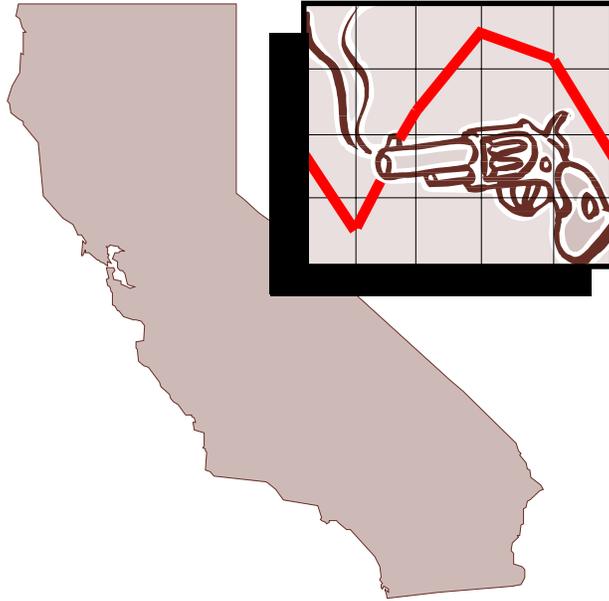


**CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATISTICS CENTER
HOMICIDE IN CALIFORNIA, 1997**

HOMICIDE CRIMES (PART 1)



- [Front Pages](#)
- [To Crimes \(part 2\)](#)
- [CJSC Home Page](#)
- [AG Home Page](#)

HOMICIDE CRIMES

Homicide is defined by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program as the "willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another." The homicide category comprises murder and nonnegligent manslaughter. Attempted murder, justifiable homicide, manslaughter by negligence, and suicide are excluded. Data depicting homicide in California have been collected and published for over 45 years.

From 1996 to 1997:

- The homicide rate per 100,000 population decreased 13.3 percent (9.0 to 7.8).
- The number of homicides decreased 11.4 percent (from 2,910 to 2,579).

Comparing 1988 to 1997:

- The homicide rate per 100,000 population decreased 25.7 percent (10.5 to 7.8).
- The number of homicides decreased 12.5 percent (from 2,947 to 2,579).

Comparing 1952 to 1997:

- The homicide rate per 100,000 population increased 225.0 percent (2.4 to 7.8).
- The number of homicides increased 824.4 percent (from 279 to 2,579).

The 1997 homicide rate of 7.8 is the lowest since 1970.

Table N-1
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1952-1997
Number and Rate per 100,000 Population

Year(s)	Number	Rate
1997	2,579	7.8
1996	2,910	9.0
1995	3,530	11.0
1994	3,699	11.5
1993	4,095	12.9
1992	3,920	12.5
1991	3,876	12.6
1990	3,562	12.1
1989	3,159	11.0
1988	2,947	10.5
1987	2,929	10.7
1986	3,030	11.3
1985	2,781	10.7
1984	2,724	10.6
1983	2,640	10.5
1982	2,778	11.3
1981	3,140	13.1
1980	3,405	14.4
1979	2,941	12.6
1978	2,601	11.4
1977	2,481	11.1
1976	2,214	10.1
1975	2,196	10.2
1974	1,970	9.3
1973	1,862	8.9
1972	1,789	8.7
1971	1,633	8.0
1970	1,355	6.8
1969	1,376	6.9
1968	1,171	6.0
1967	1,051	5.4
1966	897	4.7
1965	892	4.8
1964	758	4.2
1963	656	3.7
1962	671	3.9
1961	609	3.7
1960	620	3.9
1959	515	3.4
1958	547	3.7
1957	497	3.5
1956	474	3.5
1955	417	3.2
1954	419	3.3
1953	276	2.3
1952	279	2.4

