

Lecture 7A: Distribution of Crime

Part I. Class

Part II. Age

Part III. Gender

Part IV. Ethnicity/Race

Part V. Criminal Careers

Part I. Class

- Official statistics indicate crime rates are higher in inner-city, high poverty areas than those in wealthier sub-urban areas. Prisoners are often from lower class and unemployed backgrounds.
- **Is there real a disparity in crime, or does the criminal justice system discriminate?**

Class and Self-Report

- Large number of self-report studies conducted since the 1950's show that there is NOT a class relationship with crime.
- Critics argue that the self-report studies are biased, as they mainly ask questions about trivial offenses such as using a fake ID and drinking. Including serious felony offenses, results in a significant association between lower classes and crime.

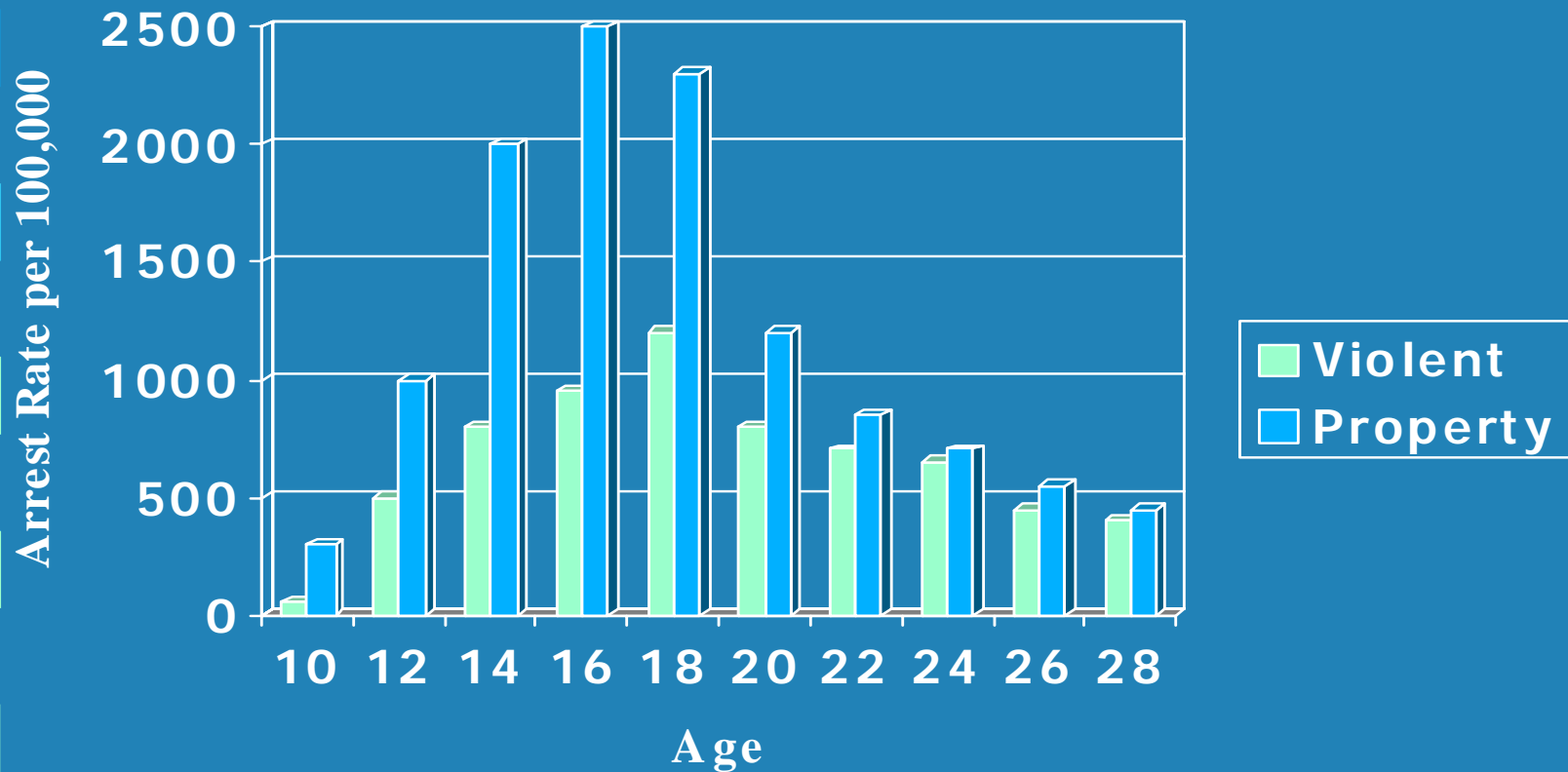
Class and other Correlates

- How do we measure “class”? A weak class/crime association occurs when father’s occupation and education are used, but stronger effect when unemployment and welfare are used.
- There are often interaction effects with other variables (e.g., poor white females more crime prone than poor African American females).

Part II. Age and Crime

- Major finding in Criminology: Age is inversely related to criminality (i.e. younger individuals more likely to be involved in crime).
- Youths aged 13 to 17 comprise 6% of U.S. population, but account for 30% of index crime arrests.

The Age-Crime Curve



Hypothetical Age-Crime Curves at Individual Level

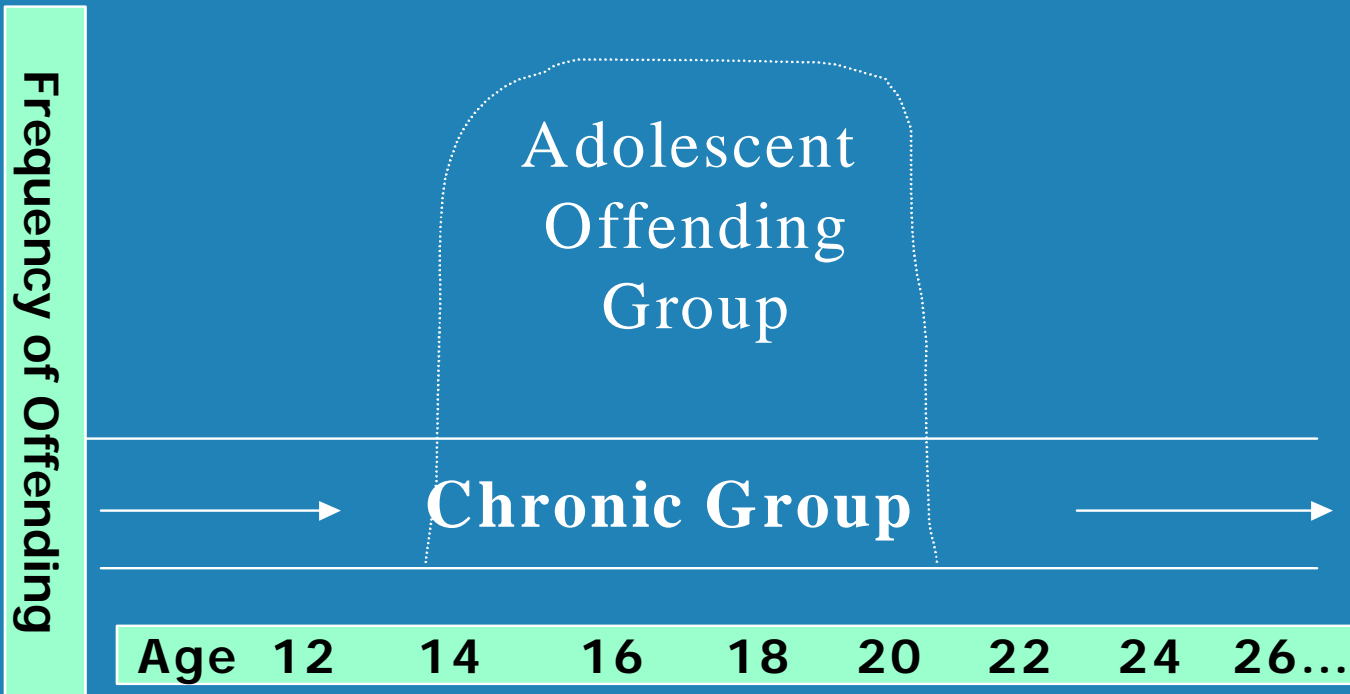
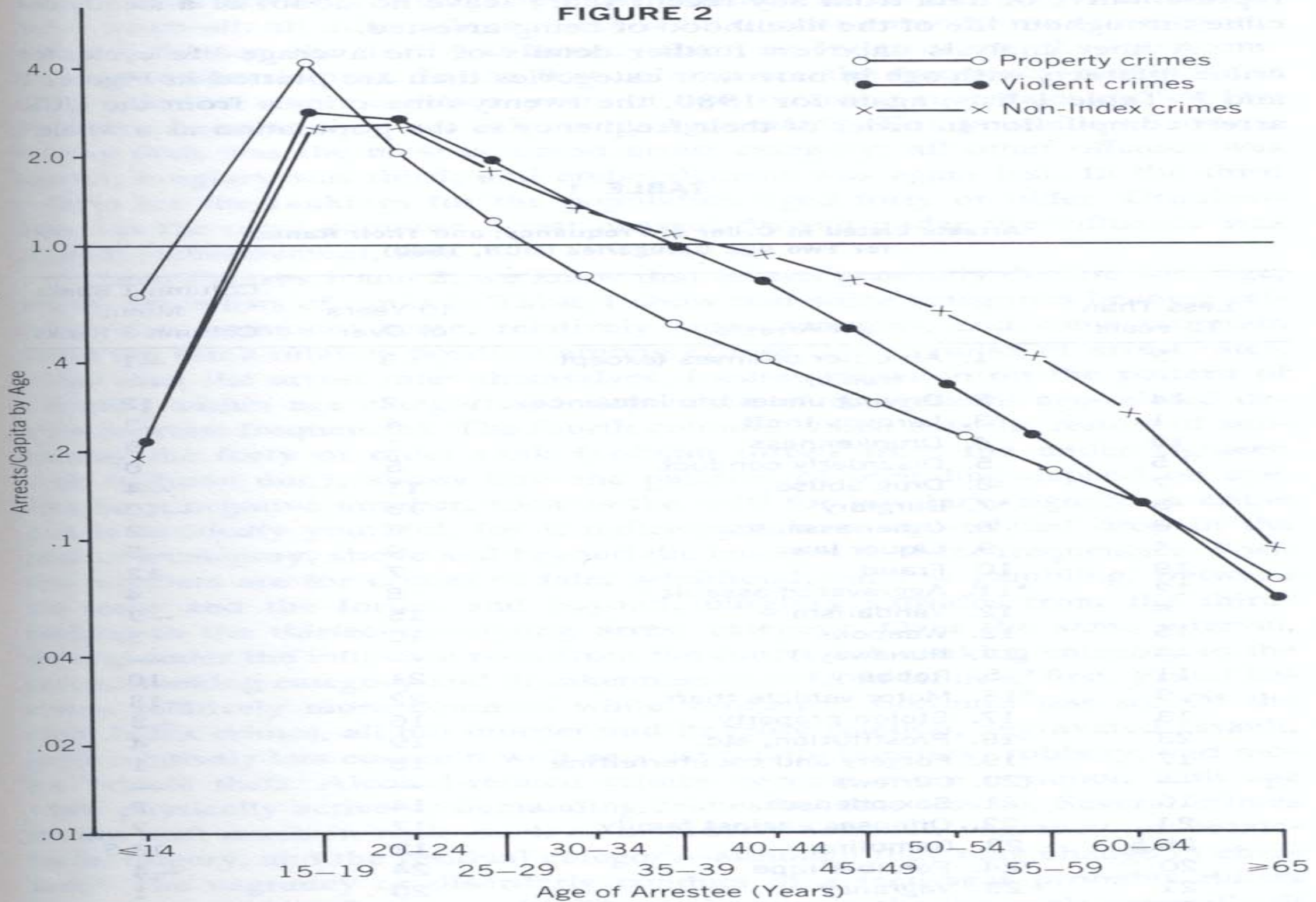


