The South Carolina Silent Witness Story
Report on Domestic Violence Homicide Victims from 2008

Kelly W. Hall
September 25, 2009
This year’s ceremony will mark the **twelfth anniversary of Silent Witness**.

In **2008**, there were a **total of 32** people murdered by a household member, according to the South Carolina\(^1\) definition. Of those 32 people, **26 were women**, constituting 81% of the total, and **6 were men**, constituting 19% of the total.

The demographics of the victims were as follows: 53% were black and 47% were white. The average age of these victims was 45 years old.

The Office of the Attorney General, through its S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women program, collected the data by contacting every Sheriff’s Office, Coroner’s Office, Police Department and Solicitor’s Office in the State. Those offices were provided with a victim information sheet to complete and asked to provide any incident reports related to domestic homicide victims. As always, these offices were gracious and provided this Office with an abundance of information. In addition, all information was crosschecked for accuracy with the records of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division.

Eighteen counties reported one or more domestic homicides for 2008.

Guns were the primary weapon used in these homicides. In 56% of the cases, a gunshot wound was listed as the primary cause of death. Knives were used in 9.5% of the cases; in 9.5% of the cases the victim was beaten to death (by hand); and in 25% of the cases another form of weapon was used.

The courts have disposed of only five cases. There are nineteen trials pending and eight defendants have committed suicide.

Attached to this document are county-by-county statistics and statewide graphs depicting the statistics mentioned in this report.

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\(^1\) §16-25-10 defines "household member" as spouses, former spouses, persons who have a child in common, or a male and female who are cohabiting or formerly have cohabited.
Totals

South Carolina

Total: 32  Women: 26  Men: 6
Whites: 15  Blacks: 17
Gun: 18  Knife: 3  Hand: 3
Other: 8
Disposition: 19 trials pending
1 guilty verdict
4 guilty pleas
8 committed suicide

Average Age of Victim

45 years

By County

Abbeville

Total:0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Aiken

Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0
Allendale

Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0  
Whites: 0  Blacks: 1  
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0  
Other: 1/ Unknown because the body was never recovered  
Disposition: Found guilty of murder and serving life sentence

Anderson

Total: 3  Women: 2  Men: 1  
Whites: 2  Blacks: 1  
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0  
Other: 2/ Blunt force to head w/ hammer; Strangulation  
Disposition: Trial pending; Trial pending; Trial pending

Bamberg

Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0  
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0  
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0  
Other: 0  
Disposition: 0

Barnwell

Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0  
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0  
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0  
Other: 0  
Disposition: 0
Beaufort
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Berkeley
Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 1
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Committed suicide

Calhoun
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Charleston
Total: 2  Women: 2  Men: 0
Whites: 1  Blacks: 1
Gun: 2  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Trial Pending; Committed suicide
Cherokee
Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 1
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 30 years in prison

Chester
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Chesterfield
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Clarendon
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Gun</th>
<th>Knife</th>
<th>Hand</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
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</table>
Edgefield

Total: 0 Women: 0 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 0
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Fairfield

Total: 0 Women: 0 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 0
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Florence

Total: 3 Women: 3 Men: 0
Whites: 1 Blacks: 2
Gun: 2 Knife: 0 Hand: 1/ Blunt force to torso w/ hand
Other: 0
Disposition: Committed suicide; Trial pending; Trial pending

Georgetown

Total: 1 Women: 1 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 1
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 1/ Blunt force to head w/ hand
Other: 0
Disposition: Trial pending
Greenville

Total: 3  Women: 2  Men: 1
Whites: 2  Blacks: 1
Gun: 3  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Trial pending; Trial pending; Committed suicide

Greenwood

Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Hampton

Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 1
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Committed suicide

Horry

Total: 3  Women: 2  Men: 1
Whites: 3  Blacks: 0
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 2/ Strangulation, Strangulation
Disposition: Trial pending; Trial pending; Trial pending
Jasper
Total: 0 Women: 0 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 0
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Kershaw
Total: 0 Women: 0 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 0
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Lancaster
Total: 0 Women: 0 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 0
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Laurens
Total: 0 Women: 0 Men: 0
Whites: 0 Blacks: 0
Gun: 0 Knife: 0 Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0
Lee
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Lexington
Total: 2  Women: 1  Men: 1
Whites: 1  Blacks: 1
Gun: 0  Knife: 1  Hand: 0
Other: 1/ Suffocation
Disposition: Committed suicide

Marion
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Malboro
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Gun</th>
<th>Knife</th>
<th>Hand</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oconee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>Pled guilty to murder and sentenced to 17 years in prison with credit for time served; Pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 20 years in prison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Trial pending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pickens
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Richland
Total: 3  Women: 2  Men: 1
Whites: 0  Blacks: 3
Gun: 1  Knife: 1  Hand: 0
Other: 1/ Blunt force trauma from an automobile
Disposition: Trial pending; Trial pending; Trial pending

Saluda
Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

Spartanburg
Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0
Whites: 1  Blacks: 0
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Committed suicide
Sumter

Total: 2  Women: 2  Men: 0
Whites: 1  Blacks: 1
Gun: 2  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Trial pending; Committed suicide

Union

Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 1
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 1/ Unknown because there were only limited skeletal remains
Disposition: Trial pending

Williamsburg

Total: 0  Women: 0  Men: 0
Whites: 0  Blacks: 0
Gun: 0  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: 0

York

Total: 1  Women: 1  Men: 0
Whites: 1  Blacks: 0
Gun: 1  Knife: 0  Hand: 0
Other: 0
Disposition: Pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 7 years in prison
2008 Domestic Violence Homicides
State of South Carolina
Sex Differential

- Men: 26
- Women: 6

2008 Domestic Violence Homicides
State of South Carolina
Race Differential

- White: 17
- Black: 15
2008 Domestic Violence Homicides
State of South Carolina
Primary Weapon Differential

2008 Domestic Violence Homicides
State of South Carolina
Disposition Differential