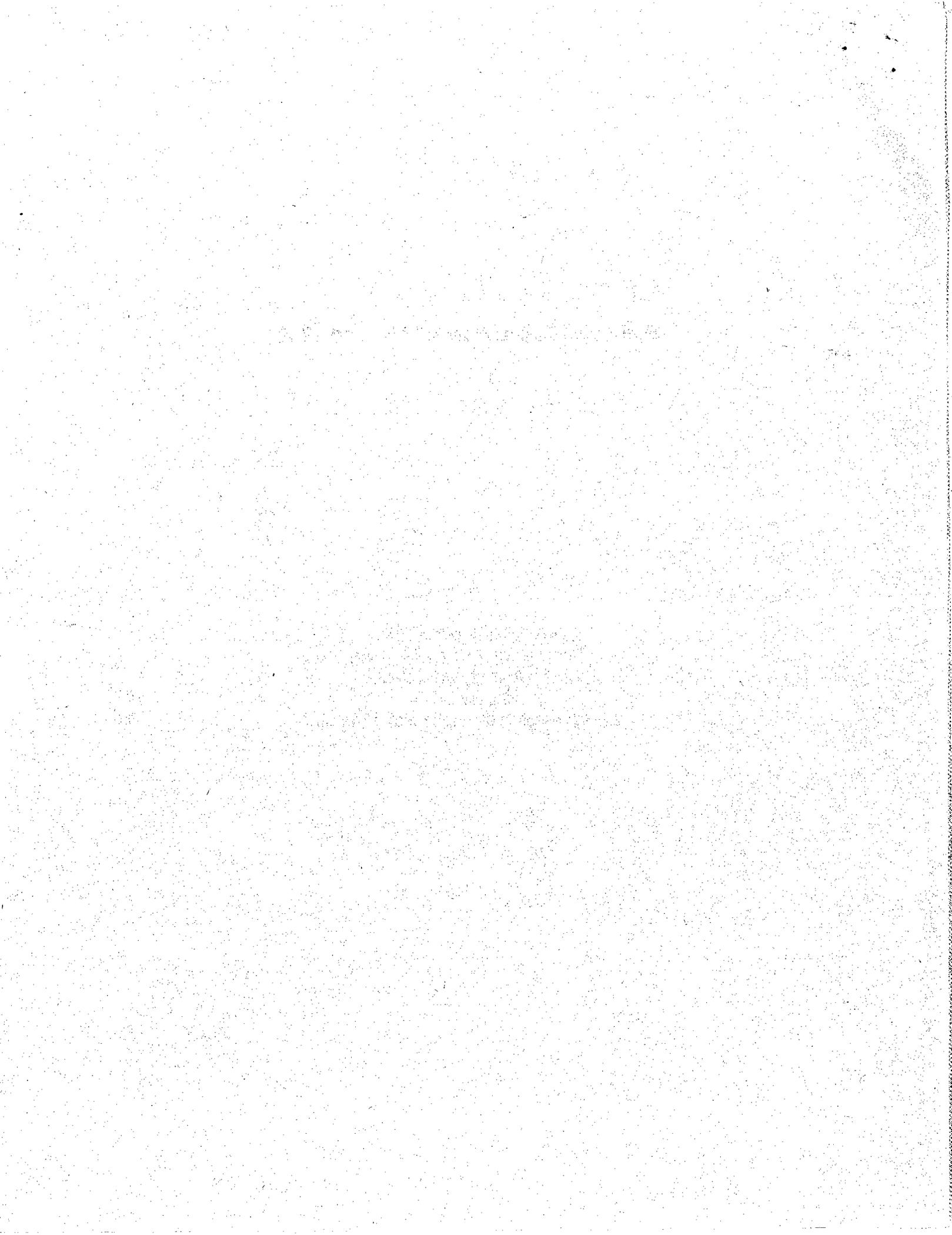


Minnesota Arrest Rates: 1990 and 1998

Working Paper 00-19
Prepared by Martha McMurry
State Demographic Center
January 2000
E-mail: helpline@mnplan.state.mn.us



Minnesota Arrest Rates: 1990 and 1998

Introduction

Arrest rates in Minnesota vary dramatically by age, sex, race and ethnicity, and location. Males, especially those in their late teens and early twenties, have the highest arrest rates. Arrest rates for African Americans, people of Hispanic origin, and American Indians are much higher than rates for white, Asian and nonhispanic people. Though arrest rates do not show a clear-cut geographic pattern, arrest rates in some counties are many times higher than in other counties.

Arrest rates have risen in the 1990s, but there are some exceptions. The rate of adult arrests for Part I (the more serious) offenses has not risen. The rate of arrest has risen for all types of juvenile offenses and for adult Part II (the less serious) offenses.

Arrest rates have risen more for females than for males, and more for Asians than for other races. Trends in arrest rates by county range from enormous gains to substantial declines.

Arrest Rates in 1998

Arrest rates, rather than the number of arrests or the amount of crime, are the focus of this report. It is important to keep in mind that there are potential problems with both the arrest data and with the population numbers used as a base for calculating the rates.

Many crimes are not reported. Even if a crime is reported, there is frequently no arrest. In part, the number of arrests reflects the number of crimes, but arrests also vary depending on the level and effectiveness of law enforcement. The quality of arrest data varies by time and location. Arrests may not be reported to the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, or there may be errors in the data, such as incorrect coding of the type of offense or the characteristics of the person arrested.

The arrest rate does not necessarily reflect the number of individual persons who are arrested. Some arrests may be improperly counted more than once. If a person is arrested for multiple offenses, only the most serious offense is supposed to be recorded in the database, but it appears that in some cases all the offenses are recorded. In addition, some individuals may be arrested multiple times in a year, thus contributing disproportionately to the arrest rate.

The population data used to calculate arrest rates may be in error. If the population number is too small, the rate shown will be too high, and vice versa. Use of alternative population estimates has a large effect on the estimated arrest rates for Minnesota's nonwhite and Hispanic origin populations.

Despite these problems, arrest rate data give a broad picture of which groups are most likely to be arrested and how this has changed over time.

Types of offenses

Arrest data includes information on the type of offense. Offenses are grouped into three types: Part I offenses, Part II offenses and status offenses. Part I offenses are considered the most serious crimes. They include murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson. Part II offenses, which include vandalism, drunken driving, narcotics violations, disorderly conduct and a wide range of other offenses, are the less serious type of crime and account for the great majority of arrests. The status offenses are curfew violations, loitering, and runaways. Only juveniles can be arrested for status offenses.

Arrests by race and ethnicity

Nonwhite and Hispanic origin Minnesotans are much more likely to be arrested than white, nonhispanic Minnesotans. The 1998 arrest rates per 100,000 were 32,570 for blacks, 27,046 for Hispanics, 21,221 for American Indians, 6,146 for Asians, and 4,772 for whites. Hispanic origin is considered an ethnic category separate from race. A person may be any combination of race and Hispanic origin.

