

Box 2.5 Monitoring the Future

The only student-based self-report survey done on a yearly basis with a nationwide sample is Monitoring the Future.¹⁰⁵ Responses to their delinquency questions reveal few differences in self-report delinquent behavior by white compared to African-American youth. White youth were slightly more likely to report being in a serious fight within the last year, using a weapon to get something from a person, taking something from a store, and taking a car that did not belong to someone in their family. African-American youth were slightly more likely to report taking something from a store without paying for it, taking something not belonging to them worth less than \$50, and going into some house or building without permission.

David Huizinga and Elliot explored whether African-American youth have a higher prevalence of offending than whites and whether a higher incidence of offending by African Americans can explain differential arrest rates. Their analysis revealed few consistent racial differences across the years studied, either in the proportion of African American and white youth engaging in delinquent behavior or in the frequency with which African American and white offenders commit delinquent acts. Contrary to Hindelang, they suggest that the differential selection bias hypothesis cannot be readily dismissed because the differential presence of youth in the criminal justice system cannot be explained entirely by differential offending rates.¹⁰⁶

FOCUS ON AN ISSUE**Code of the Street: Predicts Violent Delinquency**

In Elijah Anderson's work, he sets forth a "Code of the Street" perspective to explain the causes of violent delinquency among African Americans. This work suggests a learning environment conducive to the commission of violence as individuals develop "social identities" consistent with the predominant street culture.¹⁰⁷ Recent work by Eric Stewart and Ronald Simons offers a multivariate analysis of the "code of the street" perspective by testing two key hypotheses, finding support for each. Using a data set of 700 African-American youth in response to a survey designed to "identify neighborhood and family processes that contribute to African-American children's development in families living in a wide variety of community settings,"¹⁰⁸ these researchers found the following:

First, based on the assumption of the existence of a neighborhood-based

street culture of violence, Stewart and Simons hypothesize that "neighborhood street culture would be related significantly to violent delinquency above and beyond individual level street code values."¹⁰⁹ Their findings indicate that neighborhood street culture does in fact predict violent delinquency beyond the individual respondent's personal commitment to street code values.

Second, based on the ideas presented by Anderson that suggest "the neighborhood street culture moderates the effect of individual-level street code values of violence" thus leading to the assumption that "neighborhood street culture tends to amplify the violence-provoking effect of personnel commitment to the street code" Stewart and Simons proposed

a second hypothesis in which they expect: "the effect of street code values to be associated strongly with violent delinquency in settings where strong evidence is found of a neighborhood street culture." Their findings indicate

that support for the position that "neighborhood street culture moderates individual-level street code values on violence in neighborhoods where street culture is widespread."¹¹⁰

the economic indicators, the gap in offending by race and ethnicity effectively disappears.¹¹¹

Drug Offenders

A prevalent image in the news and entertainment media is the image of the drug user as a person of color. In particular, trend arrest data for nonalcoholic drug abuse violations reflect an overrepresentation of African Americans and often an overrepresentation of Native Americans for alcohol-related offenses. A more comprehensive picture of drug users emerges from self-report data that ask respondents to indicate their use of and their prevalence of use for particular drugs. In a recent report on the use of licit and illicit drugs among people of color, through the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) reveals racial and ethnic variations among young people and adults. For all residents aged 12 and older,¹¹² 10.1 percent report using illicit drugs in the last year. The lowest use pattern was with Asians Americans (3.1 percent), followed by Hispanics (8.8 percent), whites (9.5 percent), and African Americans (10.5 percent). The highest level of use was reported by American Indians/Native Alaskans (12.3 percent) and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (14.0 percent), and biracial/multiracial respondents (17.0 percent).

College student drug use (ages 18–22) was more the double the use of general population at 22.3 percent. Asian Americans reported significantly lower than average use (9.4 percent). Whereas African-American and Hispanic college students (19.7 percent and 21.5 percent, respectively) report slightly lower than average use. Whites have the highest level of drug use in college at 25.1 percent. The typical drug of choice for college students was marijuana.

In a multivariate analysis of earlier NSDUH data, McCabe and colleagues find that male students are generally more likely to report drug use than female students; however, they find that, "Hispanic and white students were more likely to report drug use and abuse than Asian and African American students prior to coming college or during college."¹¹³ Additionally, the use of marijuana by college students reveals that it is more often used by Hispanic college students, followed by white, Asian American, and then African American college students.