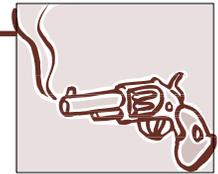
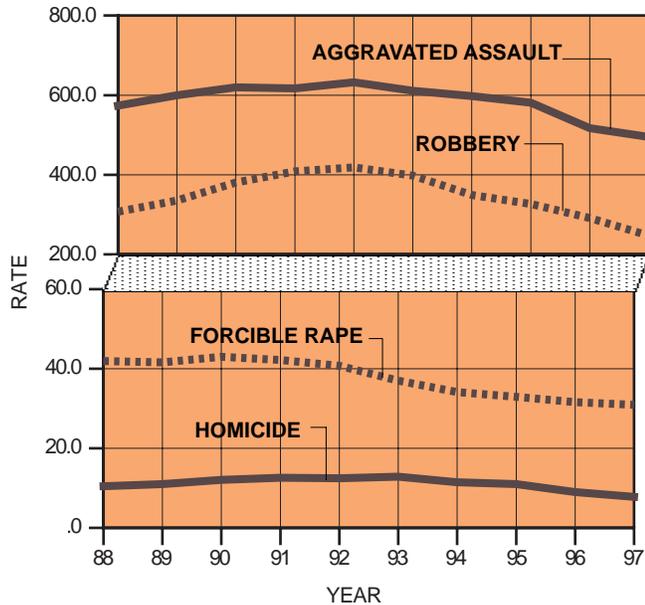


Chart 1
VIOLENT CRIMES, 1988-1997
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 1.

There are four offenses classified as violent crimes by the FBI: homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. For comparison, changes in the rates of the four offenses follow:

From 1996 to 1997:

- Homicide decreased 13.3 percent (9.0 to 7.8).
- Forcible rape decreased 2.2 percent (31.6 to 30.9).
- Robbery decreased 15.0 percent (290.7 to 247.0).
- Aggravated assault decreased 4.2 percent (516.9 to 495.3).

Comparing 1988 to 1997:

- Homicide decreased 25.7 percent (10.5 to 7.8).
- Forcible rape decreased 26.3 percent (41.9 to 30.9).
- Robbery decreased 19.6 percent (307.2 to 247.0).
- Aggravated assault decreased 13.7 percent (574.0 to 495.3).

Of the four offenses classified as violent crimes by the FBI, homicide maintained the lowest rate per 100,000 population for the years shown.

Charts 2, 3, and 4 display homicide rates per 100,000 population for victims classified by gender, race/ethnic group, and age.

In 1997,

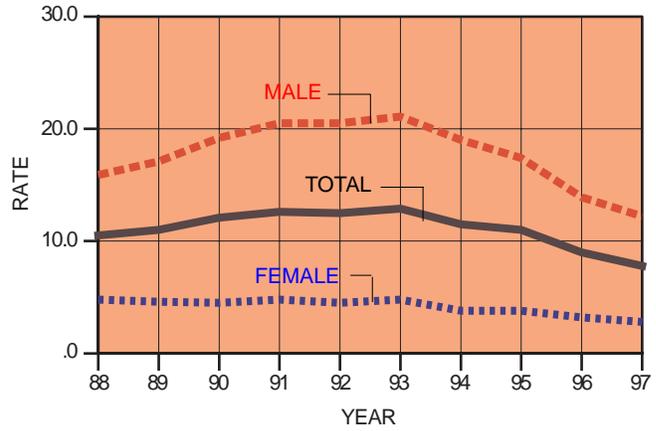
- The total homicide rate was 7.8 per 100,000 population.
- The male homicide rate was more than four times that of the female homicide rate (12.2 vs. 2.8).
- The black homicide rate was over nine and one-half times that of whites and over two and one-half times that of Hispanics (29.5 vs. 3.1 and 11.1, respectively).

Comparing 1988 to 1997:

- The male homicide rate decreased 23.3 percent. The female homicide rate decreased 41.7 percent.
- The white homicide rate decreased 45.6 percent, the Hispanic homicide rate decreased 14.6 percent, and the black homicide rate decreased 34.6 percent.

