

50 Under 30

Masculinity and the War on America's Youth
A Human Rights Report



Alejandro Ray Lucero
1977-2002



Delilah Corrales
1982-2005



Amanda Milan
1975-2000



Brandie Coleman
1985-2003



Freddie Martinez, Jr.
1985-2001



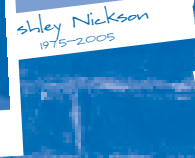
Allison Decatrel
1982-1999



Deasha Andrews
1974-2002



Ukea Davis
1984-2002



Ashley Nickson
1975-2005



Chennelle Pickett
1972-1995



James Rivers
1972-1995



Joel Robles
1975-2004



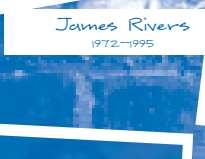
Arlene Diaz
1974-2002



Jessica Mercado
1979-2003



Stephanie Thomas
1983-2002



Emarie Kiera Spaulding
1978-2003



Lani Kai Okaru
1973-2001



Taundra Michaels
1976-2002



Gwen Araujo
1985-2002



Laurny Paige
1961-1999



Tyra Hunter
1971-1995



Cindy Cuanda
1979-2003



Reshae McCawley
1973-2003



Chanel Chandler
1976-1998



Nikki Nicholas
1984-2003



Nireah Johnson
1986-2003



Timothy Blair, Jr.
1986-2005



Bella Evangelista
1978-2003

Kareem Washington
1978-1999





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The Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GenderPAC) ensures that classrooms, communities, and workplaces are safe places for every person to learn, grow and succeed, whether or not they fit stereotypes for masculinity and femininity.

As a human rights organization, GenderPAC promotes an understanding of the connection between gender stereotypes and discrimination based on characteristics such as age, race, socioeconomic status, sex, and sexual orientation.

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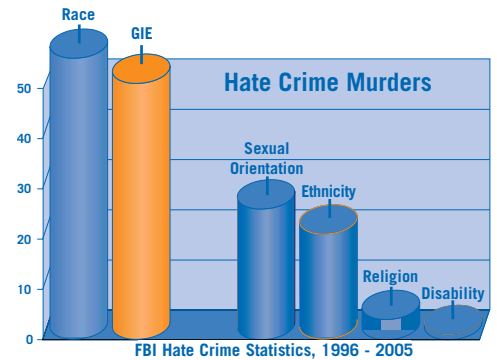
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OVERVIEW: A Gender War on America's Youth

50 Under 30: Masculinity and the War on America's Youth documents a murderous tide of under-reported violence that is claiming the lives of gender non-conforming youth and young adults ages 30 and under, and the dangerous indifference of law enforcement authorities, policy-makers and mainstream media.



Few of us realize just how many young people are dying violently each year simply because they don't fit someone's ideal for masculinity and femininity. Yet if federal law mandated the FBI to track gender-based hate crimes, they would outweigh every other category except race (see graphic).

These assaults are a violation of the most basic human rights: life, liberty, expression of self, and basic safety. *50 Under 30* aims to not only convey the tragic personal toll behind the data, but to spur decisive action by human rights and other advocacy organizations, educators, police, media, and youth themselves.

For many, the term "gender-based violence" will be new, but the concept will not be. Anyone who has seen a "sissy boy" beaten or a "tomboy girl" ridiculed and tormented is already familiar with the hatred and violence towards those who are gender non-conforming.

Research shows that hostility toward gender non-conformity starts early and is commonplace. In one recent study, 54% of youth reported that their school was unsafe for guys who aren't as masculine as other guys, while one-quarter (27%) complained of being bullied themselves for not being "masculine or feminine enough."¹ In another, 61% of students reported seeing gender non-conforming classmates verbally attacked, and more than one-fifth (21%) reported seeing them physically assaulted.²

But this report is not about common harassment or bullying of youth that simply spun out of control. For if the animus towards gender non-conformity is widespread and indiscriminate, its fatalities certainly are not. Indeed, they are distinctly non-random and specific. They are precise in target, and consistent in method.

Most of these young victims were biologically male; they were Black or Latina/o; and they were transgressing gender boundaries in some profound way. Almost all were killed by young males about their own age, who assaulted them in extraordinary attacks and often multiple acts of violence.

These deaths are consistent with a pattern of young men using murderous aggression to enforce standards of masculinity and to assert their manhood.

This is in the context of a wider "gender culture" that rewards hyper-masculinity, that loathes "sissies," and that condones a "boy code" that uses male aggression to toughen up young boys (and sometimes enforce femininity in girls – while 8% of these victims were biologically female, their assailants were still males). In such a culture, being publicly labeled a "punk," or "fag" can literally be a death sentence. This is, quite literally, a gender war on America's youth.

50 Under 30 is an examination of a little more than 10 years of the casualties in this war being waged on youth aged 13-to-30. We focused on youth, both because there has been such indifference to the epidemic of gender-based violence against them and because youth are particularly vulnerable to such violence, often lacking adult advocates or sufficient financial and social capital to ensure their own safety. The data in this report suggests the danger may be magnified among youth of color.

These are deaths that go under-reported, under-publicized, and under-solved. Authorities often fail to categorize them as gender-based assaults, or even as hate crimes. If they are covered by media, it is singularly and always according to the identity of the victim. Since the epidemic is never seen as a whole, its root causes are never addressed or initiatives to address them developed.

These young people have been dying violently, and alone, at the rate of about five per year for the last decade. 16 were teenagers; the youngest – Sakia Gunn – was only 15. Please speak out. Get involved. This epidemic must be stopped.