For the U.S. population aged 12–17, survey data reveal interesting patterns for "licit" (cigarettes and alcohol) and "illicit" drug use¹¹⁴ (marijuana). Examination of the data reveals that the pattern of cigarette and alcohol use varies by race and ethnicity. While 5.6 percent of this age group indicated they had smoked in

the last month, white youth had the highest reported cigarette use (7.2 percent). Hispanic and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander youth have half the level of white youth smoking cigarettes in the last month (3.7 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively). African-American and Asian youth report the lowest levels of smoking cigarettes (3.2 percent and 2.5 percent, respectively). Whites also show the highest use of smokeless tobacco. All racial groups show a decline in smoking since 2009. As for alcohol use, youth were asked if they started drinking in the last year, with 10.5 percent of white youth initiating alcohol use, followed by a lower percentage of Hispanic and African-American youth (9.1 percent).

The initiation patterns of drug use by youth in the last 12 months also diverge by race and ethnicity.¹¹⁵ The pattern, however, is the same across drug type. Specifically, white youth reporting the highest initiation of alcohol, cigarettes, and nonmedical use of prescription drugs compared to African-American and Hispanics youth. The use patterns differ between Hispanic and African-American youth as the former report higher levels of initiation for cigarettes and nonmedical use of prescription drugs.

Monitoring the future is another self-report drug use survey. This annual survey asks a sample of high school students from around the nation their daily to lifetime drug use for a range of licit and illicit drugs.¹¹⁶ The primary observation about race, given prevalence estimates across three years, is "12th grade African American students reported lifetime, annual, 30 day, and daily prevalence rates for nearly all drugs as lower—sometimes dramatically so—than those for white and Hispanic 12th graders Also, usage rates for most drugs were generally lower for African American students than for white and Hispanic students in 8th and 10th grade."¹¹⁷ As with college students, marijuana use is highest among Hispanics, and Hispanics have the highest annual and lifetime prevalence for crack and cocaine use. White students have the highest annual and lifetime use for hallucinogens (including LSD), tranquilizers, amphetamines, and sedatives.

To the extent we see a face of color when we picture drug users, we are only aware of a small portion of the picture of drugs use across racial and ethnic groups. Often whites report the highest use levels. Neighborhood characteristics and family environment may serve as risk factors contributing to drug use. For example, the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse data reveal the disturbing observation that a far greater number of African-American and Hispanic youth (approximately one third) reported seeing people sell drugs in the neighborhood occasionally or more often than whites did (less than 10 percent).

Mass Shooting Offenders

Given the information available on homicides in single incident cases, we now turn to the question, "Do Mass shooters have a race"? This section reviews two aggregate, descriptive accounts of criminal incidents that lead to the massive injury and death in the United States. One account is a journalistic from a major news magazine, *Mother Jones*, of Mass shooting events, while the other account is from a federal law enforcement agency describing active shooter event. Both

accounts identify the offenders as being overwhelmingly male (more than 95% of the time). Note, this percentage is far in excess of the roughly 50 percent of the U.S. population that is identified in the U.S. Census as male. However, do mass shooters and active shooters have a race? The discussion of mass shooters identifies the gender, race, and often age of the offenders, while the government source identifies gender and age, but not race of the shooters. Race is difficult to define at times and may best be considered as a self-defined status; however, an attribution of race by another (such as by a journalist from a photograph) clearly has a racial impact. Does the absence of race in a government report on active shooters raise important questions?

