



## Sexual Assaults in Anchorage

Information from four years of police files shows that the problem of sexual assault in Anchorage has discernible contours: most assaults take place indoors, between people who are not strangers to each other, with either or both parties having consumed alcohol. The attached tables, figures and map provide an overview of reported sexual assaults in the city from 2000 through 2003. The data come from a recently-completed report by the Justice Center that updates an earlier study released in 2003. The new study was undertaken by the Center in collaboration with the Anchorage Police Department.

The Justice Center study revealed that victims have tended to be young and female, with Native women victims in over 45 percent of reported sexual assaults. In a majority of the assaults—over 62 percent—the assailant was not a stranger to the victim. A majority of the assaults occurred indoors, with 45 percent taking place at the residence of one or both of those involved. Over 65 percent of the victims had used alcohol prior to the assault and close to 74

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[http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/22/4winter2006/b\\_sxassault.html](http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/22/4winter2006/b_sxassault.html)

For other articles and publications related to sexual assault and violence against women, see:  
<http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/vaw/>

**Abstract:** *This study examined the characteristics of all sexual assaults reported to the Anchorage Police Department from 2000 through 2003. Key descriptive findings are summarized.*

- *Victims tended to be young and female, with Native women victims in over 45% of reported sexual assaults.*
- *In a majority of the assaults – over 62% - the assailant was not a stranger to the victim. The most common non-stranger relationships included friends and acquaintances.*
- *A majority of the assaults occurred indoors, with 45% taking place at the residence of one or both of those involved.*
- *Sixty-five percent of victims had used alcohol prior to the assault and 74% of suspects had also.*
- *While assaults occurred all over the Municipality of Anchorage, they happened with more frequency in Spenard, Fairview, and Downtown.*

percent of suspects had also. While assaults occurred all over the city, they happened with more frequency in certain areas of town—particularly in Spenard, Fairview, and Downtown.

The data presented here are already two years old, but figures released by the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program

indicate that the rate of reported forcible rape (a more tightly defined offense than that reflected in the tables presented here) in the Municipality of Anchorage was 96.1 per 100,000 people in 2004. The national rate was only 32.2. These UCR figures are not directly comparable to those presented in the Justice Center study, but they show that the

**Table 1. Race of Victims in Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, 2000-2003**

| Race             | Percentage of Anchorage population, 2001 <sup>1</sup> | Sexual assault victims |        |  |
|------------------|---|------------------------|--------|--|
|                  |   | N                      | %      | Rate per 1,000 population <sup>2</sup> |
| White            | 77.6 %  | 556                    | 45.5 % | 2.77                                   |
| Native           | 10.6  | 550                    | 45.0   | 20.08                                  |
| Black            | 7.2   | 75                     | 6.1    | 4.04                                   |
| Hispanic         | 6.0   | 17                     | 1.4    | 1.10                                   |
| Asian            | 7.3   | 22                     | 1.8    | 1.17                                   |
| Pacific Islander | 1.3   | 1                      | 0.1    | 0.30                                   |
| <b>Total</b>     |   | <b>1221</b>            |        |  |

1 Includes both males and females (95.2% of victims were female), categories are not mutually exclusive  
 2 Rate is computed as a four-year rate. To obtain average annual rates, divide by four. Population estimates are 2001 estimates and include both males and females.

**Source of data:** Anchorage Police Department & U.S. Census Bureau

**Table 2. Race of Suspects in Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, 2000-2003**

| Race             | Percentage of Anchorage population, 2001 <sup>1</sup> | Sexual assault suspects |        |  |
|------------------|---|-------------------------|--------|--|
|                  |   | N                       | %      | Rate per 1,000 population <sup>2</sup> |
| White            | 77.6 %  | 483                     | 39.6 % | 2.40                                   |
| Native           | 10.6  | 272                     | 22.3   | 9.93                                   |
| Black            | 7.2   | 319                     | 26.1   | 17.18                                  |
| Hispanic         | 6.0   | 95                      | 7.8    | 6.16                                   |
| Asian            | 7.3   | 46                      | 3.8    | 2.44                                   |
| Pacific Islander | 1.3   | 4                       | 0.3    | 1.20                                   |
| <b>Total</b>     |   | <b>1219</b>             |        |  |

1 Includes both males and females (99.5% of suspects were male), categories are not mutually exclusive.  
 2 Rate is computed as a four-year rate. To obtain average annual rates, divide by four. Population estimates are 2001 estimates and include both males and females.

**Source of data:** Anchorage Police Department & U.S. Census Bureau

sexual assault rate in Anchorage continues to be extremely high. With the problem of sexual assault, it is also important to note that national data show that many assaults are not reported to the police, so it is possible that the figures collected represent only a limited picture of the problem.