FIGURE 2

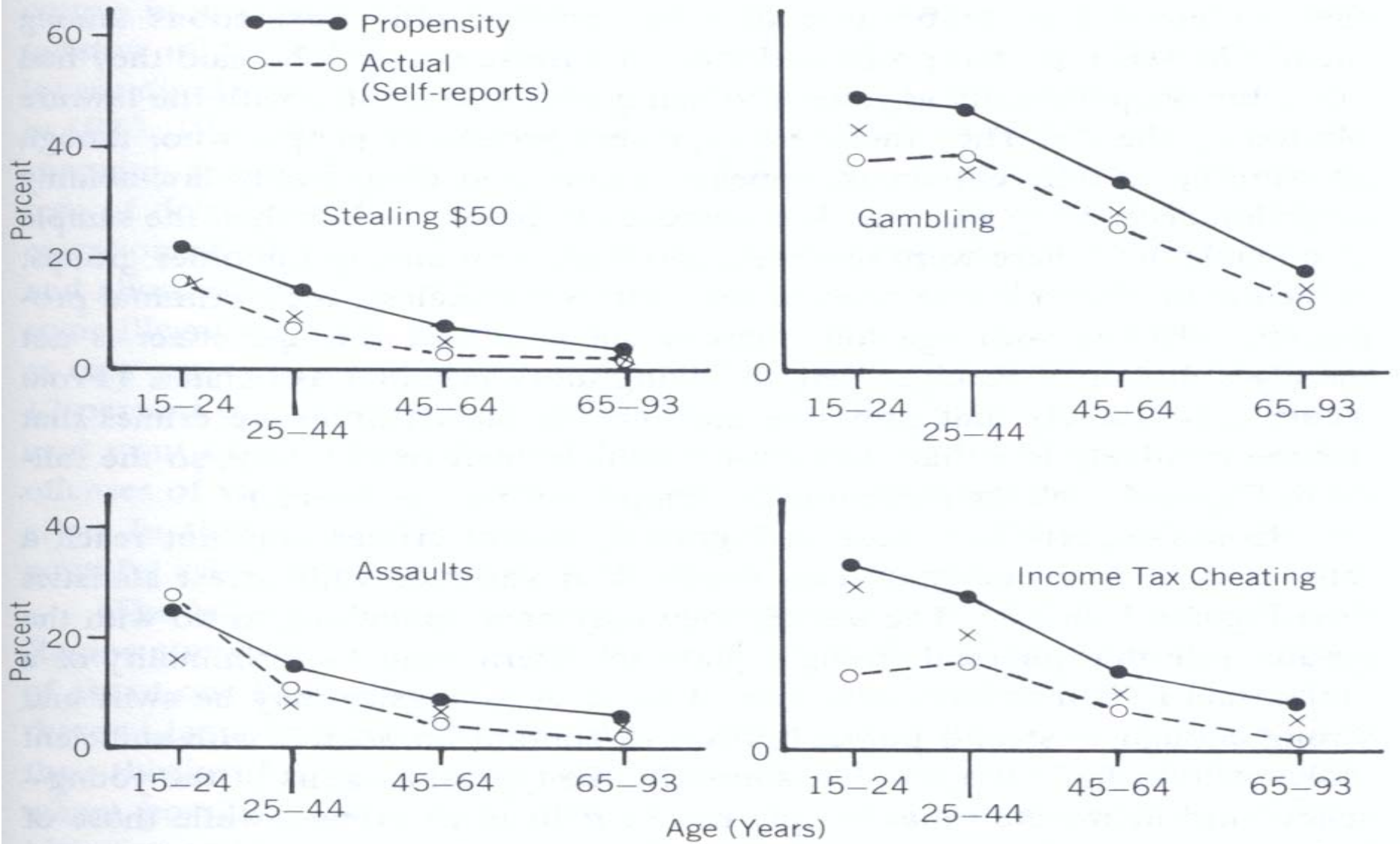


Proportion of arrests (in 1980) per proportion of the population at large in each age category for property and violent Index crime and non-Index crime, plotted on a logarithmic axis. If arrests were equally spread over the life cycle, the curves would be horizontal at a value of 1.0.

Does Age Matter For Criminological Theories?

- Invariant Hypothesis: Association between age and crime is constant among all types or people (e.g., ethnicity, gender, class), thus irrelevant to the study of crime.
- Variant Hypothesis: There is a strong correlation between age and crime, but this pattern varies by gender, type of crime, social and cultural conditions, and other factors. Thus, important to the study age specifically to understand crime.

FIGURE 4



Adapted from A. R. Rowe and C. R. Tittle, Life cycle changes and criminal propensity, *The Sociological Quarterly* (1977), 18:228.

TABLE 1

**Arrests Listed in Order of Frequency, and Their Ranks
for Two Age Categories (UCR, 1980)**

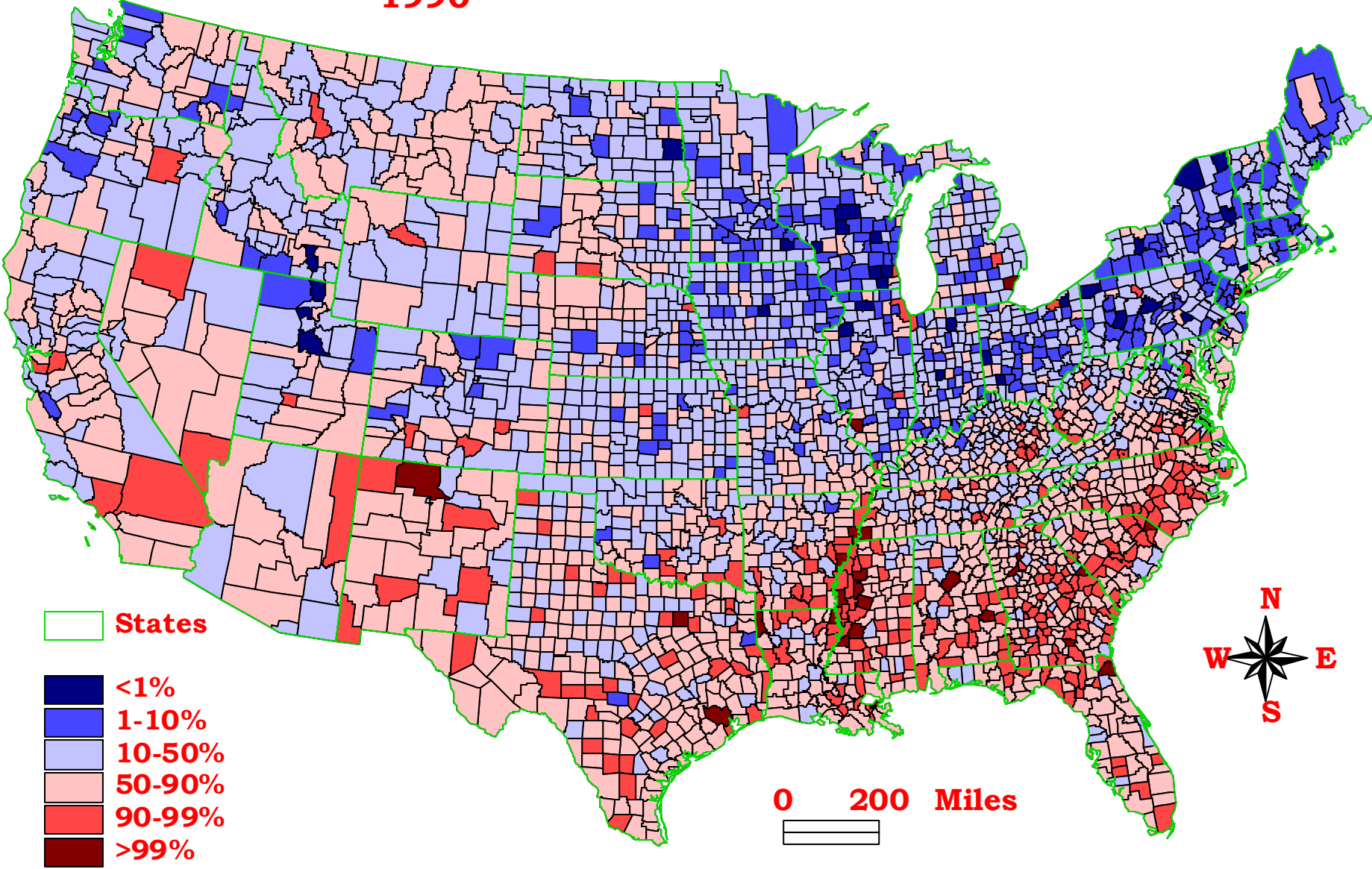
Less Than 18 Years	All Arrests	40 Years or Over	Column 1 Ranks Minus Column 3 Ranks
2	1. All other offenses (except traffic)	3	-1
14	2. Driving under the influence	2	12
1	*3. Larceny theft	4	-3
10	4. Drunkenness	1	9
5	5. Disorderly conduct	5	0
7	6. Drug abuse	11	-4
3	*7. Burglary	13	-10
8	8. Other assaults	6	2
4	9. Liquor laws	9	-5
19	10. Fraud	7	12
12	*11. Aggravated assault	8	4
6	12. Vandalism	15	-9
15	13. Weapons	10	5
—	(14. Runaways)	—	—
11	*15. Robbery	21	-10
9	*16. Motor vehicle theft	22	-13
13	17. Stolen property	16	-3
23	18. Prostitution, etc.	19	4
17	19. Forgery and counterfeiting	18	-1
—	(20. Curfew)	—	—
16	21. Sex offenses	14	2
24	22. Offenses against family	17	7
25.5	23. Gambling	12	13.5
20	*24. Forcible rape	24	-4
21	25. Vagrancy	20	1
25.5	*26. Murder, etc.	23	2.5
22	27. Suspicion	26	-4
18	*28. Arson	25	-7
27	29. Embezzlement	27	0

