

Violence Against Trans Sex Workers

Fact Sheet | Intersections of Gender Identity, Race, Class, & Criminalization

- ★ 12 trans women and femme-presenting gender nonconforming individuals who engaged in sex work were murdered in United States in 2015. They comprised 29% of all U.S. sex worker homicide victims.¹ 10 of these victims were black. One was Latina. 10 were 35 or younger, and 50% were 25 or younger.
- ★ 23% of 2012 GLBT homicides in the United States were connected to sex work, continuing a trend from 2011 and 2010 where 22% and 18% of homicides were connected to sex work.²
- ★ 4 in 5 transgender D.C. residents have been verbally, physically or sexually assaulted.³ 44% of D.C. trans residents were denied a job they were qualified for, 45% were discriminated against at work, and 41% have worked in the sex industry.
- ★ 40 percent of transgender inmates in the United States reported sexual victimization compared to 4 percent of all inmates.⁴ Nearly one in six transgender people (16%) (including 21% of transgender women) have been incarcerated at some point, and 47% of black transgender people have been incarcerated.⁵
- ★ Transgender people engage in sex work at a rate ten times that of cisgender women, and 13% of transgender people who experience family rejection have done sex work.⁶
- ★ Black (53%) and Latino/a (34%) trans folks have extremely high rates of underground work, likely related in part to structural exclusion from educational systems and dramatically higher rates of employment discrimination.
- ★ Trans people of color were more likely to have reported having done sex work: 44% of African-American and 28% of Latin/a transpersons reported engaging in the sex trade.
- ★ 33% of trans people without a high school diploma engaged in sex work, compared to only 7% with BA degrees.
- ★ Trans people who did sex work were almost four times as likely to have been incarcerated (48%) than trans women who did not engage in sex work (16%).
- ★ Trans people with sex trade experience were 25 times as likely to be HIV-positive (15.32%) than the general population (0.6%).
- ★ 60% of trans people with sex work experience had attempted suicide, a rate more than 37 times that of the general population (1.6%).
- ★ 29% of trans people who experienced domestic violence reported engaging in sex work for income.
- ★ Trans people who had experienced homelessness were 2.5 times more likely to have been incarcerated (34%) than those who had not (13%), and were more than four times more likely to have done sex work for income (33%) than those who had not (8%). They were more likely to be HIV-positive (7.12%) than those who had not (1.97%) and were much more likely to have attempted suicide (69%) than those who had not (38%).

¹ Koster, Katherine & Demeri, Derek, 2015 Sex Worker Homicide Report, SWOP-USA (forthcoming)

² Chestnut, Shelby et. al., 2012,

³ Lumby, Elena et.al., 2011-2012 Washington D.C. Transgender Community Needs Assessment, DC Trans Coalition, 2013.

⁴ Beck, Allan, et. al. Sexual Victimization in Prisons and Jails Reported by Inmates, 2011-12. Washington: National Criminal Justice Reference Service, 2013.

⁵ Grant, Jaime M., et. al., Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011.

⁶ *ibid* (through end)