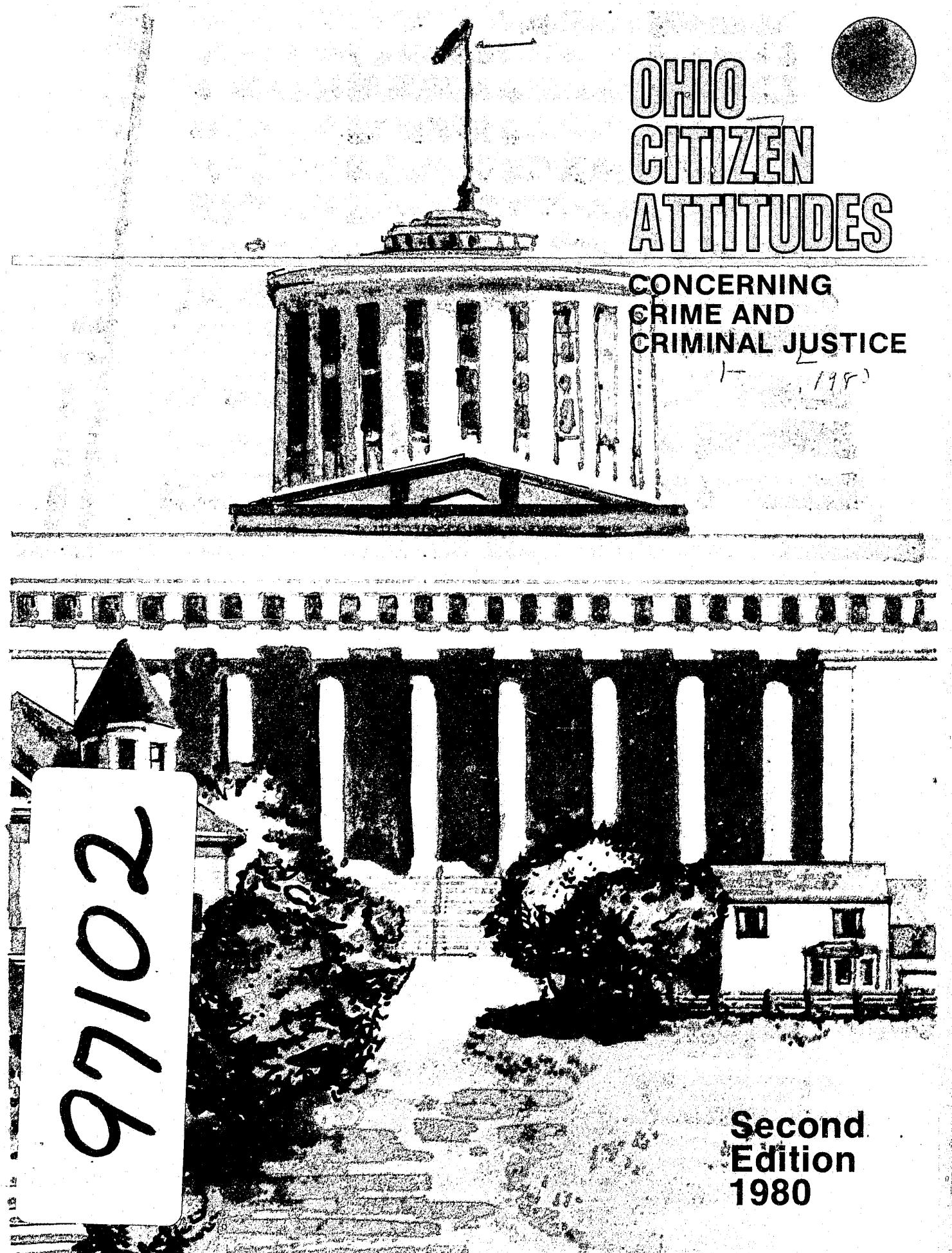


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A SERVICE OF:

THE OHIO STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER:
OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

STATE OF OHIO
JAMES A. RHODES, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JAMES A. DUERK, DIRECTOR

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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FOREWORD

This is the second in what is hoped to be a continuing series on Ohioans' attitudes toward crime and criminal justice in the State. It probes citizen beliefs, fears, practices and suggestions about crime control. And because this study is based on a scientifically administered survey, guess work and emotional arguments about "what the people want" can be put into proper perspective.

Public opinion is an important factor in the administration of criminal justice. Judges, prosecutors, sheriffs, and legislators are among the elected officials who play critical roles in Ohio's Criminal Justice System. As such, they are shaped by, as well as shapers of, public attitudes about crime. In another vein, an accurate assessment of citizen attitudes is critical to the success of proposals for changing the criminal justice system. Financing new prisons, locating community treatment facilities, enforcing gambling laws and many other system options will only be as successful as the public support for them.

There are other reasons as well. Public fear of crime levels directly impact the economic and social functioning of society, creating the need for all government decision-makers to keep abreast of changes in these levels. Also, the extent to which citizens initiate home security measures--asked for the first time this year--can provide law enforcement planners with invaluable information as they pursue the important job of crime prevention.

In all, some one-hundred questions were asked of the 848 persons randomly selected for this study. Some questions from the 1979 survey were repeated to allow for trend analysis, but many others were asked for the first time in the 1980 study. The same questions were also asked of 424 Ohio senior citizens, the results of which are not generally included in this document but which are separately available upon request.

This report is being sent to prosecutors, sheriffs, chiefs of police, judges, correction officials, legislators, special advisory groups, academicians, various state officials and others concerned with crime and criminal justice in Ohio. Hopefully, it will prove to be a cornerstone for the decisions they must make on a daily basis.

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PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT CRIME

The Ohio Citizen Attitude Survey has devoted considerable attention to citizen attitudes about crime, particularly with regard to fear levels. The latter issue has aroused such great interest in recent years, that many American leaders and scholars are more concerned with the fear of crime than with the incidence of crime. The feeling is that while crime itself is a statistically rare occurrence, the fear it induces may victimize a disproportionately large number of citizens. There is the additional concern that a fearful society will not fulfill its role in the process of criminal justice (as witnesses, observers, etc.). Indeed, the highly publicized Figgie Report on Fear of Crime has already pronounced that such fear is "paralyzing way of life."

This bleak judgement, however, is seriously flawed by at least two considerations. The first--almost universally overlooked in discussions about any social problem--is that there is no common understanding of such terms as "high," "low," "serious" and other words frequently used when describing social issues. For example, if a Presidential candidate receives 55% of the Nation's vote it is considered a landslide. However, if 45% of all citizens said they did not feel safe in their own homes it would be interpreted as a very high fear rate. The same kind of problem occurs in considering different kinds of societal fears. If, as Figgie contends, citizens are becoming "paralyzed" by the fear of crime then to what extent is the same thing happening with regard to fear of driving, fear of job loss, or fear of disease? And, furthermore, to what extent are these fears interrelated? Until all of these issues are more precisely defined, judgements about the fear of crime will lack perspective.

The second problem with the Figgie conclusion is that major crime attitude surveys of the past ten years have supported the opposite viewpoint, to wit: citizens are not inordinately fearful of crime, even those citizens (women, senior citizens) who are stereotypically thought to have higher fear levels. This same finding is strongly supported by both the 1979 and 1980 Ohio Citizen Attitude Surveys.

¹ The Figgie Report on Fear of Crime: America Afraid. Research & Forecasts, Inc. (New York, N.Y.), 1980. Pg. 3-6.

² Of course this same criticism could be directed against this survey report. The judgements contained herein are offered because the responses are usually so one-sided as to lend some general confidence to the conclusions.

³ See Garofalo, James. Public Opinion About Crime (Albany, NY). Criminal Justice Research Center, 1977.

There were some significant findings among the attitudes of certain sub-samples in the Survey. Specifically:

- blacks are considerably more fearful than whites (46%-20%) in their neighborhoods at night;
- for the same category, women and former crime victims also demonstrate heightened fear levels (31% and 33%), though both remain well below the figure for blacks;
- there was very little difference between women and men concerning fear in the downtown areas;
- divorcees and persons living at the same residence for more than twenty years tend to be more fearful than the general population, though not at a statistically significant level.

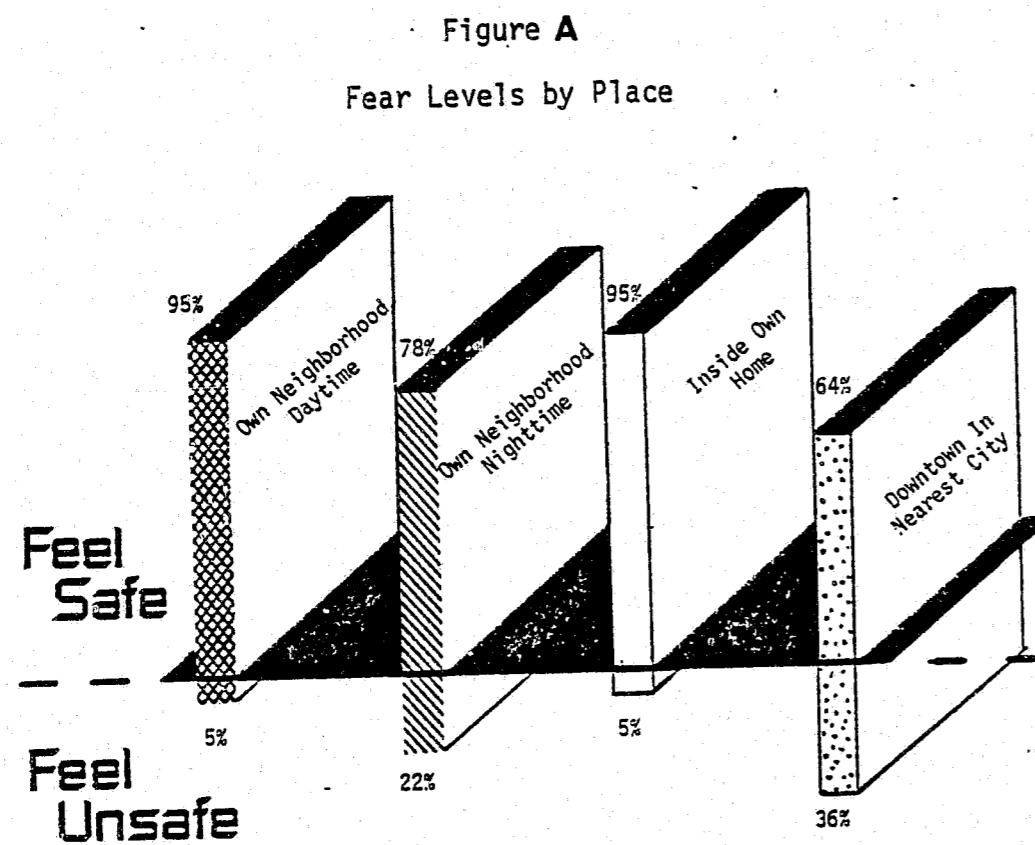
As a follow-up to the neighborhood fear questions the respondents were asked how they perceived the level of crime in their own neighborhood compared with other neighborhoods in their immediate area. Asking the same question in the 1970's, the National Crime Survey had found that people tended to be less pessimistic about their neighborhood crime problems than they were about crime problems elsewhere. Indeed, the National Crime Survey found that even in the most crime-prone neighborhoods in cities like Atlanta, Newark and Detroit residents still believed that crime was probably as bad or worse elsewhere.⁴ Table 1 illustrates a similar but even stronger belief among Ohioans. Even in those groups traditionally more sensitive to neighborhood problems (e.g. senior citizens, crime victims) there is an overwhelming inclination to view crime as something which happens somewhere else.

TABLE 1
How Own Neighborhood Compares to Others in Area

	Much More Dangerous	More Dangerous	About Average	Less Dangerous	Much Less Dangerous
ALL RESPONDENTS	0.9%	2.5%	41.2%	32.8%	22.5%
WHITES	0.6%	2.3%	40.7%	32.4%	23.9%
BLACKS	1.8%	7.0%	47.4%	35.1%	8.8%
MALES	1.2%	3.2%	36.5%	34.0%	25.1%
FEMALES	0.6%	1.9%	45.4%	31.9%	20.3%
CRIME VICTIMS	2.8%	6.6%	51.9%	26.4%	12.3%
SENIOR CITIZENS	1.5%	1.3%	39.4%	37.0%	20.8%

⁴ Garofalo, Ibid. See pages 176, 257, and 321.

