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Delaware Crime Report 1978 -- 1989

May 1990



STATE OF DELAWARE
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER
60 THE PLAZA
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

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**U.S. Department of Justice
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VIOLENT CRIMES

Between 1988 and 1989, some significant changes for reported violent crime occurred. Most important are the changes for aggravated assault (+31 percent), robbery (+18 percent), and forcible rape (+11 percent). Homicide has remained relatively stable over the past three years.

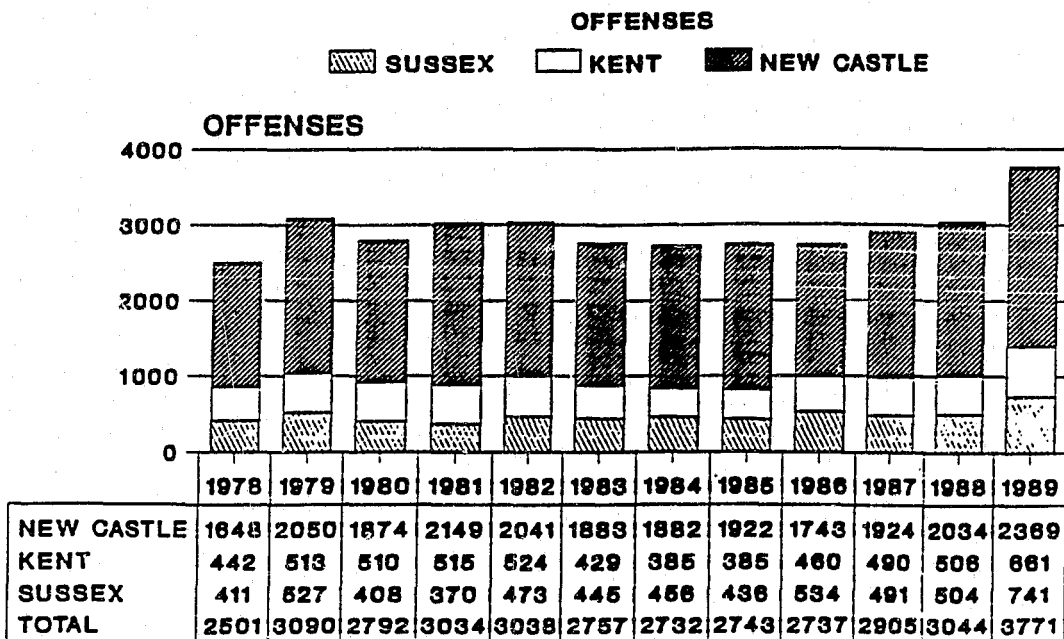
Compared to changes on the national level, Delaware has significantly higher increases for rape (Delaware +11 percent and U.S. +1 percent), robbery (Delaware +18 percent and U.S. +7 percent), and aggravated assault (Delaware +31 percent and U.S. +5 percent).

Over the twelve year period of 1978 to 1989, the changes in these violent crimes is informative. From a historical perspective change in the number of reported forcible rapes is the most significant. In 1978, 110 forcible rapes were reported in Delaware. This number has increased steadily each year with 571 forcible rapes being reported in 1989. The consensus among criminal justice professionals is that for the most part this increase is related to increased confidence in the criminal justice system's handling of these cases. Sexual offenses against children is the most rapidly growing type of offense reported. These crimes are charged as felonies and therefore they appear in the reported rape count. This is not the case in many other states. This may cause Delaware to appear higher in national rankings for reported rapes than is the case.

