



THE CITY OF

# SAN DIEGO

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OFFICE OF  
JERRY SANDERS  
CHIEF OF POLICE

95 - 68

July 17, 1995

Mr. John Lusardi  
Police Executive Research Forum  
1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 930  
Washington DC 20037

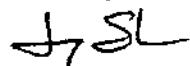
Dear John,

In March of 1993, the San Diego Police Department's Sex Crimes Unit began a study of violent sexual assaults that had occurred in the city, in the previous two years. The project was done by Detective Sergeant Joanne Welter and Detective Sharon McNair. Their analysis showed that 69% of the assaults in 1992 were committed by acquaintances of the victims. By 1993, the number of acquaintance assaults had risen to 83%.

In response to the problem, Detective Sergeant Welter and Detective McNair established a Speaker's Bureau that included both concerned citizen's and officers. Their goal was to provide information on the subject, in an effort to educate the public about acquaintance assaults. The response from the public was overwhelmingly supportive. The curricula and outlines were established in 1994 and the training began in January of 1995.

Their goal of reducing acquaintance assaults is being realized through this public education campaign. This was a very successful project and I am pleased to recommend them for the annual Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award.

Sincerely,

  
Jerry Sanders  
Chief of Police



**HERMAN GOLDSTEIN EXCELLENCE  
IN PROBLEM SOLVING APPLICATION**

**Project Title: Sexual Assault Prevention through Community Awareness and Participation**

**SYNOPSIS**

In 1992, 69% of the felony sexual assaults in the City of San Diego involving victims over the age of fourteen, were committed by acquaintances. In 1993, that number rose to 83%. In March of 1993, using the SARA model, the San Diego Police Department Sex Crimes Unit began analyzing these crimes to determine how they could be reduced. As a result of our analysis and a brainstorming session with the Problem Analysis Advisory Committee, we acknowledged that prevention is directly related to education and **accurate** public information. Volunteers were recruited and trained to provide prevention lectures to any interested group throughout San Diego County. Although we expected the number of reports to initially increase as a result of enhanced community awareness, in 1994, sexual assaults committed by acquaintances decreased to 78%.

• **What was the Problem?**

The majority of sexual assaults are committed by acquaintances. Most typically, however, law enforcement, the public, and the media continue to perpetuate the myth that most sexual assaults are committed by strangers who lurk in dark shadows wearing ski masks and armed with a knife. In most sexual assaults involving acquaintances, the crime occurs in the suspect or victim's own home and many of them involve alcohol and drugs. The common defense is "consent" which is very difficult to disprove unless there are significant injuries or witnesses. As a result,

detectives spend many hours investigating crimes that have little or no promise of adjudication, e.g., only 10% of the total number of cases received in the Sex Crimes Unit in 1994 were submitted to the District Attorney's Office for evaluation and prosecution. Out of the 10% referred, only 50% were successfully adjudicated.

- Who was affected by the problem and how were they affected?

49% of sexual assault victims are between 19 and 25 years of age. All sexual assaults are traumatic and have a life long effect on the victims. There is a common belief that sexual assaults committed by acquaintances are somehow less traumatic than those committed by strangers. This is a falsehood. Although stranger assaults tend to be more violent, assaults by acquaintances are often more traumatic because the victim is severely judged by her peers, the community and the judicial system from the first responding officers to the jury. Therefore, many of these crimes go unreported and very few of those reported ever see successful prosecution. In many cases, the victim recognizes the difficulty in pursuing prosecution and she chooses to suspend the investigation.

Law enforcement and the community as a whole is affected because officers and detectives spend many hours investigating these crimes. If the number of preventable sexual assaults is reduced, patrol officers and detectives could spend more time

working unsolved cases that present a serious threat to the community.

- How did the Department handle the problem in the past?

Although the San Diego Police Department has been actively involved in Problem Oriented Policing since 1988, few investigative units have looked at ways to problem solve. Typically Investigative Units are reactive, meaning the problem is only addressed after a crime has occurred. Historically, a sexual assault program would address "stranger" suspect issues and the class would most likely have been taught by a male with experience in self-defense and martial arts. Typically, women would have been given information about how to fight off an attacker, use mace or perhaps even carry a firearm. The audience would be almost 100% female. The problem is that few law enforcement agencies have really looked at the data and they have actually helped to reinforce the myths about sexual assault in our society. As one of our Speakers says in her presentation, "A woman doesn't go to her front door with a can of mace when her neighbor comes over to borrow a cup of sugar."

- what information was collected about the problem?

The Sex Crimes Unit first began analyzing 1992 crime reports involving sexual assaults to determine the exact number of crimes committed by acquaintances and strangers. After separating the

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cases into two categories, we began to study all the data. We looked at the type of sexual assault involved, the sex, race and age of the victim(s) and suspect(s), whether alcohol and drugs were known to be involved, the location of the crime, the time of day, the day of the week, whether weapons or force were used, and the geographical area of the city. The analysis was startling even for veteran detectives and officers. We discovered that most stranger assaults are random, and although there is a definite high risk time of day, the victim has little control over whether or not the crime occurs. Assaults committed by acquaintances on the other hand, are very different since in 1993, 57% occurred in a residence and 48% occurred between 2000 hours on Friday and 0400 hours on Sunday. Potential victims have many options which can dramatically decrease their risk and exposure to this type of crime.

After completing the preliminary analysis, the Sex Crimes Unit hosted a Problem Analysis Advisory Committee meeting to further analyze the data and brainstorm possible responses. Attendees included representatives from law enforcement agencies, medical and military personnel, rape crisis centers, women's resource centers, school personnel and regular Advisory Committee members. The analysis identified what the problem was, who was affected by the problem and possible responses to the problem. The Sex Crimes Unit

has continued to analyze applicable crime reports on a yearly basis and we now have three years of data, from 1992 through 1994.

Most statistics quoted state that as little as 10% of all sexual assaults are actually reported to the police. We have developed a comprehensive survey which is completed by our audiences. The survey will assist us in continuing our analysis of the problem and help us to assess whether our response is appropriate and effective.

- **What were the difficulties encountered by the problem solvers?**

There were no difficulties in getting the information since we had complete access to crime reports involving sexual assaults. Interestingly, we were surprised to find that although teenage pregnancy and HIV among adolescents are at an all time high, many parents do not feel sexual assault should be discussed with junior high and high school age children. We have also discovered that some university/college presidents and deans are reluctant to expose this issue because they are afraid it will increase the number of sexual assault reports that will create a perception of an increase in crime on their campuses which will in turn negatively effect their public image.

At our request, Channel 8 did a television news story about the program during the beginning stages, however, most news stations and reporters stated they would not be interested in

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assisting us with informing the public about our program unless there is a sensational case to go with it, i.e., a case like Tyson or Kennedy. Regardless of the facts and the numbers, the media continues to over dramatize the risk of stranger assaults involving both adults and children while ignoring the real issues.

The Speaker's Bureau is made up of a diverse group of people. One third of the group is male and we have several ethnic groups represented. Members range from twenty to sixty-five years of age. Each individual is motivated and qualified to give presentations to just about any group who requests our services. However, we have discovered that members are hesitant to solicit their own presentations and instead, wait for their assignments from the Sex Crimes Unit. This is unfortunate and puzzling given the fact that we have retired university professors, a retired Air Force Colonel, nurses, Child Protective Service Workers all who have numerous community and professional contacts. At this time, we are attempting to motivate and encourage each of them to market the program and solicit many of their own speaking engagements.

• **What was the goal of the problem solving' effort?**

Our goal is to reduce the number of sexual assaults committed in the City of San Diego. After completing our analysis, our objective was to specifically reduce the number of sexual assaults

committed by acquaintances by educating the community and law enforcement about the myths and truths involving sexual assault.

- What strategies were developed to reach that goal?

The Sex Crimes Unit and the Problem Analysis Advisory Committee agreed that education is the key to preventing sexual assaults. We recognize the need to take our information to the community by forming a partnership with high schools, universities, businesses, and service organizations. However, given the shortage of police officers and budget constraints, we recognize that staffing will not allow for officers and detectives to be involved in a pro-active educational campaign on a full-time basis. Our response to the problem was to form a Speaker's Bureau made up of concerned officers and citizens who volunteer their time to address this problem. We used Department announcements and the media to recruit interested applicants. The response was so overwhelming that people had to be turned away after we received the first thirty applications. Applicants were interviewed and selected based on their motivation and their ability to work with this sensitive subject. After the applicants were chosen, we created a thirty hour training program to provide them with a comprehensive understanding of the problem and our goals. Members of the Speaker's Bureau were also encouraged to go on ride-alongs with Sex Crimes Detectives and patrol officers.

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Initially, applicants expected to be given a canned outline. It was important to us, however, that they truly understand the issues involved and, therefore, before graduating, they were responsible for developing their own outlines from the information provided during the training. Additionally, members of the group formed subcommittees to specifically prepare outlines and audio visual aides for different audiences, i.e., community service organizations, university students, high school students, businesses, military personnel and law enforcement. The Speaker's Bureau training began in January 1995 and concluded in February. As of this time, we have conducted approximately fifty presentations. Although we firmly believe this program needs to be available to junior high school students, we discovered that many high schools are hesitant to allow us to present the information because some parents feel it is too advanced for adolescents. One of the subcommittees has specifically dedicated their time and energy to selling this program to San Diego City School Administrators in an effort to see that this information becomes part of the mandatory Health Sciences or Life Skills curriculum. On September 11, 1995, we have scheduled a preview presentation for twenty City School administrators who will decide whether or not the program will be adopted in the high school system. We recently recruited a volunteer who is working full-time to assist us with

marketing the program through a variety of means, i.e., written, television and radio medias.

- What agencies helped the police department achieve their goal?

This project has been operating without a budget. All of the speakers, both officers and citizens, donated their time to attend the thirty hours of mandatory training and they continue to attend meetings and conduct presentations as volunteers. The training facility was donated by the Learning Institute. A variety of agencies provided expert instructors at no charge to the Police Department. The agencies included: the San\* Diego County District Attorney's Office, Children's Hospital's Center for Child Protection, VillaView Community Hospital, Chula Vista Police Department, the Center for Women's Studies and Services, the University of California San Diego, the University of San Diego, and the San Diego Police Department's Volunteer in Policing Program, Crisis Intervention and the Sex Crimes Unit.

- Was the goal accomplished?

Although this is a long term project, we have created a dynamic Speaker's Bureau. We have retained 95% of the original graduates. Program evaluations have been outstanding. Sexual assaults by acquaintances decreased from 83% to 78% between 1993 and 1994. However, we do not feel this is directly related to this project. Realistically, we expect the crime reports to increase as

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young men and women learn what constitutes a crime of sexual assault. We do not expect to see a significant decrease for several more years. As an example, we began presenting this program at the University of San Diego in 1992. At that time, there had been no reports of sexual assaults on campus during the previous two years. Following the numerous presentations we conducted with fraternities, sororities and other student groups, two sexual assaults were reported reflecting a 200% increase.

We strongly believe our goals are being realized through this program because we know continued education and awareness is the key to preventing unnecessary sexual assaults.