Alternative population estimates affect arrest rates

The rates reported in the previous paragraph were calculated using U.S. Census Bureau estimates of the population by race and ethnicity. The arrest rates could be considerably different if alternative population estimates were used. The relatively small size of Minnesota's minority populations, combined with a rapid rate of growth, make it difficult to estimate the size of these groups. There are several reasons to believe that the Census

**1998 Minnesota Arrest Rates for Juveniles and Adults, by Race and Offense Type
(Bureau of Criminal Apprehension arrest data; U.S. Census Bureau age estimates)**

	White	Black	American Indian	Asian and Pac. Islander	Hispanic Origin	Total Population
Juvenile, Rates per 100,000						
Juvenile total	5,408	21,579	15,167	6,183	17,442	6,319
Part 1 Juvenile	1,121	6,595	3,506	2,141	5,579	1,444
Part 2 Juvenile	3,560	10,964	8,843	3,121	9,474	3,959
Status offenses	727	4,020	2,818	920	2,389	916
Murder/manslaughter	0	28	12	6	3	2
Rape	15	69	25	6	33	17
Robbery	16	530	104	32	175	41
Agg. assault	77	561	332	164	336	107
Burglary	129	418	327	112	316	145
Larceny	799	4,142	2,030	1,555	4,389	998
Motor vehicle theft	83	847	675	267	326	135
Other assaults	336	2,375	1,206	497	1,466	447
Vandalism	339	1,044	1,024	258	850	379
Weapon offenses	76	465	178	110	300	96
Narcotics	351	1,342	580	269	606	395
DUI	81	20	128	32	79	78
Liquor laws	920	531	2,221	607	1,170	915
Disorderly	930	1,782	1,396	599	2,214	961
Other exc. traffic	361	2,360	1,732	562	1,921	481
Curfew	500	3,365	2,279	693	1,658	664
Runaways	227	654	539	228	732	252
Adult, Rates per 100,000						
Adult total	4,553	39,382	25,597	6,118	33,463	5,660
Part 1 Adult	408	6,450	3,471	1,038	6,367	602
Part 2 Adult	4,145	32,931	22,126	5,080	27,096	5,058
Murder/manslaughter	2	58	24	3	15	4
Rape	16	213	48	33	200	21
Robbery	8	456	186	11	231	21
Agg. assault	56	1,357	889	156	1,035	99

1998 Minnesota Arrest Rates for Juveniles and Adults, by Race and Offense Type
 (Bureau of Criminal Apprehension arrest data; U.S. Census Bureau age estimates)

	White	Black	American Indian	Asian and Pac. Islander	Hispanic Origin	Total Population
Burglary	51	506	326	48	401	65
Larceny	250	3,211	1,626	735	4,135	347
Motor vehicle theft	25	651	371	52	350	44
Other assaults	354	4,983	3,193	499	4,055	500
Fraud	299	960	827	642	1,286	328
Vandalism	93	749	713	113	638	116
Weapons offenses	30	666	183	61	253	48
Prostitution	22	1,402	398	41	159	61
Narcotics	367	5,042	1,081	391	2,827	491
DUI	1,199	2,177	3,762	981	4,463	1,244
Liquor laws	631	2,344	3,435	824	2,129	705
Disorderly	269	2,965	2,309	395	2,307	358
Other exc. traffic	754	9,552	5,358	931	7,030	1,023
All offenses, all ages	4,772	32,570	21,221	6,146	27,046	5,836

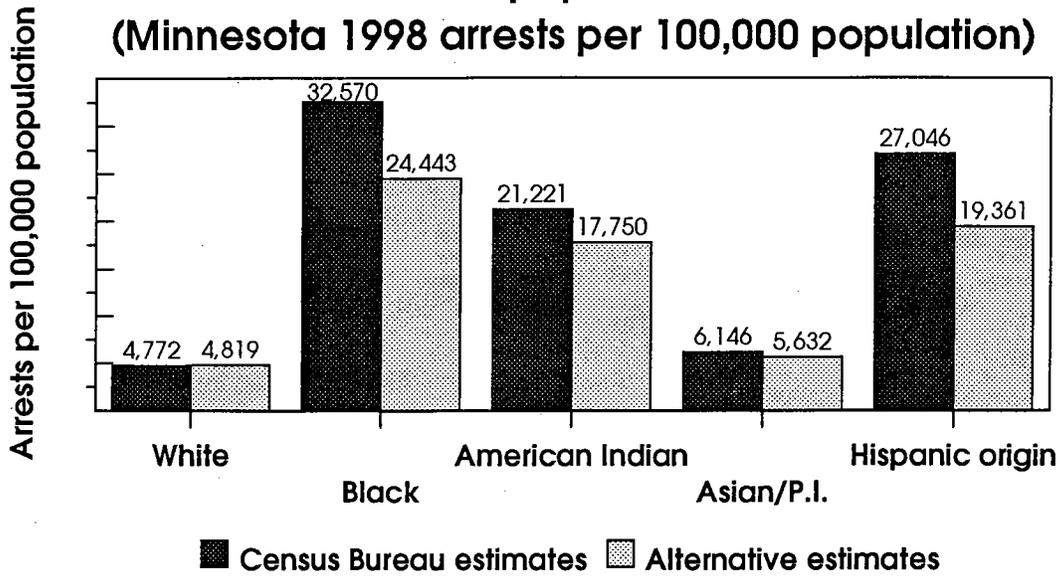
g:\demo\crime\Rates Race Hispanic 1990 1998.123

Bureau estimates of the state's minority populations, especially blacks and Hispanics, are too low. First, the undercount of nonwhites and Hispanics in the decennial census is more severe than for whites and nonhispanics. In addition, the growth in minority populations since 1990 may be underestimated because the Bureau's methodology misses some of the migration of young people, low-income individuals and people from other countries.

One alternative is to adjust each population for the census undercount and to assume each population has grown at the same rate as school enrollments in that group. Use of this alternative estimate changes the arrest rates considerably, particularly for blacks and Hispanics. For example, the estimated arrest rate for black Minnesotans is 32,570 per 100,000 using the Census Bureau population estimates, but less than 25,000 per 100,000 using the alternative series. We do not know whether the alternative series is in fact more accurate, but it is clear that arrest rates vary dramatically depending on assumptions made about population size. It is also clear that even using a higher population number, minority arrest rates are still considerably higher than white rates.

