

00:00:20:00 - 00:00:38:07

Stephen Gutowski

All right. Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to another episode of the Weekly Reload Podcast. I'm your host, Stephen Gutowski. I'm also a CNN contributor and the founder of thereload.com, where you can head over and sign up for our free newsletter today if you want to keep up to date with what's going on with guns in America. This week's episode is brought to you by The Dispatch.

00:00:38:07 - 00:00:56:08

Stephen Gutowski

We'll hear a little bit more about them at the end of the show, but we are going to be focusing on crime and crime data and what the numbers are telling us. So that is why we have brought back Jeff Asher, who is a crime data analyst, to talk about all those things with us. Welcome back to the show, Jeff.

00:00:56:08 - 00:00:57:18

Stephen Gutowski

Thanks for thanks for coming on.

00:00:57:20 - 00:01:02:23

Jeff Asher

Thank you. And I know my nationals didn't make the playoffs, so I guess we have to talk about crime data.

00:01:03:01 - 00:01:25:10

Stephen Gutowski

Yes. Well, I went to, the two games at the, the for whatever reason, they had like, bookended, series with the nets in DC. And I live in, in Virginia now. So, I went to both those series and the last two of three. The Phillies lost the two that I was two and one. The third one they were.

00:01:25:12 - 00:01:26:16

Jeff Asher

We might be good next year.

00:01:26:16 - 00:01:46:15

Stephen Gutowski

So maybe if you can keep that one guy from gambling until eight in the morning, I guess any road trips, it's very insider baseball stuff going on here. You find the net, the nets for the first time in the playoffs, which doesn't sounds like a made up stat, but but it's not. Somehow the Phillies and Mets have never played in the playoffs before.

00:01:46:17 - 00:02:02:19

Stephen Gutowski

And so I guess we'll see how it goes. Hopefully the Phillies dominate, but, we'll see. Speaking of made up stats or things that sound made up or controversy over stats, well, first of all, tell me, tell people a little bit about your background, who you are and what you do.

00:02:02:21 - 00:02:25:08

Jeff Asher

I do crime data analysis above, analyzing what the data says and analyzing the quality of the data. I have a company that we, we were mainly in criminal justice, but work in education and nonprofit world as well. And just providing consulting. I'm on data quality, data trends, data, anything.

00:02:25:10 - 00:02:27:02

Stephen Gutowski

It's a data Linux, right?

00:02:27:02 - 00:02:28:10

Jeff Asher

Yep. That's that's nice.

00:02:28:12 - 00:02:36:07

Stephen Gutowski

And you, you also run a sort of live crime stat reporting, operation, as well. Right?

00:02:36:09 - 00:02:59:19

Jeff Asher

Yeah. So we have a grant from Arnold Ventures to launch, and we launched about a month ago, the real time crime index, real time crime index.com, or one word. And it is a database, monthly crime data, with about a month and a half lag from. We have around 300 agencies reporting data that we're able to grab each month.

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Jeff Asher

So we've got a sizable sample, and it allows us to, hopefully see national trends as they develop. And the goal is to have 500 to 1000 agencies. And part of that is we'll probably expand from 50,000 or more. Is our cutoff to 40,000 or more is our cutoff. And get, you know, we want to basically get as many crimes as possible so that you can be predictive of the national trend through as few agencies as possible, so that you can do something that is doable from month to month.

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Stephen Gutowski

Right. And so you actually go to the, police departments themselves. I mean, obviously, a lot of this is publicly available data that the police departments publish each month, although everybody has a little bit of a different method. It sounds like, but you're going straight to the, original source for this information. And then, so you have experience doing that, and you also write stories around that data that you collect this raw data, which, which will often lead, news coverage, because basically, if it's not FBI reporting something and it makes news about crime, it's usually something that you guys have have put out.

00:04:12:07 - 00:04:20:00

Stephen Gutowski

Right. But so you, you have experience with the raw data and then also you have a lot of experience looking at FBI data as well. Right?

00:04:20:02 - 00:04:46:14

Jeff Asher

Yeah. And noticing where the issues are because there's always issues with crime data. And. Sure. And I think that there's a tendency in this country to point out what have been imperfections in the data for the last 100 years of this program as some sort of proof that you throwing out the baby with the bathwater. And so kind of hopefully identifying, okay, yes, this is a problem.