# 1994 SEXUAL ASSAULTS



STRANGER

VS

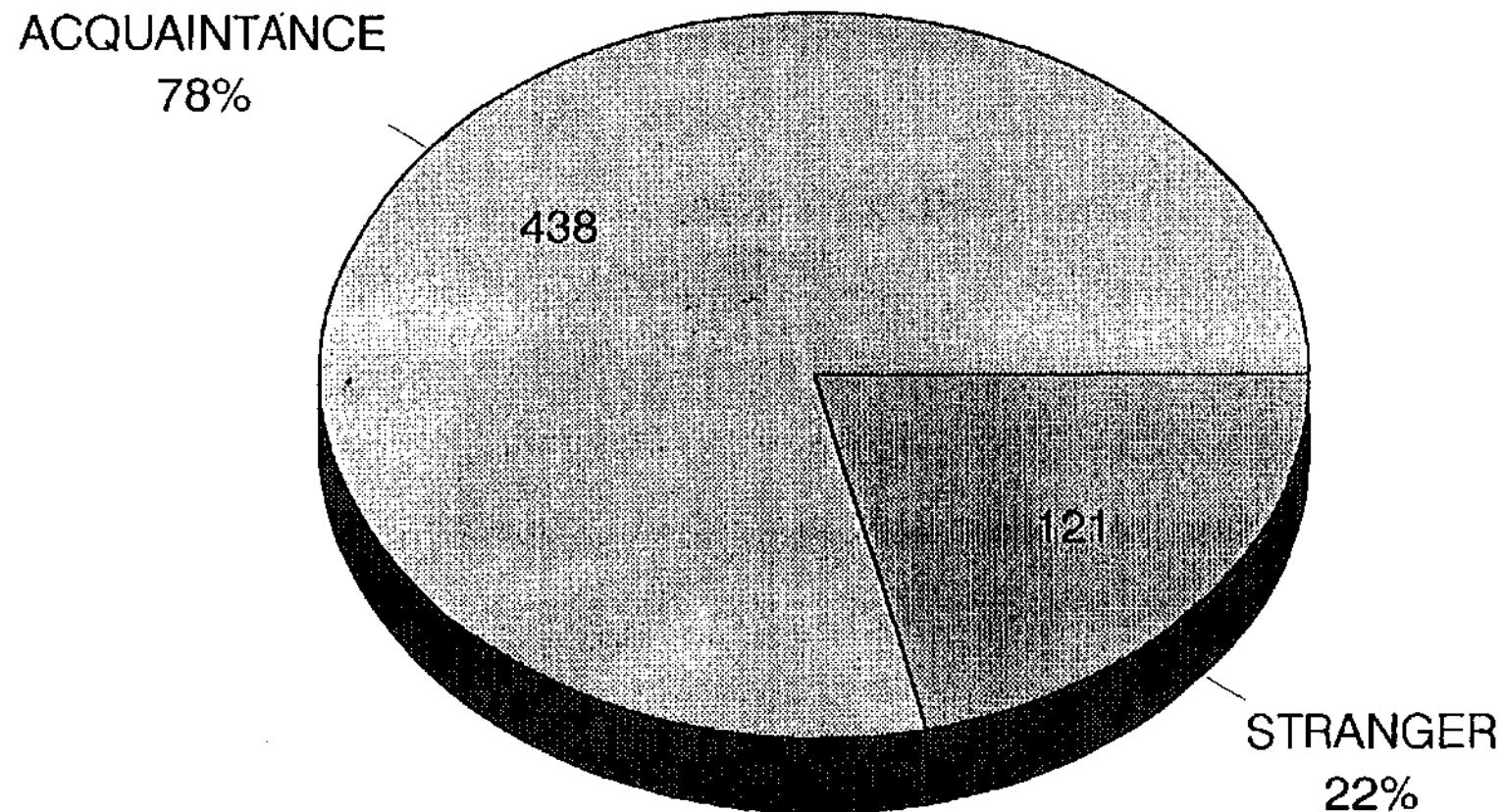
ACQUAINTANCE



PRESENTED BY SAN DIEGC

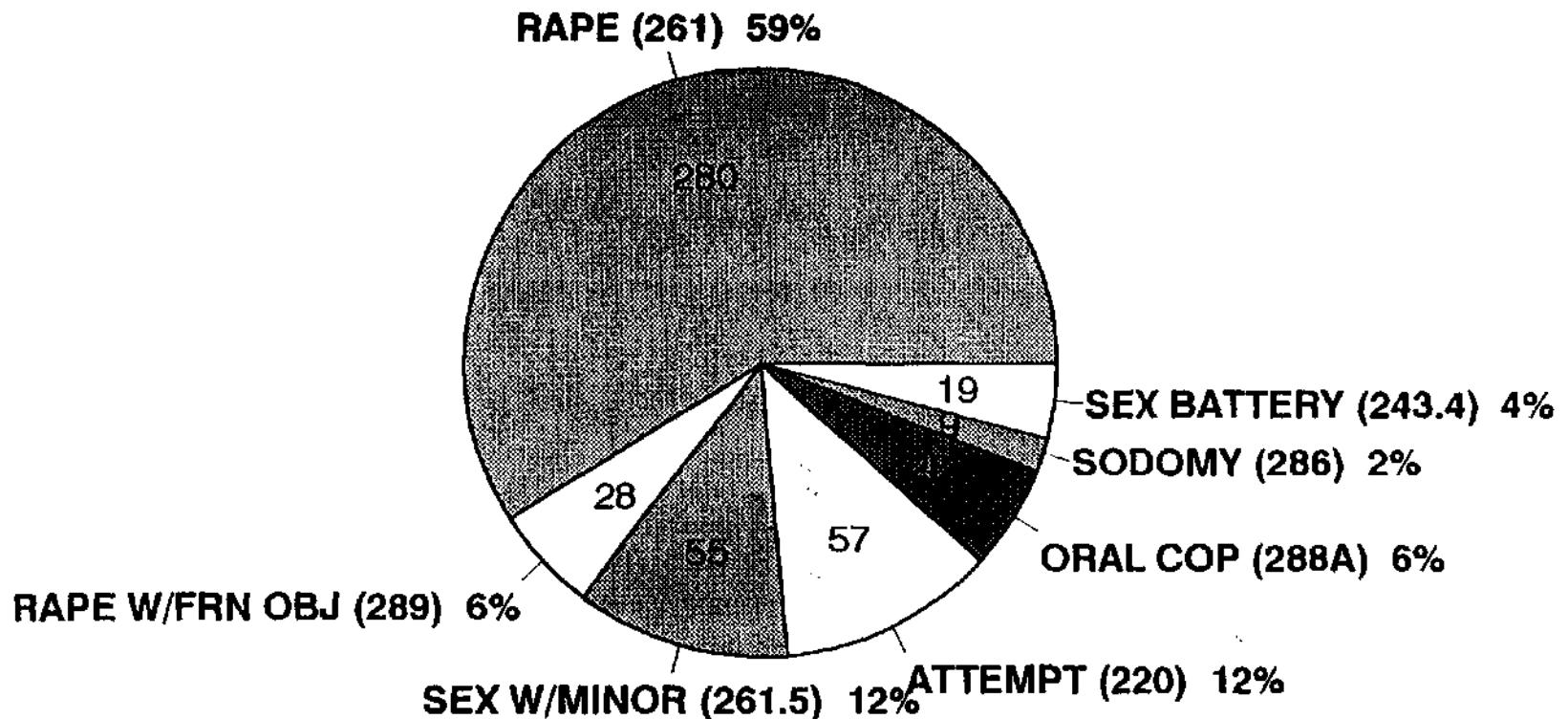
# RAPE

## ACQUAINTANCE vs STRANGER



- TOTAL CASES = 559
- VICTIMS ARE 14 YEARS OR OLDER
- 1994 CITY OF SAN DIEGO CRIME CASES
- STATISTICS DO NOT INCLUDE IN-HOUSE CHILD ABUSE CASES

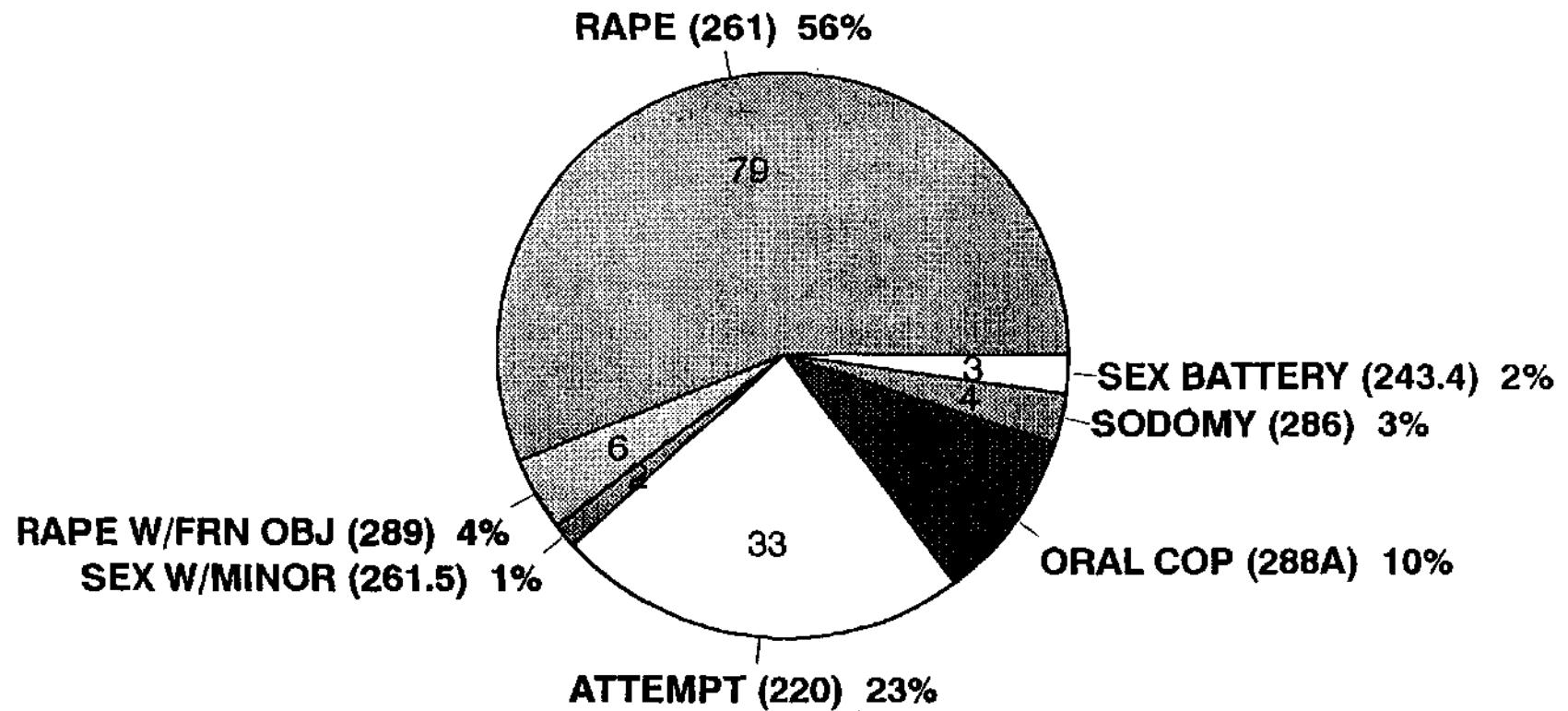
# SEX CRIME WITH KNOWN ASSAILANT (VICTIM IS 14 OR OLDER)



TOTAL ACQUAINTANCE CASES = 438

# SEX CRIME BY A STRANGER

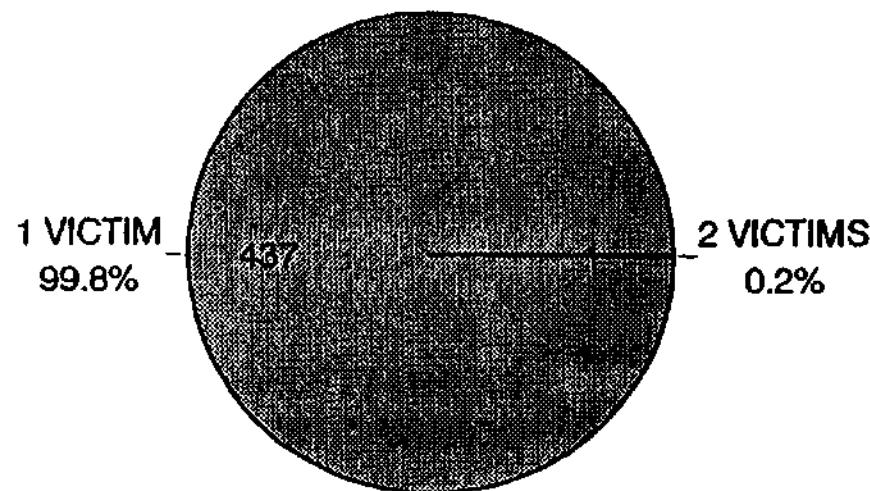
(VICTIM IS 14 OR OLDER)