André Rosay of the Justice Center was the principal investigator for the study.

The complete results from this recent update can be found at <http://justice.uua.alaska.edu/research/2000/0107sxassaultupdate/index.html>. The earlier study is available at <http://justice.uua.alaska.edu/research/2000/0107sxassault/>. A lengthier article on the 2003 study, "Forcible Rapes and Sexual Assaults in Anchorage," appeared in the Winter 2004 issue of the

*Alaska Justice Forum*.

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**Table 3. Alcohol Use by Victims of Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, by Year: 2001-2003**

Row percentages.

| Year         | Alcohol use |               | No alcohol use |               | Total      |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
|              | N           | %             | N              | %             |            |
| 2001         | 167         | 62.3 %        | 101            | 37.7 %        | <b>268</b> |
| 2002         | 171         | 63.6          | 98             | 36.4          | <b>269</b> |
| 2003         | 194         | 69.8          | 84             | 30.2          | <b>278</b> |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>532</b>  | <b>65.3 %</b> | <b>283</b>     | <b>34.7 %</b> | <b>815</b> |

Source of data: Anchorage Police Department

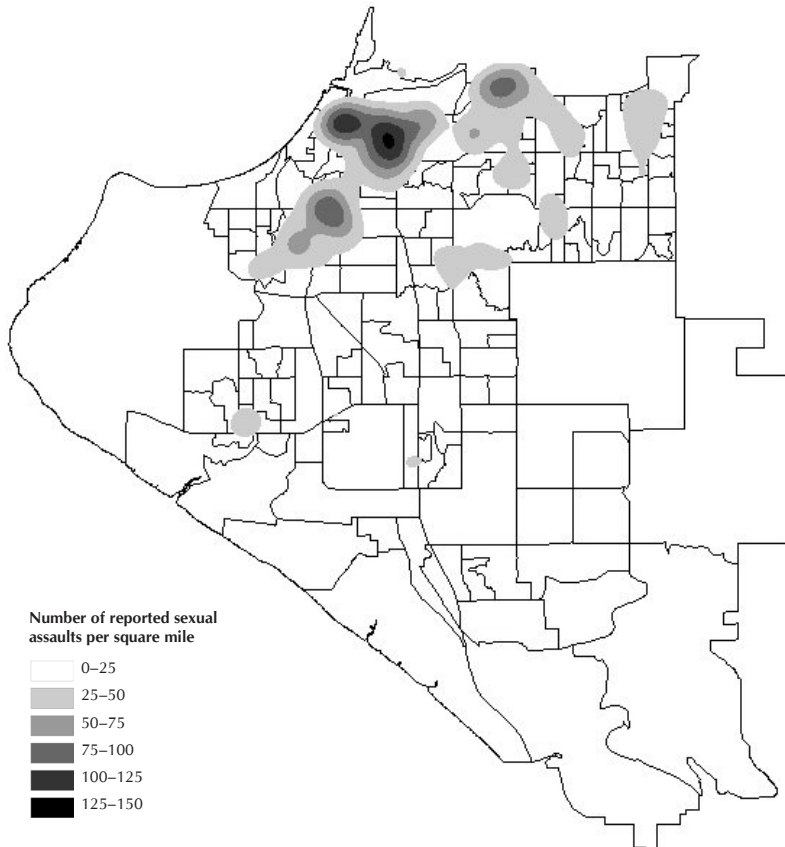
**Table 4. Alcohol Use by Suspects of Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, by Year: 2001-2003**

Row percentages.

| Year         | Alcohol use |               | No alcohol use |               | Total      |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
|              | N           | %             | N              | %             |            |
| 2001         | 157         | 76.2 %        | 49             | 23.8 %        | <b>206</b> |
| 2002         | 152         | 72.7          | 57             | 27.3          | <b>209</b> |
| 2003         | 136         | 72.0          | 53             | 28.0          | <b>189</b> |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>445</b>  | <b>73.7 %</b> | <b>159</b>     | <b>26.3 %</b> | <b>604</b> |

Source of data: Anchorage Police Department

**Figure 1. Locations of Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, 2000-2003**



**Table 5. Victim-Offender Relationship in Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, 2001-2003**

| Relationship              | N           | % of total    | % of non-stranger |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total non-stranger</b> | <b>645</b>  | <b>62.2 %</b> | <b>100.0 %</b>    |
| Acquaintance              | 330         | 31.8          | 51.2              |
| Friend                    | 135         | 13.0          | 20.9              |
| Family                    | 83          | 8.0           | 12.9              |
| Intimate                  | 97          | 9.4           | 15.0              |
| <b>Stranger</b>           | <b>392</b>  | <b>37.8 %</b> | <b>--</b>         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>1037</b> |               |                   |