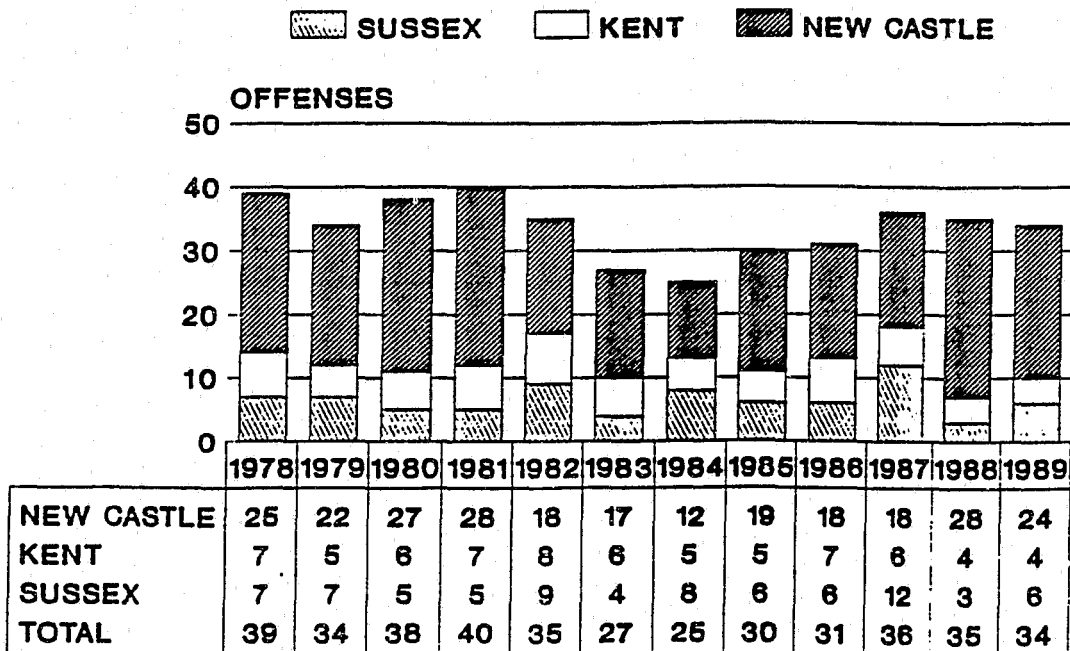
From a historical perspective aggravated assault shows a disconcerting pattern. There were 2,333 reported aggravated assaults in 1989. This is slightly higher than the prior peaks for Delaware of 2,163 in 1979 and 2,081 in 1982. Between 1983 and 1988, however, Delaware enjoyed a significant reduction in the number of reported aggravated assaults, the average number of reports in this period being 1,661 per year. The resurgence of reported aggravated assaults in 1989, although not much higher than peaks of ten years ago, is significant. A possible explanation may be its relationship to illicit drug activities. Law enforcement is seeing more drug related assaults being reported following the law enforcement crackdown on illicit drug activities.

Robbery, like aggravated assault, increased significantly in 1989 (18 percent). Historically, however, this increase is not as dramatic as the increase in aggravated assault. Robbery has been cyclical over the past twelve years, and rarely has the annual change for reported robbery gone outside of an expected variance. Over the past twelve years the average number of robberies has been 790 per year with an expected variation of 854 on the high side and 726 on the low side. Reported robbery in 1989 at 933 exceeds the high side expectation by 79 cases.