Definitions for mass shootings and the similar active shooter incidents are varied; however, they do have an overlap of incidents. *Mother Jones* has constructed a data base of mass shooting incidents (typically killing four or more people with little or no break), which includes offender information. Their database reveals the vast majority of mass shooters are whites. This is a different picture of the typical offender than we see in typical (individual victim) accounts in the SHR made available by the FBI that are addressed above. *Mother Jones* reveals that in more than 75 incidents since 1982, the typical shooter is white (in over 80 percent of the cases), and in the remaining cases, the shooter is identified as Asian or African American.¹¹⁸ This pattern of 80 percent of mass shooters being whites persists in Columbine copycat shootings as well, which have resulted in 21 attacks, with 89 fatalities and 126 wounded since 1999.¹¹⁹

The Federal Bureau of Investigation released a report in 2014, entitled, "A Study of Active Shooter Incidents Between 2000 and 2013."¹²⁰ An active shooter incident is defined as "a situation in which a shooting is in progress and an aspect of the crime may affect the protocols used in responding to and reacting at the scene of the incident" (Blair et al., p. 4). Highlights from this study (Blair et al., 2014, pp. 5–7) reveal that critical shooter incidents have occurred in 40 of the 50 states; 160 incidents were identified, with an average of 6.4 incidents in the first 7 years studied and 16.4 incidents in the last 7 years studied; 1,043 people were injured or killed.

Further review of these data reveals that incidents are typically in business locations or an educational environment. The report states that "though this study does not focus on the motivation of the shooters, the study did identify some shooter characteristics" (Blair et al., 2014, p. 20):

- In 158 incidents, the shooter acted alone;
- Shooters are predominantly male, with fewer than 4 percent of incidents involving a female;
- A number of shooters were identified as middle school or high school age.

No race information is presented in the report for the shooters, even though 97% of them are dead or in custody. Moreover, no race information is offered in the description of victims, either. The conclusion is that males are overrepresented as offenders in active shooter events, but we have no information from the FBI

about shooter race. This report stands in contrast with the UCR, the SHR, and the Hate Crime statistics that report race of arrestees, and in the last two reports, race of suspect.

Can you picture an offender without picturing a race? Can law enforcement act effectively with a shooter profile that does not include race? Is race assumed to be connected with motivations, thus, excluded?

In a recent New York Times op-ed piece,¹²¹ Anthea Butler, professor of Religious and Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, highlights the racialized nature of reporting on homicides and mass shootings. In short, minority homicide offenders are "street thugs" and white mass killing offenders are troubled by mental illness. Metzel and MacLeish conclude in their recent research that "notions of mental illness that emerge in relation to mass shootings frequently reflect larger cultural stereotypes and anxieties about matters such as race/ethnicity, social class, and politics. These issues become obscured when mass shootings come to stand in for all gun crime, and when 'mentally ill' ceases to be a medical designation and becomes a sign of violent threat."¹²²

Summary: A Picture of the Typical Criminal Offender

The image of the typical offender that emerges from the data examined here conflicts somewhat with the image in the minds of most Americans. If by the phrase "typical offender" we mean the offender who shows up most frequently in arrest statistics, then for all crimes except murder and robbery the typical offender is white, not African American.

As we have shown, focusing on the *number* of persons arrested is somewhat misleading. It is clear from the data discussed thus far that African Americans are arrested at a disproportionately high *rate*. This conclusion applies to property crime and violent crime. Moreover, victimization data suggest that African Americans may have higher offending rates for serious violent crime, but examinations of victim perception of offender with official arrest data reveal that some of the overrepresentation of African-American offenders may be selection bias on the part of criminal justice officials, but this dilemma remains unsettled.

If part of the view of the typical criminal offender is that the typical drug offender is a minority, we have shown that self-report data from youth populations in the United States reveal that people of color do not have consistently higher drug-use rates than whites. This picture varies slightly by type of drug, with Hispanic youth showing higher rates of use with some drugs and Native American youth with other drugs, but there is little evidence of differential patterns of higher use rates by African Americans than other racial groups.

The typical offender in mass shooting situations has a race, and even when it is not reported in government publications, media outlets provide such information in their data bases. The typical mass shooter has a race: white. Moreover, the depiction of this type of crime is conflated with media depictions of "street thugs" versus the mentally ill.

CRIME AS AN INTRARACIAL EVENT

In the minds of many Americans, the term *crime* conjures up an image of an act of violence against a white victim by an African-American offender.¹²³ In the preceding sections, we demonstrated the inaccuracy of these perceptions of victims and offenders; we illustrated that the typical victim is a racial minority and that the typical offender, for all but a few crimes, is white. We now turn to a discussion of crime as an *intraracial* event.