00:04:46:16 - 00:04:53:16

Jeff Asher

This does not change. You know, what 400 places are saying? Just because one place has a clear data reporting issue.

00:04:53:18 - 00:05:19:20

Stephen Gutowski

Right. And that's kind of what we want to cut there. Because a lot of that's politically motivated. Right. Got the crime data is very political because, what the crime is doing, which direction it's headed up or down, has political impacts on it's people running for office or people in office. So, that's why I want to bring in one and try to cut through some of the, the noise that's out there and try to get, a real good understanding of what's actually happening.

00:05:19:20 - 00:05:56:08

Stephen Gutowski

It seems my impression is that, crime has been dropping. We've we've talked about this, you know, for a while now. You've been on the show, before. I think it's several times. And one of the big trends in recent years is that crime is receding, but it's receding from this huge spike we saw during the, you know, around 2020, the pandemic, the rioting that we had, and all the associated, bad stuff that was came along with that seem to have led to a huge increase in murder and other forms of crime.

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Stephen Gutowski

But since then, that's begun to go down and and it's gone down at a pretty quick pace. Let's just start with murder. What what have we seen happen to the murder rate, this year and for the last couple of years?

00:06:14:01 - 00:06:43:09

Jeff Asher

Yeah. So murder in 2020 rose 30%. Largest by far increase ever recorded. And I think the previous large was like 12%. So you know, number one, both in terms of the percentage and then number one over 5000 more murder victims in 2020 compared to 2019. So, massive increase in murder from 2019 to 2020, 2021. It was about the same maybe up, down a little bit.

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Jeff Asher

Not not a ton of change. 2022. It fell likely a little bit last year. 2023 murder fell at what was until then the largest, the fastest rate ever recorded almost a 12% decline in murder, according to the FBI's data, which we have, we can back up with CDC data, we can back up with gun violence archive data and see that, yeah, these these things fell at a very fast rate.

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Jeff Asher

And then looking to 2024 right now in the real time crime index, we have murder down about 17% in 300 cities with available data through July. We're looking at so if you know, 12% was the largest, now we're looking at 17, maybe even more percentage points dropped in 2024, which we're still about 9 or 10% above 2020 or 2019, right, in 2023.

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Jeff Asher

So with this year added on, we should be at or below 2019, right? So we basically that 2020 huge surge in the span of two years essentially have completely erased that, which is really incredible trend. I think, it's unfortunate that we've had this disagreement or whatever you want to call it, about whether or not it's real, because the evidence is overwhelmingly clear that this is happening just as it happened in 2020.

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Jeff Asher

We can argue about who who was to blame or what was to blame for 2020. We can argue about who's to credit, what's the credit for what we're seeing now. And we should be having those discussions and we should be doing that research. But what I just disagree with is the idea that we can't measure this accurately because we 100% can.

00:08:35:12 - 00:08:56:18

Stephen Gutowski

Okay. So so and I want to start with murder because I feel like murder. And I know your thoughts of this, but I feel like murder is probably the where we're going to have the best data because it's, we're we're going to miss the least amount of crimes, you know, murder. I'm not saying every murder is, attributed to being a murder.

00:08:56:18 - 00:09:22:14

Stephen Gutowski

You know, like, I'm sure some things that were murders don't actually get reported as murders, but it's it's much, I would

imagine, much easier to track murders than a lot of other kinds of crimes, because a lot of other crimes can go on unreported, or what have you. So murder, though it seems very, very clear in the data that it is, it had this huge increase and has now had a had a very sharp decline.

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Stephen Gutowski

And, where are we at right now, by the way, are we back below the pre-pandemic numbers, the pre 2019 numbers, or are we back in line with where things were before this spike? Where are you? What are you seeing right now?

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Jeff Asher

It's hard to say exactly. I, I think if you kind of do the math looking forward, we're probably in this year. We're probably going to match 2019 or be slightly below 2019 rate. It's kind of complicated because big cities murder rose everywhere in 2020, but it rose a little bit more in big cities than in smaller places.