Figure A graphically illustrates these relatively low crime-fear levels among Ohioans. Respondents were asked to choose from four response categories ("very safe," "reasonably safe," "somewhat unsafe," and "very unsafe") in describing their feelings of safety in four separate situations (out alone in their own neighborhood during the day and at night, inside their own home (time unspecified), and downtown in the nearest city). The figures show a direct relationship between feelings of safety and proximity to one's home, with slightly more than 95% of the respondents feeling either very safe or reasonably safe within their own homes. Notably, that figure slips to 64% when visiting the downtown area of the nearest city. Following the traditional pattern, Ohioans tend to be more fearful of violent (personal) crime in the downtown areas while property crime is the chief concern at home. Within the neighborhood, when out alone, the respondents predictably exhibited more fear at night than during the day, but even then better than three out of four people indicated feelings of safety. For daytime hours the figure jumps to 95.5%.



-3-

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Clearly, there is a wide gap between crime knowledge based on first hand, observable information and that based on secondary sources. That fact was also confirmed by the 1979 Citizen Attitude Survey which found that while nearly 96⁵ of all respondents believed crime was increasing nationwide, only one in three believed crime was increasing in their neighborhood.

While Ohioans as a whole tend to be very opinionated about issues relating to crime and criminal justice (most of the questions in this report drew one-sided responses), they appear much less certain about how to improve the Criminal Justice System in the State. Table 2 reflects the respondents' views as to how government can better protect them against crime.

TABLE 2

How Can Government Improve Crime Prevention?
(most important improvement)

Law Enforcement Improvement	32.6%
Harsher Treatment of Criminals/Accused	16.2%
Crime Prevention	4.7%
Law Reform	3.5%
Improve Social/Economic Condition	2.9%
Court Reform	1.5%
Encourage Self Defense	1.2%
Nothing	7.1%
Other	2.5%
No Opinion	21.0%
No Answer	.8%
NA	6.1%
TOTAL	100.0%

Even this varied list is deceptively simple. It was created by collapsing some 52 answers into the eight real answer categories in the table.

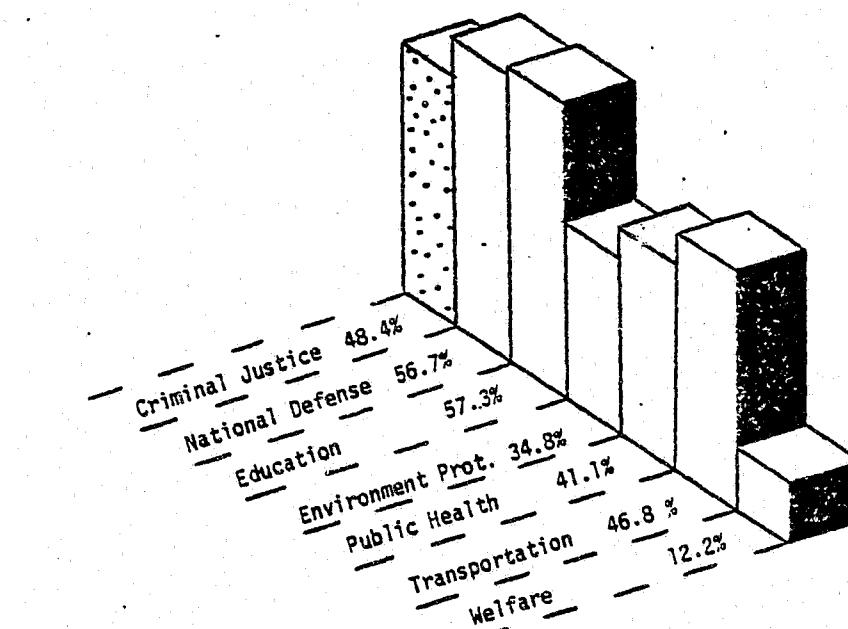
As a further measure of the public's attitude toward crime, the respondents were asked if they thought organized crime is a serious problem in Ohio. Eighty-eight percent (88%) felt organized crime is a serious problem, with half of these describing it as very serious. Eleven percent (11%) described it as a "minor problem," and only 1% felt it is no problem at all.

⁵ Ohio Citizen Attitudes (Columbus, Ohio) Office of Criminal Justice Services, Ohio Department of Economic and Community Development (1980).

Public sympathy for government spending in the area of criminal justice remains relatively strong in Ohio. A plurality of respondents (48.4%) felt that government is spending "too little on criminal justice,"⁶ while only 9.3% stated that current funding levels were too high. Figure B illustrates that "criminal justice" was ranked third among the seven government service categories listed, behind "education" and "(national) defense." Given the huge outlays for these later two service areas (education outspends criminal justice in Ohio by a 6-1 ratio), and the popular support they have traditionally received, the priority accorded criminal justice by Ohioans is noteworthy.

Figure B

"Not Spending Enough For..."



⁶ The 1980 question concerning government spending in several service areas differed from that used in 1979. Whereas last year's query paired "criminal justice" against each of the other areas, and asked for a spending preference if excess tax dollars existed, the 1980 survey simply asked respondents to judge current spending levels in each area as "too much," "about right," or "too little."

Furthermore, at the other end of public opinion, the respondents who believed that government funding for criminal justice is too excessive were fewer in number than those of any other category (see Table 3).

TABLE 3

Percentage of Ohioans Who Feel Government is Spending Too Much For:

Criminal Justice	9.3%
Education	11.0%
Defense	11.5%
Transportation	14.0%
Public Health	14.7%
Environmental Protection	28.1%
Welfare	65.3%

ATTITUDES ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT

As was true in 1979, Ohioans continue to exhibit rather positive attitudes about law enforcement, both at the State and local levels. When asked to rate their overall confidence in thirteen criminal justice components and agencies, the respondents ranked the five law enforcement components among their top six confidence choices, with only "private attorneys" joining that circle.

TABLE 4

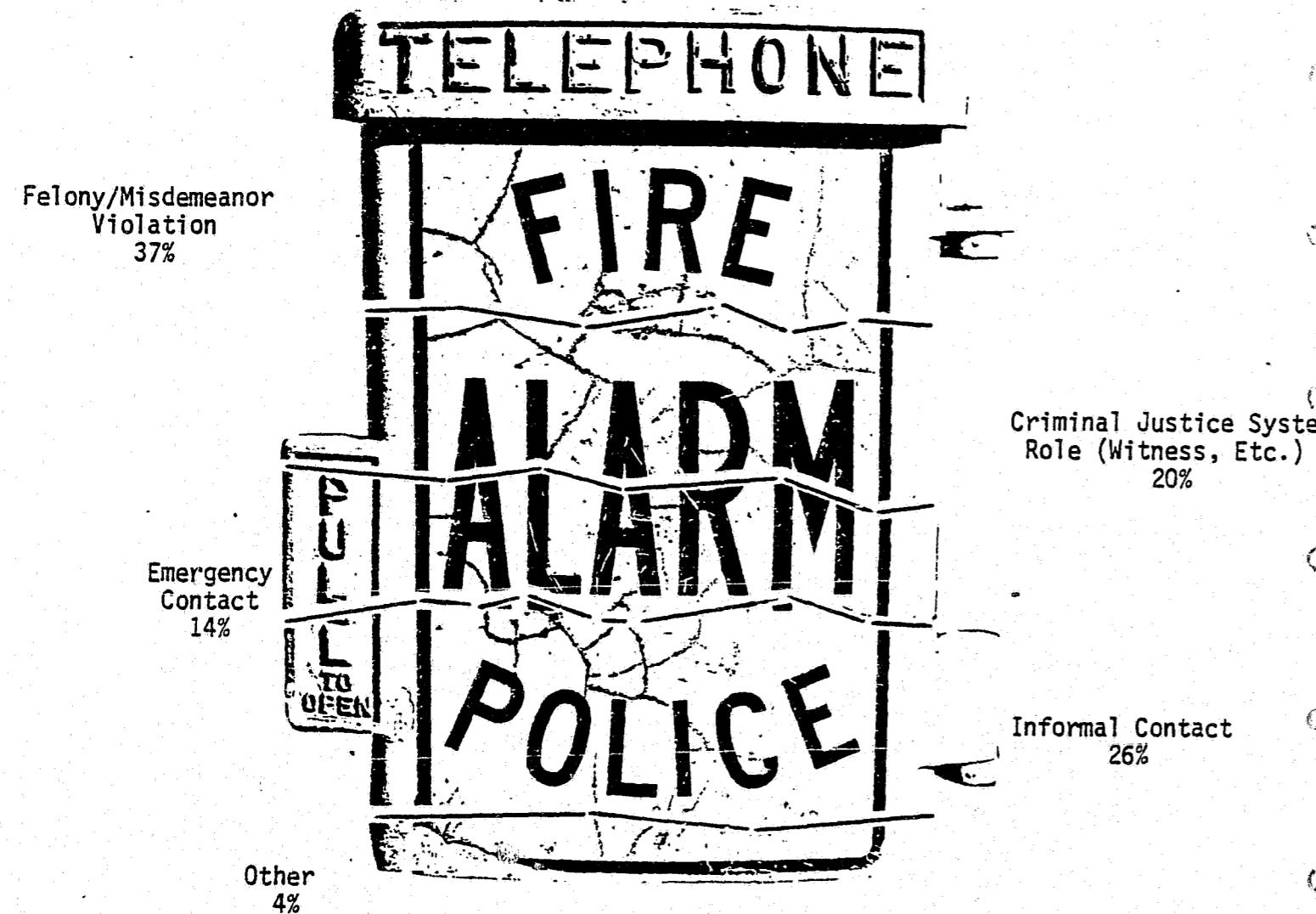
Public Confidence Levels
for
Selected Law Enforcement Components

	Great Deal of Confidence	Some Confidence	Not Much Confidence	No Confidence	N/A	Total
Federal Bureau Of Investigation	37.3%	47.9%	5.9%	1.7%	7.3%	100.1%
Ohio State Highway Patrol	59.3%	30.6%	3.1%	1.3%	5.7%	100 %
Local Police	34.4%	40.6%	14.3%	3.7%	7.0%	100 %
Local Sheriff	29.1%	45.0%	11.4%	3.9%	10.7%	100.1%
U.S. Attorney General	19.8%	47.5%	10.6%	2.3%	19.7%	99.9%

There is evidence to indicate that public attitudes are correlated with personal encounters with segments of the Criminal Justice System. Hence, the added measure of public confidence which law enforcement officers seem to enjoy may well be a reflection of their increased visibility among citizens, as compared to criminal court officials, for example. The survey attempted to isolate this "public contact" factor by asking a series of questions which, not surprisingly, does indicate that citizens have a good deal more exposure to the police than to the courts, prisons, or other aspects of the Criminal Justice System. While only 20% of the respondents indicated any contact with criminal courts in Ohio, better than two-thirds (68.6%) said they had experienced at least one encounter with an Ohio law enforcement officer, eighty percent of which have occurred since 1978. Hence, most citizens have at least some first-hand personal evidence upon which to make judgements about the police, an advantage not afforded the less visible and less accessible Criminal Justice System components which must trust their public images to secondary sources outside of their control.

