

# INTRODUCTION

Hate crimes committed against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive people (LGBTH)<sup>1</sup> continue to rise throughout the United States despite dramatic decreases in overall violent crime according to sources at the Department of Justice. This report analyzes incidents of anti-LGBTH violence reported to community-based anti-violence programs in fourteen areas across the country, known as the “national tracking programs” of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP).<sup>2</sup> The analysis contained in this report includes, among other things, available information on victims of anti-LGBTH crime, offenders and the response of local police departments for 1997.

NCAVP is a coalition of LGBTH victim assistance, advocacy and documentation programs located throughout the nation. Although NCAVP was officially created in 1995, the members of the coalition have worked closely together for nearly a decade to strengthen the national anti-violence movement and to report and document anti-LGBTH hate crimes. Part of NCAVP’s mission is to educate the general public about the extent and brutality of anti-LGBTH violence, including through the distribution of this annual report.<sup>3</sup> This is the 13th annual national report on anti-LGBTH violence based on documentation provided by local anti-violence programs across the country.

During 1997, NCAVP played a leading role in the effort to warn our communities about spree killer Andrew Cunanan. Despite NCAVP’s efforts to work with the police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the case was tragically mishandled and law enforcement missed many opportunities to work with the community to assist in his capture. In the aftermath of this case, NCAVP members were invited to meet with the FBI to provide suggestions on how the Bureau could respond better to future incidents. NCAVP members were also invited to conduct quarterly sensitivity meetings to FBI agents at Quantico, the FBI’s training base; the first civilian group ever to be invited to do so. In addition, NCAVP was well represented at President Clinton’s 1997 Hate Crimes Summit, a gathering at the White House in November of 300 victim advocates, religious leaders, law enforcement experts and leading officials from Congress and the Justice Department.

The purpose of this report is to show trends in violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive people. It does not purport to document the actual, or even approximate, number of anti-LGBTH incidents that occurred in the United States in 1997. Extensive empirical evidence shows that anti-LGBTH violence is vastly under-reported, even to NCAVP members. NCAVP knows from dozens of prevalence surveys, academic studies and government-funded reports conducted over the last two decades that LGBTH people are disproportionately the victims of hate-motivated violence. Under-reporting, coupled with the fact that most areas of the country do not have local victim assistance or documentation programs, means that a very large percentage of anti-LGBTH violence remains undocumented and, therefore, is not represented

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this report LGBTH will serve as an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive people.

<sup>2</sup> See [Appendix A](#) for a complete list of participating programs. See [Appendix B](#) for summaries of selected incidents included in this report.

<sup>3</sup> See [Appendix C](#) for the NCAVP Mission Statement.

in this report.

It is significant to note that each of the programs participating in this report uses the same intake forms, definitions and criteria for documenting anti-LGBTH incidents.<sup>4</sup> The participating programs define an anti-LGBTH incident as one in which there are sufficient objective facts to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the offender's actions were motivated in whole or in part by the offender's bias against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or HIV-positive people. The definition of, and the criteria used to determine,<sup>5</sup> bias motivation parallel the definition and criteria used by the FBI to track bias motivation generally.<sup>6</sup> To ensure the integrity of this report, no incidents as reported by victims were included where the anti-LGBTH motivation was questionable.

In addition, the various reporting programs use consistent definitions for terms used in the report such as “offense” and “incident.” These definitions closely follow the definitions used by the FBI. It should be noted, however, that one offense - harassment (verbal/sexual) - is not a crime in most states. This offense includes the use of anti-LGBTH slurs against an offender. NCAVP programs document these offenses because of the psychological pain and fear this type of harassment causes to victims, as well as the evidence that many people who engage in verbal harassment often escalate their behavior to more violent acts over time.

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<sup>4</sup> The standardization of statistic gathering was one NCAVP's first priorities. The incident documentation form is attached as [Appendix D](#) and the 21-page instruction manual for completing the form is available upon request.

<sup>5</sup> Criteria used to determine bias motivation include: a) the offender's use of anti-LGBTH language, b) a history of anti-LGBTH incidents in the same area, c) a perception by a substantial portion of the LGBTH community where the crime occurred that the incident was motivated by bias, d) a coincidence with a LGBTH event, such as Lesbian/Gay Pride Day or National Coming Out Day, e) some indication that the victim was selected for victimization because of his/her appearance, clothing (e.g., gay pride T-shirt) or behavior (e.g., same-sex couple holding hands), f) the offender's membership in an identifiable hate group with a history of committing anti-LGBTH violence or g) the victim's participation in activities promoting LGBTH rights or activities in response to AIDS.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (1992). *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*, p.38. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office. See [Appendix E](#) for other definitions.

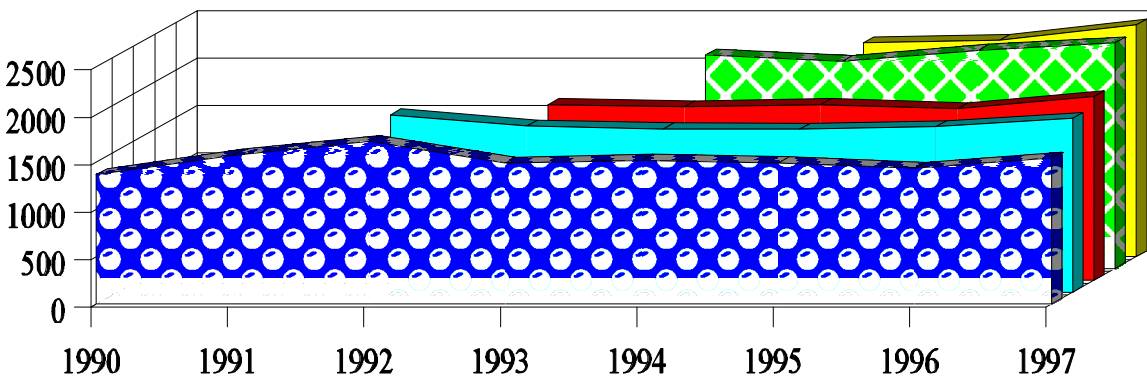
# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS






## Hate-Motivated Violence Continues to Rise

While crime rates fell dramatically across the country last year according to the Department of Justice, hate-motivated violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive (LGBTH) community continued to rise. The 14 national tracking programs of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP), a coalition of organizations serving LGBTH crime victims, documented 2,445 incidents of anti-LGBTH violence last year. This represents a 2% increase in bias crimes committed against the LGBTH community nationally in 1997. This increase follows a 6% rise in anti-LGBTH violence in 1996. When these increases are compared with the double-digit decreases in other violent crime recorded nationally in both 1997 and 1996, the statistics clearly show that hate-motivated violence continues to be a very serious problem and that certain communities are not benefitting from the much publicized reduction in crime generally seen across the country.