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Jeff Asher

And we tend to overstate the measurements that we're able to take come from big cities. So if smaller places are seeing a similar sized decline as big cities than you'd basically see, big cities might be at or slightly above 2019 and the rest of the country below it. So all of the evidence that suggests that that essentially we're at or below where we were 2019 ish, we're not quite to those sort of historic lows that we reached in 2014.

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Jeff Asher

But if you were to see another similarly sized drop in in 2025, you you'd be at that level. And I don't know that. Yeah, I would my, my instinct is that we're probably going to see things kind of level off. But you know, my instinct was not that we would inherently see it incredibly fast. Declines in 2023 and 2024.

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Jeff Asher

Something else.

00:10:49:02 - 00:11:17:21

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah, yeah. And and just to talk about real quick why you're so confident in these numbers, like, you think that what this trend that we've seen in the data that we're getting now is accurate, and that we can measure this stuff reliably, because we've had you on the show before, we, we did talk about, for instance, the FBI and the way that it tracks crime, had a switch over in the, procedures.

00:11:17:21 - 00:11:41:17

Stephen Gutowski

It was using the technology it was using to get reports from from local police departments. That's how they track crime, right? They they have local police departments voluntarily submit reports to them. About, you know, their crime data. And they did it on one system. And then in was a 2024, 21, 2021 during this spike period, they switched from the old system to the new system.

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Stephen Gutowski

And they didn't during that period, they had issues with with data collection. Right?

00:11:47:07 - 00:12:11:15

Jeff Asher

Yeah. So they switched to neighbors from what's known as SRS. You know, your your average person doesn't need to know what they stand for anything. But basically they switched to a new system that is more encompassing,

encompassing more crimes. And so you, they went from, on average, about 95 ish percent of the nation's population is covered by an agency that reports data each year.

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Jeff Asher

And so that was the case. Three neighbors, neighbors, has been around since the 80s. So it's it's been around and they just said they mandated that agencies are going to report. So it's not anything. It's new. I saw somebody refer to it as woke, which is like, you can imagine some contractor in the FBI, 1986 coming up with a crime data collection system and then 40 years later, being called for it.

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Jeff Asher

It's not new. The mandate came under the Obama administration. It was carried out under the Trump administration, and it was first reported into the Biden administration. So like, right, we've got lots of, hands in the fire here.

00:12:48:18 - 00:12:50:12

Stephen Gutowski

Government moves very slowly on this.

00:12:50:12 - 00:12:52:21

Jeff Asher

Yes, especially the FBI and data collection.

00:12:52:23 - 00:13:01:01

Stephen Gutowski

But it just so happened that the the deadline for switching over was in this chaotic period of 2021. Yes. And it did result in problems at the time.

00:13:01:01 - 00:13:23:23

Jeff Asher

Right. Major problems. And I wrote about it and nobody cared. They went from basically 95% reporting to about 60% reporting, which means if you're making up 5% of the gap, you're estimating, but you don't really need a margin of error, you understand what's happening, and especially if you're consistent about it, if you're estimating what 40% of the gap is, you need really large margin of error there.

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Jeff Asher

And so that's what the FBI did. The 2021 numbers are crap, to be honest. I.

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Stephen Gutowski

And they put disclaimers on all that at the time too, right.

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Jeff Asher

Yeah. And they knowledge it and it was a, it was a thing that was known. 2022 the FBI backtracked and said, okay, agencies that have not made the switch to the new system can still report under the old system. And we'll just translate it and give you the prime numbers so that.

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Stephen Gutowski

That was the problem. Right? That was the sort of classic government issue of like this is a voluntary program. These police agencies don't have to switch to the new system if they don't want to. They don't have to report anything at all to the FBI if they don't want to. And a bureaucratic changeover like that, even with decades of, forewarning, tends to go

poorly, in a lot of, a lot of government situations.

00:14:19:19 - 00:14:22:00

Stephen Gutowski

And that seems like that was the issue, right?

00:14:22:02 - 00:14:53:21

Jeff Asher

Entirely. And you have to have motivation and, the Uniform Crime Report has always been voluntary. The FBI has never been able to compel agencies to report data. And so they went from about 60 to 65% coverage in 2021 to 94%, 93.5% in 2022. It ticked up to 94.3% in 2023. So very normal level of coverage. Historically, 94% has been the average.

