

# SCSL Digital Collections

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

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**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<sup>1</sup> 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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<sup>1</sup> §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

**Colleton**

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

**Darlington**

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

**Dillon**

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

**Dorchester**

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



**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

**McCormick**

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

**Newberry**

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

**Oconee**

Total: 2      Women: 2      Men: 0  
Whites: 2      Blacks: 0  
Gun: 1      Knife: 0      Hand: 1/ Blunt force to head  
Other: 0  
Disposition: 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

**Orangeburg**

Total: 1      Women: 0      Men: 1  
Whites: 0      Blacks: 1  
Gun: 0      Knife: 1      Hand: 0  
Other: 0  
Disposition: Trial pending

**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

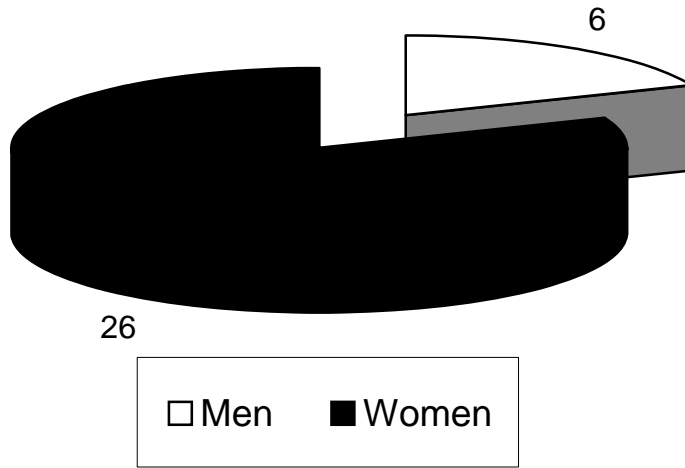
**Williamsburg**

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**



**2008 Domestic Violence Homicides  
State of South Carolina  
Race Differential**