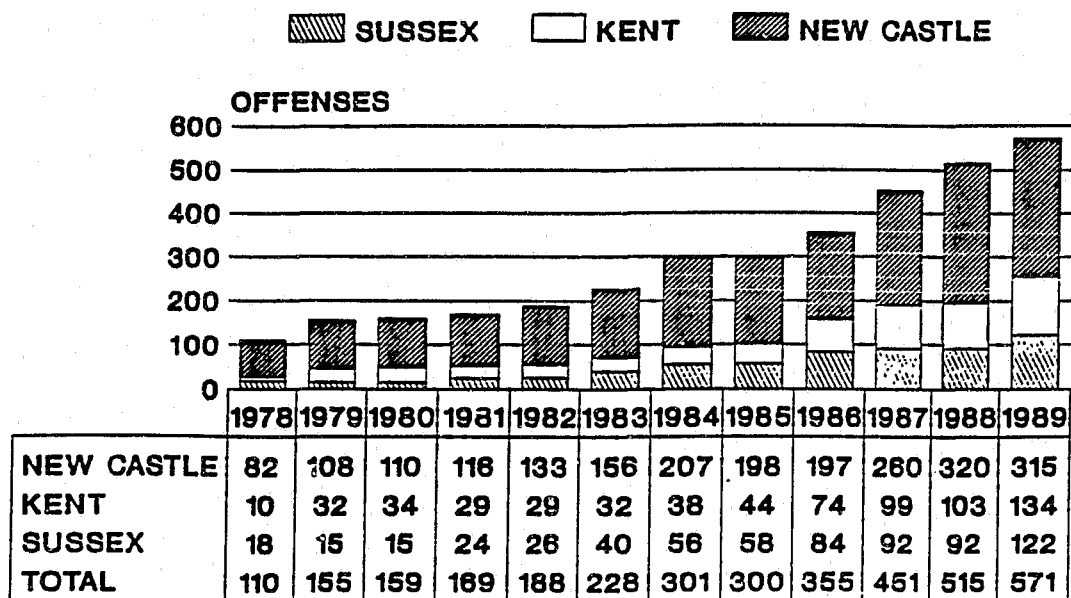
Total Violent Crime 1978 - 1989



Homicide 1978 - 1989

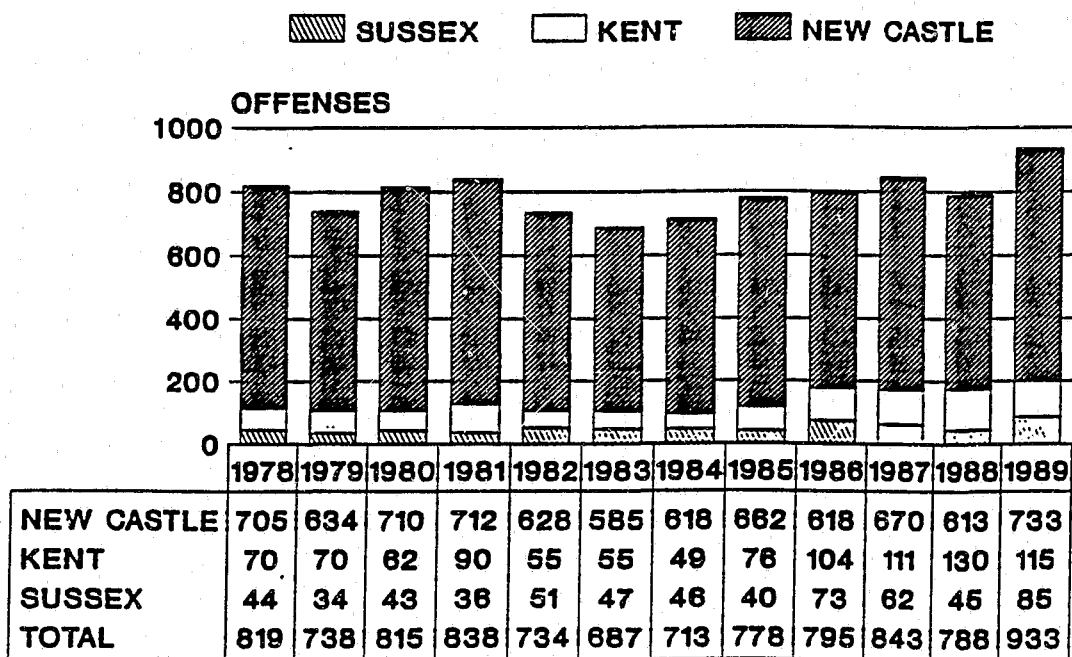


Rape 1978 - 1989

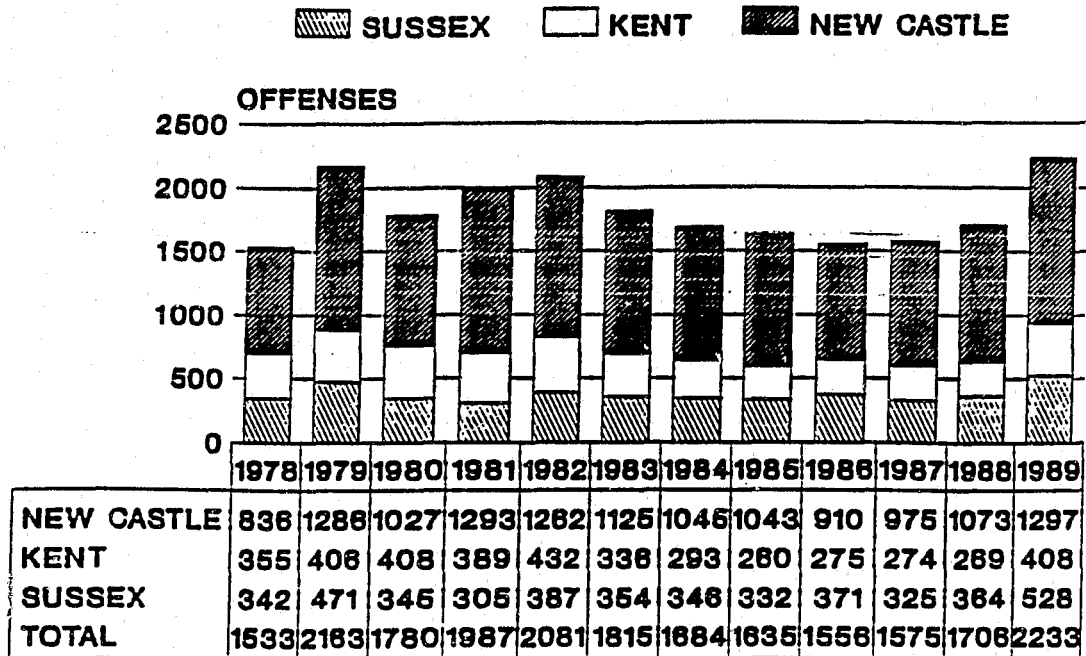


Note: In about 80 percent of the reported rapes the assailant is known by the victim.

