



## **CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS AGE 65 OR OLDER 1993-2002**

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## CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS AGE 65 OR OLDER, 1993-2002

In January 2005, the Bureau of Justice Statistics released a special report on crimes against persons ages 65 and older. Ten years of data (1993-2002) from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) were used to generate the report.

According to the NCVS for the period 1993-2002, persons ages 65 or older generally experienced victimizations at much lower rates than younger groups of people during the ten year period.<sup>1</sup> The following statistics were noted:

- While nonfatal violence generally declined for most age groups between 1993 and 2002, those 65 or older had the lowest rates of any age group. The elderly experienced nonfatal violent crime (rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault) at a rate one-twentieth that of young persons.
- Persons age 65 or older had the lowest rate of murder of all age groups every year between 1993 and 2002.
- Households headed by persons 65 or older experienced property crimes at about one-fourth the rate of that for households headed by persons under age 25.
- Purse snatching/pocket-picking (personal larceny) was the only measured crime for which the elderly were victimized at about the same rates as most other groups. The only group to experience a greater rate of personal larceny was the 12-24 age group.

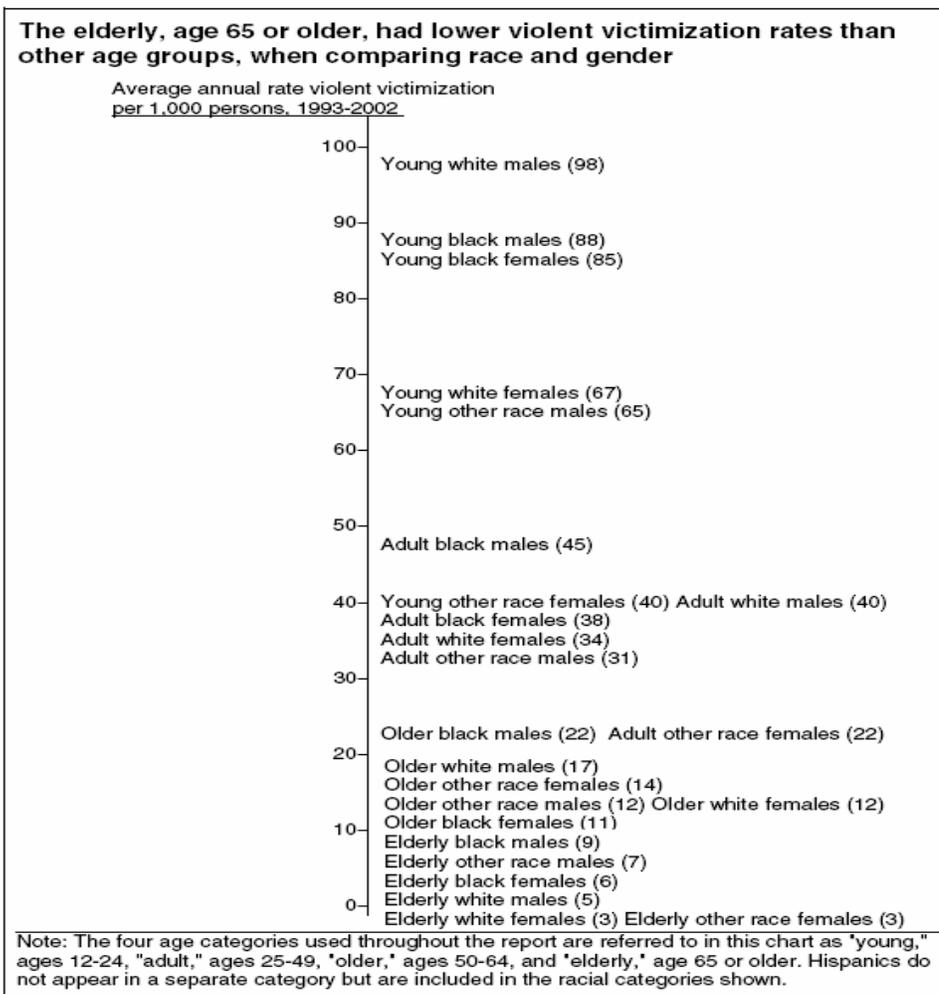
When persons 65 or older were victimized:

- 92 percent of the crimes were property crimes (household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft). In comparison, violent crimes comprised more than half the victimizations experienced by persons ages 12 to 24.
- They were equally likely to face offenders with weapons, were equally likely to suffer serious injuries and were more likely to offer no resistance.
- Their offenders were somewhat more likely to be strangers and were more likely to be age 30 or older
- About one-fourth of violent crimes committed by the elderly were committed at night, compared to almost half of all violence against persons age 12-64. Similar differences were found for personal larceny and property crime.

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<sup>1</sup> Interestingly, a 2003 citizen attitude survey conducted by OCJS found that 68% of those polled believed that senior citizens are the most likely crime victims.

- About 46 percent of violent crimes and about 67 percent of property crimes against persons or households headed by persons age 65 or older occurred at or near their homes.
- Compared to younger victims, persons age 65 or older were more likely to report violence and purse snatching/pocket picking to the police. Regardless of age, approximately one-third of all households reported property crimes.



A link to the full report can be found on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cpa6502.pdf>.