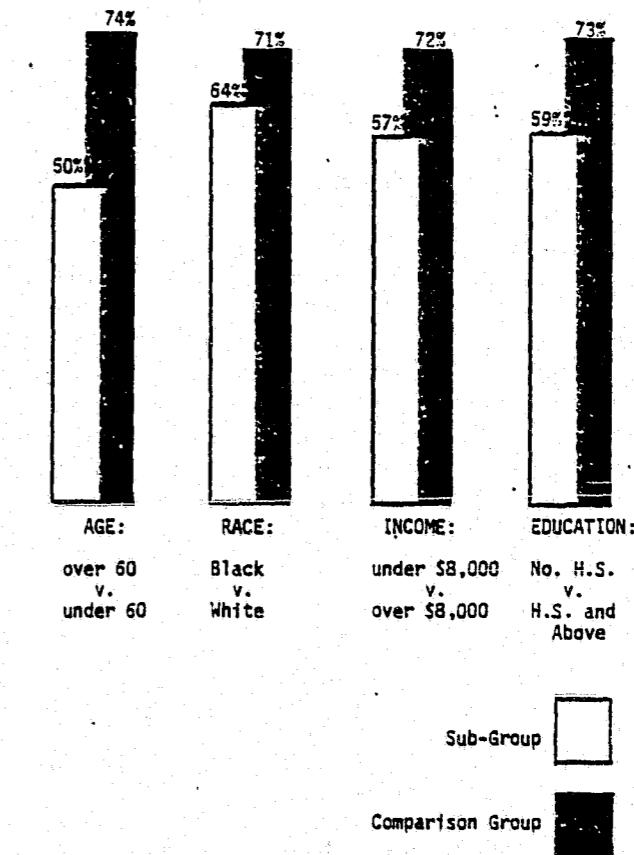
Contrary to some expectations, most citizen contacts with law enforcement are not negative in nature, another factor likely to influence public attitudes. Figure C illustrates that nearly two-thirds of the respondents' most recent law enforcement contacts concerned something other than criminal or misdemeanor violations for which they were charged.

Figure C
Reasons For Citizen Contact With Law Enforcement Officers



There is an indication that at least some of Ohio's subpopulation groups tend to have fewer law enforcement contacts than citizens as a whole. It might be expected that these groups (blacks, senior citizens, low-income earners, and those who have not received a high school degree) would therefore show less support for law enforcement, an expectation which, with the exception of senior citizens, proves largely true. Nevertheless, the differences were usually only matters of degrees, and "less support for law enforcement" is only a comparative phrase (e.g., while more whites than blacks feel that current laws are too restrictive of police, a majority of blacks also hold that opinion). Figure D the extent to which the four population subgroups fall short of their respective counterparts with regard to whether or not those persons have ever had any contact with Ohio law enforcement officers.

Figure D
Contact With Ohio Law Enforcement Officer
(% Yes)



⁷ The comparisons were based either on logical counterparts (e.g., black/white) or the mean of all other categories (e.g., all income categories over \$8,000).

Most of the law enforcement questions in the survey dealt with the authority of law enforcement officers, and addressed the controversial issues of police decoy squads (i.e., entrapment), wiretapping, and the use of deadly force. As an outgrowth of these queries, two additional questions were directed toward the possible need for civilian review boards to monitor law enforcement use of authority. One general question concerned the overall restrictiveness (or lack thereof) of the laws governing police authority. The responses to these questions (excepting "deadly force") are contained in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Selected Issues in Law Enforcement

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Use of Decoy Techniques	22.7%	59.5%	9.6%	2.7%	5.6%
Current Laws Are Too Restrictive of Law Enforcement	13.2%	37.4%	31.8%	5.9%	11.7%
Are Civilian Review Boards Necessary	60.2%		28.3%	11.4%	
Should Police Be Allowed To Use Wiretaps	50.6%		39.7%	9.7%	

Somewhat surprisingly, the Public's relatively high degree of confidence in law enforcement does not automatically translate into unlimited support for police authority. With the exception of using decoy techniques, which Ohioans support by a better than four to one margin, citizens are rather cautious in allocating discretionary authority to law enforcement officers. Barely 50% feel that current laws are too restrictive of the police, and only the same slim majority are willing to approve the use of wiretaps. Significantly, three out of five respondents cited the need for civilian review boards to act as watchdogs of local law enforcement agencies. Generally, police agencies oppose such boards.

⁸ These questions were not phrased using the same answer categories as in the first two questions. They should be viewed as simple "yes/no" type responses.

In one very important and controversial area, the use of deadly force, Ohioans are very supportive of law enforcement. It is worth noting that this question concerned a reactive, or defensive aspect of police work (i.e., criminal confronts the police), whereas the earlier issues were proactive (i.e., police confront the criminal, often at some perceived risk to citizen rights). The respondents offered some twenty-six circumstances in which they felt deadly force (use of officer's gun) was justified. These were collapsed into the categories below in Table 6.

TABLE 6

Justifiable Reasons for Deadly Force

When Any Life is Threatened	29.4%
When Officer's Life is Threatened	34.8%
During Commission of a Violent Crime	7.1%
During Commission of a Non-Violent Crime	6.0%
Other	3.8%
Deadly Force Never Justified	13.4%
N/A	5.5%
TOTAL	100.0%

There were some interesting correlations between certain sub-groupings of the population and the "authority" questions. There was a direct, positive relationship between education and the use of deadly force, with 94% of all college graduates supporting the practice while only 72% of those with less than a high school education answered in the affirmative. Senior citizens also showed an aversion to the concept. In another vein, whites and blacks disagreed on the use of wiretaps, with three out of five blacks opposed to the practice, figures which virtually reversed themselves among white respondents.

Occasionally, some of the figures were significant precisely because they lacked any correlation. There was, for instance, no significant difference between blacks and whites on the deadly force issue which, in some of Ohio's large cities, has often taken on racial overtones in recent years. A similar judgement could be made about race-variable analysis of the civilian review board question, seen as necessary by both whites and blacks.

One final question, used for the first time this year, asked respondents to identify their sources of information about law enforcement. Two-thirds of all respondents cited the media (television, newspapers, and radio) in their answers, a significant majority but

well short of the 80% of the respondents who identified the media as their main information source about the courts. The different figures again point to the difference in visibility among the various components of the Criminal Justice System.

TABLE 7

Main Sources of Information About Law Enforcement	
Newspapers	52.3%
Television	13.3%
Radio	2.0%
Friends/Relatives	16.8%
Books/Literature	3.5%
School	2.4%
Other	9.8%
TOTAL	100.1%

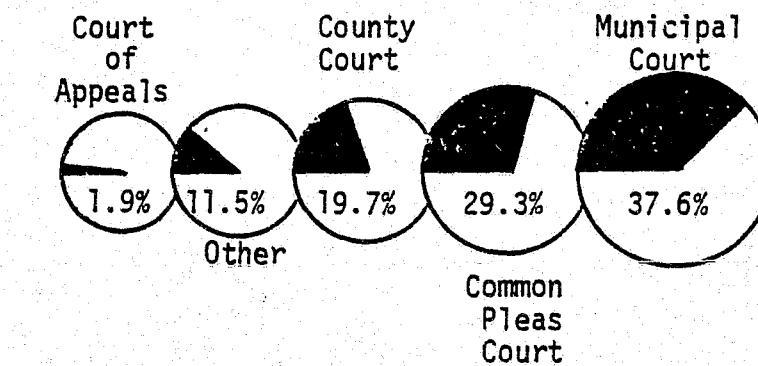
PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT THE COURTS

The courts are subject to much confusion and misunderstanding in the public mind. Seven out of ten Ohioans admit to a "below average" understanding about the operations of the courts, yet two-thirds offered opinions as to how to change them. Erratic public judgements were first noted in last year's Citizen Attitude Survey when 78% of the respondents condemned criminal court sentencing as "too lenient," yet by a 52%-to-38% margin favored keeping the sentencing function in the hands of judges as opposed to state lawmakers.

As with law enforcement, it would appear that public attitudes are influenced by first-hand citizen contact with the courts. Since such contact is lacking for most Ohioans (only 20% have ever had any kind of contact and less than half of these within the past two years), public judgements are correspondingly negative. The reverse side of this correlation was noted in a recent Arizona study which found that most jurors "believe justice was done in the case on which they served," and that most people involved in a criminal court proceeding felt "that their understanding of the court system improved as a result of that experience."

Figure E

Respondents' Criminal Court Experience



9 "Arizona Crime and Criminal Justice Survey" (Volume, III). Statistical Analysis Center, Phoenix, Arizona (1979). Pg. XIX-XX

The respondents who had direct contact with criminal courts in Ohio cited five different court settings for their experiences (see Figure E). Eighty-seven percent (87%) indicated that these experiences had occurred in municipal courts, common pleas courts, or county courts, the basic courts of original jurisdiction in Ohio.

(NOTE: Municipal courts are confined to urban areas, whereas county courts are usually found in rural areas. Generally, common pleas courts handle the more serious felonies.) Less than two percent (2%) of those interviewed noted contact with a court of appeals, while the remainder (11.5%) cited other types of courts, probably traffic or mayors' courts, though these respondents may not have clearly understood what was meant by a "criminal court."

Figure F

Respondents' Type of Participation
in Criminal Court Proceedings

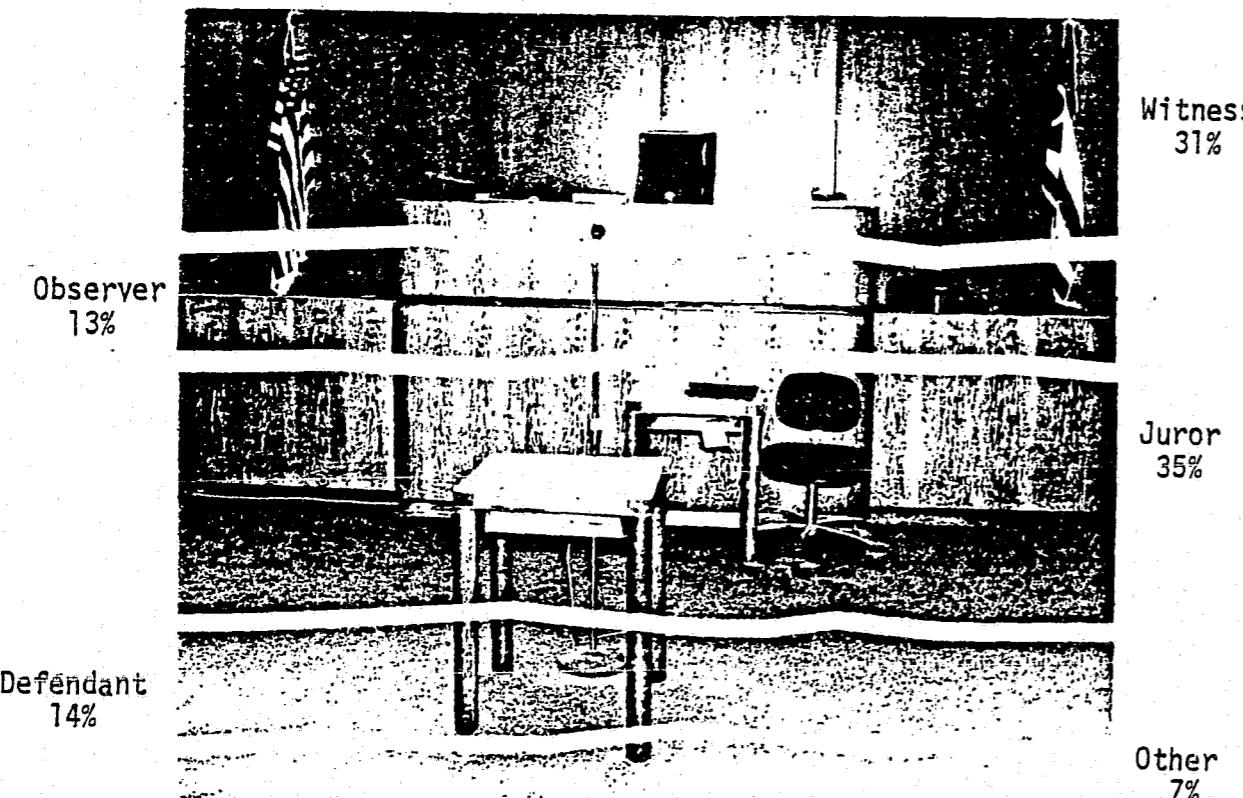


Figure F illustrates that most citizen involvement in Ohio criminal courts takes place in a neutral context. Only 14% of the court-participant subsample listed themselves as defendants in criminal court proceedings, with the remaining 86% naming neutral roles such as witnesses, jurors, observers, etc.

A final question asked of the court-participant subsample concerned their perception of how they were treated by the court during their experience. Table 8 shows that slightly more than half felt they were treated with "a great deal of respect," while another one-third indicated that "some respect" had been demonstrated by the court.

