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HEALTH

Nearly Half of All Murdered Women Are Killed by Romantic Partners

A new CDC report suggests that domestic violence is a major cause of death for women.

By Olga Khazan



Advocates for victims of domestic abuse protest in downtown Chicago in 2015. (Sophia Tareen / AP)

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Over half of the killings of American women are related to intimate partner violence, with the vast majority of the victims dying at the hands of a current or former romantic partner, according to a new report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today.

The CDC analyzed the murders of women in 18 states from 2003 to 2014, finding a total of 10,018 deaths. Of those, 55 percent were intimate partner violence-related, meaning they occurred at the hands of a former or current partner or the partner's family or friends. In 93 percent of those cases, the culprit was a current or former romantic partner. The report also bucks the strangers-in-dark-alleys narrative common to televised crime dramas: Strangers perpetrated just 16 percent of all female homicides, fewer than acquaintances and just slightly more than parents.

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About a third of the time, the couple had argued right before the homicide took place, and about 12 percent of the deaths were associated with jealousy. The majority of the victims were under the age of 40, and 15 percent were pregnant. About 54

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