### Number of Reported Incidents

1990-1997



-  1995 Add District of Columbia
-  1994 Add Los Angeles, St. Louis, Virginia
-  1993 Add Phoenix, California Central Coast
-  1992 Add Cleveland, Detroit, El Paso
-  1990 Chicago, Columbus, Massachusetts, New York City, San Francisco

Incidents

### Incidents By Month

Traditionally, anti-LGBTH violence climbs to its highest levels in the month of June when communities across the country are celebrating Pride Month. This trend is not surprising because the LGBTH community receives a high degree of visibility and media focus during Pride Month and, historically, there has always been a correlation between increased visibility for the community and increased reports of anti-LGBTH incidents. While June was once again the most violent month last year, the number of incidents reported in

June (254) was nearly matched by the number of incidents reported in March (240) and April (234). Compared to 1996, the number of incidents reported in March and April were up 30% and 25%, respectively, in 1997. We attribute this rather alarming rise in anti-LGBTH violence in March and April to the unprecedented national attention given to the "coming out" of actress Ellen DeGeneres and her television character Ellen Morgan during this period. The tidal wave of publicity surrounding Ellen's coming out seems to have spurred a homophobic backlash that accounts for the increase in reported incidents of anti-LGBTH violence during these months. Part of the responsibility for inflaming the violence belongs to leaders of the Radical Right who were widely quoted condemning Ellen and ABC, including Jerry Falwell who referred to Ellen as "Ellen DeGenerate," thereby providing legitimacy to the perpetrators of hate crimes. Also, during this same time period, the bombing of a lesbian bar in Atlanta received extensive national press coverage. Once again, our statistics demonstrate the strong correlation between increased visibility and the lack of moral leadership by prominent figures in society and increased levels of violence.

### **The Victims of Anti-LGBTH Violence**

In 1997, the number of victims of bias crimes reporting to NCAVP tracking programs who identified as lesbian or gay decreased 1% from the number who did so in 1996. The number of heterosexuals, however, reporting that they were victims of anti-LGBTH crime actually rose a significant amount in 1997--36%. This underscores the fact that hate crimes are crimes of perception. Victims are chosen not necessarily because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or HIV-positive, but because the perpetrator perceives them to be. These statistics send a clear and unambiguous message that no one is safe from hate crimes and that it is in everyone's interest to stop this epidemic of hate.

### **Rise in Serial Incidents**

Serial incidents of anti-LGBTH crime climbed a frightening 36% in 1997. Serial incidents are defined as continuous violence and harassment by one offender against a single victim over a period of time. The largest increase in serial incidents occurred amongst victims who suffered ten or more previous violent incidents at the hands of the same offender; the size of this group increased 66%. Frequently, serial incidents occur in or around the victim's home or community. The perpetrators usually know the victim and often live in the victim's neighborhood or building. In 1997, incidents occurring in or around the victim's private residence increased by 24%, which is consistent with a rise in serial incidents. Regrettably, our work with victims has shown that law enforcement often fails to intervene on behalf of victims in these situations, claiming that these incidents are simply "neighborhood disputes." In most serial incidents, however, the violence tends to spiral out of control and victims are left helpless as the criminal justice system remains cruelly unresponsive.

### **Police Incidents and Response**

NCAVP statistics for 1997 document a shocking 83% rise in reported anti-LGBTH violence occurring in police precincts and jails. Equally startling, the number of reported offenders who were law enforcement officers increased by 76% nationally, from 266 in 1996 to 468 in 1997. Additionally, reports of unjustified arrests increased by 48%. It is an extremely disturbing trend that more and more people are suffering homophobic violence at the hands of the police, the very people who are entrusted with ensuring the safety of all citizens. It is not surprising, therefore, that statistics continue to show that many victims of

anti-LGBTH violence are reluctant or unwilling to seek help from the police or file police reports of an incident. The number of victims who refused to report incidents to the police increased by 21% in 1997. Clearly, police training programs and disciplinary procedures need to be vastly improved to reverse these trends. If drastic steps are not taken, police officers will continue to be a part of the problem, rather than a part of the solution on hate crimes.

### **Incidents at Schools & Colleges**

Another disturbing trend to emerge from the NCAVP data is that anti-LGBTH violence at schools and colleges rose 34% last year. The number of victims under the age of 18 also increased in 1997 (by 10%), while violence against those in the 18 to 22 age group increased 35%. These troubling numbers seem to indicate that schools are failing to institute effective anti-bias curricula - if they have any such programs at all - and are negligent in their duty to protect their students from violence and harassment. The role of schools is particularly important in the fight against bias-related violence because negative attitudes toward the LGBTH community are often instilled in children by their families. If left unchecked, these negative attitudes are often expressed through violence. Unfortunately, a very large percentage of offenders are people under the age of 22. Of the offenders whose age was reported to NCAVP, over 43% were in this under 22 age group. Teachers and administrators have an obligation to keep their students safe, including LGBTH youth. They can only meet this obligation by creating a climate in the schools that promotes acceptance of people regardless of their sexual orientation, gender-identity or HIV status.

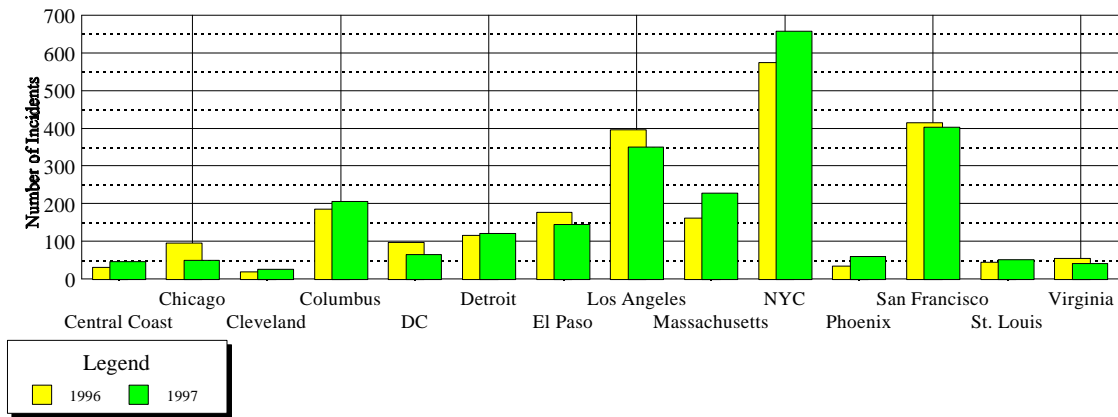
### **Types of Offenses**

In 1997, there was a 67% increase in bomb threats or bombings against LGBTH individuals and establishments according to NCAVP documentation. It is important to note that this dramatic rise does not include the highly publicized bombing last year of a lesbian bar in Atlanta, Georgia. The Lesbian and Gay Chapter of the ACLU of Georgia is not yet a tracking program, and therefore their statistics are not included within the text of this report. The increase in bombings and bomb threats is only one of the signs that violence against the LGBTH community has become far more intense in the past twelve months. Further illustrating the increased personal and ongoing nature of anti-LGBTH violence is the 33% increase in extortion and blackmail reported in 1997.

### **Conclusion**

The statistics gathered by the national tracking programs of NCAVP clearly show that hate-motivated violence continues to be a very serious problem for the LGBTH community. As our statistics have shown, there is a direct correlation between increased violence against our community and high visibility of our community. We expect the community will continue to attract more and more attention in the media and the entertainment industry. This attention will undoubtedly result in the number of violent incidents increasing even further. In addition, the rise in the use of the internet has provided a new and powerful vehicle for bigots to spread their hateful views and promote more violence.

## Anti-LGBTH Incidents Reported to National Tracking Programs 1996-97



With large decreases in violent crime being achieved in communities across the country, the fact that the LGBTH community has not experienced the same level of decreases is inexcusable. Clearly, more work needs to be done by the government, law enforcement, educators and community leaders. Our statistics show that the police are not doing enough. Action should be taken to reduce the number of incidents that occur in police precincts and to increase the number of victims that feel comfortable reporting to the police. Educators need to establish programs that increase sensitivity to diversity in the schools and establish a zero tolerance policy on all hate crimes. Also needed is comprehensive hate crime legislation in every state to stem this horrible epidemic of crime.