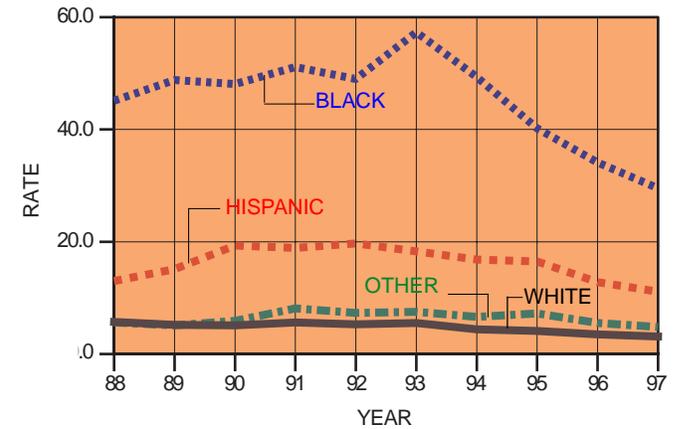
Homicide rates decreased for all gender and race/ethnic groups shown.

Chart 2
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1988-1997
By Gender of Victim
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: [Table 2.](#)

Chart 3
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1988-1997
By Race/Ethnic Group of Victim
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: [Table 3.](#)

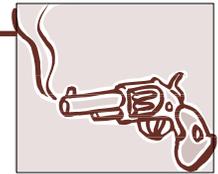
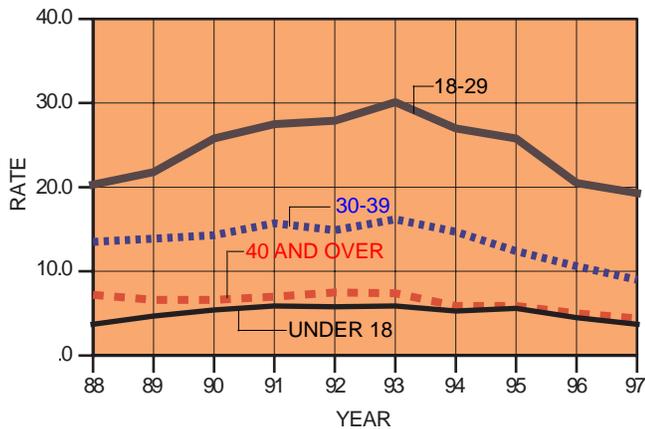


Chart 4
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1988-1997
By Age of Victim
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 4.

In 1997,

- Homicide victims aged 18-29 had the highest homicide rate (19.3 per 100,000 population).

Comparing 1988 to 1997:

- There was no change in the homicide rate for victims under age 18. The homicide rate decreased 4.9 percent for victims aged 18-29, 33.3 percent for victims aged 30-39, and 38.9 percent for victims aged 40 and over.

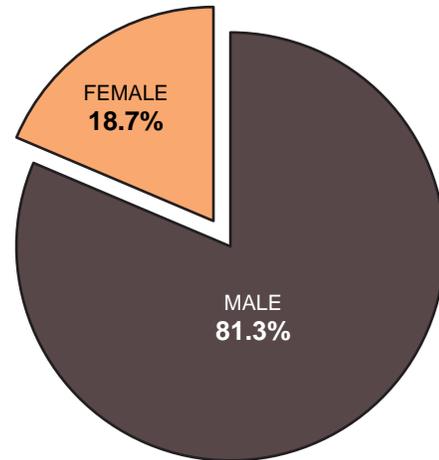
“Under age 18” is the only age category shown whose 1997 homicide rate is not lower than it was in 1988.

In 1997,

- Males represented 81.3 percent of total homicide victims; they comprised 50.0 percent of the population.
- Females represented 18.7 percent of total homicide victims; they comprised 50.0 percent of the population.

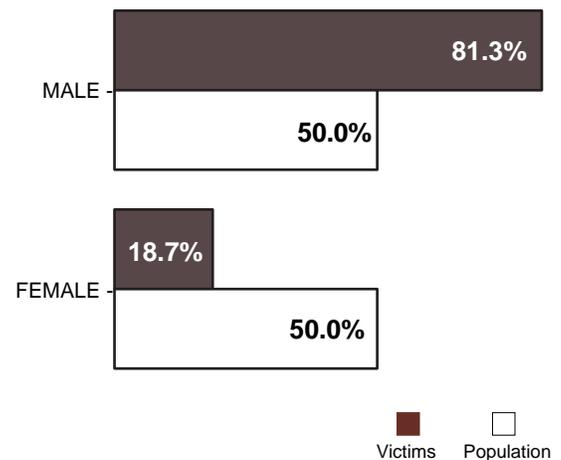
As homicide victims, males are statistically over-represented when compared to females.