Riki Wilchins
Executive Director

These cases – widely covered by media – are emblematic of the problem:

Gwen Araujo (1985-2002)

On October 3, 2002, Latina transgender teen Gwen Araujo (17) went to a party with new acquaintances. (Araujo, who had been mercilessly bullied because of her gender expression, stopped attending school in the eighth grade and became an independent study student.) According to reports, she'd had sexual relations with two of the boys. At the party she was forced to strip and inspected by one of the girls, who announced that Araujo had male genitals. One boy began choking her and then others joined in – hitting her head with a skillet and then a can of food, causing her to bleed profusely and pass out. According to the trial reports, Araujo regained consciousness after the boys left to get some shovels – and begged one of the women to help her leave before she was murdered. Shortly thereafter, the boys returned, surprised to find her conscious. They pushed her down and kneed Araujo repeatedly in the head so hard it left a hole in the wall. Taking her body out to the garage, they strangled her with a rope, hog-tied her, and threw her in the bed of a truck. They left her body in a shallow grave dug in a secluded area of El Dorado National Forest.



Gwen Araujo
(1985-2002)

Sakia Gunn (1987-2003)

On the evening of May 11, 2003, African-American lesbian Sakia Gunn (15) went out with a close friend – both “dressed like boys,” according to Gunn’s mother. The friends, who called themselves “aggressives” because they embraced a masculine gender presentation, spent the evening on Christopher Street in New York’s Greenwich Village with two other friends, then took the Path Train back to Newark, New Jersey. At about 3 A.M. while waiting at a bus stop, they were approached by two African-American men in a white car who made suggestive comments. When Gunn stated that they were lesbians and weren’t interested, the men attacked. She tried to fight back, but just as she broke free, one man lunged at her, stabbing her once deeply in the chest. Both men then fled. Gunn’s friends flagged down a passing car and took her to a nearby hospital, bleeding profusely. Said her friend Valencia Bailey (15), “She died in my arms in Emergency.”



Sakia Gunn
(1987-2003)

GLOSSARY

Gender-Based Violence Violence that targets victims because of their real or perceived gender, gender identity, or gender expression.

Gender Expression Manifesting feelings of masculinity/femininity through how one looks, acts and dresses

Gender Identity An inner sense of being male or female

Gender Identity and Expression The most common phrase used in law and public policy addressing gender-based violence and discrimination; encompasses both the inner sense (gender identity) and the outer appearance (gender expression)

GIE Acronym for “gender identity and expression”

Gender Non-Conforming A broad term for anything that doesn’t fit expectations for masculinity and femininity

Gender Presentation See “gender expression;” how we present ourselves socially as men or women

LGBT Acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender”

Sexual Orientation Romantic, emotional and physical attraction to men or women

Cross-Dresser Someone who occasionally wears clothing of the other sex; almost exclusively heterosexual males

Transsexual Specific term that describes someone who wants to or has changed sexes

Transgender Umbrella term for cross-dressers, transsexuals, and others who cross gender boundaries in profound ways



Deasha Andrews
(1974-2002)

On August 8, 2002, in Jacksonville, FL., Deasha Andrews (28), an African-American transgender woman, was found shot to death in her car. Her murder remains unsolved.



Timothy Blair, Jr.
(1986-2005)

On May 22, 2005 in Louisville, KY, Timothy Blair, Jr. (22), an African-American cross-dresser, was found shot multiple times while wearing feminine attire. His murder remains unsolved.



Brandie Coleman
(1985-2003)

On July 23, 2003 in Indianapolis, IN, Brandie Coleman (18), an African-American woman, was found in a car with a transgender friend, Nireah Johnson. Both were bound and shot to death. Their car had been set afire, possibly to destroy evidence. Paul Anthony Moore (20) was convicted and sentenced to 120 years in prison in 2004.



On May 6, 2005, in Yuma, AZ, Delilah Corrales (23), a transgender Latina woman, was found stabbed, severely beaten, and drowned in the Colorado River. Her murder remains unsolved.



On September 30, 2003, in San Pablo, CA, Sindy Cuarda (24), a transgender Latina woman, was killed with multiple gunshots to her upper body. Her murder remains unsolved.



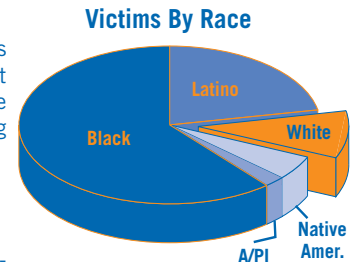
In the early morning of August 12, 2002, in Washington, D. C., Ukea Davis (18) an African-American transgender woman, was killed with her friend Stephanie Thomas (also transgender) in a hail of automatic gun-fire from a passing car. Their assailant then returned on foot, walked up to their car, and fired another burst of more than 20 bullets into their dead bodies. Her murder remains unsolved. The two girls had been bullied so severely at school that they feared returning and had recently dropped out.

THE VICTIMS

The young victims of gender-based violence share a number of key similarities.

Similarity #1: Most Victims Are Of Color

Youth of color account for 91% of victims for which race is known, with Black and Latino victims accounting for the vast majority (85%). This suggests that the intersection of race and gender non-conformity is crucial to increasing a young person's vulnerability to fatal assault.



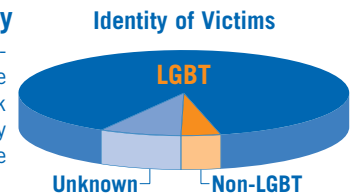
Similarity #2: Most Victims Are Poor

Poverty and gender are intertwined in many of these fatalities. Victims are disproportionately from economically-disadvantaged communities. Stephanie Thomas and Ukea Davis, who had withdrawn from school because of severe bullying and harassment by their peers and teachers, were gunned down by a passing car just one block from their home in Washington D.C.'s Ward 7, which held the city's second highest poverty rate at the time.³

Some victims have been forced out of school, out of homes, or out of jobs – sometimes all three. Lack of money, resources, and marketable skills also forced some of these victims to trade temporary sex-work for food and shelter, increasing their vulnerability to assault from a client. This suggests that lack economic and social resources is also important in creating vulnerability to a fatal attack.