### Anti-LGBTH Incidents Reported to National Tracking Programs 1996-1997

Tracking Program Location	1996	1997	%Change
Central Coast (CA)	30	46	+53%
Chicago (IL)	96	49	-49%
Cleveland (OH)	18	25	+39%
Columbus (OH)	186	206	+11%
DC	97	65	-33%
Detroit (MI)	116	120	+3%
El Paso (TX)	176	145	-18%
Los Angeles (CA)	396	350	-12%
Massachusetts	161	228	+42%
New York City (NY)	575	658	+14%
Phoenix (AZ)	34	60	+77%
San Francisco (CA)	415	402	-3%
St. Louis (MO)	44	51	+16%
Virginia	55	40	-27%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2399</b>	<b>2445</b>	<b>+2%</b>

# RECOMMENDATIONS

NCAVP urges elected officials, educators, business leaders and others to take the following actions immediately.

1. Broaden and pass Hate Crimes legislation which includes the LGBTH community. These laws must be adopted at the federal level and in every state immediately. Historically, the implementation of such legislation in states, counties, and municipalities across the country has resulted in a decline in the number of bias incidents in those areas. Beyond that, such laws send a strong message that government will not tolerate hatred and violence;
2. Schools, colleges and businesses need to recognize that hate violence of all kinds is a reality which has a negative impact. In response, inclusive tolerance curricula need to be adopted and implemented;
3. Police Departments across the country should incorporate representatives of the LGBTH community, and others who have had a negative relationship with law enforcement, in all levels of police trainings. Police Departments which have conducted such programs have found that they are extremely effective. They humanize the communities, give the officers desperately needed information about those communities, and begin to build a bridge between the police and the public. Funds must be allocated to localities to make sure that law enforcement agencies conduct these trainings on an ongoing basis;
4. Government funds must be allocated to community based organizations who serve victims of bias crime. Beyond that the Department of Justice needs to address the fact that federal monies, which are allocated as block grants, are being disseminated in a manner which is discriminatory to the LGBTH community. For example, states which have laws prohibiting the promotion of homosexuality will not allocate federal Victims of Crime Act grants to LGBTH victims assistance agencies;
5. To counter the impact of the radical rights' rhetoric, public officials must speak out in response to anti-LGBTH violence and bias. Such leadership will send both the necessary message of tolerance and the message that violence against any American will not be tolerated.

# ASSAULTS, INJURIES AND WEAPONS

## Assaultive Offenses

In 1997, the number of assaults with weapons reported nationally increased by 1% over the number reported from the previous year. This increase is surprising when compared to national statistics that show a double-digit decline in violent crime overall. The total number of bias-motivated assaultive offenses (which includes assault with a weapon, assault without a weapon, attempted assault, sexual assault/rape and murder)<sup>8</sup> declined overall across the country by 14%. Again, when compared to the large decrease in violent crime nationally, this decrease indicates that the benefits of the reductions in crime occurring nationally are not reaching all groups equally.

Although the combined statistics from the national tracking programs show a decrease in assaultive offenses, certain participating programs did not follow this trend. Specifically, El Paso, Detroit, Columbus and DC reported significant increases in assaults against LGBTH people in their communities.

**Assaultive Offenses<sup>9</sup> - 1997**

Offenses	1996	% of Total Offenses (5,486)	1997	% of Total Offenses (5,338)
Assault without a Weapon	630	12%	576	11%
Assault with a Weapon	272	5%	274	5%
Attempted Assault with a Weapon	226	4%	118	2%
Sexual Assault/Rape	110	2%	95	2%
Murder	27	.5%	18	.5%
<b>Total Assaultive Offenses</b>	<b>1265</b>	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>1081</b>	<b>20.5%</b>

## Injury Levels & Seriousness of Injuries

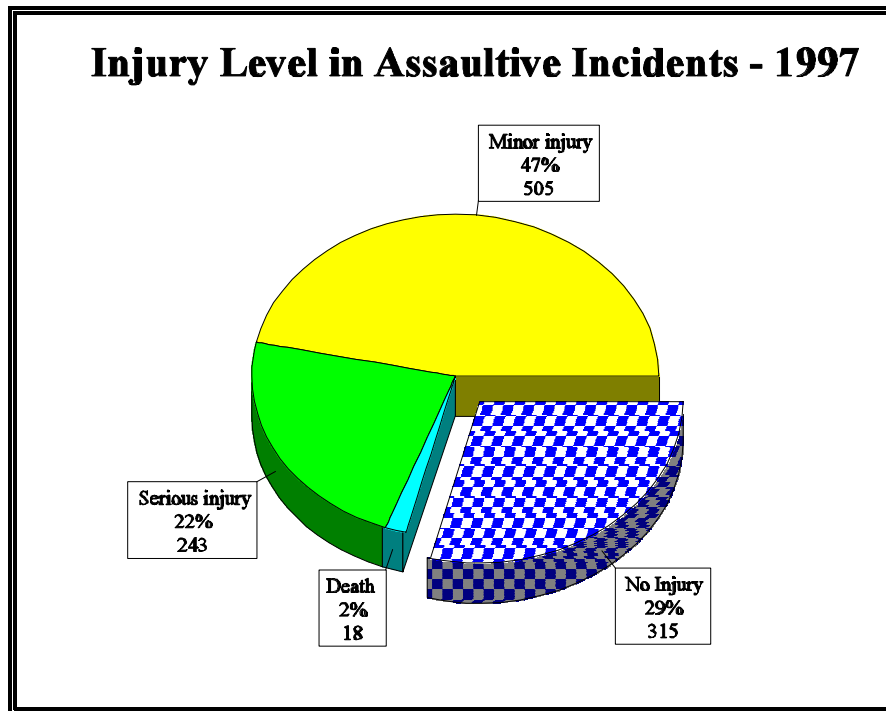
Nationally, there was a decline in the number of victims who were injured in an anti-LGBTH incident. There was, however, a disturbing jump in injuries to victims in four national tracking programs: Columbus (80%), DC (237%), El Paso (38%) and Phoenix (18%).

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<sup>8</sup> Definitions for these terms can be found in [Appendix E](#).

<sup>9</sup> NCAVP documented a total of 5,338 offenses in 1997, but only 2,930 incidents. This is because one incident will often include several offenses. For example, one incident could include all of the following offenses: assault with a weapon, sexual assault, harassment and robbery.





NCAVP also continued to track the extent of injury experienced by victims of assaultive offenses this past year and the medical attention these victims received. Victims continue to be injured in a large majority of assaultive incidents, approximately 71%. Of the individuals who were injured, only 30% reported that they did not require medical attention for their injuries. Almost 17% needed medical attention but did not receive any. Cleveland, Columbus, DC, El Paso, Massachusetts, Phoenix and Virginia all experienced an increase in the number of victims who needed but did not receive medical attention.

### Weapon Use

In 1997, there were 310 incidents involving the use of weapons against the LGBTH community. The most frequently used weapons were bottles, bricks and rocks, closely followed by bats, clubs and blunt objects. Knives and other sharp objects, as well as firearms, were also commonly used weapons.

<b>Weapons Used</b>	<b>1996</b>		<b>1997</b>	
	<b>Number of Incidents</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Bats, Clubs, Blunt Objects	115	24	70	22.5
Bottles, Bricks, Rocks	101	21	79	25.5
Firearms	69	15	29	9
Knives, Sharp Objects	80	17	63	20
Rope, Restraints, etc.	28	6	3	1
Others	82	17	66	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100</b>

The data paints a troubling image of the extreme intensity of the violence aimed at the LGBTH community in 1997 and indicate a high level of premeditation in LGBTH hate crimes. The perpetrators who used weapons used firearms, knives, sharp objects, bats, clubs and blunt objects in more than half of the assaults. The use of these types of weapons clearly indicates that an attack was planned in advance because these are weapons that perpetrators bring with them intending to injure someone. On the other hand, bottles, bricks and rocks are usually found objects that a perpetrator will use to assault a victim in a spontaneous incident.

