

Femicides of prostitutes in Porto Alegre, RS, Brasil

Feminicídios de prostitutas no município de Porto Alegre, RS, Brasil (resumo: p. 16)

Femicidio de prostitutas en el municipio Porto Alegre, RS, Brasil (resumen: p. 16)

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This article presents the femicides among sex workers in the city of Porto Alegre, in the years 2006-2010. A case study analyses 12 femicides that occurred in prostitutes and were identified in 94 police inquiries, referring to the women murders available by the Police State Department of the city. Femicides were characterized into three categories: crimes of misery, because all the women were very poor; hate crimes, in which were rape, mutilations, torture and extreme use of lethal instruments; and sexual crimes in which were sexual violence. During the period studied, femicides by sexual workers were highly frequent in relation to other women. These deaths express the neglect and the misogyny of patriarchal society and the little value of these human lives.

Keywords: Femicides. Murdered women. Prostitutes. Sexual worker.



Introduction

Female prostitution is characterized as commercialization of sex, an activity in which male power is legitimized by a financial transaction in which the payer has unrestricted access to the woman's body. It has been common along history, but only capitalism have linked prostitution and money, in such a way that it has intensified the exploitation and disposal of sex workers¹.

In contemporary societies, sexual exploitation of young people, forced and bonded prostitution, trafficking in women, and pornography constitute one of the most profitable businesses worldwide. On the other hand, trading sex for money is a survival alternative for poor, racialized young women in patriarchal societies where the state does not guarantee rights, including education, employment, income, and social protection^{2,3}. In this system, women have little or no power regarding the control of the activity and are mostly exploited by middlemen.

Patriarchy is a power system in which men are in superiority, and women are given the status of subordinates. Patriarchal ideology ensures male sexual access to the use of both feminine and feminized bodies, cements the social role of women, enhances the unequal power relations between the sexes, granting men the right to access sex when and how they want it, supplying sexual fantasies through pornography and the purchase of sexual services from women used as commodities⁴. For Carole Pateman⁵, prostitution expresses the condition of social and political inferiority of women, so the prostitute sells her body in the capitalist market, therefore selling herself.

It is estimated that there are 40 to 42 million women practicing prostitution worldwide, 75% between the ages of 13 and 25, most of them victims of human trafficking⁶. Prostitution is more prevalent in places where the social protection network is precarious or nonexistent, where gender relations are marked by strong inequalities, and where access to education and job markets are difficult for women⁷⁻⁹.

There are factors in poor and peripheral countries, such as poverty, low levels of education, lack of job skills, absence of social support networks, and/or the presence of armed conflicts that make young women more susceptible to being recruited for sex work. They are more exposed to violence, which, in many situations, begins in childhood with the use of physical force, abuse, and sexual exploitation⁶.

In Brazil, albeit the changes incorporated by Law No. 12,015 of 2009 in the Criminal Code of 1940, recognizing the right to freedom of choice and protection of sex workers, there is a lack of firm support for these workers¹⁰⁻¹².

Gender-related murders of women are called feminicides, a political and legal term characterized by the exercise of unequal power relations between the sexes that culminate in the death of one or more women^{13,14}. More than half of all murders of women correspond to feminicides, and among the countries with the highest rates are Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, in Central America¹⁵, where sexual exploitation of girls is also high¹⁶. Brazil also ranks fifth worldwide¹⁷.

Sex workers are at a higher risk of being victims of femicide and *post-mortem* mutilation. In Italy¹⁸ this risk is five times greater, in the United States¹⁹ it is eighteen times greater, and in England²⁰ it is 60 to 120 times greater than for other women. Although femicides occur in greater proportions among those who work on the streets²¹, an analysis carried out in the United Kingdom over the last twenty years has shown an increase in migrants and sex workers who work in enclosed spaces²².

The lack of recognition of prostitution as an employment contributes to the stigmatization of sex work, keeping sex workers in the underground economy and with their safety at risk. In addition, sex workers rarely report crimes to the police, so decriminalizing the activity would add to their safety, and femicides would be considered work-related deaths^{22,23}.

The femicides of sex workers are still little publicized, although they constitute an important public health problem. They occur more frequently in metropolitan areas, where social and gender inequalities contribute to the increase of illegal activities, such as sexual exploitation and commerce^{20,24,25}.

This study aims to analyze police inquiries (IP in the Portuguese acronym) regarding femicides of sex workers that occurred in the city of Porto Alegre, capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, between 2006 and 2010.

Methodological pathway

This is a qualitative study using the social case study method to analyze murders of sex workers. The social case study investigates a contemporary situation within a real-life context seeking to understand the behavior and possible determinants of the phenomena studied²⁶.

It is also part of a larger research study that analyzed 94 inquiries from 2006 to 2010 obtained from the Police State Department of Porto Alegre (DH in the Portuguese acronym). These correspond to 45% of the total of female deaths by aggression notified to the Mortality Information System (SIM in the Portuguese acronym) of DATASUS in the period, which constituted a total of 207 deaths. Among the 94 female deaths by aggression, 64 femicides were identified, among which 12 were perpetrated on women practicing prostitution and analyzed in this article.

