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## Criminality of Police Officers

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# Criminality of Police Officers

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American Society of Criminology  
Los Angeles, California  
November 1, 2006

# The Literature:

## What is known about police criminality?

- Independent Commission Reports:
  - Knapp Commission (1972)
  - Pennsylvania Crime Commission (1974)
  - Mollen Commission (1994)
- Newspaper Investigative Reporting:
  - *New York Times* (1970s)
  - *Boston Globe* (1980s)
  - *Philadelphia Inquirer* (1990s and 2006)
- Research in Criminology / Social Sciences:
  - *Driving while Female* (Walker, 2002, 2003)
  - *Fallen Blue Knights: Controlling Police Corruption* (Ivkovic, 2005)
  - *Bad Cops: A Study of Career-Ending Misconduct Among New NYPD Officers* (Fyfe and Kane, 2006)

# Methodology

- Content analysis of newspaper articles about sworn law enforcement officers in the US arrested during the 18 month period from January 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006.
- Convenience sampling primarily using Google News search engine automated daily searches of newspapers published on the Internet.
- Articles were cataloged, coded, and entered into SPSS.
- Coded variables included gender, age, years of service, duty status at time of offense, state, department type and size, victim demographic information, and 64 offense categories (mostly NIBRS categories).
- SPSS runs for frequencies and correlations.

# Google News Search Engine Automated Daily Search Terms

- “deputy was arrested”
- “deputy was charged”
- “deputy was convicted”
- “deputy was indicted”
- “detective was ...”
- “detectives were ...”
- “officer ...”
- “officer was ...”
- “police chief was ...”
- “police officers were ...”
- sheriff “was ...”
- “trooper was ...”
- police “caption was ...”
- police “lieutenant was ...”
- police “officer is ...”
- police “officer was ...”
- police “sergeant was”

# Sample

- 695 arrests of 657 individual sworn law enforcement officers (38 of the cases represent officers who were arrested more than once).
- Each one of the 695 arrests is treated as a case.
- These officers were/are employed by 449 agencies (primary state, sheriff, county police, municipal police, special police, and tribal police agencies) in 49 states and DC. Wyoming is not represented in the sample.
- All of the officers were employed as sworn law enforcement officers at the time of commission of the offense for which they were arrested.

# Descriptive Statistics

	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Min/Max</u>
Age	535	36.43	8.084	20-64
Yrs Service	414	9.51	7.434	0-36

	<u>n</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Gender	695	663 (95.4)	32 (4.6)

# Frequency of Criminal Offenses for Sworn Officers Arrested

N = 695

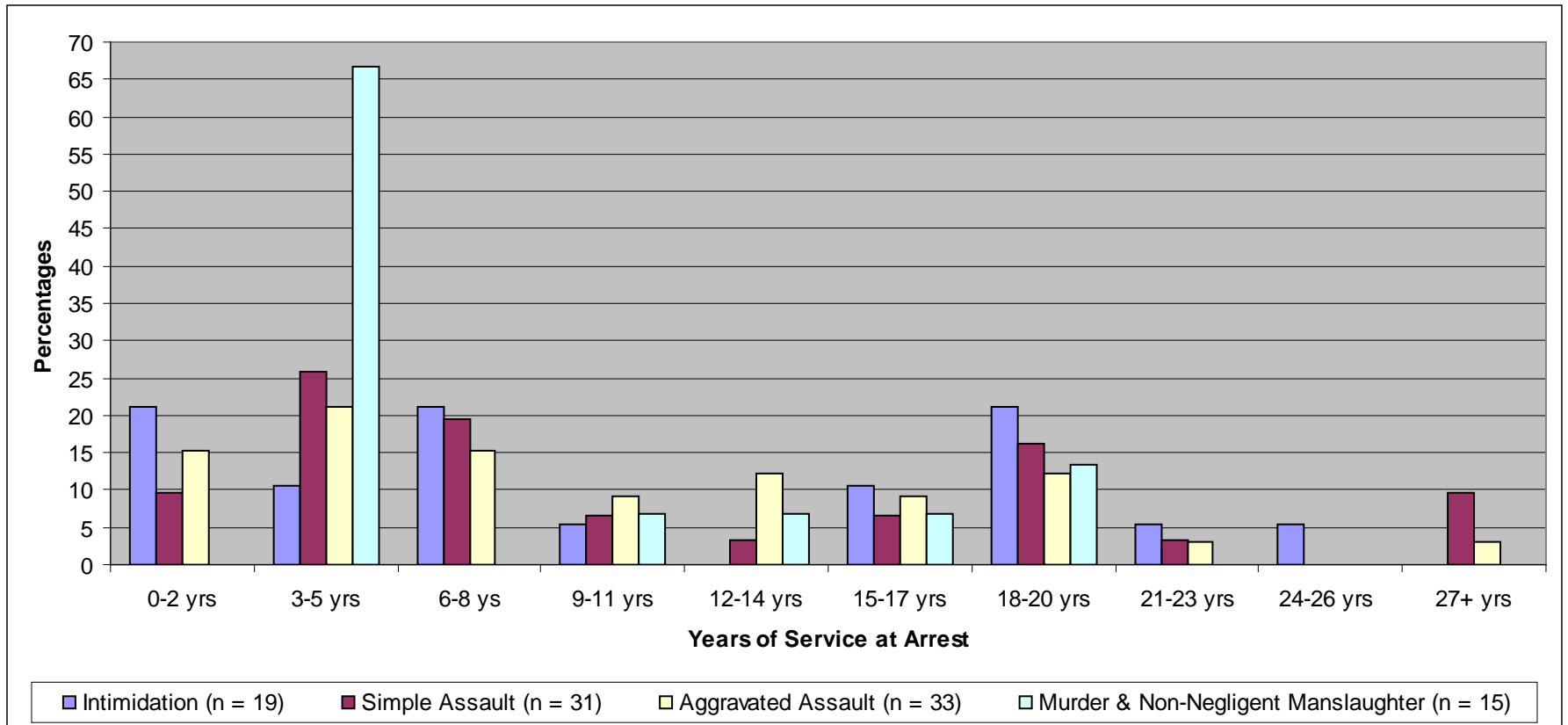
	n	%
all other offenses (unclassified)	114	16.4
driving under the influence	95	13.7
simple assault	75	10.8
aggravated assault	61	8.8
forcible fondling	59	8.5
forcible rape	40	5.8
drug / narcotic violation	38	5.5
weapons law violation	37	5.3
intimidation	36	5.2
all other larceny	35	5.0
liquor law violation	33	4.7
statutory rape	33	4.7
false report / statement	29	4.2
pornography / obscene material	29	4.2
other sex crime	28	4.0
forcible sodomy	26	3.7



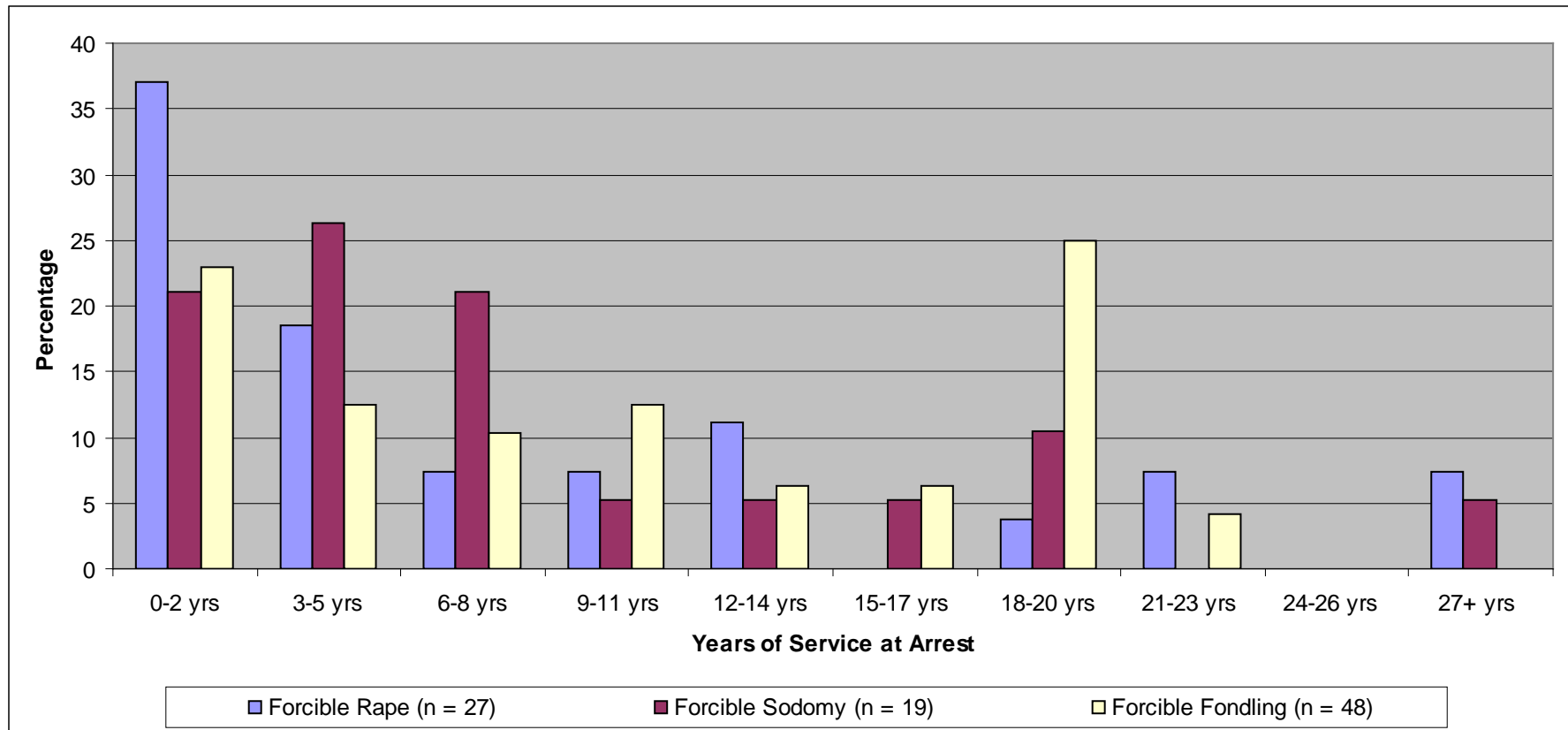
	n	%
murder & non-negligent manslaughter	22	3.2
extortion / blackmail	21	3.0
bribery	19	2.7
kidnapping / abduction	18	2.6
on-line solicitation of a child	18	2.6
disorderly conduct	17	2.4
indecent exposure	16	2.3
civil rights violation	11	1.6
evidence: destroying / tampering	11	1.6
false pretenses/swindle/confidence game	11	1.6
robbery	11	1.6
burglary / breaking and entering	10	1.4
destruction / damage / vandalism	10	1.4
sexual assault with an object	9	1.3
gambling: operating / promoting	8	1.2
impersonation	8	1.2
theft from building	8	1.2
restraining order violation	7	1.0
drunkenness	6	.9

	n	%
embezzlement	6	.9
prostitution	6	.9
arson	5	.7
negligent manslaughter	5	.7
counterfeiting / forgery	4	.6
shoplifting	4	.6
stolen property offenses	4	.6
trespass of real property	4	.6
drug equipment violation	3	.4
credit card / atm fraud	2	.3
family offense, non-violent	2	.3
incest	2	.3
liquor law violation	2	.3
motor vehicle theft	2	.3
pocket-picking	1	.1
theft from motor vehicle	1	.1
theft of motor vehicle parts	1	.1
wire fraud	1	.1
wiretapping, illegal	1	.1

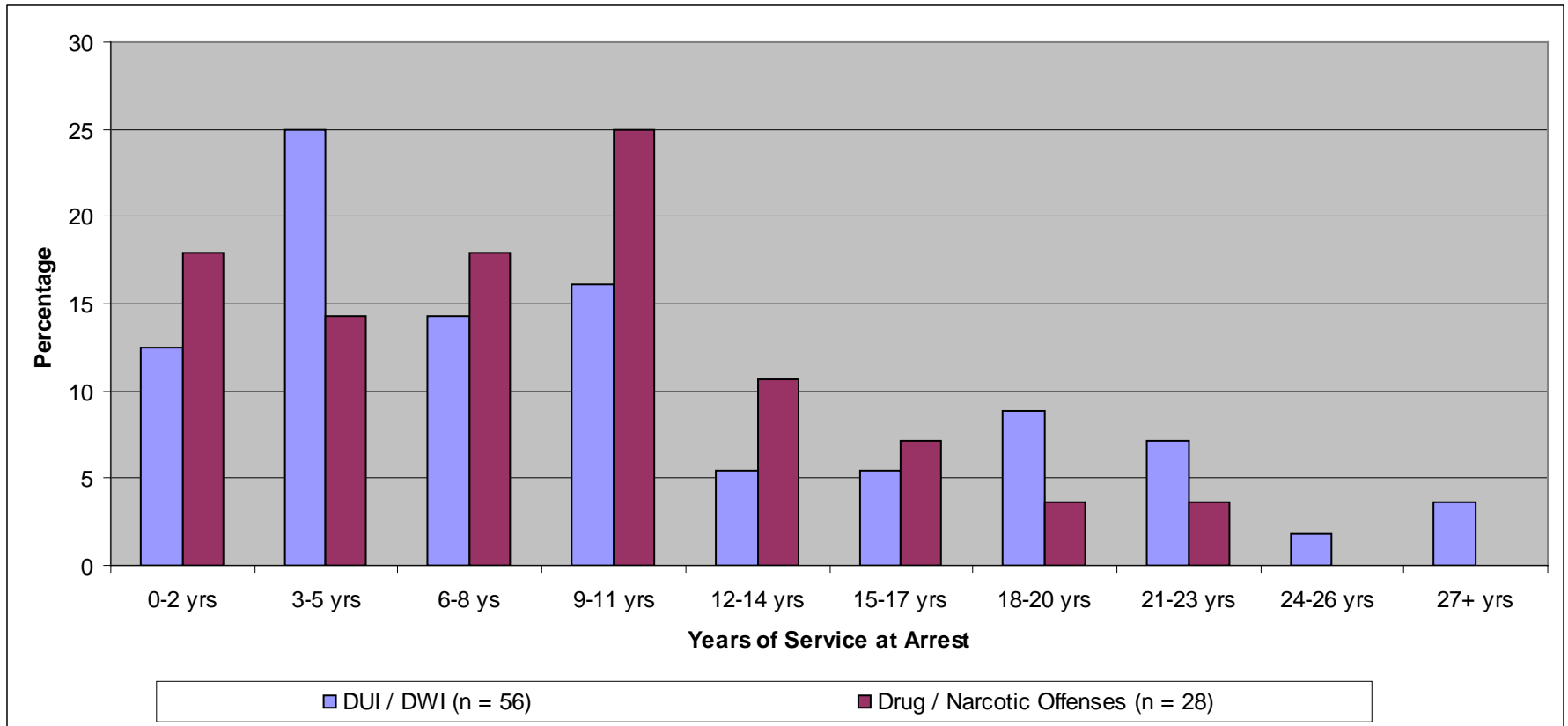
# Years of Service at Arrest: Intimidation, Assault & Murder