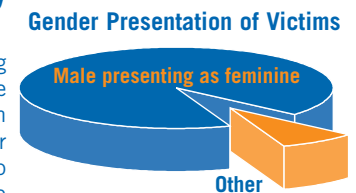
Similarity #3: Most Victims Are Transgender or Gay

88 % of the victims were gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender; 4% of victims were heterosexual, and in 8% of the cases, the victim's identity was unclear. If we peel back assailants' motives, these victims were targeted not only because of their sexual orientation (if at all), but because they did not fit expectations for masculinity and femininity.



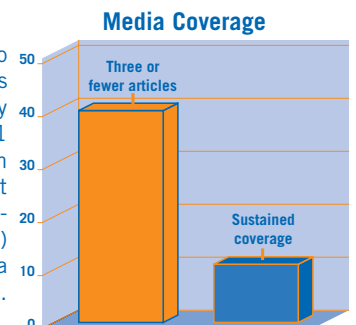
Similarity #4: Most Victims Are Biologically Male But Not Presenting Masculinely

92% of the victims were biologically male but presenting with some degree of femininity. All known assailants were male as well, suggesting a special animus from young men for displays of femininity or gender transgression by other biological males. Combined with recent studies in which up to one-quarter of teenage youth report being bullied because they weren't "masculine or feminine enough," this suggests that school violence prevention efforts will be less than fully successful until they directly address hostility towards gender non-conformity.⁴



Similarity #5: Most Victims Are Ignored by Media

It is difficult to imagine another youth population subject to so much violence and so little public attention. The deaths documented in this report have gone largely unpublicized by mainstream media, as has the epidemic as a whole. Only 11 victims generated sustained coverage (3 or more articles in top 100-ranked newspapers), and then only when an arrest and public trial was involved.⁵ The 32 non-trial murders averaged only a single 500-word article (about 10 paragraphs) rather than the more extensive coverage usually accorded a deadly hate crime. 24% of victims (12) received no coverage at all.

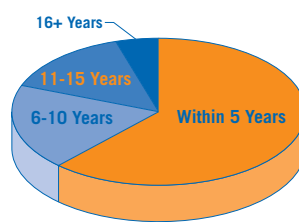


THE ASSAILANTS

Similarity #1: All Assailants Are Male, Most Attack Biologically-Male Peers Their Own Age

Of the 22 murders with known assailants: 100% were male; 92% attacked victims who were biologically-male as well; and 82% attacked victims within 10 years of their own age (59% within 5 years). Assailants were young – about two-thirds (68%) between 17 and 24 of age. Combined with the extreme violence of the assaults, these statistics make these attacks consistent with young men using murderous aggression to enforce standards of masculinity and assert their own manhood.

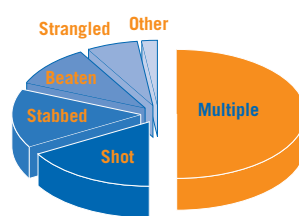
Age Difference of Assailants



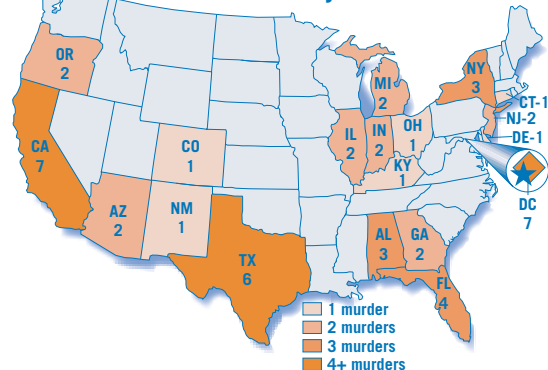
Similarity #2: Most Assailants Use Extreme Violence

Half of victims in this report suffered multiple stab or bullet wounds, or combinations of strangling, stabbing, and beating. In a number of cases, victims appeared to have been shot, stabbed or bludgeoned even after death. Almost all of the victims in this report were killed with extreme violence far beyond that necessary to simply terminate life. This suggests attacks motivated by intense rage and loathing whose goal was not simply death, but punishment and annihilation.

Means of Violence



Fatal Assaults by State



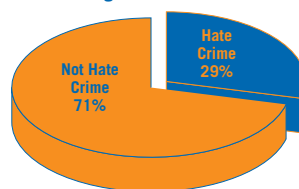
Similarity #3: Most Assailants Live In Major Cities⁶

64% of the cases documented in this report took place in one of 18 major cities, with three cities accounting for more than one-quarter of all murders (27%): Washington, D. C. (7), Houston (4), and New York City (3). 40% of the murders occurred in just two states: (California – 7; Texas – 6) and Washington, D.C. (7). About half (46%) of all murders occurred in the South and one-quarter (26%) in the West (Midwest: 16%; Northeast: 12%).

Similarity #4: Most Murders Aren't Investigated as Hate Crimes

Murders classified as hate crimes were about one-and-a-half times more likely to result in apprehension of a suspect than those that were not (50% vs. 33%). Almost three-quarters (72%) of these attacks were not so classified, often despite clear evidence to the contrary.

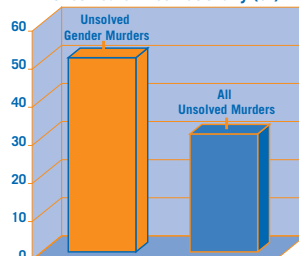
Investigation as Hate Crime



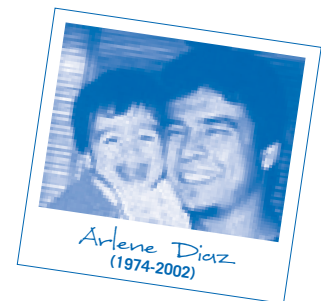
Similarity #5: Most Assailants Go Free

To date, only 46% of the murders in this report have been solved. This compares with a 69% solved rate for all homicides nationally.⁷ Failure to categorize these murders as hate crimes and investigate them as such, the general lack of media publicity, and the marginal nature of many of these victims' lives probably contributed to the low solved rate. Regardless of the reason, most youth who commit gender-based murders of other youth will not be arrested or charged for their crimes.