TABLE 8

Respondents' Perceptions Regarding
How They Were Treated By The Courts

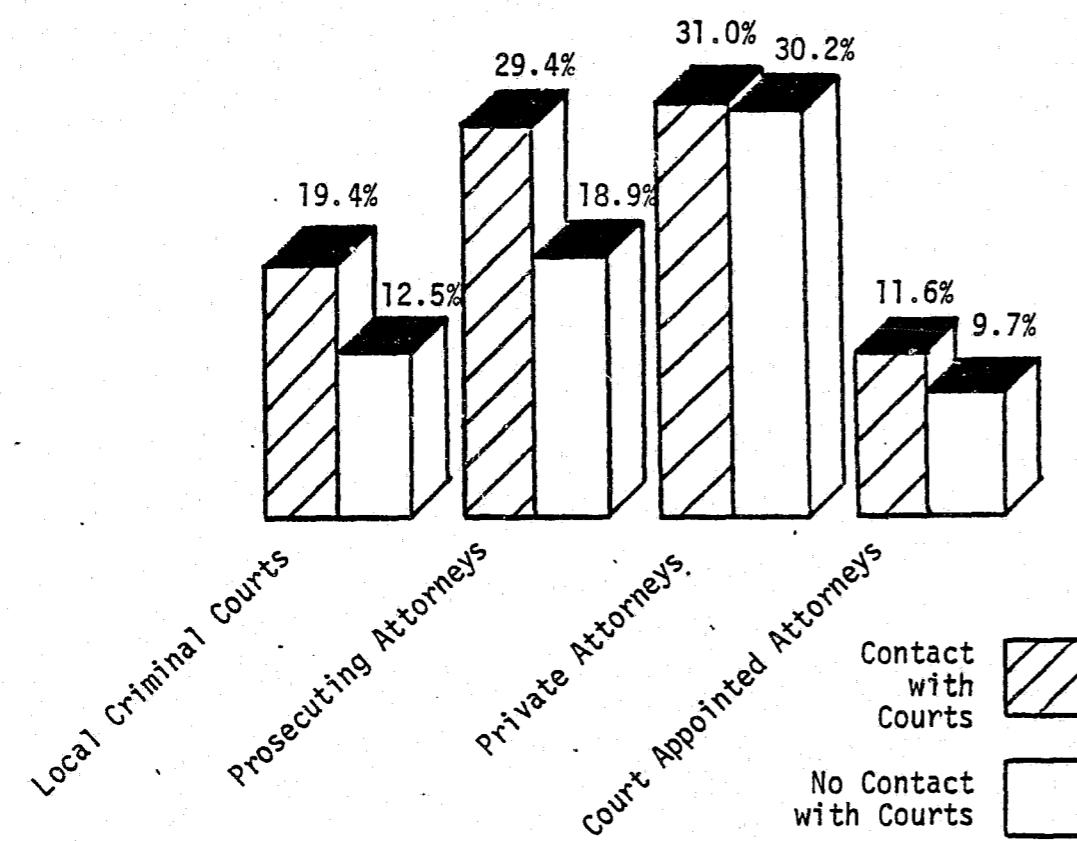
With A Great Deal Of Respect	52.6%
With Some Respect	34.2%
With Only A Little Respect	9.2%
With No Respect	3.9%

The question, though somewhat abstract, is important because court treatment and court justice are likely to be associated in the citizen's mind. Hence, if one feels that he or she has been treated with little respect in the criminal courts, he may well make a similar judgement about the overall quality of justice. One might assume the converse to be true as well.

If this hypothesis is true, it can be assumed that persons who have had some kind of encounter with a criminal court will be more positive about "courtroom justice" than their peers who have had no criminal court contact. When asked to rate their confidence in several distinct components of the court system, respondents with direct court experience showed a slight but consistent tendency toward greater confidence than did their counterparts with no court contact. (Figure G).

Figure G

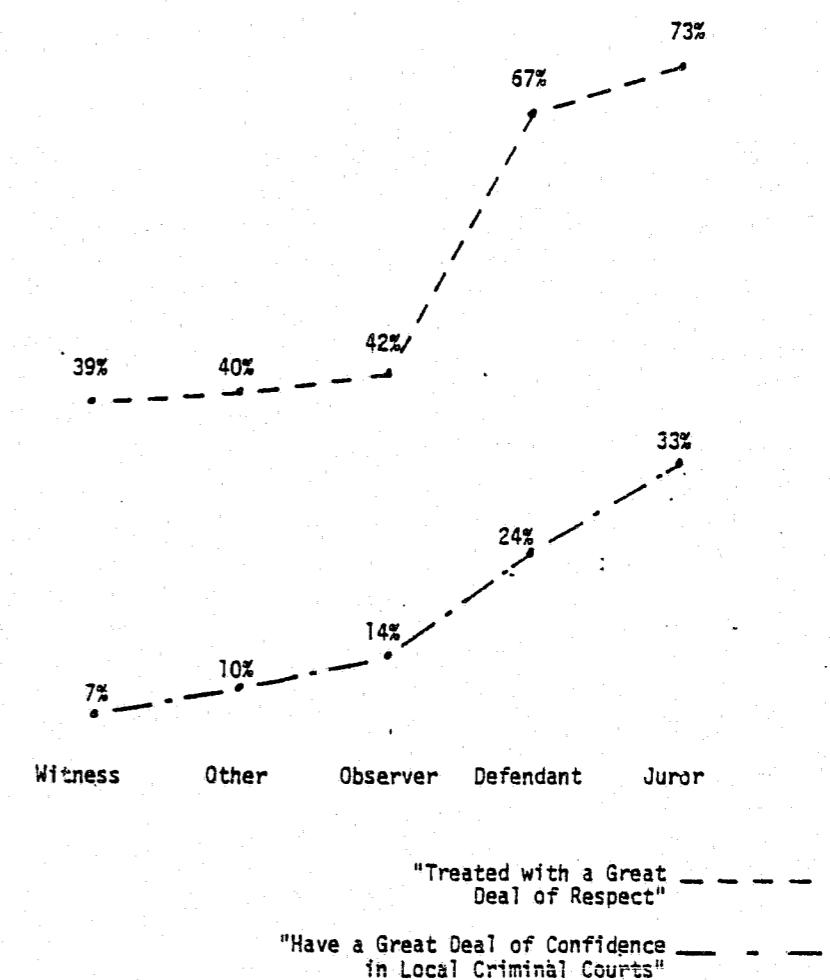
Respondents (Court Experience v.
No Court Experience) with
"A Great Deal of Confidence in..."



Even more illuminating is Figure H shows a strong correlation between perceived treatment by the court (at the "great deal of respect" level) and confidence in local criminal courts (at the "great deal of confidence" level). That is, the better one feels about his or her treatment by the court, the more likely he or she is to have confidence in the criminal courts.

Figure H

Correlation Between Court "Treatment"
and "Confidence in Local Criminal Courts"
by Type of Participation

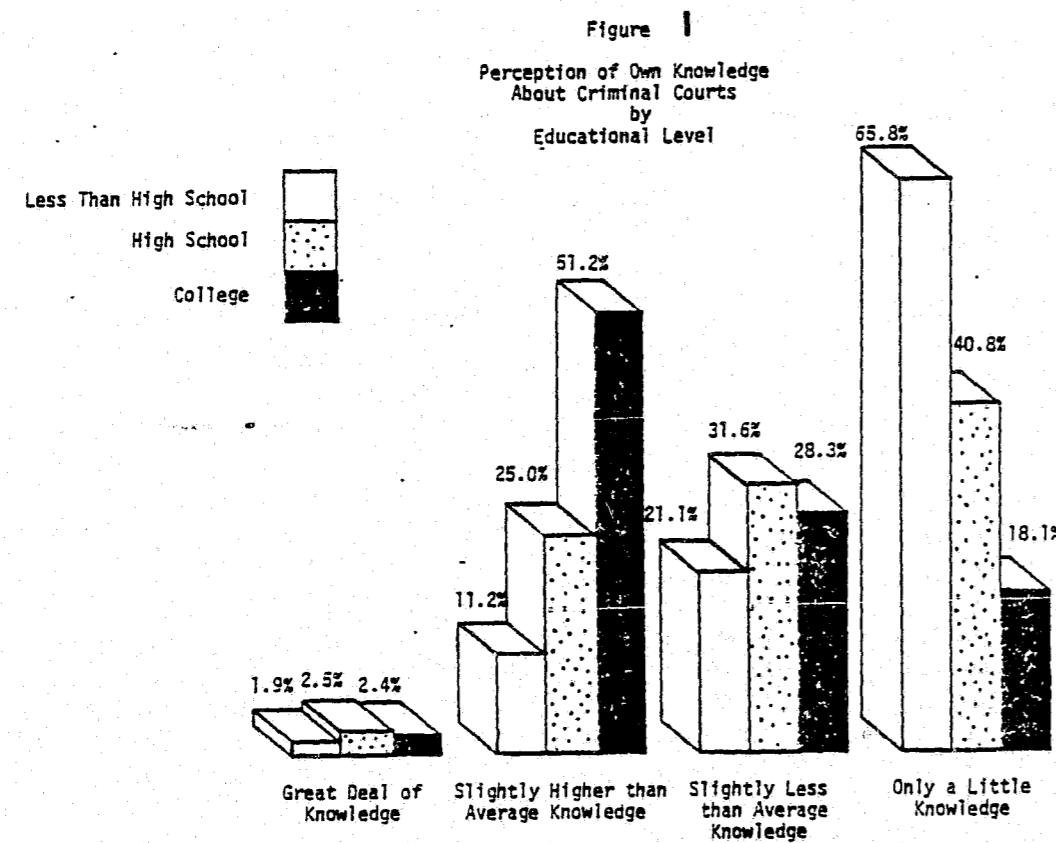


If there is confusion about Ohio criminal courts, it is logical to ask about citizen's sources of information regarding those courts. Not surprisingly, four out of five Ohioans listed media components as their primary sources of information about the courts. This is 13% higher than the number of respondents listing the same information sources for law enforcement, and again reflects the public's limited exposure to the criminal courts.

TABLE 9
Sources of Information About the Courts

Newspapers	62.6%
Television	16.8%
Radio	1.5%
Friends/Relatives	10.4%
Books/Literature	1.6%
School	2.2%
Other	5.0%
	100.1%

It is interesting to note that the most noticeable and, perhaps dangerous breakdown in understanding the criminal court function seems to occur among Ohioans with college educations. With the exception of that group, Ohioans tend to respect the relationship between their lack of court contact and their lack of understanding about the criminal court function. The college-educated respondents, however, while citing the same sources of information (their reliance on media sources was actually higher than the average for the state), were nearly twice as likely as other respondents to rate their knowledge about the courts as "above average." This tendency is graphically displayed in Figure I.



When asked what one kind of change they would like to see made to improve the working of the court system, the respondents displayed the same diversity of opinion they had demonstrated in answering the question about what government could do to prevent crime. It was also quite similar to the "cause of crime" question response in the 1979 survey. Evidently, public frustration is at least partly fueled by the lack of any clear consensus regarding solutions.

TABLE 10

Respondents' Preferred Changes for Improving the Court System

Sentencing Reform	18.6%
Reducing Court Delays/Inefficiency . . .	13.7%
Less Emphasis on Defense Rights . . .	3.8%
More Emphasis on Defense Rights . . .	3.5%
Reform Role/Authority of Judges . . .	8.0%
Other Criminal Justice Solutions . . .	11.7%
Other	4.0%
No Change Needed	3.6%
Don't Know/ No Opinion	27.7%
N/A	5.4%
	100.0%

As a further testimony to the lack of citizen understanding regarding the courts, 11.7% (or 105) of all respondents answered this question by citing problems and solutions relating to aspects of criminal justice outside the court's jurisdiction or role (eg., "more money for police," "repeal bad laws," "better prison facilities," etc.).

Concerning the confidence rating for some of the criminal court components, public opinion appears to be very similar to that of a year ago, with a slight tendency toward higher ratings this year. As mentioned previously, the court ratings were generally lower than those accorded certain law enforcement functions.