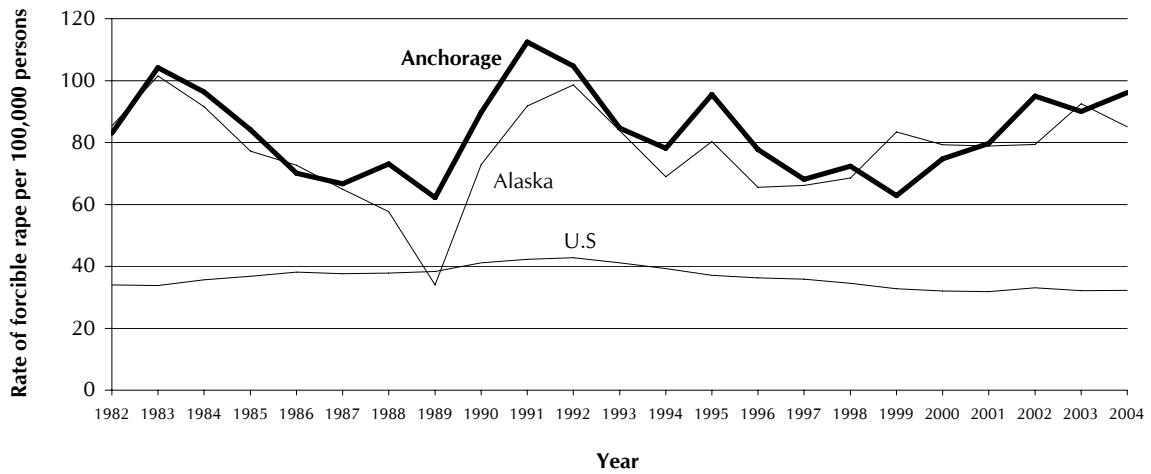
Source of data: Anchorage Police Department

**Table 6. Assault Location Type for Sexual Assaults Reported to Anchorage Police, 2000-2003**

| Location                   | N           | %      |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Victim's house             | 250         | 19.5 % |
| Suspect's house            | 256         | 20.0   |
| Victim and suspect's house | 75          | 5.9    |
| Other's house              | 141         | 11.0   |
| Hotel                      | 102         | 8.0    |
| Bar                        | 13          | 1.0    |
| Outdoors                   | 250         | 19.5   |
| Other                      | 111         | 8.7    |
| Unknown                    | 83          | 6.5    |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>1281</b> |        |

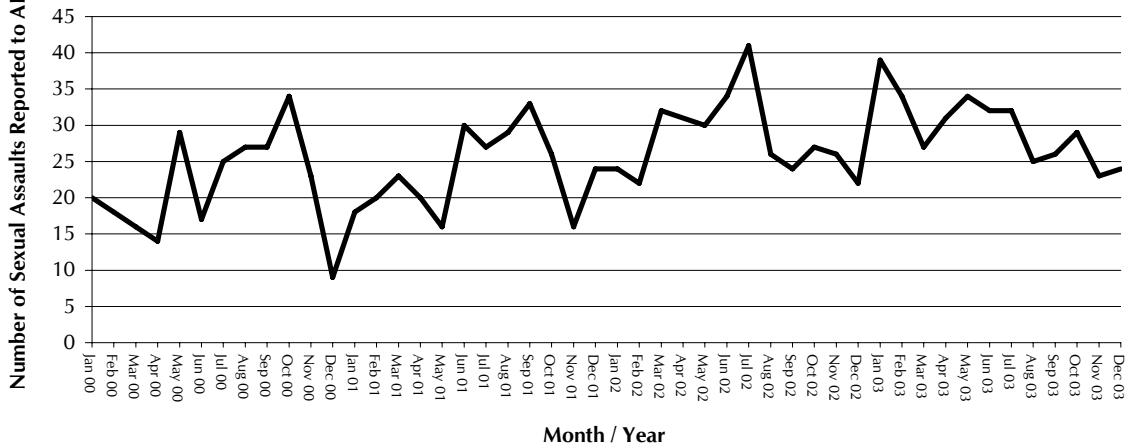
Source of data: Anchorage Police Department

**Figure 2. Rates of Forcible Rape in the U.S., Alaska, and Anchorage: 1982 - 2004**



Source of data: Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation

**Figure 3. Number of Sexual Assaults Reported to the Anchorage Police Department by Month: January 2000 to December 2003**



Source of data: Anchorage Police Department