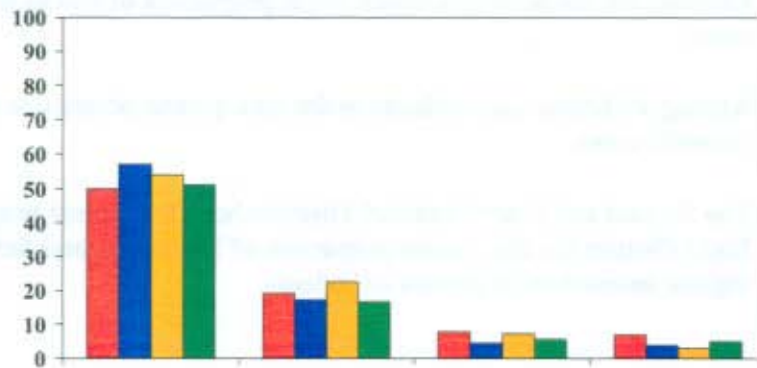

Adult Major Criminal Case Filings By Race and Ethnicity

2002

Minnesota Courts Statewide



Research & Evaluation Unit
Court Services Division
State Court Administration
Minnesota Supreme Court

August 2003

Adult Major Criminal Case Filings in 2002 by Race and Ethnicity

Highlights

- In July 2001, the courts began collecting self-reported race information on persons who appear in court in all criminal, juvenile and traffic cases. This is the first summary of data made possible by the race data collection project. In the future, as criminal cases are processed to disposition, yearly and trend data on hearings, trials, dispositions and sentences will be reported by race.
- The Hispanic data has been classified as a race/ethnicity category to allow us to present a single view of race and ethnic distributions. Over half of all persons who indicated their ethnicity as Hispanic also indicated the "other" category for race.
- Whites make up the majority of filings followed by African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians.
- There are only very slight variations in race when comparing males to females.
- Felonies are made up of a much larger proportion of blacks than the GM DWI cases.
- Among all felony cases, blacks make up a greater proportion of drug cases than property cases.
- The Second and Fourth Judicial Districts have the largest proportion of blacks, the Eight District has the largest proportion of Hispanics, and the Ninth has the highest proportion of American Indians.

Adult Major Criminal Case Filings in 2002 by Race and Ethnicity

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Introduction to the Race Data Collection Project

The Minnesota Judiciary is committed to ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all Minnesotans in the court system. Determining whether all persons are treated fairly and equitably requires empirical data. In July 2001, the courts began collecting self-reported race information on persons who appear in court in all criminal, juvenile and traffic cases. This is the first summary of data made possible by the race data collection project.

This report summarizes the racial distributions of adult major criminal cases filed in 2002 and illustrates how the information that is currently available begins to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the people served in the court system. Although the question of whether there is bias in the court system cannot be answered by looking at the adult criminal cases filed by race and ethnicity, the data in this report represent a significant step forward.

Prior to July 2001 when the court's race data collection project was instituted, the racial and ethnic composition of cases that were charged, had a trial, and were disposed was not known. In the future, as criminal cases are processed to disposition, yearly and trend data on hearings, trials, dispositions and sentences will be reported by race. If there is differential treatment of persons of different races or ethnic backgrounds at a given point in the court process, then additional steps can be taken to further understand the cause and to change the current policy or practice.

Data Collection and Reporting

One of the first issues to address is how to report the categories of race. The Minnesota Court's method of collecting data on race is based on the U.S. Census methodology where Hispanic origin is classified as an ethnicity, not a race. Therefore, persons appearing in court are asked to indicate both their race and ethnicity (Hispanic/Non-Hispanic). Collecting race and ethnicity as separate indicators is somewhat problematic for reporting. A majority (52%) of persons indicating their ethnicity as Hispanic do not consider themselves to belong to one of the specific racial groups, instead they indicate a race category of "other." For purposes of this summary, while recognizing that ethnicity is understood to be separate from race, the category of Hispanic is classified as a race in order to present a single view of the racial and ethnic distributions.

Due to very small numbers within certain categories of race, namely the "Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander" category and where more than one race is indicated, cases are combined for purposes of reporting. The Hawaiian/Pacific Islander race category is combined with the Asian category and those persons indicating more than one race are displayed in the category of "multiple races."