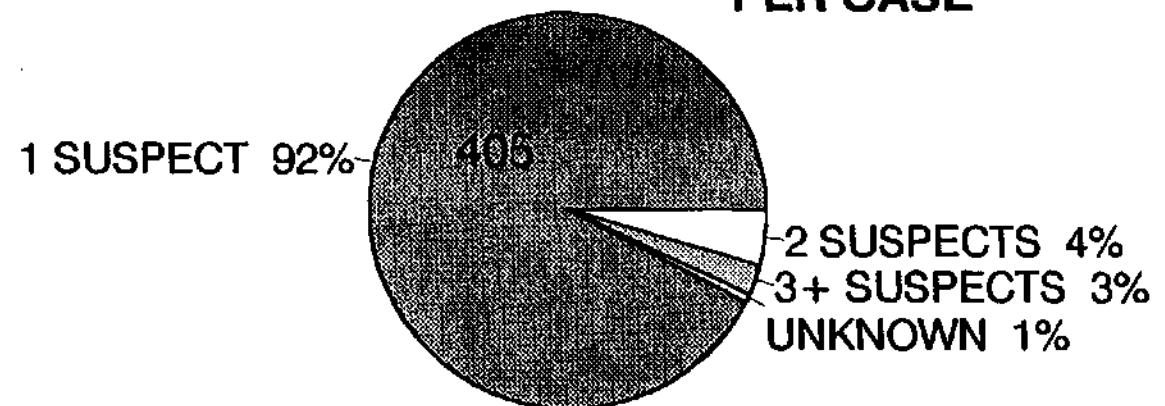
TOTAL STRANGER CASES = 121

## **NUMBER OF VICTIMS/SUSPECTS (ACQUAINTANCE)**

**# OF VICTIMS  
PER CASE**

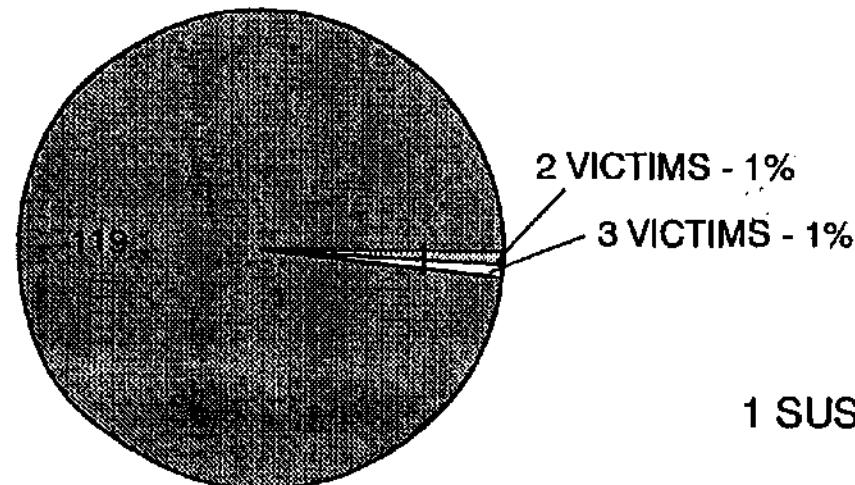


**# OF SUSPECTS  
PER CASE**

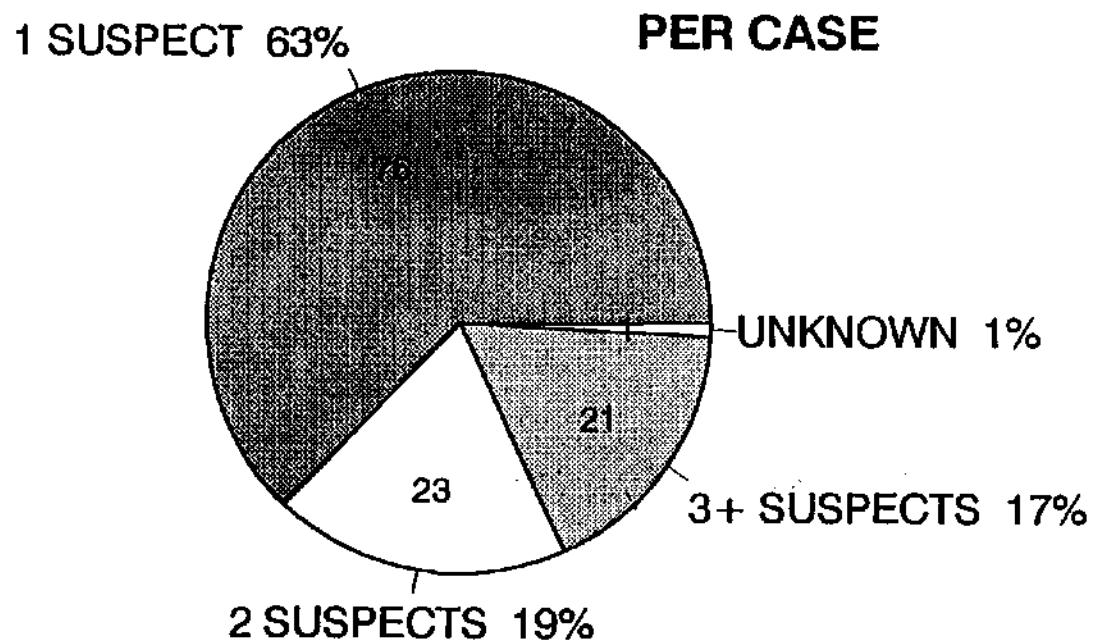


## NUMBER OF VICTIMS/SUSPECTS (STRANGER)

# OF VICTIMS PER CASE

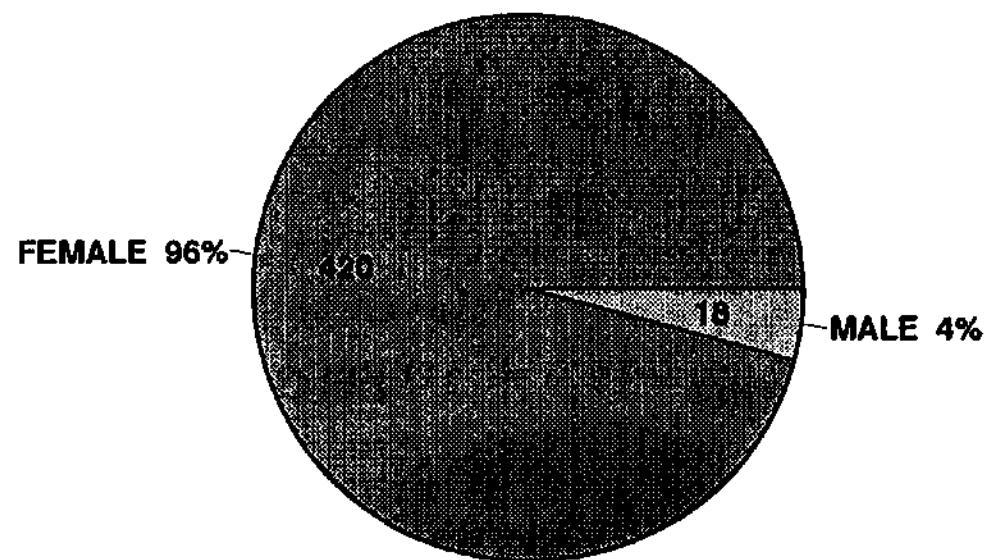


# OF SUSPECTS  
PER CASE

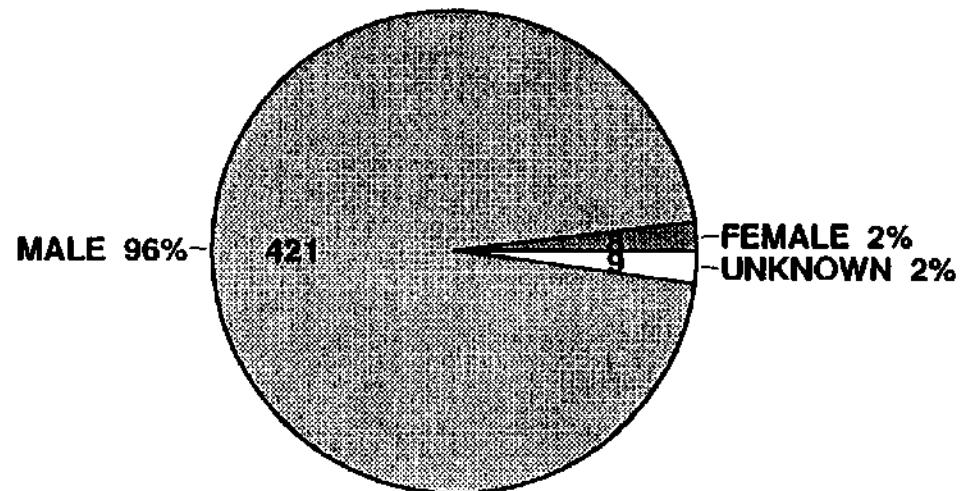


## VICTIM/SUSPECT SEX BREAKDOWN (ACQUAINTANCE)

### VICTIM SEX

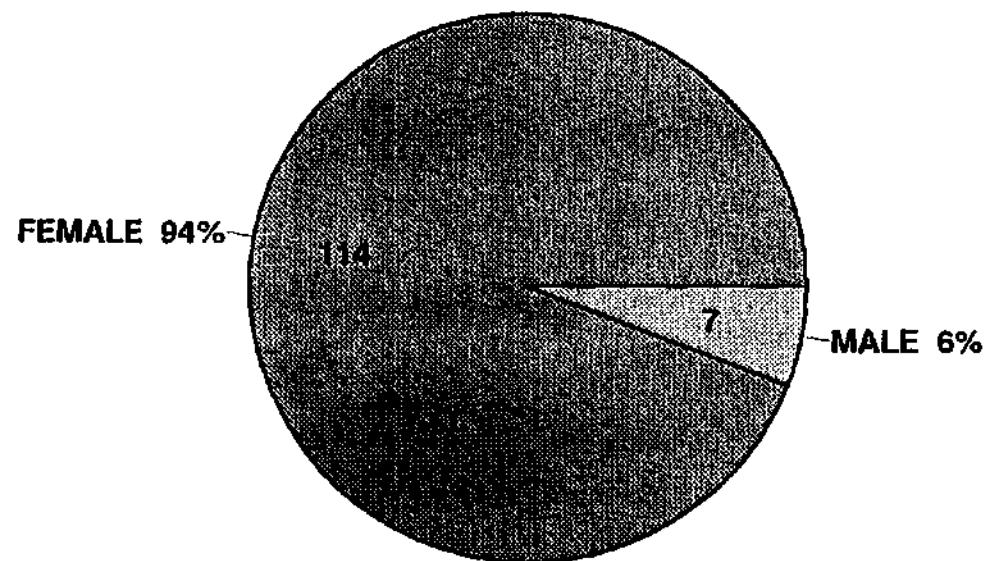


### SUSPECT SEX

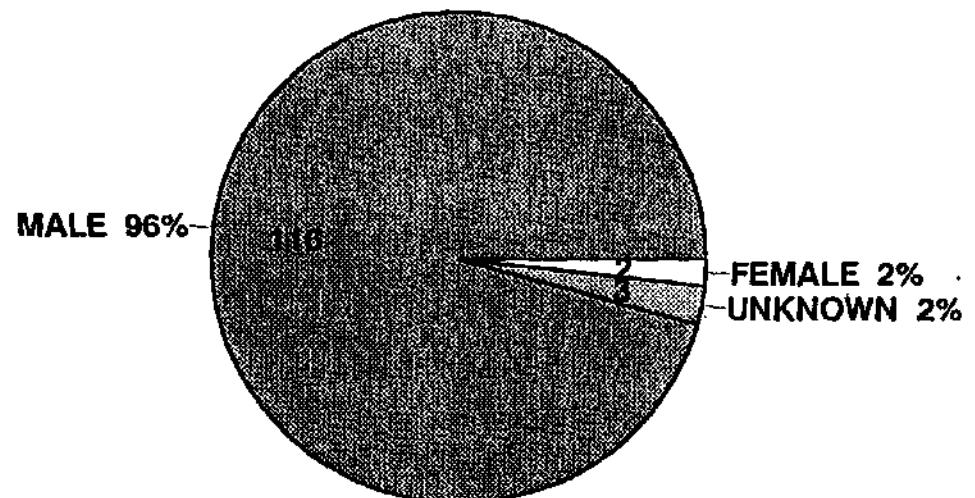