# OFFENSES AND SERIAL INCIDENTS

## Types of Offenses

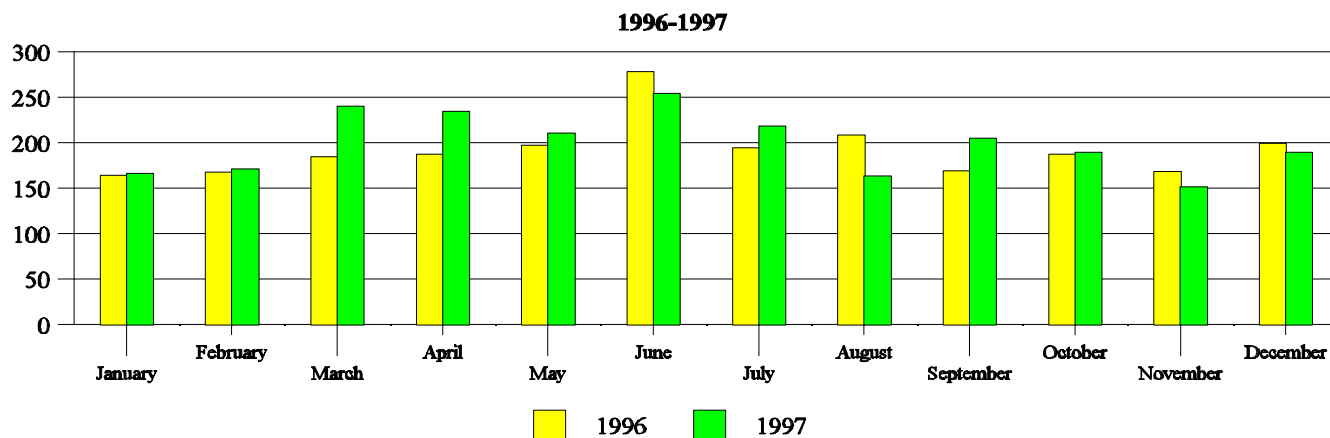
The types of offenses committed against the LGBTH community also intensified nationally in 1997. Arson rose by 91%; bomb threats and bombings increased by 67%; unjustified arrests increased by 48%; extortion and blackmail jumped 33%; harassment increased by 7%; and assault with a weapon rose 1%. The rising viciousness of anti-LGBTH violence is a shocking trend that belies the commonly held theory that the LGBTH community is most often victimized by perpetrators whose only offense is the use of homophobic slurs.

Columbus experienced the highest number of arson attacks, followed by Chicago. San Francisco led the nation in the number of bomb threats and bombings. The tracking programs in Chicago, Detroit, DC, Los Angeles, Massachusetts, New York City, Phoenix, San Francisco and Virginia recorded a rise in unjustified arrests. New York City experienced the largest rise in extortion and blackmail. Harassment (including verbal, mail, telephone and sexual harassment) increased in Central Coast, Columbus, DC, Los Angeles, Massachusetts, New York City and Phoenix. Offenses involving assault with a weapon rose in Columbus, Detroit, El Paso, New York City and St. Louis.

## Incidents by Month

Traditionally, anti-LGBTH violence reaches its highest point during June, the month we celebrate Lesbian and Gay Pride. Although the fourteen NCAVP tracking programs show that this trend held steady in 1997, with the highest number of incidents occurring in June, we experienced a rather surprising surge in violence in March and April of 1997. In fact, the percentage of anti-LGBTH violence jumped by 30% in March and 25% in April. Moreover, the number of incidents of hate-motivated violence in these months almost reached the same levels as in June: we recorded 240 incidents in March and 234 incidents in April compared to 254 for June.

## National Monthly Trends



We attribute this unusual upswing in violence during these two months to the almost unprecedented level of national attention focused on the “coming out” of actress Ellen DeGeneres, who first revealed that she is a lesbian in a cover interview with TIME Magazine and a number of interviews on television magazine shows like “Prime Time Live” and “20/20.” This publicity occurred in conjunction with the “coming out” of her television character, Ellen Morgan, during the same period. In addition, we believe that the much publicized bombing of a lesbian bar in Atlanta during this same time period also played a part in this increase.

The media frenzy surrounding Ellen’s coming out seems to have spurred a homophobic backlash that accounts for the simultaneous jump in incidents of anti-LGBTH violence. Undoubtedly, the Radical Right played a major role in creating a climate of homophobia, as their leaders, such as Jerry Falwell, were widely quoted denouncing Ellen and referring to her as “Ellen DeGenerate.”

The fact that the rise in violence coincides with major events like Pride celebrations and the Ellen “coming out” once again clearly shows that when our community is most visible, we are more likely to become victims of hate-motivated violence.

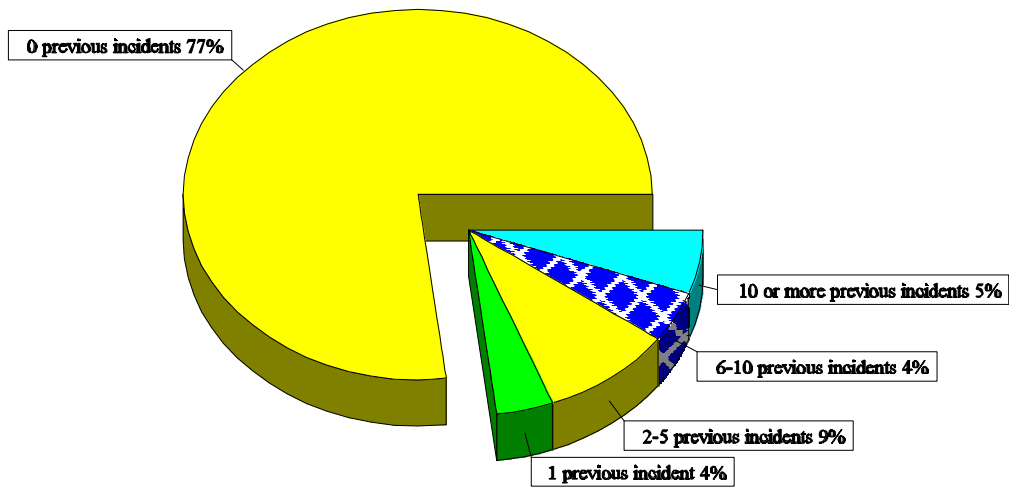
### **Serial Incidents**

Anti-LGBTH serial incidents (defined as continuous violence and harassment of one offender against a single victim) rose a stunning 36% in 1997. It is especially shocking to note that the number of victims who suffered 10 or more previous violent incidents at the hands of the same offender increased by 66%. Serial incidents rose in Central Coast, Cleveland, Columbus, DC, El Paso, Los Angeles, Massachusetts, New York City, Phoenix, St. Louis, San Francisco and Virginia.

This upsurge in serial incidents corresponds with the rise in incidents occurring around private residences in 1997. Usually, serial incidents take place in and around a victim’s home or community. The offenders more often than not know the victim and frequently live in the victim’s neighborhood or building. That would partially explain 1997’s 24% increase in incidents occurring in and around a victim’s home. The following cities and states reported increases in violence occurring in and around private residences: Central Coast, Columbus, DC, El Paso, Los Angeles, New York City, Phoenix, St. Louis, San Francisco and Virginia.