National Crime Victimization Survey

Few criminal justice data sources, including the NCVS, offer comprehensive information on the racial makeup of the victim-offender dyad. Recall that the NCVS asks victims about their perceptions of the offender's race in crimes of violence and data presented distinguish among only African Americans, whites, and "others" (victims' perceptions of the offender as Hispanic are not available).

With these limitations in mind, NCVS data on the race of the victim and the perceived race of the offender in single-offender violent victimizations can be examined.¹²⁴ These data indicate that almost all violent crimes by white offenders were committed against white victims (73 percent). This pattern also characterized the individual crimes of robbery, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and simple assault. The typical white offender, in other words, commits a crime against another white person.

This intraracial pattern of violent crime is also reported by African-American victims. In short, crimes of robbery, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and simple assault of African Americans are predominantly intraracial. The only NCVS crime type that does not follow this pattern is a white robbery victim with injury. These

Box 2.6 Civil Rights Cold Cases

Pursuant to the passage of the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act ("Emmett Till Act"), signed into law on October 8, 2008, the Department of Justice and the FBI are working together to address "violations of criminal civil rights statutes ... result[ing] in death" that "occurred not later than December 31, 1969." Toward that end, each of the 56 FBI field offices searched their "cold case files" to identify incidents that might be ripe for investigation. Since February 2007, the FBI and the Division have partnered with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), and the National Urban League to identify additional cases for investigation and to solicit their help.

(Excerpt from <https://www.justice.gov/crt/cold-case-initiative>)

What Civil Rights era criminal cases were left unresolved in your state? Can you identify a case the FBI might be able to solve through this initiative?

victims are nearly as likely to be victimized by perceived offenders who are white or African American.

Uniform Crime Report Homicide Reports

A final source of data on the victim–offender pair is the Supplemental Homicide Report. Contrary to popular belief, a 29-year review of UCR/SHRs reveals that homicide is essentially an intraracial event.¹²⁵ Specifically, in data spanning 1980–2008,

- 93 percent of African-American murder victims were slain by other African Americans;
- 84 percent of whites were victimized by whites;
- 26.7 percent of stranger homicides were interracial;
- 9.7 percent of friend or acquaintance victimization was interracial;

Cross-sectional UCR data for 2008 alone reveals¹²⁶:

- 63 percent of Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders were victimized by Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders; and
- 57 percent of Native American/American Indians were victimized by Native American/American Indians.

The small percentage of interracial homicides are more likely to occur with young victims and young offenders and are slightly more likely to be black-on-white offenses than white-on-black offenses. This analysis also reveals that most homicides are intraracial, regardless of relationship with the offender: stranger homicides (7 in 10 are intraracial) than homicides by victim or acquaintance (9 in 10 are intraracial).¹²⁷

Summary

The general pattern revealed is one in which white offenders consistently victimize whites, whereas African-American offenders, and particularly African-American males, more frequently victimize both African Americans and whites. As noted, the politicizing of black criminality continues, and the emergence of and subsequent focus on racial hoaxes persists.¹²⁸ See “Focus on an Issue” sections for a discussion of the politicizing of black criminality and the persistence of racial hoaxes.

CRIME AS AN INTERRACIAL (HATE) EVENT

Not all interracial criminal events are considered hate crimes. The term *hate crime* (or bias crime) is most often defined as a common law offense that contains an element of prejudice based on the race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability status of the victim (some statutes add gender). Generally,

FOCUS ON AN ISSUE

Politicizing Black-on-Black Crime and Ignoring White-on-White and White-on-Black Crime

Bing and Russel note that, "Much attention has been devoted to 'black-on-black' crime ... It is not unusual to see in the written press or to hear in the electronic media stories depicting the evils of living in the black community. [This] has occurred with such frequency that some individuals now associate black people with criminality. Simply put, it has become fashionable to discern between crime and black-on-black crime. Rarely does one read or hear about white crime or 'white-on-white' crime. This is troubling when one considers that most crimes, including serious violent crimes, are committed by and against whites as well as blacks."¹²⁹

Some researchers have challenged the assertion that crime is predominantly intraracial.¹³⁰ These critics point to the fact that a white person has a greater likelihood of being victimized by an African-American offender than an African American has of being victimized by a white offender. Although this is true, it does not logically challenge the assertion that crime is predominantly an intraracial event. Remember that the NCVS reveals that the typical offender is white, not African American.

