

## Demographic Characteristics of Persons Killed by Police

Malika Odera, Jesse Malone, Ethan Reynolds, Qassim Bolaji, and Hadley Wellen

The aim of this project was to provide an overview of the demographics of persons killed by police in 2015 and 2016. Given the missing data in each of the datasets, our analysis is presented in a lower bound and upper bound fashion. The data for this project was gathered from four datasets which have been frequently cited in the current literature on homicides by police.

## DESCRIPTIONS:

- Washington Post(January 1, 2015 – Present): “Every fatal shooting nationwide by a police officer in the line of duty”
- Mapping Police Violence (January 1, 2013 – Present): “Death as a result of being shot, beaten, restrained, intentionally hit by a police vehicle, pepper sprayed, tasered, or otherwise harmed by police officers, whether on-duty or off-duty”
- The Counted/Guardian(January 1, 2015 - December 31, 2016): “Any deaths arising directly from encounters with law enforcement”, must be on duty, does not include mass shootings or self-inflicted deaths
- Fatal Encounters(January 1, 2000 – Present): “All deaths that happen when police are present or that are caused by police: on-duty, off-duty, criminal, line-of-duty, local, federal, intentional, accidental—all of them”

## Totals

### Fatal Encounters

Total Reported = 3,217  
2015 = 1,611  
2016 = 1,606  
Median Age = 34

### The Guardian

Total Reported = 2,239  
2015 = 1,146  
2016 = 1,093  
Median Age = 35

### Mapping Police Violence

Total Reported = 2,172  
2015 = 1,102  
2016 = 1,070  
Median Age = 35

### Washington Post

Total Reported = 1,953  
2015 = 993  
2016 = 960  
Median Age = 34

## Race

### Fatal Encounters

White 47.8%-56.0%  
Black 25.8%-34.0%  
Hispanic 14.5%-22.7%  
Other 3.8%-12.0%

### The Guardian

White 51.7%-53.5%  
Black 25.6%-27.4%  
Hispanic 16.9%-18.8%  
Other 4.0%-5.8%

### Mapping Police Violence

White 49.5%-51.1%  
Black 26.9%-28.4%  
Hispanic 18.0%-19.5%  
Other 4.1%-5.6%

### Washington Post

White 49.6%-50.8%  
Black 25.3%-29.1%  
Hispanic 17.2%-21.0%  
Other 4.1%-8.0%

## Gender

### Fatal Encounters

Male 91.6%-91.7%  
Female 8.1%-8.3%  
Trans 0.1%-0.2%

### The Guardian

Male 94.9%  
Female 5.1%  
Non-conforming 0.04%

### Mapping Police Violence

Male 95.3%-95.4%  
Female 4.5%-4.6%  
Trans 0.1%-0.2%

### Washington Post

Male 95.8%  
Female 4.2%

## Race & Gender

### Fatal Encounters

White Male 43.3%-50.6%  
Black Male 23.8%-31.1%

### The Guardian

White Male 48.3%-50.1%  
Black Male 24.5%-26.2%

### Mapping Police Violence

White Male 46.6%-48.1%  
Black Male 25.8%-27.3%

### Washington Post

White Male 47.0%-50.8%  
Black Male 24.2%-28.1%

## Race, Gender, & Age

### Fatal Encounters

Young, White Male  
21.4%-26.0%  
Young, Black Male  
17.7%-22.4%

### The Guardian

Young, White Male  
23.3%-24.2%  
Young, Black Male  
18.0%-18.9%

### Mapping Police Violence

Young, White Male  
22.4%-22.9%  
Young, Black Male  
19.4%-19.9%

### Washington Post

Young, White Male  
23.2%-24.9%  
Young, Black Male  
18.2%-20.2%



## CONCLUSION

The data demonstrated that despite varying definitions on what is included for homicides committed by the police, most of the data sets displayed similar results in the number of deaths in total and in similar ratios by age, race/ethnicity and gender. Fatal Encounters, however, differs from the others in that the data set has both a wider range of cases and more missing information on demographic information.