

Amber Hunt • Free Press Staff Writer • March 19, 2009

## Analysts: Detroit not deadliest city if socioeconomic status weighed

If you consider Detroit's socioeconomic status, it's not the deadliest city in the country after all, according to rankings released this week by the Improving Crime Data Project, which ranked 63 large American cities based on homicide rates.

The data reflects the raw rates per 100,000 population, and then adjusts the rates for differences across the cities in demographic and social factors.

The data was compiled by criminologists Richard Rosenfeld, Alfred Blumstein and Robert Friedmann, who are professors at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Carnegie Mellon University and Georgia State University, respectively.

Detroit ranked 23 in 2007 after the statistical adjustment, according to the data.

Heeding the FBI's concerns that ranking cities by their crime rates isn't an apples-to-apples comparison because cities differ in poverty, unemployment and other crime-producing factors beyond their control, the criminologists adjusted the homicide figures to weigh median income, male unemployment, race composition and female-headed families.

"Several cities fall or rise substantially in rank when socioeconomic differences are statistically controlled," according to a project news release. "Detroit falls from number 1 in the unadjusted homicide ranking - Cleveland drops from number 9 to number 61."

Atlanta also falls, from number 8 to 43, while Albuquerque, New Mexico, increases from number 38 to number 7 and Santa Ana, Calif., rises from number 45 to 11.