Robbery 1978 - 1989



Aggravated Assault 1978 - 1989



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PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN CRIME PATTERNS 1989 OVER 1988 THE UNITED STATES COMPARED TO DELAWARE

	Total Violent Crime	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault
United States	+5%	+4%	+1%	+7%	+5%
Delaware	+24%	-3%	+11%	+18%	+31%

Source of United States Data:
Uniform Crime Report
1989 Preliminary Annual Release

Delaware Crime Report
May 1990

PROPERTY CRIMES

The property crime that increased significantly in 1989 was motor vehicle theft (+32 percent). Burglary and arson showed significant decreases in 1989 (-12 percent and -30 percent respectively).

For property crimes Delaware has a higher one year increase for motor vehicle theft than the U.S. -- +32 percent versus +9 percent. For burglary and arson, however, Delaware is significantly lower in 1989 compared to the U.S. (Burglary: Delaware -12 percent and U.S. -2%) and (Arson: Delaware -30 percent and U.S. -2 percent).

Motor vehicle theft follows a historical pattern similar to aggravated assault. Between 1978 and 1983, the number of reported vehicle thefts was higher than it was between 1984 and 1988. The average in the early period was 2,695 per year and the average in the later period was 1,829 per year, a decrease of about 860 from the earlier to the later period. The single year change in 1989 moved the number of motor vehicle thefts back to the higher levels reported in the early 1980's.

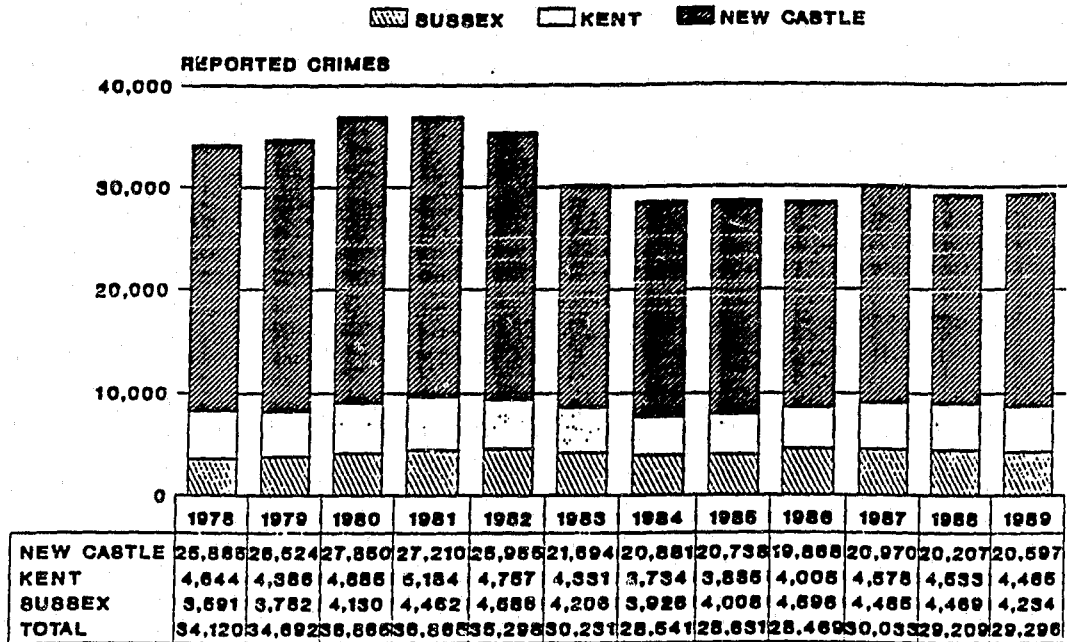
The reasons for the increase in motor vehicle thefts is not well understood. It is, however, a problem not isolated to Delaware. Increases in motor vehicle theft is a nationwide problem. One aspect of change related to motor vehicle theft shown in an indepth California study (1) is that a greater proportion of adults are being arrested for motor vehicle theft. In 1975, 64 percent of the motor vehicle thefts arrests were adults. By 1987 this percentage had increased to 76 percent. This may indicate a reduction in joyriding thefts and an increase in stripping.

The 12 percent decrease for the reported burglaries in Delaware is counter to conventional wisdom that the increased use of illicit drug is closely related to increases in property crimes to obtain resources to purchase the drugs. It may be that the drugs are cheap enough and that selling drugs is more profitable and less risky than stealing.

