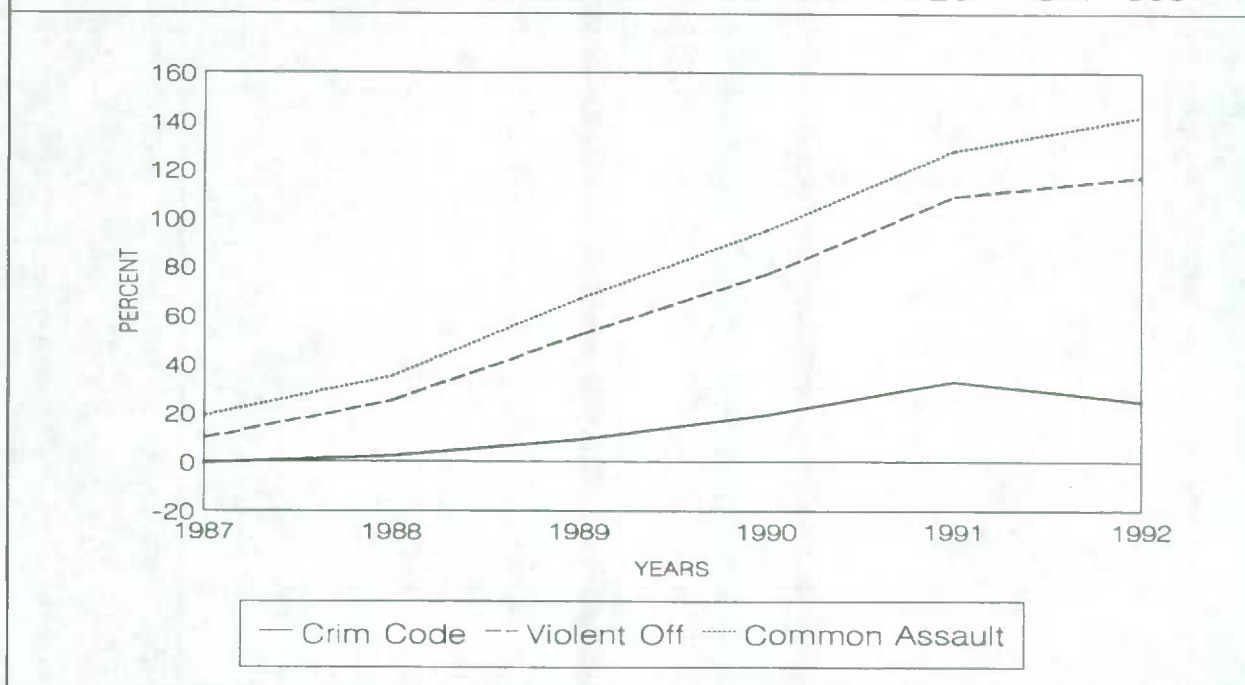


Figure 7 examines the percentage change in the rate of youths charged in the post-YOA period of 1986 to 1992. During the reference period, the Criminal Code rate increased 25 percent, growing from 4877 youths charged per 100,000 youths to 6083 youths charged per 100,000 youths. The violent offence rate grew 117 percent, expanding from 415 youths charged per 100,000 youths to 900 youths charged per 100,000 youths. During the same period, the common assault rate increased by 142 percent, progressing from 178 youths charges per 100,000 youths to 432 youths charges per 100,000 youths.

Comparing Figure 6 and 7, we can see that changes in charge rates in the post-YOA reference period differ from the rates in the pre-YOA reference period in two important ways. First, the pace of growth in the overall Criminal Code rates appears to be slower in the post-YOA reference period than in the pre-YOA period. By contrast, the pace of growth in the common assault and violent offence charge rates appears to be increasing much more rapidly in the post-YOA period.

Since the pace of growth in the common assault charge rate is higher than the violent rate, and because common assaults represent the majority of violent offences, it is probable that the rapid growth in the rate of youths charged with violent offences is at least partially driven by increases in the proportion of common assault offences cleared by charge. As with the adult rates, large increases in the proportion of persons charged may be linked to certain provisions in Bill C127 which redefined Criminal Code assault offences in 1983. Provisions which made it possible for police to lay more charges and arrest in spousal common assault cases may have had the spill-over effect of making it possible to lay more charges in all common assault cases, including youth common assault cases.

FIGURE 8: YOUTHS CHARGED
AS A PROPORTION OF YOUTHS DEALT WITH: 1982-1992

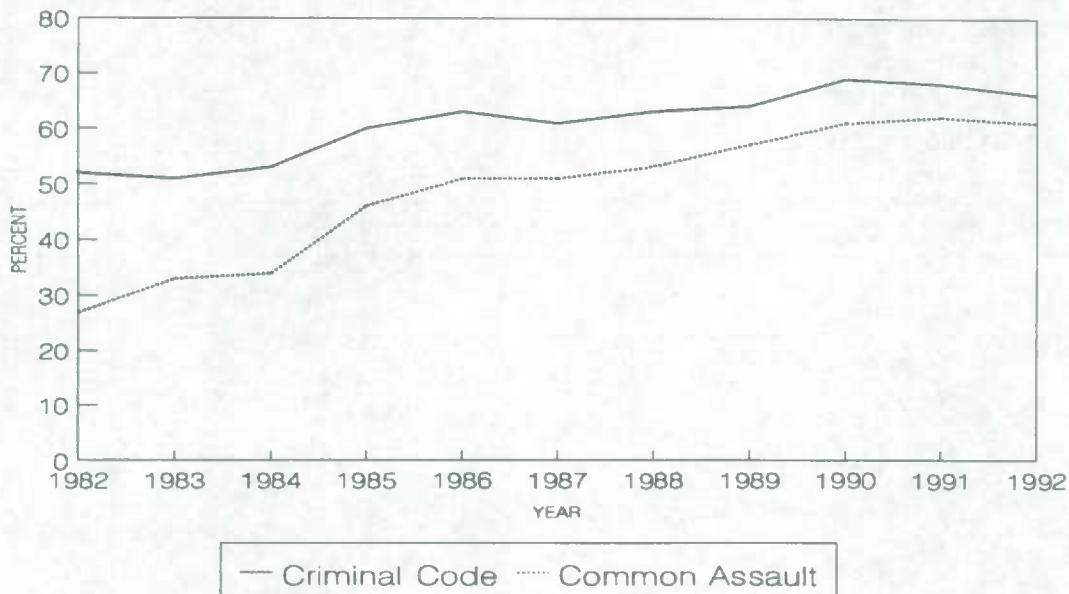


Figure 8 illustrates trends in charging practices between 1982 and 1992 by examining changes in the rate of youths charged as a proportion of the total number of youths dealt with. It shows that the proportion of youths charged with Criminal Code offences, as a proportion of youths dealt with, increased by 14 percentage points, growing from 52 percent in 1982 to 66 percent in 1992. During the same period, the proportion of youths charged with common assault, as a percent of total youths dealt with, moves from 27 percent in 1982 to 61 percent in 1992, a 34 percentage point increase in the charge ratio. Under these circumstances, even if the number of common assault offences coming to the attention of the police did not increase, the youth charge rate would still show an increase.

It is important to note that the quality of the "youths not charged" data (used in the creation of the "youths dealt with" total) is unknown, and may not have been uniformly collected. As such, these data provide only an indicator of charging trends, and are not an absolute measure. Nevertheless, these data suggest a general upward trend in the proportion of youths being charged by police during the ten year period examined. This outcome may help provide a partial explanation for the findings in Figures 6 and 7 which indicate that the rate of youths charged with common assault grew much more quickly than the overall rate of youths charged with Criminal Code offences after 1983.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES

All of the information presented in this section is from the 1992 revised UCR survey, and includes both youth and adult data for 50 police respondents representing about one third of all offences in Canada. It is important to note that this survey is not based on a random sample, and therefore may not be reflective of any particular geographic area.