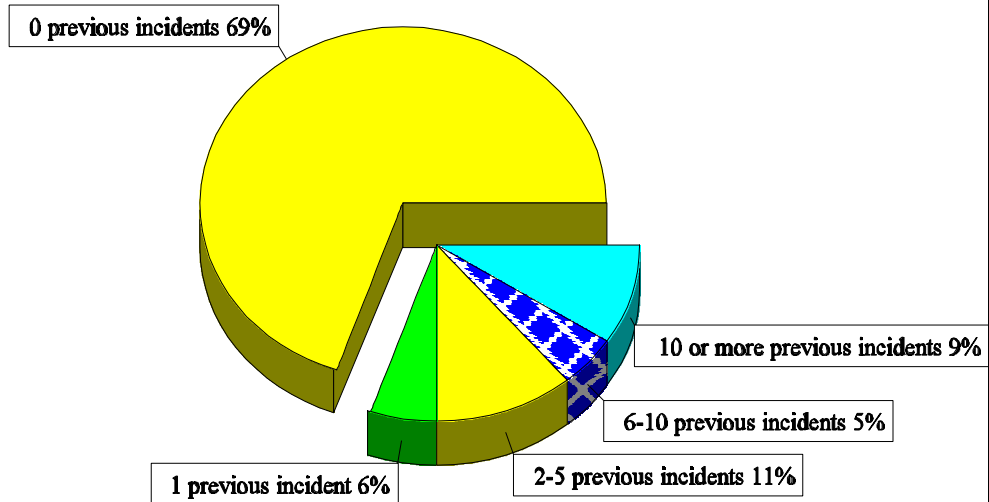
Unfortunately, NCAVP has documented that the response of law enforcement to these serial incidents is often grossly negligent. Law enforcement often fails to intervene on behalf of victims, asserting that these incidents are simply “neighborhood disputes.” In most cases of this type, the violence spirals out of control and victims are left helpless as the criminal justice system remains unresponsive.

## Single and Serial Incidents - 1996



\*Due to rounding, the total equals 99%

## Single and Serial Incidents - 1997



# THE VICTIMS OF ANTI-LGBTH VIOLENCE

A total of 2,930 victims reported anti-LGBTH incidents to the 14 NCAVP tracking programs in 1997, a 2% increase over 1996. NCAVP statistics show that anti-LGBTH violence in 1997 was once again targeted almost exclusively at individuals rather than property. In fact, 95% of hate-motivated violence was directed at individuals. A mere 5% of the anti-LGBTH violence affected property. In contrast, a far higher percentage of hate-motivated crimes nationally were property crimes. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported that 45% of hate crime offenses reported to the agency against all groups were against property. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) numbers are similar to the FBI's figures, with 45% of all anti-Jewish hate-motivated incidents directed against property and 55% directed against persons.<sup>10</sup> Hate crimes directed at an individual are often experienced as more personal than those directed at property.

Offense Type	National (NCAVP)		ADL	FBI
	No. Offenses	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total
Offenses against persons	5,089	95.5%	55%	55%
Offenses against property	249	4.5%	45%	45%
Totals	5,338	100%	100%	100%

## Victims' Sexual Orientation

While services provided by NCAVP members are available to all people, regardless of sexual orientation, the majority of the victims (83%) in 1997 continued to be lesbians, gay men or bisexuals. There was, however, a significant and somewhat unprecedented 36% increase in the number of victims who identified as heterosexual. This shift clearly illustrates the fact that anti-LGBTH violence is motivated by the perception of the perpetrator, not the actual sexual orientation of the victim, proving that all people are at risk of being a victim of LGBTH bias crime. NCAVP programs in El Paso, San Francisco and Los Angeles documented a significant increase in hate-motivated violence against heterosexuals. Cleveland, Columbus, DC and New York City reported slight increases in such violence.

## Victims' Race

Although the majority of victims reporting to NCAVP were white, the 1997 data continue to show a decrease in the proportion of white victims. In 1996, 62% of victims reporting to NCAVP programs were white. In 1997, this percentage declined to 57%. Offsetting the decrease in the proportion of white victims was a 25% increase in reporting by Latinos/as and a 20% increase in reporting by African-Americans.

## Victims' Gender

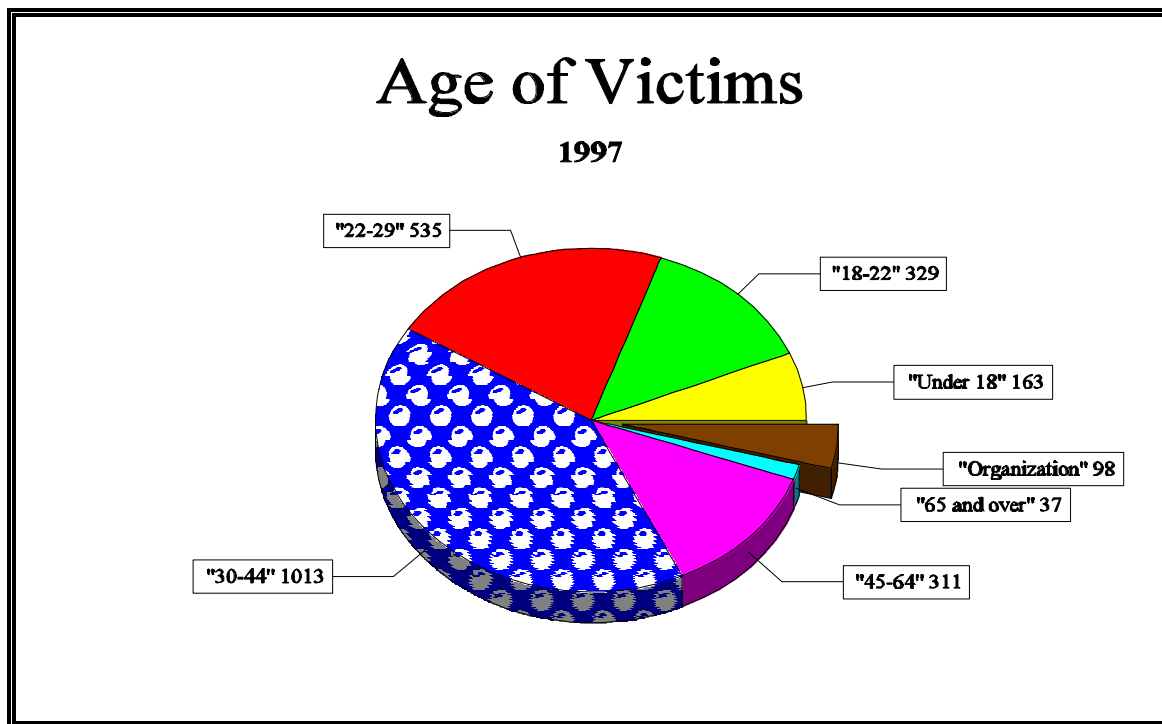
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<sup>10</sup> The statistics from the FBI and the ADL are the most recent statistics available from these agencies.

The proportion and the number of female victims in 1997 remained virtually the same as in 1996, with women making up 30% of the victims in NCAVP's cases. On the other hand, the number of male victims increased 4%, an increase from 1800 to 1868. In 1996, 66% of the victims were men, while in 1997 men represented 68% of victims.