Chart 5
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
By Gender of Victim



Source: [Table 5](#).

Chart 6
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Gender of Victim by Percent of Total Victims
and Percent of Population



Sources: [Table 2](#) and [Table 5](#).

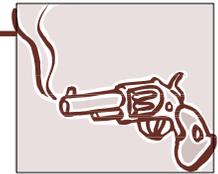
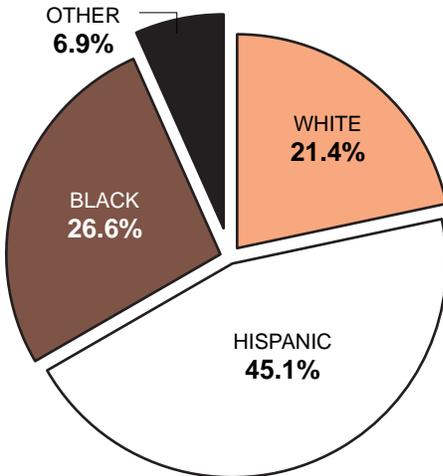
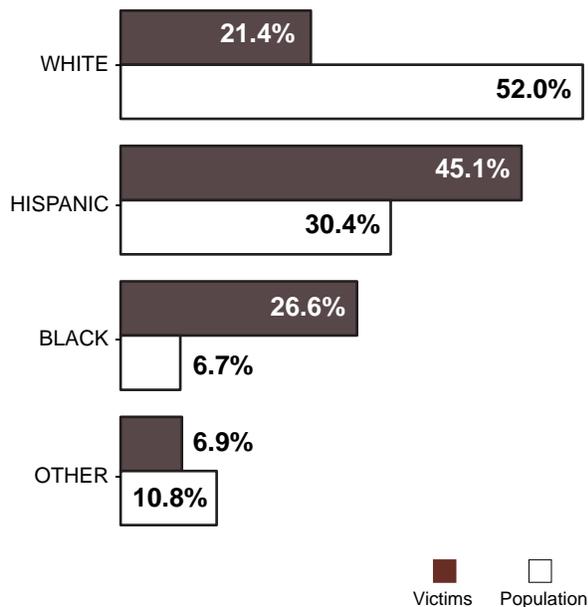


Chart 7
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
By Race/Ethnic Group of Victim



Source: Table 6.

Chart 8
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Race/Ethnic Group of Victim by Percent of Total Victims
and Percent of Population



Sources: Table 3 and Table 6.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of independent rounding.

In 1997,

- Whites represented 21.4 percent of total homicide victims; they comprised 52.0 percent of the population.
- Hispanics represented 45.1 percent of total homicide victims; they comprised 30.4 percent of the population.
- Blacks represented 26.6 percent of total homicide victims; they comprised 6.7 percent of the population.
- The “other” race/ethnic group category represented 6.9 percent of total homicide victims; they comprised 10.8 percent of the population.

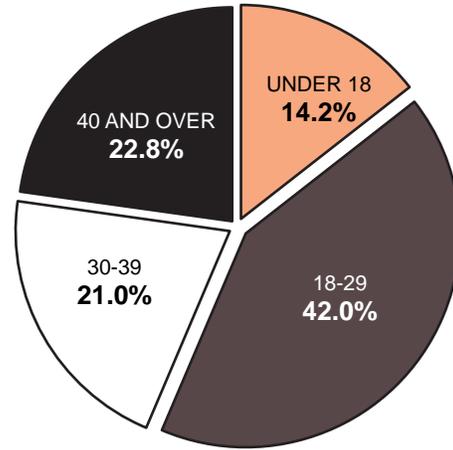
As homicide victims, Hispanics and blacks are statistically over-represented when compared to the white and “other” race/ethnic group categories.