3.1 Incident Characteristics:

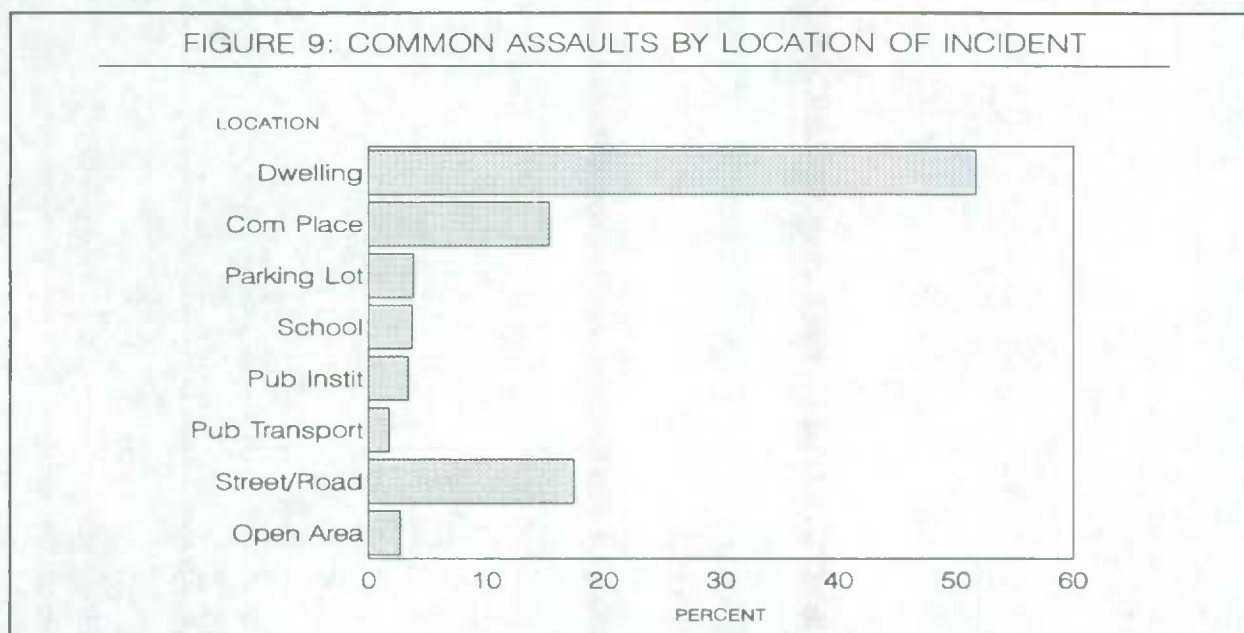


Figure 9 outlines common assault data by the location of the incident. It shows that the majority of all common assaults (51.7 %) take place in private dwellings. Commercial places (including bars, night clubs, restaurants, shopping malls, office buildings, etc.) account for 15.4 percent of all common assaults, while streets and roads provide a location for 17.5 percent of common assaults. Together, these three locations account for 85 percent of all reported common assaults. All other locations combined (parking lots, schools, public institutions, public transportation, and open areas) produce only about 15 percent of common assaults with no one location accounting for more than 4 percent. The location of assault incidents can vary according to the relationship of the accused to the victim and the sex of the victim. These variations are highlighted in the cross classified data presented in Section 3.3.

Figure 10 displays common assault data according to the time of day at which the incident occurred. The chart indicates that assault incidents tend to occur relatively infrequently during the early hours of the morning, increase in frequency as the day progresses, and peak during the later part of the evening. Three time periods account for the majority of reported common assaults. Indeed, 54 percent of all common assault incidents occur between 3:00 pm and 12:00 midnight, with the 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm time period accounting for the highest proportion (18.6%) of assaults. The 3:00 am to 9:00 am time period produced the fewest number of assaults.

FIGURE 10: COMMON ASSAULT INCIDENTS BY TIME OF DAY

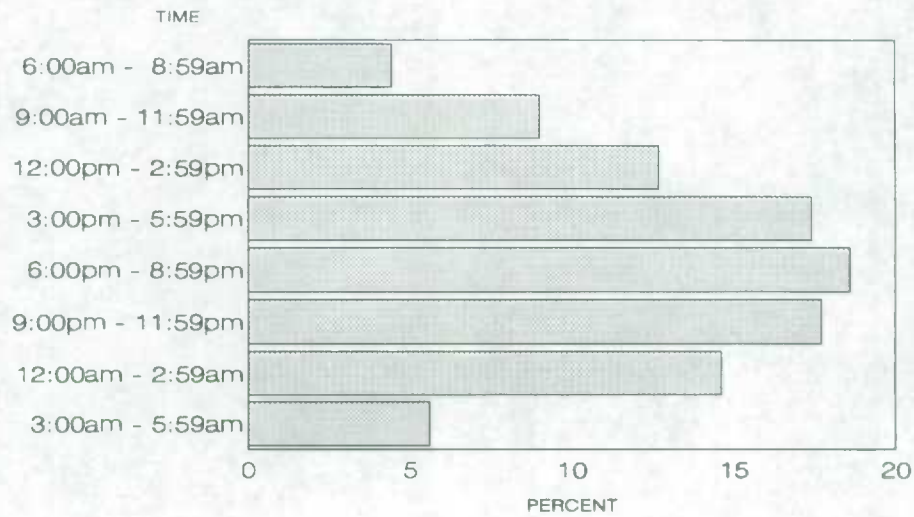


FIGURE 11: SEASONALITY OF COMMON ASSAULT INCIDENTS

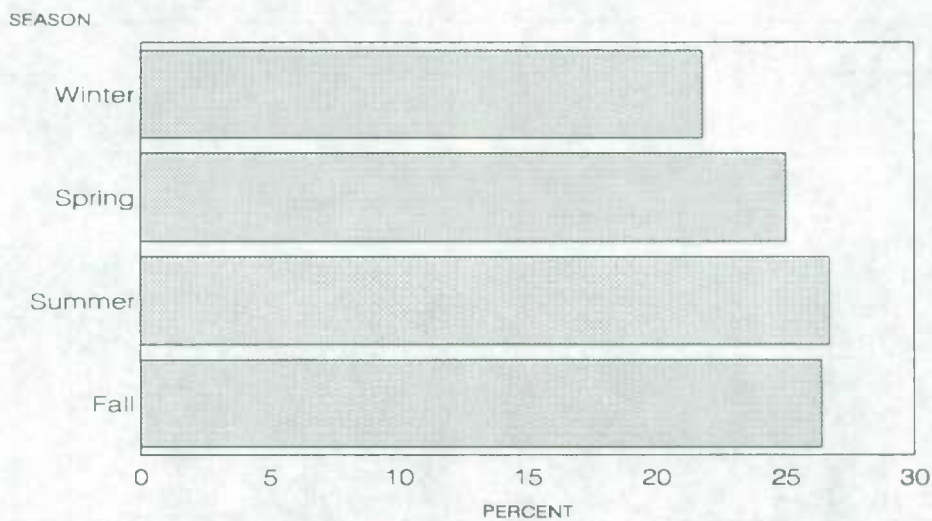


Figure 11 illustrates the seasonal features of the common assault data. Although the chart indicates that there is not a great deal of variability in assault rates among seasons, a lower proportion of assaults do occur in the winter, while a slightly larger proportion occur in the summer. Data Table 11 included in Appendix A shows that the highest proportion (9.4%) of common assault incidents occurred in October and the fewest (6.8%) occurred in January.

3.2 Characteristics of Victims and Accused:

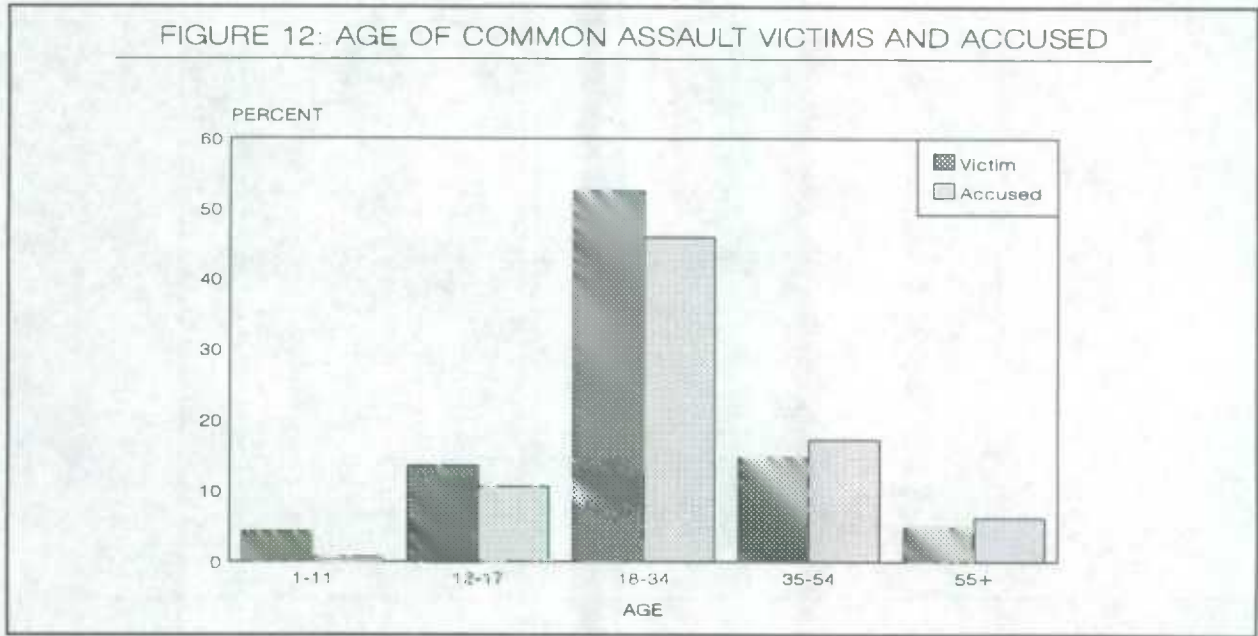


Figure 12 compares the age ranges of common assault victims and accused. It shows that the largest proportion of victims and accused are in the 18 to 34 age range, and that victims tend to be a little bit younger than accused.