TABLE 11

Public Confidence Ratings for
Selected Court Components

	Great Deal of Confidence	Some Confidence	Not Much Confidence	No Confidence	DK/ N/A	Total
U.S. Supreme Court	25.4%	45.6%	14.8%	4.1%	10.0%	99.9%
Court Appointed Attorneys	8.7%	48.5%	22.2%	7.0%	13.5%	99.9%
Local Criminal Courts	12.4%	53.6%	18.9%	3.7%	11.5%	100.1%
Prosecuting Attorneys	19.2%	53.1%	15.8%	3.0%	8.9%	100.0%
U.S. Attorney General	19.8%	47.5%	10.6%	2.3%	19.7%	99.9%
Private Attorneys	27.8%	50.2%	10.7%	2.9%	8.4%	100.0%

A final question addressed the controversial issue of the authority for prescribing criminal court sentences. By a 47%-19% margin the respondents reaffirmed the authority of judges to prescribe sentence, as opposed to doing so legislatively. (Over one-fourth of the respondents did not answer the question). This was somewhat higher than last year's 52%-38% margin, although this could have been the result of changes in the wording of the question.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT PRISONS

Last year's Citizen Attitude Survey found that Ohioans support longer prison sentences for criminals, but question the effectiveness of those institutions for doing anything more than isolating dangerous persons from society (which they perceived as the primary role prisons should be playing). Furthermore, the citizens surveyed balked, by a 2-1 margin, at the prospect of increasing state income taxes to build new prisons.¹⁰

The present survey has attempted to probe for greater understanding of the sometimes erratic display of public opinion concerning the role of prisons in Ohio. At the outset, it was established that Ohioans generally agree that the State is in need of new prisons. Table 12 indicates that slightly more than half of all citizens see the need for new prisons, while only ten percent (10%) deny that need. Significantly, almost one-third felt their knowledge on the issue was too inadequate to allow them an opinion.

TABLE 12

Does Ohio Need New Prisons?

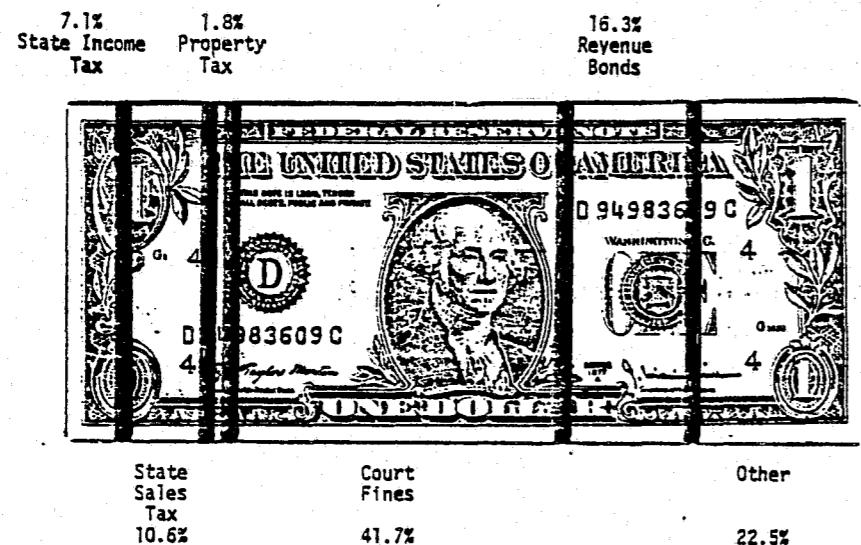
Strongly Agree	14.5%
Agree	41.6%
Disagree	8.3%
Strongly Disagree	1.7%
Don't Know	30.9%
Not Available	3.0%
	100.0%

The 503 respondents who cited a need for new prisons were then asked the best means for paying for such prisons. It was felt that the sole option offered for this question in last year's survey, state income tax increase, was both too limited in scope and too volatile in nature to allow for a free range of opinion. Hence, several other answer categories were added, thereby significantly increasing the number of usable responses (see Figure J).

¹⁰ Ohio Citizen Attitudes: A Survey of Public Opinion on Crime and Criminal Justice. Ohio Department of Economic and Community Development. pg. 5 (1979).

Figure J

How to Finance New Prisons in Ohio

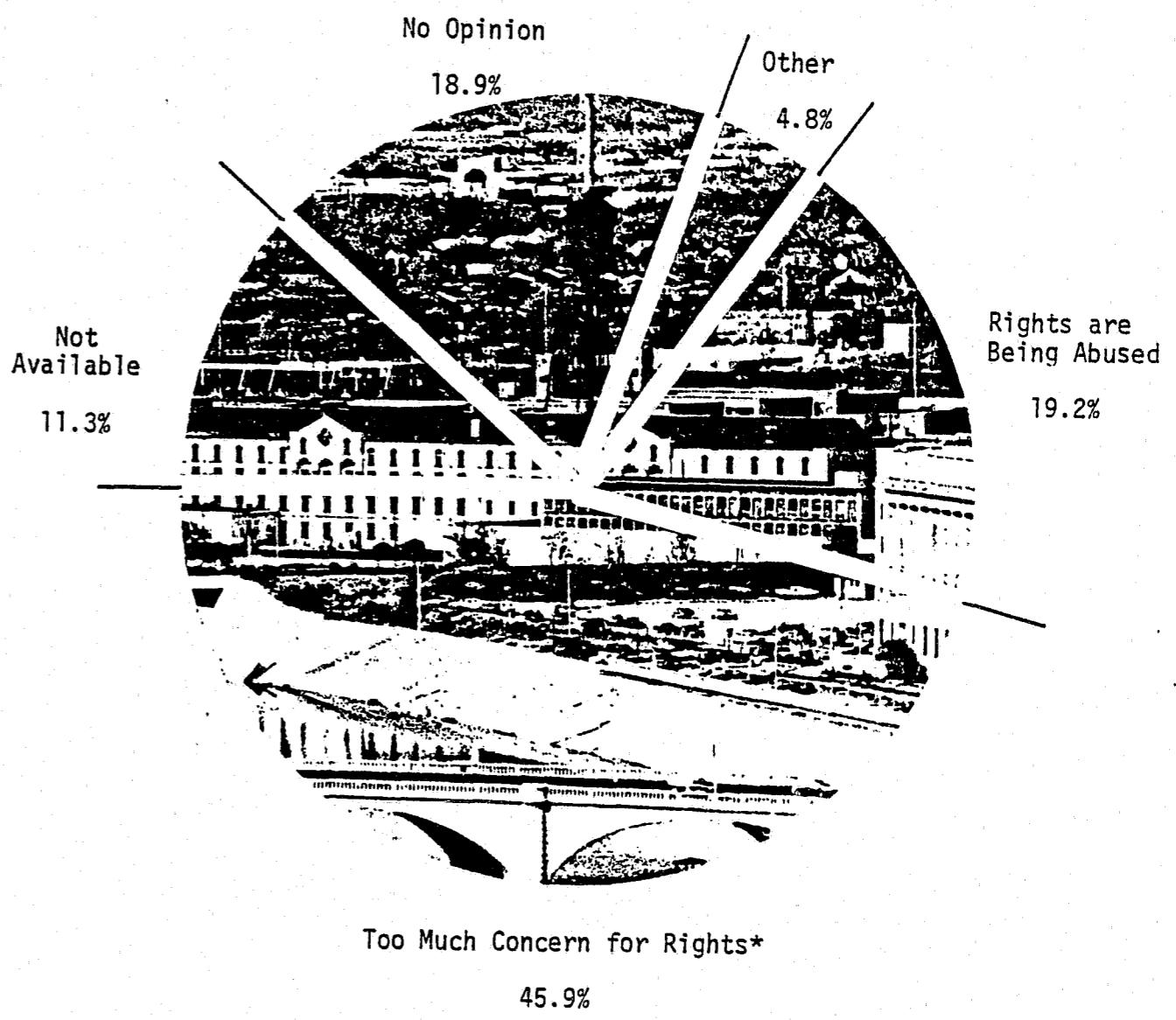


As was true of several other survey questions which required the respondents to propose solutions (e.g., how to prevent crime, how to improve the courts), the "paying for prisons" question drew a disparate response in which no single answer category received 50% of the preferences. This was especially surprising since the categories included an attractive and noncommittal alternative, "court fines." Nevertheless, only 41.7% of the respondents chose that option, while one in five chose an option which would increase their taxes. Once again, the diversity of opinion here testifies to the complexity of the issues facing the Criminal Justice System in Ohio.

The most critical problem facing Ohio prisons today is overcrowding. In addition to economic difficulties, overcrowding raises legal issues concerning prisoner rights and, beyond that, the point at which the federal courts should intervene in defense of those rights. To address these two controversial issues, the survey asked respondents to assess the general level of concern for prisoner rights (too much, too little, etc.), and to indicate whether federal courts should temporarily take over the operation of state prison systems when overcrowding becomes a serious problem.

Figure K

Concerning Prisoners' Rights...



* Includes those who answered, "Prisoners have no rights."

Figure K illustrates that a plurality of Ohioans feel there is currently "too much concern for prisoner rights." (The 45.9% figure becomes a majority if the "not availables" are apportioned among the real answer categories). Less than one in five felt that prisoner rights are being abused. The question itself did not elicit information reflecting the extent of citizen knowledge about this issue (e.g., What are prisoner rights? How could one know if they were being abused? What evidence is there for the "too much concern" judgement?). As prisons are even less visible and accessible to the public than either law enforcement agencies or the courts, it is safe to assume that citizen information about prisons comes largely through the news media, a source likely to magnify exceptional and infrequent events such as prison riots, job actions and demands for various convenience or service items such as libraries, recreational equipment, and television.

Table 13 demonstrates the firm opposition of Ohioans to even a temporary federal court takeover of the State prison system as a solution to the overcrowding problem. While those who specifically rejected such a proposition represented only slightly more than half of all respondents, they outnumbered their "federal court takeover" counterparts by nearly a five to one ratio.

TABLE 13

Should Federal Courts Take Over
Overcrowded State Prison Systems?

Federal Courts Should Takeover	11.9%
States Should Solve Problems	54.8%
Other	1.7%
No Opinion	22.9%
DK/NA	8.7%

There is at least some indication that blacks' views on these two issues are more evenly divided than those of the general population.¹¹ The number of blacks who feel that prisoner rights are being abused exactly matches (44.7%) the number who feel there is too much concern for prisoner rights. Similarly, whereas 15.9% of all whites favor, in principle, a temporary federal court takeover of over-crowded state prison systems, the figure jumps to 37.2% for blacks.¹²

¹¹ The guarded language of this sentence is due to the statistically unreliable size of the black sub-sample, partly a product of the relatively large number of non-responses.

¹² For purposes of statistical analysis, cross tabulations were displayed as "white" and "non-white." However, only nine persons out of nearly 900 interviewed listed themselves as something other than white or black.

It is tempting, based on the foregoing data, to assume a traditional conservative-liberal dichotomy in constructing an analysis. Such an approach would see the "conservatives" as favoring new prisons, less emphasis on prisoner rights, and total state, not federal, control of state prison systems. The "liberal" position, with a de-emphasis on new prisons, concern for prisoner rights, and federal court takeovers in light of overcrowded state systems, would comprise the opposite view. This interpretation, however, breaks down under analysis. Significantly, blacks, shown to differ from white respondents in two issue areas, are equally as firm in their belief that Ohio needs new prisons as are whites (83.0% vs 83.6%, respectively). Furthermore, among all respondents, those who disagree with the statement that Ohio needs new prisons tend to be much more put off by too much concern for prisoner rights than their "agree" counterparts (75%-62%), and also tend to view federal court intervention more negatively (13% vs 21%). This would seem to indicate a kind of unintentional coalition between those whose primary concern is sending more people to prison for longer periods of time and those whose interest lies in improving prisoner conditions through acquisition of more space and, presumably, better facilities.

It is probable that other factors also influenced the unexpected results. For example, many people with otherwise "hardline" attitudes toward prisons and offenders might have disagreed with the need for new prisons because of a greater concern for costs. At any rate, the data defy a simple explanation.