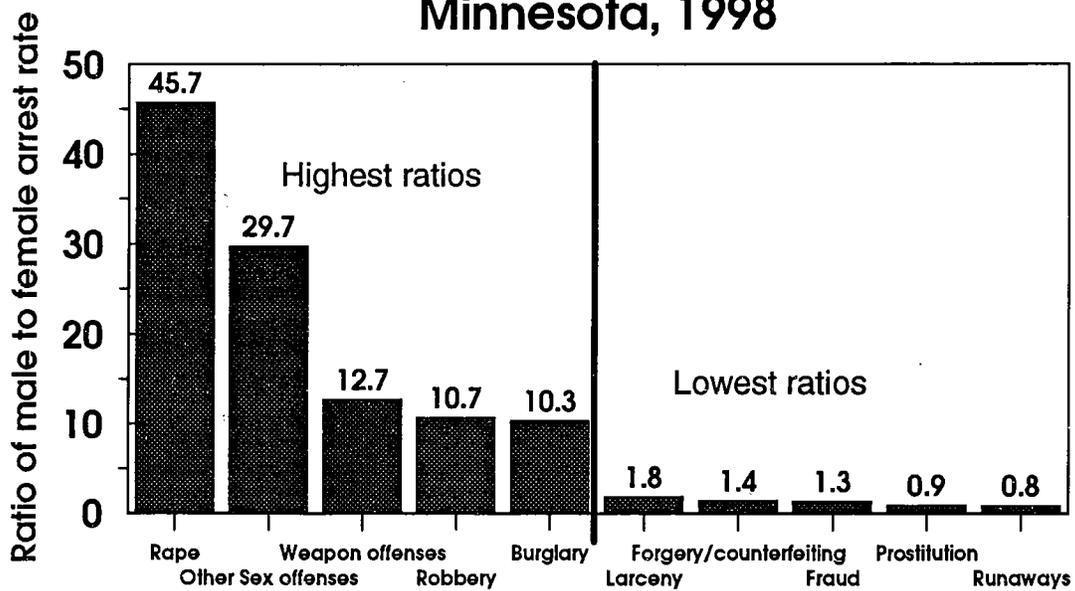
In assessing the relationship between arrest rates and racial or ethnic identity, another issue is whether people are being counted the same way in the arrest data and the population data. In the census, race and ethnicity are based on self-identification. In the arrest data, the ethnic and racial classification may be made by a law enforcement official. This identification might not match with that chosen by the individual.

Arrest rates vary depending on which estimate of population is used (Minnesota 1998 arrests per 100,000 population)



Sources: Census Bureau population estimates by race and Hispanic origin. Alternative race and ethnicity estimates from State Demographic Center, based on school enrollment data and 1990 estimate of undercount. Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning.

Offenses with the greatest and smallest ratio of male arrest rates to female arrest rates Minnesota, 1998



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning. Population estimates by gender from U.S. Census Bureau.

The Criminal Justice Statistics Center database on arrests by race and ethnicity has little demographic detail. The only age breakdown is between juveniles and adults, and arrests are not broken down by gender. The available breakdowns show the same racial differentials among juveniles as among adults. For almost every type of offense among both juveniles and adults, blacks, Hispanics and American Indians have considerably higher arrest rates. There are a few exceptions; for example black juveniles have some of the lowest rates of arrest for liquor law violations and driving under the influence.

Male vs. Female arrest rates

Males are much more likely to be arrested than females. In Minnesota in 1998, there were 9,063 arrests per 100,000 males, compared to 2,702 per 100,000 females. Males have higher arrest rates for almost every offense. The biggest differences in arrest rates occur for rape, other sex offenses, weapon offenses and robbery. The only offenses for which females had higher arrest rates are prostitution and runaways.

Arrests by age

Arrest rates for people ages 15 to 19 are almost twice as high as arrest rates for any other age group. People ages 18 or 19 were arrested at a rate of 25,905 per 100,000, and those ages 15 to 17 at a rate of 24,243 per 100,000. After age 20, arrest rates decline steadily with age. Among those over age 65, the arrest rate was only 246 per 100,000. In other words, teenagers between ages 15 and 19 are a hundred times as likely to be arrested as senior citizens.

Minnesota arrest rates by gender and type of offense, 1990 and 1998

	1990 arrests per 100,000:		1998 arrests per 100,000:	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
<u>All offenses:</u>	6,702	1,686	9,063	2,702
<u>Part 1 offenses:</u>	1,365	410	1,210	454
Murder	6	0	5	1
Rape	25	0	40	1
Robbery	44	4	49	5
Aggravated assault	153	24	167	37
Burglary	190	13	159	16
Larceny	803	354	668	377
Motor vehicle theft	143	15	120	18
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
<u>Part 2 offenses:</u>	5,237	1,195	7,550	2,062
Negligent manslaughter	0	0	0	0
Other assaults	681	109	797	183
Arson	12	2	13	2
Forgery/counterfeiting	54	30	63	45
Fraud	229	169	277	221
Embezzlement	0	0	0	0
Stolen property	85	11	116	23
Vandalism	310	22	332	45
Weapon offenses	68	3	114	9
Prostitution	19	49	43	50
Other Sex offenses	58	1	50	2
Narcotics offenses	292	46	806	135
Gambling offenses	3	0	3	1
Offenses against family	16	4	23	11
DUI	1,445	276	1,520	362
Liquor law violations	727	228	1,115	417
Drunkenness	0	0	0	0
Disorderly conduct	464	84	813	233
Vagrancy	1	0	14	2
Other offenses except traffic	773	161	1,452	321
Suspicion	0	0	0	0
<u>Status offenses:</u>	353	314	1,093	730
Curfew/loitering	208	100	882	435
Runaways	145	215	210	295

Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning.

Population by gender and age from U.S. Census Bureau.

Status offenses rate calculated for under 18 population only.

Though the data shows children under 10 being arrested at a rate of 122 per 100,000, in fact children under age 10 cannot technically be charged with a crime in a court of law. Young children who run into legal problems are dealt with outside the criminal justice system.