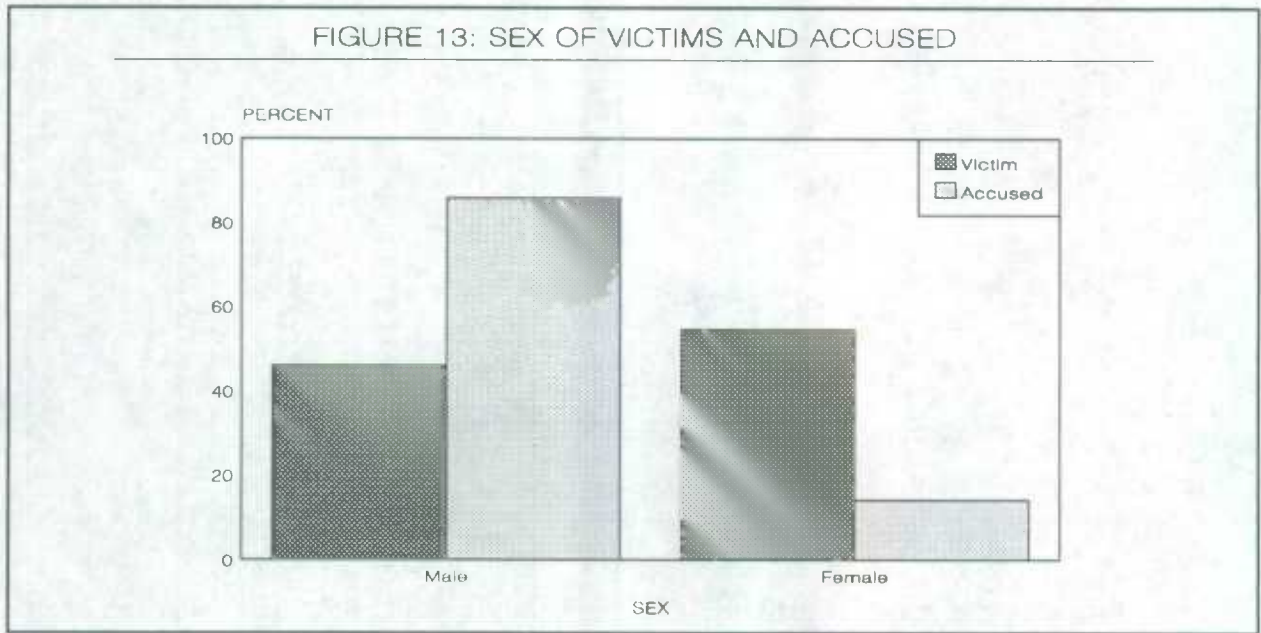


Figure 13 looks at gender variations between victims and accused. It illustrates that males are the victims in 46 percent of common assault incidents, but are the accused in 86 percent of incidents. Conversely, females are the victims in 54 percent of cases, but are the accused in only 14 percent of incidents.

FIGURE 14: ALCOHOL/DRUG CONSUMPTION OF VICTIMS AND ACCUSED

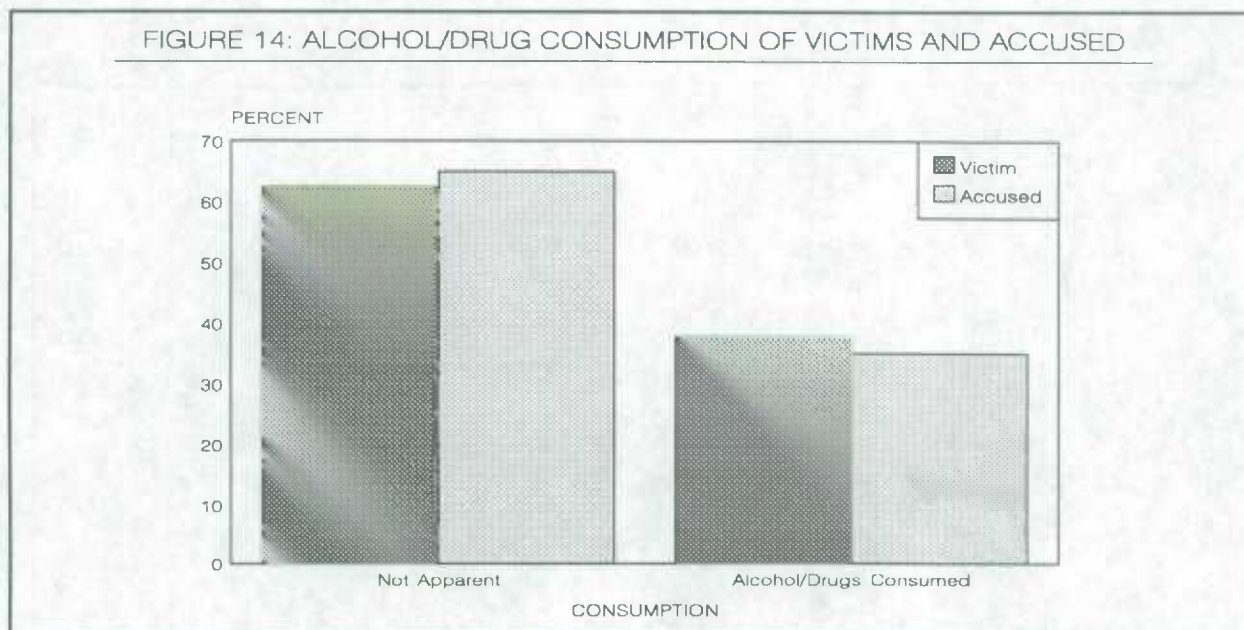


Figure 14 examines drug and alcohol involvement in common assault incidents. It suggests that at least 35 percent of accused and 38 percent of victims had consumed either alcohol or drugs prior to the assault.

FIGURE 15: RELATIONSHIP OF ACCUSED TO COMMON ASSAULT VICTIMS

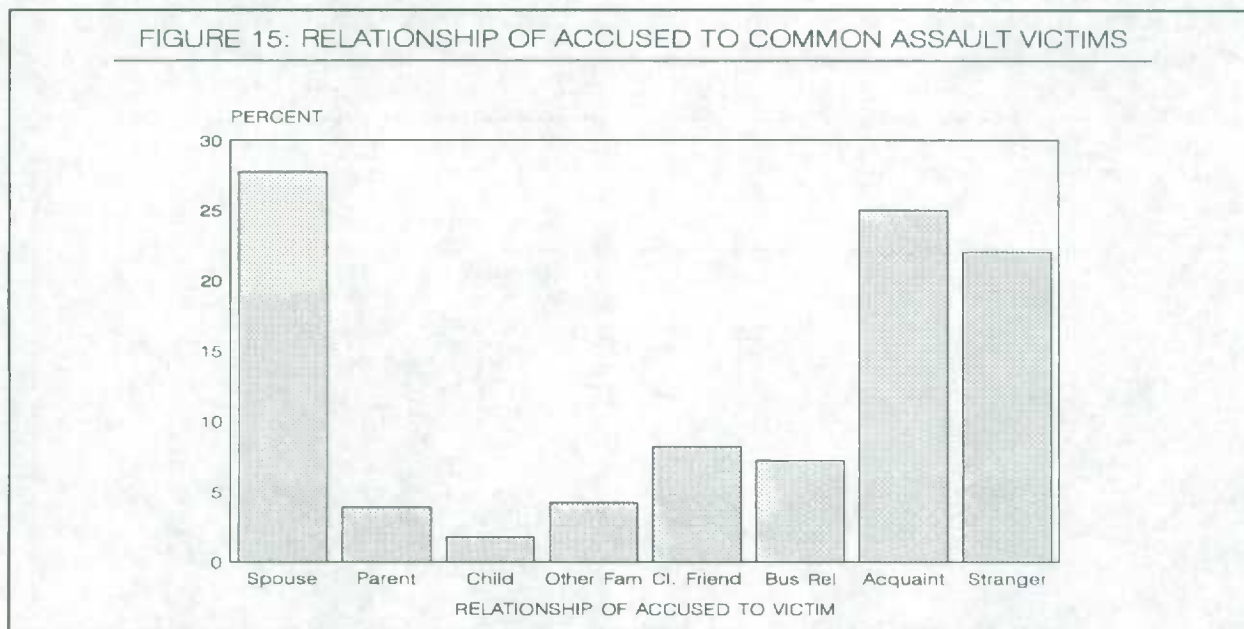


Figure 15 investigates the relationship of the accused to the assault victim. In 28 percent of common assaults the accused is the spouse or ex spouse of the victim. Casual acquaintances are the accused in 25 percent of assaults, while strangers are the accused in 22 percent of incidents. For the remaining 25 percent of assaults, the accused are close friends (8.2%), business relationships (7.2%), parent (3.9%), child (1.8%) other immediate family members (2.9%), and extended family members (1.3%). Thus in 78 percent of common assault incidents, the accused are known to victims, and in 38 percent of cases, the accused are members of the family.

3.3 Cross Classified Characteristics:

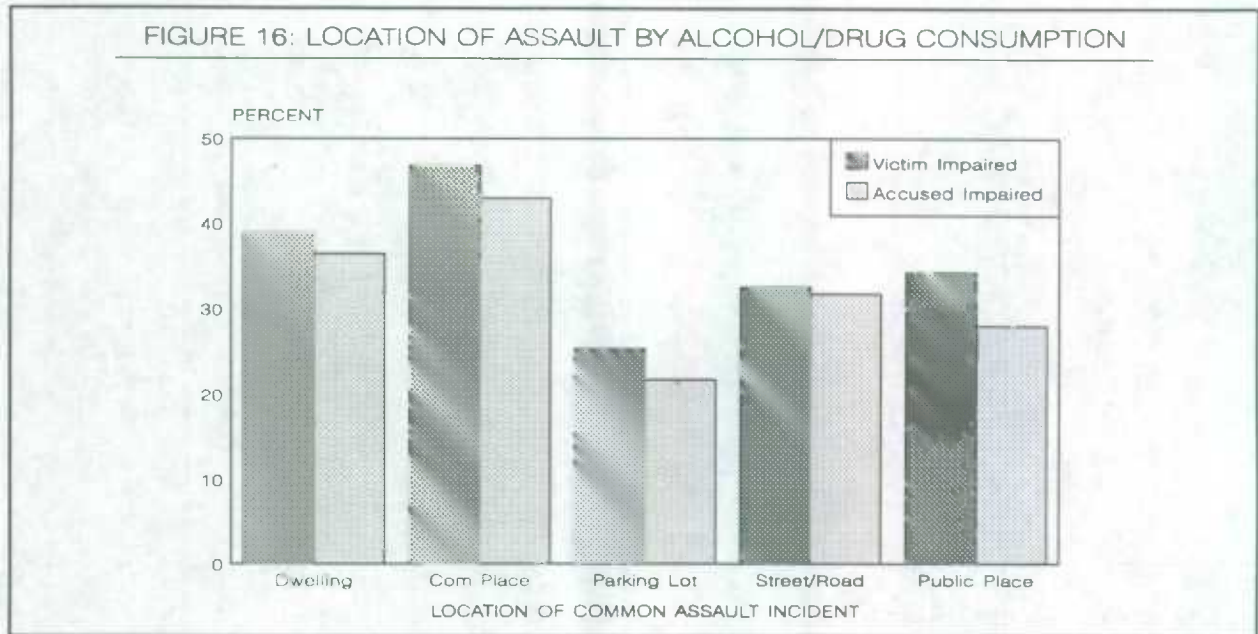


Figure 16 looks at the connection between the location of common assaults and the incidence of alcohol and drug consumption. It indicates that alcohol and drugs are a factor for both victims and accused in all locations, ranging from a high of 47 percent for assaults in commercial places (bars, restaurants, malls) to a low of 22 percent for common assaults in parking lots.