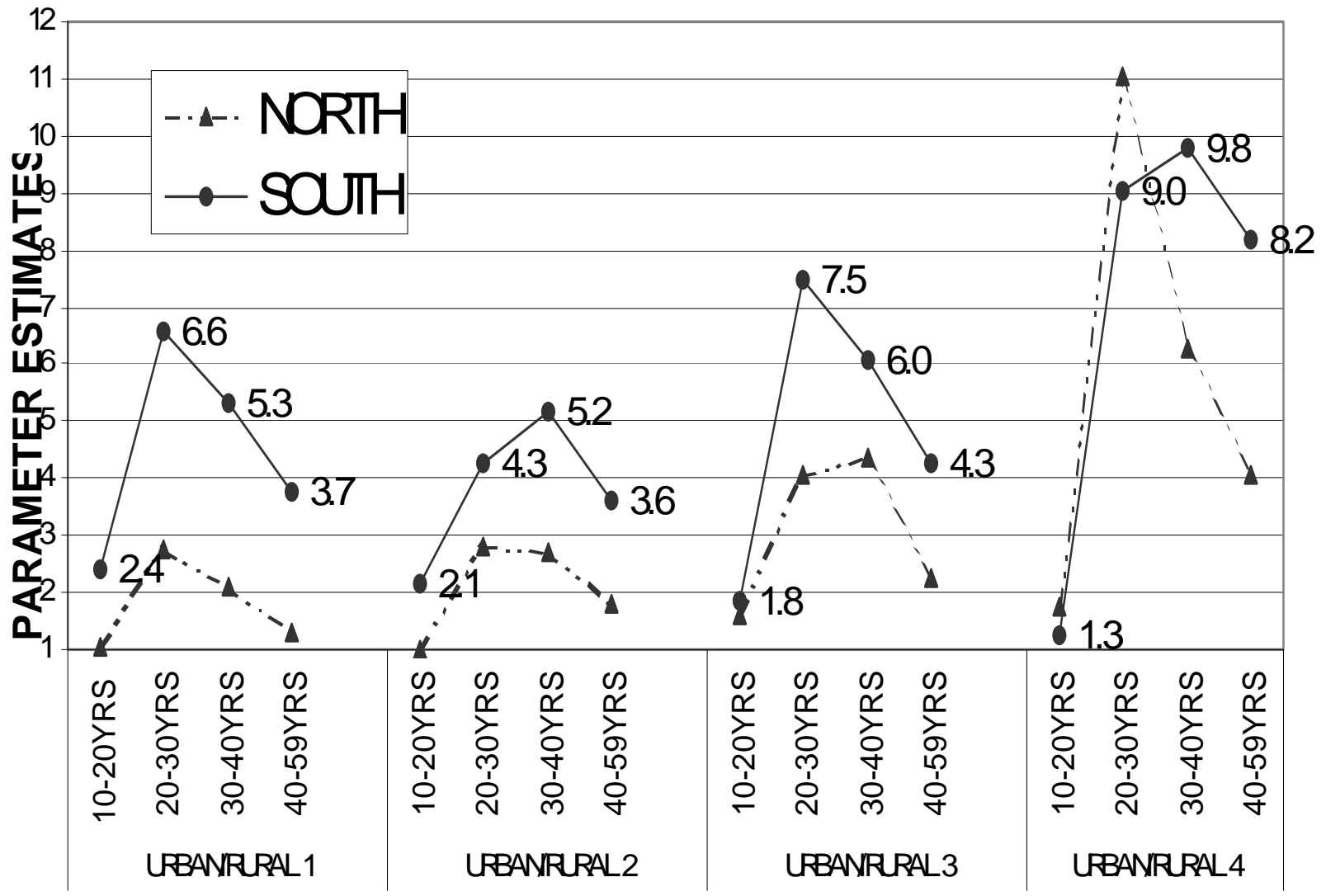
* Index crimes.

Example From My Research

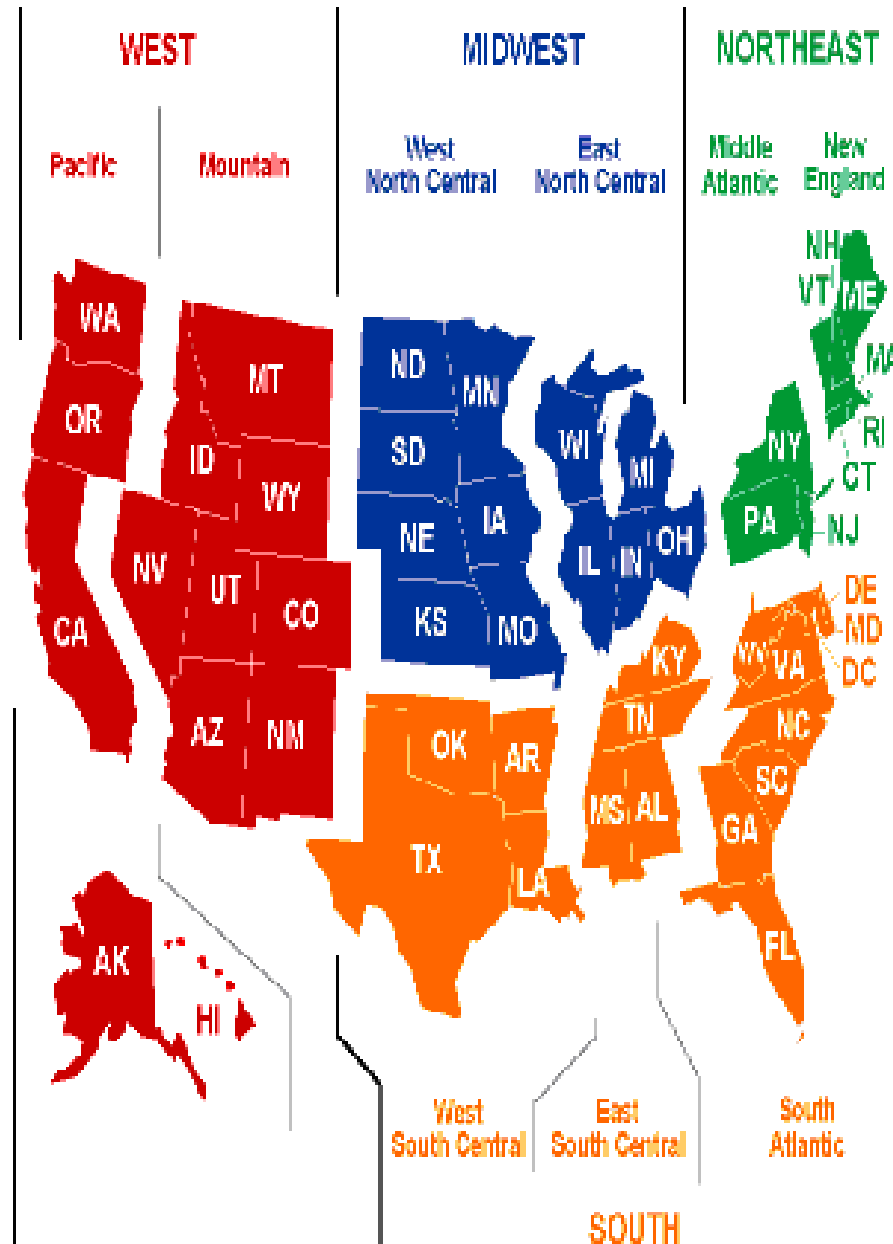
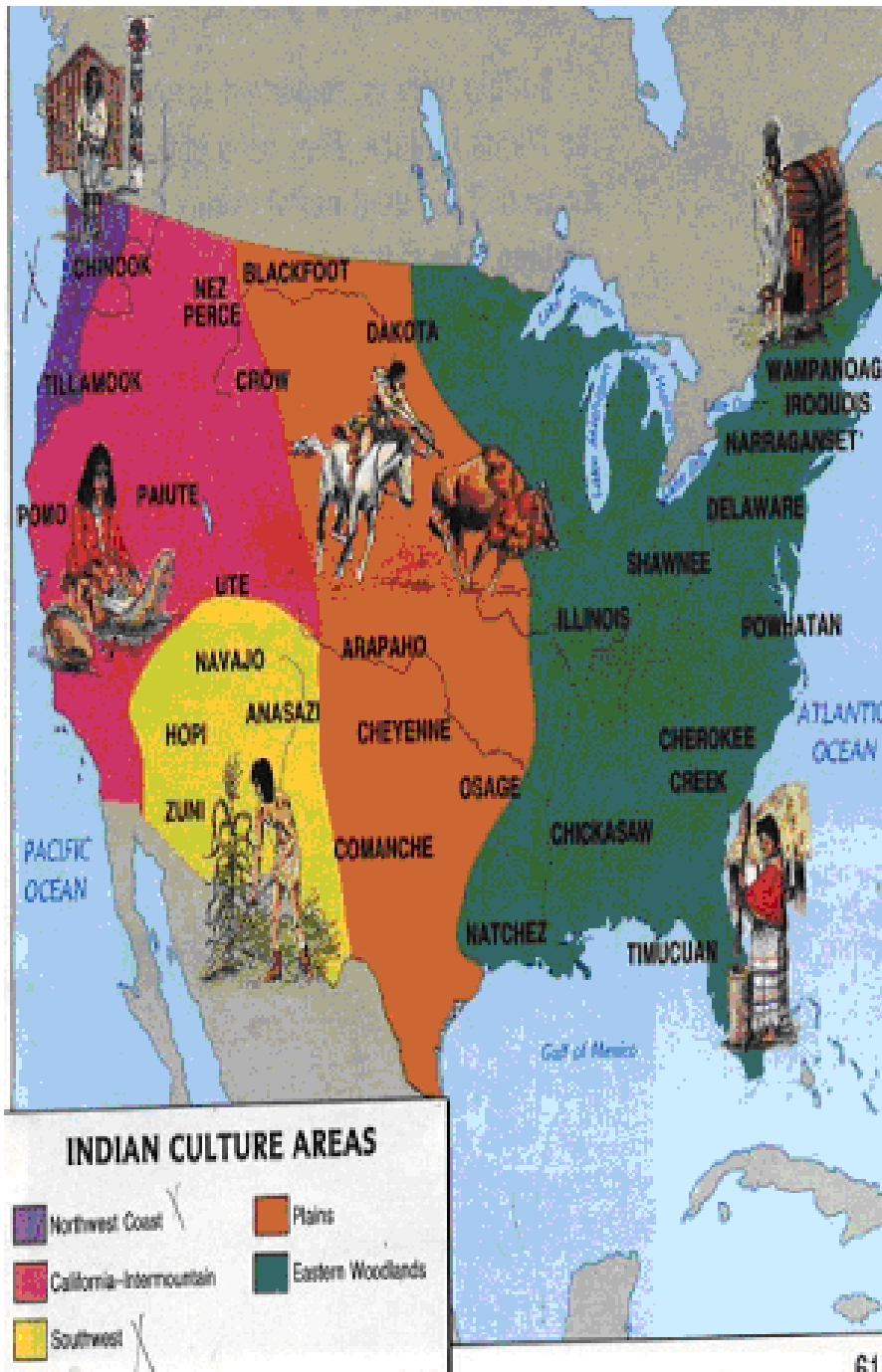
- Age-specific homicide rates seem to VARY with respect to regions which have historically differed by systems of social control (e.g., stronger unilateral and bilateral controls).
- Examples from White and Native American offenders.