In 1997,

- Victims under age 18 represented 14.2 percent of total homicides; this age group comprised 28.3 percent of the population.
- Victims aged 18-29 represented 42.0 percent of total homicides; this age group comprised 16.1 percent of the population.
- Victims aged 30-39 represented 21.0 percent of total homicides; this age group comprised 17.3 percent of the population.
- Victims aged 40 and over represented 22.8 percent of total homicides; this age group comprised 38.2 percent of the population.

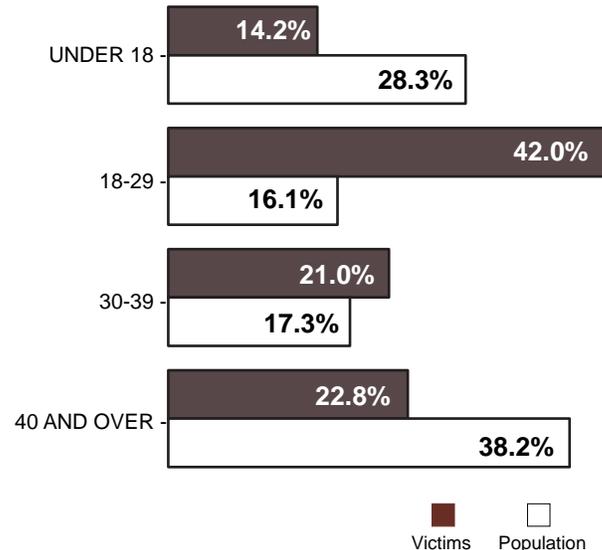
As homicide victims, persons aged 18-29 and 30-39 are statistically over-represented when compared to persons under age 18 and persons aged 40 and over.

Chart 9
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
By Age of Victim



Source: [Table Z](#).

Chart 10
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Age of Victim by Percent of Total Victims and Percent of Population



Sources: [Table 4](#) and [Table Z](#).

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of independent rounding.

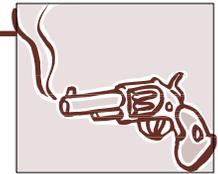
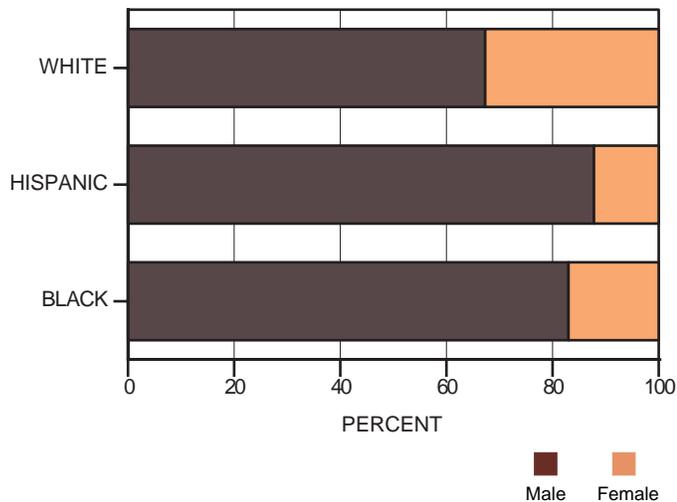
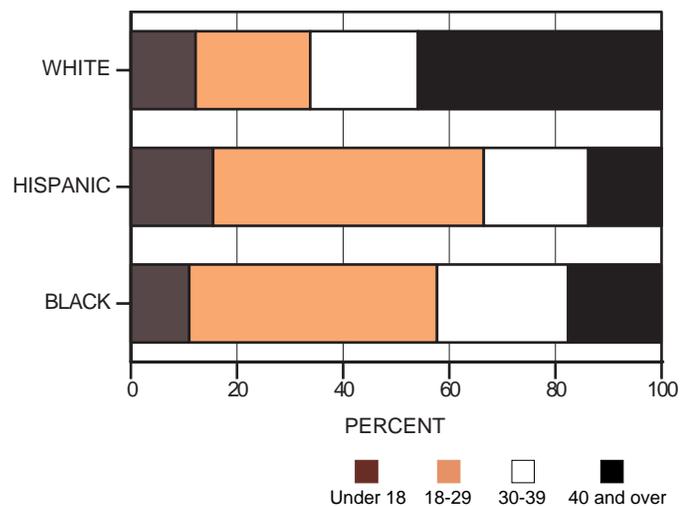


Chart 11
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Race/Ethnic Group of Victim by Gender of Victim



Source: Table 8.