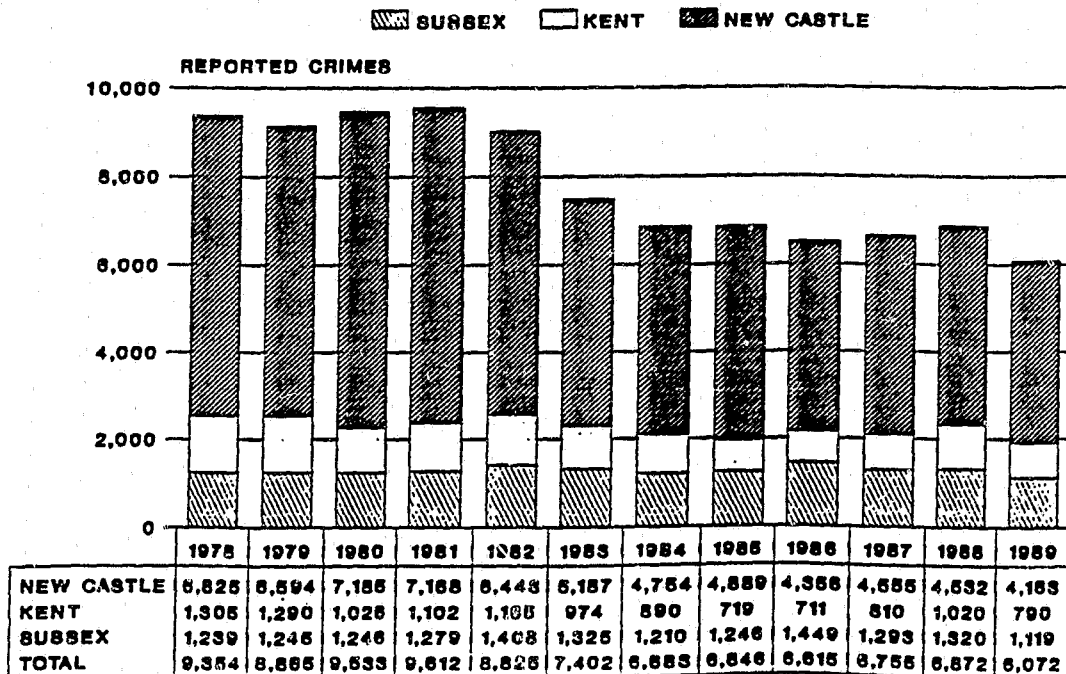
Larceny, after decreasing from a high of 24,668 being reported in 1981 has remained stable near the 20,000 a year level. In 1989, the number of reported larcenies was 20,300.

(1) "Conspicuous Depredation: Automobile Theft in Los Angeles, 1904 to 1987" by J.B. Thomas, Office of the Attorney General-Bureau of Criminal Statistics. March 1990.