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Jeff Asher

If you go back to 1960. So okay. Yeah, it was it was what we would expect for coverage.

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Stephen Gutowski

So there was a problem, but it was literally just that one year, 2021. And then the FBI said, never mind. You can I mean, obviously I'm sure they want people to transition to the new system, but they will still accept the old procedures.

00:15:15:10 - 00:15:49:21

Jeff Asher

Yeah. And they've gone in in 2023, only 12% of agencies reported data under the old system. So okay, you're up to 83% of the population is reporting under the new system. They're very much getting there and it's not a big deal. But it it was it became a big deal because a bunch of people misread a old Marshall Project article that basically miss misstated or misstated what was happening in 2022.

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Jeff Asher

And regardless, you know, and it it then became an issue. And once it's an issue, people, you know, dig in and are willing to learn new information.

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Stephen Gutowski

But so for the 2024 numbers, they do encompass 94.3, I think you said percent of the population. That's the 2023 numbers.

00:16:09:02 - 00:16:09:10

Jeff Asher

Yeah.

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Stephen Gutowski

Because the FBI is a bit delayed on this stuff. We don't get the full year numbers until well into the next year. Right?

00:16:16:20 - 00:16:19:18

Jeff Asher

Yeah. We just got the 2023 numbers two weeks ago.

00:16:19:20 - 00:16:34:04

Stephen Gutowski

Right. So but for those numbers, they do cover 94 plus percent of all of the police or the population of the United States, the police departments that represent their population. Right?

00:16:34:06 - 00:16:36:00

Jeff Asher

Yes. Correct. Okay.

00:16:36:02 - 00:16:50:21

Stephen Gutowski

Okay. And so, let's talk a little bit now about, some of the other broader crime trends, like murder is one thing to track. Then you have all kinds of other crimes, violent crimes, property crimes. What are we seeing in the numbers for those?

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Jeff Asher

So the FBI had a 3% decline in violent crime. Violent crime reported violent crime. You know, we have to separate, you know, that not every crime gets reported. The FBI showed a slight, like, a 6% increase in violent crime in 2020. So the real story was not that violent crime surged or the crime surged. It was that murder and gun violence surge that we had a huge increase in shootings, a huge increase in murder.

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Jeff Asher

And that has come down. Violent crime has also come down a can. You know, it basically has erased the gains of 2020. In 2023, it was slightly below 2019 rate and it was slightly above 2014 rate in 2014, with, the lowest violent crime rate since 1970. So it didn't really have a lot to fall in order to reach that.

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Jeff Asher

But violent crime has falling. Property crime fell in 2023 like 2.4%. But you saw large decreases in burglary and theft and a 12% increase in motor vehicle theft. So, motor vehicle theft because of that trick to steal Kias and Hyundais big increase. If you looked at 2024, the real time crime Index, we're showing about a 4 or 5% decline in violent crime.

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Jeff Asher

So still seen a sizable decline in violent crime and a 9% decrease in property crime, because that huge increase in motor vehicle thefts has sort of hit its peak. And it's starting to come down. And so yeah, you had four straight years of increasing motor vehicle thefts. So a 20% decline on top of that of 4,050% increase is not that much.

00:18:32:08 - 00:18:57:01

Jeff Asher

But you're seeing you're starting to see, large declines in property crime. So that would be my guess is that we'll see a historic decline in murder this year. Okay. Decline in violent crime, probably to the lowest level reported since 1970. And then a very large decline in property crime, and property crime last year, I think the property crime rate was the lowest since, like 1965 or something like that.

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Jeff Asher

So that's.

00:18:58:02 - 00:18:59:19

Stephen Gutowski

Interesting.

00:18:59:21 - 00:19:08:07

Jeff Asher

And again, only a third of property crimes get reported to the police. Right. Only so of violent crimes get reported to the police other than murder.

00:19:08:09 - 00:19:25:13

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. But so but, just to set this the the this the story there, violent crime and property crime did not see the same sort of massive increase that murder did. And so maybe they're back down a bit, but there wasn't that as much fluctuation. Those things is what it sounds like.