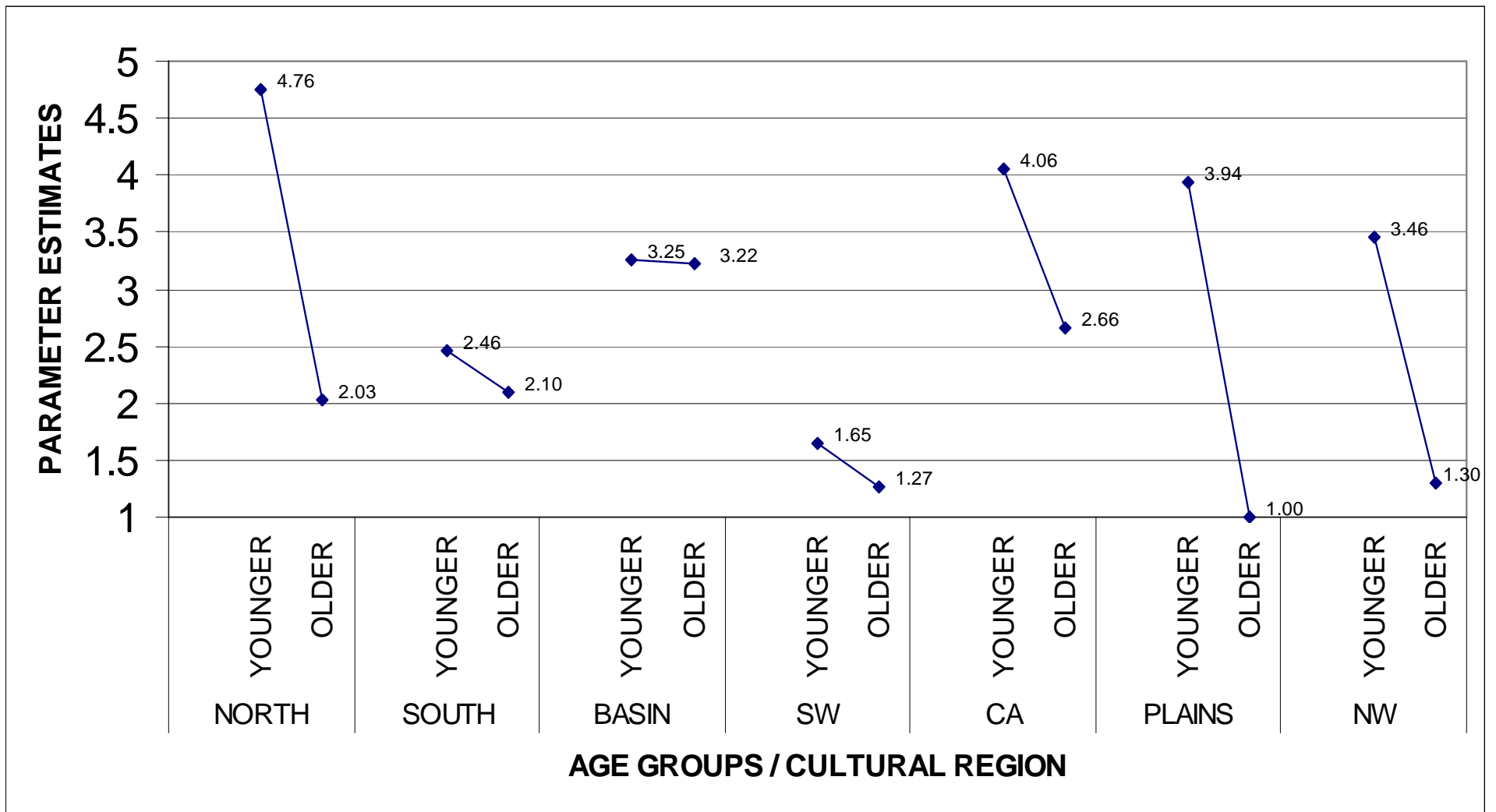
**Percentile Map
Homicide Rate (EBS)
1990**





Age and Beale Urban/Rural Categories





Variation in Age-specific homicide rates (15-30; 31-50) between Native American cultural regions

Why Does Aging Out Occur?

- Despite the debate over variance and invariance, “aging out of crime” is a general pattern.
- Explanations: Young people are risk-takers and thrill-seekers, whereas aging individuals become more concerned with ties to conventional society, families, and long-term rewards.

“Aging out” and Three Strikes Laws

- Three strikes laws create longer mandatory prison sentences for second and third time offenders.
- By the time an individual has received their second and third strike offense, they may be “aging out” of their criminality.

Part III. Gender

- Official police data and surveys suggest that males are much more likely to be offenders. For example, victim studies show that 80% of offenders are males. URC arrest ratio is about 3 male offenders to every one female, and 6 to 1 for violent crimes.
- Self-report data show smaller differences. Is this because of different types of crime?

TABLE 1**Female Arrestees as Percentage of Total Arrests, by Nation
(1963, 1968, 1970, and 1972)**

Brunei	2.02	Israel	11.71
Fiji	2.67	Tunisia	13.06
Hong Kong	2.76	England and	13.61
Malawi	4.27	Wales	
Cyprus	6.38	United States	13.66
Finland	6.66	Austria	13.75
Tanzania	6.85	France	14.25
Monaco	7.00	Jamaica	15.46
Japan	9.69	Luxembourg	16.38
Canada	9.77	West Germany	16.66
Netherlands	10.25	Thailand	17.38
Korea	10.51	New Zealand	20.56
Scotland	11.53	West Indies	20.90