Unsolved Crimes Nationally (%)



On October 31, 1999, in Iverness, FL, Allison Decatrel (17), was fatally hit by a car. Allison had been trick-or-treating with her friends, who were all dressed in clothes of the opposite sex, when her assailant made derogatory comments about their costumes. Richard Burzynski (18) was sentenced to a prison term of 45 years.



In April 2002 in El Paso, TX, Arlene Diaz (28), a transgender Latina, was killed by a single gunshot. Police classified the murder as a hate crime. The alleged assailant, Justen Hall (20), was charged with murder but sentenced to death on an unrelated murder charge before prosecution.



On August 16, 2003, in Washington, D. C., Bella Evangelista (25), a transgender Latina woman, was shot to death. Antoine Jacobs (22) confessed and was convicted of second-degree murder; he was sentenced to 17 years in prison.



On August 7, 1995, in Washington, D. C., Tyra Hunter (24), an African-American transgender woman, was critically injured in a car accident. According to witnesses, the emergency medical technician stopped working on her for two to five critical minutes to laugh with his partner after discovering that she had male genitalia. Tyra died as a result of her injuries.



On July 23, 2003, in Indianapolis, IN, Nireah Johnson (17), an African-American transgender woman, was found in a car with a friend, Brandie Coleman. Both had been bound and shot to death by a sexual partner who learned that she was biologically male. Paul Anthony Moore (20) was convicted of murder, criminal confinement and arson, and sentenced to 120 years in 2004.



On September 27, 1999, in Cleveland, OH, Chareka Keys (19), an African-American transgender woman, was found beaten to death in an abandoned factory. Police ruled out robbery as a motive; her murder remains unsolved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Top 5

1. **Recognize and investigate gender-based assaults as hate crimes (police)**
2. **Respond firmly to gender-based bullying and harassment (educators)**
3. **Report epidemic of gender-based violence (media)**
4. **Ratify laws and policies that track gender-based hate (legislators)**
5. **Reach out and educate local youth on gender and violence (youth, organizations)**

Human and Civil Rights and Other Advocacy Organizations

To date, too few non-governmental organizations, civil rights or national advocacy organizations have adequately addressed this violence, and few have devoted specific resources to combating this epidemic. Yet they have a unique role to play, because these murders are the result of widespread and deeply held attitudes, and long-term change will most likely to come not from public officials or new legislation but from organizations challenging individual beliefs and attitudes.

Human and civil rights and other advocacy organizations must:

- Recognize gender non-conformity as an issue and speak out about the violence;
- Get training on gender non-conformity and then educate the public; and
- Add "gender identity and expression" to their own non-discrimination policies and practices.

A number of participants in the Hate Crimes Coalition (a partnership of national advocacy groups that meets regularly in Washington, D.C.) have spoken out against these crimes, as have organizations in the human rights community. LGBT organizations have also commendably spoken out when victims are transgender; however they could be even more effective if they publicly acknowledged that many gay, lesbian and bisexual victims are targeted not only because of their sexual orientation, but also because of how they look, act and dress -- their gender expression.

Educators

Intolerance towards gender non-conformity starts early and is pervasive in the classroom. For instance, while more than one-quarter of students report being harassed for "not being masculine or feminine enough," less than half of them said school authorities took effective action when they reported such incidents.⁸ If youth don't feel safe, they can't learn. Indeed a number of the victims in this report, like Gwen Araujo and Stephanie Thomas, were forced to drop out of school because of persistent bullying and harassment. Educators can help stop gender-based bullying and its escalation into fatal assaults through early intervention, education and prevention.

Educators must:

- Respond firmly to all bullying and harassment based on gender stereotypes;
- Include curriculum items about gender identity and expression;
- Create safe classrooms by promoting acceptance and diversity among students; and
- Help schools add "gender identity and expression" to their non-discrimination policies.

Community Youth

Youth activists have a distinct role to play in combating gender-based violence. Because it is their freedoms and their lives that are on the line, they are exceptionally credible messengers to their peers and are best positioned to change attitudes towards masculinity and gender.

Youth must:

- Educate other youth through film screenings, community events, and speak-outs;
- Write an op-ed in your school newspaper or organization newsletter;
- Help your school or organization add "gender identity and expression" to its non-discrimination policies and conduct diversity training; and
- Start a youth-led support or advocacy group.

Mainstream Media

Gender-based violence is overwhelmingly young, urban, of color, and economically disadvantaged, and thus beyond the focus of mainstream media – unless a high-profile trial results. Since less than half of the assailants were apprehended, these murders seldom received sustained media coverage. Often local gay or alternative newspapers provided the only coverage, performing a public service by reporting these crimes.

Mainstream media must do a better job of covering this epidemic: one church burning is a local story – 50 churches burned is a national trend that deserves appropriate coverage. By using gender non-conformity as a category of analysis, media will be better able to "connect the dots" among the otherwise disparate murders of youth in their jurisdictions. This will help inform readers, change embedded social attitudes, and prompt authorities to action.

When Sakia Gunn was killed, every article analyzed for this report classified the murder as a "lesbian hate crime," omitting any mention of gender as a motivating factor. Yet they also quoted her mother clearly stating that she and a friend went out "dressed like boys" (they were self-identified "aggressives," or masculine-identified) and thus their gender presentation was the single most likely reason their assailants targeted them instead of another group of girls.

Police

To date, only 46% of the murders in this report have been solved, as compared with 69% for all homicides nationally.⁹ It does not help that police often appear to be indifferent (or sometimes antagonistic) toward young, gender non-conforming victims, whose gender presentation make make them personally uncomfortable or even offend them.

Complicating matters, very few police departments offer adequate diversity training on gender identity and expression. This makes it harder for well-intentioned officers to recognize gender-based hate crimes when they occur or respond appropriately to gender non-conforming victims.

