



Pathology Biology Section – 2011

G70 A Comparison Study of Homicides Between Beijing, China and the State of Maryland, United States

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have learned the epidemiological characteristics of homicides in Beijing, China and the state of Maryland, United States.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by illustrating the differences in the pattern of homicides between China and the United States, and by discussing the influence of cultural dimensions and socioeconomic development on violent crime.

A retrospective comparison study was conducted on homicides occurring in 2008 comparing Beijing, China and the State of Maryland, United States. Beijing, the capital of China, with a population of 16,950,000, covering 6,489 square miles, is made up of two suburban counties and 16 urban districts. Maryland, with a population of 5,633,597 and a total area of 12,407 square miles, comprises twenty-three counties and Baltimore City. In 2008, a total of 398 homicides occurred in Beijing. The homicide rate was 2.34 homicides per 100,000 population. Maryland, however, had 536 homicides (9.51 per 100,000 population), which was more than four times as high as the homicide rate in Beijing. Males were much more likely to become homicide victims than females in Maryland (Male: Female = 5.2:1, based on the rate), when compared with homicides in Beijing (Male: Female = 1.4: 1). The age distribution of homicide victims was similar between Beijing and Maryland, with the majority of the victims in their 20's to 40's.

The most common cause of homicide in Beijing was sharp force injury (52.8%), followed by blunt force injury (24.1%), asphyxia due to suffocation/strangulation (17.8%). Only two deaths were caused by firearm injury combined with sharp force injury. On the other hand, the most common cause of homicide in Maryland was firearm injury (74.8%), followed by sharp force injury (10.3%), blunt force injury (5.0%), and suffocation/strangulation (3.5%). There was a significant difference between Beijing and Maryland regarding the homicide death scene location. More than 71% of the homicide victims in Beijing were found inside of buildings, such as residential houses (44.2%), business/government offices (10.0%), stores (7.5%), night clubs (6.5%), and other facilities (2.8%). However, only 37.9% of the homicide victims in Maryland were found inside of buildings with fewer than 30% of the victims found in residential houses. The majority of Maryland homicide victims were found either on the street (42.9%), or in the park/wood/field (12.9%), or other outside locations. The possible motives of homicide in both regions will also be discussed.

Forensic Science, Homicide, Epidemiology