00:19:25:17 - 00:19:43:05

Jeff Asher

Yeah. And the long term trend of property crime has been declining every year. 2022 I think was the first time in like 30 years that you saw an increase in property crimes, only because you saw probably an artificially low rate in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic.

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Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. So very different impacts and effects on those areas of crime. And yeah getting into this the idea like like we you know I mentioned before murder seems a little bit easier to track than some of these other things because it's less likely to go unreported. Not that it can't, but it's less likely to happen. And so what are some of the issues?

00:20:02:10 - 00:20:20:06

Stephen Gutowski

How do we know that that like violent crime and property crime are going unreported? You know, obviously we have the numbers that the FBI gets. But but we have research and we have data that suggests that there's a lot of violent crime. And property crime doesn't as you mentioned, there, doesn't actually get reported. How do we know that?

00:20:20:08 - 00:20:42:05

Jeff Asher

So the Bureau of Justice Statistics run something called the National Crime Victimization Survey, which every year they publish a table showing the share of of crimes. Obviously, you can't survey murder victims, so they survey every other crime type. And people say whether or not they reported it to the police. I think Ncvs is great. It's a wonderful tool.

00:20:42:07 - 00:20:59:07

Jeff Asher

I think that it has. It's a survey. There's 120,000 people. So it's a large survey. But unless you're going to say that what the New York Times presidential poll says is 100% the truth, you there's a margin of error there, and there's a lot.

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Stephen Gutowski

Of somebody saying any he shows other surveys. Yeah.

00:21:01:18 - 00:21:27:00

Jeff Asher

And so I think people have a tendency to ignore the margin of error, which at times can be sizable, especially if you're diving in, and you know, they're extrapolating national trends from 0.7% of the country's population. You gotta, you know, if you had 50 people out of 220,000 said that they were the victim of an aggravated assault, you got it.

00:21:27:00 - 00:21:55:22

Jeff Asher

There's a large margin of error in there. And as to exactly what that means for our national rate. And so, there has been a recent tendency, I think, to use oh, it says chose x percent years or whatever, but, for the most part, Ncvs shows a similar, similar, picture compared to what the FBI data showing NBS and UCR don't agree on what happened in 2020 and 2021.

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Jeff Asher

And I point out that it was it was hard to do in person surveys in 2020 and 2021. So like something weird makes sense in a survey those years, the 2023 Ncvs that just came out showed a slight decline in violent crime from 2022, although within the margin of error, and that violent crime in 2023 was not statistically different from 2019.

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Jeff Asher

And if you look at what. So that's not all the crime, the reported and unreported. And if you look at the reported crime, it shows a slight decline in violent crime from 2022 to 2023, and largely the same rate of violent crime in 2023 compared to 2019. So, we're we're speaking the same language. The disagreements there, I think are, largely around the periphery and largely due to people kind of overusing what Ncvs does and doesn't do well.

00:22:51:11 - 00:23:06:08

Stephen Gutowski

So, following up on that a little bit, have we seen, in these surveys, any increase in the number of people who aren't reporting crimes, like, are there more crimes going unreported according to these? No, than before, or is it pretty much the same rate?

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Jeff Asher

No, it's pretty much the same. Again, there's a margin of error there. But in 2023, the share went up from like 41% of violent crimes to 46% or 45%. So the the numbers over the last decade or so have not changed at all. If you go back 30 years or 20 years, you see a higher share saying that they reported violent crimes, by it doesn't explain anything having to do with our, our current crime trends.

00:23:36:03 - 00:23:47:04

Stephen Gutowski

Interesting. Okay. And, so the FBI has also started to do I guess they're kind of competing with you a little bit, I guess, because now they're releasing quarterly reports, right. For the first time.

00:23:47:06 - 00:24:10:21

Jeff Asher

Yeah. So they've been releasing quarterly reports. I think people need to take them, especially early in the year with a very large grain of salt. The first quarter. So basically, let's say you run a department, your department reports data to their state UCR program. The state UCR program reports it to the FBI. You have underreported your March data.