Only one of the confidence rating categories addressed adult corrections. Respondents were asked to generally rate their "confidence in state prisons." Fifty-six percent indicated either a great deal (7%) or some (49%) confidence in state prisons, the lowest confidence rating among the 13 components listed in the scale. Any interpretation of that figure, however, should be tempered by the fact that the participants may have been responding to any one of a number of possible areas (e.g., rehabilitation, security, facilities, etc.).

PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT JUVENILE JUSTICE

In contrast to the other areas of Ohio's Criminal Justice System, juvenile justice issues were rather strongly correlated with certain personal characteristics of the respondents, notably age, education and income. Furthermore, race, the only predictor variable of any strength among the other components, was of virtually no consequence with regard to juvenile justice. It is probable that juvenile justice drew more predictable and differentiating responses because one of the personal variables, age, is by definition, an inherent factor in this area.

Only two of the juvenile justice questions from the 1979 Citizen Attitude Survey were asked again in the 1980 edition, and both produced results which were very close to the 1979 responses, and too statistically insignificant to differentiate from the error factor. By a 70%-26% margin the respondents favored trying violent juvenile offenders as adults (71%-29% in 1979), while the ratio of those objecting to the building of a juvenile treatment facility in their neighborhood was 27%-73% (23%-77% in 1979).

Three additional questions were used to amplify an issue inadequately addressed in 1979, the practice of placing in secure detention juvenile truants, incorrigibles, runaways, and others guilty of status offenses (i.e., acts which would not be offenses if committed by an adult). The earlier survey had simply asked if juvenile court judges should be allowed to "jail runaway youths," a choice of words which some felt biased the responses in a negative direction. This year's questions, addressing the detention issue separately for runaways, truants and incorrigibles, instead used the phrase "to place in secure detention," when describing the options of juvenile court judges. Indeed, the change in wording did seem to directly influence the responses, as can be seen in Table 14. Whereas only three out of ten 1979 respondents were willing to see juvenile court judges "jail runaway youths," more than half of the 1980 survey participants said that the same judges "should be allowed to place in secure detention juveniles who runaway from home." As much of the controversy surrounding this issue has stemmed from federal insistence on deinstitutionalization of status offenders, and since federal officials make no distinction between jails and detention facilities in this regard, interpretations of the public mind on this issue must be made with caution.

TABLE 14

"Should Juvenile Court Judges be Allowed to Place in Secure Detention . . . ?"

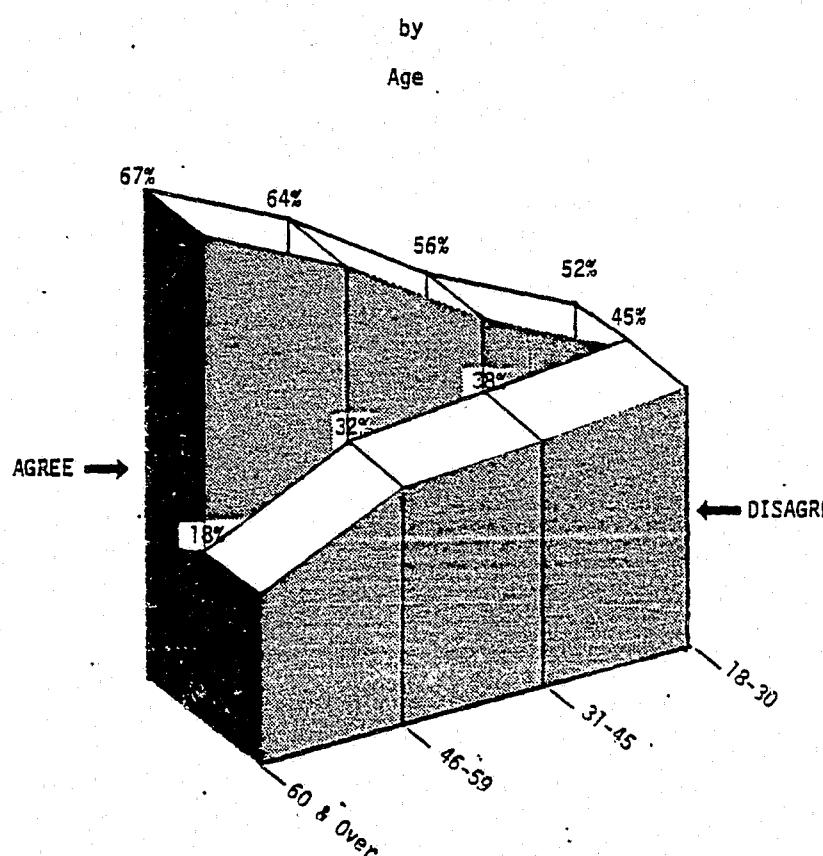
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Depends	Total
". . . juveniles who run away from home?"	8.5%	49.8%	29.9%	5.3%	6.5%	100.0%
". . . juveniles with a history of truancy?"	6.4%	43.3%	40.6%	6.9%	2.8%	100.0%
". . . children whose behavior cannot be managed at home or in school?"	16.9%	61.7%	16.1%	3.2%	2.1%	100.0%

The data do seem to indicate a severity ranking within public opinion. That is, while not quite half of all respondents were willing to allow confinement for truants, four-out-of-five believed that such an option was legitimate for incorrigible children. Crosstabulation of the data more clearly illustrates the divisions of opinion. For example, better than 96% of all respondents who strongly agreed that truants should be subject to detention also believed that incorrigibles should face the same judicial alternative. In contrast, some 60% of those strongly disagreeing with confinement for truants nonetheless supported the confinement option for incorrigibles.

Concerning the issue of locating juvenile treatment facilities within the respondent's own neighborhood, it is somewhat surprising to find that there is no noticeable correlation between the fear levels noted in the first section of this report and objections to a nearby juvenile treatment facility. In fact, those respondents who said they did not feel safe in their neighborhood at night were less likely (23%-28%) to object to such a facility than were their "feel safe" peers, though the difference is not statistically significant.

Without question, the strongest correlations were found when measuring these questions against the breakout of the "age" characteristic of the respondents.

Figure L
"Judges Should be Allowed to Confine Runaways" *



* Figures will not equal 100% as non-responses were not included.

Figure L indicates a powerful correlation between age and accepting the practice of locking up runaways (i.e., the older the respondent, the more likely he or she will be to support juvenile court confinement authority in treating runaways). The correlation between age and confining truants was nearly as strong, and in virtually every juvenile justice response category the sixty-and-above group represented the most conservative viewpoint of the four age groupings. While a "tendency" in this direction would not have been surprising, the overwhelmingly consistent pattern and degree of difference among the responses indicate that social factors other than those affecting the juvenile justice system influence public opinion in this area.

A strong correlation is also to be noted between juvenile justice issues and education. Sixty-six percent (66%) of all non-high school graduates felt that juvenile court judges should be allowed to detain truants, but that figure slips to 48% for high school graduates, and 32% for college graduates. The same type of pattern, though not quite so strong, is observed among high income Ohioans (over \$25,000 per year) who are more opposed to confining truants than any other of the six income groups.

With regard to two other personal characteristics, the lack of any correlations is noteworthy. Race, one of the most influential variables throughout other sections of this report, is conspicuous because of the consistent "status quo" responses to the juvenile justice issues. For none of the issues is there a statistically significant difference between black and white responses, and black attitudes toward the confining of truants are actually slightly more conservative (i.e., more supportive of juvenile court judges) than those of whites (61%-48%). Racial attitudinal differences regarding other components of the Criminal Justice System--where they exist--almost always find blacks as being more critical of the System's institutions.

The "victimization" variable, identifying those who have been victims of a crime, also ran counter to standard expectations. Not only did victims fail to show more hostility to juvenile offenders, they proved more sympathetic than non-victims with regard to trying violent juvenile offenders as adults, confining truants, locating juvenile treatment facilities in their own neighborhood and separating juvenile and adult offenders.

A new question in the 1980 survey asked respondents if they felt juvenile offenders should be housed separately from adults. Table 15 illustrates the one-sided display of public opinion on this issue.

TABLE 15

Should Juvenile and Adult Offenders be Housed in Separate Facilities?

Separate Facilities	75.1%
Same Facilities	5.4%
Other/Depends	1.3%
No Opinion	12.3%
DK/NA	5.9%
	100.0%

Clearly, Ohioans favor separate treatment facilities. The respondents were not, however, asked about the fiscal implications of such a policy.

Another new question concerned citizen perceptions of the behavior of youthful offenders placed in community treatment facilities, compared to that of other young people in the community. The query drew a somewhat mixed response, with one third of the respondents failing to answer. However, those who did respond felt (by a 39%-25% margin) that there is little to distinguish the general behavior of the two groups being compared.

Only one of the confidence scale categories related to an institution of juvenile justice, that being youth detention centers. Twelve percent of the survey participants expressed a "great deal" of confidence in the centers, while half accorded them "some" confidence. Slightly more than one-fifth cited little or no confidence, and a relatively large number (11%) felt unqualified to render a judgement. Generally, the confidence ratings were a little below the average for those given to other criminal justice system components. Among specific groups, senior citizens demonstrated a disproportionately large amount of confidence in detention centers, with 23% claiming a great deal of confidence.

CRIME PREVENTION: ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

The idea of fighting crime by reducing the opportunity for its occurrence has been popular among criminal justice practitioners during the past decade. The State of Ohio has encouraged the concept through "Operation Crime Alert," a statewide program aimed at raising public awareness about crime prevention practices and assisting local law enforcement agencies in establishing and sustaining local crime prevention programs. The Citizen Attitude Survey provides a good tool for measuring the extent to which Ohioans are availing themselves of crime prevention programs and security improvements for their homes.

Basically, the Crime Prevention responses can be grouped into three categories:

- awareness of crime prevention programs;
- participation in crime prevention programs; and
- home security measures.

Approximately one-third of all Ohio citizens are aware of crime prevention programs in their local communities. The remainder either know of no such programs (40.4%) or are unsure of their existence (26.1%). It is estimated that one-half to two-thirds of all Ohioans are, in fact, jurisdictionally covered (i.e., by their local law enforcement agencies) by such programs, meaning that one-third to one-half of the "covered" citizens are unaware of programs which actually do exist. In another vein, 61% of the respondents indicated they had at least heard of "Operation Crime Alert."

If public awareness is the first step in the direction of effective crime prevention, participation in crime prevention efforts is certainly the second. To date, slightly less than six percent of all Ohio families have become involved in crime prevention programs¹³, and a plurality of these (36%) are involved only to the extent that they have attended crime prevention meetings. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the "actives" are involved in block watch type activities, while twenty-four percent (24%) have participated in home security improvement programs.

It would appear that Ohioans are more likely to respond to crime prevention individually than in group settings. Table 16 reflects some of the many ways in which, and the extent to which, individual citizens have improved the security of their homes.

13 The respondents evidenced some confusion about the nature of crime prevention programs. While only 13 identified themselves as participants in "neighborhood watch" groups, sixty-eight (68) said they were a part of a "block watch" program. The latter is more oriented toward school hours and school children, but still crime preventive to a significant degree.

TABLE 16

Percentage of Ohio Residents Who Have . . .

Taken Any Home Security Measures During the Past Two Years	41.9%
Deadbolt Locks on All Doors	43.6%
Pin Locks in Any Windows	33.7%
A Break-In Alarm	8.7%
Received a (police) Security Inspection . . .	5.2%
Indentification Markings on Valuables . . .	39.5%
I.D. Notice on Outside of Home	6.0%
Listed Identified Items	16.9%

Once again, there was no consistent profile of those who involve themselves in crime prevention activities or programs, although the survey results did produce some expected tendencies. For example, persons in high income brackets are more likely to place identification markings on their personal property. Notable for their failure to show strong crime prevention awareness were home owners, senior citizens and--excepting the use of identification markings--upper income groups. Positive correlations with crime prevention practices and awareness were noted for the dissimilar variables¹⁴ of education and race (non-white).

Interestingly, "feelings of safety at home" were not associated with crime prevention measures, either positively or negatively. This would seem to indicate that crime prevention measures do not, in themselves, guarantee peace of mind. The extent to which awareness implies fear, or fear spawns awareness, is something which social scientists are only now beginning to understand.