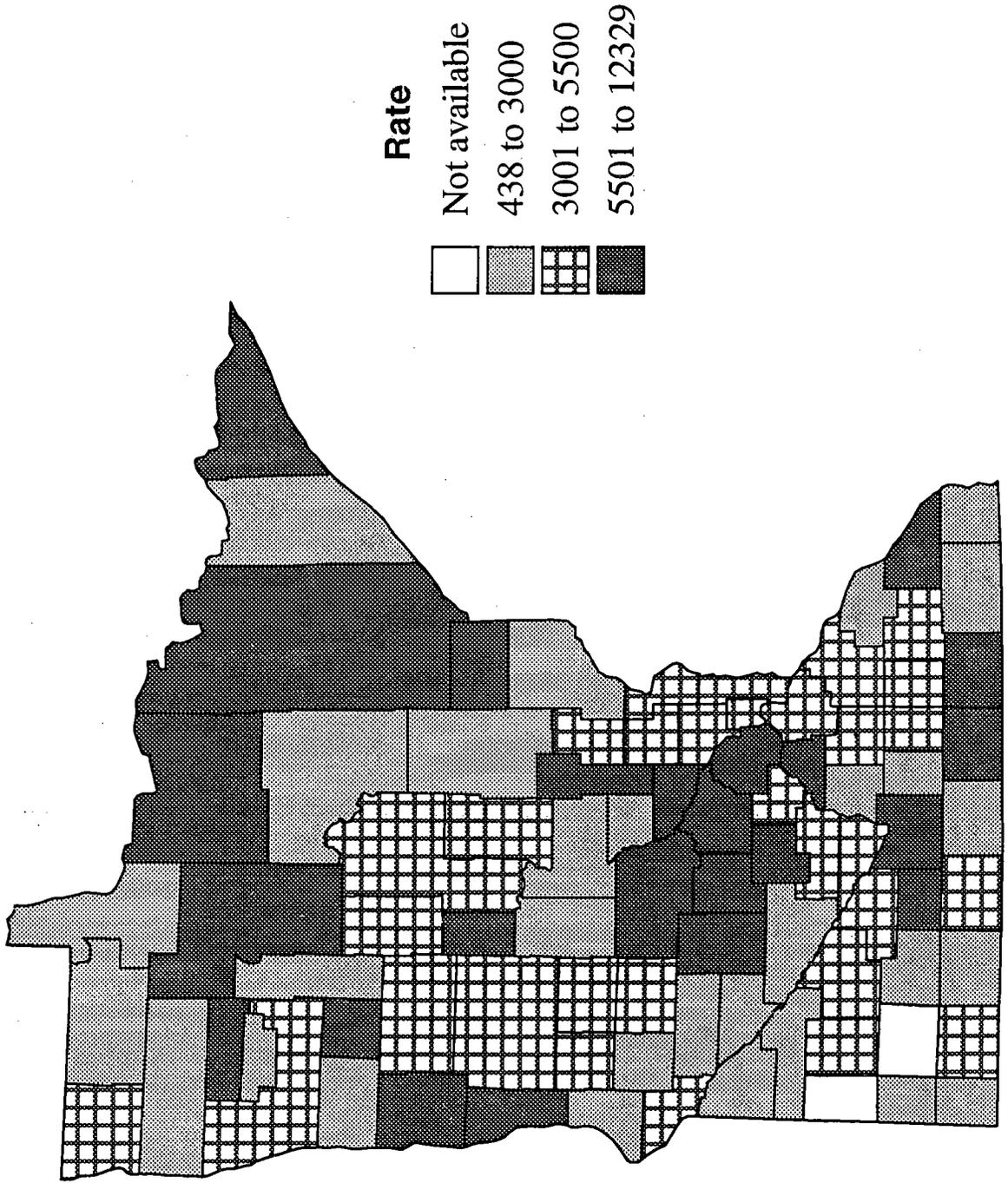
In every age group, males are more likely to be arrested than females. The gender difference in arrest rates is greater among adults than among juveniles. Juvenile males are arrested 2.4 times as often as juvenile females, while adult males are arrested 3.9 times as often as adult females. The biggest discrepancies occur above age 55. Men age 55 or older are 5 times as likely to be arrested as women in this age group.

Arrest rates by county

County arrest rates differ dramatically. From 1996 to 1998, the highest arrest rates were in Mille Lacs County, with an annual average of 12,329 arrests per 100,000, and Pennington County, 11,216 per 100,000. Freeborn, Beltrami and Mahnomen counties were among the other counties with the highest arrest rates. Because many counties have small populations and the number of arrests may fluctuate from year to year, the arrest rates are a three-year average. The 1997 population and the average number of arrests from 1996 through 1998 were used to calculate the rates.

The lowest arrest rate was in Norman County, 438 per 100,000. Other counties with low arrest rates were Rock, 635 per 100,000; Lac Qui Parle, 648 per 100,000, and Fillmore, 792 per 100,000.

Annual arrest rates per 100,000 3-year average, 1996-1998



Arrest rates for Minnesota counties, 1989-1991 and 1996-1998
(Three-year averages, arrests per 100,000 population)

	1989-1991	1996-1998		1989-1991	1996-1998
Aitkin	579	2,368	Martin	1,689	3,227
Anoka	4,467	4,722	Meeker	1,452	5,538
Becker	4,559	4,669	Mille Lacs	3,353	12,329
Beltrami	7,552	8,762	Morrison	1,616	1,396
Benton	1,574	2,735	Mower	3,859	7,904
Big Stone	2,540	4,649	Murray	n/a	n/a
Blue Earth	4,564	8,368	Nicollet	3,392	4,881
Brown	2,467	3,505	Nobles	1,529	3,875
Carlton	4,173	7,271	Norman	702	438
Carver	3,622	3,917	Olmsted	3,335	5,072
Cass	3,139	5,113	Otter Tail	3,904	5,058
Chippewa	1,300	1,864	Pennington	8,244	11,216
Chisago	5,244	3,422	Pine	1,389	2,369
Clay	5,365	7,364	Pipestone	2,551	2,906
Clearwater	1,589	2,047	Polk	2,702	3,592
Cook	5,110	5,522	Pope	4,635	4,713
Cottonwood	2,537	2,856	Ramsey	3,885	4,798
Crow Wing	3,346	5,348	Red Lake	729	1,294
Dakota	3,694	5,392	Redwood	2,392	5,285
Dodge	1,562	3,033	Renville	902	2,085
Douglas	2,835	5,349	Rice	3,637	5,035
Faribault	2,657	1,877	Rock	n/a	635
Fillmore	801	792	Roseau	1,588	2,755
Freeborn	5,780	8,826	St. Louis	3,494	6,587
Goodhue	3,208	4,826	Scott	5,294	6,377
Grant	4,339	5,238	Sherburne	3,604	5,979
Hennepin	5,313	6,838	Sibley	1,230	3,114
Houston	3,716	2,276	Stearns	4,203	6,019
Hubbard	3,329	4,345	Steele	2,851	4,497
Isanti	1,602	3,184	Stevens	2,937	2,671
Itasca	1,674	2,051	Swift	1,573	2,874
Jackson	3,154	2,479	Todd	2,779	2,629
Kanabec	2,369	5,434	Traverse	1,934	2,555
Kandiyohi	5,267	7,315	Wabasha	1,261	2,345
Kittson	1,289	4,144	Wadena	5,742	7,746
Koochiching	4,622	5,672	Waseca	922	1,680
Lac Qui Parle	538	648	Washington	4,096	5,104
Lake	1,011	1,596	Watonwan	3,210	6,431
Lake of the Woods	2,821	2,618	Wilkin	6,426	8,473
Le Sueur	892	1,727	Winona	4,667	8,217
Lincoln	411	n/a	Wright	4,180	6,594
Lyon	4,334	4,117	Yellow Medicine	1,609	1,286
McLeod	3,743	5,765			
Mahnomen	2,538	8,579	MINNESOTA	4,134	5,581
Marshall	1,813	1,517			

Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Minnesota Planning. Does not include State Patrol arrests.
 Population data from Minnesota State Demographic Center.