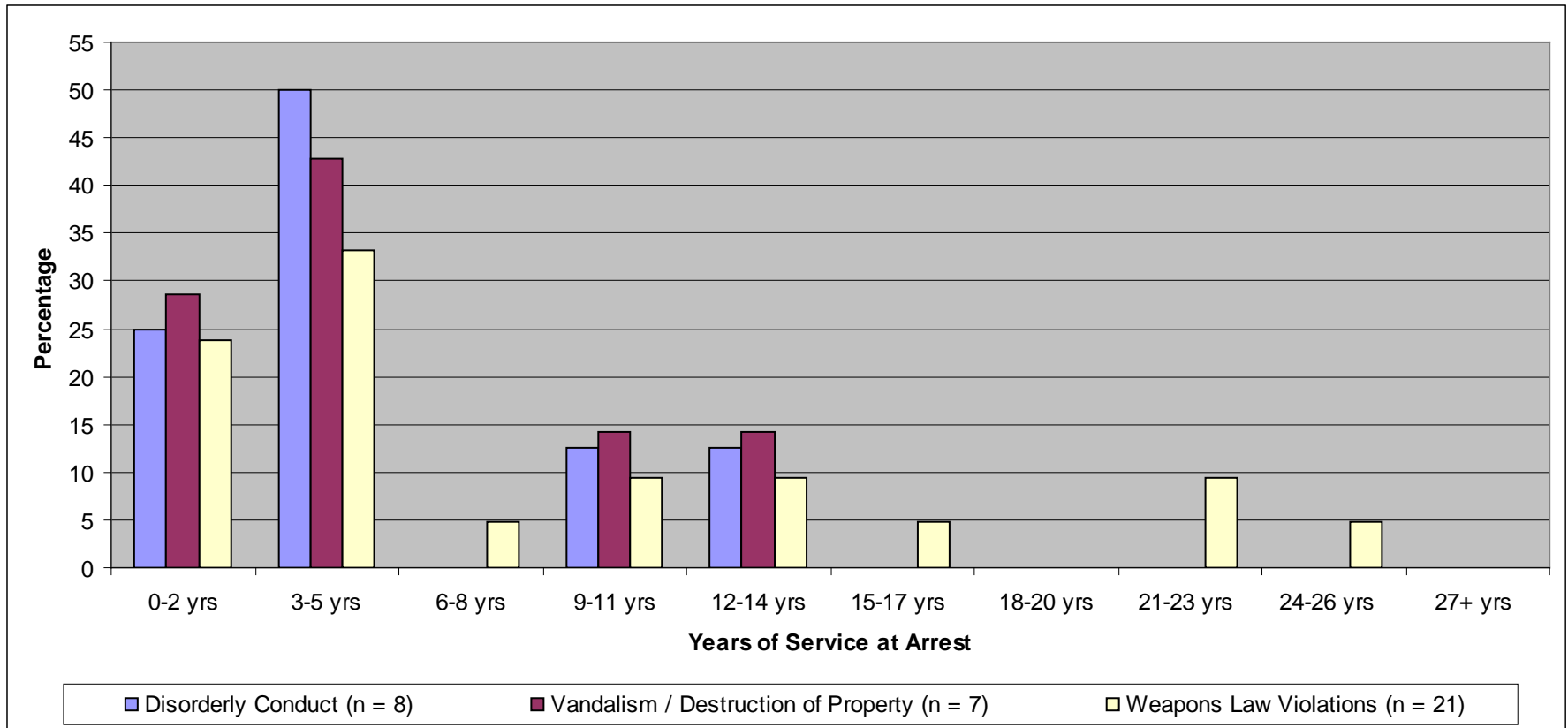
# Years of Service at Arrest: Forcible Rape, Sodomy & Fondling



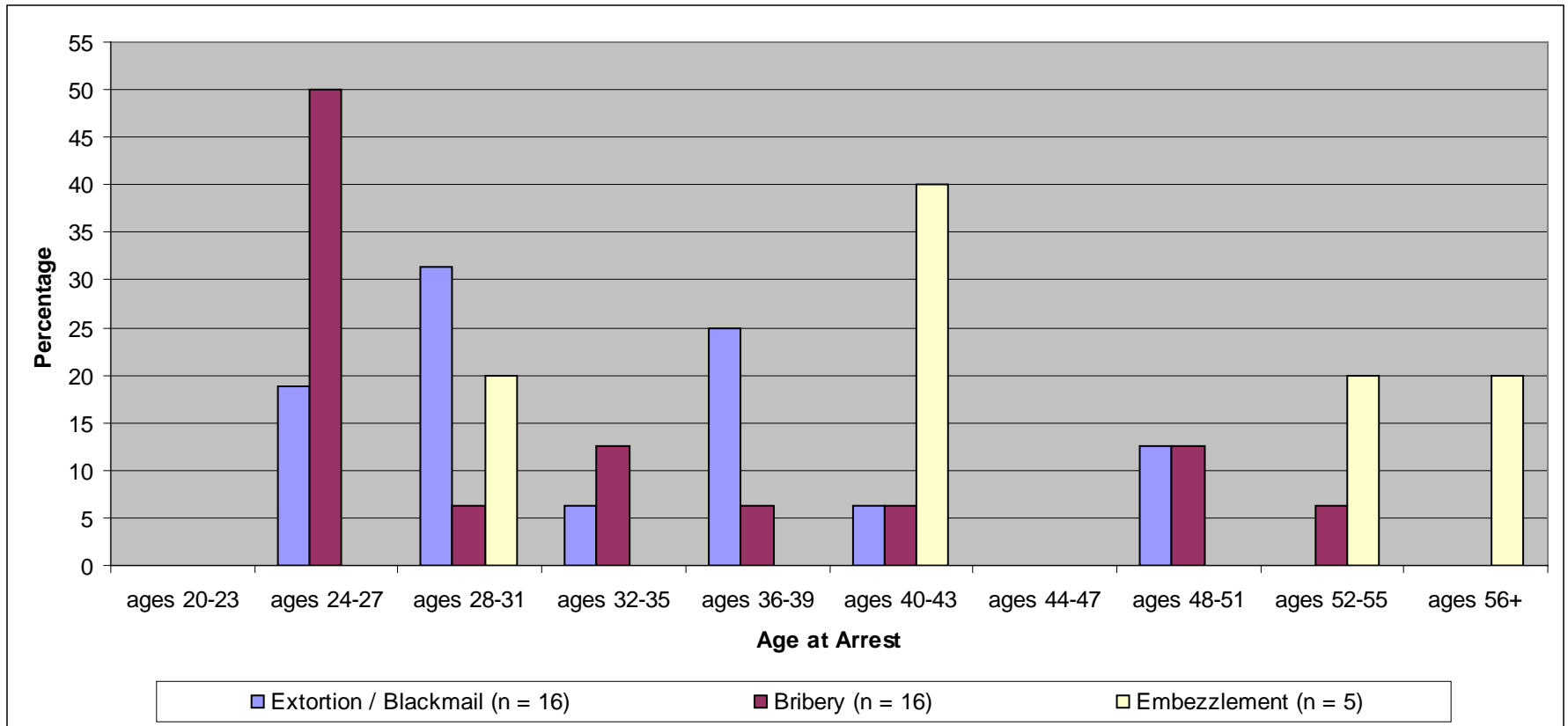
# Years of Service at Arrest: DUI and Drug Offenses



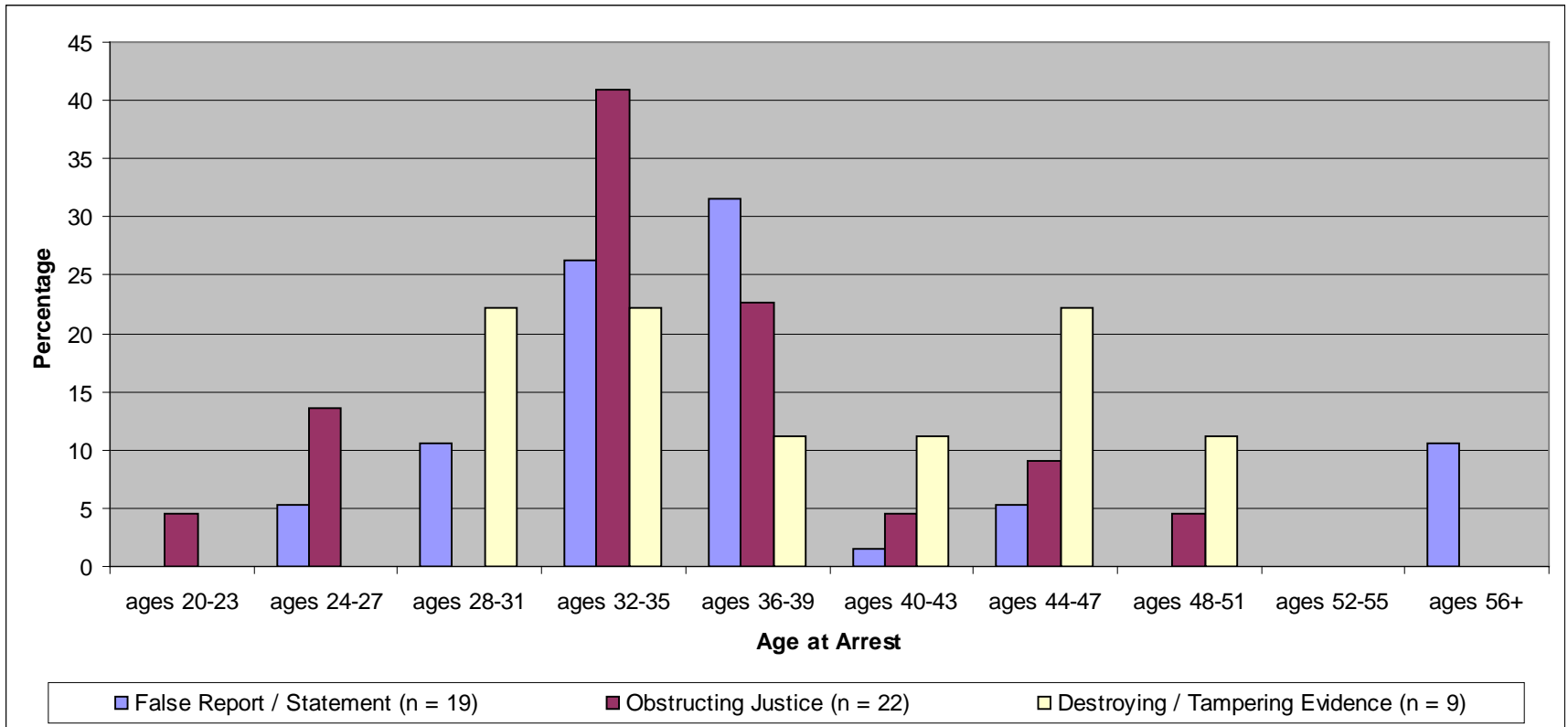
# Years of Service at Arrest: Disorderly Conduct, Vandalism & Weapons Law Violations