## VICTIM/SUSPECT SEX BREAKDOWN (STRANGER)

### VICTIM SEX

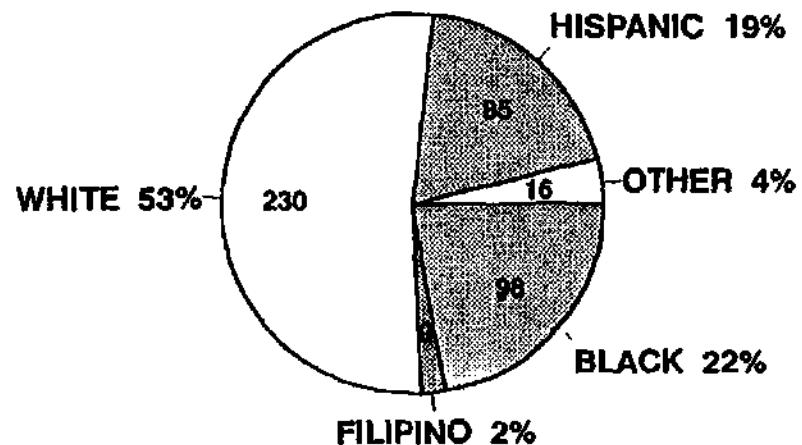


### SUSPECT SEX



# VICTIM/SUSPECT RACE BREAKDOWN (ACQUAINTANCE)

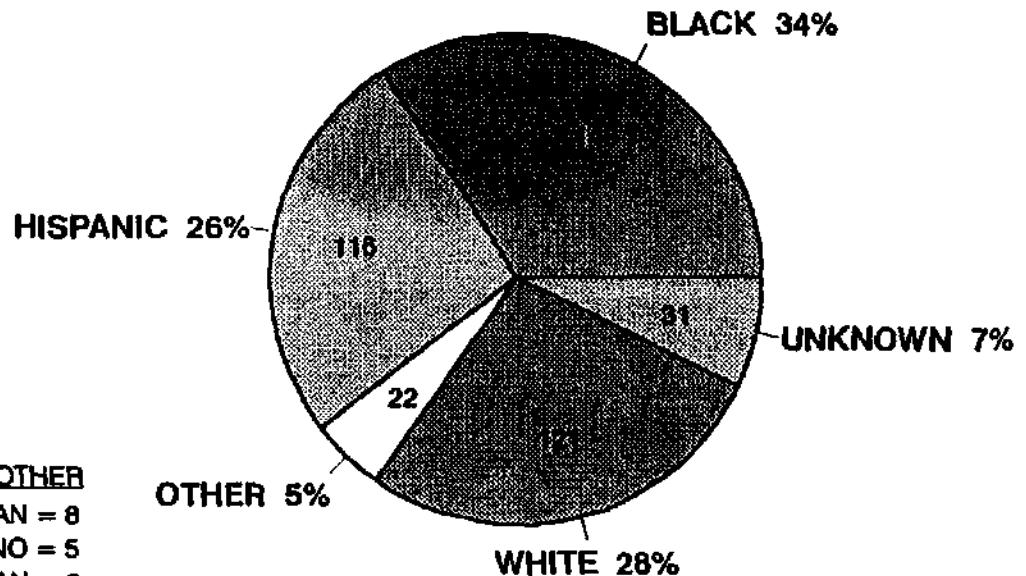
## VICTIM RACE



### VIC RACE OTHER

ASIAN = 4  
CAMBODIAN = 1  
AMER INDIAN = 1  
JAPANESE = 1  
VIETNAMESE = 1  
NOT DEFINED = 6

## SUSPECT RACE

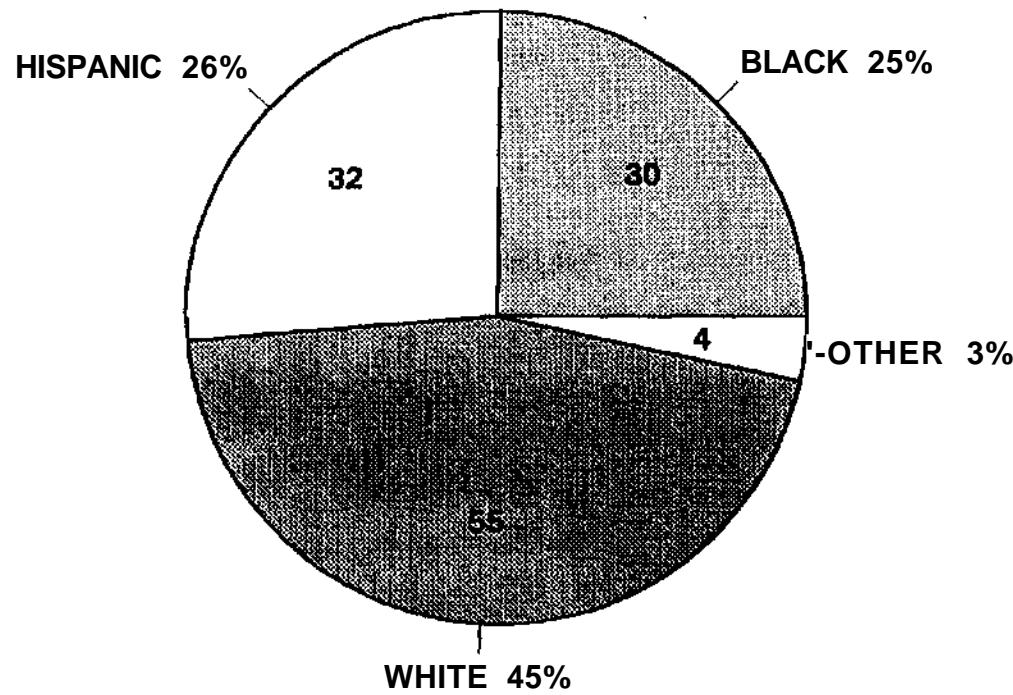


### SUS RACE OTHER

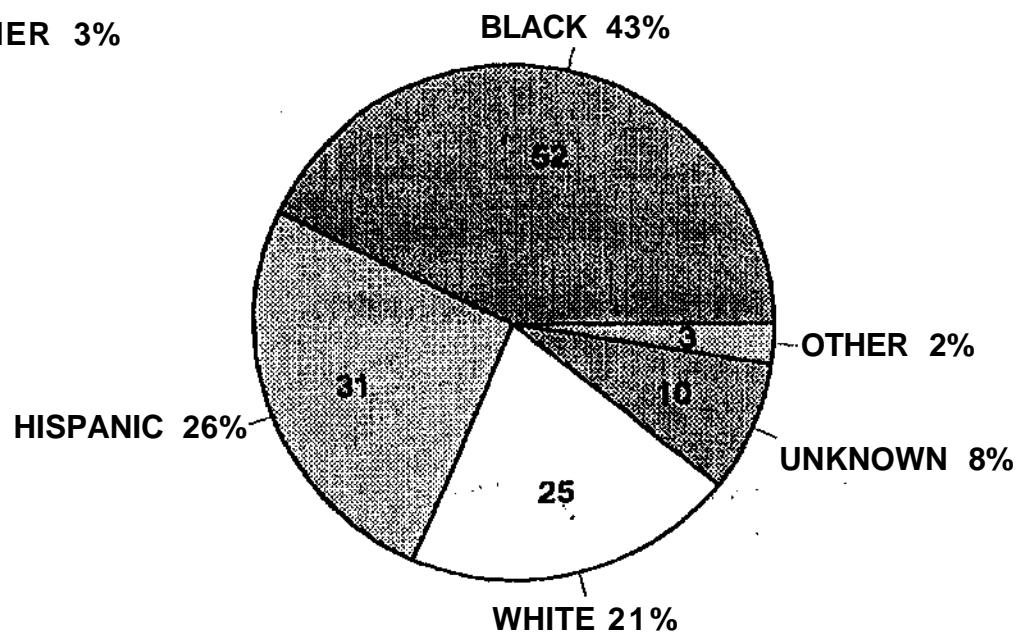
ASIAN = 8  
FILIPINO = 5  
GUAMANIAN = 3  
AMER INDIAN = 2  
PACIFIC ISLANDER = 2  
VIETNAMESE = 2

# VICTIM/SUSPECT RACE BREAKDOWN (STRANGER)

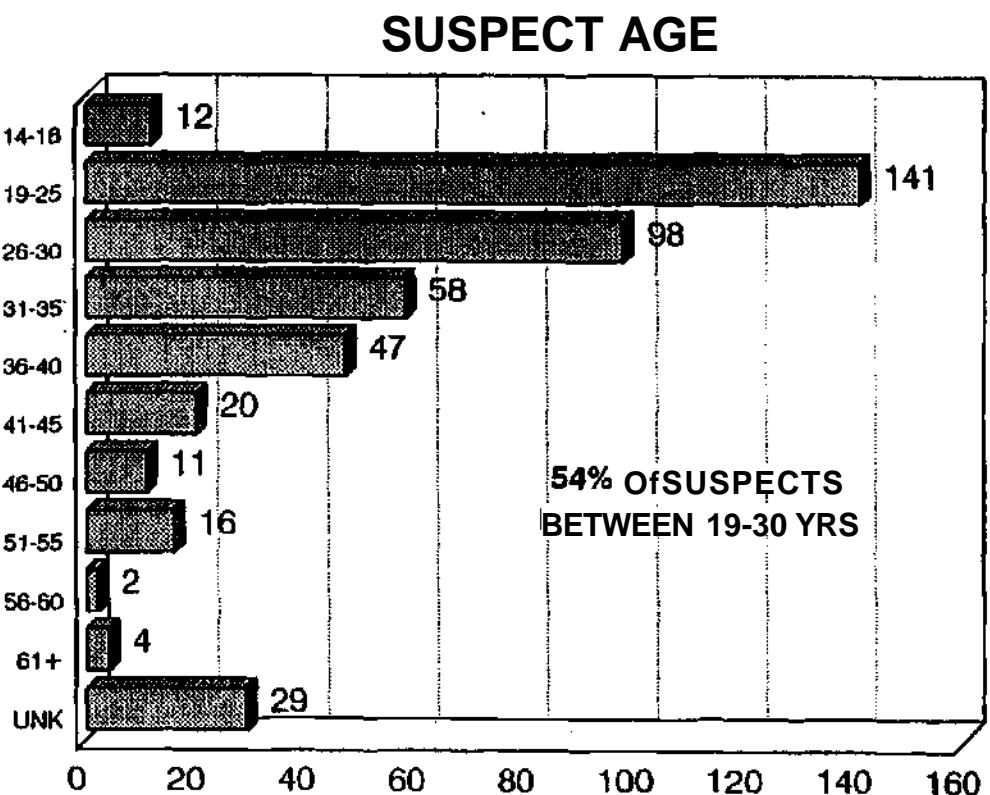
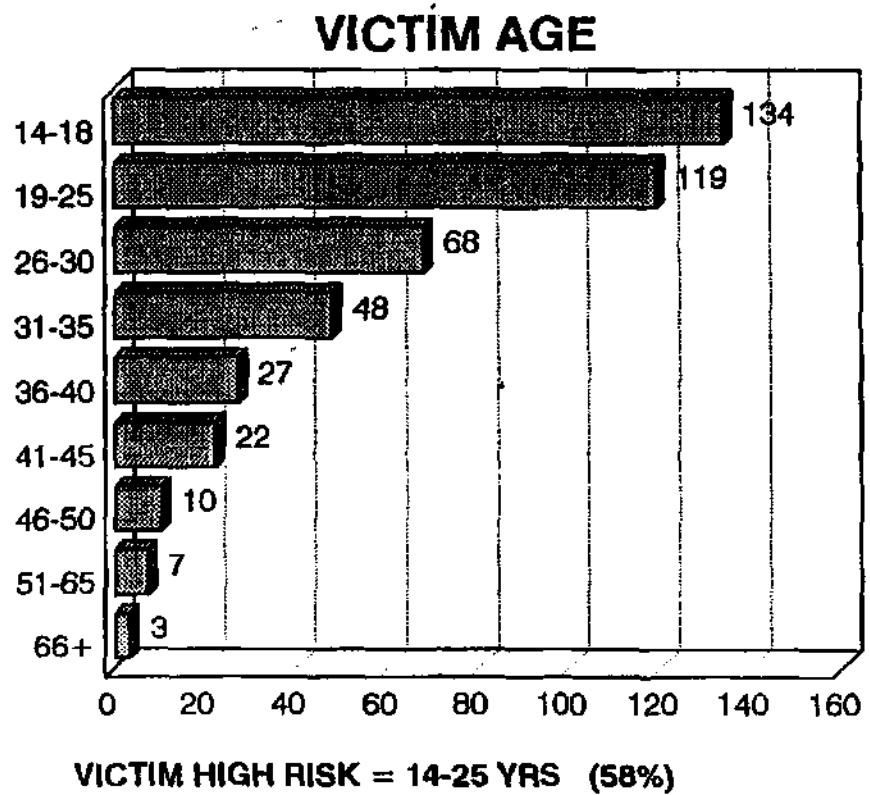
## VICTIM RACE