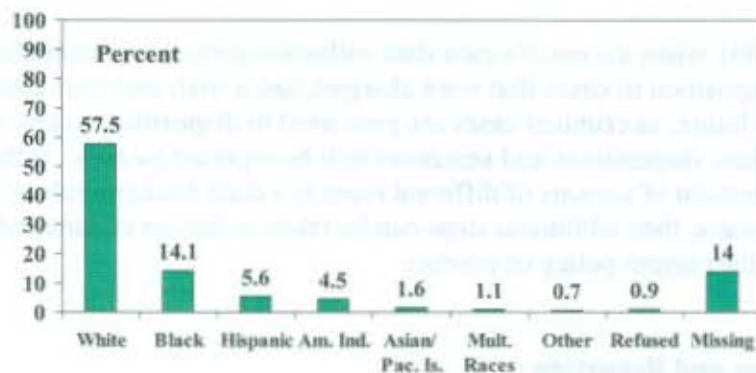
For purposes of this report, filings only include cases where the defendant has made a first appearance. Since the collection of race data requires an appearance, the inclusion

of cases where the defendant has yet to appear in court would overstate the actual rate of missing data. The "Missing" category includes cases where the race field is blank and cases where a "U" code is entered for "Unavailable".

Overall Filings by Race/Ethnicity

The overall breakdown by race of the 2002 court filings for adult major criminal cases (felonies and gross misdemeanors) is displayed in the chart below. The percentages are based on a total of 58,750 cases filed. Whites make up the majority of cases followed by blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians. Less than 1% of the cases show a refusal to provide race data and in 14% of the cases race data are missing.

**Adult Major Criminal Filings in 2002
by Race/Ethnicity**

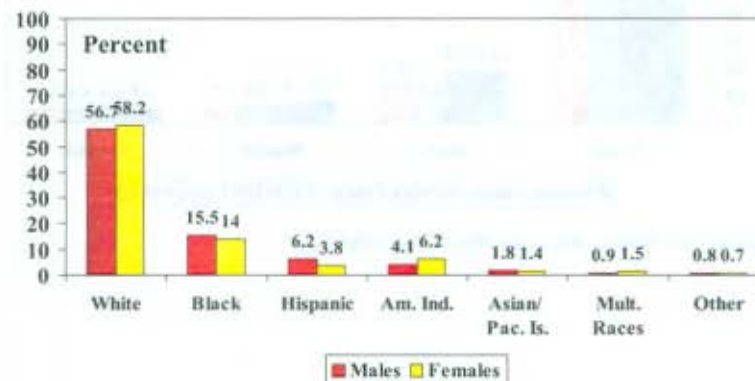


	Number	Percent
White	33753	57.5%
Black	8298	14.1%
Hispanic	3302	5.6%
Amer Indian	2652	4.5%
Asian/ Pac Islander	967	1.6%
Multiple Races	625	1.1%
Other	424	0.7%
Refused	510	0.9%
Missing	8219	14.0%
Total	58750	100.0%

Filings by Gender

Only slight variations in race appear when comparing males and females. Males are more likely than females to be black or Hispanic and females are more likely than males to be white, American Indian or multiple races.

Adult Major Criminal Filings for 2002 Gender* by Race/Ethnicity



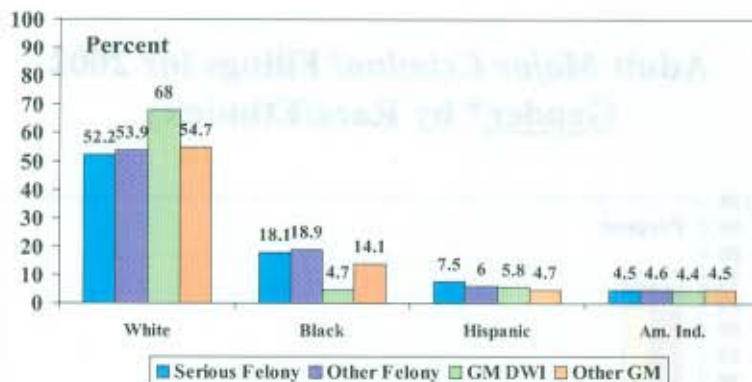
*Gender data was missing in 11.7% of the filings.