An exception to the predominant intraracial pattern of crime occurred with the examination of Native American and Asian victimization patterns. Native Americans report most victimizations occurring by whites, and Asians report victimizations occurring almost equally by whites, African Americans, and other racial groups (with no group committing the majority of offenses).

Braga and Brunson, reporting for the Executive Session on Policing held at the

Kennedy School (2015), assert that "the term 'black-on-black violence', while statistically supported [in some situations] is simplistic and emotionally charged definition of urban violence when used by political commentators, politicians and police executives."¹³¹ Does this term suggest that urban violence is a "black problem"? These authors note that television and print media coverage may be presented without the appropriate contextual information and may be perceived as reflecting the actual racial distributions of crime and offenders. They sight damaging examples of unsupportable statements and erroneous facts used by commentators, mayors, and police chiefs. A discussion of what can be done in a constructive manner focuses on community-level issues, such as building collective efficacy. Papachristos, Braga and Hura's examination of homicide in Boston (over a 13-year period), reveals that "black-on-black" homicide is largely concentrated in a small number of disadvantaged neighborhoods, with offenders that were involved in criminal activity.¹³² Further, a large number of incidents could be explained by the actions of a small number of "career" criminals.

Do we consider any particular crimes to be "white-on-white crimes"? Why or why not? Consider financial crimes. What about state crime? If the government is a majority white government, if it commits a crime against predominantly black cities, is this "white-on-black crime"? Consider the Flint, Michigan, lead-poisoning scandal.

hate crime legislation is enacted in the form of enhancement penalties for common law offenses (ranging from assault to vandalism) that have an element of prejudice. Justifications for the creation of such legislation include the symbolic message that certain actions are exceptionally damaging to an individual when they are “provoked” by the status of race and ethnicity and that such actions are damaging to the general community and should be condemned.

The FBI has been mandated by Congress to collect and disseminate information on hate crime in the United States.¹³³ In 2014, the FBI Hate Crime Data Collection Program received reports from nearly 15,494 law enforcement agencies, representing nearly 85 percent of the U.S. population. The FBI offers this caution in its annual report: “The reports from these agencies are insufficient to allow a valid national or regional measure of the volume and types of crimes motivated by hate; they offer perspectives on the general nature of hate crime occurrence.”

The FBI received reports of 5,479 bias-motivated criminal incidents in 2014, consisting of 6,418 offenses. Most offenses reported (63.1 percent) involved crimes against a person, with 36.1 percent of the offenses designated as property offenses. A small number of offenses (less than 1 percent) were designated as crimes against society.¹³⁴ As shown in Figure 2.2, most common offense were the crimes of intimidation (27.2 percent), followed by destruction/vandalism of property (26.4 percent), simple assault (23.6 percent), and aggravated assault (12.0 percent).¹³⁵ The most commonly reported hate crime motivation was identified as race bias (48.3 percent), followed by 20.1 percent reflecting sexual orientation or gender identity bias, 17.1 percent reflecting bias based on religion, and 12.4 percent reflecting a bias based on ethnicity/national origin (Figure 2.2).

The victims of race bias crimes were reflective of all race categories, including a multiracial group category. Three racial groups reported high percentage of victimization than their representation in the population: 63.5 percent were motivated by African-American bias, with 5.5 percent resulting from anti-Asian bias and 4.6 percent motivated by American Indian/Alaska Native bias. White

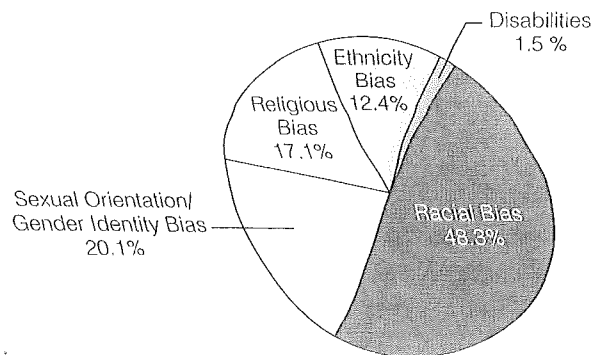


FIGURE 2.2 Hate Crime Offenses by Bias Type, 2014

SOURCE: FBI, Hate Crime Statistics, 2014 (2015).

victims made up of 22.8 percent of bias-motivated offenses were reported, making them the second largest group of race-based hate crime victims. Asian/Pacific Islanders accounted for 0.01 percent of hate crime victimization.