# Age of Officer at Arrest: Extortion, Bribery & Embezzlement

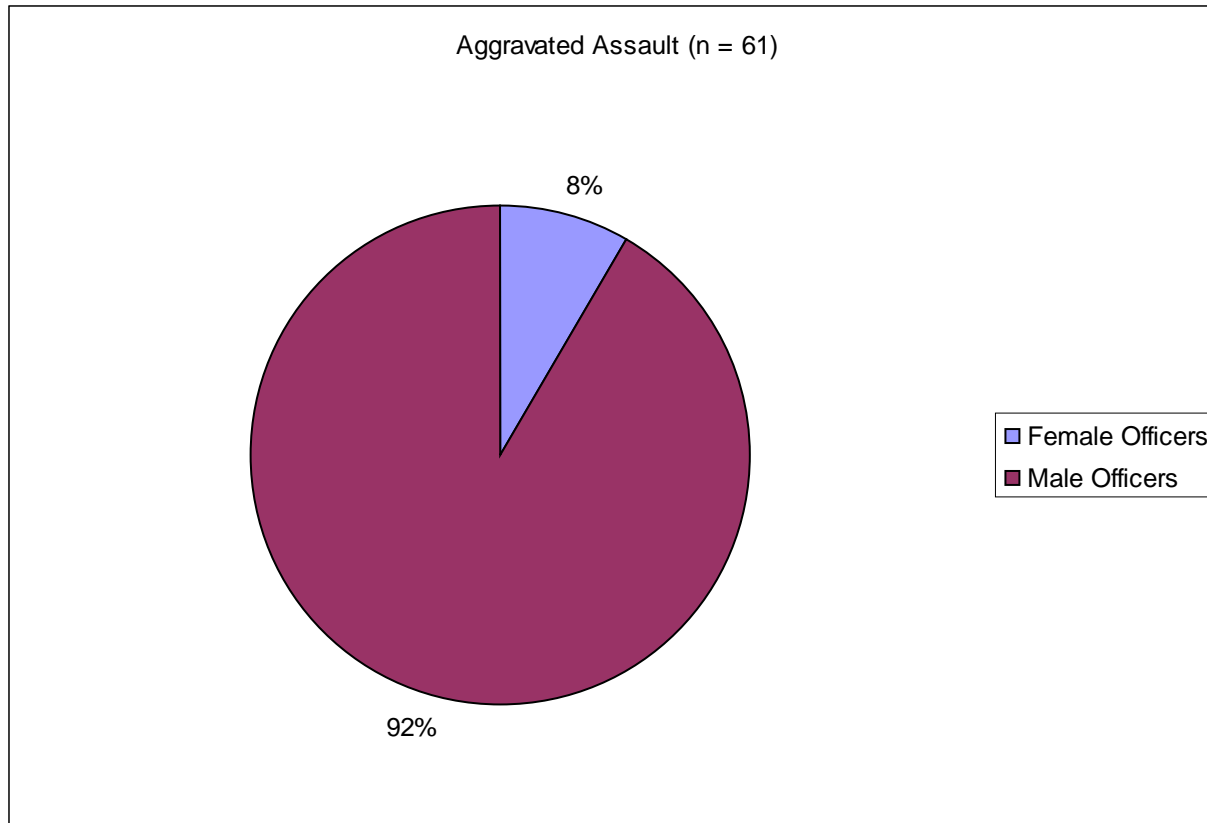


# Age of Officer at Arrest: False Reports, Obstructing Justice & Destroying/Tampering with Evidence

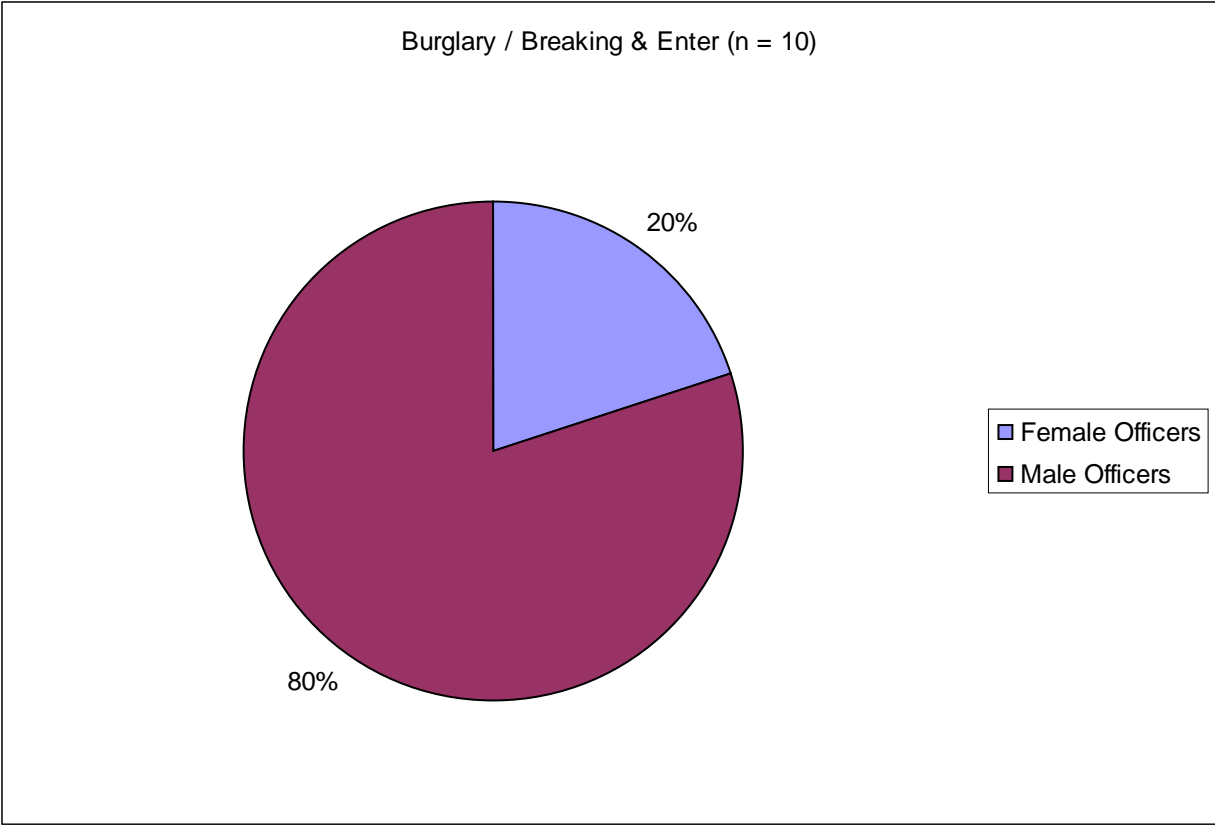




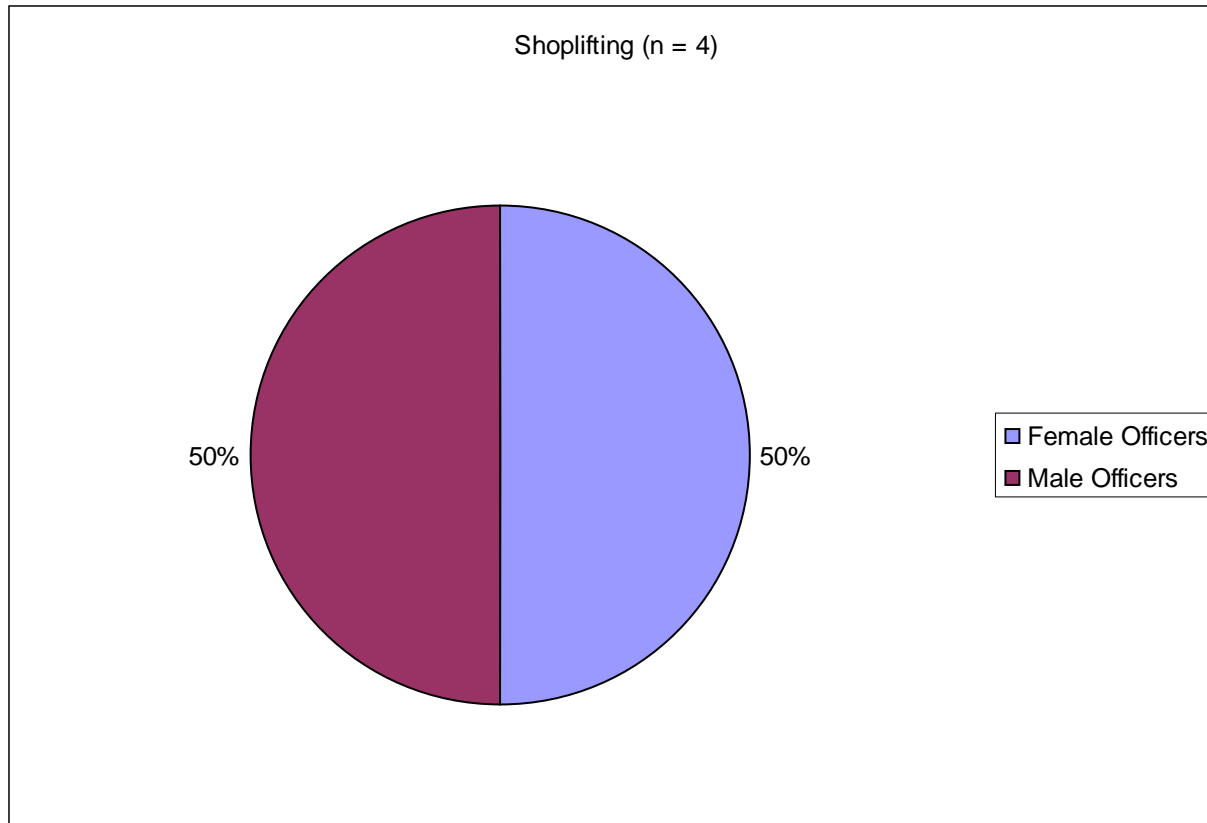
# Gender: Officers charged with Aggravated Assault



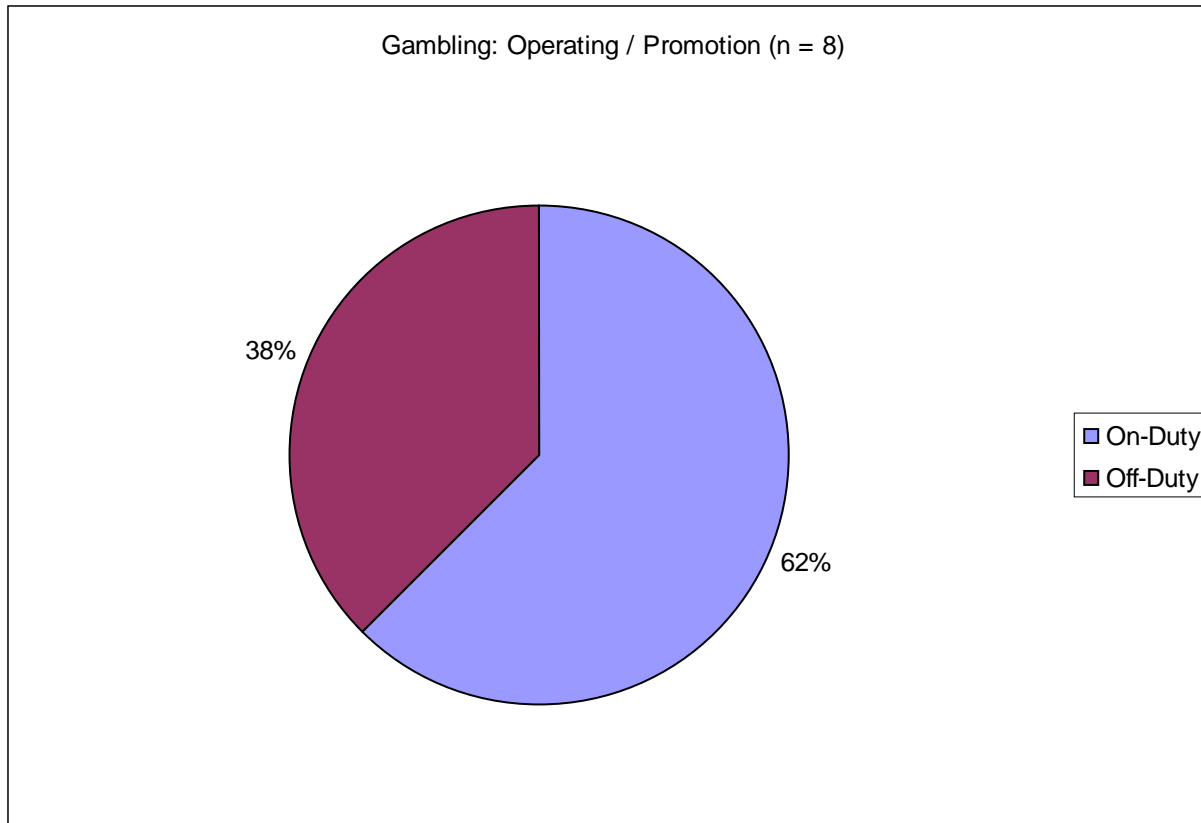
# Gender: Officers charged with Burglary



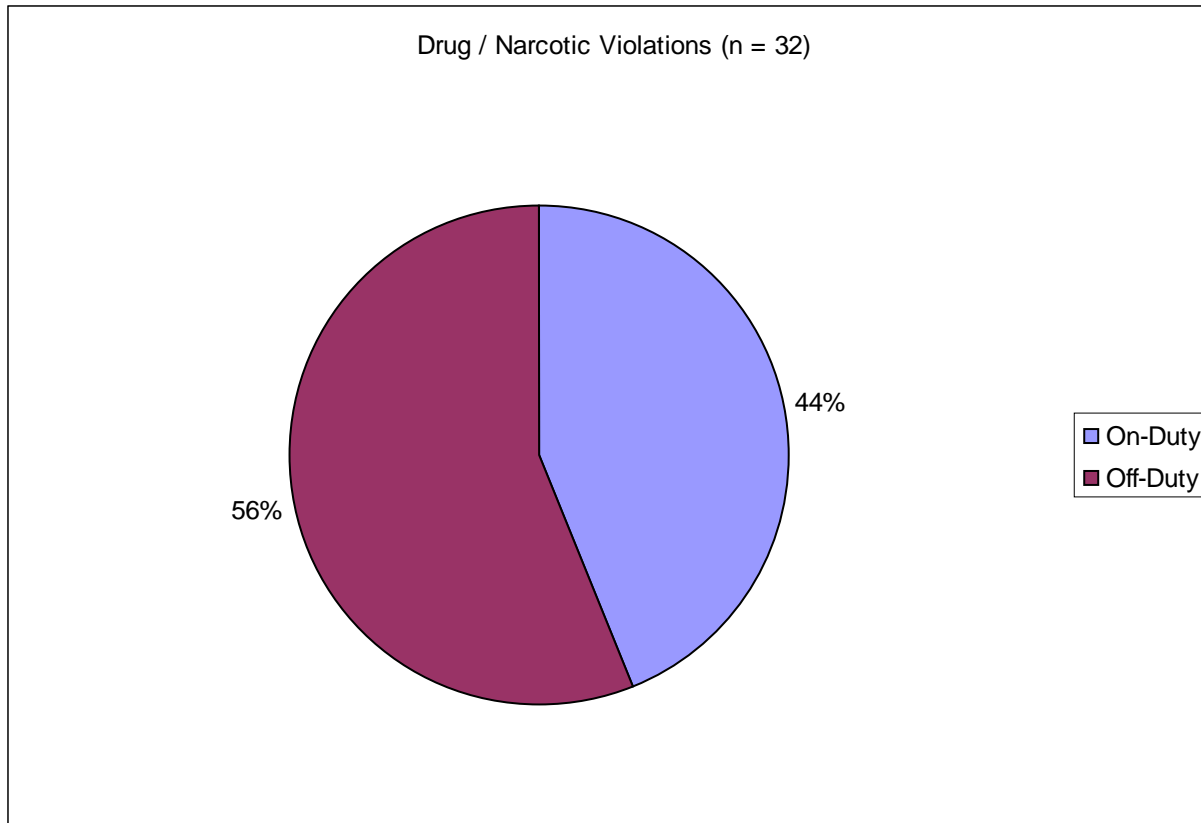
# Gender: Officers charged with Shoplifting