## SUSPECT RACE

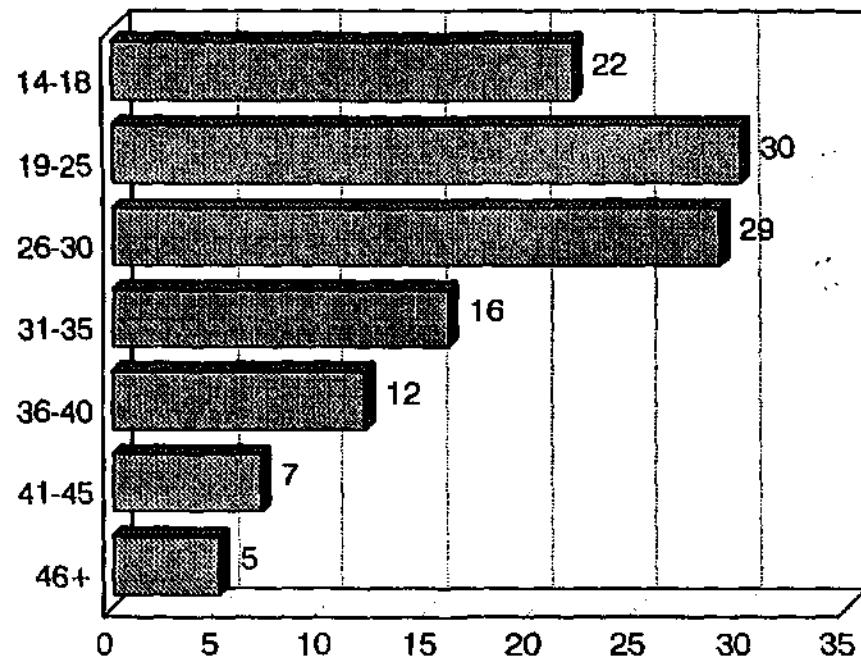


# VICTIM/SUSPECT AGE BREAKDOWN (ACQUAINTANCE)



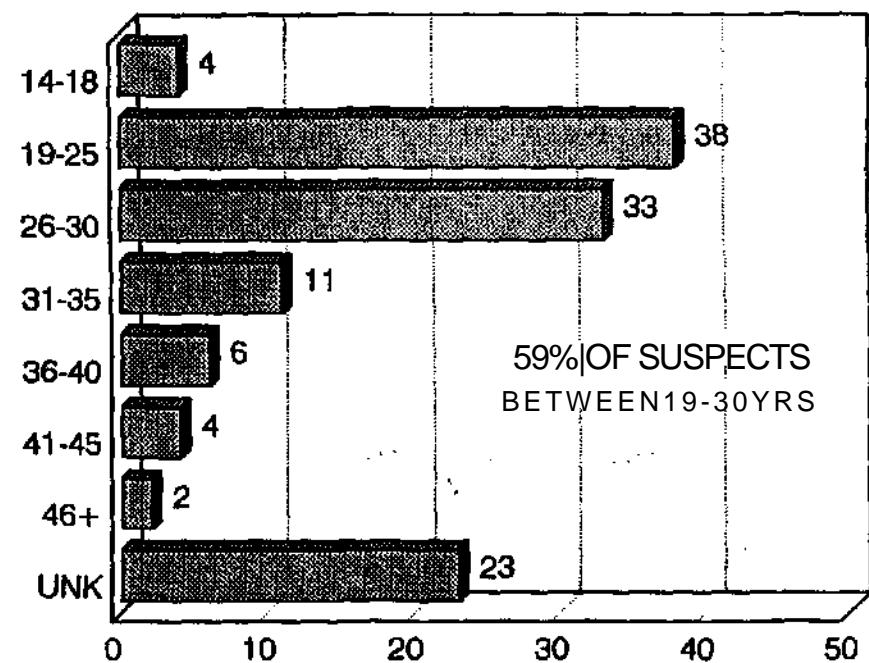
# VICTIM/SUSPECT AGE BREAKDOWN (STRANGER)

VICTIM AGE



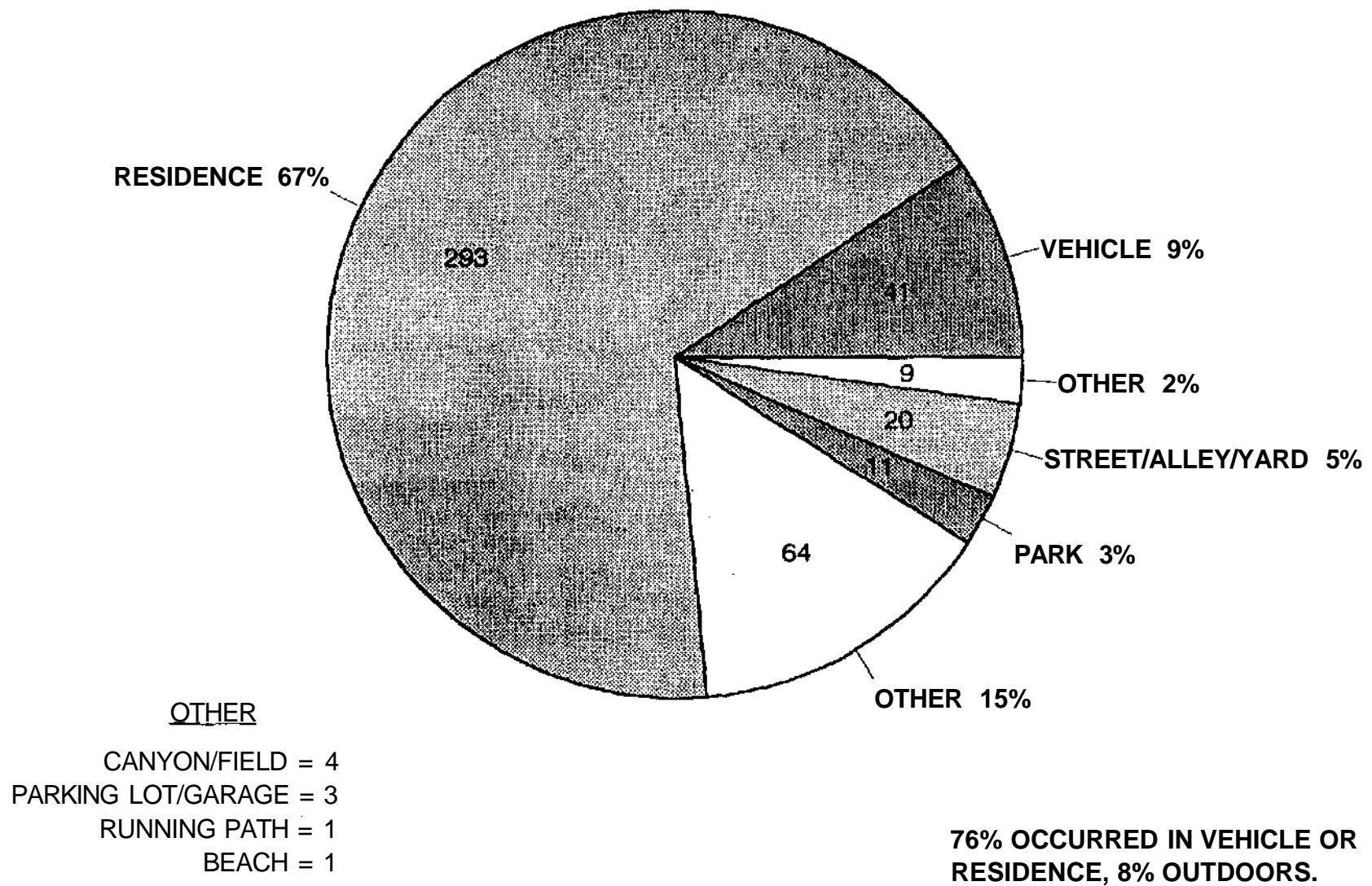
VICTIM HIGH RISK = 19-25 YRS (49%)