Offender information is also available in the FBI Hate Crime Reporting Program reports. This information is provided by victims reporting their perceptions, rather than being based on arrest or charging information. In 73.9 percent of the hate crime offenses reported, the offender was known and the perception of race was reported by the victim. In these cases, suspected offenders were most often identified as white (56.7 percent), and suspected offenders represented all four race categories and were occasionally identified as multiracial.¹³⁶ In short, all race groups have individuals who have been victimized by bias crimes and all race groups have individuals who are suspected offenders of bias crimes.

Information on the trends of victimization and offending in bias-crime events is limited, but patterns for both whites and African Americans have emerged. African Americans are most often victimized by whites. And whites are most often victimized by African Americans.¹³⁷ Native American, Asian American, and Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native bias-crime victims identified whites as the offender in more than half of incidents. Whereas Native Americans were rarely identified as offenders, they were as likely to have white victims as African-American victims, and the offender identified as Asian American is found to victimize African Americans more than the other racial groups.¹³⁸

In 2005, the Bureau of Justice Statistics released a Special Report comparing the picture of hate crime incidents and offenders that appears in victim self-report survey information (the NCVS) with the picture found in police-based data (UCR).¹³⁹ The NCVS requires corroborating evidence of hate-based motivation before it records an event as a hate crime. Specifically, the offender must use derogatory language, display a hate symbol, or have a confirmed hate crime report by local law enforcement. Pooling several years of NCVS data (2000–2003) resulted in an average of 191,000 hate incidents, of which 92,000 were reported to police (44 percent). These data reveal approximately 3 percent of all violent crime reported in the NCVS were perceived by the victim as hate crimes. Nearly one-third of the offenses were violent crimes such as rape and serious assault, and nearly 25 percent of the offenses were household vandalism that was perceived to be motivated by hate. The most common motivation identified by victims was based on race (55 percent), association with someone of a different race (such as multiracial couple; 31 percent), or ethnicity (29 percent).

Key information describing the offender and the incident is also available from the NCVS data. Offenders are predominately male and most likely to be white and a stranger to the victim. The event is most likely to be a violent crime and occur in a public place. When comparing hate offenders to non-hate offenders, NCVS data reveal that perceived gang membership and use of weapons did not vary from hate- to non-hate-related events. However, a larger percentage of females are identified as offenders in hate events than non-hate events. Similarly, the perceived racial makeup of offenders is different with hate- and non-hate-related events. Forty-four percent of offenders are white in hate events; 62 percent of offenders are identified as white in non-hate events. Conversely, a large

percentage of hate offenders are perceived as African American than non-hate offenders (39 percent compared to 24 percent).¹⁴⁰

When the racial composition of victims and offenders is examined, interesting differences appear. First, white victims report that nearly half of their offenders were white offenders and nearly half of the offenders were African Americans. However, African-American victims perceive their offenders to be white in more than 85 percent of offenses, with African-American offenders identified in only 15 percent of cases.¹⁴¹

The official UCR recording of hate crime incidence from this time period (2000–2003) gives an annual average of 8,227 incidents.¹⁴² What accounts for the disparity? First, the motivation of association is not recognized by the UCR classification system (identified above as the second most common motivation in the NCVS). Second is the lack of victimization reporting to the police. The NCVS respondents reveal the hate incidents they report to the police are confirmed by police investigation in fewer than 10 percent of incidents. This study also reveals that victims are less likely to report hate-related events to the police than similar non-hate-related events. Additionally, the NCVS data may reflect an overreporting by respondents, perhaps due to telescoping events forward in time.

