



E36 When a Man Kills a Woman — Femicide in Clark County, Nevada: An Overview of Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) and Intimate Partner Homicide Followed by Suicide (IPHFS)

Cristina Tica, MA, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept of Anthropology, 4505 S Maryland Parkway, Mailstop 455003, Las Vegas, NV 89154-5003; and Caryn E. Tegtmeyer, MA, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S Maryland Parkway, Box 455003, Las Vegas, NV 89154-5003*

The goal of this presentation is to demonstrate how women are more likely to be killed by their intimate male partner than by any other type of perpetrator. Attendees will gain valuable insight into the patterns of female IPH and female IPHFS affecting Las Vegas and its metropolitan environs.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by explaining femicide — the killing of a woman by a known perpetrator. In the United States, approximately one-fourth of murders committed annually are perpetrated against women. Every week, there is at least one case in the media in which the female is killed by her male intimate partner. In 2011, Nevada ranked number one in the rate of women killed by men. This presentation seeks to highlight the impact fatal domestic violence has had in Clark County.

Data was collected from the Clark County Office of the coroner/medical examiner for all female homicides for seven years (2010 to 2016), with a total of 240 victims. The investigation reports, autopsy reports, the case notes, and case images were consulted.

Of the 240 total female homicides, 148 were intimate violence, in which the attacker knew the victim. Of these 148 intimate violence cases, 84 were perpetrated by a romantic partner, 36 by a relative, 23 by other, 2 by a friend, 2 by a roommate, and in 1 case, the relationship could not be established.

For the 84 romantic relationship victims, “romantic” was defined as the offender being the husband, boyfriend, partner, ex-husband, ex-partner, or ex-boyfriend of the decedent. All of these offenders were male.

Out of the 84 cases, 73 females killed by intimate partners were adults (18 to 65 years old), 10 were older adults (more than 66 years old), and one was less than 18 years old. Of the 84 victims of fatal romantic partner domestic abuse, 44 were White, 18 were Black, 14 were Hispanic, 7 were Asian, and 1 was Multi-Cultural.

In the current sample, most females killed by a romantic partner died of gunshot wounds (47 of 84, or 56%), followed by stabbing (15 of 84, or 17.9%), and blunt force trauma (14 of 84, or 16.7%). Additionally, most of them (66 of 84, or 78.6%) had both cranial and postcranial injuries. Of those who were shot, the majority (33 of 47, or 70.2%) also had both cranial and postcranial trauma.

Out of 84 cases, 31 (36.9%) perpetrated by a romantic male partner were homicides, followed by suicide. This study found that most female IPHFS incidents were perpetrated by White males (20 out of 31, or 64.5%). Most homicide-followed-by-suicide victims were adult White females, followed by adult Hispanic females. Twenty-eight of 31 (90.3%) of the IPHFS victims were killed by firearms, and 23 of 31 (74.2%) had both cranial and postcranial trauma.

According to the Center for Disease Control, intimate partner violence is a serious, preventable public health problem affecting millions of Americans. Violence against women has reached epidemic proportions in many societies, estimated by the World Health Organization (WHO) to account for between 5%-20% of healthy years of life lost in women aged 15 to 44 years. WHO has also stated that “the overwhelming burden of partner violence is borne by women at the hands of men.” That is why studies such as this are needed to help determine patterns and to understand them, in order to prevent, but also better help, the victims of domestic abuse.

Femicide, Intimate Partner Homicide, Homicide Followed by Suicide