Perhaps the most surprising finding of this section is the general lack of security consciousness among senior citizens. Figure M depicts the extent to which seniors are failing to advantage themselves of both basic security measures (deadbolt locks, property identification and window pinlocks) and crime prevention programs. This profile runs counter to the popular image of older citizens barricading themselves behind tightly locked doors. It also lends credibility to the earlier finding that seniors are not noticeably more

fearful of crime than other age groups in society. It is probably fair to assume that older citizens spend more time at home than do their more youthful counterparts, but this may be more the product of physical limitations and social isolation than of any inordinate fear of crime.¹⁵

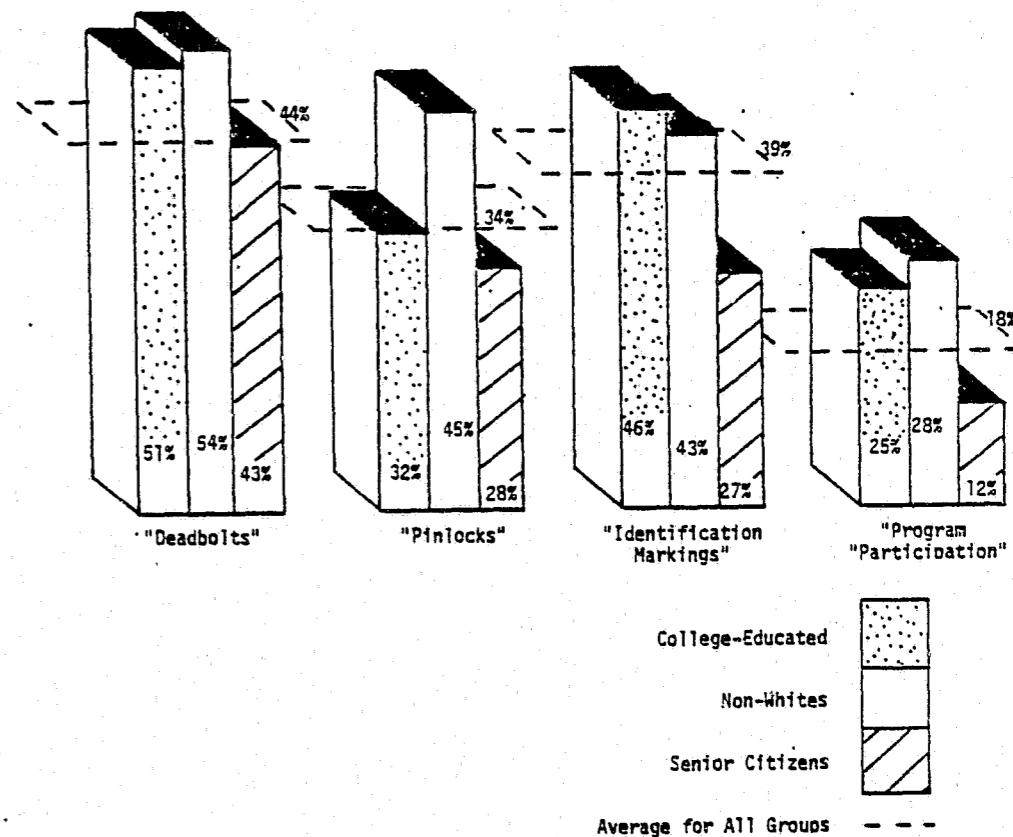
The strongest associations with crime prevention measures were found among non-white and college-educated respondents. As illustrated in Figure M, these two subgroups were significantly above the average participation levels, with college-educated respondents ranking especially high in the "awareness" areas while non-whites were significantly involved in crime prevention "practices." With the sole exception of the program awareness question, blacks and hispanics proved more crime preventive than whites in every area of the crime prevention section.

Figure M

Who Practices Crime Prevention?

by

Education, Race and Age



¹⁴ When Education and Race were crosstabulated, significant differences occurred. Non-whites were twice as likely to have failed to finish high school, and only half as likely to have finished college as were whites.

¹⁵ A recent victimization study released by the Department of Economic and Community Development ("Property Crime Victimization: The Ohio Experience" May, 1981) demonstrates that senior citizens are also victimized at a rate lower than any other age group. The seniors' tendency to "stay home" would explain the seemingly inconsistent findings of low victimization rates and low levels of crime prevention participation.

ATTITUDES ABOUT LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

While virtually every aspect of criminal justice is subject to legislative influence, some issues are particularly so in Ohio. Often, these exist in the form of "legalization" issues concerned with removing or amending laws so as to better reflect changing public attitudes. The prospect of legalized marijuana usage, sports betting and prostitution, three commonly discussed legislative issues, were the subjects of questions in the 1980 Citizen Attitude Survey. Furthermore, three separate questions addressed the highly controversial issue of capital punishment in Ohio, notable because, unlike the first three issues, it owes its existence exclusively to the Criminal Justice System and has received a significant amount of discussion during the last two legislative sessions in Ohio.

It should again be noted that the Citizen Attitude Survey is not intended to provide an in-depth measurement and analysis of any one particular issue, but rather aims at the general tenor of public opinion in many areas. The capital punishment questions, though addressed in three queries, are no exception to this rule. For example, while it can safely be said that Ohioans overwhelmingly accept the concept of capital punishment, the survey could not determine the precise criminal acts for which citizens felt it should be imposed or ways in which to overcome the Constitutional challenges to practice. Neither did the survey attempt to measure Ohioans' knowledge of the subsidiary issues which affect capital punishment (legal, economic, racial, etc.). In fact, there is room for skepticism in this regard since 88% of those respondents who favor capital punishment also admit to a below average understanding of the criminal courts responsible for imposing such a sentence.

TABLE 17
Attitudes About Capital Punishment
1979 v. 1980

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
"Capital Punishment is Inhumane"				
1979	6.8%	24.0%	58.2%	11.0%
1980	6.3%	24.0%	50.9%	18.8%
"Capital Punishment Deters Criminal Acts"				
1979	11.4%	61.8%	22.6%	4.2%
1980	21.5%	52.5%	21.6%	4.5%
"Impose Capital Punishment for Certain Crimes"				
1979	21.8%	61.9%	12.4%	3.8%
1980	34.6%	52.8%	9.0%	3.6%

Table 17 strongly demonstrates that Ohioans do not feel the death penalty is inhumane and believe it to be an effective crime deterrent that should be imposed for at least some crimes. These three points of public opinion are of interest because a major criticism of capital punishment has been that it constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment." And since many if not most studies have concluded that it is not an effective crime deterrent. Furthermore, at the time of this survey, the death penalty was not in effect in Ohio.

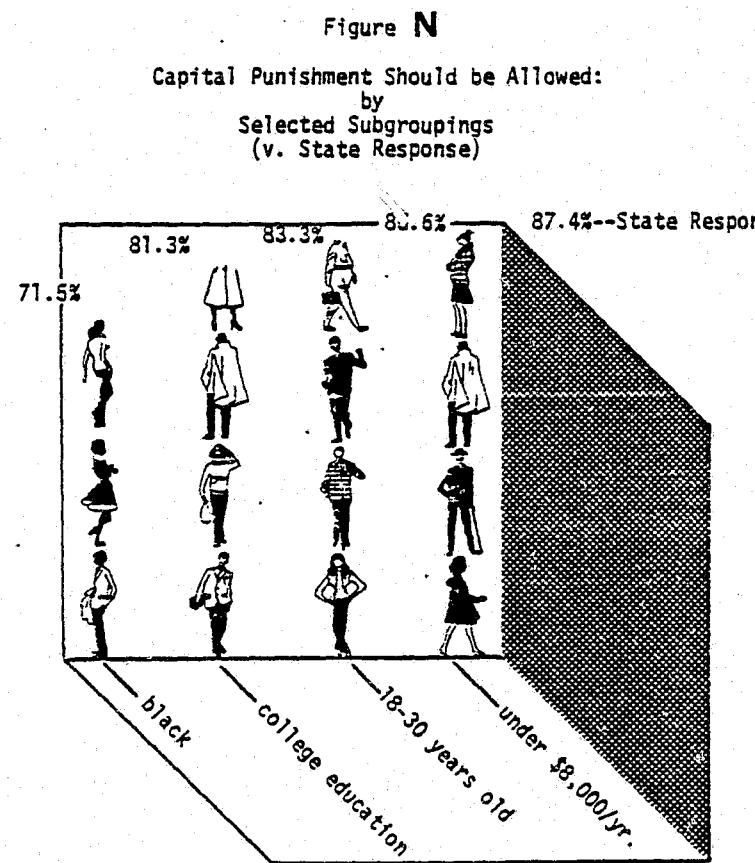
The figures¹⁶ also show some differences between the 1979 and 1980 responses, although it would be unwise to draw too many conclusions from only two years of data. In general, it appears that public opinion on the issue may have polarized over the past year, particularly among those supporting the death penalty. The number of respondents strongly agreeing with the deterrent effect nearly doubled between 1979 and 1980, and the same category ("strongly agree") showed an almost 60% increase among those favoring use of the death penalty. At the same time, those strongly disagreeing with the statement that "capital punishment is inhumane" increased from 11.0% to 18.8% of the total number of respondents. It is probable that at least some of this solidification of opinion can be attributed to the 1980 Senate and House races in Ohio, as well as the publicity directed to the issue during the preceding session of the General Assembly.

As in 1979, a significant number of persons who characterized capital punishment as inhumane also condoned its use. In fact, 68% of all 1980 survey participants who described the death penalty as inhumane fell into this seemingly inconsistent answer pattern. One explanation for this finding--perhaps the only one--is that people continue to be guided by a concept of justice in which the severity of the punishment should fit that of the crime. This, however, is favored not because of vengeance--the 1979 respondents' views on the "reason for prisons" appears to rule out that motive--but simple because such punishment seems "just."

At least some of the opinions expressed by respondents in other issue areas are associated with capital punishment opinions. For example, persons who feel that prisoner rights are being abused are less supportive of capital punishment than those citing too much concern for prisoner rights. In the same vein, there was a noticeable connection between respondents favoring juvenile bindovers and those supporting the death penalty. These, however, are merely similarities in attitudes, and there is no reason to interpret any predictive or causal value in them.

¹⁶ This is not a claim for statistical significance, but simply a recognition that several of the paired figures differ by much more than the error range ($\pm 2.8\%$) for the survey.

Among the personal variables, which can be very predictive, there was no subgroup of any kind which did not support the capital punishment option. The point is important because some of the most serious criticism of the death penalty concerns its possible discriminatory impact on lower income persons who cannot afford legal counsel, blacks for racial reasons, and others. Figure N illustrates that while some demographic subgroups vary slightly from the norm in their capital punishment views, all are still well above the 50% agreement line concerning imposition of the sentence for some crimes.



Among the three legalization issues--marijuana usage, prostitution and sports betting--only the last item appears to have any significant degree of public support. It is possible that the respondents were influenced here by the legalized status of some aspects of sports betting (e.g., harness racing), thus confusing the "keep same as now" response category.

TABLE 18

Should We Legalize . . .

	Marijuana Usage?	Prostitution?	Sports Betting?
Make it Legal	20.9%	23.6%	44.2%
Keep Same As Now	30.4%	35.4%	38.3%
Set Higher Penalties	47.3%	39.3%	17.1%
Other/Depends	1.3%	1.8%	.5%
	99.9%	100.1%	100.1%

Table 18 reflects a clear prioritization of public attitudes concerning the three issues. A plurality of Ohioans favor stiffer penalties for marijuana usage, with only one in five supporting legalization. This current of popular opinion seems to run counter to the direction of the 1975 drug reform law in Ohio, and contrasts with the more tolerant attitudes toward sports betting and, to a lesser extent, prostitution. These differences are magnified by cross-tabulating each issue against the other in a one-on-one relationship. For example, among the "set higher penalties" group, 73.2% of those advocating harsher penalties for prostitution made the same response for marijuana use, but the inverse relationship found only 61.5% of the marijuana "higher penalties" group supporting stiffer prostitution penalties. The figures were even more one-sided in the marijuana-sports betting crosstabulation. For the same response category, with a corresponding 79%-29.5% split. The figures for prostitution and sports betting were 69.3% and 31.7%.