Chart 12
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Race/Ethnic Group of Victim by Age of Victim



Source: Table 9.

In 1997,

- More white victims were female than were either Hispanic or black victims (32.7 vs. 12.2 and 17.0 percent, respectively).
- More Hispanic and black victims were aged 18-29 than were white victims (51.0 and 46.7 vs. 21.6 percent, respectively).
- More white victims were aged 40 and over than were either Hispanic or black victims (45.9 vs. 13.9 and 17.5 percent, respectively).

The majority of Hispanic and black victims were younger than the majority of white homicide victims.

When homicides were examined by the relationship of the victim to the offender, it was found that:

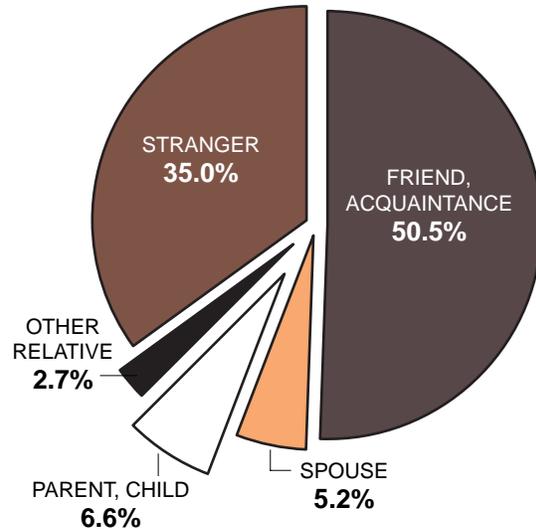
In 1997,

- 50.5 percent of victims were friends or acquaintances of offenders.
- 5.2 percent of victims were spouses of offenders.
- 6.6 percent of victims were parents or children of offenders.
- 2.7 percent of the relationships of victim to offender fell in the "other relative" category.
- 35.0 percent of victims were strangers to offenders.

Comparing 1988 to 1997:

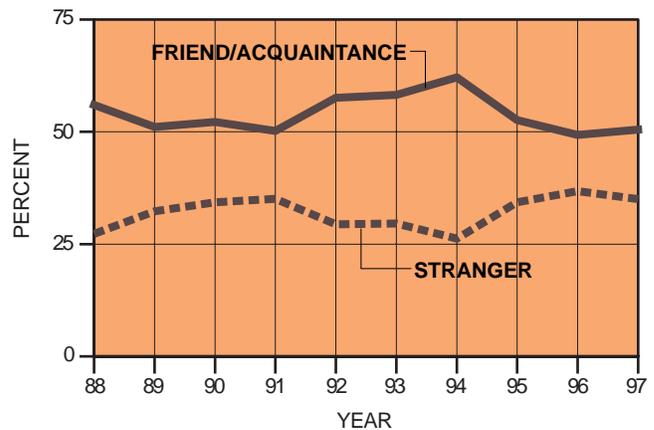
- The proportion of homicides in which victims were friends or acquaintances of offenders decreased from 56.0 percent in 1988 to 50.5 percent in 1997.
- The proportion of homicides in which victims were strangers to offenders increased from 27.3 percent in 1988 to 35.0 percent in 1997.