Law enforcement authorities must:

- Mandate diversity training for their officers on GIE issues;
- Investigate gender-based assaults as aggressively as any other homicide;
- Prioritize hate crimes against gender non-conforming youth of color; and
- Be proactive in classifying gender-based assaults as hate crimes, particularly when victims are gender non-conforming, the assaults are extremely violent, and no other motive is apparent.

Brandon Teena's murder (portrayed in the movie "Boys Don't Cry") remains emblematic of police hostility toward and failure to aggressively investigate gender-based crimes. Authorities responded to Brandon's complaints of being beaten, raped, and threatened with death by taunting him about his gender (see Appendix), and letting his assailants know they had been reported. Five days later, Brandon's assailants returned – they bludgeoned him, shot him in the neck and head, and stabbed him once in the liver to make sure he was dead. To eliminate witnesses, they also killed a couple visiting him – only sparing their 8-month-old baby.

Legislators and Policymakers

Only ten states – California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, New Mexico, Minnesota, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Vermont – and Washington, D.C., have added GIE or similar language to their hate crimes laws. No federal law has been passed, thus such statutes only apply to about 24% of the U.S. population.

Legislators must:

- Enact state and local legislation that mandates tracking of assaults motivated by a victim's "gender identity or expression," including federal legislation that would mandate FBI tracking of such assaults;
- Provide assistance to human rights, LGBT and community groups that have the capacity to independently monitor police murder investigations; and
- Mandate law enforcement diversity training and make adequate funding available.

Laws that mandate tracking, reporting and tabulating of hate crimes based on gender non-conformity are imperative; however, there is ongoing concern that laws which allow for enhanced penalties may be disproportionately invoked against defendants who are of color, and are thus controversial; this report does not endorse them and takes no position on them.



On March 3, 2002, in Phoenix, AZ, Alejandro Lucero (25), a transgender Hopi woman, was strangled and beaten to death. Police ruled the murder a hate crime, but her case remains unsolved.



On June 16, 2001, in Cortez, CO, Fred Martinez (16), a Two-Spirit Navajo teen, was bludgeoned to death on the edge of town as he walked home. Shaun Murphy (18) pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 40 years in prison.



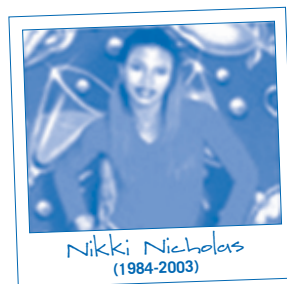
On December 13, 2003, in Largo, FL, Reshae McCauley (30), a cross-dresser, was fatally stabbed at home. McCauley was last seen with William McHenry (34) at a club that caters to the LGBT community. McHenry, whose blood-spattered clothing was found in the victim's apartment, was sentenced to life in prison.



On May 9, 2003 in New Haven, CT, Jessica Mercado (24), a transgender Latina who was involved in sex-work, suffered multiple stab wounds before her apartment was set on fire. Michael Streater (30) pleaded guilty to first-degree murder and arson; he was sentenced to 30 years in prison.



On June 20, 2000, in New York, NY, Amanda Millan (25), an African-American transgender woman who was involved in sex-work, was stabbed to death. According to witnesses, Amanda's throat was slashed after she was verbally harassed about her biological sex. Dwayne McCuller (20) pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 17 1/2 years to life.



On February 21, 2003, in Green Oak Township, MI, Nikki Nicholas (19), an African-American transgender woman, was shot to death in an abandoned farmhouse. The case remains unsolved.

A MOTHER'S OWN WORDS¹⁰

Fred Martinez, Jr. (16) was a "Two-Spirit" Navajo teenager – someone who embraced both masculine and feminine roles. Fred was beaten to death with a rock near Cortez, CO by another teen who bragged that he had "bug-smashed a fag." The following is excerpted from a speech by his mother, Pauline Mitchell.



"My son, Fred Martinez, was a happy child. Three years ago, he started changing, wearing make-up. First eyebrow pencil. Later on curling his hair, putting more make-up on, and putting on nail polish. And Fred always carried a purse. He liked it. He would go out with the girls. He loved to fiddle around with his girlfriends' hair.

One day, we sat down in the front room, and he said, "This is the way I want to be." His brothers didn't say anything to him. We really didn't say nothing to him. He was precious to us. Fred was my baby, the youngest. If that is how he wanted to be, if he was happy with it, then it was okay.

Fred was killed because he was different. Because of the way he dressed, kids picked on him. The school authorities picked on him, too, often sending him home from school... And no way am I going to let that go. I am going to fight on. All of us need to speak out against violence like this, so it never happens to another child again.

My son was only 16 years old. He could have had a lot of good years ahead of him. I was sick for a month and a half from the loss of my son. I love my son so much and I miss him very, very much. He was an outspoken boy, laughing and joking all the time. It is so quiet at home now."

METHODOLOGY

The data in this report came from a variety of sources: websites, hate crimes reports, newspaper accounts, and on-line databases. Analysis of media coverage was compiled through extensive searches of LexisNexis, the world's largest collection of public records, unpublished opinions, forms, legal, news, and business information.

We included crimes committed from 1995 to 2005. The year 1995 was approximately when gay and alternative media began to report regularly on transgender and gender-related murders. Before that, gender identity or expression were rarely considered as factors in assaults and murders – thus decreasing the likelihood of finding any media or police reports on such victims. However, as those reports became increasingly available, our research more readily uncovered gender-based assaults on transgender and gay victims. The data in this document reflects that.

We suspect a considerable undercount of fatal assaults against effeminate gay men and masculine lesbian women caused by their gender expression. With victims who were lesbian, gay, or bisexual, police, media, and advocacy groups often simply labeled all such attacks against them as 'anti-gay,' making it difficult to distinguish whether attackers were motivated by their sexual orientation, gender expression, or both. We intend to address this in future reports.