### Victims' Age

In 1997, there were double digit increases in older and younger victims who sought services from NCAVP members. Victims over 65 years-of-age increased 23%, victims 18 to 22 years old jumped 35% and victims under 18 years of age rose 10%. The increase in younger victims closely corresponds with the 34% increase in the percentage of incidents which occurred at or around a school or college. Columbus, Detroit, El Paso, Massachusetts, New York City, Phoenix, St. Louis and San Francisco all reported increases in the number of victims who were under age 18 or in the 18 to 22 age group. Seven of those programs also reported an increase in the number of incidents which occurred at schools or colleges. The largest age category of victims continues to be people between the ages of 30 and 44, with 1013 victims constituting 42% of all victims whose age was reported.



\*Doe

s not include victims whose age was not recorded.

### Violence Against Transgender Persons

This is the third consecutive year that the NCAVP has collected data on violence against transgender persons. Transgender is an umbrella term encompassing the diversity of gender expression including drag queens and kings, bigenders, cross dressers, transgenderists, and transexuals.<sup>11</sup>

In 1997 3.5% of the victims reporting to the NCAVP self identified as a transgender person. This is only slightly down from the 4% in 1996. In 1997 95 of the 102 transgender victims were male to female, and 7 were male to female. It would be inappropriate to draw any significant conclusions regarding national trends due to the small numbers.

There are a number of possible reasons we can offer to explain why these numbers are as low as they are. First of all, many of the reports taken by each tracking program come through their crime victims hot lines. Therefore, there is no in person contact. We believe that many transgender persons self identify as the gender they are living as. Keeping that in mind, when a victim who is a transgender person calls a victim assistance hotline, they often do not identify as transgender.

Secondly, there is a reluctance on the part of transgender persons to report incidents of violence to the police and to the NCAVP due to transphobia even within the LGBTH community.

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<sup>11</sup> The Gender Identity Project of the NYC Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center. *Wherever you are on the Transgendered Spectrum:....Drag, Cross Dresser, Crossgender, Bigender, TV, Transexual, FTM, MTF, New Woman, New Man,...You are not alone!*



# THE OFFENDERS OF ANTI-LGBTH VIOLENCE

## Relationship of Offenders to Victims

The 1997 information on offenders of anti-LGBTH violence reflects the trends we have seen in data on serial incidents and site of incident reports. Other parts of this report clearly show an increase in the number and percentage of victims who were repeatedly victimized by individuals they knew, such as neighbors, landlords and co-workers. Many of the perpetrators attacked their victims at locations where the victim would ordinarily feel safe, such as homes, workplaces and police stations.

Site of Incident	1996	1997	Percent +/-
Police Precinct/Jail	42	77	+83%
Private Residence	451	559	+24%
Public Transportation	88	78	-11%
Street/Public Area	590	614	+4%
Workplace	292	270	-8%
Public Accommodation	182	170	-7%
Cruising Area	143	120	-16%
School/College	146	196	+34%
LGBTH Institution	89	83	-7%
In/Around LGBTH Bar, etc.	248	182	-27%
LGBTH Event/Parade/Rally	14	14	0%
Other	19	44	+132%
Unknown	95	38	-60%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2399</b>	<b>2445</b>	<b>+2%</b>

The trends discussed above are reinforced by the information reported to NCAVP on the relationship of the offenders to the victims. The data show a 49% increase in the number of offenders who were acquaintances/friends of their victims and a 21% increase in those who were co-workers.

Relationship of Offender to Victim	1996	1997	Percent +/-
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Acquaintance/Friend	108	161	+49%
Employer/Co-worker	347	421	+21%
Ex-Lover	27	25	-7%
Landlord/Tenant/Neighbor	523	395	-24%
Law Enforcement Officer	266	468	+76%
Lover/Partner	27	52	+93%
Pick-Up	111	93	-16%
Relative/Family	104	105	+1%
Roommate	33	18	-45%
Security Force/Bouncer	55	37	-33%
Service Provider	156	155	-1%
Stranger	1396	1475	+6%
Other	267	257	-4%
Unknown	740	418	-44%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4160</b>	<b>4080</b>	<b>-2%</b>

One of the largest and most troubling increases was in the offenses where the offender was a police officer or other law enforcement official. NCAVP documented a 76% increase in 1997 in the number of offenders who were identified as law enforcement officers. The huge rise in this statistic, coupled with the increase in wrongful arrests (48%) and the jump in incidents which occurred at police precincts and jails (83%), paints a frightening picture of the relationship between law enforcement and the LGBTH community. Clearly, there is a high and growing level of homophobia among police officers which is being expressed in violence against people perceived to be LGBTH.

### **Number of Offenders**

Historically, much of the violence against the LGBTH community was perpetrated in a relatively random and spontaneous manner, involving groups of people attacking individuals or smaller groups of victims in public places or on the street. In 1997 many more of the attacks were serial incidents perpetrated in a premeditated manner by a single individual who knew the victim. The 11% rise in incidents perpetrated by one offender in 1997 underscores this finding.

<b>Number of Offenders Per Incidents</b>			
	1997 - National		1996
<b>Offenders involved in incident</b>	Number of Incidents	% of total Incidents	% of total Incidents
1	1,518	65	61
2-3	607	27	29
4-9	174	7	9
10 & over	30	1	1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>2,329</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

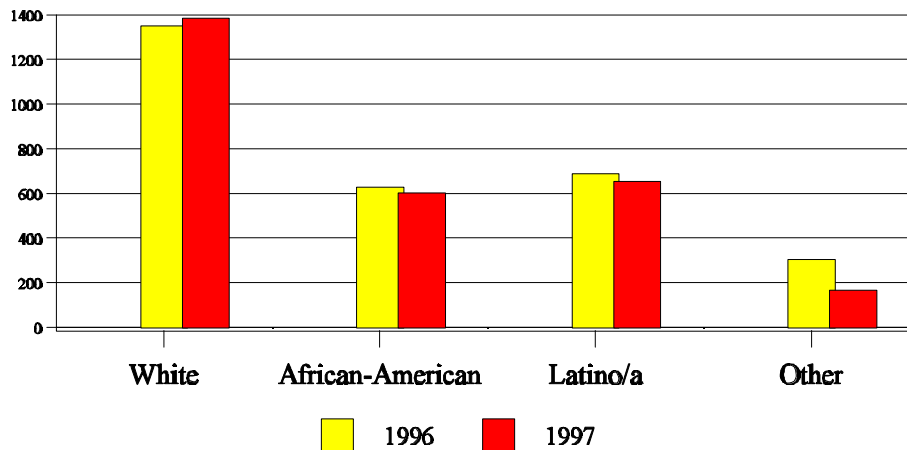
\*Does not include 116 incidents in which the number of offenders was unknown.

### Race and Gender of Offenders

Overall, the gross number of offenders decreased 2% in 1997. White people made up 49% of all offenders whose race was reported by the victims. This represents a 3% increase over 1996. African-Americans represented 15% of the offenders and Latino/as represented 16% of offenders. It comes as no surprise that males comprised 85% of all offenders, the same level as in 1996.