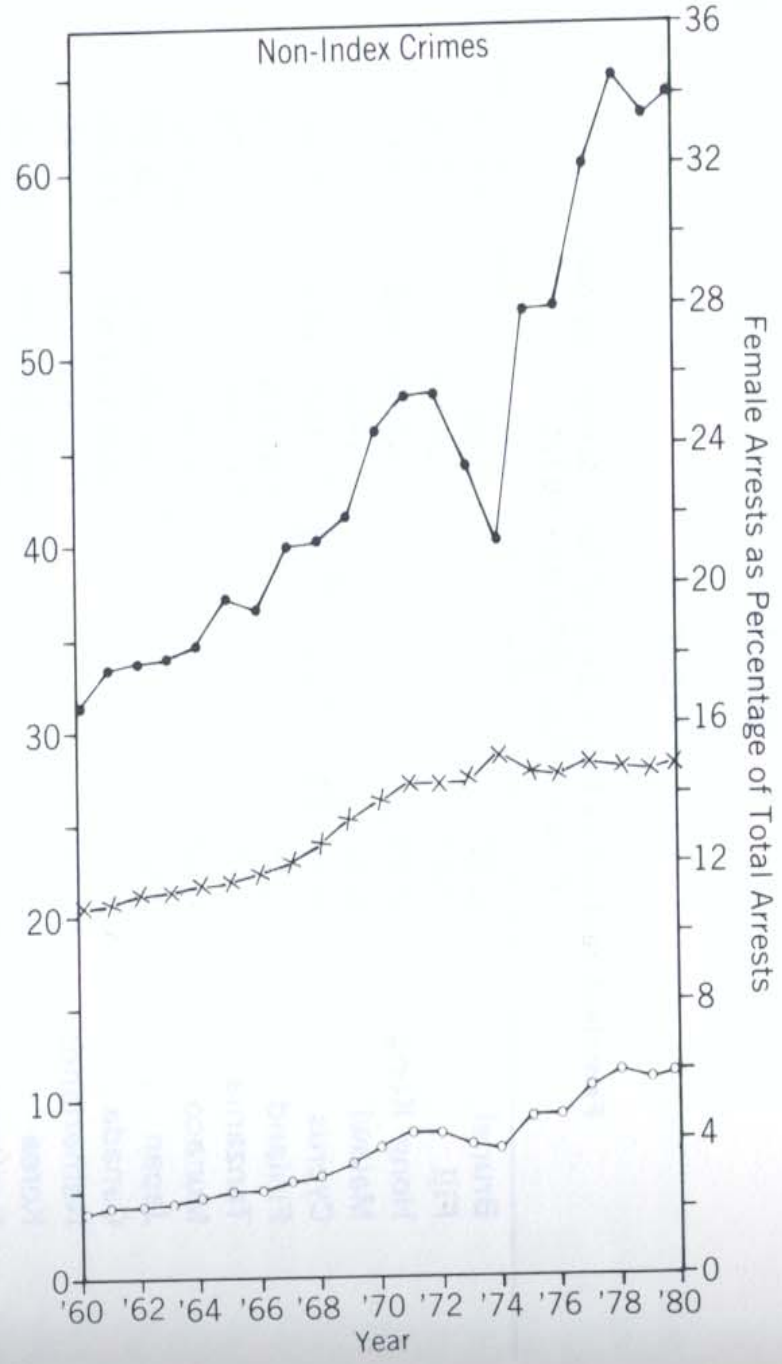
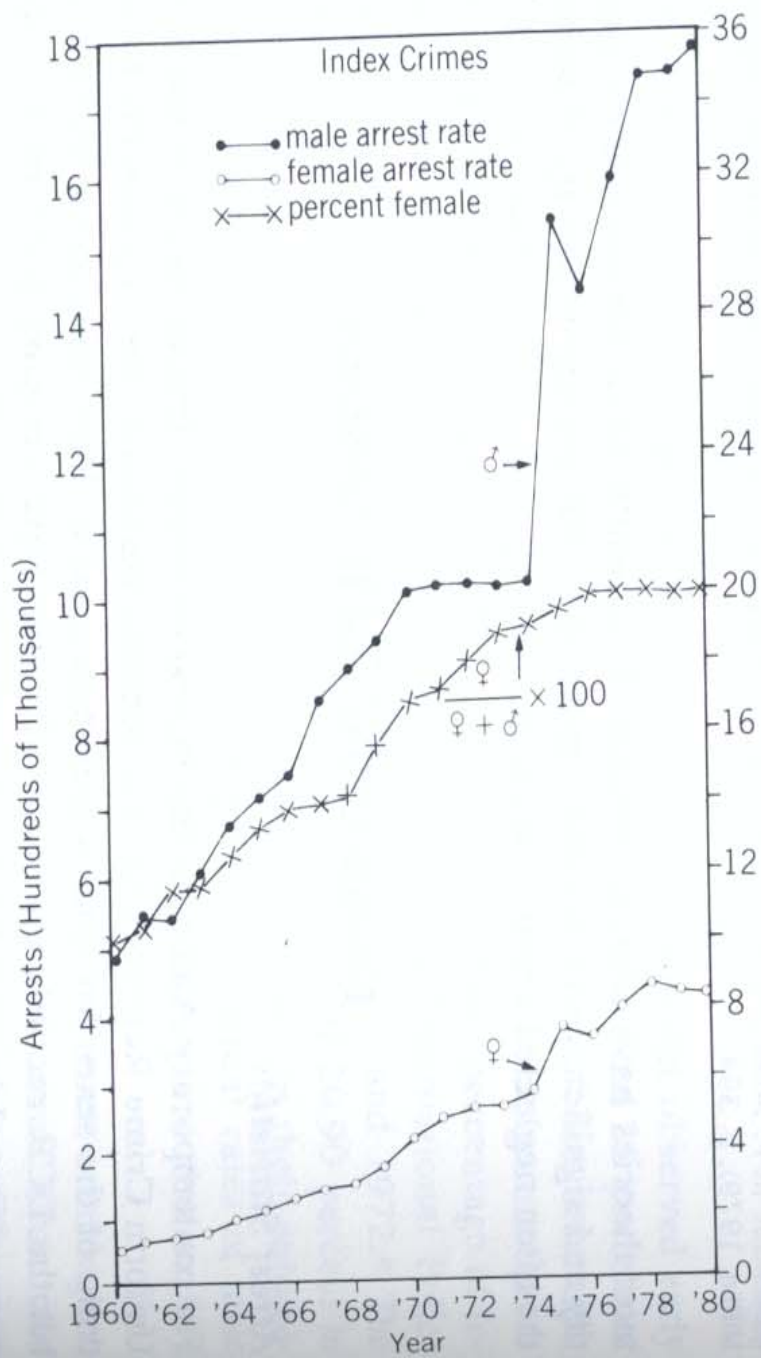
Adapted from R. J. Simon and N. Sharma, Women and crime: Does the American experience generalize? In F. Adler and R. J. Simon (eds.), *Criminology of Deviant Women* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), p. 394.

Explaining Gender Differences

- Biosocial Differences: Early theories stressed that females are more passive and weak, and female criminals have “masculine” traits. Modern theories stress male sex hormones and other biological links.
- Socialization Differences: Females socialized to be less aggressive than males, and are more likely to have their behavior controlled by families than males are.

Feminist Views: Is Convergence Possible?

- **Liberal feminist theory:** As “second-class” economic and social position among women improves, and their lifestyles become more like males, crime rates should converge.
- **Evidence of convergence?** Female criminals come from the socioeconomic class least affected by the liberation movement; offense patterns remain different, especially for serious crimes. However, female arrest rates have been increasing at faster pace than male rates.



Part III. Race/Ethnicity

- Race is a biological category. A few genes code for differences in skin color and other physical differences.
- Ethnicity is a cultural category. Ethnic groups share cultural values, beliefs, etc.
- Racial differences in behavior likely most explained by ENVIRONMENT and CULTURE.

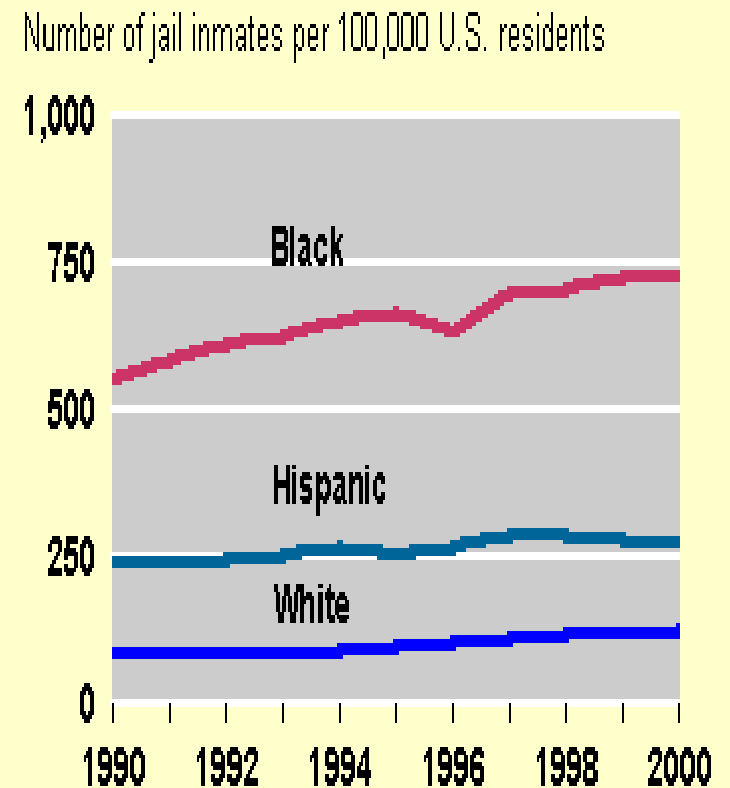
Evidence for Environmental Factors Associated with Race

- Serious crime rates for Blacks from inner-city environments in the UK are much lower than crime rates for Blacks from inner-city U.S. areas (ghettos).
- Whites and other ethnic groups also known to have very high rates of violence and property crime.

Discrimination or Disparity?

- There is evidence of discrimination in the criminal justice system, but doubtful this *completely* explains why minority groups more likely to be in jail.
- Doubtful police routinely ignore white killers, robbers, and rapists, while arresting only minorities.
- In sum, crime rates for serious index crimes likely higher among minorities.

Jail incarceration rates by race and ethnicity, 1990-2000



Correlates of Minority “Crime”

- Racism and discrimination
- Poverty and inequality (concentration)
- Segregation and isolation
- Hopelessness
- Lack of real and perceived economic opportunity
- Cultural values
- Loss of positive peer influence

Part V: Criminal Careers

- Studies suggest that most offenders discontinue to commit crimes after arrest.
- Chronic or career criminals: a small group of offenders who continue to commit crimes regardless of informal and formal sanctions; likely commit the majority of crimes in a population.

Longitudinal Birth Cohort Research



Research that tracks an identifiable group of individuals over a long period of time.

Cohort Study: Obtain a sample of individuals all from ONE time period and follow them through time.

Researchers “follow” individuals with official records and with period interviews.



1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000



The “Chronic 6%”

After following a birth cohort of 9,945 boys born in Philadelphia in 1945, Wolfgang and his associates found that 6% of the total sample were responsible for 51.9% of all offenses. These were referred to as chronic offenders or career criminals. Similar research has resulted in similar findings.