We also suspect the omission of a significant number of gender-based fatalities against heterosexual women who were attacked because they were perceived as insufficiently feminine, as too "aggressive," or simply for invading male prerogatives. We intend to remedy this as well in future reports.

We originally identified 64 murders of youth ages 13 through 30 where gender non-conformity appeared to have played a role. Of these murders, we characterized 51 crimes as either definitely or probably motivated by the victim's gender identity or gender expression.

Unless an assailant made a direct public statement – during the assault in front of surviving witnesses, in confiding to a friend, or at a trial afterwards – it was often impossible to determine with complete confidence whether gender was a factor in the crime.

We examined several factors, especially those the FBI employs in determining if a crime was hate-based, including: a) use of extreme violence, b) differences in identity between victim and assailant, c) bias-related comments made by assailant to victim, d) neighborhood's history of hate crimes committed against other members of victim's gender expression, and e) belief among family and community that murder was motivated by hate.

Why a Human Rights Report?

Issues of gender identity and gender expression have increasingly come into focus in international human rights law, not only in generalized language promising equality, security and human dignity, but in (for example) the European Court of Human Rights' recent recognition that "gender identity is one of the most intimate areas of a person's private life," and that human rights protections must be extended regardless of persons' gender identity or personal gender expression.¹¹

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, among the most widely accepted Human Rights' treaties, emphasizes governments' special obligation to eliminate "prejudices [based on] stereotyped roles for men and women."¹²

Moreover, the profound violence that often accompanies societies' enforcement of gender stereotypes has been addressed directly by the UN's expert on torture, who analyzed torture cases worldwide and concluded that "[S]exual minorities are often subjected to... rape or sexual assault to 'punish' them for transgressing gender barriers or challenging gender roles...[and] are disproportionately subjected to torture...[for] failing to conform to socially constructed gender expectations."¹³

In US asylum law, domestic courts are increasingly finding that victims who challenge gender roles (as opposed to simply being gay) often risk torture and persecution in their own countries, and need the special protection of political asylum – a specialized form of human rights protection. Another UN human rights expert recently recognized that in the US, transgender youth deserve special protections as well because they are "among the most vulnerable and marginalized young people in society."¹⁴

As a tool, human rights law is particularly adept at recognizing government inaction and intolerance that enable violence to take root. It recognizes that hatred of gender non-conformity has even led to extrajudicial executions (organized killing by state forces) of transsexuals, cross-dressers, drag queens, effeminate gay men and others who challenge gender norms.

The murders in this report share strong similarities with those documented by human rights experts in other countries. While these killings are not centrally organized, nor perpetrated by state forces, government indifference to the pattern of continuing violence targeting a specific group of American youth is itself a significant human rights violation, and US authorities must be held accountable.

Appeals to basic human rights are often the only effective means of challenging embedded social attitudes and practices that tolerate or even promote attacks on disfavored minorities. Widely-accepted and long-standing cultural attitudes towards masculinity, femininity, and gender non-conformity will have to be challenged and changed if the violence documented in this report is to be stopped or even slowed.

Gender expression is a human right. State authorities' failure to adequately investigate and prosecute these murders constitute human rights violations. Authorities must take responsibility for ending the violence that is killing gender non-conforming youth. It is a matter of human rights.

End Notes

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Leni Kai Okaruru
(1973-2001)

On August 26, 2001, in Hillsboro, OR, the body of Leni Kai Okaruru (28), an Asian/Pacific-Islander crossdresser, was found dead in a field. Her head had been severely and repeatedly beaten. Leni Kai was wearing feminine attire at the time of the murder. The case remains unsolved.



Christian Paige
(1974-1996)

In Chicago, IL, on March 22, 1996, Christian Paige (22), a transgender woman, was beaten, strangled, and then stabbed with a knife more than 20 times. Her apartment was then set afire, possibly to destroy evidence. Her murder remains unsolved.



Lauryn Paige
(1981-1999)

On January 8, 1999, in Austin, TX, Lauryn Paige (19), a transgender woman, was found dead – she had been stabbed with a knife more than 60 times and her throat cut so deeply that she was almost decapitated. Camaliel Coria (28) was sentenced to 40 years in prison.



In November 1995 in Boston, MA, Chanelle Pickett (23), a transgender woman, was beaten to death by her date after he discovered she was biologically male. In 1997, William Palmer was convicted of assault and battery, which carried a maximum sentence of 2 1/2 years.



On August 21, 2003, in Washington D. C., Emonie Kiera Spaulding (25), an African-American transgender sex worker, was shot and killed after her assailant learned that she was biologically male. Derrick A. Lewis (23) pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter while armed and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.



On August 12, 2002, in Washington D. C., Stephanie Thomas (19), an African-American transgender woman, was killed with her friend Ukea Davis (also transgender) only a block from her home in a hail of automatic gun-fire from a passing car. Their assailant then returned on foot, walked up to their car, and fired another burst of more than 20 bullets into their dead bodies. Her murder remains unsolved. The two girls had been bullied so severely at school that they feared returning and had recently dropped out.

APPENDIX: Victim Details

In addition to the youth stories profiled throughout this report, the following victims comprise the 51 assaults evaluated in this analysis.

Jacqueline Anderson

In February 1998 in Portland, OR, Jacqueline Julita Anderson (29), a bearded woman, was shot to death by the ex-boyfriend of her partner. Eric Running (47) was convicted of aggravated murder and sentenced to death.

Bibi Barajas

In January 2002 in Houston, TX, Bibi Barajas (27), a transgender woman who had been involved in sex work, was found dead from multiple gunshot wounds to her neck, arm and chest. Her murder remains unsolved.

Alina Marie Barragan

On January 19, 2000, in San Jose, CA, the body of Alina Marie Barragan (19), a transgender Latina woman, was found strangled to death following a sexual encounter in which her assailant learned she was biologically male. Kozi Santino Scott (21) was convicted and sentenced to 15 years to life.