James Jacobs argued that hate crime statutes create a law unlikely to deter, and its implementation will widen social division. He also argued that hate crime legislation represents an ill-advised insertion of the civil rights paradigm into the criminal law. Specifically, Jacobs reasons that civil rights legislation is an attempt to extend “positive rights and opportunities to minorities and women ... directed at the conduct of government officials and private persons who govern, regulate, or sell goods and services. By contrast, hate crime law deals with conduct that is already criminal and with wrongdoers who are already criminals.” He concluded that the “possibility that criminals can be threatened into not discriminating in their choice of crime victims is slight.”¹⁴³

In a recent study examining the potential for community disorganization to explain the occurrence of hate crime, Christopher Lyons hypothesized that socially disorganized communities will have higher rates of hate crime. In his multivariate analysis of communities in Chicago, he characterized social disorganization with such measures as youths who skipped school, the presence of graffiti, and fighting in front of a respondent’s house. He also controlled for unemployment, poverty, percentage of families on public assistance, and percentage of families with single mothers. Additionally, he controlled for racial composition and percentage change in minority racial composition over the last decade. The dependent variables for this study were the occurrence of anti-black and anti-white hate crimes. His findings indicate that “anti-black hate crimes are most numerous in relatively organized communities with *higher* levels of informal social control, and *especially* in internally organized white communities undergoing the threat of racial invasion” and are most common in “economically affluent communities.” Anti-white hate crimes, however, have a different set of causes, since these crimes are identified as “somewhat more likely in disadvantaged communities, especially with higher levels of residential mobility.”¹⁴⁴

Lyons concludes that "the correlates of anti-black crimes are distinguishable from those of crime in general," while anti-white crime, "like other forms of crime ... appear[s] to be the product of social disorganization brought about by population turnover."¹⁴⁵ The logical extension of this research is that different

FOCUS ON AN ISSUE

Disability and Crime Victims

The FBI Hate Crimes statistics report bias incidents occurring against people with disabilities. Although these events are rare—95 incidents in 2014, and approximately 1 percent of all reported hate crime incidents—this status of victimization is still relevant to a discussion of minorities and criminal justice.¹⁴⁶ These data distinguish between those with physical disabilities (27.3 percent) and those with mental disabilities (72.6 percent). Of the known reported incidents, 42.8 percent occurred in the residence/home, higher than the percentage for this location for any other bias-crime offense.

A recent report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics based on the National Crime Victimization Survey (2009–2013) indicated a victimization rate was more than twice that of persons without disabilities (36 vs. 14 per 1,000 population).¹⁴⁷ The definition used in this survey is broader than the mental or physical disability used by the FBI reporting data, encompassing restrictions to full participation in activities at home, school and work, that could include hearing, vision, ambulatory, and cognitive issues. Thus, roughly 21 percent of all violent victimizations occurred against someone with a disability. African Americans with disabilities reported victimization rates similar to those without disabilities; however, the remaining racial groups had higher rates for members with a disability than those without a disability. The disability victimization rate did not vary significantly by

gender, with males and females both having a higher victimization rates than the non-disabled population.

Examination of FBI Hate Crime Statistics revealed a larger percentage of disability bias offenses were committed against whites identifying a disability than against African Americans identifying a disability. The victimization of Hispanics was significantly lower than for non-Hispanics. Age differences emerged in these data that indicate a higher percentage of disability-based bias crimes occurred against people aged 21 and over, compared with respondents aged 20 or younger.¹⁴⁸

Victims identifying their offenders indicated that their offenders were more likely to be a combination of male/female offenders than one or the other, significantly more likely to be white than African American, and more likely to be 20 or younger than 21 or older. This report indicates significantly more victimizations during this time period than the FBI Hate Crime statistics that police agencies report.

Persons with disabilities report being victimized by non-strangers at higher percentage than persons without disabilities (more than 60 percent of the time, compared to less than 50 percent of the time). Karla Westjohn challenges stereotypes that disabled people can also be offenders, because some of the offenders known to the victim were also disabled. She also asserts the need for law enforcement and the courts to be more responsive to disabled victims as able witnesses.¹⁴⁹

prevention strategies may be needed for different types of hate crime incidents. Moreover, this research again highlights the importance of criminological theory based on neighborhood context to explain the causes of crime and victimization (this is addressed more in Chapter 3).

ETHNIC YOUTH GANGS

In the minds of most Americans, the words *gang*, *race*, and *crime* are inextricably linked. Recall the incident described at the beginning of this chapter, in "Focus on an Issue: Central Park Jogger" (earlier in the chapter), in which a woman was raped and believed to be attacked by a group of minority teenagers in Central Park. The media labeled these youths a "gang." This designation, however, was challenged by those who argued that the teenagers allegedly involved in the incident were not organized, had no gang identity, and behaved more like a mob than a gang.¹⁵⁰ This insistence on the perceived "group" nature of the offense led investigators to arrest and the court to convict the "gang" suspects, ignoring the evidence of the single "real" offender identified later by DNA testing.