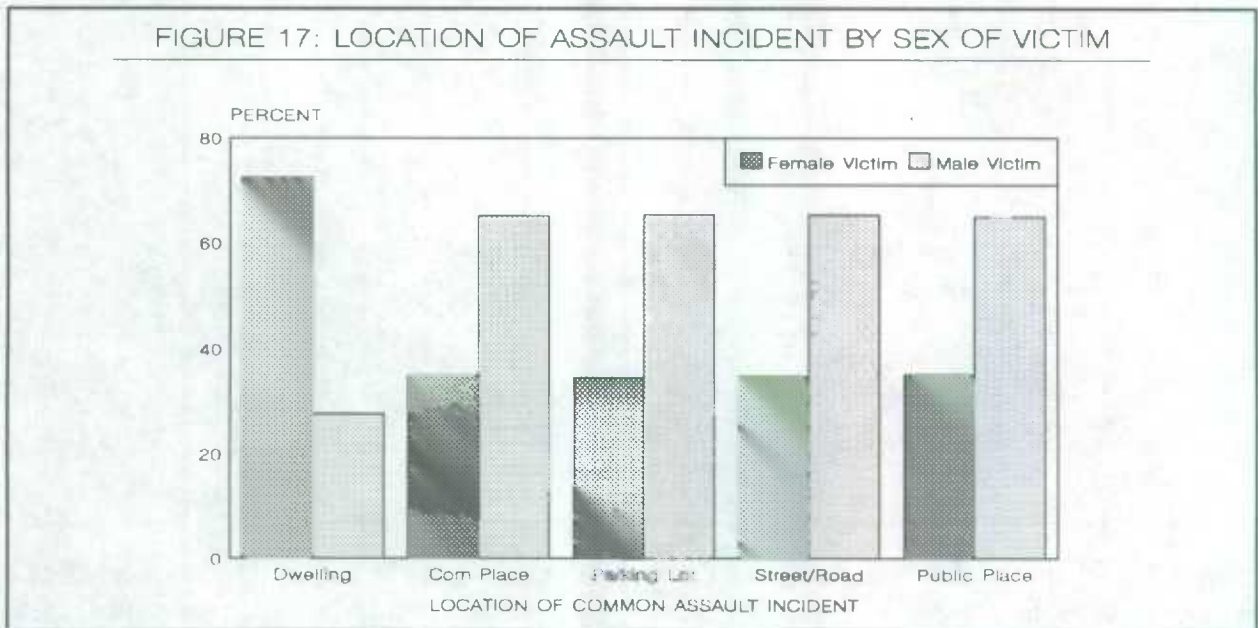


Figure 17 explores the link between the location of common assaults and the sex of the victim. Here we find that females make up 72 percent of victims for assaults occurring in private homes, while males are most often the victim (65% of the time) for assaults occurring outside the home.

FIGURE 18: LOCATION OF COMMON ASSAULT BY RELATIONSHIP OF ACCUSED TO VICTIM



Figure 18 examines the association between the location of common assaults and the relationship of the accused to the victim. This chart shows that common assaults fall into two groups, those involving family and close friends, and those involving business relations, acquaintances and strangers. Assaults in the first group are far more likely to occur in the home. Indeed, 89 percent of spousal assaults, 86 percent of other family member assaults and 75 percent of close friend assaults occur in private dwellings. Conversely, assaults among the second group are more likely to occur at locations outside the home.

FIGURE 19: RELATIONSHIP OF ACCUSED TO VICTIM BY OCCUPANCY WHERE COMMON ASSAULT TAKES PLACE IN A DWELLING

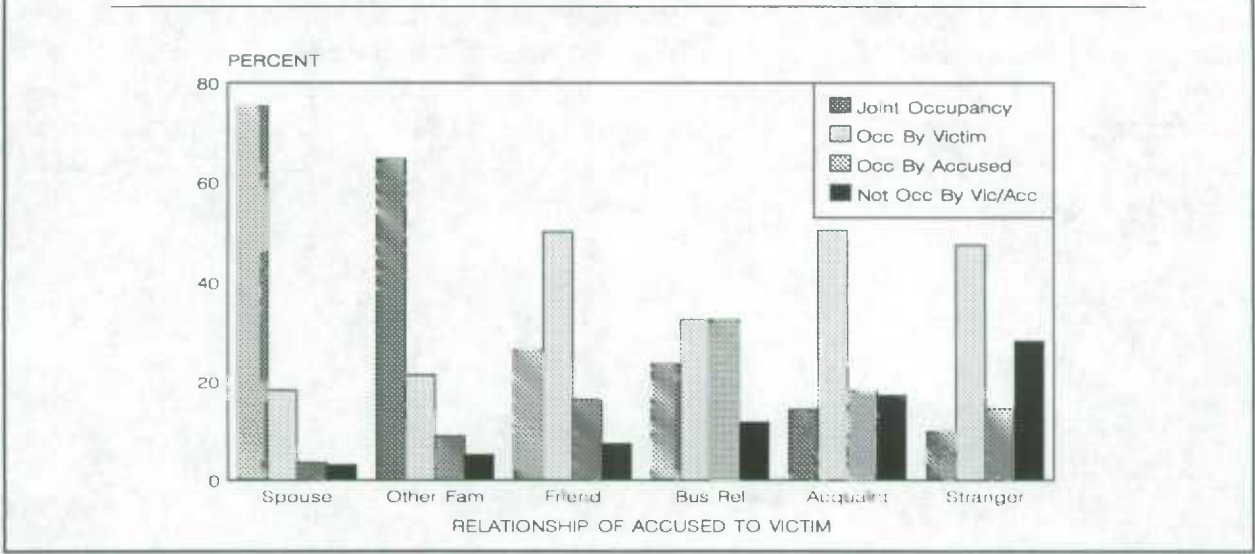


Figure 19 extends the focus of the previous chart by analyzing the link between the relationship of the accused to the victim and occupancy status, in cases where common assaults take place

in a dwelling. Here we find that spousal and other family member assaults most often occur in joint occupancy situations, that is, in circumstances where both the victim and the accused live in the same household. On the other hand, non family member assaults are more likely to take place in the victim's home or in the home of the accused. Overall, more than 82 percent of assaults that occur in a dwelling, take place in the victim's home.

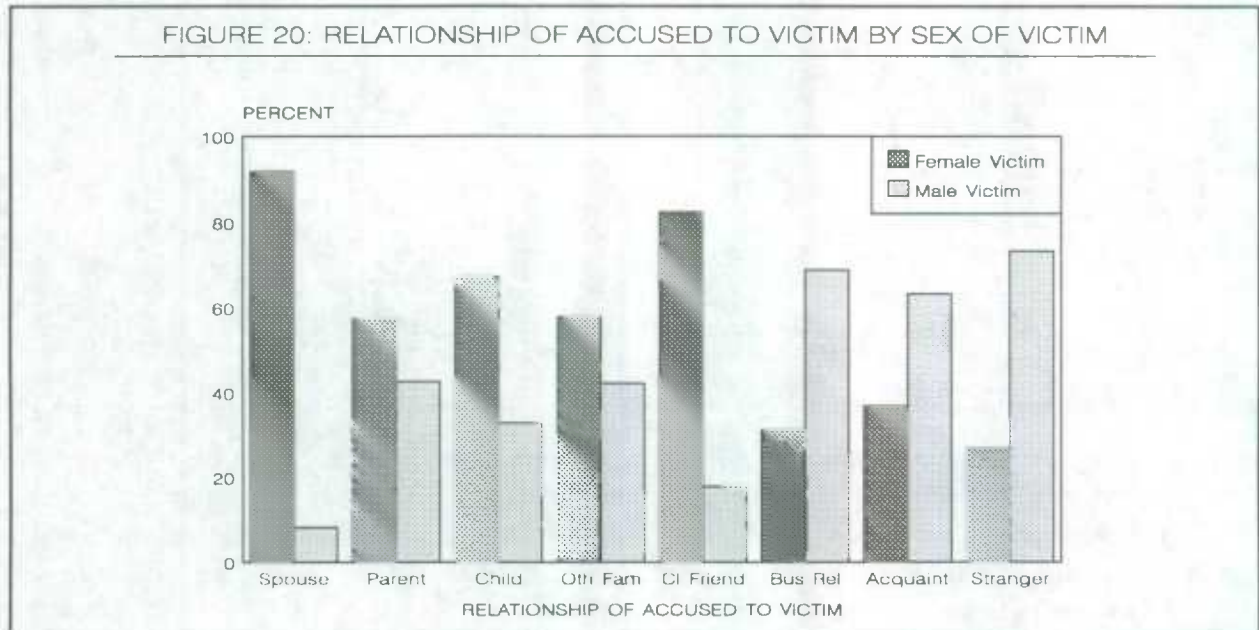


Figure 20 examines the association between the relationship of the accused to the victim and the sex of the victim. Here again the data can be split into two groupings. The first group contains common assaults by spouses, parents, children, other family members and close friends, while the second group is composed of common assaults by business relations, acquaintances and strangers. The first group tends to have a higher proportion of female victims while the second group has a higher proportion of male victims. For example, females are the victims in 92 percent of spousal assaults, 82 percent of assaults by close friends (this would include boyfriends), 57 percent of assaults by parents, and 67 percent of assaults by children. On the other hand, males are the victims in 69 percent of assaults by business relations, 63 percent of assaults by acquaintances and 73 percent of assaults by strangers.