Cinnamon Broadus

In January 2003 in Fort Lauderdale, FL, Cinnamon Broadus (21) a transgender woman was shot and died while running from her assailants. Her murder remains unsolved.

Chanel Chandler

On September 28, 1998, in Clovis, CA, Chanel Chandler (22), an African-American transgender woman, was found with her throat cut from a beer bottle in her apartment, which had been set on fire in what police called an attempt to destroy evidence. Christopher Lopez and Christopher Chavez were charged with Chanel's murder but were released in 1999 after the charges were dropped.

Tarayon Corbitt

On August 10, 1995, in Dale County, AL, Tarayon Corbitt (19), a transgender woman, was found dead – shot twice in the head and once in the chest. Her murder remains unsolved.

Tyra Henderson

On April 23, 2000, in Washington, D. C., Tyra Henderson (22), an African-American transgender woman involved in sex work was found bludgeoned to death. Her murder remains unsolved.

Ryan Hoskie

On December 27, 2004, in Albuquerque, NM, Ryan Hoskie (23), an African-American transgender woman involved in sex work, was found dead in an alley. Her body showed signs of upper body trauma. Her murder remains unsolved.

Michael Hurd

On June 18, 2003, in Houston, TX, Michael Hurd, a 23-year-old crossdresser was shot to death in his car. Michael was found wearing a wig, make-up, and feminine attire. His murder remains unsolved.

Robert H. Jones

On October 15, 1997, in New Castle, DE, Robert H. Jones (30), a transgender woman, was stabbed to death. Jones was attacked in her car after her assailant learned she was biologically male. Ronald Taltoan plead guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to a prison term of 10 years.

Francisco Luna

On March 4, 2001, in Houston, TX, Francisco Luna (29), a transgender Latina woman, was shot multiple times in the face, stomach and shoulder. Her case remains unsolved.

Robert Martin

On January 7, 2001, in Ashburn, GA, Robert Martin (29), an African-American crossdresser, was found severely beaten in an abandoned school-yard. He was still wearing a feminine wig. Martin was in a coma three months before dying. His murder remains unsolved.

Tamya Michaels

On December 14, 2002, in Highland Park, MI, Tamya Michaels (26), a transgender woman, was shot. Her murder remains unsolved.

Feliciano Moreno

On December 26, 2004, in Los Angeles, CA, Feliciano Moreno (25), a Latina transgender woman was shot in the head and dumped in a cul-de-sac. She had been involved in sex-work. Patrick Vallor (29), the primary suspect, was killed by police after he lead them on a high-speed chase.

Ashley Nickson

On May 1, 2005, in Dothan, AL, Ashley Nickson (30), an African-American transgender woman, was shot three times in her home by Steven Kyles (19) following a sexual encounter. Kyles, who had a history of violence, had been released from jail for an unrelated shooting just days earlier.

James Rivers

In December 1995 in Oakland, CA, James Percy Rivers (23), an African-American transgender woman, was stabbed and beaten to death in her apartment. Her murder remains unsolved.

Joel Robles

On August 15, 2004, in Fresno, CA, Joel Robles (29), a Latina transgender woman, was stabbed 20 times after a sexual partner discovered she was biologically male. Estanislao Martinez (23) pleaded guilty to the murder and was sentenced to four years in prison.

Donathyn Rodgers

On November 15, 2005, in Cleveland, OH, Donathyn Rodgers (19), an African-American transgender woman, died from gun shots to the face, back, shoulder, and thigh. The shooting an abandoned gas station was suspected to be sex-work related. Her murder remains unsolved.

Christina Smith

On October 12, 2005, in Houston, TX, Christina Smith (20), a transgender woman was found shot in the head on the front patio of her apartment. Her murder remains unsolved.

Quincy Taylor

In October 1995 in Atlanta, GA, Quincy Favors Taylor (16), an African-American cross-dresser, was fatally shot once in the chest in a parking lot. His murder remains unsolved.

Kareem Washington

On August 29, 1999, in Passaic, NJ, Kareem Washington (21), an African-American cross-dresser, died from stab wounds in the back and neck. The body had been left in an industrial area of the town and police believed the assault may have been sex-work related. His murder remains unsolved.

Dion Webster

In November 1996 in New York, NY, Dion Webster (21), African-American and transgender, was killed by multiple stabs to the head with a knife. Webster had been involved in sex work, and was believed to be killed by a client. Her murder remains unsolved.

Imani Williams

On August, 21, 2003, in Washington, D.C., Imani Williams (24), an African-American transgender woman, was found beaten and shot to death. Her murder remains unsolved.

Jerrell Williams

In November 1997 in Mobile, AL, Jerrell Williams (19), an African-American cross-dresser, was stabbed and had his throat slashed. His assailant, Tavares Forrest, pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to 15 years.

Sidney Wright

On June 18, 2005, in Chicago, IL, Sidney Wright (26), an African-American transgender woman, was punched and stabbed to death by Michael Majors (25) following an argument about Wright's sexual orientation. Majors was arrested and charged with first-degree murder.

Excerpts of Police Questioning of Brandon Teena Regarding His Rape – Falls City NE

On Christmas Day, 1993 Brandon Teena was assaulted by two acquaintances who were angered to learn that he was biologically female. Portions of the Sheriff's Office's interrogation of him are excerpted below. Days later, the two assailants returned and killed him.

Sheriff's Office: And what did you have in your underpants?... You didn't have a sock? Do you run around once in a while with a sock in your pants to make you look like a boy?

Brandon Teena: Yeah.

SO: How come you forgot to tell us about this?

BT: Well, I didn't see it as important.

SO: It's all important when we are doing an investigation. We ask you to start at the beginning and you skipped half of it...

...

SO: Okay. So then after he could stick it in your vagina he stuck it in your box or in your buttocks, is that right?

BT: Yes, sir.

...