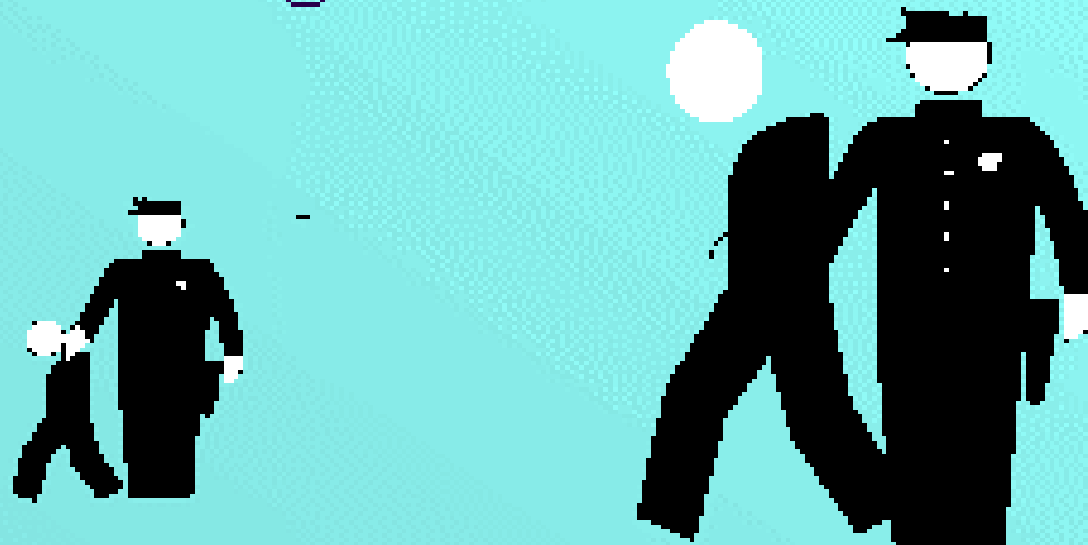
Similar Results in Additional Cohort Studies

- Wolfgang's second cohort: Larger sample (13,000 males and 14,000 females). Chronic offenders: 7.5% of sample who committed 61% of the crimes and disproportionate amount of serious crimes (61% of homicides, 76% of rapes, 73% of robberies).
- Similar results from other studies both within and outside of the United States.



Continuity of Crime

The cohort follow-ups clearly show that chronic juvenile offenders continue their law-violating careers as adults.



Then and **NOW**

Theoretical Implications

- Traditional theories of criminal behavior failed to distinguish between chronic and occasional offenders.
- Why do some offenders continue their criminal careers and others do not?

Policy Implications: Chronic Offenders and Incarceration

- Idea of chronic offenders received a lot of attention from criminal justice policy makers. “If we lock up the chronic offenders, crime rates will be dramatically reduced!!”
- Problem of prediction: which offenders will become chronic offenders?

7B: Organized Crime



General Definition

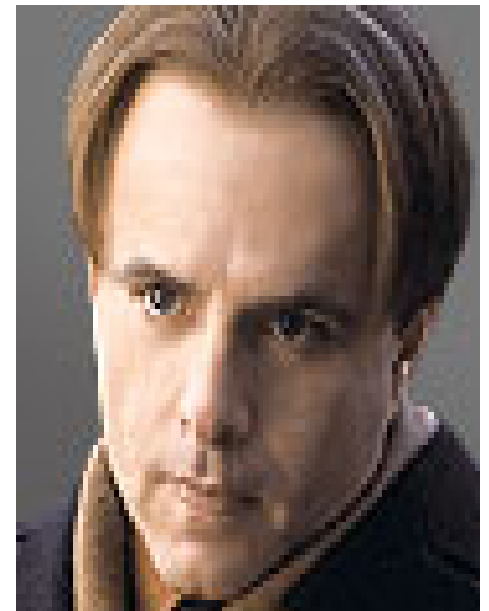
- Organized crime is a term that refers to those illegal activities connected with the management and coordination of **racketeering** (organized extortion) and the **vices** - particularly illegal drugs, illegal gambling, loans (+interest), and prostitution.
(Block/Chambliss, 1981: 12)

Protection (“Roof”)

- Usually the state provides criminal and civil protection; it punishes those breaking criminal laws, and resolves civil disputes (e.g., contract breaches).
- Organized crime groups often sell “protection” and provide a “service” to individuals in their community or region.
- Some individuals actually seek the protection of organized criminals (usually people engaging in criminal activities). Other law abiding citizens are “encouraged” by the organized criminals to buy their services.

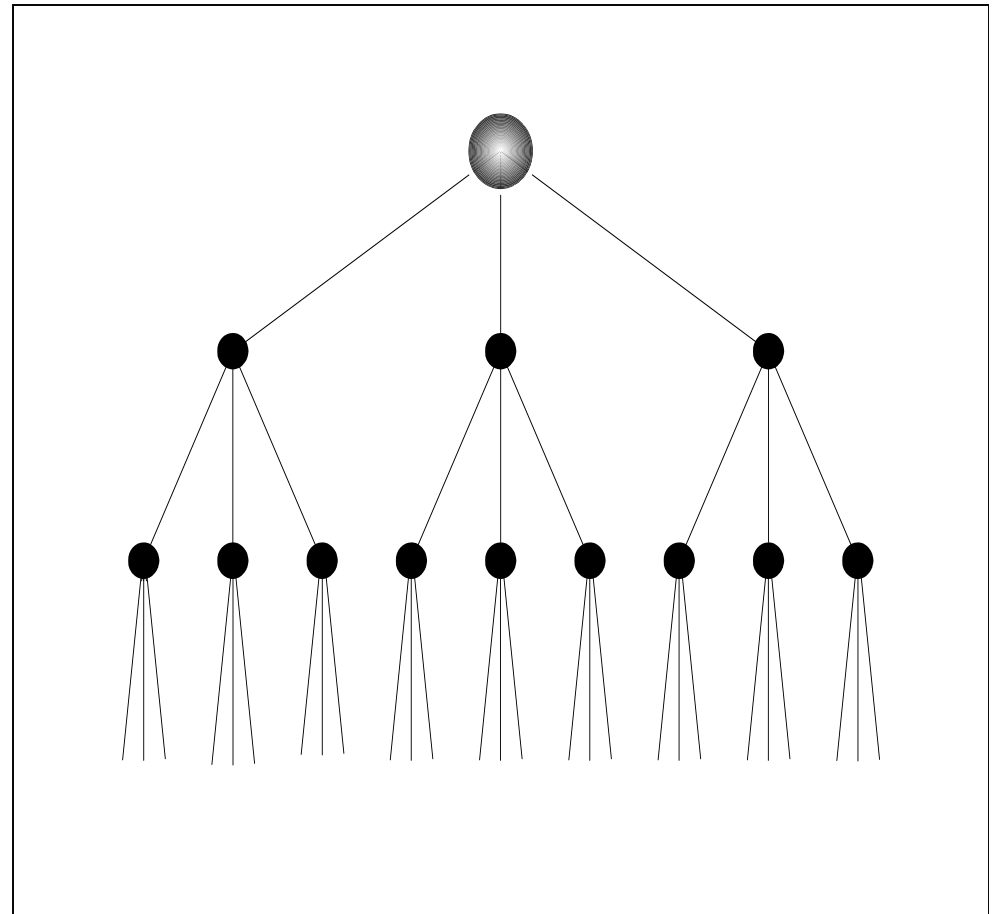
Selling Vice

- People often demand drugs, sex, loans, and gambling opportunities. However, to supply such services, it helps to cooperate with other individuals (division of labor).
- Groups find a variety of ways (with variable success) to organize themselves to provision vice and protection.
- **Important to look at the mechanisms of organizational compliance and internal control.**



Organization: Leadership Hierarchies

- Most common form of organized criminal group is characterized by a single leader and a relatively clearly defined hierarchy. Systems of internal discipline are strict.



Organization: Culture, Symbols

- Strong social or ethnic identities can be important mechanisms to build organizational trust, and promote **LOYALTY**.
- Rules structure interaction by specifying what behaviors should be followed.
Example: Italian Mafia groups and the rule of “Omerta”

Russian Organized Crime

- Communist government marginalized thousands of people, and sent many to Gulags in Siberia
- Communism also created a system in which people had difficulty obtaining material property.
-



Russian Organized Crime

- Russia has been, more or less, an orderly country for much of its history.
- But it has practically never been lawful.
- Property rights and an independent judiciary were only weakly rooted under Tsarist absolutism. They were further destabilized following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