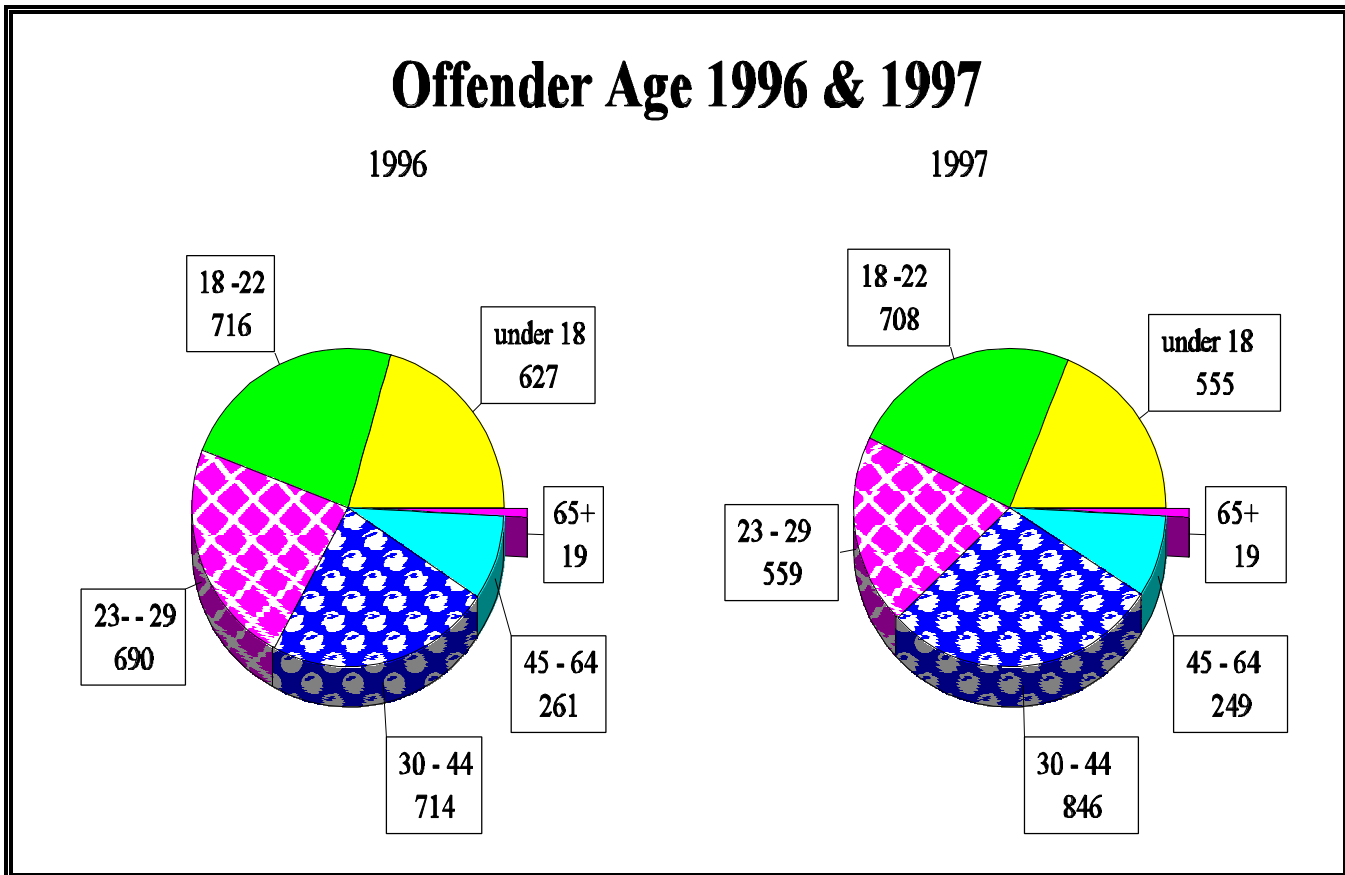
### Race of Offender

1996-1997



### Age of Offenders

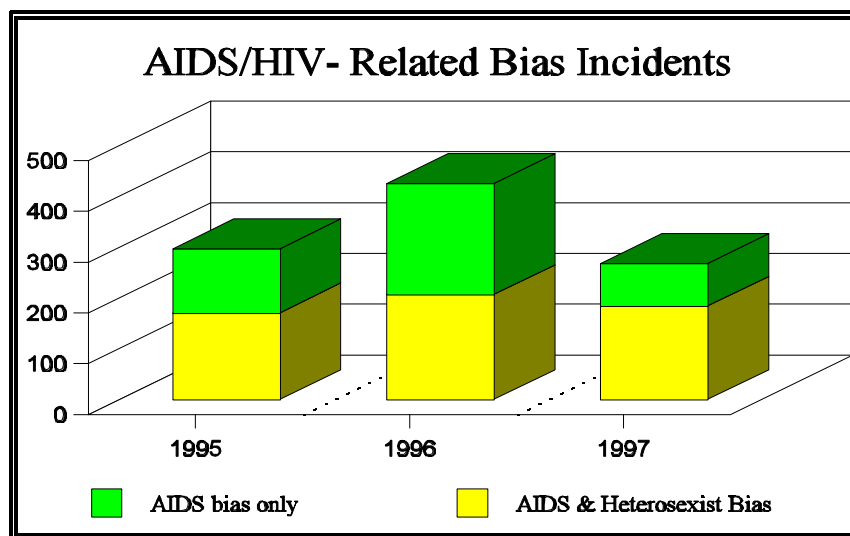
The percentage of victims who were between 30 and 44 years-of-age increased 18% in 1997. All other offender age categories decreased or stayed constant.



## HIV-RELATED VIOLENCE

In 1997, NCAVP's national tracking programs documented 268 incidents motivated in whole or in part by hatred, fear and ignorance about HIV/AIDS and persons perceived to have HIV/AIDS. This was down significantly from the 426 incidents documented in 1996. We speculate that this may be related to the widespread publicity about protease inhibitors, the new class of anti-HIV drugs, that first became generally available last year. Stories in the media about protease inhibitors were the most optimistic articles on the HIV/AIDS crisis since the onset of the epidemic and may have mitigated some of the fear people have about the virus and those it infects.

We believe another possible explanation for the decrease in reported incidents is the positive physical effects protease inhibitors have had on many people with HIV/AIDS. Protease inhibitors have greatly reduced the obvious physical symptoms of some AIDS-related opportunistic infections, including wasting syndrome and lesions. Many victims are chosen by offenders because of these physical symptoms or because they appear vulnerable as a result of their weakened condition. We believe that the use of protease inhibitors may have reduced the number of people with HIV/AIDS who have been targeted because of their appearance.



It is notable, however, that while there was a

decrease in overall HIV/AIDS-related incidents, there was a substantial increase in the proportion of those HIV/AIDS-related incidents that also included bias based on sexual orientation or gender-identity. In 1996, almost half of the documented cases of HIV/AIDS-related bias also had this additional bias element. In 1997, that number increased to 69% of the cases. In fact, most of the decrease in overall anti-HIV/AIDS incidents came from those incidents classified as solely HIV/AIDS-related, while the total number that represented both forms of bias decreased just 11%. Much of the initial prejudice against people with HIV/AIDS stemmed from the perception that HIV/AIDS was a “gay disease.” Although gay men and lesbians now account for less than half of new AIDS cases, it’s clear that there is still a strong link between homophobia and anti-HIV/AIDS bigotry and hate.

# REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT/ LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

## Tension Grows Between Community and Law Enforcement

Information collected by NCAVP programs includes the number of incidents reported to the police, police response and police attitude. In 1997, this information indicates a growing reluctance on the part of victims to report anti-LGBTH crimes to the police and an alarming increase in police indifference or hostility to those victims who did seek police assistance. The resistance of many victims to reporting is validated by the fact that there were significant increases in wrongful arrests, the number of offenders who are members of law enforcement and the number of incidents that occurred at a police precinct/jail. These data indicate a very hostile attitude on the part of law enforcement towards the LGBTH community.