Total Property Crime 1978 - 1989



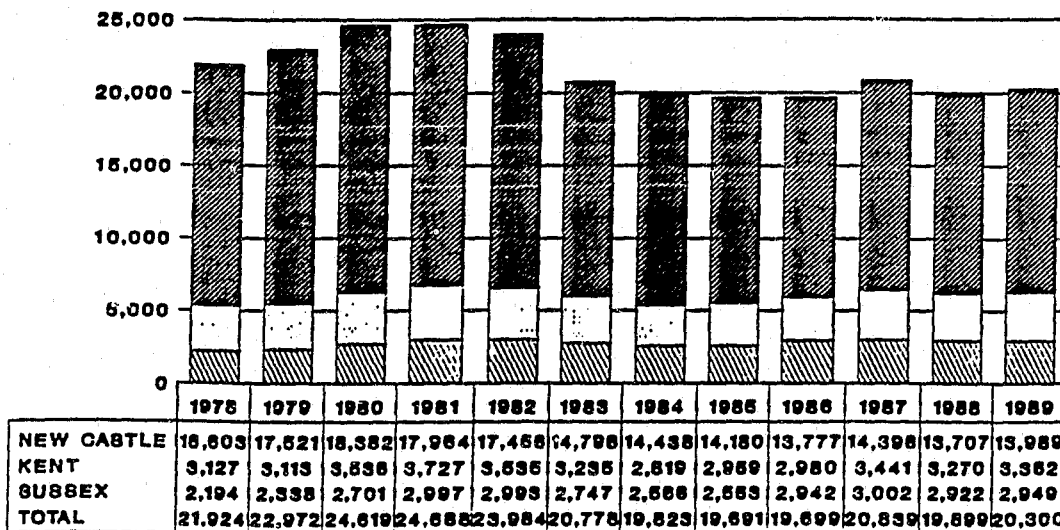
BURGLARY 1978 - 1989



LARCENY 1978 - 1989

SUSSEX
 KENT
 NEW CASTLE

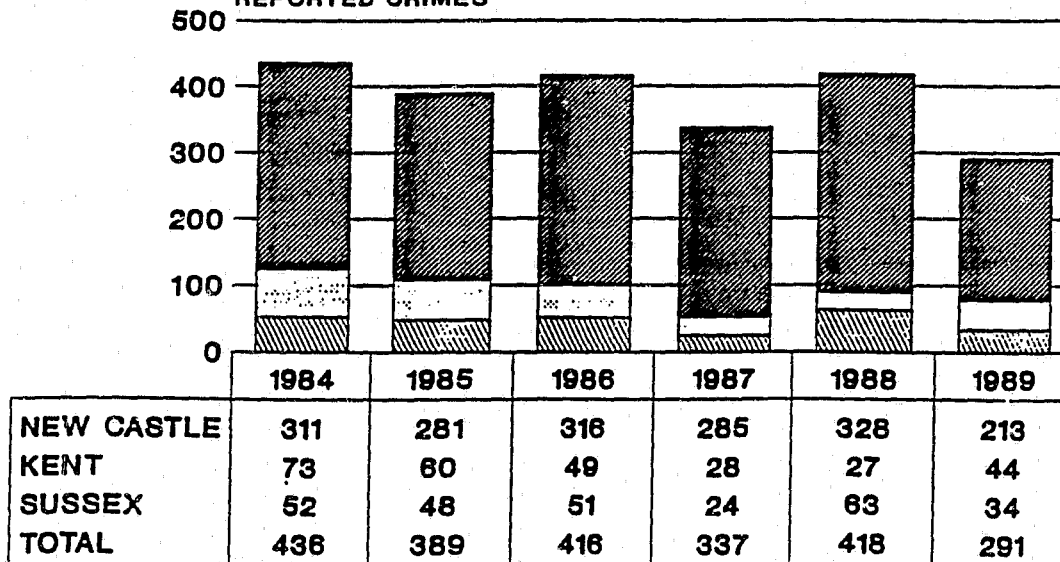
REPORTED CRIMES



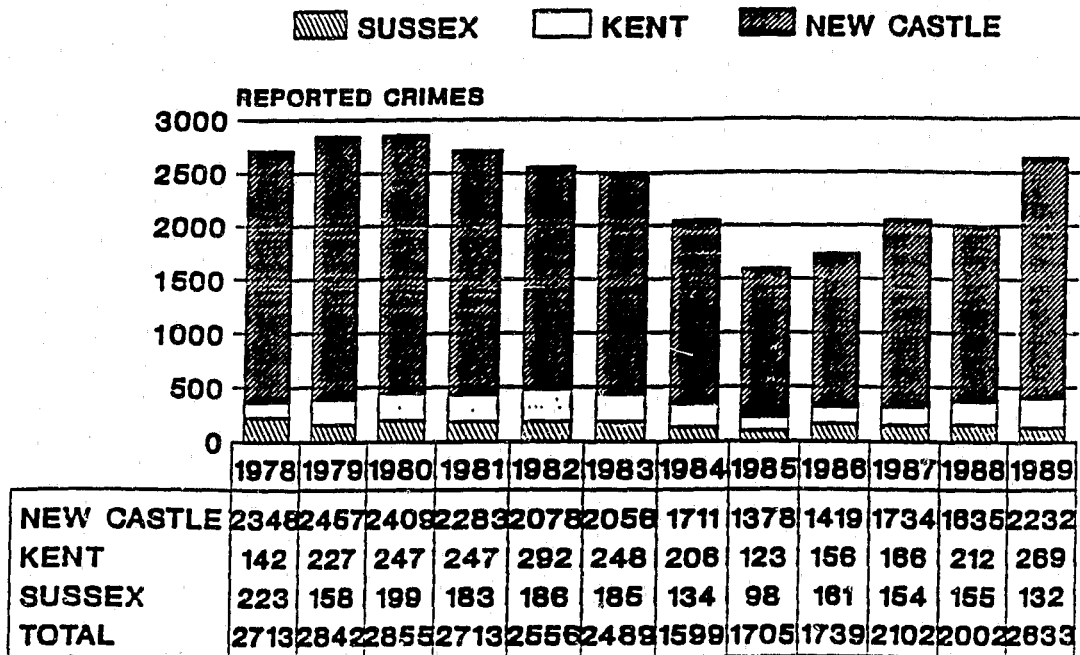
ARSON 1984 - 1989

SUSSEX
 KENT
 NEW CASTLE

REPORTED CRIMES



MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT 1978 - 1989



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**PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN CRIME PATTERNS
1989 OVER 1988
THE UNITED STATES COMPARED TO DELAWARE**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Burglary</u>	<u>Larceny</u>	<u>Motor V</u>	<u>Arson</u>
	<u>Property Crime</u>			<u>Theft</u>	
United States	+2%	-2%	+2%	+9%	-2%
Delaware	No Change	-12%	+2%	+32%	-30%