Because gambling and prostitution have traditionally constituted a large bulk of all organized crime activities, these two questions were measured against the earlier query about the seriousness of organized crime. It could be hypothesized that those who see organized crime as a serious problem in Ohio will be more likely to opt for higher penalties for prostitution and sports betting, with the converse true for those who see little or no organized crime problem. Table 19 illustrates that this is only partly borne out by the survey results.

TABLE 19¹⁷

How Serious Is Organized Crime?
By
Legalization Of Prostitution/Sports Betting

	Legalize Prostitu- tion	Set Higher Penalties Prostitu- tion	Legalize Sports Betting	Set Higher Penalties Sports Betting
Very Serious	25.2%	42.0%	42.0%	25.8%
Somewhat Serious	20.3%	36.9%	44.1%	11.1%
Only a Minor Problem	24.7%	44.7%	53.9%	9.0%
Not a Problem	44.4%	-0-	55.6%	11.1%

As can be seen at a glance, Ohioans seem to prefer radically different approaches to these two crime issues. Among those who see organized crime as a very serious problem 25.2% feel prostitution should be legalized as opposed to 42% who would like to see the penalties increased. However, the figures are almost exactly reversed for the same group's attitudes toward sports betting. Another anomaly is the 44.7% who feel that organized crime is only a minor problem, yet would increase penalties for prostitution. One possible explanation for these findings is that people do not understand the gambling/prostitution link to organized crime. Beyond that, it may simply be a difference of opinion as to whether a serious social problem is best addressed by fighting it or joining (i.e., legalizing) it. There is a third possibility, that being that people may tend to differentiate between criminal justice matters and those relating to more traditional moral concerns. For example, when the "prostitution" responses were crosstabulated against those of the "use of force laws too restrictive on police" question, it was found that a plurality of those who strongly disagreed with the "restrictive" statement (i.e., a liberal response) also wanted more severe penalties for prostitution (i.e., a conservative response). Furthermore, senior citizen respondents tended to be much more rigid in their social issue responses than in their criminal justice issue responses.

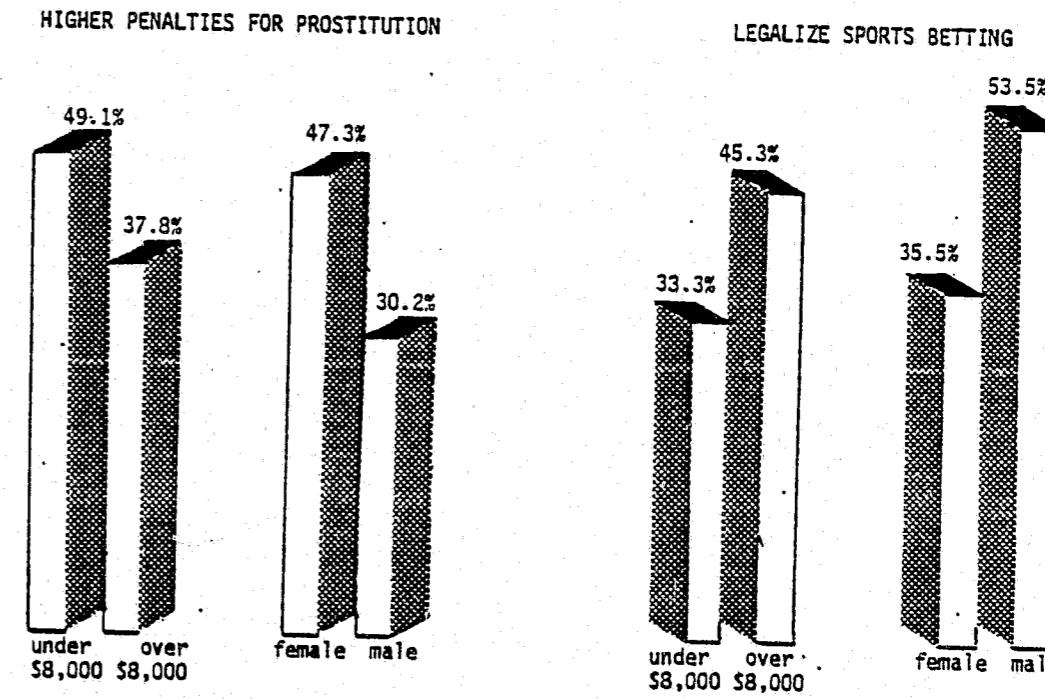
¹⁷ Figure will not add to 100% as the display shows only two of four response categories. Nearly all of the unshown responses fell into "keep same as now" category.

The personal characteristics of those supporting more liberalized marijuana laws are fairly predictable. They tend to be young, single, male, and college educated. Not so predictable are the groups which demonstrate above average support for legalized prostitution.¹⁸ Most noticeable among these was the "above \$25,000 a year" income group, 32% of whom favored legalization compared to 22% for the remaining groupings. Also, the "never marrieds," among the most liberal respondents concerning marijuana usage, were below the legalization average (18% to 24%) when responding to the prostitution question.

Two groups not heretofore noticeably different from the average response ranges suddenly appear as negative voices regarding the legalization issues. Women and persons in the lowest income category (under \$8,000 per year) consistently opposed liberalized tendencies regarding legalized marijuana, but not to a statistically significant degree. Figure O portrays the extent to which these two groups counter other respondent trends. When considering the legalization issues alone (i.e., leaving out the other response categories), these two groups are even more conservative about prostitution and sports betting than the over 60 age group.

Figure O

Legalization Issues: Some Differences of Opinion



¹⁸ However, no variable grouping saw even a bare majority of its number support legalized prostitution.

SURVEY BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The 1980 Citizen Attitude Survey, like its predecessor in 1979, was based on the results of a randomly selected sample of some 848 Ohioans who were interviewed by telephone during October of 1980. Additionally, 424 senior citizens were interviewed to provide independently credible results for that cohort. Respective sampling error ranges for the two cohorts were $\pm 2.9\%$ and $\pm 4.0\%$ (for 50%-50% dichotomous responses) at the 90% confidence level. (NOTE: Originally, telephone interviews were initiated with 896 statewide respondents and 494 senior citizens, but only those who completed the interview, noted above, were used to calculate the error ranges cited herein).

The University of Cincinnati's Behavioral Sciences Laboratory (BSL) was chosen from among four bidders¹⁹ to generate the requisite samples and conduct the interviews. In addition to an extensive background in public opinion survey research, BSL has been among the Nation's forerunners in developing the Random Digit Dialing (RDD) technique which has helped to fully establish the credibility of telephone interviewing in survey research. Essentially; this procedure generates random telephone numbers from telephone company area exchanges, thus including unlisted numbers within the scope of the survey.

As a result of this highly scientific selection process, the demographic profile of the respondents closely reflects that of Ohioans as a whole. Geographically, respondents were found in 86 of the State's 88 counties. Among six of the eight largest counties, survey representation was within one percent of the actual county-to-state population ratio, while the remaining two county samples were within two-and-one-half percent of the 1980 census figures. For example, the sample's 77 Hamilton county respondents represented 8.6% of the total sample population (896), while the county-to-state population ratio for Hamilton is 8.0%. In Montgomery County the figures were slightly reversed at 4.6% and 5.2%, respectively.

At least one fact testifies to the credibility of both the survey and the BSL effort. Several of the Crime Prevention questions requested sensitive information about the home security of the respondent (use of deadbolt locks, pin locks, alarms, etc.). The respondents might have been expected to balk at such questions, yet only 48 of 896 failed to complete the interview, and less than one percent (1%) refused to answer those questions.

¹⁹ The others were: The Ohio State University Polimetrics Laboratory (Columbus); Market Opinion Research (Detroit); and Saperstein & Associates (Columbus).

A word needs to be said about the occasional use of the terms "conservative" and "liberal" in this report. The terms are not used to stereotype any groups of people, but rather to describe traditional issue positions which the author felt were sufficiently well understood in the public mind. For example, the position supporting increased emphasis on prisoner rights was described as "liberal." As with all words, these were used only to provide greater clarity and understanding, and are not intended to convey political or other meanings.

Several methodological notes concerning the statistical procedures for this report need to be highlighted. All statistical analysis was based on the SPSS tape provided by the BSL, with subsequent program runs (crosstabs, recodes, select options, etc.) conducted by the Statistical Analysis Center staff on the IBM Computer within the Department of Administrative Services.

Rounding: Rounding of numbers was used only in certain instances, but where this occurred odd numbers were rounded up and even numbers were rounded down for .5 fractions.

Missing Data: Throughout most of the SPSS tables the 48 incomplete interviews continued to show as missing data. For analytical purposes these cases were excluded from any consideration, and results were based on the 848 completed interview. Because SPSS provides an adjusted frequency display in addition to the actual frequencies, it is possible to project answer categories based on a 100% response; that is, including the "NAs" and "Don't Knows" among the real answer categories by weighting them in accordance with the real answer pattern. For the most part this report utilized the adjusted tables. However, actual frequencies were used when the missing data figure rose above 5% of the total responses, and when the missing data category was, in itself, significant (i.e., "awareness" questions).

Statistical Significance: SPSS provides a full battery of tests for statistical significance, and these were routinely run for all one-by-one variable analysis. However, as this report is intended for use at the popular level, the author chose to represent strong correlations through bar charts, line graphs and other graphic displays rather than to become involved in discussions of statistical calculations. Any of the tests and crosstabs can be made available upon request.

Oversampling: Senior citizen interviewees who were drawn for the statewide cohort were automatically included as a part of the senior citizen cohort. This reduced by 150-200 the number of additional senior interviews needed, thus saving a significant amount of money and time. Because of the random purity of the state cohort, and because both cohorts are statewide in scope, such oversampling does not diminish the credibility of the Survey.

OTHER SAC PUBLICATIONS

May 1980

Ohio Citizen Attitudes: A Survey of Public Opinion on Crime and Criminal Justice (1979 data). An analysis of public opinion and attitudes on a wide range of issues concerning law enforcement, courts, corrections, juvenile justice, crime prevention and other areas of crime and criminal justice.

June 1980

Concerning Crime and Criminal Justice: Attitudes Among Ohio's Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police (1979 data). Opinions and attitudes of 82 Ohio sheriffs and 182 chiefs of police, analyzed by jurisdictional size.

September 1980

In Support of Criminal Justice: Money and Manpower (1977 data). Analysis of employment and expenditures within Ohio's criminal justice system, by type of component (police, courts, corrections, etc.) and type of jurisdiction (county, city, township and state).

September 1980

Survey of Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys: Report (1979 data). An operational overview of 46 county prosecutors' offices.

September 1980

State of the States Report: Statistical Analysis Centers (Emphasis Ohio) (1980 data). An analysis of the criminal justice statistical analysis centers located in virtually every state and several territories.

December 1980

The Need for Criminal Justice Research: OCJS Requests and Responses (1978-1980). An analysis of some 300 research requests received and responded to by the OCJS SAC Unit between 1978 and 1980, by type, request source and time of response.

March 1981

Profiles in Ohio Law Enforcement: Technical Assistance, Budgets, and Benefits (1979 data). The second report emanating from the 1979 SAC survey of 82 sheriff's departments and 182 police departments in Ohio; discusses technical assistance needs and capabilities among these agencies, as well as budgets and fringe benefits.

April 1981

Property Crime Victimization: The Ohio Experience (1978 data). A profile of property crime in Ohio highlighting the characteristics of victims, offenders, and the crimes themselves; based on results of the annual National Crime Survey victimization studies in Ohio.

May 1981

A Directory of Ohio Criminal Justice Agencies (1981 data). An inventory of several thousand criminal justice (and related) agencies in Ohio, by type and county.

June 1981

A Stability Profile of Ohio Law Enforcement Trainees: 1974-1979 (1981 records). A brief analysis of some 125 Ohio Law Enforcement Officers who completed mandated training between 1974 and 1979. The randomly selected group was analyzed in terms of turnover, advancement, and moves to other law enforcement agencies.

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