4. DISCUSSION

The preceding analysis of common assaults, and related data, showed a significant increase in offence rates, as well as adult and youth charge rates. However, it also raised several important questions concerning the interpretation of these data. Of particular concern was the difficulty in determining what proportion of the rate increases were due to actual increases in the level of societal violence, and what proportion were due to increased reporting by the public.

A significant proportion of the growth in adult violent offences may be related to increased reporting of spousal assault offences by victims, caused by many factors including more assertive charging practices surrounding common assault cases. For example, spousal assaults represent almost 30 percent of common assault offences, and therefore influence considerably the common assault rate. Because common assaults constitute a majority of violent offences, increases in common assaults help to drive growth in the violent offence rate. Consequently, the introduction of Bill C127, and related changes in spousal assault charging practices, may have had the effect of helping to drive growth in the violent crime rate during the past decade.

To gain a better understanding of the potential underlying causes of elevated common assault reporting rates, a chronology of events related to spousal assault was examined. As demonstrated by the chronology of events in Appendix C, spousal assault evolved into a major public issue during the 1980's with many jurisdictions issuing directives to charge accused in spousal assault cases. In response to Bill C 127, and to the intermittent introduction of spousal assault charging directives by various jurisdictions, police began to lay more charges in spousal assault cases. As a result of these more assertive charging practices, the proportion of assault offences cleared by charge began to escalate, moving from about 25 percent in 1982 to 48 percent in 1992. Hence, while the rate of actual assault offences increased 104 percent during the reference period, the rate of adults charged increased 194 percent, almost twice as fast as the growth in reported assault offences.

The report further suggested that increased police charging in spousal assault cases may also have had the effect of increasing public reporting of common assaults. Victimization studies show that one of the main reasons that victims do not report crimes is that they do not feel that the police can do anything about them. However, if there is evidence that police can respond effectively, (ie. laying more charges in spousal assault cases), then victims should be more likely to report such incidents. In this way, visible evidence of increased charging in spousal assaults may have helped establish a pattern of greater victim reporting.

A similar phenomenon occurred with youth charge rates. The introduction of the Young Offenders Act changed the youth population base by removing 7 to 11 year olds and by adding the relatively more criminally active 16 and 17 year olds. Combined with the publicity surrounding the implementation of the Act, and a corresponding growth in public awareness and sensitivity to youth crime issues, assault reporting rates may have increased. Further, after the introduction of Bill C127, the rate of youths charged with common assault began to increase

much more rapidly than the overall youth Criminal Code rate. The redefinition of Criminal Code assault laws which made it possible to lay more common assault charges, and particularly spousal assault cases, may also have had the spill-over effect of making it possible to lay more charges in all common assault incidents, including youth common assault cases.

When the characteristics of common assault incidents were examined, the study found that females are most likely to be assaulted in their own home by someone that they know, most often a spouse, while males are more likely to be assaulted at locations outside of their home by a non-family member. Also significant was the finding that almost 40 percent of common assault victims were assaulted by a family member; 28 percent by a spouse, 4 percent by a parent, 2 percent by a child, and 4 percent by other family members. This highlights the fact that family violence is a dominant component in common assault offences.

The above analysis suggests that increases in police reported assault rates are not necessarily an indication of increases in the level of violence within society. While violence may be increasing, some portion of the reported increases in violent crime may be related to the fact that much of the violence which has always been present within society is becoming more visible because of increased reporting. Furthermore, increases in assault reporting rates appear to be a response to public policy initiatives which have focused attention on this critical social problem, and as such, have sensitized the public, including victims, to the importance of the issue. Viewed in this way, increases in reported assaults and higher rates of charging in assault cases are evidence of successful public policy initiatives.

A better indicator of real increases in violence should be available with the release of the 1993 Criminal Victimization Report produced as part of the General Social Survey (GSS). Indeed, the 1993 GSS is now in the field and should provide initial data by the Spring of 1994. By comparing any reported changes in 1993 violent victimization levels against 1988 GSS victimization levels, it will be possible to better estimate actual changes in the level of societal violence. For example, if the 1993 GSS finds a rate of violent victimization which is the same as that found in 1988, and police reported data show a increase in reported violent offences during the same period, the difference may be attributed to changes in reporting rates. The GSS victimization results will provide a benchmark against which to compare changes in reported and unreported crime over time, and as such, will assist immeasurably in the interpretation of UCR crime data.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DATA TABLES

Aggregate UCR - Time Series Data

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- Table 2: Actual Offences - Percentage Distribution
- Table 3: Actual Offences - Percentage Change in Rates From 1974
- Table 4: Adults Charged
- Table 5: Common Assault Offence Rates
- Table 6: Youths Charged - Percent Change In Offence Rates 1974-83
- Table 7: Youths Charged - Percent Change in Offence Rates 1986-92
- Table 8: Youths Charged as a Proportion Of Youths Dealt With

UCR Microdata - Common Assault Offences, 1992

- Table 9: Incident Location
- Table 10: Time of Incident
- Table 11: Incident Seasonality
- Table 12: Age of Victims and Accused
- Table 13: Sex of Victims and Accused
- Table 14: Alcohol and Drug Involvement by Victim and Accused
- Table 15: Relationship of Accused to Victim
- Table 16: Location of Incident by Alcohol/Drug Involvement
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- Table 18: Relationship of Accused to Victim by Location of Incident
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- Table 20: Relationship of Accused to Victim by Sex of Victim

TABLE 1: ACTUAL OFFENCES - VIOLENT INDEX COMPOSITION

Violent Offence Counts - Canada Total

Year	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
CC TOTAL	2174061	2277749	2368956	2392369	2431428	2627193	2899006
VIOL INDX	188906	204917	219381	232699	248992	269503	296957
HOMICIDE	698	559	642	575	657	656	753
AT MURDER	862	880	916	836	829	905	1046
SEXUAL AS	18248	20530	22369	24886	26868	27843	30351
LEVEL 1	100979	111757	123684	130109	139836	151585	167220
LEVEL 2	27038	29013	29982	30980	31951	35282	37797
LEVEL 3	2604	2722	2513	2824	3273	3470	3883
AS B-HARM	3465	2947	2962	3735	3838	3908	4065
DIS F-ARM	156	162	171	155	182	202	308
AS POLICE	4861	5225	5756	5568	6132	7137	7074
AS OTH OF	540	568	564	621	621	817	707
OTHER AS	3484	3381	3693	3962	4531	4930	5489
ABDUCTION	910	892	967	1057	1003	1046	1096
ROBBERY	22752	23268	22523	24249	25709	28109	33235

Percent Change In Violent Offence Rates From 1985

CC TOTAL	4.0	7.1	6.9	7.3	14.3	24.3
VIOL INDX	7.7	14.1	19.7	26.4	34.9	46.5
HOMICIDE	-20.5	-9.6	-20.0	-9.7	-11.1	0.6
AT MURD	1.3	4.4	-5.8	-7.8	-0.7	13.1
SEX AS	11.7	20.4	32.5	41.2	44.3	55.0
LEVEL 1	9.9	20.3	25.2	32.8	42.0	54.4
LEVEL 2	6.5	8.9	11.3	13.3	23.4	30.3
LEVEL 3	3.8	-5.2	5.3	20.6	26.0	39.0
AS B-HAR	-15.6	-16.0	4.7	6.2	6.7	9.4
DIS F-ARM	3.1	7.7	-3.5	11.9	22.5	84.0
AS POLICE	6.7	16.3	11.3	21.0	38.9	35.6
AS OTH OF	4.4	2.6	11.7	10.3	43.1	22.0
OTHER AS	-3.7	4.1	10.5	24.7	33.8	46.9
ABDUCT	-2.7	4.4	12.8	5.7	8.7	12.3
ROBBERY	1.5	-2.7	3.5	8.4	16.8	36.2

Violent Offence Counts - Percent Distribution

	7 YEAR AVERAGE	PERCENT CRIM CODE	PERCENT VIOLENT
CC TOTAL	2452966
VIOL INDX	237336	9.68	...
HOMICIDE	649	0.03	0.3
AT MURDER	896	0.04	0.4
SEXUAL AS	24442	1.00	10.3
LEVEL 1	132167	5.39	55.7
LEVEL 2	31720	1.29	13.4
LEVEL 3	3041	0.12	1.3
AS B-HARM	3560	0.15	1.5
DIS F-ARM	191	0.01	0.1
AS POLICE	5965	0.24	2.5
AS OTH OF	634	0.03	0.3
OTHER AS	4210	0.17	1.8
ABDUCTION	996	0.04	0.4
ROBBERY	25692	1.05	10.8