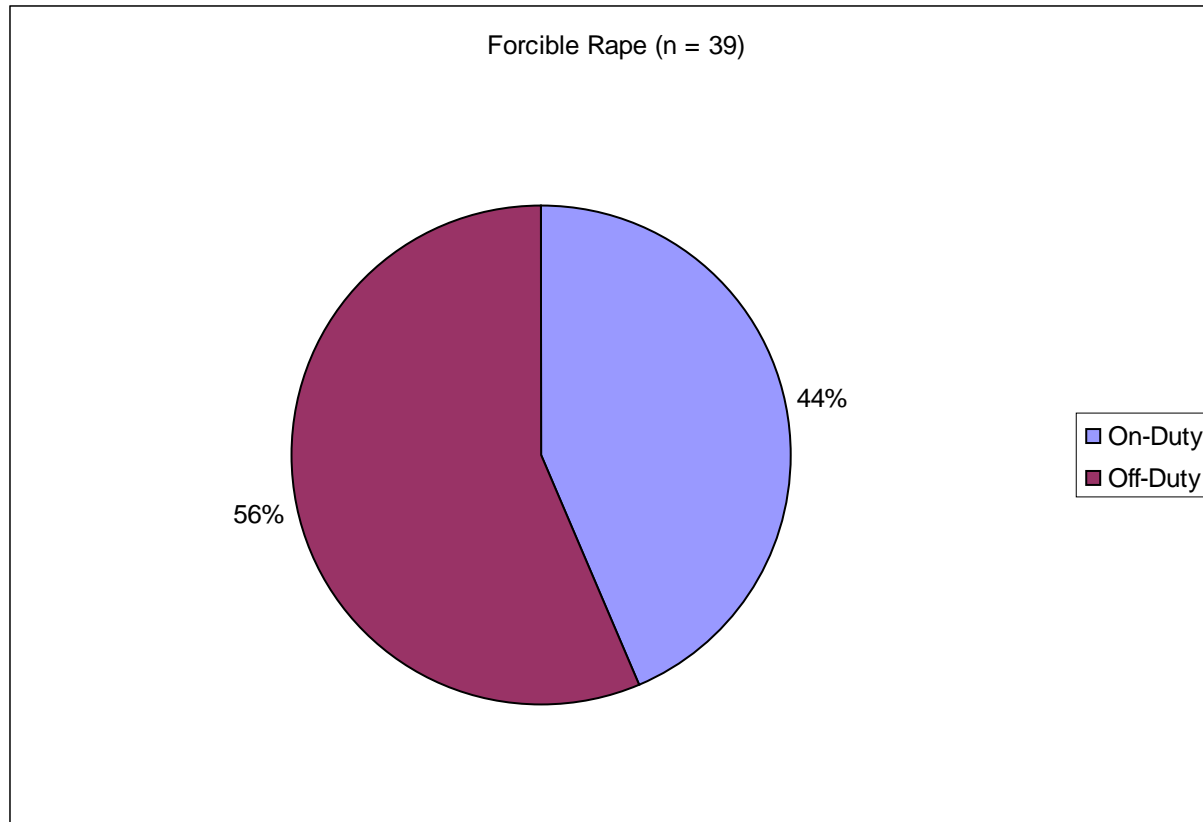
# On-Duty Crimes: Gambling: Operating / Promoting



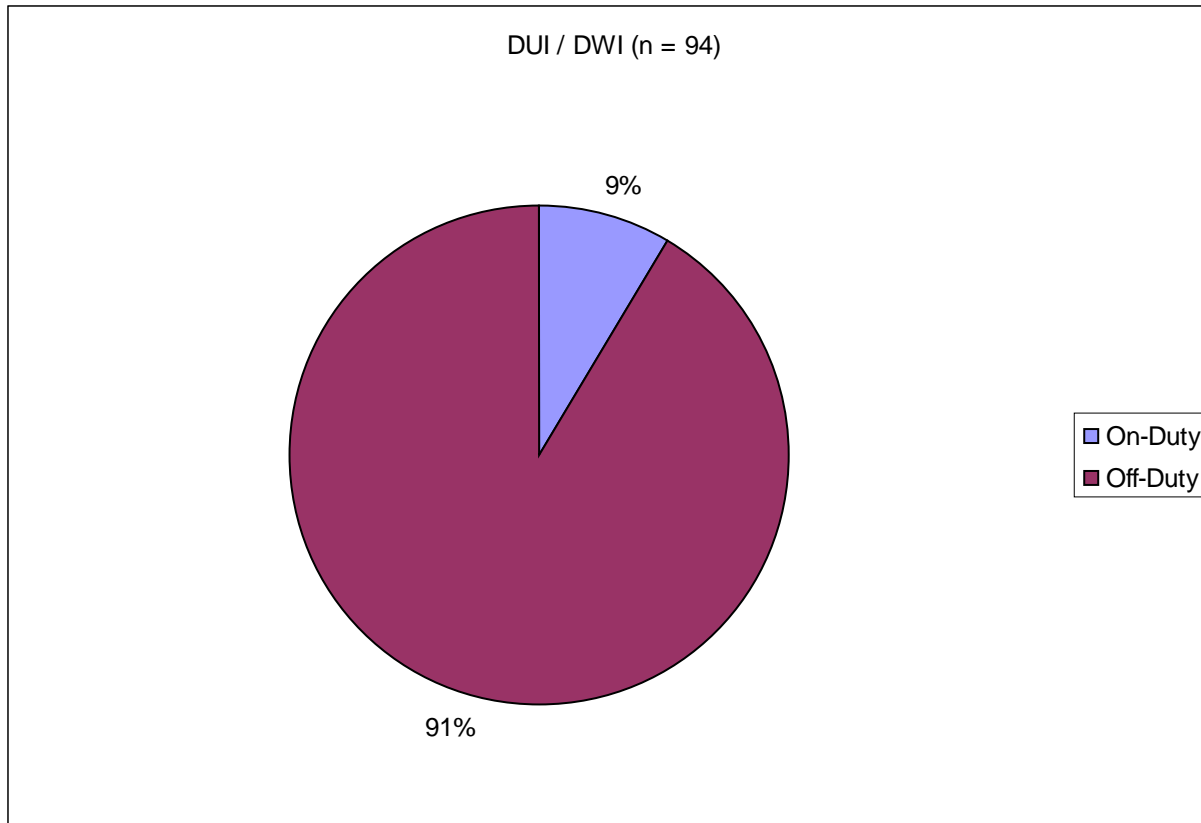
# On-Duty Crimes: Drug / Narcotic Offenses