SO: Alright, did it feel like he stuck it in very far? Or not?

BT: I don't know how far. It hurt.

SO: Did you holler all the time he was putting it in?...

...

SO:... Did he have a hard on when he got back there or what?

BT: I don't know. I didn't look.

SO: You didn't look. Did he take a little time working it up, or what? Did you work it up for him?

BT: No, I didn't.

SO: You didn't work it up for him?

BT: No.

...

SO:... Did you scratch or bite or claw or anything when he was doing this. You didn't?

...

SO: ...Why do you run around with girls instead of guys being you are a girl yourself?

BT: Why do I what?

SO: Why do you run around with girls instead of guys being you are a girl yourself. Why do you make girls think you are a guy?

BT: I haven't the slightest idea.

SO: You haven't the slightest idea? You go around kissing every girl?...

...

SO: The ones, the girls that don't know about you, think you are guy. Do you kiss them?

BT: [Inaudible] what [inaudible] that happened last night?

SO: Because I'm trying to get some answers so I know exactly what is going on. Now, do you want to answer that question for me or not?

BT: I don't see why I have to.



IN MEMORIAM

Sakia Gunn	(15)	Murdered 2003	Newark, NJ	(stabbed to death)
Quincy Taylor	(16)	Murdered 1995	Atlanta, GA	(shot in the chest)
Fred Martinez	(16)	Murdered 2001	Cortez, CO	(beaten to death)
Allison Decatrel	(17)	Murdered 1999	Iverness, FL	(hit by car)
Gwen Araujo	(17)	Murdered 2002	Newark, CA	(beaten and strangled to death)
Nireah Johnson	(17)	Murdered 2003	Indianapolis, IN	(shot and burned)
Ukea Davis	(18)	Murdered 2002	Washington, DC	(shot multiple times)
Brandie Coleman	(18)	Murdered 2003	Indianapolis, IN	(shot and burned)
Tarayon Corbitt	(19)	Murdered 1995	Dale County, AL	(shot three times)
Jerrell Williams	(19)	Murdered 1997	Mobile, AL	(stabbed to death)
Chareka Keys	(19)	Murdered 1999	Cleveland, OH	(beaten to death)
Lauryn Paige	(19)	Murdered 1999	Austin, TX	(stabbed multiple times)
Alina Marie Barragan	(19)	Murdered 2002	San Jose, CA	(strangled)
Stephanie Thomas	(19)	Murdered 2002	Washington, DC	(shot multiple times)
Nikki Nicholas	(19)	Murdered 2003	Green Oak Township, MI	(shot to death)
Donathyn Rodgers	(19)	Murdered 2005	Cleveland, OH	(shot multiple times)
Christina Smith	(20)	Murdered 2005	Houston, TX	(shot to death)
Dion Webster	(21)	Murdered 1996	New York, NY	(stabbed to death)
Kareem Washington	(21)	Murdered 1999	Passaic, NJ	(stabbed to death)
Cinnamon Broadus	(21)	Murdered 2003	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	(shot multiple times)
Christian Paige	(22)	Murdered 1996	Chicago, IL	(beaten, strangled and stabbed)
Chanel Chandler	(22)	Murdered 1998	Clovis, CA	(throat cut)
Tyra Henderson	(22)	Murdered 2000	Washington, DC	(beaten to death)
Timothy Blair, Jr.	(22)	Murdered 2005	Louisville, KY	(shot multiple times)
Chanelle Pickett	(23)	Murdered 1995	New York, NY	(beaten to death)
James Rivers	(23)	Murdered 1995	Oakland, CA	(beaten and stabbed to death)
Michael Hurd	(23)	Murdered 2003	Houston, TX	(shot to death)
Ryan Hoskie	(23)	Murdered 2004	Albuquerque, NM	(upper body trauma)
Delilah Corrales	(23)	Murdered 2005	Yuma, AZ	(stabbed to death)
Tyra Hunter	(24)	Murdered 1995	Washington, DC	(hit by car)
Sindy Cuarda	(24)	Murdered 2003	San Pablo, CA	(shot multiple times)
Jessica Mercado	(24)	Murdered 2003	New Haven, CT	(stabbed to death)
Imani Williams	(24)	Murdered 2003	Washington, DC	(beaten and shot to death)
Amanda Milan	(25)	Murdered 2000	New York, NY	(stabbed to death)
Alejandro Lucero	(25)	Murdered 2002	Phoenix, AZ	(beaten and strangled to death)
Emonie Spaulding	(25)	Murdered 2003	Washington, DC	(shot to death)
Bella Evangelista	(25)	Murdered 2003	Washington, DC	(shot multiple times)
Feliciano Moreno	(25)	Murdered 2004	Los Angeles, CA	(shot to death)
Taamyra Michaels	(26)	Murdered 2002	Highland Park, MI	(shot to death)
Sidney Wright	(26)	Murdered 2005	Chicago, IL	(stabbed to death)
Bibi Barajas	(27)	Murdered 2002	Houston, TX	(shot multiple times)
Loni Kai Okaruru	(28)	Murdered 2001	Hillsboro, OR	(beaten to death)
Deasha Andrews	(28)	Murdered 2002	Jacksonville, FL	(shot to death)
Arlene Diaz	(28)	Murdered 2002	El Paso, TX	(shot two times)
Jacqueline Anderson	(29)	Murdered 1998	Portland, OR	(shot to death)
Francisco Luna	(29)	Murdered 2001	Houston, TX	(shot multiple times)
Robert Martin	(29)	Murdered 2001	Ashburn, GA	(beaten to death)
Joel Robles	(29)	Murdered 2004	Fresno, CA	(stabbed multiple times)
Robert H. Jones	(30)	Murdered 1997	New Castle, DE	(stabbed to death)
Reshae McCauley	(30)	Murdered 2003	Largo, FL	(stabbed to death)
Ashley Nickson	(30)	Murdered 2005	Dothan, AL	(shot multiple times)

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