Source of United States Data:
Uniform Crime Report
1989 Preliminary Annual Release

Delaware Crime Report
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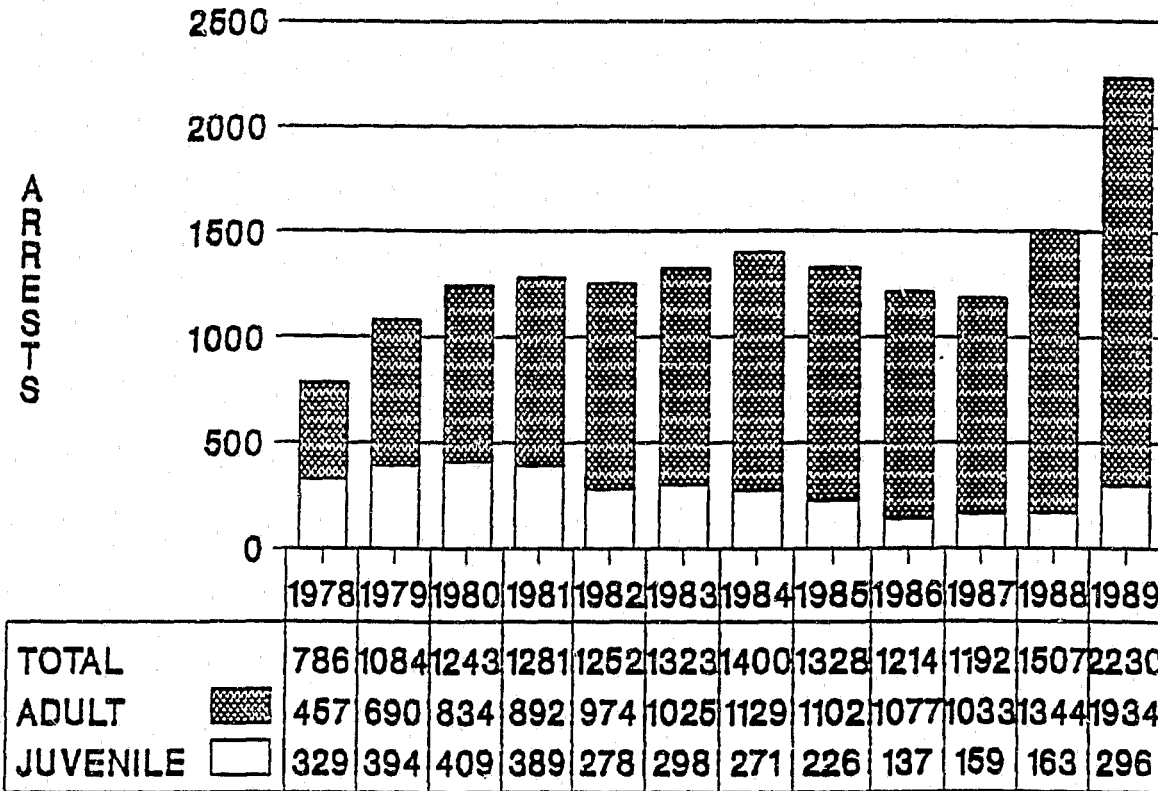
ILLICIT DRUGS

In total, illicit drug arrests in Delaware increased 48 between 1988 and 189 percent. Adults are much more likely than juveniles to be arrested for the possession or trafficking of an illicit drug. In 1989, 87 percent of the illicit drug arrests were adults. Adult illicit drug arrests increased from 1,344 in 1988 to 1,934 in 1989 -- a 44 percent increase. However striking that may be, it is noteworthy that drug arrests for juveniles have increased by 82 percent in 1989. 1986 was the low point for juvenile illicit drug arrests at 137. By 1989 the number has more than doubled to 296.

The increase in drug arrests is most likely related to the increase in law enforcement manpower dedicated to illicit drug behavior. Most drug related arrests are based on proactive investigations by the police because very few are reported. For most other crimes the police activity is initiated through a report of a criminal incident.

Cocaine related arrests were the driving force for the increase of both the adult and the juvenile illicit drug arrests. In 1987, there were more adult marijuana related arrests than cocaine arrests -- 567 versus 418. In 1989, the number of adult cocaine arrests was double that of the marijuana arrests -- 1,297 versus 625. Juvenile cocaine arrests have increase significantly over the past three years: from 19 in 1987, to 74 in 1988, and to 167 in 1989.