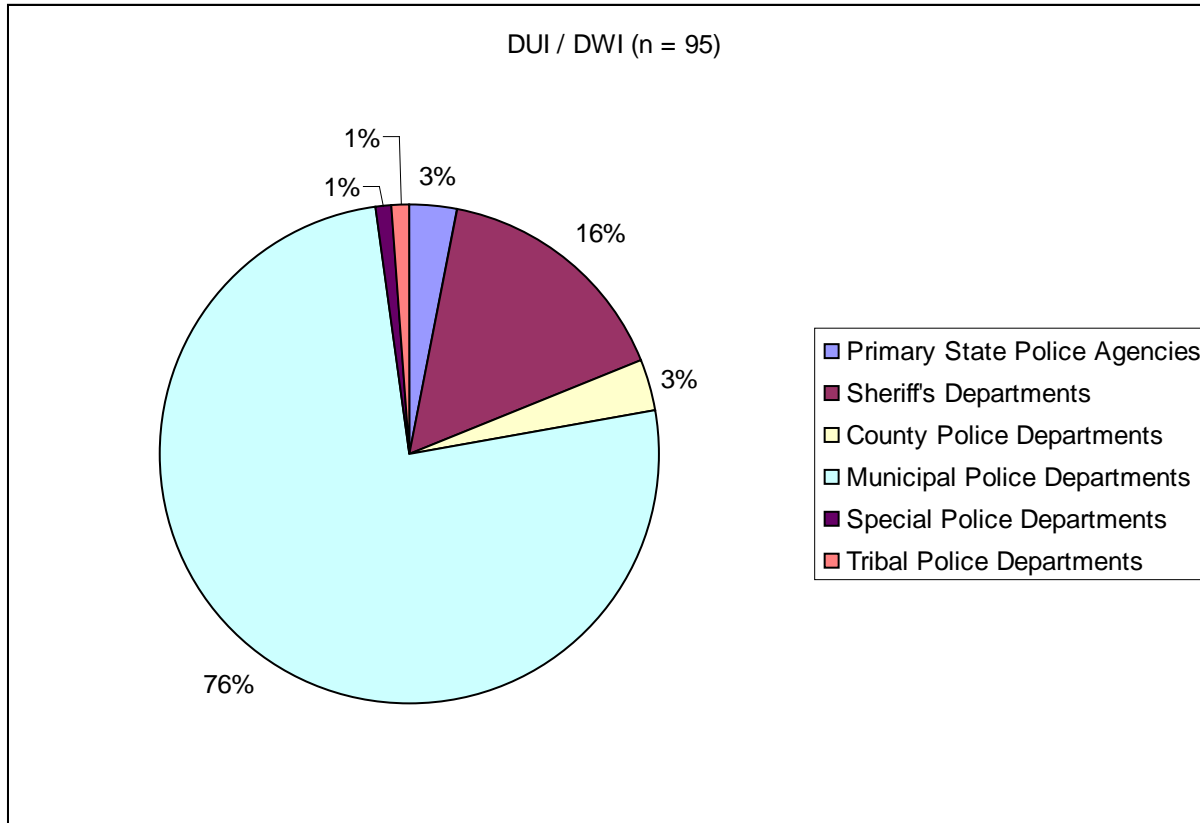
# On-Duty Crimes: Forcible Rape



# On-Duty Crimes: Driving Under the Influence

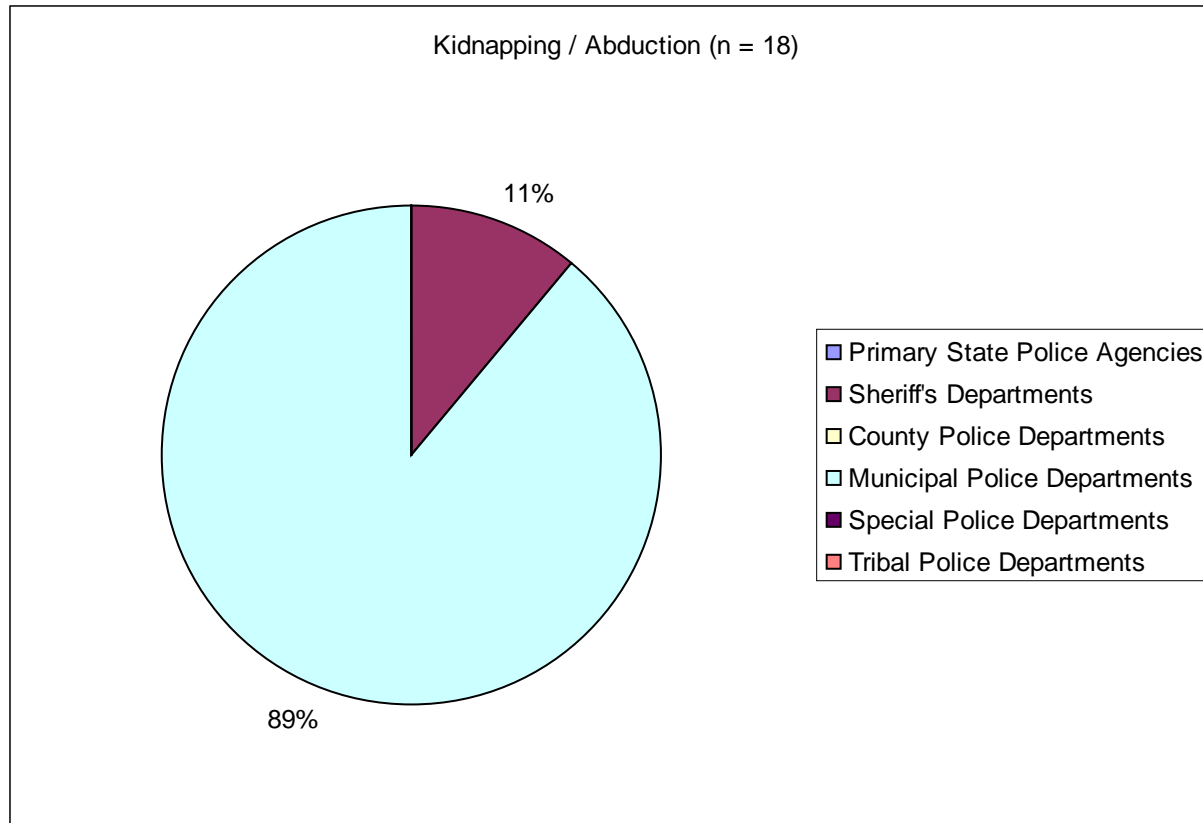


# Agency Type: Driving Under the Influence

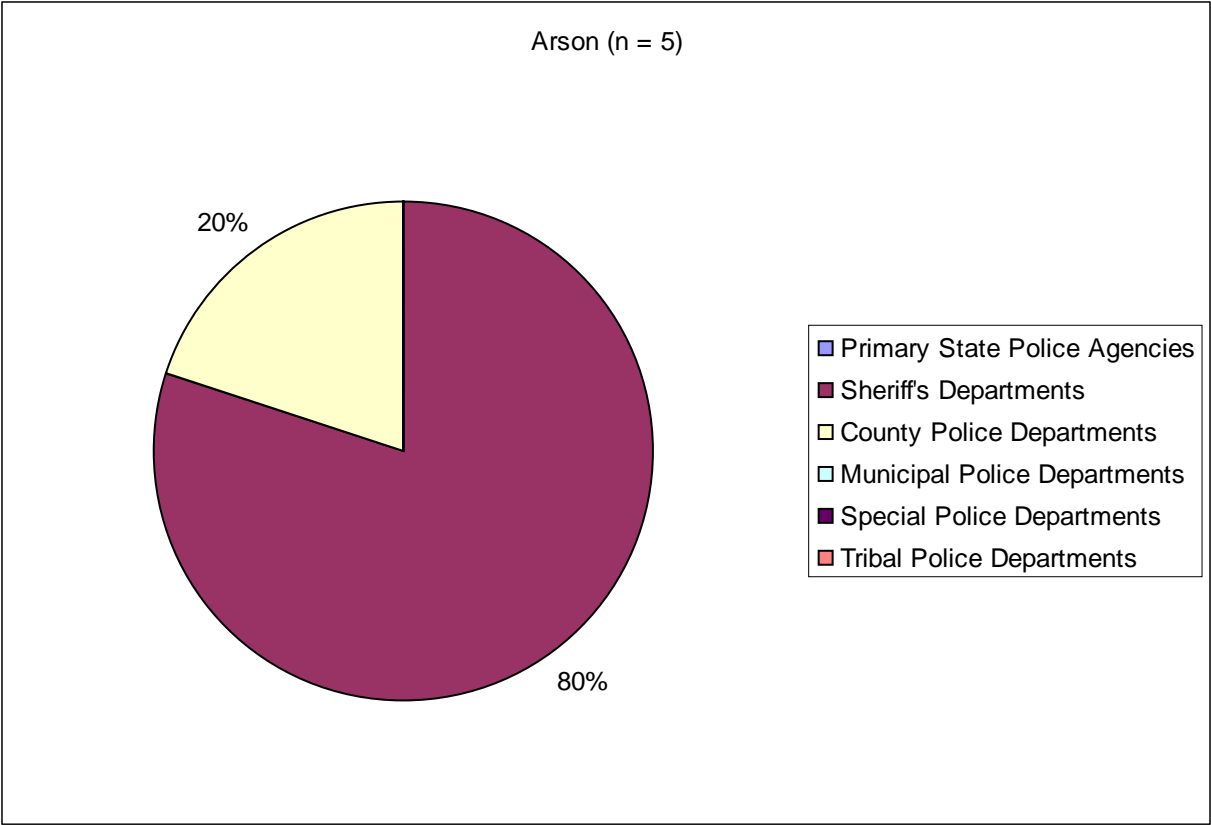




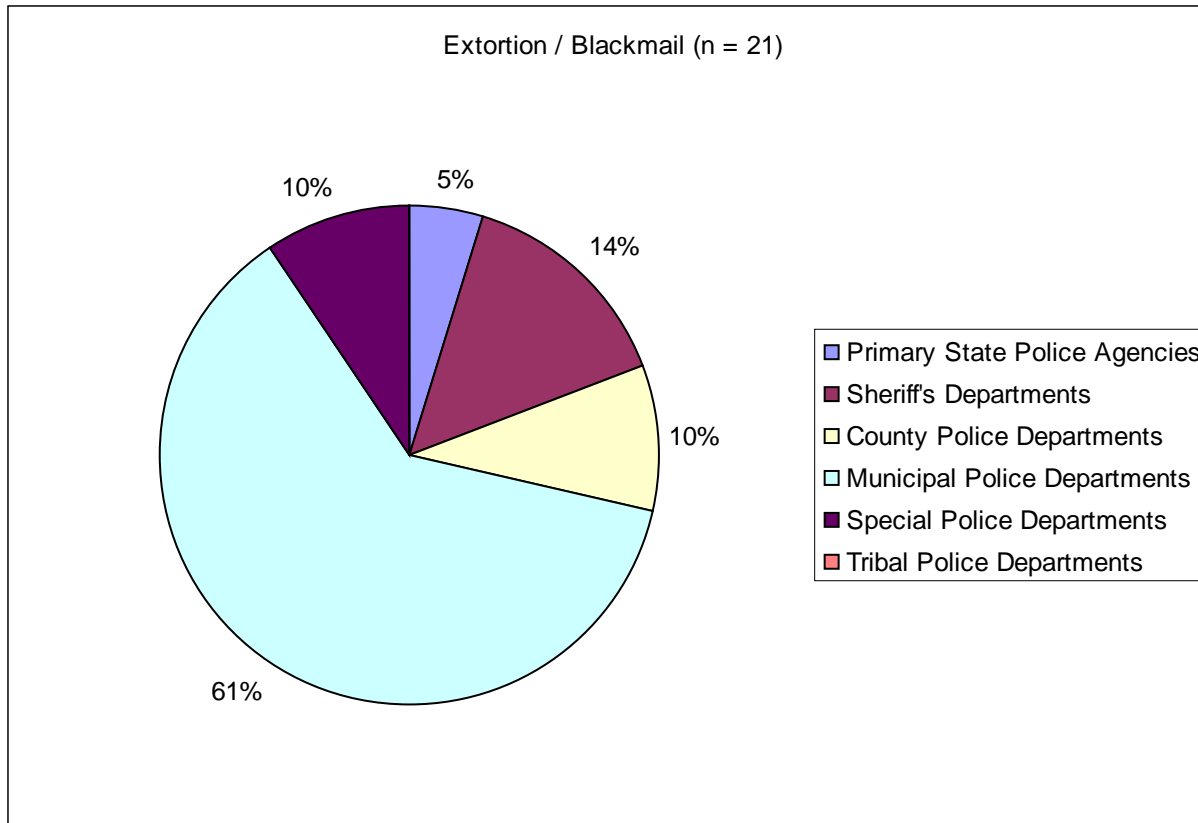
# Agency Type: Kidnapping / Abduction



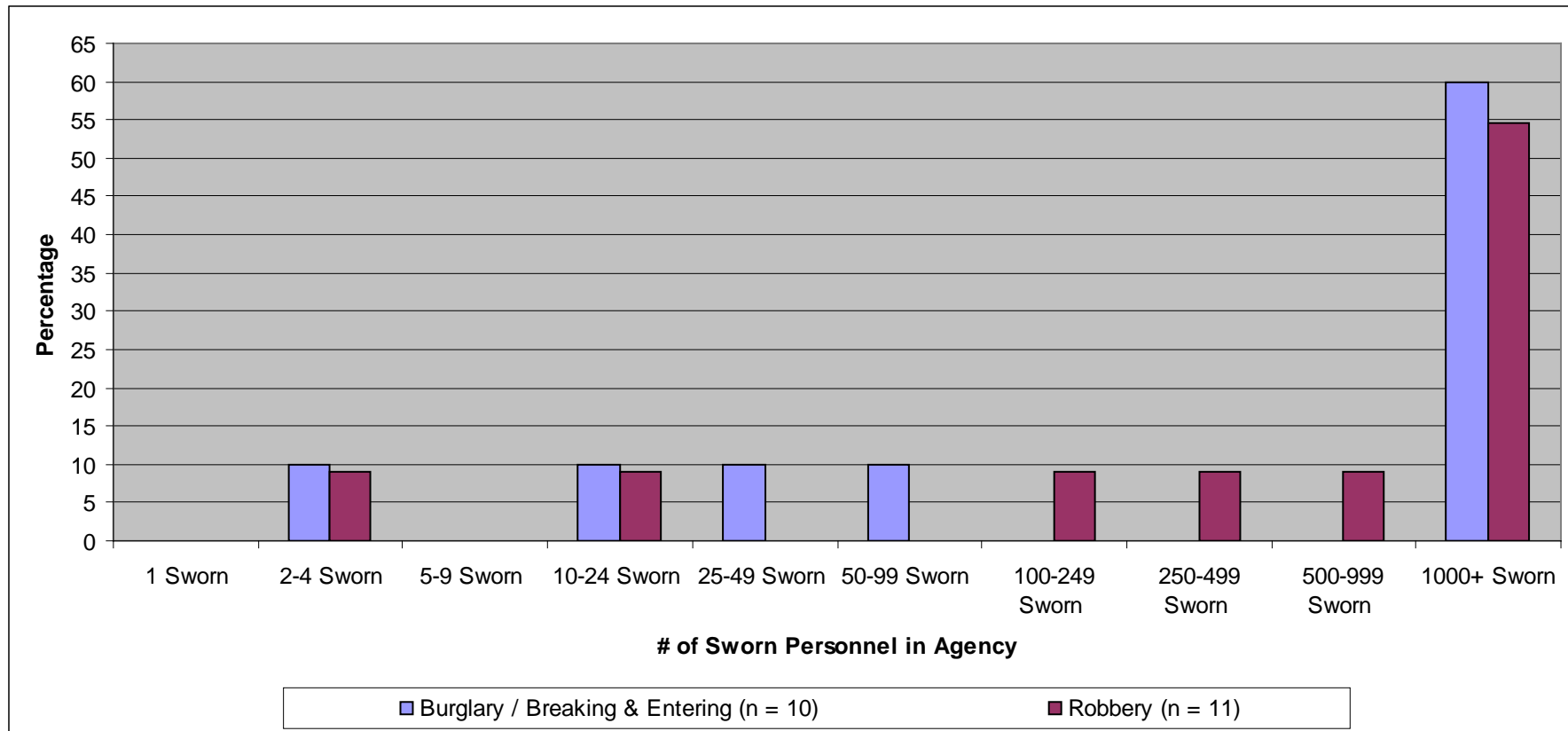
# Agency Type: Arson



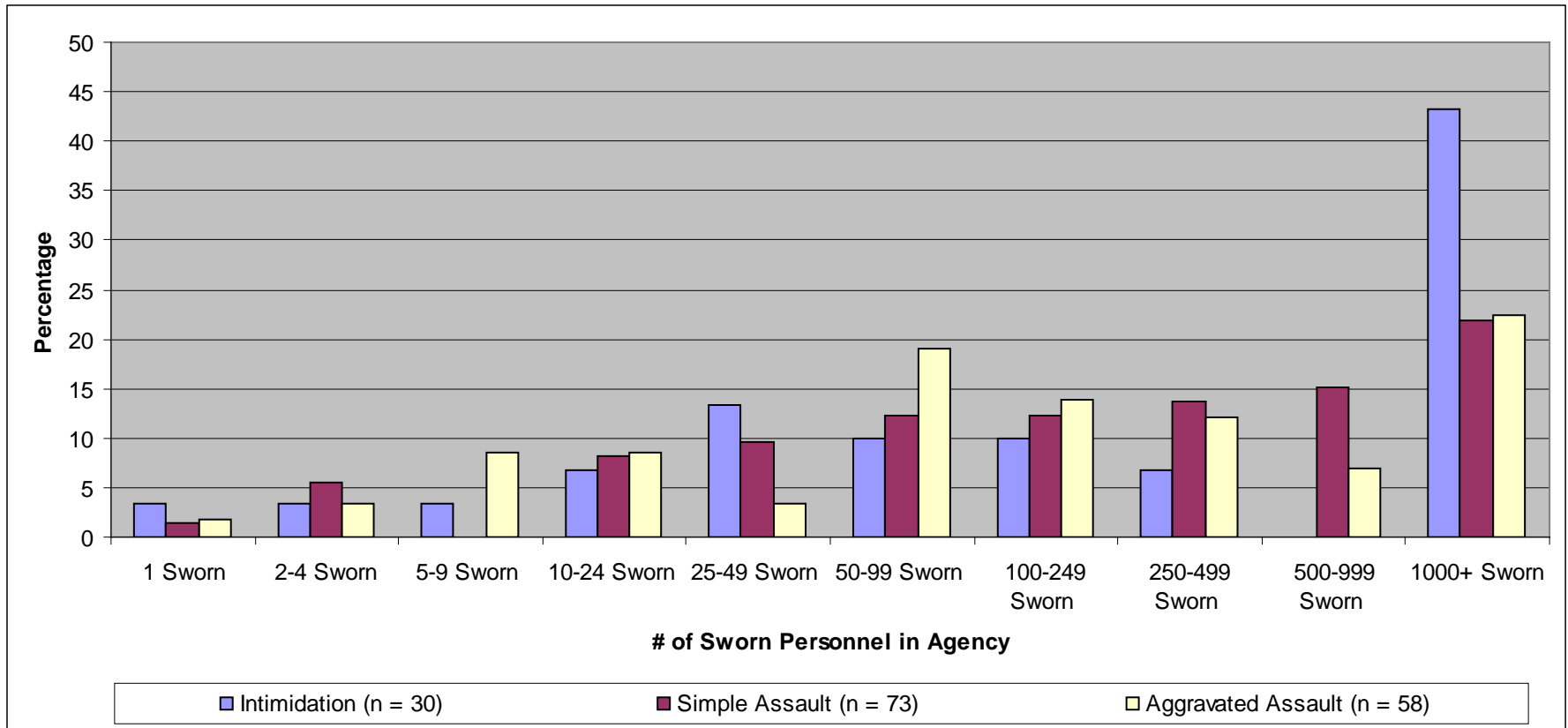