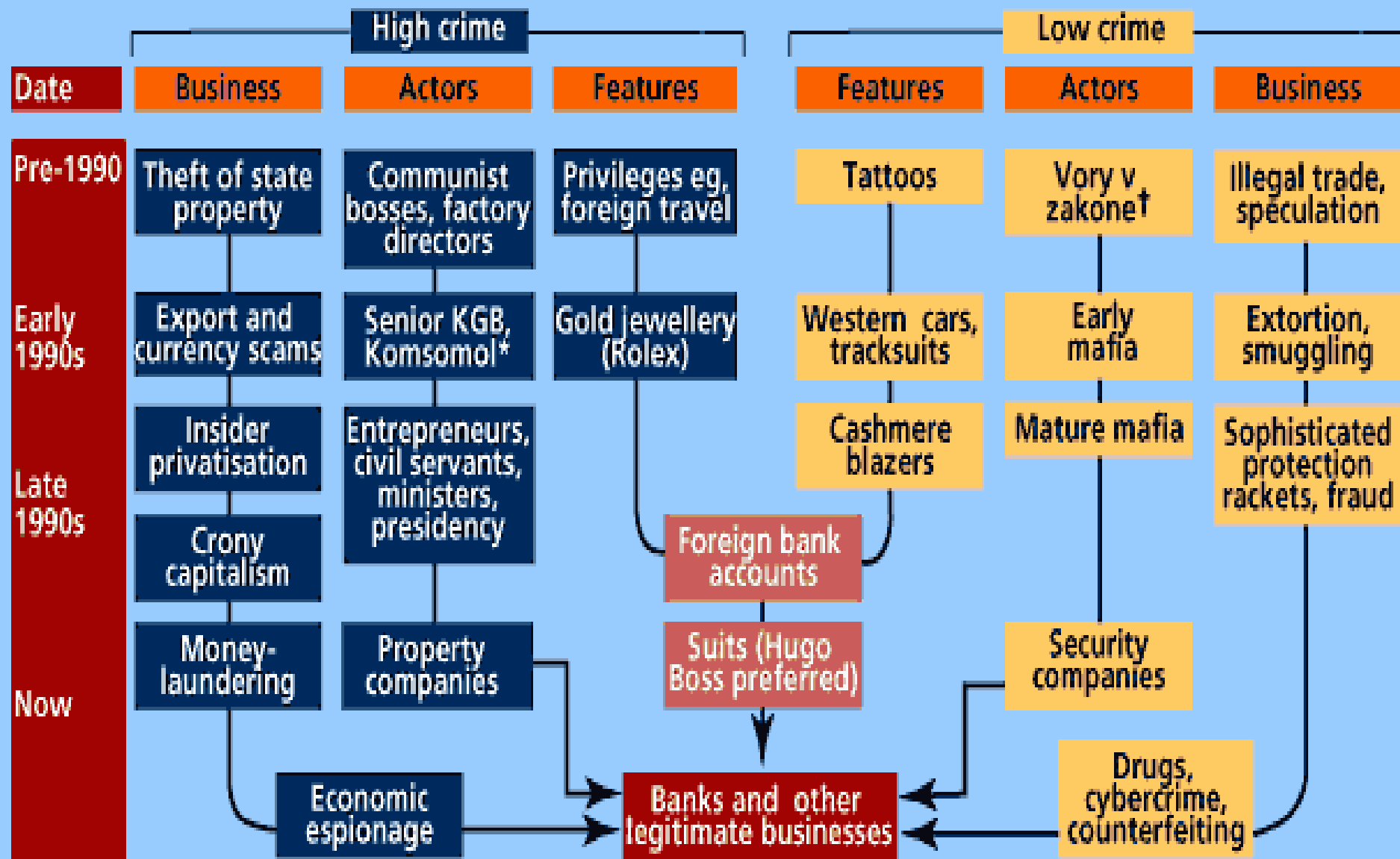
Russian Organized Crime

- In the Soviet Union, there was also organized crime, but it was largely hidden.
- For decades, there was a tightly knit group of traditional gangsters, known as vory v zakone, an expression meaning “thieves governed by their own laws”,
- Ran rackets of the kind that flourish in any repressive society, from trading in building materials to illegal prostitution and gambling.

The main “thieves in law” behavior principles

- no be employed, not to learn, not to serve in the army;
- not to ask the state support, not to inform the police about the others the anomies as well, not to plead guilty without an approval of the thieves meetings;
- strongly follow the „thieves“ rules, not ever talk about them out of the „thieves“ society;
- to use all possible ways to make other persons to obey the „thieves“;
- to appear after the first invitation at the „thieves“ special meetings and obey its decisions;
- Transfer certain part of the criminal profits to the common fund.

Evolution of a mafia



Sources: Control Risks, The Economist

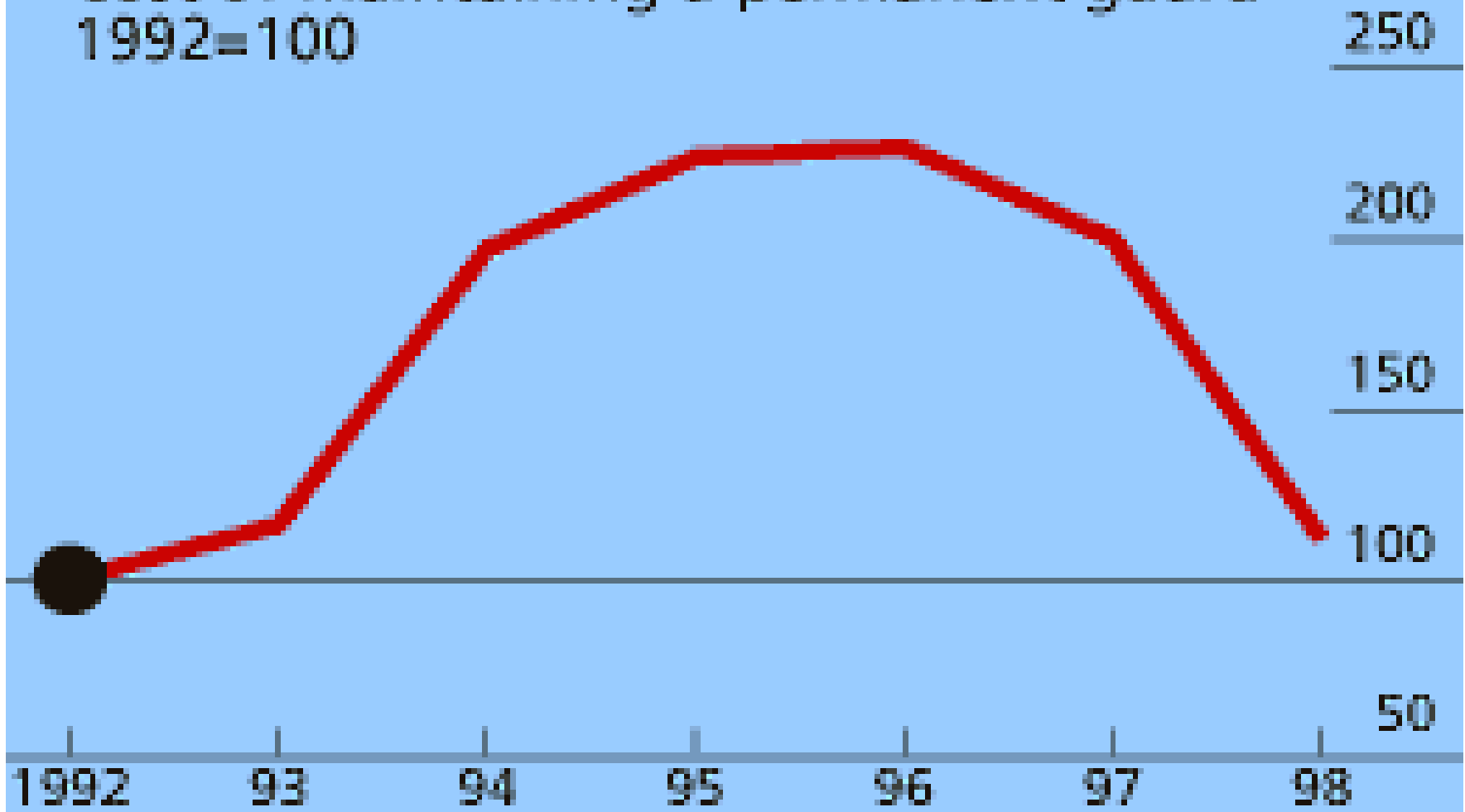
*Communist Party Youth League

†Thieves within the code - traditional gangster clans

Cheaper security

2

Cost of maintaining a permanent guard*
1992=100



*Moscow and St Petersburg. Index-linked

Source: Mark Galeotti, Keele University

Criminal circles



Sources: Control Risks; The Economist

Chinese Organized Crime

- China has a long history of secret societies.
- Known as Triads, the groups have had numerous political and economic goals
- In Hong Kong and other parts of the world, Chinese organized crime groups engage in many types of criminal activities



發現窩藏人蛇軟頂貨櫃

The canvas-top cargo container found to be used for harbouring illegal immigrants