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

TABLE 2: ACTUAL OFFENCES - DISTRIBUTION

Offence Counts By Year

	CRIMINAL CODE	VIOLENT INDEX	COMMON ASSAULT	TOT POP (X 000)
1974	1457347	126049	70362	22367
1975	1585805	135423	73901	22695
1976	1638018	136930	74549	22994
1977	1654020	135740	71544	23272
1978	1714298	138961	73484	23520
1979	1855191	147523	77930	23747
1980	2045399	155861	80896	24043
1981	2168151	162224	83126	24342
1982	2203668	168642	86093	24583
1983	2148635	170036	82460	24789
1984	2147697	178568	92066	24981
1985	2174061	188906	100979	25167
1986	2277749	204917	111757	25354
1987	2368956	219381	123684	25617
1988	2392369	232699	130109	25909
1989	2431428	248992	139836	26240
1990	2627193	269505	151585	26610
1991	2899006	296957	167220	27000
1992	2848091	307491	175736	27409

Offence Rates Per 100,000 Population & Offence Distribution

	CRIMINAL CODE	VIOLENT INDEX	COMMON ASSAULT	VIOL % CC	ASS % VIOL
1974	6515.6	563.5	314.6	8.6	55.8
1975	6987.5	596.7	325.6	8.5	54.6
1976	7123.7	595.5	324.2	8.4	54.4
1977	7107.3	583.3	307.4	8.2	52.7
1978	7288.7	590.8	312.4	8.1	52.9
1979	7812.3	621.2	328.2	8.0	52.8
1980	8507.3	648.3	336.5	7.6	51.9
1981	8907.0	666.4	341.5	7.5	51.2
1982	8964.2	686.0	350.2	7.7	51.1
1983	8667.7	685.9	332.6	7.9	48.5
1984	8597.3	714.8	368.5	8.3	51.6
1985	8638.5	750.6	401.2	8.7	53.5
1986	8983.8	808.2	440.8	9.0	54.5
1987	9247.5	856.4	482.8	9.3	56.4
1988	9233.7	898.1	502.2	9.7	55.9
1989	9266.0	948.9	532.9	10.2	56.2
1990	9872.8	1012.8	569.6	10.3	56.2
1991	10736.9	1099.8	619.3	10.2	56.3
1992	10391.1	1121.9	641.2	10.8	57.2

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN OFFENCE RATES FROM 1974

	CRIMINAL CODE	VIOLENT INDEX	COMMON ASSAULT
1974			
1975	7.2	5.9	3.5
1976	9.3	5.7	3.1
1977	9.1	3.5	-2.3
1978	11.9	4.8	-0.7
1979	19.9	10.2	4.3
1980	30.6	15.0	7.0
1981	36.7	18.3	8.6
1982	37.6	21.7	11.3
1983	33.0	21.7	5.7
1984	31.9	26.8	17.2
1985	32.6	33.2	27.5
1986	37.9	43.4	40.1
1987	41.9	52.0	53.5
1988	41.7	59.4	59.6
1989	42.2	68.4	69.4
1990	51.5	79.7	81.1
1991	64.8	95.2	96.9
1992	59.5	99.1	103.8

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistic.

TABLE 4: ADULTS CHARGED

Adults Charged By Selected Offence Groups

	CRIMINAL CODE	VIOLENT INDEX	COMMON ASSAULT	VIOLENT % CCC	ASSAULT % VIOL	ADULT POP
1974	252134	41990	17923	16.7	42.7	15416
1975	273938	42919	17588	15.7	41.0	15817
1976	297690	44374	17520	14.9	39.5	16200
1977	309834	45678	17010	14.7	37.2	16584
1978	326132	47606	17595	14.6	37.0	16939
1979	342151	49118	18328	14.4	37.3	17325
1980	375341	52765	19643	14.1	37.2	17703
1981	394601	53807	19612	13.6	36.4	18085
1982	386868	53910	19241	13.9	35.7	18393
1983	404752	62620	25207	15.5	40.3	18646
1984	397933	68333	30364	17.2	44.4	18863
1985	376541	71478	33951	19.0	47.5	18582
1986	392742	78682	38898	20.0	49.4	18783
1987	411845	86808	44806	21.1	51.6	19046
1988	418929	92761	49178	22.1	53.0	19332
1989	419636	100328	53642	23.9	53.5	19610
1990	441119	110267	59621	25.0	54.1	19940
1991	481278	122718	67844	25.5	55.3	20251
1992	475041	125955	70322	26.5	55.8	20563

Adults Charged: Rate Per 100,00 pop & Percent Change in Offence Rates

	Rate per 100,000 POP			Percent Change from 1974		
	CRIMINAL CODE	VIOLENT INDEX	COMMON ASSAULT	CRIMINAL CODE	VIOLENT INDEX	COMMON ASSAULT
1974	1635.5	272.4	116.3
1975	1731.9	271.3	111.2	5.9	-0.4	-4.4
1976	1837.6	273.9	108.1	12.4	0.6	-7.0
1977	1868.3	275.4	102.6	14.2	1.1	-11.8
1978	1925.3	281.0	103.9	17.7	3.2	-10.7
1979	1974.9	283.5	105.8	20.7	4.1	-9.0
1980	2120.2	298.1	111.0	29.6	9.4	-4.6
1981	2181.9	297.5	108.4	33.4	9.2	-6.7
1982	2103.3	293.1	104.6	28.6	7.6	-10.0
1983	2170.7	335.8	135.2	32.7	23.3	16.3
1984	2109.6	362.3	161.0	29.0	33.0	38.5
1985	2026.4	384.7	182.7	23.9	41.2	57.2
1986	2090.9	418.9	207.1	27.8	53.8	78.1
1987	2162.4	455.8	235.3	32.2	67.3	102.3
1988	2167.1	479.8	254.4	32.5	76.2	118.8
1989	2139.9	511.6	273.5	30.8	87.8	135.3
1990	2212.2	553.0	299.0	35.3	103.0	157.2
1991	2376.6	606.0	335.0	45.3	122.5	188.2
1992	2310.2	612.5	342.0	41.2	124.9	194.1

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 5: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCE RATES

Common Assault Rate Per 100,000 Population

	REPORTED	UNFOUNDED	ACTUAL OFFENCES	CLEARED BY CHARGE	CLEARED OTHERWISE
1974	345.2	30.7	314.6	80.0	172.1
1975	355.6	30.0	325.6	77.9	174.0
1976	355.5	31.3	324.2	76.3	173.3
1977	336.2	28.8	307.4	75.1	167.3
1978	338.9	26.5	312.4	76.5	167.7
1979	354.7	26.5	328.2	79.2	178.0
1980	361.4	24.9	336.5	82.6	183.4
1981	367.5	26.0	341.5	81.4	187.5
1982	376.1	25.9	350.2	80.9	193.0
1983	354.5	21.8	332.6	104.2	156.4
1984	395.4	26.9	368.5	128.4	166.7
1985	431.2	30.0	401.2	149.3	173.5
1986	476.3	35.5	440.8	172.2	178.9
1987	521.5	38.6	482.8	198.8	188.3
1988	541.4	39.2	502.2	216.1	188.0
1989	576.5	45.0	531.5	235.7	189.7
1990	620.1	50.5	569.6	261.0	195.4
1991	675.1	55.8	619.3	295.0	205.0
1992	697.4	56.2	641.2	304.5	211.9

Common Assault Offences: Percent Distribution

	ACTUAL UNFOUNDED % Reported	CLEARED OFFENCES % REPORTED	CLEARED BY CHARGE % ACT OFF	CLEARED OTHERWISE % ACT OFF
1974	8.9	91.1	25.4	54.7
1975	8.4	91.6	23.9	53.4
1976	8.8	91.2	23.5	53.5
1977	8.6	91.4	24.4	54.4
1978	7.8	92.2	24.5	53.7
1979	7.5	92.5	24.1	54.2
1980	6.9	93.1	24.5	54.5
1981	7.1	92.9	23.8	54.9
1982	6.9	93.1	23.1	55.1
1983	6.2	93.8	31.3	47.0
1984	6.8	93.2	34.8	45.2
1985	7.0	93.0	37.2	43.3
1986	7.5	92.5	39.1	40.6
1987	7.4	92.6	41.2	39.0
1988	7.2	92.7	43.0	37.4
1989	7.8	92.2	44.3	35.7
1990	8.1	91.8	45.8	34.3
1991	8.3	91.7	47.6	33.1
1992	8.1	91.9	47.5	33.0

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

TABLE 6: YOUTHS CHARGED - PERCENT CHANGE IN OFFENCE RATES 1974-1983

Offence Rates Per 100,000 Population

	CHARGED CCC	DEALT W CCC	CHARGED VIOLENT	DEALT W VIOLENT	CHARGED ASSAULT	DEALT W ASSAULT
1974	1426.9	2834.2	76.0	153.8	20.5	76.1
1975	1620.7	2999.0	85.4	162.6	22.1	78.2
1976	1650.1	3163.6	88.7	177.1	24.1	87.7
1977	1649.7	3160.5	98.6	196.8	25.5	97.2
1978	1706.9	3550.6	99.2	248.1	27.2	123.8
1979						
1980	2148.5	4176.7	123.8	307.5	33.5	147.6
1981	2306.9	4152.9	124.2	247.9	34.7	119.8
1982	2055.0	3919.8	123.0	254.1	34.9	127.1
1983	2167.2	4242.6	128.2	275.2	38.1	114.9

Youths Charged: Percent Change In Charge Rates From 1974

	CHARGED CCC	DEALT W CCC	CHARGED VIOLENT	DEALT W VIOLENT	CHARGED ASSAULT	DEALT W ASSAULT
1974						
1975	13.6	5.8	12.4	5.8	7.8	2.7
1976	15.6	11.6	16.8	15.2	17.2	15.2
1977	15.6	11.5	29.7	28.0	24.1	27.6
1978	19.6	25.3	30.5	61.3	32.2	62.2
1979						
1980	50.6	47.4	63.0	100.0	62.9	93.8
1981	61.7	46.5	63.4	61.2	68.7	57.4
1982	44.0	38.3	61.9	65.2	69.7	67.0
1983	51.9	49.7	68.7	79.0	85.2	50.9

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

NOTE: Because of data quality problems associated with a change in reporting procedures for juveniles not charged, data for 1979 are not displayed.