SUSPECT AGE

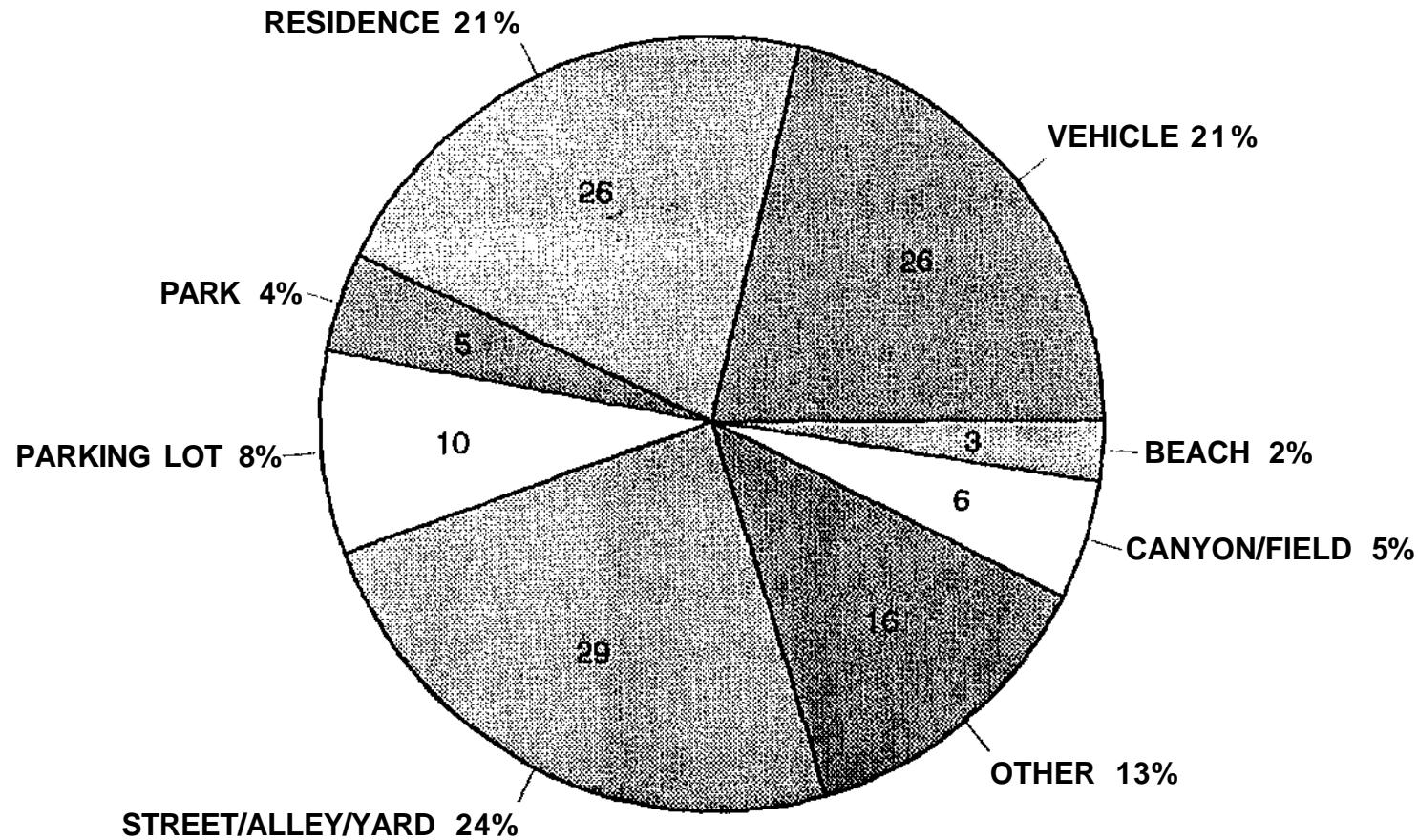


59% OF SUSPECTS  
BETWEEN 19-30YRS

# PLACE OF ATTACK (ACQUAINTANCE)



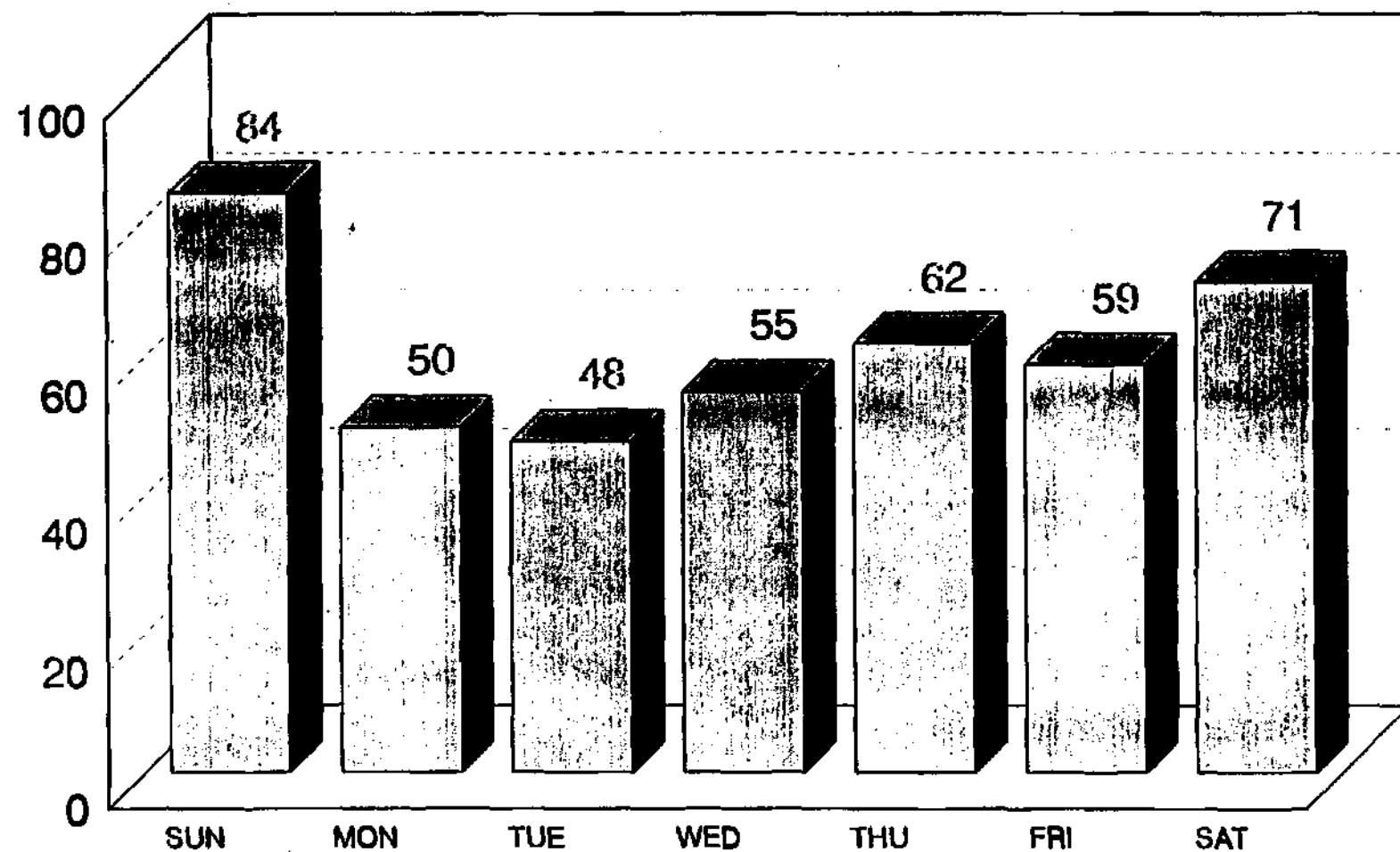
# PLACE OF ATTACK - STRANGER



44% OCCURRED OUTDOORS

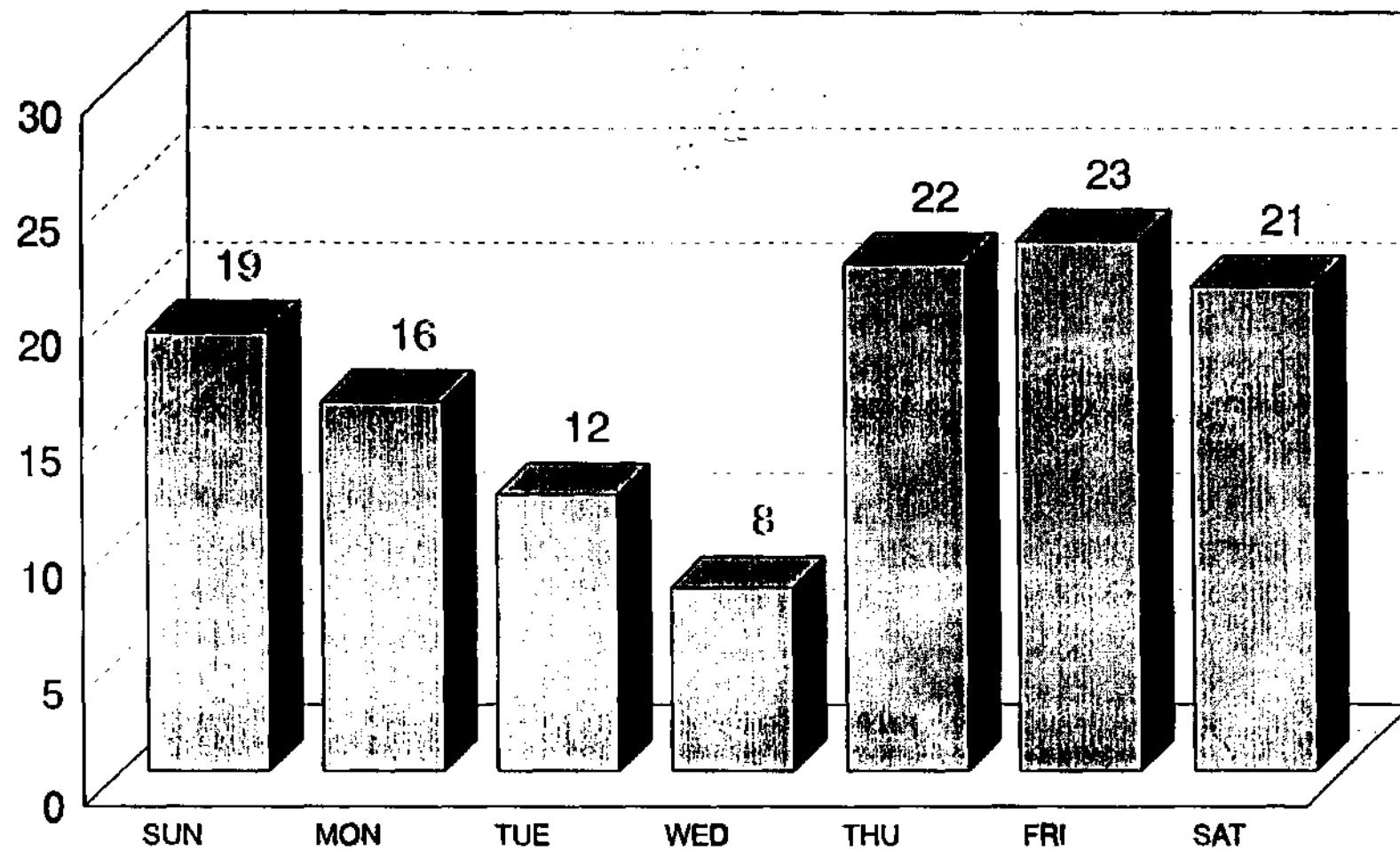
TOTAL STRANGER CASES = 121

# DAY OF WEEK (ACQUAINTANCE)



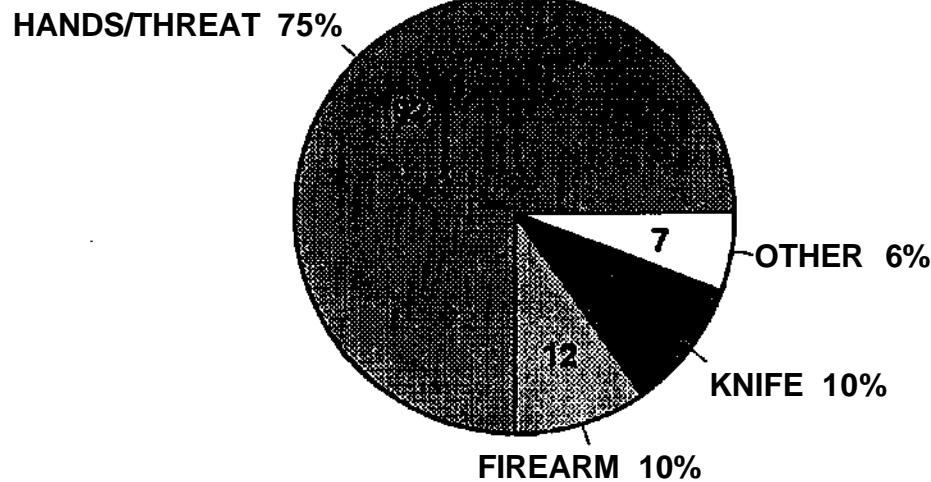
\* 35% OCCURRED BETWEEN SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