	White	Black	Hispanic	Amer Indian	Asian/Pac Island	Multiple Races	Other	Refused	Missing	Total
Female	5968 58.2%	1439 14.0%	388 3.8%	633 6.2%	145 1.4%	154 1.5%	73 0.7%	63 0.6%	1384 13.5%	10247 100.0%
Male	23594 56.7%	6466 15.5%	2599 6.2%	1699 4.1%	740 1.8%	386 0.9%	314 0.8%	344 0.8%	5494 13.2%	41636 100.0%
Total	29562 57.0%	7905 15.2%	2987 5.8%	2332 4.5%	885 1.7%	540 1.0%	387 0.7%	407 0.8%	6878 13.3%	51883 100.0%

Filings by Case Type and Offense Type

Looking at the four largest racial categories by specific case type reveals some variation in the distribution. The Serious Felony (homicides and 1st through 4th degree criminal sexual conduct) and Other Felony (all other felonies) case types are made up of a much larger proportion of blacks (about 19%) than the GM DWI case type (about 5%). Likewise, whites make up 68% of the GM DWI cases compared to about 54% of the Other Felony group. American Indians represent about 4.5% of each case type; this proportion does not vary by case type. The percentage of Hispanics varies only slightly by case type.

Adult Major Criminal Filings for 2002 Case Type by Race/Ethnicity*



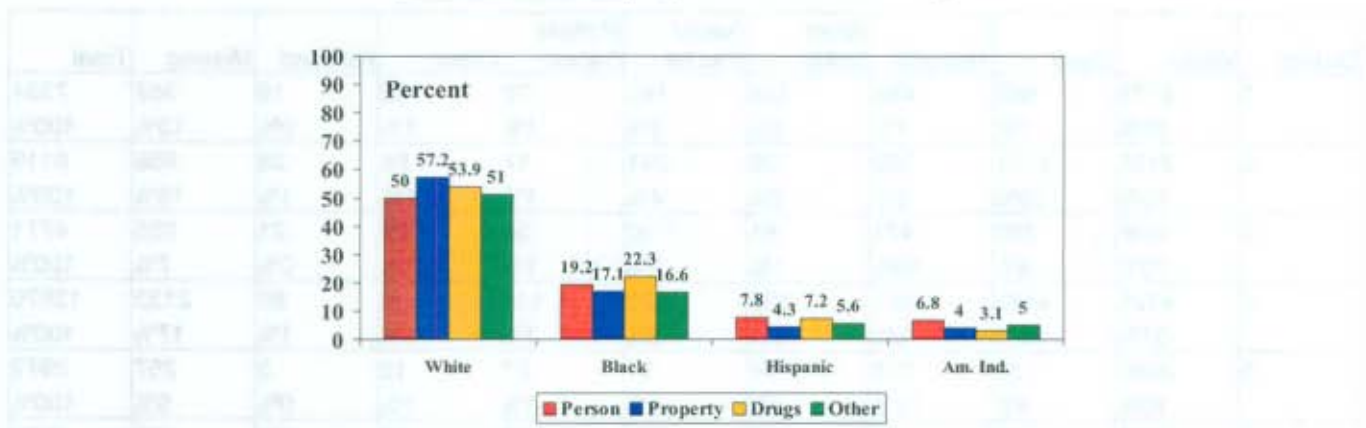
*Displays only the four largest categories of race/ethnicity.

	White	Black	Hispanic	Amer Indian	Asian/ Pac Island	Multiple Races	Other	Refused	Missing	Total
Serious Felony	666 52.2%	231 18.1%	96 7.5%	58 4.5%	37 2.9%	22 1.7%	10 0.8%	9 0.7%	148 11.6%	1277 100.0%
Other Felony	14602 53.9%	5126 18.9%	1624 6.0%	1234 4.6%	520 1.9%	339 1.3%	240 0.9%	269 1.0%	3162 11.7%	27116 100.0%
GM DWI	9627 68.0%	661 4.7%	820 5.8%	629 4.4%	164 1.2%	97 0.7%	61 0.4%	103 0.7%	2004 14.1%	14166 100.0%
Other GM	8858 54.7%	2280 14.1%	762 4.7%	731 4.5%	246 1.5%	167 1.0%	113 0.7%	129 0.8%	2905 17.9%	16191 100.0%
Total	33753 57.5%	8298 14.1%	3302 5.6%	2652 4.5%	967 1.6%	625 1.1%	424 0.7%	510 0.9%	8219 14.0%	58750 100.0%

It should be noted that race data was more likely to be missing for the GM DWI (14.1%) and the Other GM groups (17.9%) as compared to the Serious Felony and Other Felony groups (11.6%).