# Agency Type: Extortion / Blackmail



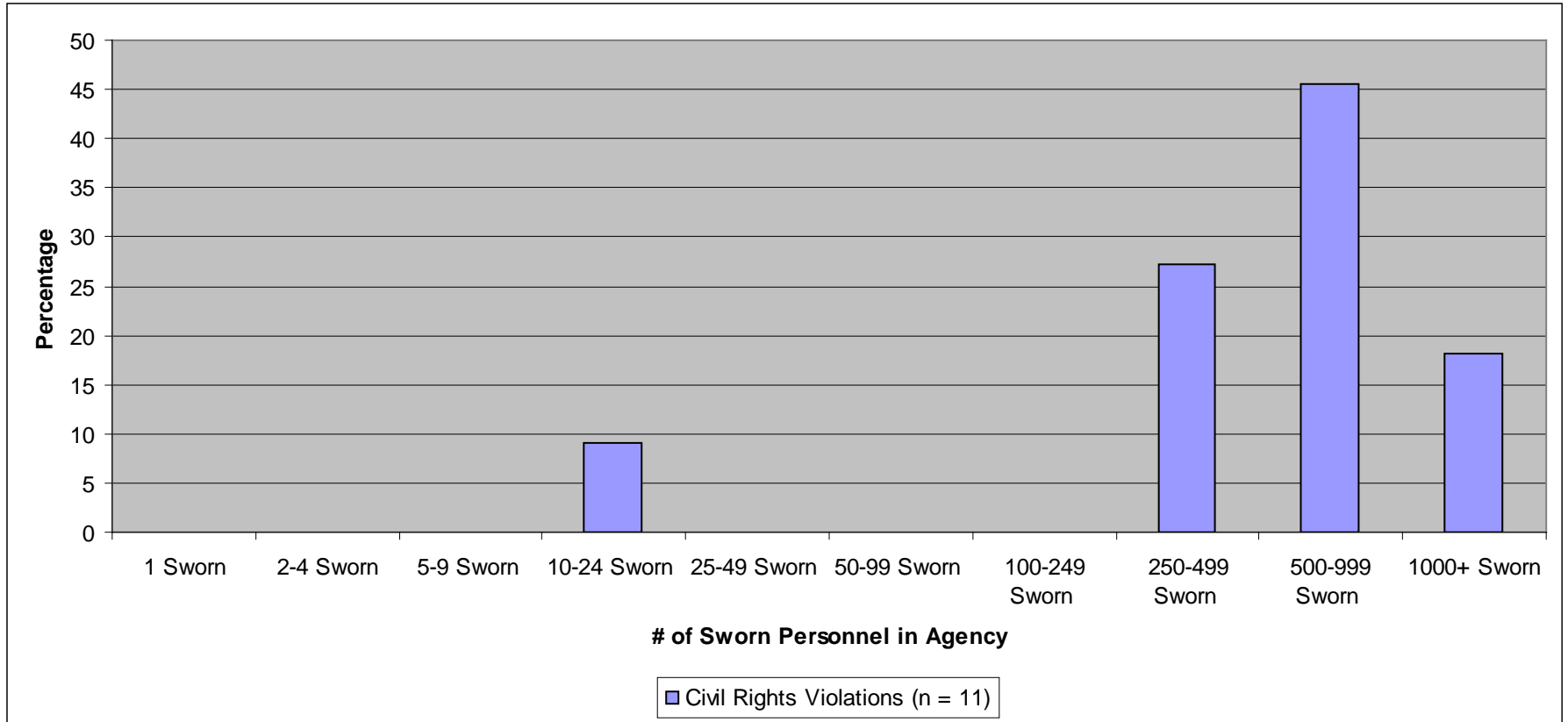
# # of Sworn Personnel in Agency: Burglary & Robbery



# # of Sworn Personnel in Agency: Intimidation & Assault

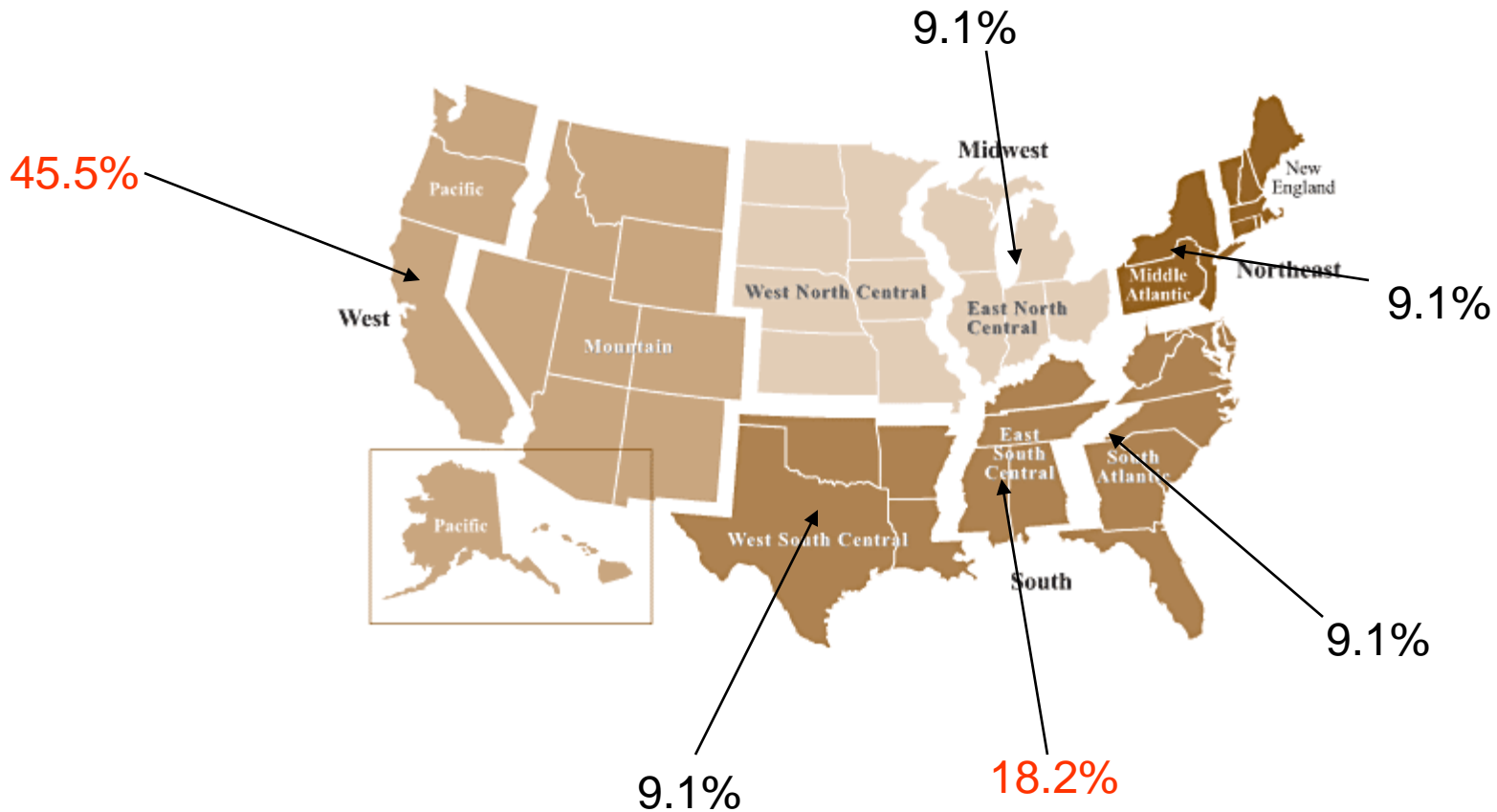


# # of Sworn Personnel in Agency: Federal Civil Rights Violations



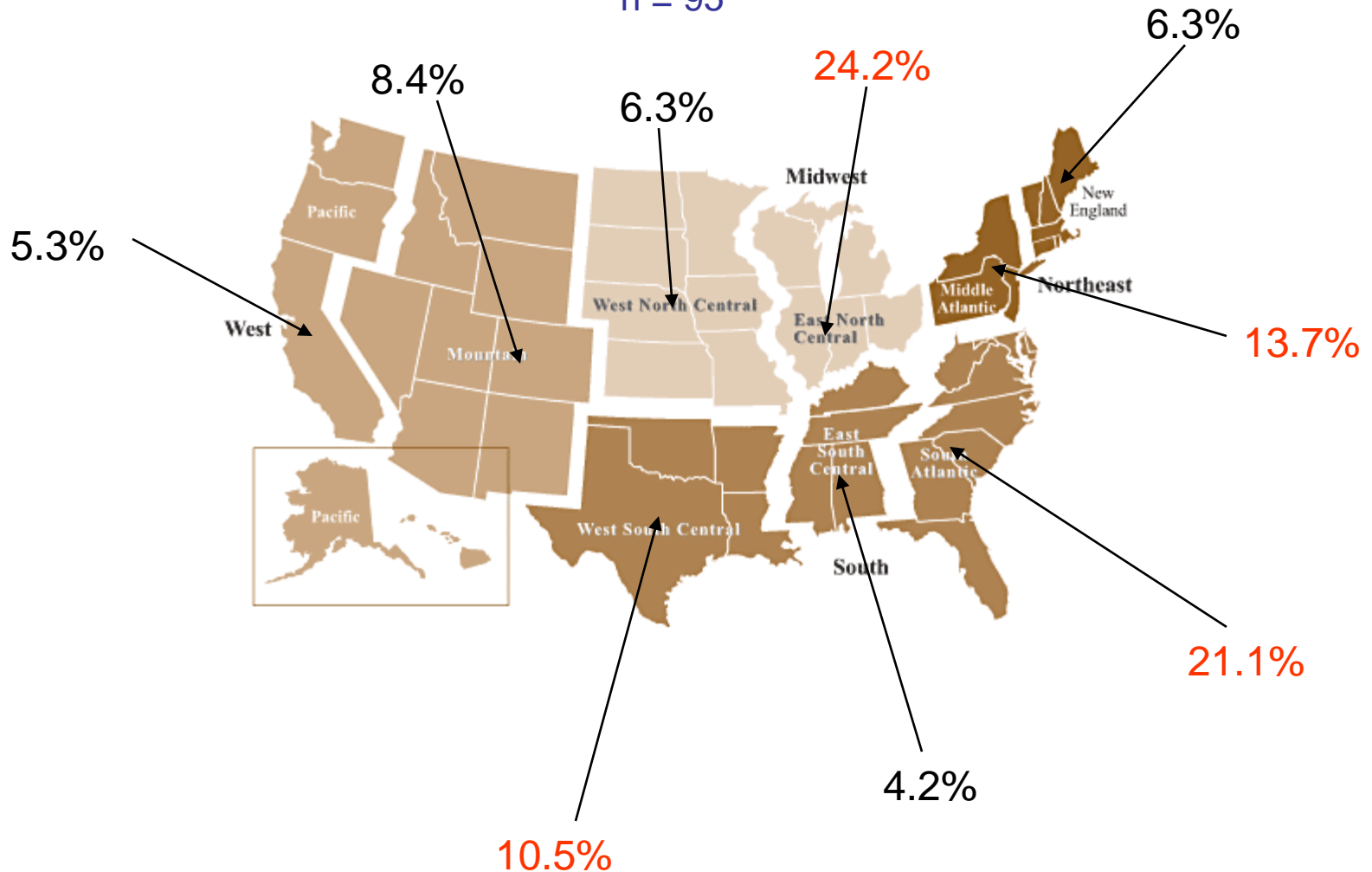
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Federal Civil Rights Violations

