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Study: Foreign-Born Women More Likely to be Slain by Partners

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By Rocco Parascandola, Staff Writer

Foreign-born women are more likely to be slain by their intimate partners than their American counterparts, according to a study by the city Department of Health. View study here http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pdf/ip/femicide1995-2002_report.pdf.

The study, based on an analysis of the 1,030 homicides of women in the city from 1995 through 2002, also found that black women were more likely to be killed than white, Hispanic or Asian women.

“Femicide in New York City: 1995-2002,” which was conducted by the Health Department’s Bureau of Injury Epidemiology, called for greater funding for research but does not offer any concrete solutions.

Dr. Susan Wilt, assistant commissioner for the Health Department’s Bureau of Injury Epidemiology and the author of the report, said that despite an improved focus by police, the very nature of domestic tension makes it a difficult problem to deal with.

“It doesn’t allow itself to being reduced the way regular crime does,” Wilt said. “How do you police relationships in people’s homes?”

The NYPD, which has paid greater attention to domestic violence in recent years, yesterday announced an initiative it thinks will help deal with the problem even better.

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said the NYPD and the city’s district attorneys have established a new protocol for sharing the department’s Domestic Incident Response Database, which provides a citywide history of domestic violence suspects and victims.

The database, Kelly said in a statement, can be used to establish patterns of individuals or can be analyzed for larger trends.

Wilt said the study showed that 51 percent of immigrant women homicide victims were killed by intimate partners, compared with 45.7 percent of women born in the United States.

Broken down by race, black women comprised 46 percent of all women murdered by intimate partners, and 50 percent of all women murdered by non-intimate partners, such as family members.

White women, meanwhile, comprised just 14 percent of those killed by intimate partners and 21 percent of non-intimate partners, while Hispanic women comprised a third of those killed by intimate partners and 23 percent slain by non-intimate partners.

Wilt says women are at the greatest risk when they leave a relationship, their exit often infuriating their abusive partner.

“Safety planning,” such as leaving a relationship without telling their partners, is recommended for women who want to minimize the chance of being attacked, Wilt said.

Until the mid-1990s it was common for police to break up a domestic disturbance without making an arrest, particularly if the woman was adamant about not pressing charges or if her partner agreed to leave the house to cool off.

Now, whenever physical violence is alleged, police must make an arrest, even if the female victim says she will not cooperate with authorities.

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