The chart below focuses just on felony criminal cases and groups these cases into four basic offense types: Person, Property, Drug, and Other. The “Other” category is mainly comprised of two offense types – illegal possession of a weapon and escape. Blacks are involved in 22% of the felony drug cases compared to 17% of the felony property crimes. Hispanics are involved in nearly 8% of the felony person cases compared to 4% of the felony property crimes. Whites are most likely to be involved in felony property crimes compared to all other offense types. American Indians are least likely to be involved in felony drug cases compared to all other offense types

Adult Felony Filings for 2002 **Offense Type by Race/Ethnicity***



*Displays only the four largest categories of race/ethnicity.

	White	Black	Hispanic	Amer Indian	Asian/ Pac Island	Multiple Races	Other	Refused	Missing	Total
Person	3202 50.0%	1227 19.2%	500 7.8%	435 6.8%	146 2.3%	123 1.9%	50 0.8%	65 1.0%	652 10.2%	6400 100.0%
Property	5893 57.2%	1765 17.1%	447 4.3%	411 4.0%	234 2.3%	96 0.9%	116 1.1%	74 0.7%	1271 12.3%	10307 100.0%
Drugs	3990 53.9%	1655 22.3%	534 7.2%	230 3.1%	99 1.3%	99 1.3%	57 0.8%	80 1.1%	661 8.9%	7405 100.0%
Other	2182 51.0%	710 16.6%	239 5.6%	216 5.0%	77 1.8%	43 1.0%	27 0.6%	59 1.4%	725 16.9%	4278 100.0%
Total	15268 53.8%	5357 18.9%	1720 6.1%	1292 4.6%	557 2.0%	361 1.3%	250 0.9%	278 1.0%	3310 11.7%	28393 100.0%

Filings by Judicial District

The distribution of cases filed by judicial district and race shows that the Second District and the Fourth District (Hennepin and Ramsey) have the largest proportion of blacks, 29% and 33% respectively. The 8th District has the largest percentage of Hispanics (15%); overall Hispanics represent only 6% of cases filed. American Indians represent 17% of cases filed in the 9th District, compared to 5% overall.

Adult Major Criminal Filings in 2002 Judicial District by Race/Ethnicity

District	White	Black	Hispanic	Amer Indian	Asian/ Pac Isl	Multiple Races	Other	Refused	Missing	Total
1	4773 65%	682 9%	488 7%	134 2%	141 2%	70 1%	65 1%	19 0%	952 13%	7324 100%
2	2455 40%	1771 29%	392 6%	125 2%	241 4%	57 1%	84 1%	38 1%	956 16%	6119 100%
3	3348 70%	389 8%	471 10%	61 1%	80 2%	38 1%	28 1%	21 0%	335 7%	4771 100%
4	4725 37%	4186 33%	691 5%	355 3%	289 2%	115 1%	106 1%	80 1%	2123 17%	12670 100%
5	2090 70%	130 4%	318 11%	94 3%	37 1%	27 1%	16 1%	3 0%	257 9%	2972 100%
6	2216 68%	233 7%	45 1%	367 11%	8 0%	82 3%	12 0%	38 1%	258 8%	3259 100%
7	4146 69%	368 6%	278 5%	452 8%	64 1%	63 1%	42 1%	84 1%	492 8%	5989 100%
8	1286 73%	41 2%	273 15%	68 4%	10 1%	10 1%	15 1%	14 1%	53 3%	1770 100%
9	2778 57%	80 2%	155 3%	814 17%	21 0%	91 2%	25 1%	70 1%	850 17%	4884 100%
10	5936 66%	418 5%	191 2%	182 2%	76 1%	72 1%	31 0%	143 2%	1943 22%	8992 100%
Total	33753 57%	8298 14%	3302 6%	2652 5%	967 2%	625 1%	424 1%	510 1%	8219 14%	58750 100%