Double Nylon Layers

Ventilation Holes

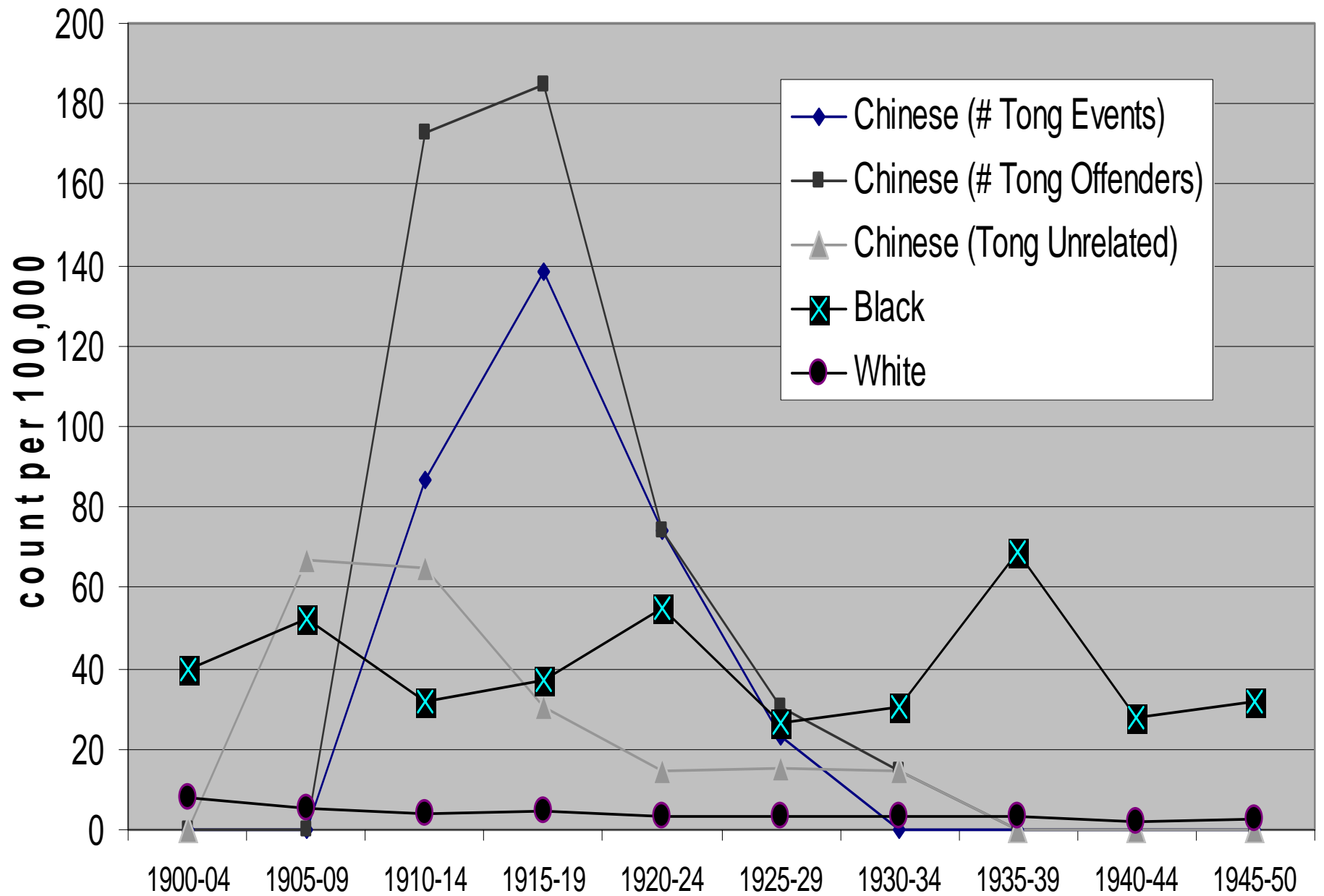
Exit

Food, Blankets, etc

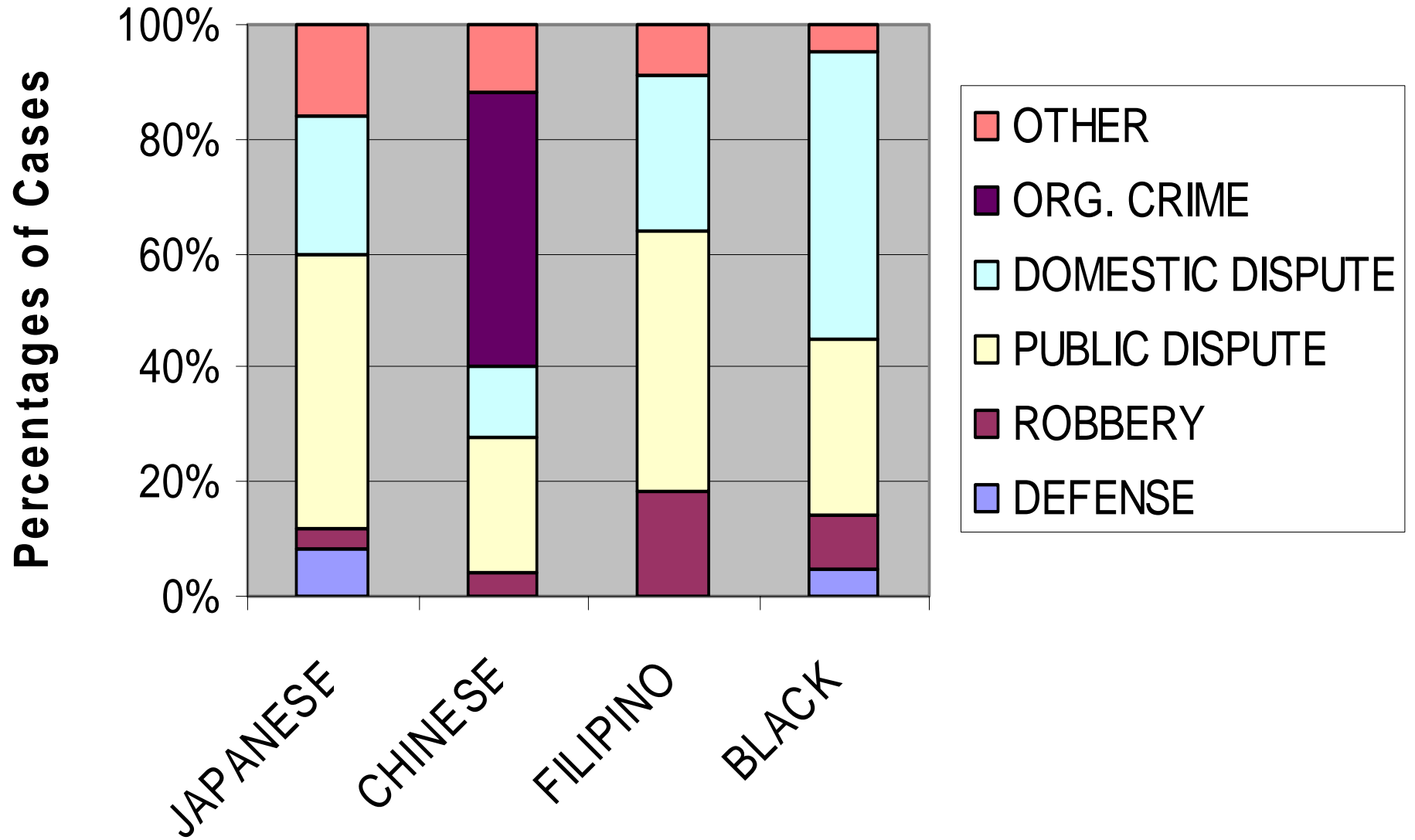


Chinese “Tongs” in the US

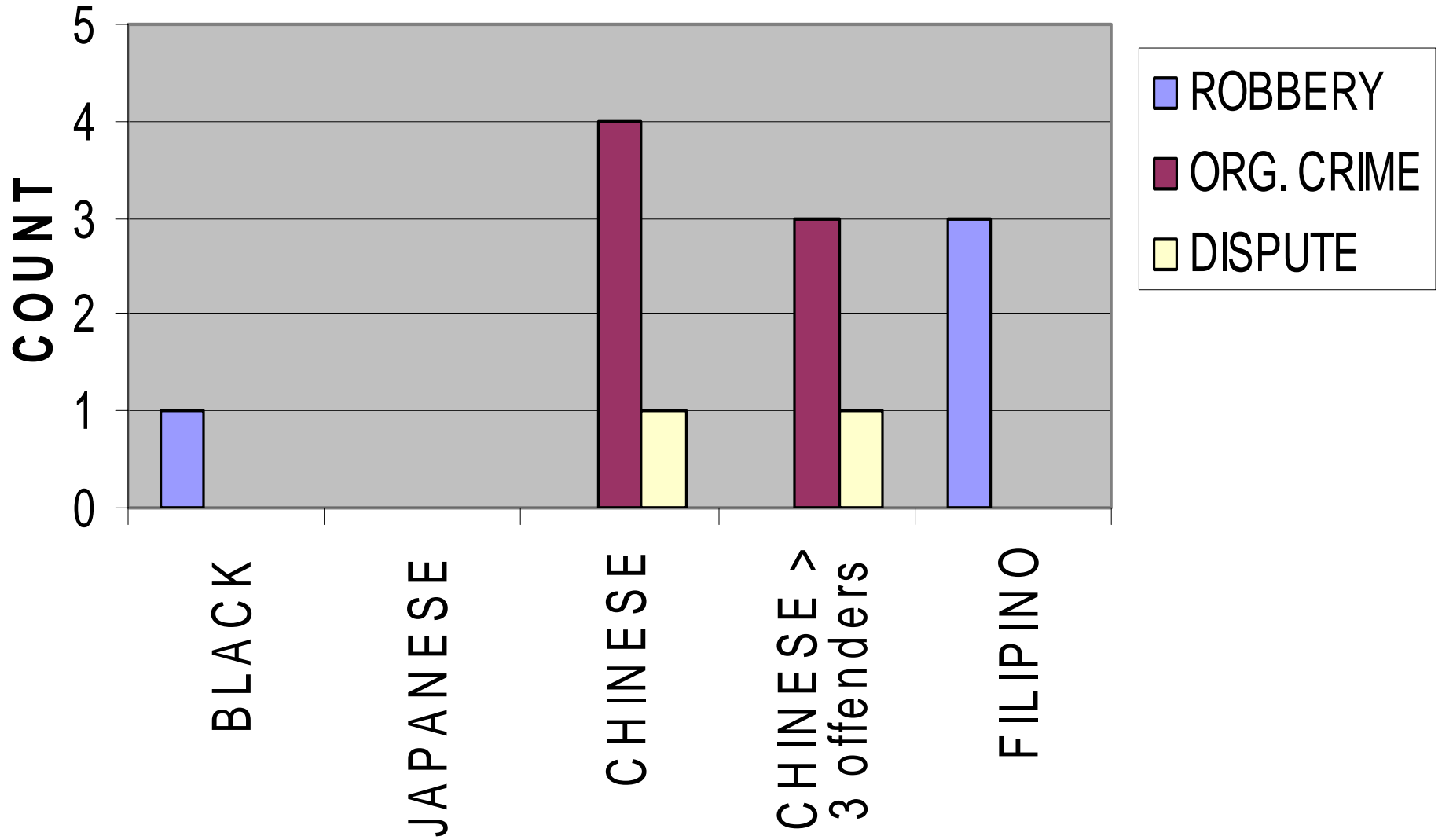
- Chinese immigrants depended on self-help organizations within their communities
- Numerous organizations existed.
- Tongs, or fraternal lodges, offered social and economic support
- Some of the tongs became “fighting tongs” from 1850 to 1930 in US Chinatowns due to their interests in vice and protection



Offender Motives



MULTIPLE OFFENDERS



Vice and Ethnicity

- 1) Ivan Light (1972): Compared vice industry among African Americans and Asians (Chinese). Both groups supplied the **demand** for prostitution and drugs. Demand was higher when sex ratios more skewed and unemployment higher.
- 2) Ethnic-specific social institutions influenced **how** vice was provided; Asians influenced by secret organizations (tongs) and peacemaking organizations (e.g., Chinese Peace Society), whereas Blacks likely did not have organized crime networks (churches and fraternal organizations important).

Demography

	1900	1910	1920	1930
Japanese (men/women)	2,886/47 61 / 1	4,988/740 6.7 / 1	3,932/2,030 1.9 / 1	3,047/2,047 1.7 / 1
Chinese (men/women)	399/12 33 / 1	789/49 16 / 1	1,041/95 11 / 1	773/185 4.2 / 1
Filipino (men/women)	-	-	-	1,529/29 53/1
Black (men/women)	186/152 1.22 / 1	1,256/776 1.6 / 1	1,492/1,033 1.4 / 1	1,560/1,218 1.3 / 1
Citywide (men/women)	43,477/ 21,045	113,337/ 77,200	133,208/ 113,606	149,058/ 142,560