DELAWARE DRUG ARRESTS (1978 - 1989)



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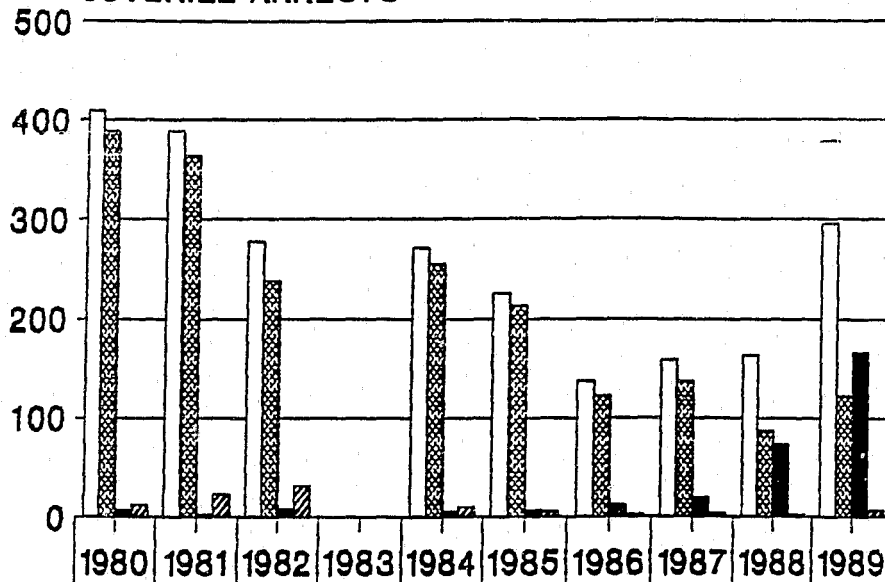
PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN DELAWARE DRUG ARREST PATTERNS 1989 OVER 1988

	Total	Adult	Juvenile
All Drug Arrests	48%	44%	82%
Cocaine Arrests	60%	55%	126%
Marijuana	31%	29%	40%

"Other" drugs not shown because the small numbers would produce distorted percentages

DELAWARE DRUG ARRESTS BY DRUG TYPE (1980 - 1989)

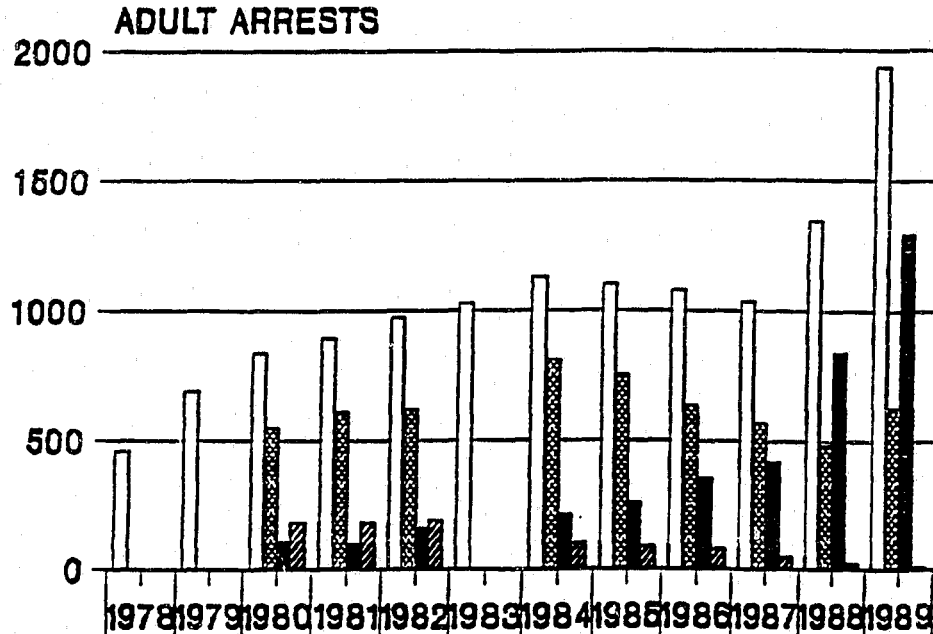
JUVENILE ARRESTS



	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
TOTAL	409	389	278		271	226	137	159	163	296
MARIJUANA	389	364	238		255	213	123	137	87	122
OP/COCAINE	7	2	8		6	7	12	19	74	167
OTHER	13	23	32		10	6	2	3	2	7

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DELAWARE DRUG ARRESTS (ADULT) BY DRUG TYPE (1978 - 1989)



	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
TOTAL	457	690	834	892	974	1025	1129	1102	1077	1033	1344	1934
MARIJUANA	0	0	545	608	618	0	810	753	637	567	483	625
OP/COCAINE	0	0	107	101	162	0	216	260	358	418	839	1297
OTHER	0	0	182	183	194	0	103	89	82	48	22	12

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