



E33 Patterns of Violent Death in Clark County, Nevada: Homicide and Suicide Patterns During and Post-Recession

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After attending this presentation, attendees will better understand patterns of violent death within the metropolitan landscape and, specifically, patterns of homicide and suicide within Clark County, NV. This study examines violent death as it relates to recession and post-recession years (2008 and 2015, respectively) to see the impact that this tumultuous period may have had on those who experienced violent death.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by: (1) providing information regarding the impact of recession periods on violent death within the metropolitan landscape by presenting a case study of homicide and suicide data from Clark County, NV; and, (2) increasing the attendees' awareness of how economic conditions and demographic factors may affect patterns of violent death.

Demographic information was collected for homicide and suicide deaths for 2008 and 2015 using the Clark County Coroner and Medical Examiner Officer records and analyzed for patterns of demographics, including age, sex, ethnicity, marital status, and zip code (as a proxy for socioeconomic status). These factors were then compared between the two years for both types of violent death to identify any differences in patterns and frequencies. For both homicides and suicides, the number of cases increased between 2008 and 2015. There were 153 homicides and 383 suicides in 2008 and 182 homicides and 416 suicides in 2015.

Homicides varied slightly between 2008 and 2015. Despite making up a smaller portion of the population in 2008, Black and Hispanic male homicides both outnumbered White homicides for the year, with Black males accounting for 39/153 homicides and Hispanic males accounting for 35/153, while White males only accounted for 32 homicide deaths for 2008. In 2015, White and Black males accounted for an equal number of homicide deaths (51/182 each), despite Black individuals continuing to make up a fraction of the population of Clark County. For both 2008 and 2015, Black individuals died younger than their White counterparts, with the majority dying before the age of 40 while White individuals were more likely to die between the ages of 30-60. In 2008, there was also an increase in the number of young male Hispanic deaths (21-30 years old) compared to 2015.

A comparison of suicide trends revealed little difference between the 2008 recession and 2015 post-recession years. The suicide rate was similar for both years at approximately 0.02% of the total population. Age, sex, and ethnicity trends were also similar with White males being by far the most commonly affected group in both years followed by White females. In 2008, White males accounted for 244 of the 383 total suicides and white females accounted for 71. In 2015, White males accounted for 232 of the 416 total suicides and White females accounted for 91 of the suicides. The number of suicides also increased by age in both years with generally the highest rates of suicides in the 41-50-year and 51-60-year age ranges.

Based on these data generated from the Clark County Coroner and Medical Examiner's Office records, there does not appear to be significant differences in suicide death demographic patterns between the recession and post-recession periods in Clark County, NV; however, there is a slight increase in the frequency of minority male homicides for 2008 in comparison to 2015, where they outnumbered White male deaths. This suggests that while



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the recession may have had little impact on the suicide patterns, it may have impacted the number of minority individuals who experienced homicide deaths.

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