# DAY OF WEEK - STRANGER



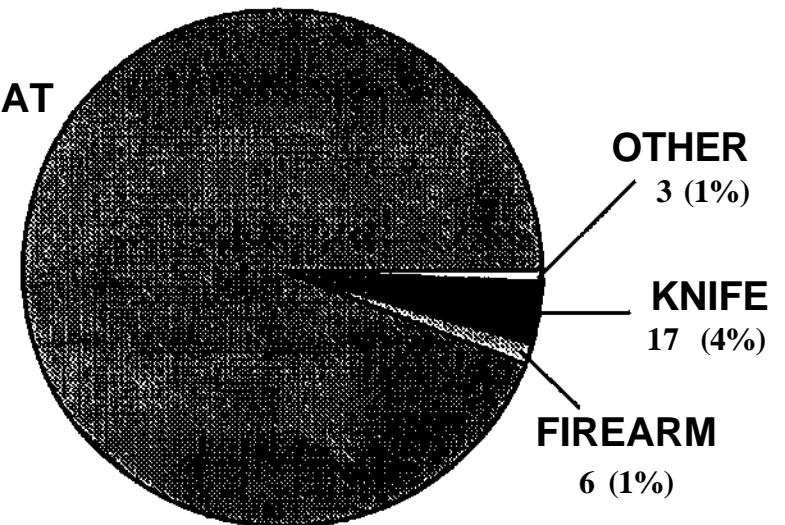
# SUSPECT WEAPON

## STRANGER

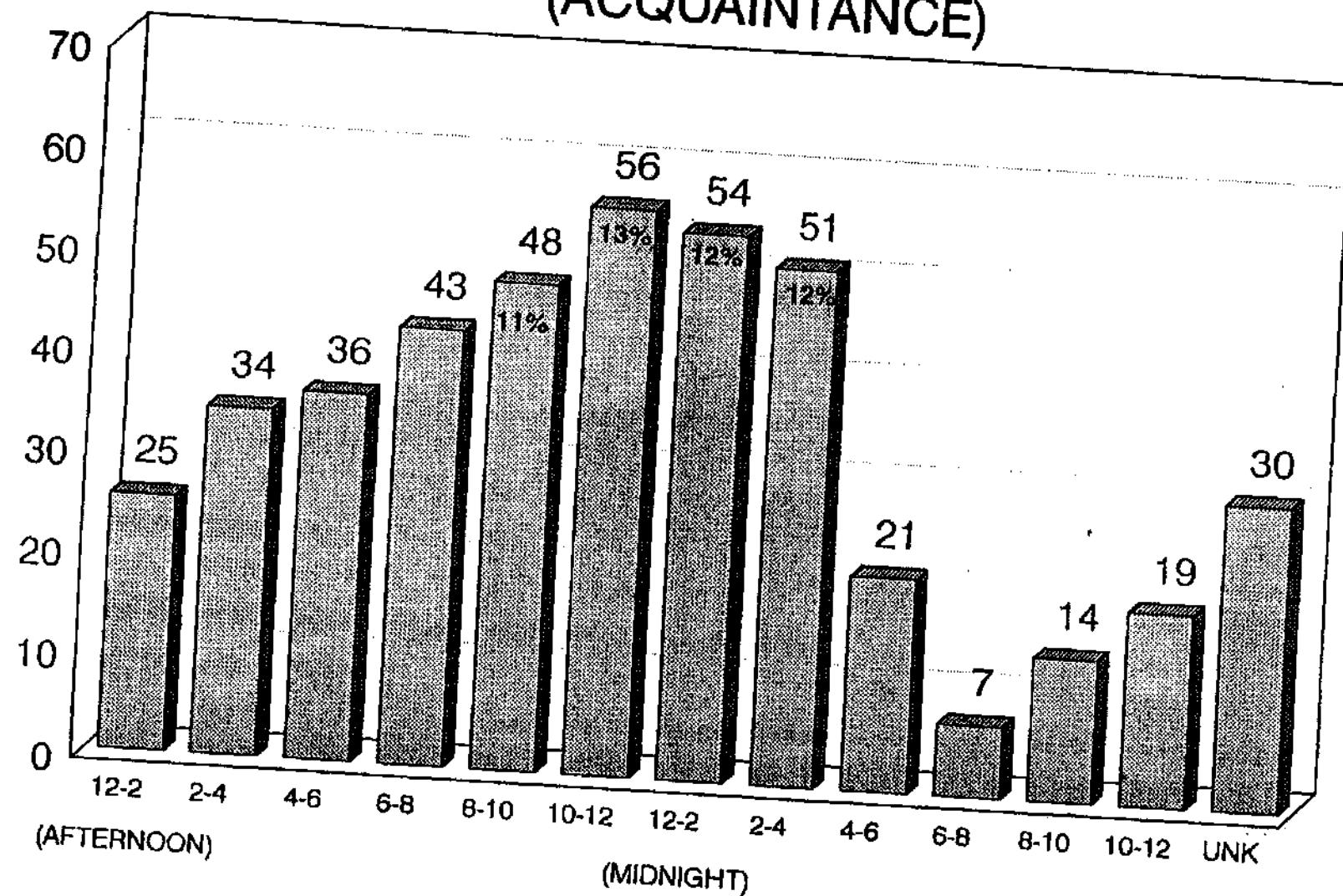


## ACQUAINTANCE

HANDS/THREAT  
412  
(94%)

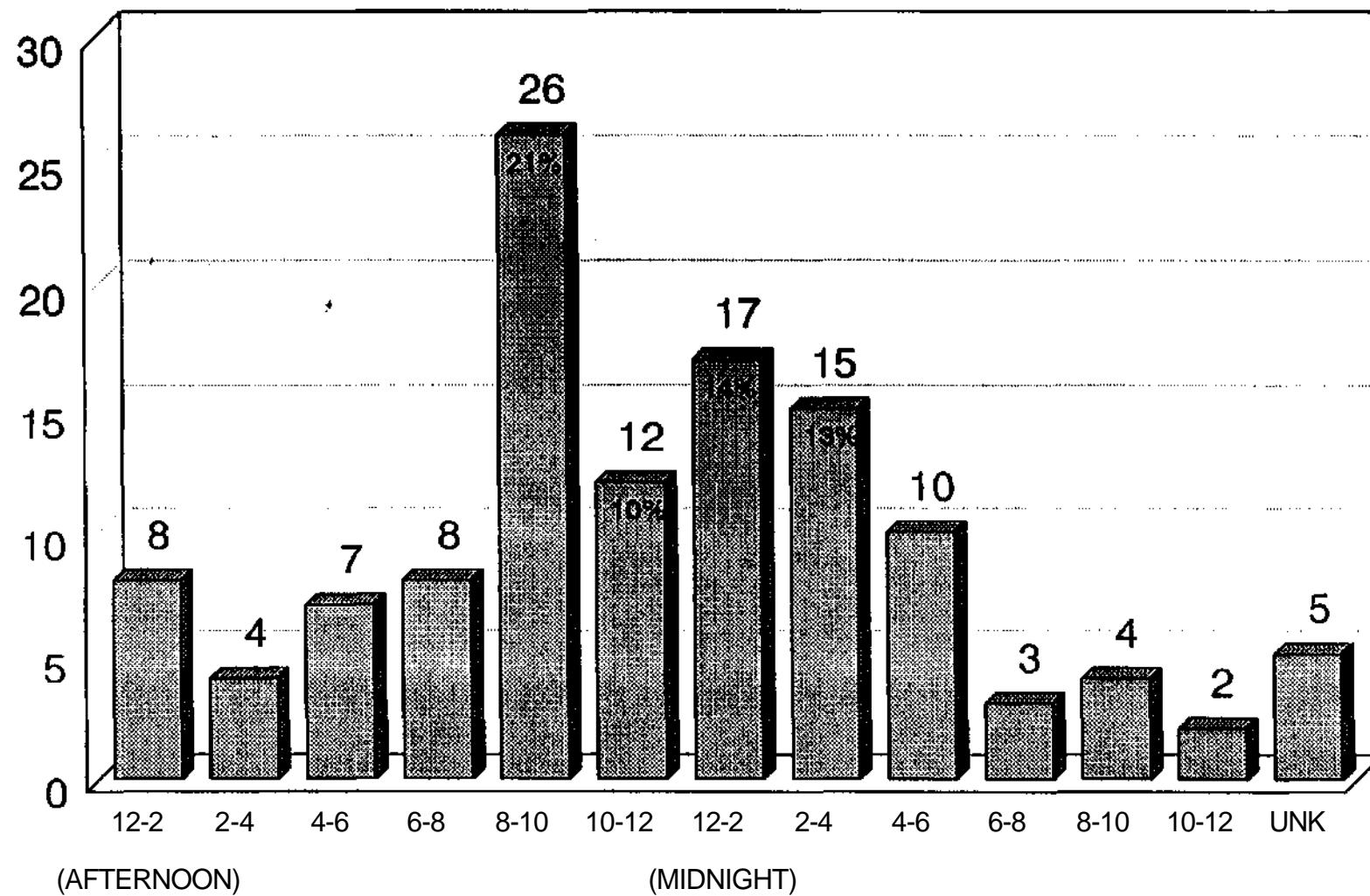


# TIME OF ATTACK (ACQUAINTANCE)



\* 48% OCCURRED BETWEEN 2000-0400 HRS

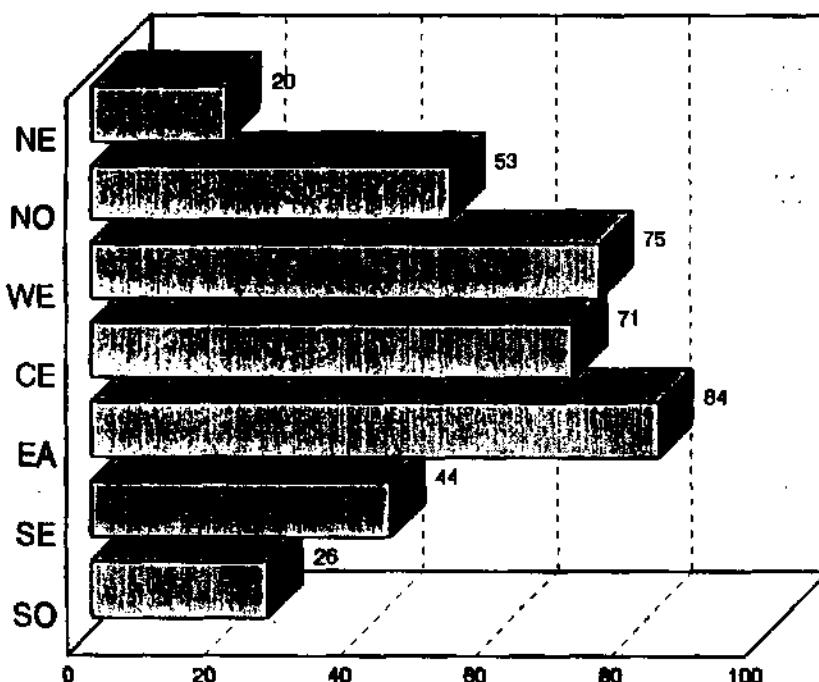
# TIME OF ATTACK - STRANGER



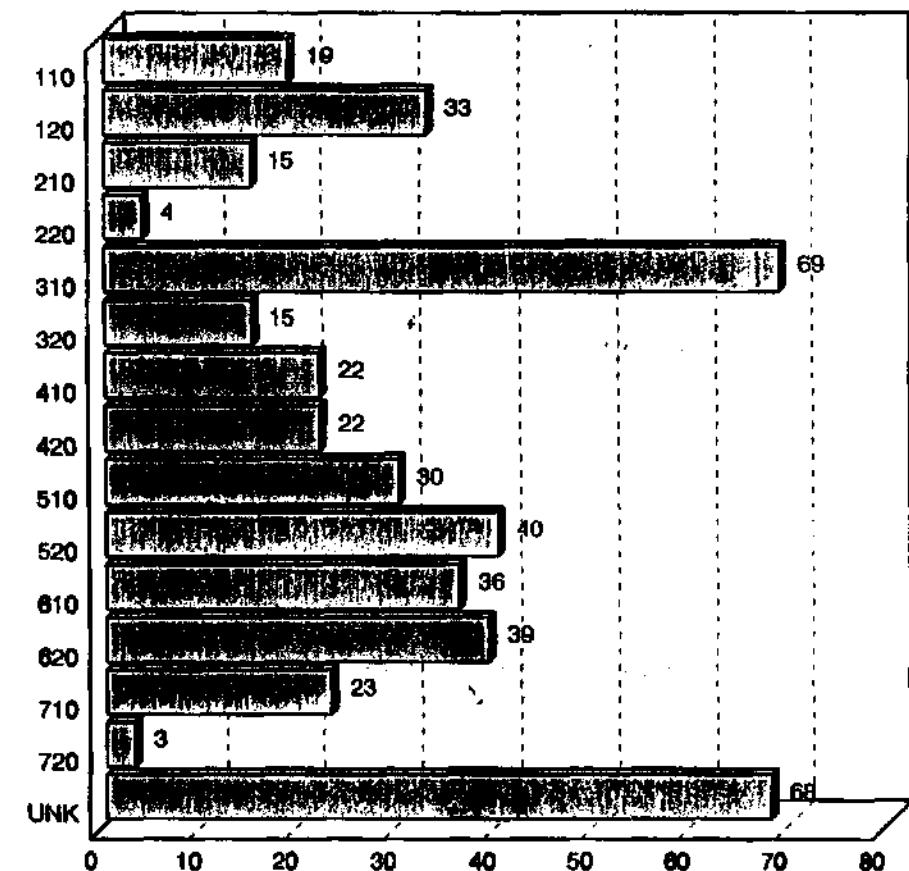
\* 58% OCCURRED BETWEEN 8 PM - 4 AM.

# GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN (ACQUAINTANCE)

AREA COMMAND

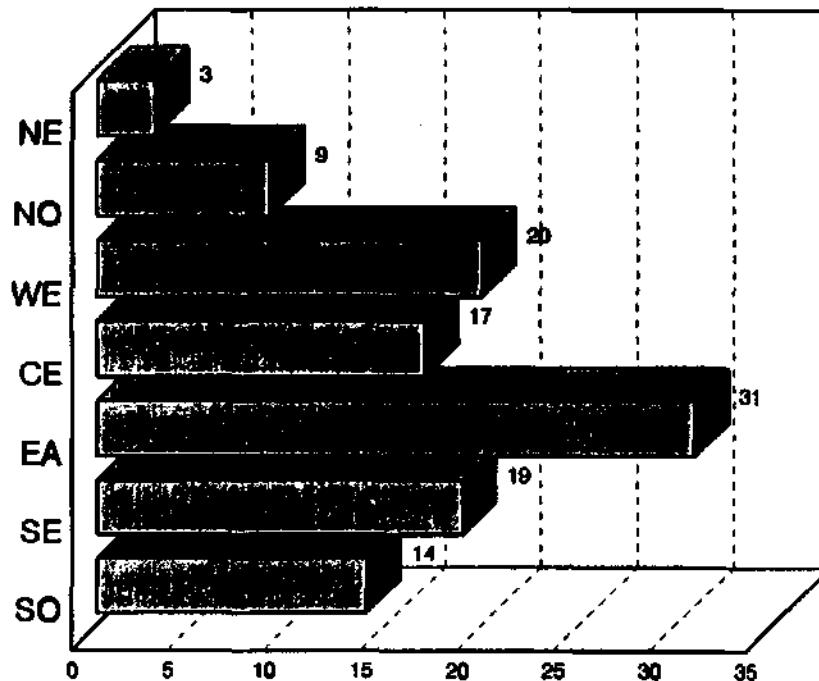


SERGEANTS AREA

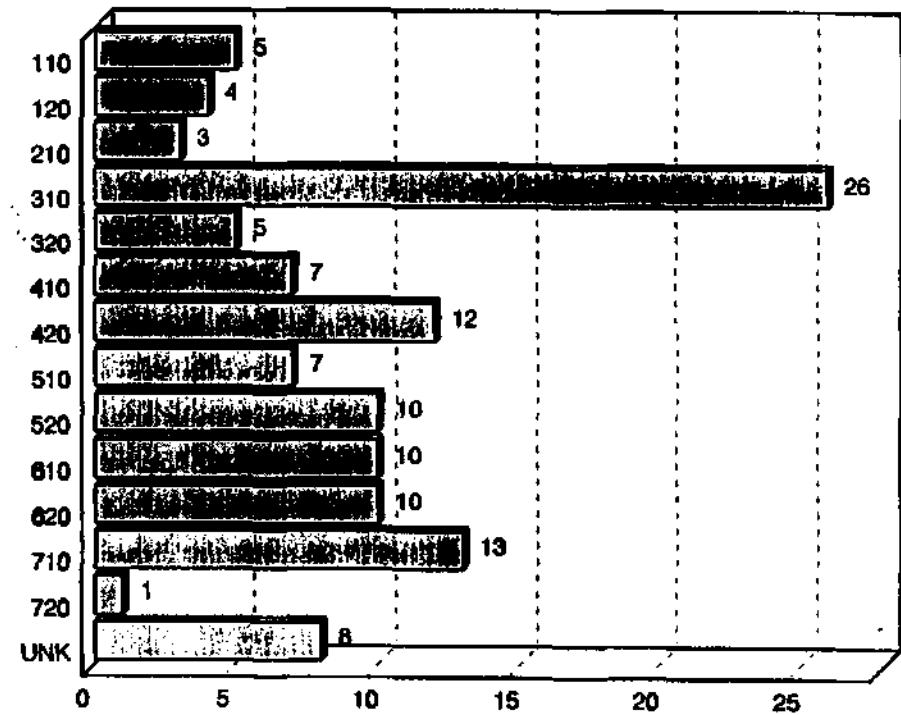


# GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN (STRANGER)

## AREA COMMAND



## SERGEANT'S AREA



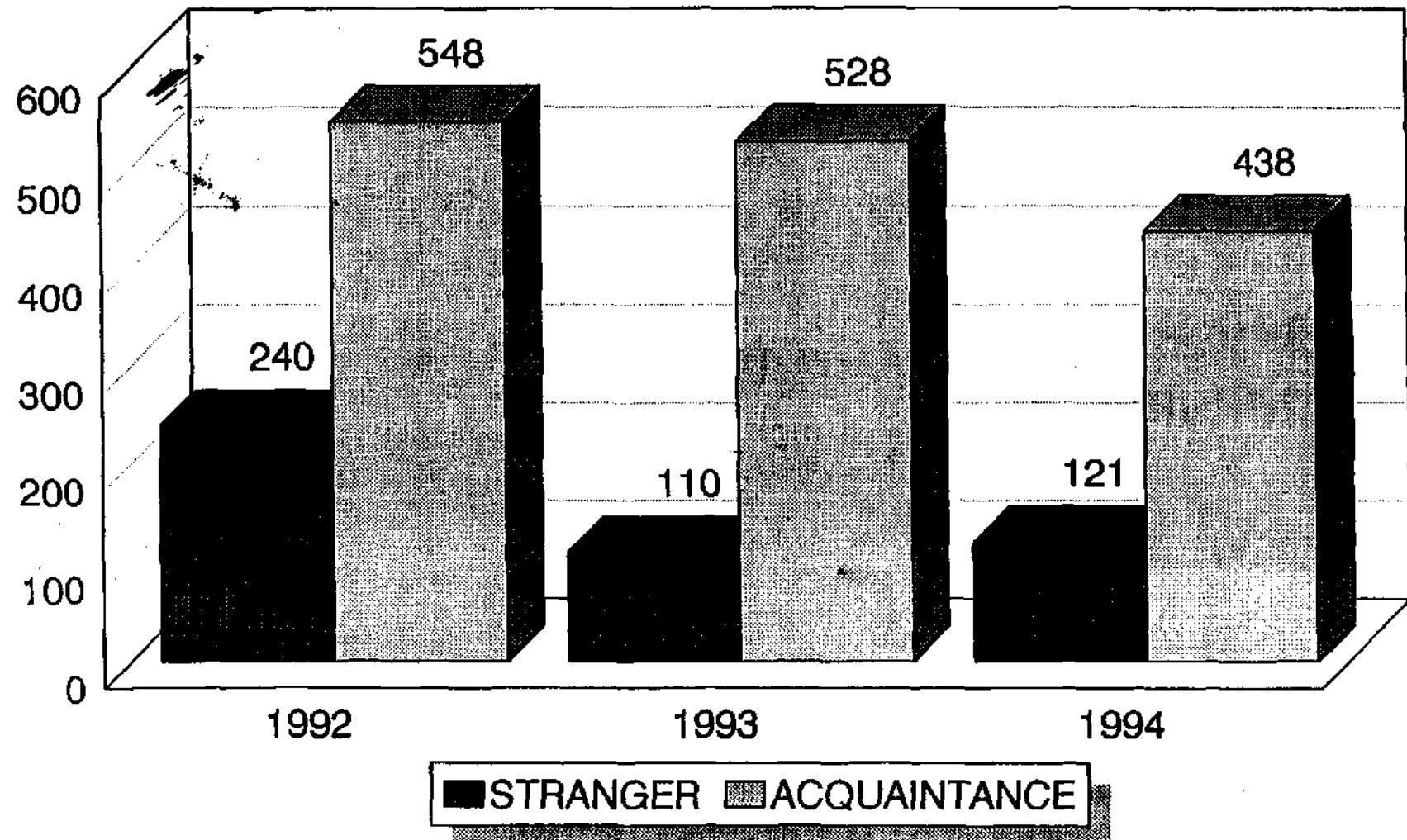
## **1994 DRUGS/ALCOHOL STATISTICS**

<b>1994</b>	<b>ACQUAINTANCE</b>	<b>STRANGER</b>
<b>VICTIM UNDER INFLUENCE</b>	<b>93 (21%)</b>	<b>9 (7%)</b>
<b>SUSPECT UNDER INFLUENCE</b>	<b>101 (23%)</b>	<b>6 (5%)</b>
<b>TOTAL CASES</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>121</b>

**NOTE: IT IS FREQUENTLY UNKNOWN IF SUSPECT HAS BEEN  
IMPAIRED BY DRUGS AND/OR ALCOHOL. SUSPECT COUNTS  
SHOULD REFLECT UNDER REPORTING.**

# **STRANGER VS ACQUAINTANCE SEXUAL ATTACKS**

**1992-1994**



# Acquaintance Rape Questionnaire

This survey is about acquaintance rape and the conditions around which it occurs. This survey is entirely anonymous and completely voluntary. Due to the sensitivity of the subject, some questions may seem personal but your honest and complete answers are important and may help to educate others to reduce their risk of becoming victims.

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your gender?

- a. Female      b. Male

3. What is your class standing?

<u>COLLEGE</u>	<u>HIGH SCHOOL</u>
----------------	--------------------

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a. Freshman     | f. Freshman  |
| b. Sophomore    | g. Sophomore |
| c. Junior       | h. Junior    |
| d. Senior       | i. Senior    |
| e. Grad student |              |

4. What is your ethnicity?

- |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| a. African-American                  |
| b. Asian or Pacific Islander         |
| c. Hispanic or Latino                |
| d. Native American or Alaskan Native |
| e. White                             |
| f. Filipino                          |
| g. Other _____                       |

5. Have you or someone you know ever been a victim of an acquaintance rape?

8. Did alcohol /drugs impair the suspect?

- a. I have been a victim  
b. Someone I know has been a victim  
c. Neither I nor anyone I know has been a victim. (skip to question #14)

- a. Both alcohol and drugs  
b. Alcohol only  
c. Drugs only  
d. Neither  
e. I don't know

6. Were any of the following used?

9. Did alcohol /drugs impair the victim?

- a. Gun  
b. Knife  
c. Force (example: held down)  
d. Threats  
e. None  
f. I don't know

- a. Both alcohol and drugs  
b. Alcohol only  
c. Drugs only  
d. Neither  
e. I don't know

7. How long did you or your friend know the suspect?

10. Where did the rape occur?

- a. More than 3 years  
b. 1-3 years  
c. 6-12 months  
d. 1-6 months  
e. Less than a month  
f. I don't know

- a. Suspects house/apt/condo  
b. Victim's house/apt/condo  
c. Suspect vehicle  
d. Victim vehicle  
e. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
f. I don't know

Please see other side for additional questions

# Acquaintance Rape Questionnaire

11. About how old were you or your friend at the time of the assault? \_\_\_\_\_

12. About how old was the assailant at the time of the assault? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Was the incident reported to the Police?

- a. Yes      b. No      c. I don't know

13a. If yes, were you or your friend satisfied with the investigation?

- a. Yes  
b. No  
c. I don't know

If no, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13b. If no, why not? Circle

- a. Didn't know it was  
b. Was ashamed/emt  
c. Didn't think anyone  
d. Afraid  
e. Didn't want police i  
f. Didn't want the has  
g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. When is it okay to force sex?

- a. If you are married  
b. If you are engaged  
c. If you have been dating for a while  
d. If you have had sex before  
e. If the person spent a lot of money  
on the date  
f. Never

16. How do you decide  
have a sexual relati  
person you are dati

- a. Number of da  
b. Time spent tc  
c. Commitment/  
d. Marriage  
e. Heat of momen  
f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

15. When dating, at what point do you believe there is an obligation to submit to sexual contact?

- a. 1-2 dates  
b. 3-5 dates  
c. 6-10 dates  
d. More than 10  
e. Never