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Jeff Asher

You you know, you have until April of 2025 to report your March 2024 data. The FBI takes it and they publish it. And you that, you know, you had only half of March included in there. So your number shows and they're comparing two and a half months of your first quarter data to three quarters, three months of first quarter data last year.

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Jeff Asher

And so they showing across the board really large declines as time goes on. You're going to fix that problem. And 11.5 months of complete data means that the missing half month is much less of a big deal than two and a half months. Or, you know, two and a half out of three. So the problem becomes less and less as the year goes on.

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Jeff Asher

But the FBI is showing implausibly high declines in across the board compared to what we see in other data sources. So I think it validates that what we're seeing in other data sources is probably accurate. But I think that when you deal with the quarterly data, you have to know what's being reported and that maybe the first in the second quarter, you kind of take with a really big grain of salt.

00:25:18:01 - 00:25:37:15

Stephen Gutowski

Okay. Interesting. So, you know, the the FBI's data reporting for the years is pretty reliable, outside of the 2021. And, but perhaps the quarterly reports are going to introduce a lot more, noise because of this, this issue about.

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Jeff Asher

The fourth quarter report that the FBI reported in March of this year for 2023 was really good. On average, it was off by 2%. It overstated declines, but it said it was a 13.2% decline in murder, and there was a 11.6% decline, or 11.7% decline. They showed, was that a 5% decline in violent crime? And there was a 3% decline in violent crime.

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Jeff Asher

So, yeah, those aren't perfect. But if you and if if it's wrong and it's wrong in a way that's knowable, that's a really valuable tool. And if you can think, okay, maybe the third quarter reports when they're released, let's let's, you know, add 4% and the fourth quarter reports, let's add 2%. That tells us what the numbers are, even if we're kind of doing some some back of the napkin math on those.

00:26:25:06 - 00:26:40:22

Stephen Gutowski

Okay. And so so where the trends headed as of today, I mean, we're still expecting to see a, another significant decline in the murder rate by the end of this year. Is there anything that you see that concerns you maybe that'll reverse or slow down the pace?

00:26:41:04 - 00:27:02:15

Jeff Asher

Not yet. I mean, it's the pace has stayed the same, pretty much. So I think what we'll see is the largest decline in murder ever recorded. You can have me back next, next September, October, and we can visit these predictions. But I think largest decline in murder. Sizable decline in violent crime, probably to the lowest rate recorded in 50 plus years.

00:27:02:17 - 00:27:24:07

Jeff Asher

And then a very large decline in property crime. Which is, again, you know, last year's decline in property crime was mostly just due to, being being muted was due to motor vehicle theft rising a lot. If you reverse motor vehicle theft, then you should see a much larger decline in property crime. So, all of those trends add up.

00:27:24:07 - 00:27:40:18

Jeff Asher

And that's what the numbers that we're seeing. It's what even taking into the grain of salt, that's what the quarterly FBI data is showing. It's with the gun violence archive data is showing what the city data is showing. So, I'm not like, going out on a limb on all of this. We have lots of different data sources telling us the same story.

00:27:40:19 - 00:28:08:07

Stephen Gutowski

Okay. So let's get into a little bit, more speculative space here. And it's perfectly all right if you don't have competent answers to these things. But one you mentioned this earlier, but so it's the data is fairly clear on what has happened. Right. But we don't know. I guess it's more of an open question as to why, do you have any is there anything we can find in the data that will tell us why we've sort of followed by.

00:28:08:07 - 00:28:22:02

Jeff Asher

Lead researchers and I mean, you know, criminologists aren't sure why murder and violent crime fell in the 90s. So I think it's very early to be making sort of declarative statements about why it's doing these things now.

00:28:22:04 - 00:28:43:12

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah, because obviously there's lots of theories out there. Police pull back. You know, just there's all sorts of stuff that people will bring up. But I guess there's no consistent consensus among researchers at this point on any of this stuff, even gone, like you mentioned, even going back to the to the drop off in the 90s.

00:28:43:14 - 00:29:00:09

Jeff Asher

Yeah. I, I, I think it's something that that, takes a long time to figure out and we can just barely tell the trends, so, so that I think is, is,

00:29:00:11 - 00:29:01:08

Stephen Gutowski

It's an open question.