Chart 13
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
By Relationship of Victim to Offender



Source: [Table 11.](#)

Chart 14
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1988-1997
By Selected Relationships of Victims to Offenders



Source: [Table 11.](#)

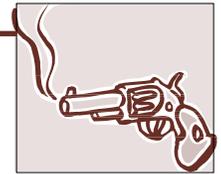
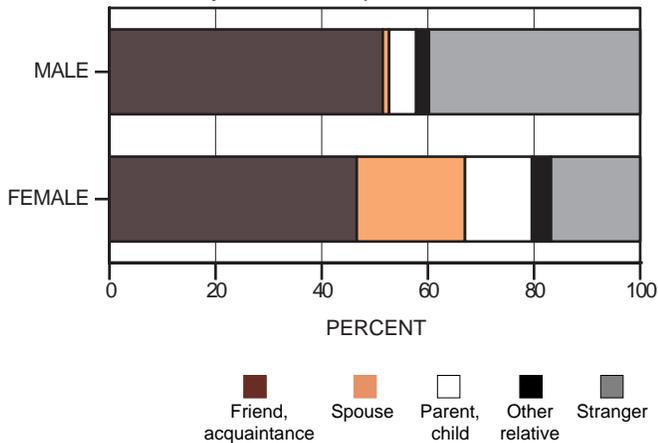


Chart 15
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Gender of Victim by Relationship of Victim to Offender

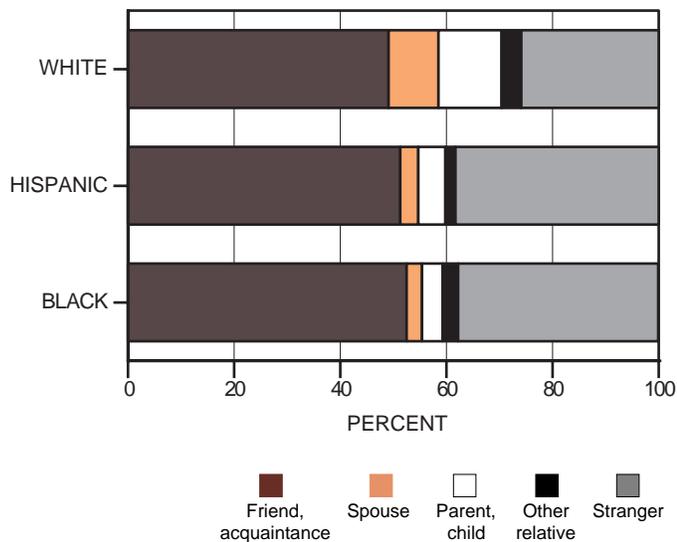


Source: Table 12.

In 1997,

- More female victims were spouses of offenders (20.4 percent) than were male victims (1.2 percent).
- More white victims were spouses, parents, or children of offenders than were either Hispanic or black victims (21.3 vs. 8.5 and 6.9 percent, respectively).

Chart 16
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Race/Ethnic Group of Victim by Relationship of Victim to Offender



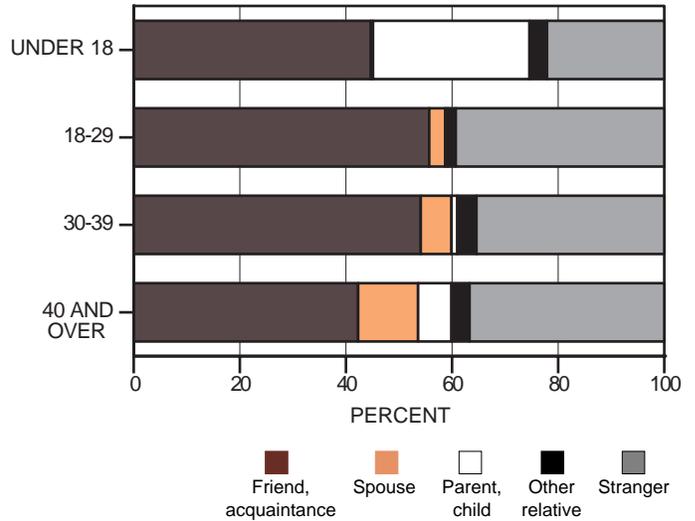
Source: Table 12.

More females were victims of spousal homicide than were males.

In 1997,

- Fewer victims under age 18 were strangers to offenders (22.2 percent) than were victims in any other age group shown.
- More victims aged 18-29 were friends or acquaintances of offenders (55.7 percent) than were victims in any other age group shown.
- More victims aged 40 and over were spouses of offenders (11.3 percent) than were victims in any other age group shown.

Chart 17
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
Age of Victim by Relationship of Victim to Offender



Source: Table 13.