n = 11



# Sworn Officers Arrested for Driving Under the Influence

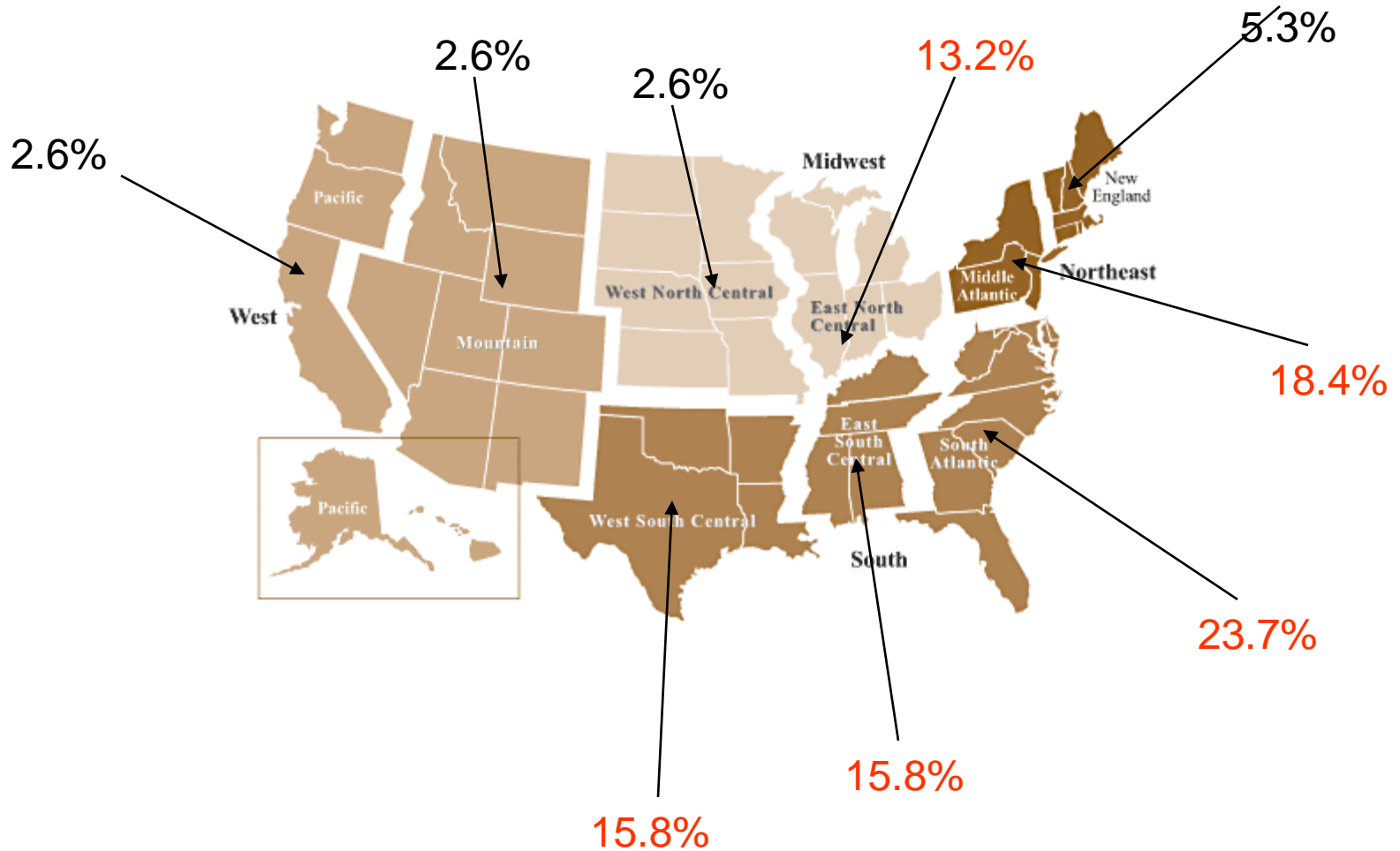
n = 95





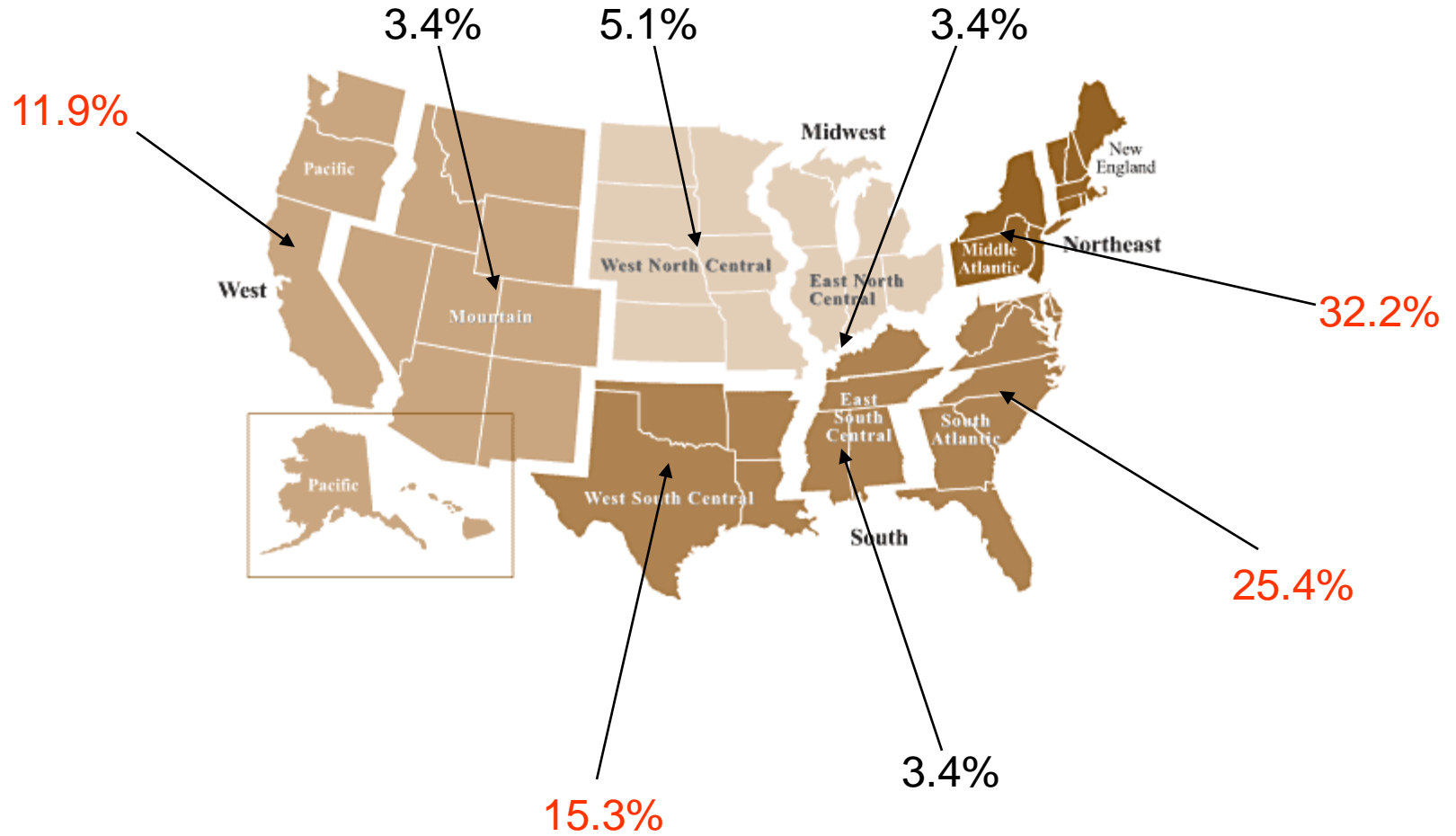
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Drug / Narcotic Offenses

n = 38



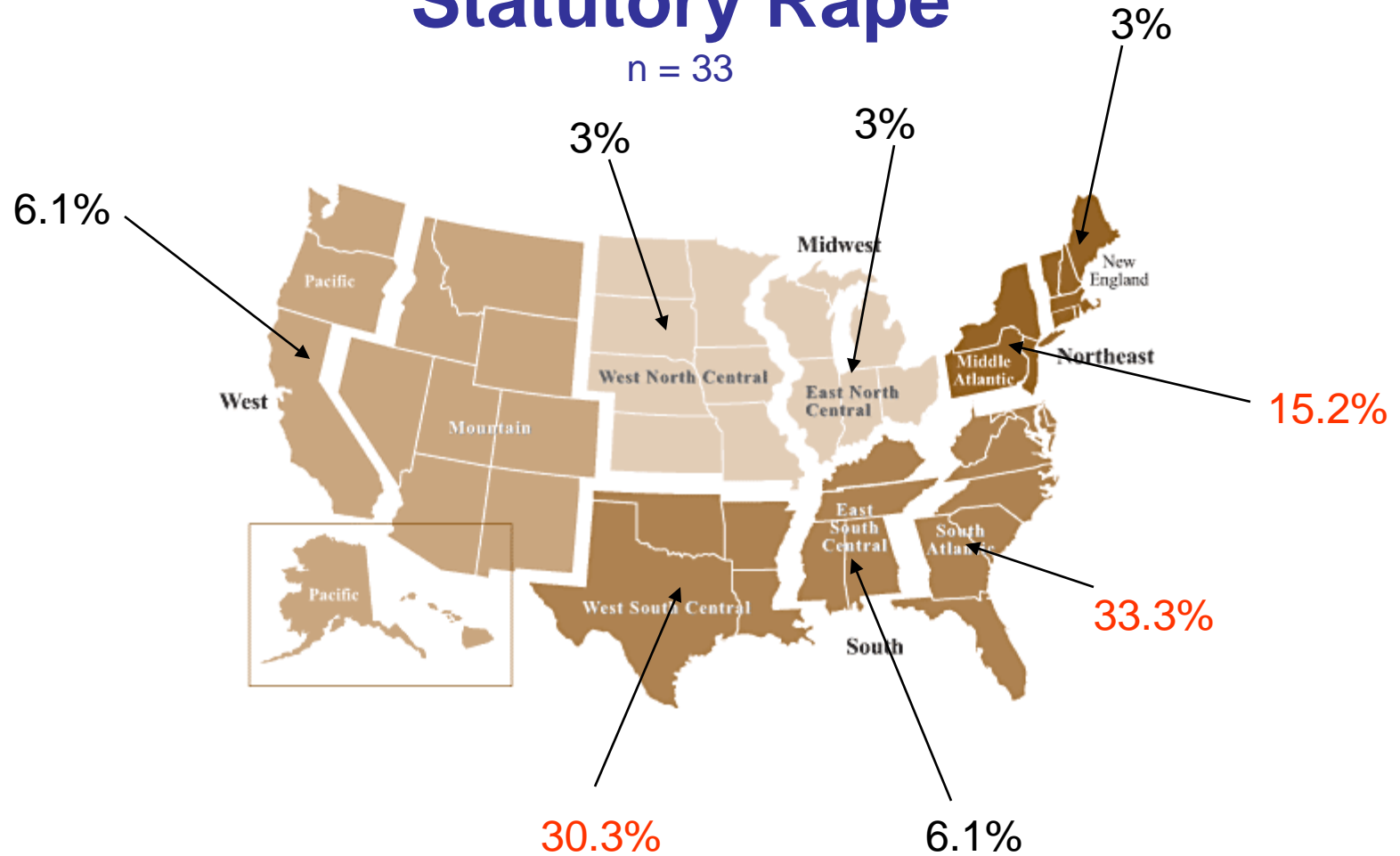
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Forcible Fondling

n = 59



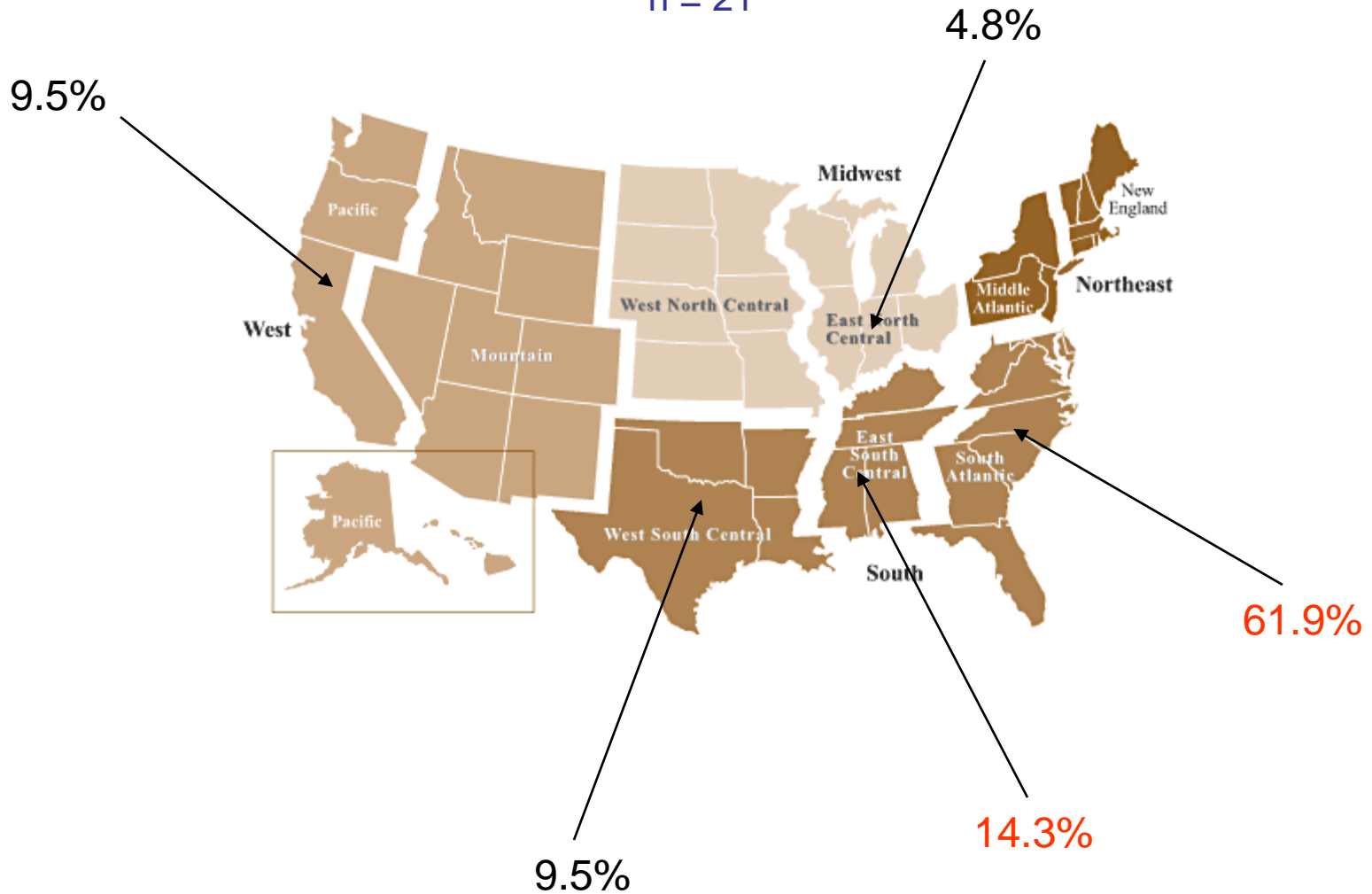
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Statutory Rape

n = 33



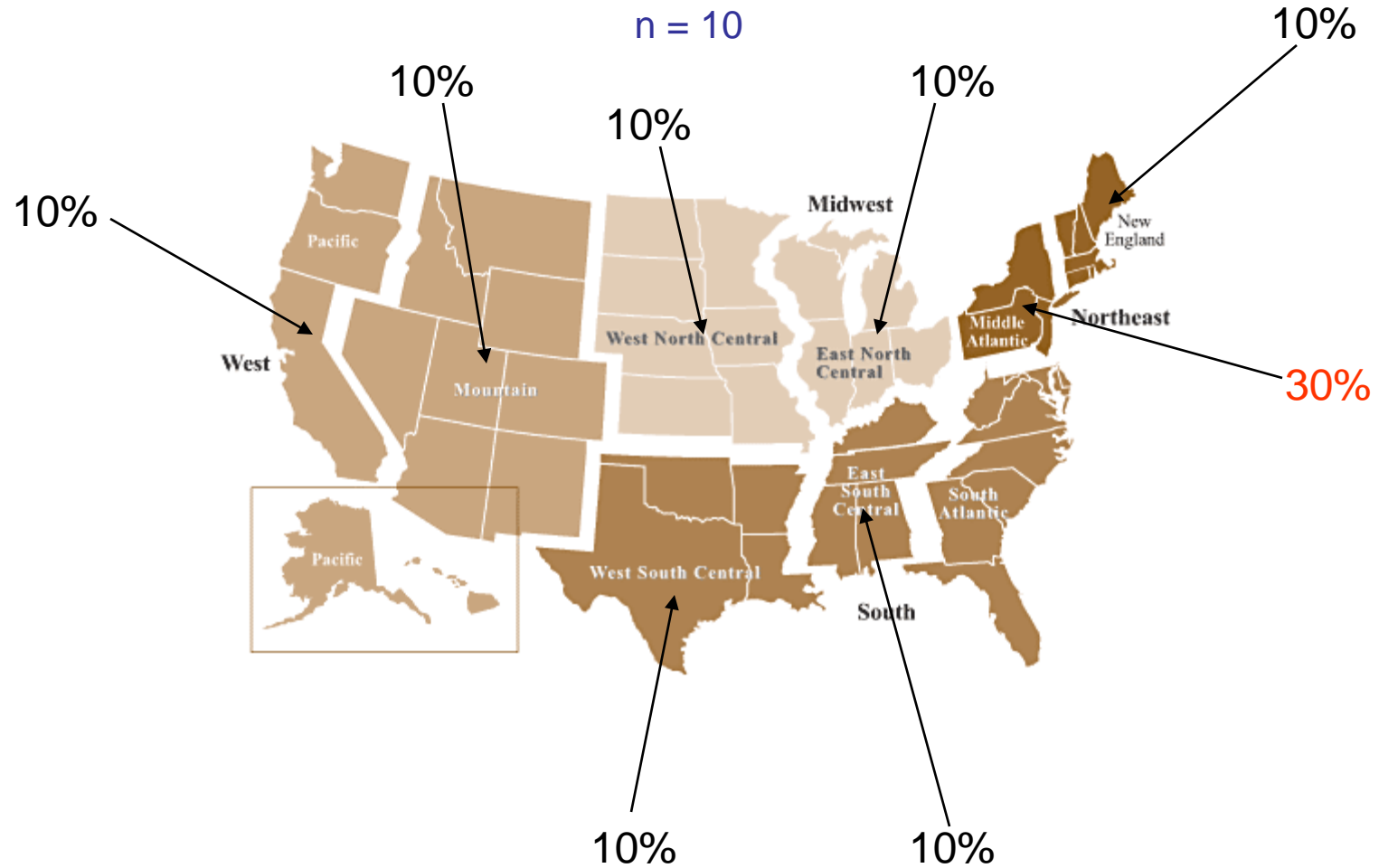
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Extortion / Blackmail

