

**Overview of
48 YEARS OF CRIME IN CHICAGO:
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF SERIOUS CRIME TRENDS FROM 1965 TO 2013**

**by Andrew V. Papachristos, Ph.D.
Yale University**

The objective of this report was to analyze Chicago's crime rates within a historical context so as to better understand longer patterns as well as contemporary rates.

Chicago has seen impressive declines in crime over the last four and a half decades. Based on data from the United States Department of Justice and Chicago Police Department, the overall levels of crime and violence have fallen to record lows as the year 2013 comes to a close. These changes in crime rates – especially recent changes – provide some additional insight into how Chicago fairs relative to other big cities. Compared to other cities of similar sizes (250,000 or more people served), Chicago is by no means the “murder capital” or “crime capital” of the U.S. Chicago had a citywide violent rate of 876.21 per 100,000 in 2012, closer to Boston and Oklahoma City, and half that of cities like Detroit, Memphis, and Baltimore.

- Chicago appears to be on track to have both the lowest violent crime rate since 1972, and lowest homicide rate since 1967.
- Early data from 2013 indicates that the index crime rate will continue to fall with early estimates suggesting a rate of 4,251 per 100,000, a rate not seen since 1972.
- Chicago has seen a strong drop in violent crime over the last two years, with 42 out of 77 community areas (over 54%) reporting 25% or higher declines in violent crime rates from 2011-2013
- From January 1, 2013 to November 30, 2013, 72 out of 77 (93.5%) of Chicago Community Areas saw a decrease in the rate of violent crime
- Chicago rates 24th in violent crime rates among large cities as of 2012, at similar levels to Boston, Massachusetts and Anchorage, Alaska.

FIGURE 1. Index Crime in Chicago (rate per 100,000), 1965 to the present



FIGURE 2. Motor Vehicle Theft and Robbery Rates in Chicago, 1965 to 2013

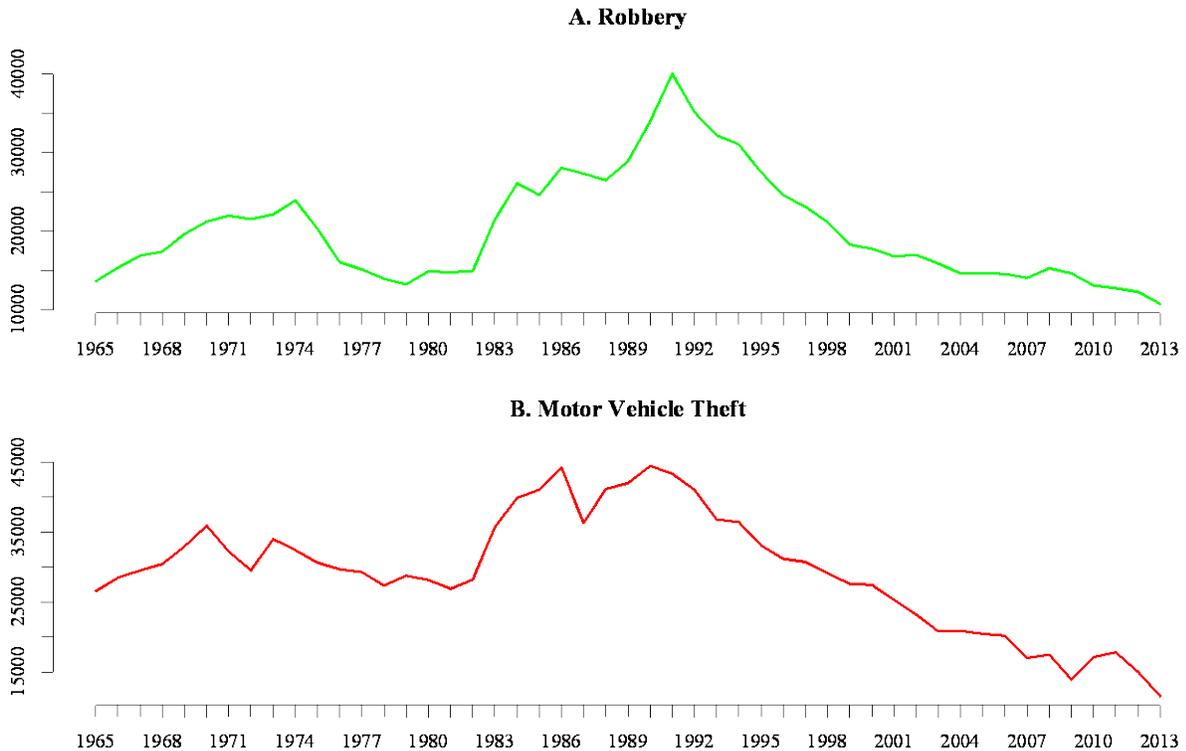


FIGURE 5. Percentage Change in Violent Crime Rate in Chicago by Community Area (2011 to 2013 – Period from Jan 1 to Nov 30)

Change in Violent Crime by Neighborhood Area, 2011-present