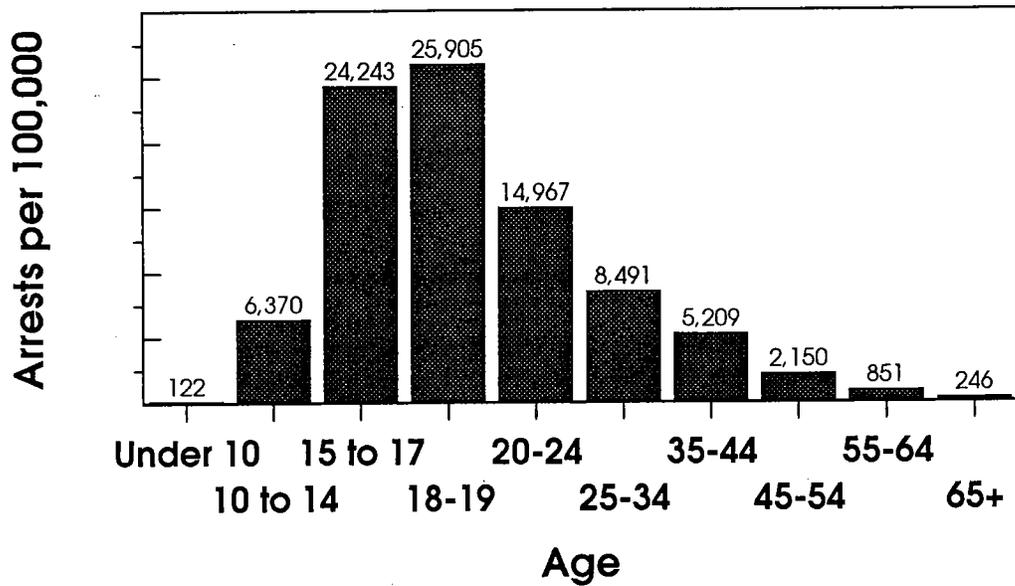
The county differences are striking, though there is no clear-cut regional pattern. Some counties with high arrest rates are urban, but others are sparsely populated and rural. The counties with the lowest rates are generally more rural but are scattered throughout the state and vary in their economic base and other characteristics.

City arrest rates

Arrest rates in Minnesota's largest cities vary widely. In 1998, Minneapolis and Duluth both had arrest rates of more than 10,000 per 100,000 population. St. Paul's arrest rate was only 4,455 per 100,000, lower than the overall state average. These figures include only arrests made by the city police, not arrests made by University of Minnesota police or other agencies.

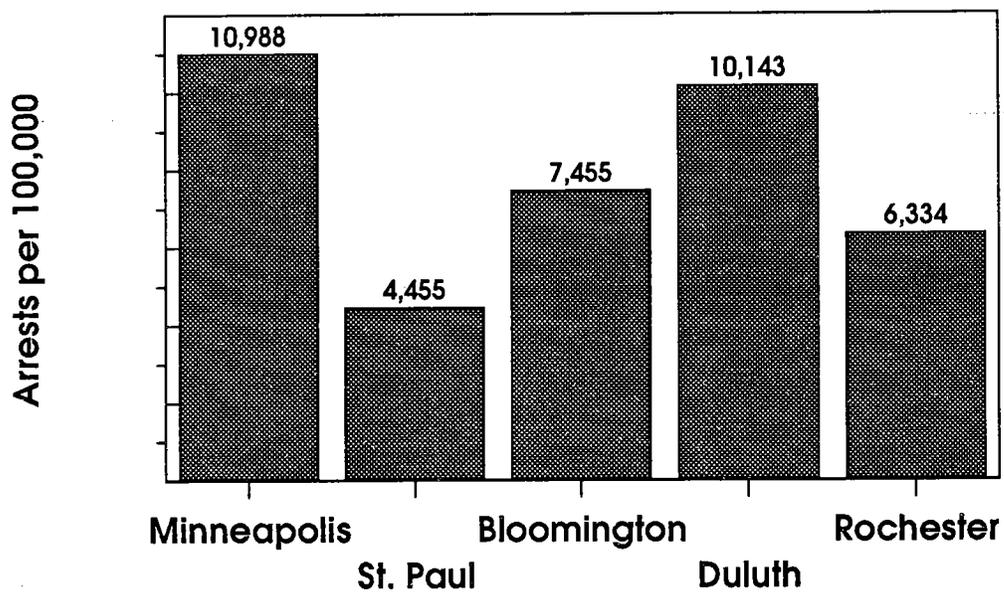
It is difficult to interpret city and county differences. Differences in levels of criminal behavior may play a role but are surely not the whole story. It is hard to believe that people in Pennington County commit 28 times as many crimes as people in Norman County, for example. Thoroughness of reporting and levels of enforcement probably vary widely from area to area. Jurisdictional issues also play a role. State police arrests are not included in the county data. The proportion of all arrests made by the State Patrol varies from area to area. Arrests made by tribal police are reported to federal agencies; some tribal agencies also share data with the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension figures, but they are not required to do so.

Minnesota arrest rates in 1998 were highest for people in late teens; rates decline with age



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning.
Population estimates by age from U.S. Census Bureau.

Arrest rates in Minnesota's five largest cities, 1998



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning.
Population estimates from State Demographic Center.

Trends in Arrest Rates

Trends in arrest rates by age and sex

Arrest rates have risen steadily in Minnesota throughout the 1990s. In 1990 there were 4,416 arrests per 100,000. This increased to 5,836 per 100,000 by 1998, a gain of 41 percent.

