

Race/Ethnicity of Murder Suspects

Of the 367 suspects arrested for homicide, 345 (94 percent) were African-American – a figure roughly equivalent to the percent of homicide victims who were African-American (92.1). In other words, the overwhelming majority of homicides in the District are black-on-black crimes. Other arrestees during the three-year period included 16 Hispanic/Latino suspects (4.4 percent), five whites (1.4 percent), and one Asian (0.3 percent).

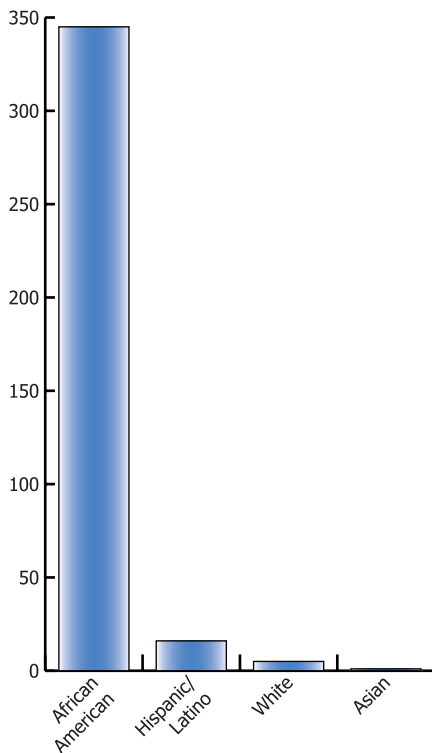
Analyzing the range of demographic information reveals that the picture of both homicide suspects and victims in the District is essentially the same: African-American males under the age of 25. Nearly 56 percent of the alleged murderers between 1998 and 2000 fit this basic profile.

Criminal History of Murder Suspects—Prior Arrests

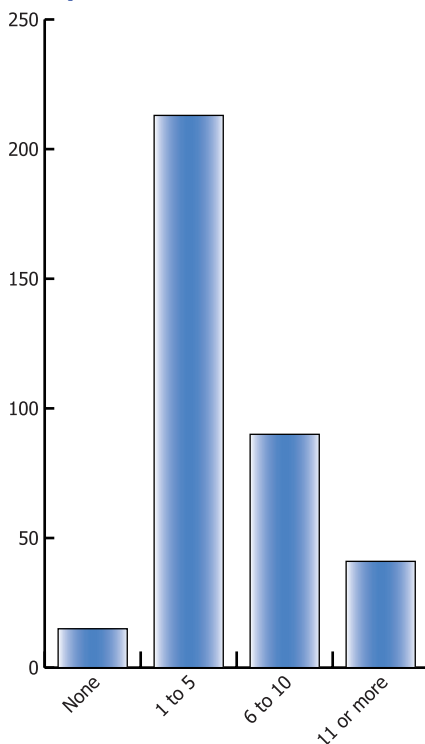
Almost every one of the 367 suspects arrested for murders committed between 1998 and 2000 had a history of arrests by the MPDC, including both violent and property crimes.³ In fact, only 15 (4.1 percent) of the arrestees had not been arrested previously by the MPDC.⁴ Nearly 60 percent of the alleged murderers had between one and five arrests. Almost 25 percent had between six and 10 arrests, and 11 percent had 11 or more prior arrests. The average arrestee had 5.3 prior arrests with the MPDC, with one suspect having 35 prior arrests.

Most murder suspects in the District not only have an arrest record with the MPDC, but also have a history of arrests for violent crimes. Only 8.2 percent of the alleged murderers did not have a prior arrest for a violent crime. In fact, the average arrestee had 2.3 prior arrests for violent crimes. Almost 83 percent had one to five prior arrests for violent crimes, and 9 percent had six or more arrests for violent crimes. The criminal history of one suspect included 12 prior arrests for violent crimes.

Homicide Suspects: 1998-2000



Homicide Suspects—Prior Arrests: 1998-2000



³ In this analysis, violent crimes are defined as homicides, rapes, robberies, and assaults. Property crimes are burglaries, auto thefts, arson, and larcenies. These definitions are in agreement with those used by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program.

⁴ Juvenile arrests are not included in this section. In addition, the arrests are only those by the MPDC; information on arrests by other jurisdictions was not available.