00:29:01:08 - 00:29:05:22

Jeff Asher

It's it's a very much open question that I think will be an open question for quite a while.

00:29:06:00 - 00:29:34:06

Stephen Gutowski

Well, that's unsatisfying, but true. Sorry. That's okay. I rather hear that and try to, you know, you're trying to make up a perfect solution for why this has happened, but, and then I guess the other one is forward looking, you know, after the 90s decline, we had this extremely long period of relatively low murder rate in the United States, and, I guess property, but property crime decline and so forth.

00:29:34:06 - 00:29:53:15

Stephen Gutowski

But, what do you mean? I mean, is there anything that could tell you what direction things are going to hell? You I mean, you mentioned earlier that you thought maybe it's going to, smooth out. We're not going to keep seeing these record declines and murder rate year over year. Why why do you why is.

00:29:53:16 - 00:30:11:17

Jeff Asher

I, I mean, I just, I, you know, regression to the mean usually happens. But I don't know. And because we because it's so complicated and we can't really explain it 100%, it's hard to say exactly what's going to happen. And I think anybody that's saying exactly what's going to happen is probably making things up.

00:30:11:19 - 00:30:32:03

Stephen Gutowski

Yeah. It does. I mean, I'm with you as far as like I feel like this was, a wild spike and now we're wrestling back to where things were. And, maybe this was some, you know, all of the chaos of 2020 took, the country in a very bad direction. But, yeah, pretty short period of time.

00:30:32:03 - 00:30:40:01

Stephen Gutowski

And now maybe we're headed back to where we had been. I don't, but, you know, but realistically, there's no way to know that, right?

00:30:40:03 - 00:30:43:08

Jeff Asher

Yeah. No. Absolutely not.

00:30:43:10 - 00:30:47:17

Stephen Gutowski

Right. So, I know that's probably not the most satisfying.

00:30:47:17 - 00:30:48:07

Jeff Asher

Story.

00:30:48:11 - 00:31:10:06

Stephen Gutowski

To hear, but it's true, right? You can't know what's going to happen just based off of what the trends have been. You can't like trying to predict the stock market, right? Yeah. You know it. You can't describe maybe macro trends that have been true for a while. Or you could you know, there's certainly wisdom and I don't, time in the market versus timing market that kind of stuff.

00:31:10:06 - 00:31:21:22

Stephen Gutowski

And, and I think that's probably true with crime data too. You can't. Yeah. You can look at how things have been and maybe make some guesses, informed guesses off of that. But you can't guarantee that's how things will turn out. Right?

00:31:22:00 - 00:31:23:09

Jeff Asher

Absolutely.

00:31:23:11 - 00:31:28:06

Stephen Gutowski

All right. Well, hey, if people want to follow your, your writing on this, where can they do that?

00:31:28:12 - 00:31:35:22

Jeff Asher

jeffasher.substack.com. Yeah. And, operators post weekly, sometimes more, when crime data comes out.

00:31:35:22 - 00:31:49:08

Stephen Gutowski

And so I read it all the time. And, literally most of the media does if you're if you're reading a crime based story, that isn't sourced from the FBI directly, it's probably from Jeff Asher.

00:31:49:14 - 00:31:50:01

Jeff Asher

Yep.

00:31:50:03 - 00:32:11:10

Stephen Gutowski

So, you know, sign up for his newsletter, go straight to the source, itself. And you'll be ahead of the trend in news reporting on these things. But yes, I appreciate you coming on the show and giving us your time and walking us through this so we can understand what's what the data says, what the real issues with it are and what the what they aren't.

00:32:11:12 - 00:32:22:23

Stephen Gutowski

Right. So I think that gives people a good insight, cuts through some of the, the political vibes around all this, and, and, it's very helpful. So I appreciate you. Thank you for coming on the show.

00:32:23:01 - 00:32:24:20

Jeff Asher

I'll be on next year and we'll talk about this again.

00:32:24:20 - 00:32:42:19

Stephen Gutowski

Yes, we'll have you back on. We'll keep on top of these things for sure. But for now, I'm going to head it over to myself to talk a little bit more about The Dispatch.