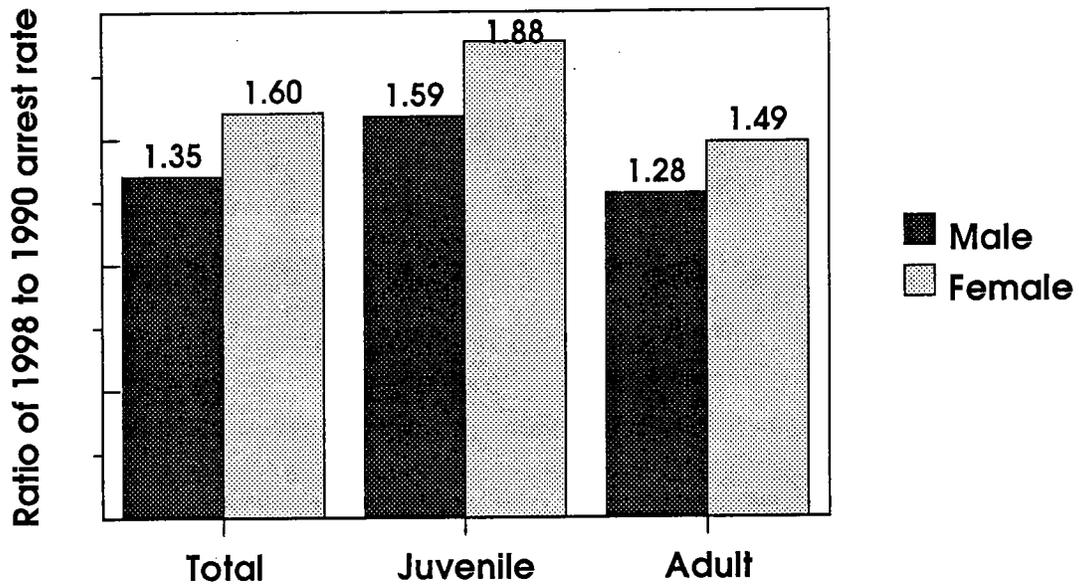
The arrest rate has risen more for females than for males. The female arrest rate rose 60 percent, compared to 35 percent for males. Female rates grew more than male rates in every age group. Though male rates remain much higher, the gender gap is less than in the past. The total number of female arrests grew from 37,681 in 1990 to 64,788 in 1998. Liquor law violation arrests accounted for 22 percent of this growth, other offenses except traffic for 18 percent, and disorderly conduct for 16 percent.

Juvenile arrest rates have risen more than adult rates. Arrest rates for people under age 18 rose 66 percent, compared to a 32 percent increase among adults. Among adults, the biggest gain was for those ages 35 to 44. The arrest rate for people in this age group went up 76 percent.

Arrest trends by type of offense

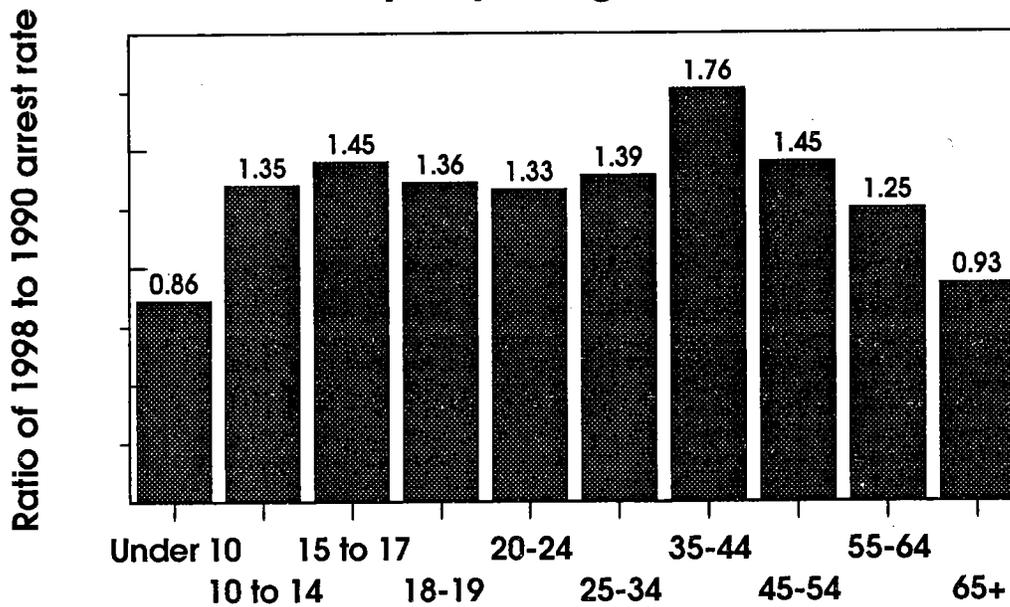
Arrest rates for Part I offenses did not rise. The rate of adult arrests for Part I offenses declined, while the arrest rate for juvenile Part I offenses stayed about the same.

Minnesota arrest rates have risen more for females and juveniles than for males and adults



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning.
Population estimates from U.S. Census Bureau.

Arrest rates in Minnesota grew the most for people age 35 to 44



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning.
U.S. Census Bureau age estimates

The overall rising arrest rate reflects gains in Part II offenses. In contrast to Part I rates, Part II and status offenses arrest rates rose dramatically. Part II rates went up 96 percent for juveniles and 41 percent for adults. Arrest rates for status offenses such as curfew violation and runaway almost tripled.

The major contributor to the gain in Part II offenses was the category of "other offenses except traffic," which accounted for 25 percent of the increase. Liquor law violations contributed 18 percent and narcotics violations 17 percent.

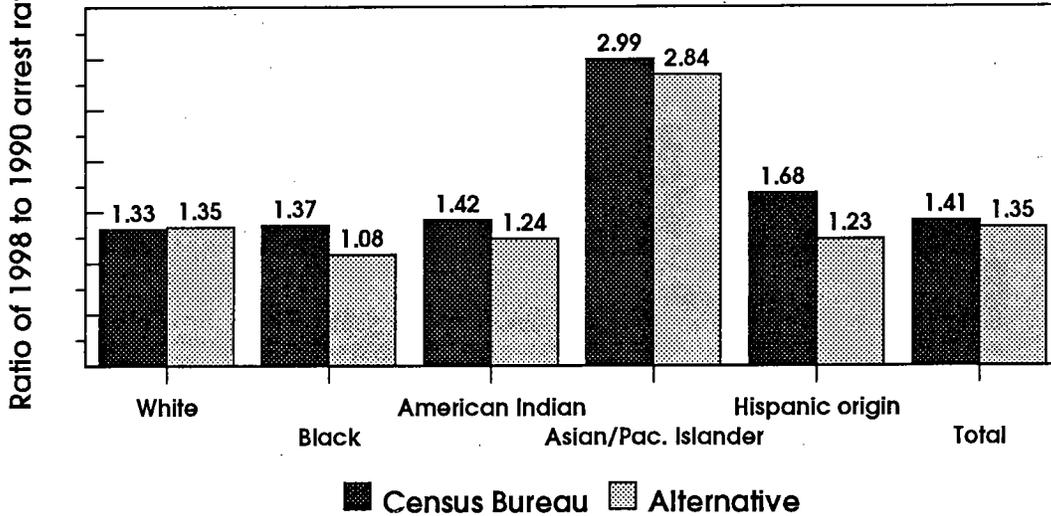
Arrest trends by race and ethnicity

Asian arrest rates have increased the most, almost tripling between 1990 and 1998. Asians had the largest gains for both Part I and Part II offenses for both adults and juveniles. They also had a very large increase in the arrest rate for status offenses. The rates of arrests for Asian status offenses grew by more than 440 percent, slightly less than the 500 percent gain for black juveniles.