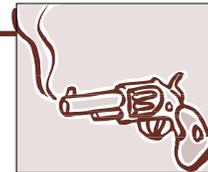
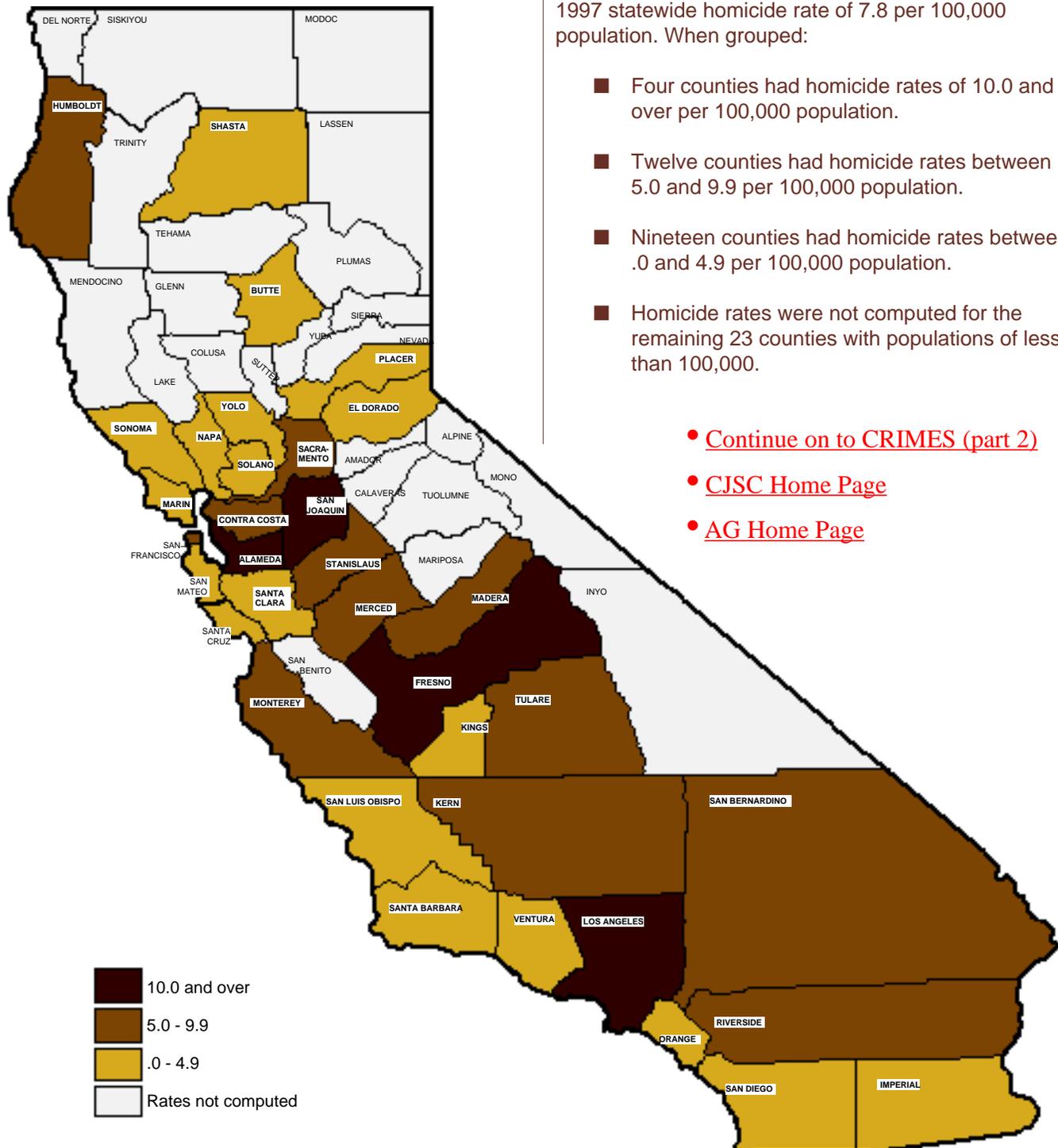


Chart 18
HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1997
County by Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 14.