### Victims Reporting to Law Enforcement

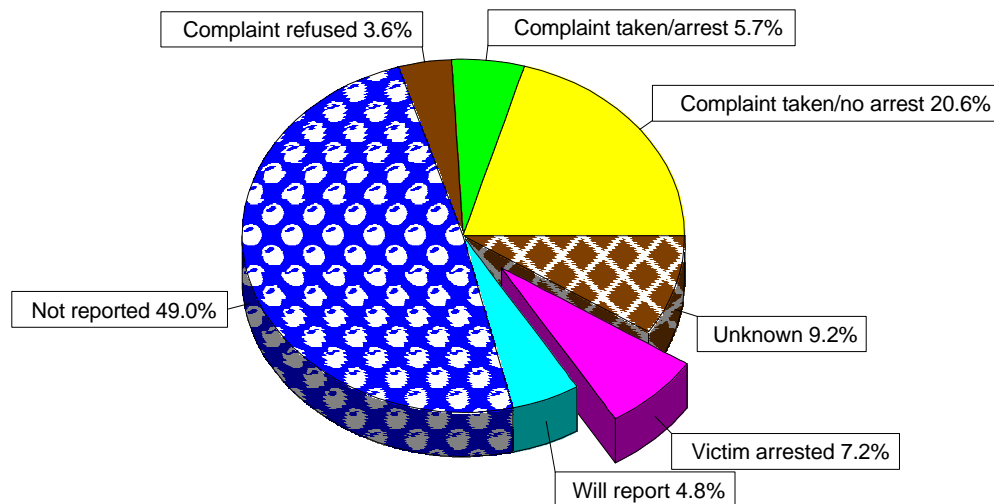
Tracking Program	% of Reported	Incidents to Police
	1996	1997
Central Coast (CA)	23%	15%
Chicago (IL)	30%	41%
Cleveland (OH)	17%	12%
Columbus (OH)	29%	23%
DC	17%	39%
Detroit (MI)	26%	28%
El Paso (TX)	26%	9%
Los Angeles (CA)	50%	17%
Massachusetts	46%	31%
New York City (NY)	37%	33%
Phoenix (AZ)	91%	22%
St. Louis (MO)	30%	27%
San Francisco (CA)	49%	48%
Virginia	20%	28%
<b>National Reporting Average</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>

Only 24% of all anti-LGBTH incidents reported to the tracking programs during 1997 were also reported to the local police. This represents an 8% decrease from the 1996 level of 32%. Both statistics are significantly lower than the 48% reporting rate for all violent crime estimated by the Department of Justice.<sup>12</sup> There was also a 10% increase in the number of victims who said they would not make a report to law enforcement. Unfortunately, of those that tried to report to the police 12% of the time the police refused to take the complaint in 1997. Of those who did file a report with the police, 45% received indifferent to hostile treatment and 55% received courteous treatment.

Beyond the growing level of hostility from law enforcement documented by this report, the disparity of reporting levels between victims of anti-LGBTH violence and other victims can be attributed to the LGBTH community's long history of distrust of the police. The most common reasons cited by victims for not reporting an anti-LGBTH incident to the police is fear of mistreatment, such as an insensitive or hostile response or physical abuse by the police, or fear of public disclosure of their sexual orientation.<sup>13</sup> The 1997 data make it clear that victims still have solid reasons for those fears.

## Police Response

1997



<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. (1985) *Reporting Crimes to the Police*. (Ref. No. NCJ-99432). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. Crimes of violence include rape, robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault.

<sup>13</sup> Herek, G.M. and Berrill, K.T. (Eds.). (1992). *Hate Crimes: Confronting Violence Against Lesbian and Gay Men*, p. 294. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. Citing: Comstock, G.D. (1989). *Victims of Anti-LGBT Violence*. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 4, 101-106.

## **Victims/Clients Arrested by Law Enforcement**

Another reason why LGBTH people fear the police is the fact that often the victims are wrongfully arrested in the incident. In 1997, there was a 69% increase in the number of victims/clients who were arrested by the police. Reports of arrests of victims/clients jumped 81% in New York City and 85% in San Francisco, Bay Area. This increase can partly be attributed to recent police initiatives in certain cities that have targeted the LGBTH community and other minority communities. For example, in New York City under the police department's Quality of Life Initiative, known gay cruising areas and other areas where LGBTH people gather were targeted for special patrols. The victims of these arrests are often men who are accused of engaging in publicly lewd behavior but, in fact, have not. Other victims are men who are entrapped by police officers pretending to be interested in having sex with the victim.

A further reason for the low levels of reporting to the police is that incidents reported to local organizations that involve solely verbal harassment do not fit the technical definition of a "crime" in most jurisdictions and therefore are not recorded by law enforcement. Typically this is less than 10% of all incidents reported to NCAVP members. If these incidents are eliminated from the data, the reporting rate of victims of anti-LGBTH crimes is still lower than that of other victims.

**LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, HIV-**



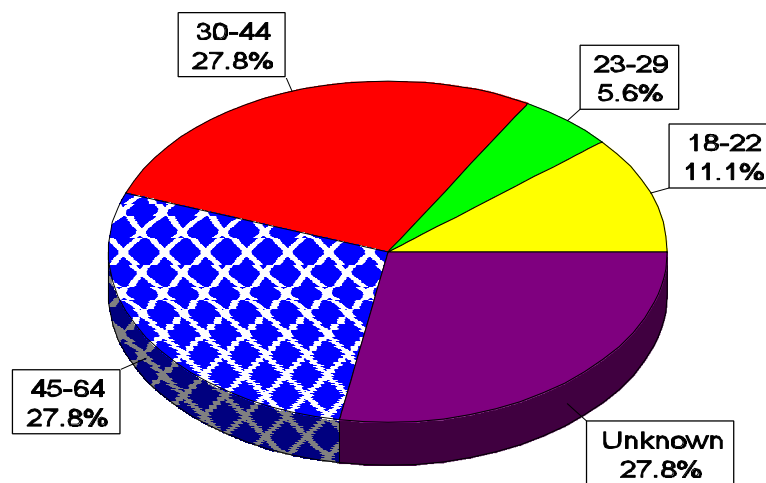
## RELATED

In 1997 there were 18 gay-related murders<sup>14</sup> reported to the 14 tracking programs of the NCAVP<sup>15</sup>. That is down from 27 in 1996, which is a decrease of 33%. Even though this is a decrease in number, it is important to remember that these murders tend to be extremely violent. 39% of the murders reported were marked by a high level of violence involving “overkill.”<sup>16</sup> A good example of this would be a victim bludgeoned to death with a blunt object and his body was left under the Christmas tree for his parents to find on Christmas Day.

All but one of the murders were of people that identified as lesbian or gay. 27% of the victims were between the ages of 30 and 44, also another 27% were between the ages of 45 and 64. The victims tended to be older than their attackers. Where the age of the offenders was known, 18-22 year olds were the most frequent perpetrators (22%).

## LGBTH-Related Murder Victims

1997



The majority

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<sup>14</sup>See [Appendix E](#) for the definition of gay-related murders.

<sup>15</sup>See [Appendix F](#) for summaries of each incident.

<sup>16</sup>See [Appendix E](#) for the definition of overkill.

of victims were men (83%), three victims were female, and one was an M-F Transgender person. Where race of the victim was known, six of the victims were African-American (33%), while 5 were White (28%). The race of the offender was mostly unknown (67%) which reflects on the fact that only four arrests have been made for these 18 murders.

The majority (61%) of these murders show clear signs that they occurred in a “pick-up” scenario. This is when the perpetrator and the victim meet and agree to go somewhere else (the victim’s home, commonly) to have consensual sex. The perpetrator usually found the victim in a gay bar or a known “cruising” area (such as a semi-public areas where men go to have sex with other men).