Hispanic origin arrest rates also grew faster than the overall average, 68 percent compared to 41 percent for the whole population. Total arrest rates for whites, blacks and American Indians increased at similar rates.

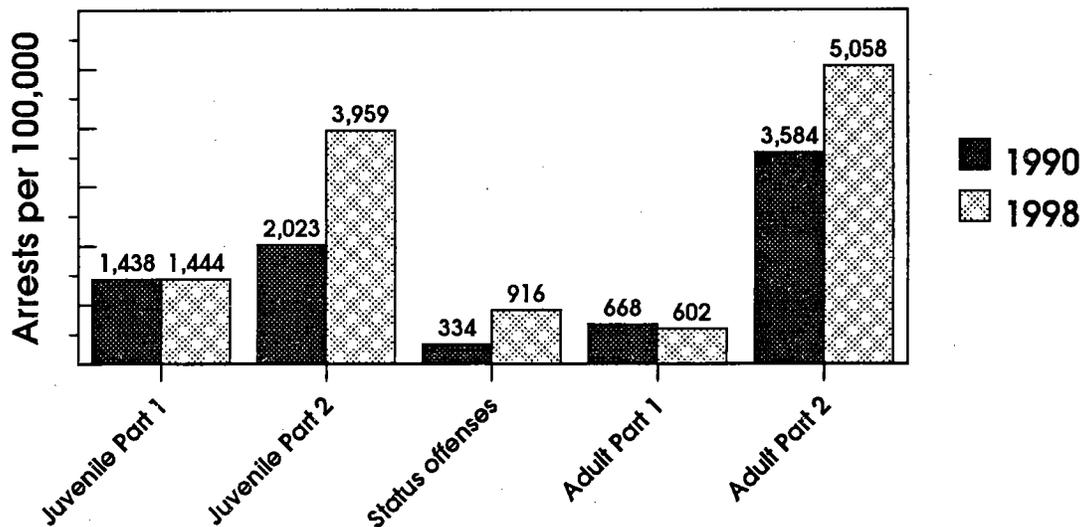
Using the alternative population series results in a somewhat different picture. The rate of growth in the Asian arrest rate would still be very high, but the growth rate for Hispanics would be similar to the state average, instead of higher, and the increase for

Ratio of 1998 to 1990 arrest rate varies considerably depending on population estimate used



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning. U.S. Census Bureau population estimates; alternative population estimates from State Demographic Center.

Minnesota arrest rates rise for Part 2 and status offenses between 1990 and 1998; Part 1 arrest rates remain stable or decline



Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning. U.S. Census Bureau population estimates.

black Minnesotans would be lower than the state average. These diverging trends again illustrate the significance of the population base used to calculate rates.

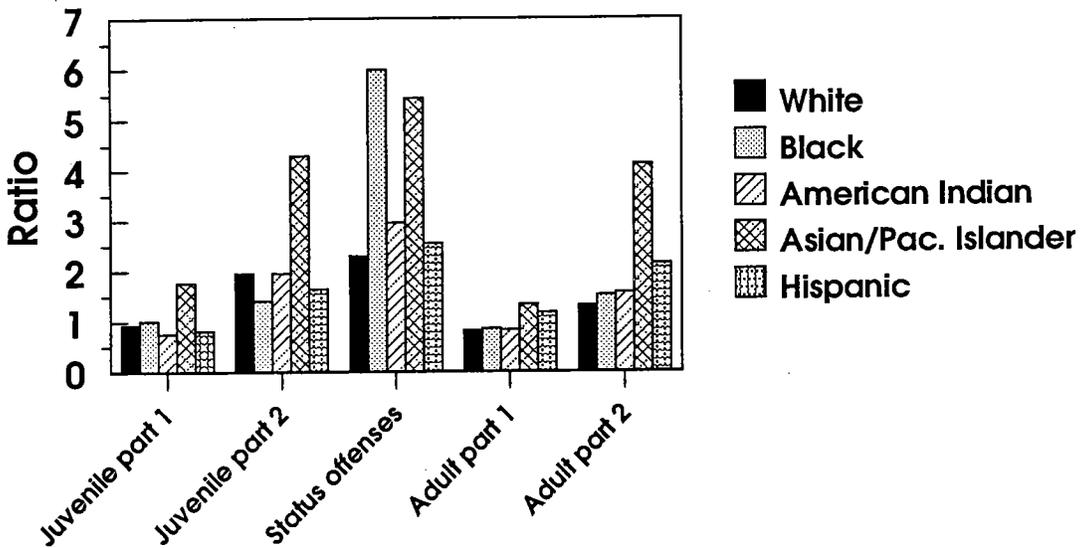
Arrests vs. Reported Crimes

Why are arrest rates rising? Are Minnesotans committing more crimes, or is law enforcement becoming more vigorous? A conclusive answer to this question is not possible given the modest scope of this report, but a look at some other statistical series provides food for thought.

First, it is possible to compare arrests with “crimes known and reported,” the crimes included in the well-known F.B.I. uniform crime reports series. The data show a similar trend – or, more accurately, a non-trend – in arrests and reported crimes for Part I offenses. Both have remained stable during the 1990s. For Part II offenses, the increase in arrests has far outpaced the growth in crimes reported, 62 percent vs. 21 percent.