n = 21



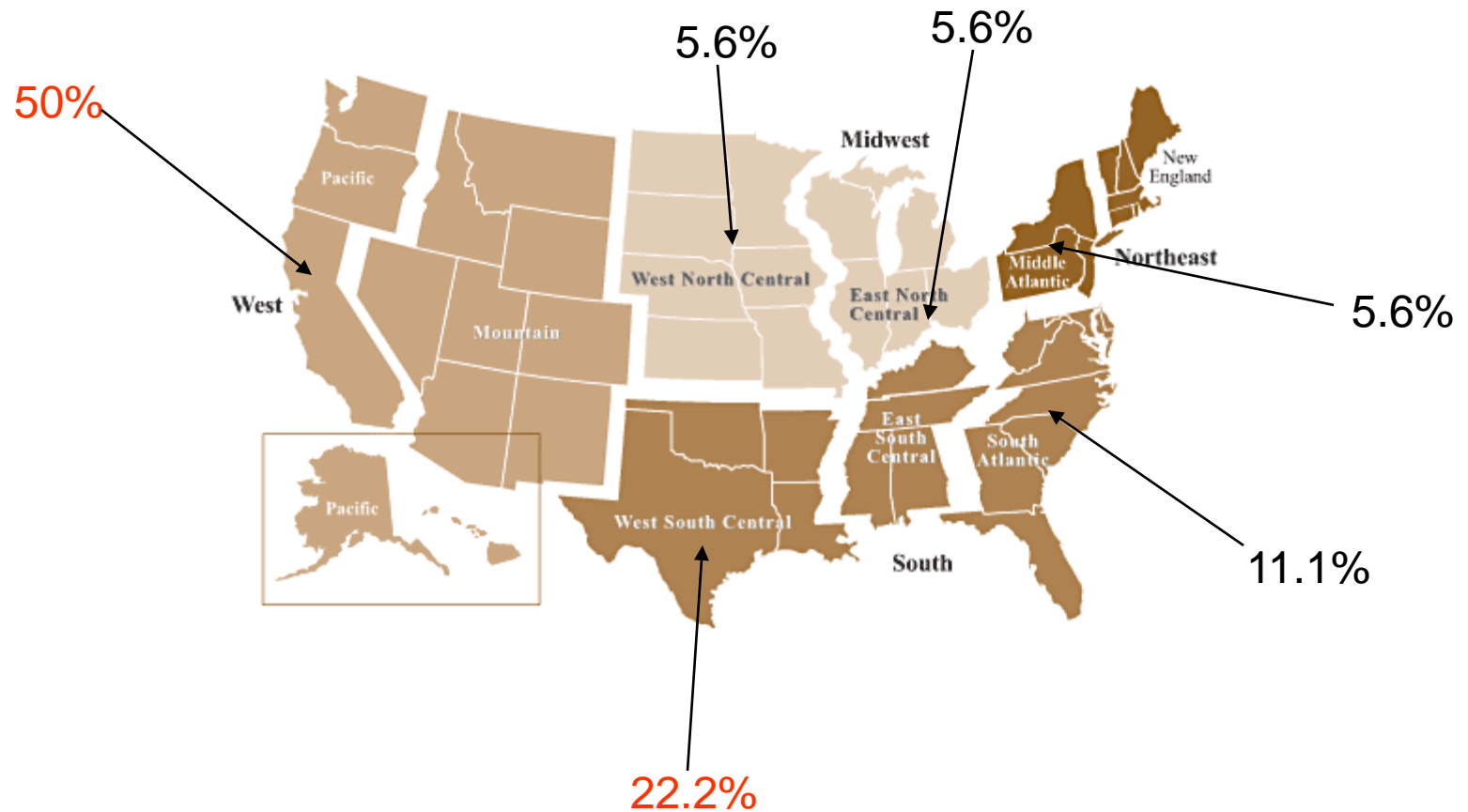
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Burglary / Breaking & Entering

n = 10



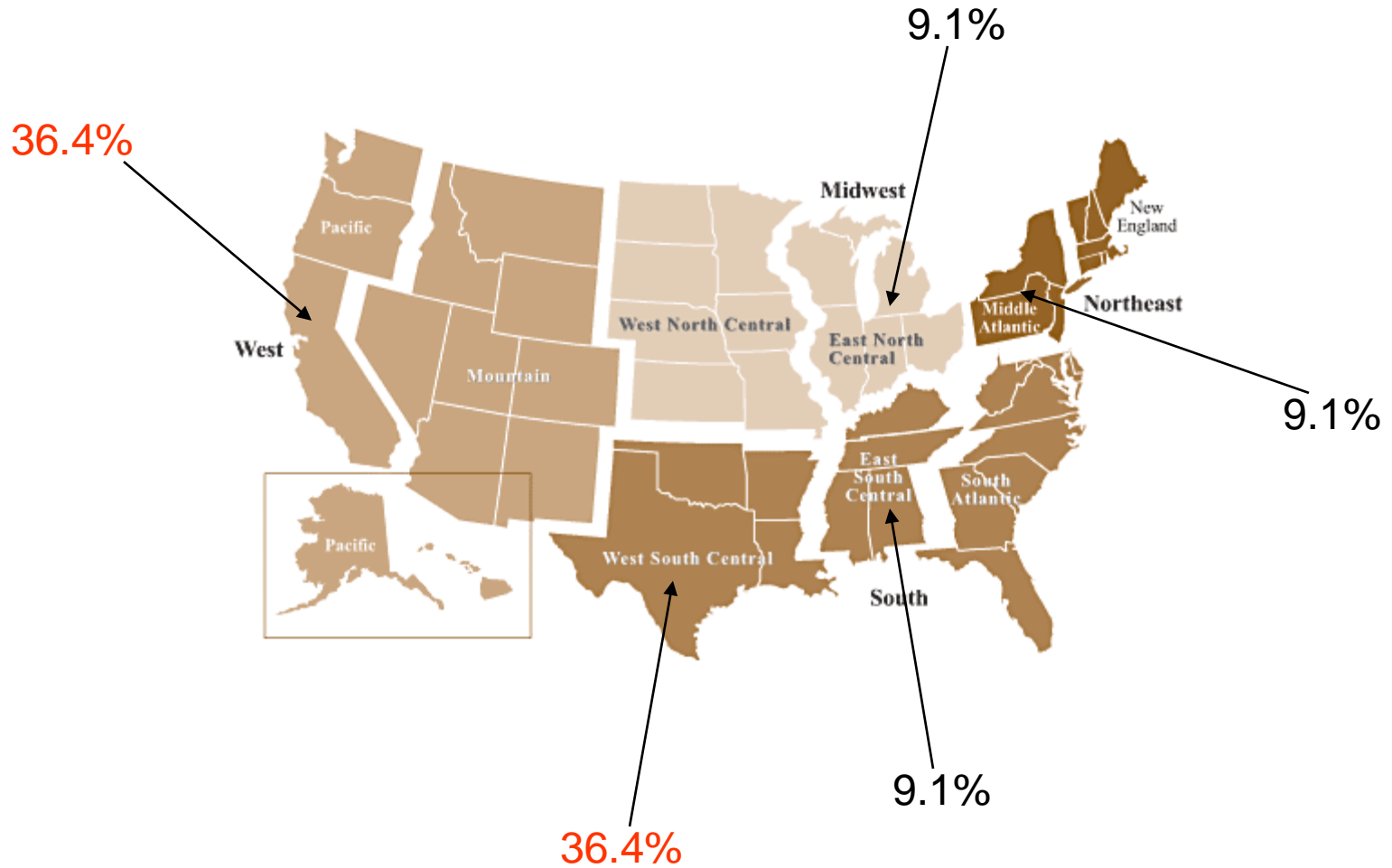
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Kidnapping / Abduction

n = 18



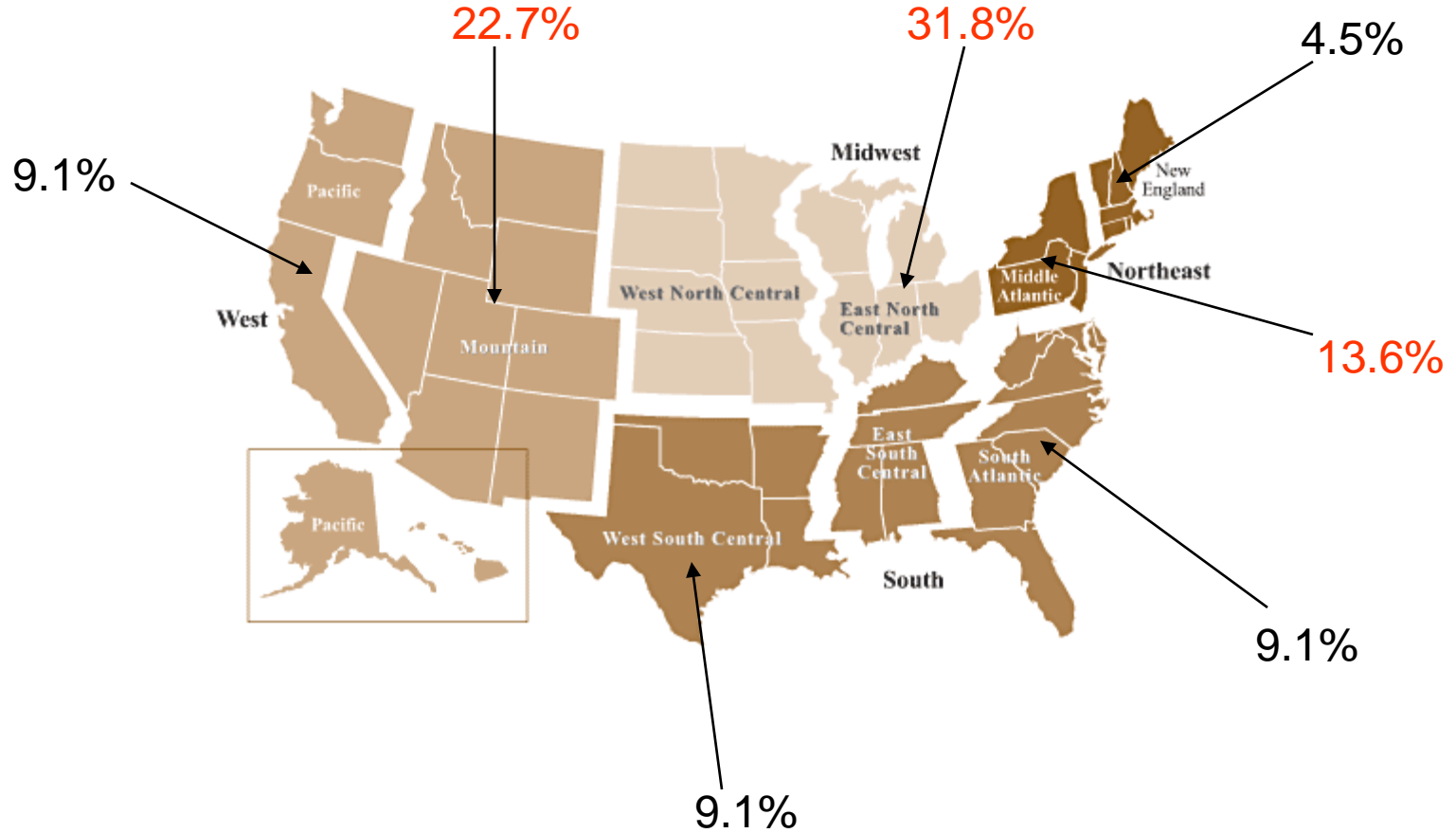
# Sworn Officers Arrested for Robbery

n = 11



# Sworn Officers Arrested for Murder & Non-Negligent Manslaughter

n = 22





# Recommendations for Future Research

- Continue data collection for an additional 18 months
  - January, 2005 – December, 2007 (36 months total)
  - Will the patterns hold with more cases?
  - Analyze data on victims
- Gather available data for use as dependent variables in logistic regression analyses
  - CALEA accreditation status
  - Agencies' hiring, minimum education, and training requirements
- Generate a random sample from the population of cases for in-depth research
  - Qualitative analysis?
  - Review of court case files to develop more data (especially interested in patterns in case dispositions (e.g., convictions, plea bargains, acquittals, dismissals))
  - Are officers keeping their jobs after being arrested?