A comprehensive review of recent research on ethnic youth gangs is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead we discuss some of the prevailing myths and new realities about gangs and gang membership. The National Gang Intelligence Center indicates that there are over 1 million gang members in more than 30,000 distinct gangs. This report offers a quick synopsis of three types of gangs¹⁵¹:

(Youth) Gangs—(U.S. Department of Justice's definition) "(1) an association of three or more individuals; (2) whose members collectively identify themselves by adopting a group identity which they use to create an atmosphere of fear or intimidation frequently by employing one or more of the following: a common name, slogan, identifying sign, symbol, tattoo or other physical marking, style or color of clothing, hairstyle, hand sign, or graffiti; (3) the association's purpose, in part, is to engage in criminal activity and the association uses violence or intimidation to further its criminal objectives; (4) its members engage in criminal activity, or acts of juvenile delinquency that if committed by an adult would be crimes; (5) with the intent to enhance or preserve the association's power, reputation, or economic resources; (6) the association may also possess some of the following characteristics: (a) the members employ rules for joining and operating within the association; (b) the members meet on a recurring basis; (c) the association provides physical protection of its members from other criminals and gangs; (d) the association seeks to exercise control over a particular location or region, or it may simply defend its perceived interests against rivals; or (e) the association has an identifiable structure."

Street Gangs—(neighborhood-based and national street gangs) "gangs located throughout the United States, and their memberships vary in number, racial and ethnic composition, and structure. Large national street gangs pose the greatest threat because they smuggle, produce,

transport, and distribute large quantities of illicit drugs throughout the country and are extremely violent. Local street gangs in rural, suburban, and urban areas pose a steadily increasing threat transporting and distributing drugs within specific areas. The local street gangs often imitate the larger, more powerful national gangs in order to gain respect from their rivals."

Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs) "are organizations whose members use their motorcycle clubs as conduits for criminal enterprises. OMGs are highly structured criminal organizations whose members engage in criminal activities such as violent crime, weapons trafficking, and drug trafficking. There are more than 300 active OMGs within the United States, ranging in size from single chapters with five or six members to hundreds of chapters with thousands of members worldwide."

Gang Myths and New Realities

We have shown that popular perceptions of crime, crime victims, and criminal offenders often are inaccurate. While gangs are consistently identified as groups using violence to further goals, who act primarily to generate income, many of the prevailing beliefs about gangs are similarly mistaken. In the sections that follow, we discuss some of the myths surrounding gangs and gang activity. We show that although there is an element of truth in each of these myths, there also are a number of inaccuracies.

Myth 1: Gangs are a uniquely twentieth and twenty-first century phenomenon.

L. Sante documents that some historians believe there is evidence to suggest that gangs began in the United States just after the Revolutionary War, around 1783. Still others document the emergence of street gangs in growing American cities several decades later, in the early 1800s.¹⁵²

A recent report on the "History of Gangs in the United States" also documents unique regional factors that have contributed to the emergence of gangs around the country.¹⁵³ For example, Northeast and Midwest gangs are largely rooted in the immigration patterns from white ethnic groups leaving Europe for America. These groups were settling in large industrial cities in very segregated housing situations and experienced prejudices that made achieving the American Dream difficult (see subculture theory in Chapter 3). In the West, the clash of American expansion and preexisting Mexican cultures lead to the emergence of street gangs. Subsequent immigration patterns to the West Coast from Mexico, immigrants looking for farm work, contributed to the growth of street gangs. Migration patterns by African Americans moving from the South to these three regions (the Northeast, the Midwest, and the West) added an additional dimension of gang formation that is still prevalent today. In the decades to come additional groups of Hispanics (Puerto Ricans, Panamanians, Cubans, and so on) and Asian immigrants (Filipinos, Chinese, Vietnamese, and so on) would continue to fuel the gang cultures in these regions. Native American gangs would emerge at a later point, both on and off tribal lands.¹⁵⁴