TABLE 7: YOUTHS CHARGED - PERCENT CHANGE IN OFFENCE RATES 1986-1992

Offence Rates Per 100,000 Population

	CHARGED CCC	DEALT W CCC	CHARGED VIOLENT	DEALT W VIOLENT	CHARGED ASSAULT	DEALT W ASSAULT
1986	4877.2	7717.2	415.0	659.7	178.9	354.4
1987	4851.3	8000.7	457.9	743.6	213.2	420.4
1988	4997.2	7964.2	520.1	810.9	240.7	451.5
1989	5324.2	8269.1	632.7	943.8	298.5	520.3
1990	5810.3	8459.3	720.4	1033.6	349.0	571.9
1991	6491.1	9518.9	867.5	1223.6	408.4	659.5
1992	6082.8	9206.1	900.3	1295.3	432.4	715.0

Youths Charged: Percent Change In Charge Rates From 1986

	CHARGED CCC	DEALT W CCC	CHARGED VIOLENT	DEALT W VIOLENT	CHARGED ASSAULT	DEALT W ASSAULT
1986						
1987	-0.5	3.7	10.3	12.7	19.2	18.6
1988	2.5	3.2	25.3	22.9	34.6	27.4
1989	9.2	7.2	52.5	43.1	66.8	46.8
1990	19.1	9.6	73.6	57.4	95.1	61.4
1991	33.1	23.3	109.0	85.5	128.3	86.1
1992	24.7	19.3	117.0	96.3	141.7	101.8

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

TABLE 8: YOUTHS CHARGED AS A PROPORTION OF YOUTHS DEALT WITH

Percentage Distribution of Offences

	CHARGED CCC % D-WITH	NOT CHR G CCC % D-WITH	CHARGED VIOLENT % D-WITH	NOT CHR G VIOLENT % D-WITH	CHARGED ASSAULT % D-WITH	CHARGED ASSAULT % D-WITH
1982	52.4	47.6	48.4	51.6	27.4	72.6
1983	51.1	48.9	46.6	53.4	33.1	66.9
1984	52.5	47.5	49.1	50.9	33.7	66.3
1985	60.5	39.5	59.8	40.2	46.4	53.6
1986	63.2	36.8	62.9	37.1	50.5	49.5
1987	60.6	39.4	61.6	38.4	50.7	49.3
1988	62.7	37.3	64.1	35.9	53.3	46.7
1989	64.4	35.6	67.0	33.0	57.4	42.6
1990	68.7	31.7	69.7	30.6	61.0	39.2
1991	68.2	31.8	70.9	29.5	61.9	38.3
1992	66.1	33.9	69.5	30.6	60.5	39.7

Source: Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 9: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992
Incident Location

	Freq.	Percent
Single Home/Dwelling Unit	22098	50.2
Commercial Dwelling	664	1.5
Commercial/Corporate Places	6788	15.4
Parking Lots	1691	3.8
Schools	1620	3.7
Public Institutions	1488	3.4
Public Transportation	761	1.7
Streets-Roads	7712	17.5
Open Areas	1193	2.7
Total	44015	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 10: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992
Time of Incident

	Freq.	Percent
6:00 am - 8:59 am	1779	4.4
9:00 am - 11:59 am	3635	9.0
12:00 pm - 2:59 pm	5148	12.7
3:00 pm - 5:59 pm	7038	17.4
6:00 pm - 8:59 pm	7506	18.6
9:00 pm - 11:59 pm	7146	17.7
12:00 am - 2:59 am	5876	14.6
3:00 am - 5:59 am	2249	5.6
Total	40377	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 11: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992
Incident Seasonality

	Freq.	Percent
January	3009	6.8
February	3156	7.1
March	3417	7.7
April	3581	8.1
May	4088	9.2
June	4066	9.2
July	3825	8.6
August	3939	8.9
September	3946	8.9
October	4144	9.4
November	3575	8.1
December	3504	7.9
Total	44250	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

TABLE 12: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992Victim and Accused Characteristics: **AGE**

	Victim Freq.	Victim Percent	Accused Freq.	Accused Percent
Age 1-11	1931	4.2	218	0.7
Age 12-17	6205	13.5	3373	10.6
Age 18-24	10192	22.2	6181	19.4
Age 25-29	7464	16.3	5566	17.4
Age 30-34	6416	14.0	5206	16.3
Age 35-39	4696	10.2	3901	12.2
Age 40-44	3255	7.1	2662	8.3
Age 45-49	2174	4.7	1714	5.4
Age 50-54	1313	2.9	1112	3.5
Age 55 Plus	2198	4.8	1994	6.2
Total	45844	100.0	31927	100.0

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 13: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992Victim and Accused Characteristics: **SEX**

	Victim Freq.	Victim Percent	Accused Freq.	Accused Percent
Male	21879	46.0	27553	85.8
Female	25718	54.0	4552	14.2
Total	47597	100.0	32105	100.0

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 14: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992Victim and Accused Characteristics: **ALCOHOL/DRUG INVOLVEMENT**

	Victim Freq.	Victim Percent	Accused Freq.	Accused Percent
Consump. Not Apparent	29699	62.3	20908	65.0
Unknown Sub. Consumed	13288	27.9	7206	22.4
Consumption of Alcohol	4446	9.3	3566	11.1
Consumption of Drugs	149	0.3	154	0.5
Consumption of Both	119	0.2	310	1.0
Total	47701	100.0	32144	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 15: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992
Relationship of Accused to Victim

	Freq.	Percent
Spouse or Ex Spouse	12473	27.7
Parent	1745	3.9
Child	810	1.8
Other Immediate Family	1311	2.9
Extended Family	572	1.3
Close Friend	3704	8.2
Business Relationship	3217	7.2
Casual Acquaintance	11228	25.0
Stranger	9888	22.0
Total	44948	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 16: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES, 1992
Location of Incident BY Alcohol/Drug Consumption:

	Victim Impaired	Victim Not Imp	Accused Impaired	Accused Not Imp
Dwelling				
Freq.	9451	14858	6449	11281
Row %	38.9	61.1	36.4	63.6
Column %	52.5	50.4	57.5	54.4
Commercial Place				
Freq.	3468	3948	1929	2560
Row %	46.8	53.2	43.0	57.0
Column %	19.3	13.4	17.2	12.3
Parking Lots				
Freq.	470	1390	265	954
Row %	25.3	74.7	21.7	78.3
Column %	2.6	4.7	2.4	4.6
Streets/Roads				
Freq.	2719	5653	1605	3451
Row %	32.5	67.5	31.7	68.3
Column %	15.1	19.2	14.3	16.6
Pub Places/Open Areas				
Freq.	1877	3609	972	2497
Row %	34.2	65.8	28.0	72.0
Column %	10.4	12.3	8.7	12.0
Total	17985	29458	11220	20743
Column %	37.9	62.1	35.1	64.9

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 17: COMMON ASSAULT IN CANADA
Location of Incident - By Sex of Victim:

	Female Victims	Male Victims	Total
Dwelling			
Freq.	17567	6713	24280
Row %	72.4	27.6	100.0
Column %	68.6	30.9	51.3
Commercial Place			
Freq.	2573	4811	7384
Row %	34.8	65.2	100.0
Column %	10.1	22.1	15.6
Parking Lots			
Freq.	643	1215	1858
Row %	34.6	65.4	100.0
Column %	2.5	5.6	3.9
Streets/Roads			
Freq.	2892	5452	8344
Row %	34.7	65.3	100.0
Column %	11.3	25.1	17.6
Public Places/Open Areas			
Freq.	1922	3551	5473
Row %	35.1	64.9	100.0
Column %	7.5	16.3	11.6
Total			
Freq.	25597	21742	47339
Column %	54.1	45.9	100.0

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 18: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES
Relationship of Accused to Victim By Location:

	Dwelling/ Residence	Comm. Place	Streets Roads	Parking Lots	Public Place	Total
Spouse/ Ex Spouse						
Freq.	11028	414	689	159	147	12437
Row %	88.7	3.3	5.5	1.3	1.2	100.0
Col %	46.6	6.1	9.0	9.5	2.9	27.7
Parent						
Freq.	1495	44	58	18	118	1733
Row %	86.3	2.5	3.3	1.0	6.8	100.0
Col %	6.3	0.6	0.8	1.1	2.3	3.9
Child						
Freq.	786	12	22	7	16	843
Row %	93.2	1.4	2.6	0.8	1.9	100.0
Col %	3.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.9
Oth Family						
Freq.	1536	123	126	38	55	1878
Row %	81.8	6.5	6.7	2.0	2.9	100.0
Col %	6.5	1.8	1.6	2.3	1.1	4.2
Cl. Friend						
Freq.	2769	297	390	94	144.0	3694
Row %	75.0	8.0	10.6	2.5	3.9	100.0
Col %	11.7	4.4	5.1	5.6	2.8	8.2
Bus. Rel.						
Freq.	663	1130	309	73	1079.0	3254
Row %	20.4	34.7	9.5	2.2	33.2	100.0
Col %	2.8	16.6	4.0	4.4	21.3	7.3
Casual Acq.						
Freq.	4089	2211	2448	603	1811.0	11162
Row %	36.6	19.8	21.9	5.4	16.2	100.0
Col %	17.3	32.5	32.0	36.0	35.8	24.9
Stranger						
Freq.	1294	2562	3616	681	1687.0	9840
Row %	13.2	26.0	36.7	6.9	17.1	100.0
Col %	5.5	37.7	47.2	40.7	33.4	21.9
Total	23660	6793	7658	1673	5057	44841
Column %	53	15	17	4	11	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 19: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES
Relationship of Accused to Victim - By Occupancy Status

	Joint Occupancy	Occ by Victim	Occ by Accused	Not Occ Vic/Acc	Total
Spouse/Ex Spouse					
Freq.	8242	1990	391	338	10961
Row %	75.2	18.2	3.6	3.1	100
Column %	67.4	28.6	17.2	18.3	47.0
Parent					
Freq.	1187	164	106	30	1487
Row %	79.8	11.0	7.1	2.0	100
Column %	9.7	2.4	4.7	1.6	6.4
Child					
Freq.	567	140	29	10	746
Row %	76.0	18.8	3.9	1.3	100
Column %	4.6	2.0	1.3	0.5	3.2
Other Family					
Freq.	666	496	198	155	1515
Row %	44.0	32.7	13.1	10.2	100
Column %	5.4	7.1	8.7	8.4	6.5
Close Friend					
Freq.	717	1357	438	200	2712
Row %	26.4	50.0	16.2	7.4	100
Column %	5.9	19.5	19.2	10.8	11.6
Business Relation					
Freq.	154	212	211	77	654
Row %	23.5	32.4	32.3	11.8	100
Column %	1.3	3.0	9.3	4.2	2.8
Casual Acquaint.					
Freq.	573	2018	724	693	4008
Row %	14.3	50.3	18.1	17.3	100
Column %	4.7	29.0	31.8	37.5	17.2
Stranger					
Freq.	121	584	179	347	1231
Row %	9.8	47.4	14.5	28.2	100
Column %	1.0	8.4	7.9	18.8	5.3
Total					
Freq.	12227	6961	2276	1850	23314
Column %	52.4	29.9	9.8	7.9	100

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

TABLE 20: COMMON ASSAULT OFFENCES
Relationship of Accused to Victim - By Sex of Victim:

	Female Victims	Male Victims	Total
Spouse/Ex Spouse			
Freq.	11442	1017	12459
Row %	91.8	8.2	100.0
Column %	47.8	5.3	28.8
Parent			
Freq.	998	741	1739
Row %	57.4	42.6	100.0
Column %	4.2	3.8	4.0
Child			
Freq.	542	266	808
Row %	67.1	32.9	100.0
Column %	2.3	1.4	1.9
Other Family			
Freq.	1090	793	1883
Row %	57.9	42.1	100.0
Column %	4.5	4.1	4.4
Close Friend			
Freq.	3039	659	3698
Row %	82.2	17.8	100.0
Column %	12.7	3.4	8.6
Business Relation			
Freq.	1001	2204	3205
Row %	31.2	68.8	100.0
Column %	4.2	11.4	7.4
Casual Acquaint			
Freq.	4141	7069	11210
Row %	36.9	63.1	100.0
Column %	17.3	36.7	25.9
Stranger			
Freq.	2645	7208	9853
Row %	26.8	73.2	100.0
Column %	11.0	37.4	22.8
Total			
Freq.	23957	19258	43216
Column %	55.4	44.6	100.0

Source: Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Canadian Centre For Justice Statistics.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

UCR - Uniform Crime Reporting Survey:

1. **Aggregate UCR Survey** - aggregate-based survey that records the number of incidents reported to the police. It includes the number of reported offences and the number of actual offences (excluding unfounded), the number of offences cleared by charge, the number of adults charged and the number of youths charged, and the gender of persons charged. It does not include victim characteristics.
2. **Revised UCR Survey** - microdata survey that captures information on individual criminal incidents reported to police, including characteristics of victims, accused persons and incidents. Definitions of Revised UCR variables are presented below:

Age refers to information reported by the police regarding the date of birth of the accused and for victims of violent crimes. If the exact information is not available, the police officer estimates the apparent age of the accused and victim.

Alcohol/Drug Use refers to the ingestion of alcohol and or drugs to the extent of being impaired. It is collected for all victim records (victims of violent crimes), and all accused involved in violent crimes, and those accused of UCR Traffic Offences.

Date and Time of Incident describes the date and the time of day the incident is known or believed to have occurred. When the actual date and time are not known, but it is known that the incident occurred somewhere between two given dates and times, these will be captured.

Gender includes male, female, unknown gender and company if the accused is a registered company. It is collected for all victims of violent crime and all accused involved in an incident.

Location of Incident refers to the actual place where the incident took place. It is split into two fields, the first describes private and public locations, and the second field, scored only for private locations and violent offences, describes whether the dwelling was occupied by the victim, accused, or a person other than the victim or accused.

Private locations include all private or commercial residences or dwellings where all structures, owned or rented, are intended for overnight accommodation. This includes single homes, row houses, apartments, rooming houses and hotel rooms.

Public locations include all non-residential properties and places where the public has general access to the structure and property. Includes Commercial and Corporate Places (office buildings, bars, restaurants, grocery stores, factories), Parking Lots, Schools, Public Institutions (government buildings, city hall, hospitals, churches, correctional facilities), Public Transportation (airports, bus or ferry depots, train or subway stations), Streets,

Roads and Highways, and Open Areas (parks, playgrounds, lakes, rivers).

Relationship of Accused to Victim establishes the nature of the relationship (ie. blood, legal, or known) between the victim and an accused for violent violations. It does so by establishing the identity of the accused (husband, child, friend) relative to the victim, at the time the incident occurred. These are:

1. **Spouse/ex-spouse** - accused is the husband or wife (or former) of the victim through marriage or common-law.
2. **Parent** - accused is the natural father or mother of the victim, or the legal guardian with legal custody of the child.
3. **Child** - accused is the natural offspring of the victim or the victim has legal care and custody of the child.
4. **Other Immediate Family** - accused is the brother or sister of the victim, or step, half, foster, or adopted brother or sister.
5. **Extended Family** - accused is related by blood or marriage including grand parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, sister/brother in law, parents-in-law, as well as step, half, foster, or adopted.
6. **Close Friend** - accused has a long-term and/or close (or intimate) relationship with the victim. Includes ex-friends.
7. **Business relationship** - accused has a relationship in which the workplace or business involved is the primary source of contact. Includes fellow workers, business partners, employee-employer, teacher-student, etc.
8. **Casual Acquaintance** - accused has a social relationship which is neither long-term or close. Includes persons known by sight, neighbours, etc.
9. **Stranger** - the accused is not known to the victim in any way.

UCR Violent Index Offences:

1. **Homicide/Attempted Murder:** Includes - first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, and attempted murder.
2. **Sexual Assault:** Includes - aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, and other sexual assaults.
3. **Aggravated Assault:** Includes - aggravated assault and assault with a weapon.
4. **Common Assault:** Includes - all common or simple assaults (Crim Code Section 265) no serious injuries involved.
5. **Robbery:** Includes - robbery with firearm, robbery with other offensive weapon, and robbery with no offensive weapon.
6. **Other Violent Offences:** Includes - abduction, assaulting a police officer assaulting other peace officer and assault with intent to resist arrest.

APPENDIC C: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS RELATED TO SPOUSAL ASSAULT

- 1979: Federal Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence was established;
- 1980: Speech from the Throne references violence against women;
- 1980: Publication of Linda MacLeod's "Wife Battering is Every Women's Issue: A Summary Report of the CACSW Consultation on Wife Battering";
- 1981: Private Members' Motion to have the issue of wife abuse examined by the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs;
- 1981: Publication of Peter Jaffe's "An Integrated Response to Wife Assault: A Community Model";
- 1981: Directive issued to lay charges where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe an assault has occurred in wife assault cases - London, Ontario;
- 1982: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence is established;
- 1982: Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs report on violence in the family tabled in the House of Commons;
- 1982: Ontario issues a directive to police agencies to lay charges in spousal assault cases where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe an assault has occurred;
- 1982: Saskatchewan issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1983: Bill C127 (redefining the sexual and physical assault sections of the Criminal Code) comes into effect;
- 1983: Manitoba issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1983: Prince Edward Island issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1983: Directive issued to the RCMP in the NWT and the Yukon by the Justice Minister and the Solicitor General that the police are to lay charges in cases of wife assault where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe an assault occurred;
- 1984: Spousal assault charging directive issued to the remainder of the RCMP across the country;

- 1986: Final report of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Wife Battering;
- 1987: Quebec issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1987: Newfoundland issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1988: Announcement of the Federal Government's first Family Violence Initiative;
- 1988: Nova Scotia issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1989: New Brunswick issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1990: Alberta issues spousal assault charging directive;
- 1991: Development of the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women;
- 1992: Announcement of the Federal Government's second Family Violence Initiative.

APPENDIX D: REFERENCES

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