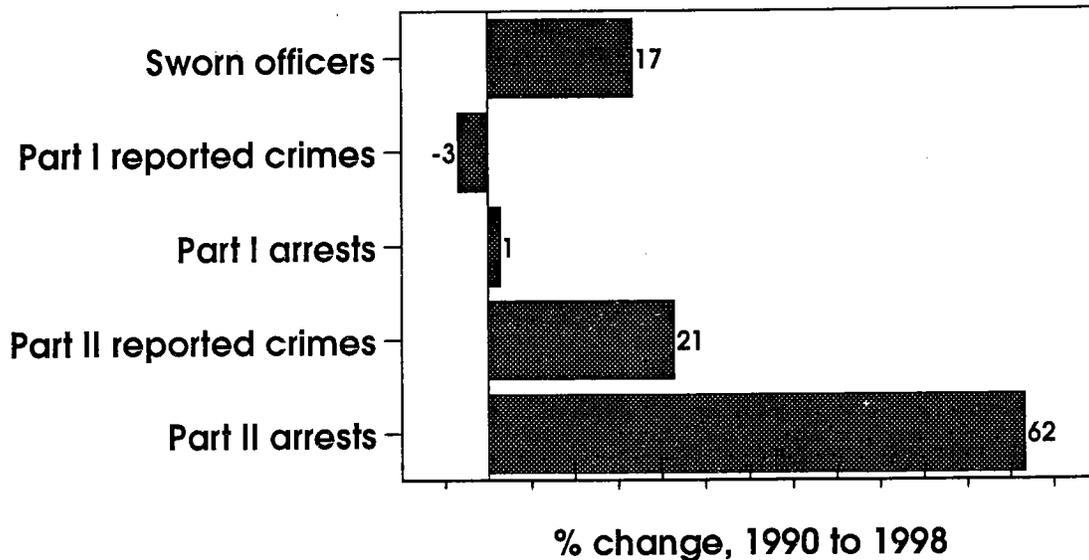
During the 1990s, public support for law enforcement activities and federal initiatives such as the “Clinton Cops” have increased the number of sworn law enforcement officers. The number of officers in Minnesota rose 17 percent between 1990 and 1998, and civilian law enforcement employment also grew substantially. The presence of more officers may have contributed at least somewhat to the rise in arrests.

Ratio of 1998 arrest rate to 1990 rate, by race, ethnicity and type of offense: Minnesota



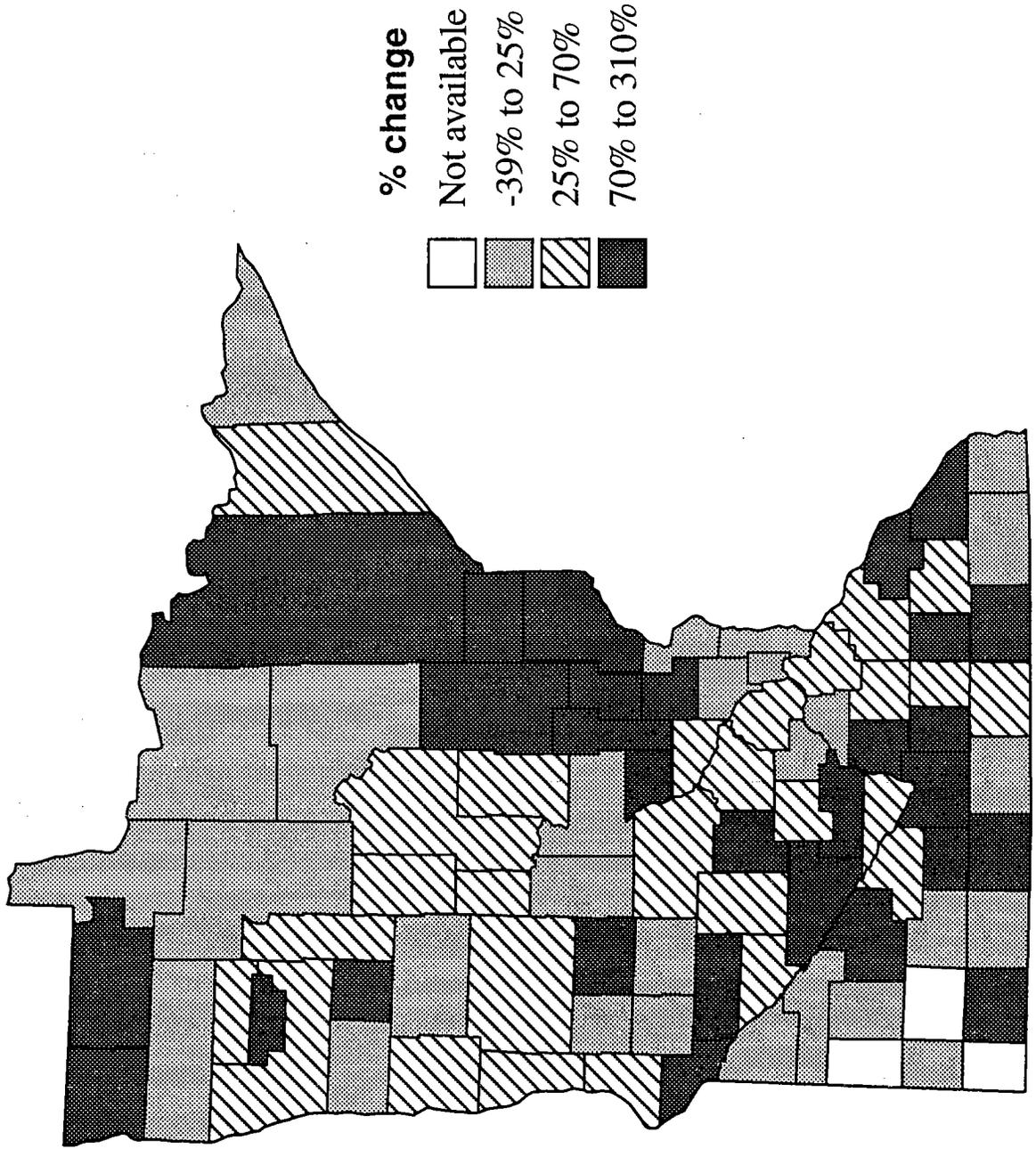
Arrest data from Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning. Population estimates from U.S. Census Bureau.

From 1990 to 1998, the number of Minnesota arrests for Part 2 offenses rose much faster than the number of Part 2 reported crimes



Source: Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

% Change in arrest rate between 1989-1991 and 1996-1998



County trends in arrests

Trends in arrest rates have varied dramatically from one county to the next. Arrest rates rose 309 percent in Aitkin County and 281 percent in Meeker County, while declining 39 percent in Houston County and 38 percent in Norman County. There is no clear-cut geographic pattern in these changes, though the extreme gainers and losers tend to be counties with smaller populations. Counties with small populations are more likely to experience dramatic fluctuations in rates from year to year. Changes in reporting practices may also play a role in these trends.

Acknowledgments

Debra Hagel helped obtain access to the arrest data and provided background information about how this data is collected and processed. Debra Hagel, Ray Lewis, Susan Roth and Tom Gillaspay all read and commented on an earlier version of this paper.

Sources

Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, school enrollment data by race and ethnicity. <http://cfl.state.mn.us/datactr/datactr2.htm>

U.S. Census Bureau, population estimates by age, race and sex.
http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/st_sasrh.html

U.S. Census Bureau, adjusted and unadjusted numbers from the 1990 census.
<http://tier2.census.gov/p194171/p194index.htm>

State Demographic Center at Minnesota Planning, alternative population estimates by race and Hispanic origin.

Criminal Justice Statistics Center at Minnesota Planning, arrest data files based on data from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.
<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/cj/cjc-data.html#arrests>

G:\demog\crime\arrest report.doc
December 28, 1999