The research focused on the specifics of the individual cases, presenting a synthesis of each one, while at the same time, considering the deaths as singular and unique. We used data extracted from the IPs, a first stage in the criminal process, which begins with the report of a crime to the police authority and the completion of the police report (BO in the Portuguese acronym), which is characterized by a standardized form filled out by the police staff recording information about the victim, the aggressor, steps to be taken, and the history of the occurrence. After the BO is elaborated, the IP is opened, having, initially, 30 days to hear the involved people, locate the witnesses, request necroscopic exams, perform weapon and crime scene examinations, raise evidence of authorship and of the “materiality of the crime”. The statements heard during the IP are mediated by the police chief, who guides the writing in the Terms of Testimony

and Records of Qualification and Interrogation, using standardized language. The IP is concluded with the report of the police station chief, which presents the first version of the crime, translating the language into legal language. After the IP is sent to the Forum for a criminal action to be filed²⁷.

The data from the 12 IPs were compiled into a text corpus in order to proceed to the analysis and reconstruction of the narratives, understanding the triggers of the crimes, the scenarios where they occurred, the description of the act and characteristics of the deaths. To characterize these crimes, the theoretical references of Carcedo¹⁴ were used, making it possible to categorize them in three groups: crimes of poverty, sexual crimes, and hate crimes.

In the reports of the investigations, the study respected the standardized spelling and linguistic style present in police records. For each of the deaths a descriptive sentence was used, trying to express the synthesis of the case, and the women victims were identified according to demographic characteristics referring to age and race/color.

The study is part of a research project entitled “Gender-based Femicides and Murders in Rio Grande do Sul”²⁸ and the project was approved by the Ethics and Research Committee of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul under number 473/2009. Although these data were compiled in the DH of Porto Alegre approximately ten years ago, in the itinerary of this research on feminicides²⁸, they remain valid to the extent that feminicides of sex workers continue to occur at increasing levels, with a portion of them related to new femicide scenarios: the networks of sexual exploitation and criminal groups linked to trafficking^{14,16}.

Femicides of prostitutes: who are they and how do they die?

The 12 inquiries regarding feminicides of sex workers in Porto Alegre in the years 2006 to 2010 represented 13% of the 64 deaths categorized as feminicides. However, these 64 IPs provided by the DH constituted only 45% of the total. Expanding the total number of deaths and considering the 207 deaths recorded in the SIM, feminicides in prostitutes would correspond to 6% of the cases, indicating a high risk of death for this professional group, in line with other studies^{20,24}.

The victims were young women, average age of 21 years, two of them minors, pointing out to a juvenilization of those who practice prostitution. They had little or no schooling, and in several statements, there were references that they prostituted themselves out of economic necessity.

Two of them were declared to be black, but it must be taking into account that in the case of homicide, the racial declaration is made by the expert at the Forensic General Institute. Thus, many black women may have been considered white, which is common in a country still ruled by racism, causing social workers, when filling in the question of race/color, to “whiten” the service users.

The settings where women live contribute to this type of crime. Porto Alegre, the city where the study was carried out, has suffered in the last years a process that Monica McWilliams²⁹ calls “stress society”, in which there is an increase in violence against women.



These territories are undergoing transformations, which may include gentrification with removal of residents and eviction of buildings, lack of housing, work, and social facilities, increase of the street population, presence of drug gangs, militias, and urban violence.

The murdered women lived and prostituted themselves in the poorest areas of the city, in neighborhoods marked by violence and drug trafficking and in urban spaces where the State has little or no presence, where prostitution and other social practices are ruled by parallel, masculine, male chauvinist and misogynist law of organized crime.

Women who work on the streets are more vulnerable to violence from clients, pimps, johns, and other profiteers⁵ and have a higher risk of being murdered than those who work indoors²⁴. Six of them worked on the streets and some used public spaces, such as vacant lots, for commercial sex. They were murdered in these same places, in the exercise of prostitution, while in the population as a whole, most feminicides occur in the domestic environment³⁰.

The inquiries analyzed presented little information, while in some cases, only the police report and the death certificate were included, and they were closed due to lack of evidence. In five inquiries there were no indictments and several of the aggressors indicted were not found because they were fugitives. Some of them had criminal records and two were serving semi-open sentences, indicating that sex workers who are murdered are most of the time murdered by aggressors with criminal records³¹. In a study that analyzed a cohort of feminicides in prostitutes in the United States, it was observed that most were killed by clients and the motives included free use of sexual services, executions, and frivolous motives, such as fights, robberies, and drug use or debts related to them¹⁹.

Reading the indictments, it may be observed the construction of a discourse that has as its reference the evaluation of the previous lives of the victims and the accused, whose conduct and habits are investigated and their social and psychological profiles are inferred²⁷. Therefore, it is common to include aspects such as family and economic situation, including the profile of the aggressor, who most of the time has a criminal record; and of the victims, who are stigmatized for their sex work and/or (bad) maternity, and these factors are investigated and catalogued, in addition to psychological aspects such as the use of alcohol/drugs and depression.



Crimes of misery: victims of inequality

In recent decades poverty got a feminine face and, even in countries where women have reached educational levels equivalent to men and in places where there is protection against gender discrimination, unemployment, precarious female workwork-house and prostitution have increased. Prostitution is often the only alternative for survival^{32,34}.

Currently, sex work is being organized on a large scale through transnational exploitation groups that place women in other countries and regions. Thus, they are left without safety nets, withholding their passports and/or forcing them to work under slave-like conditions^{14,16}.

The term “crimes of misery” was used because all the murdered women lived in conditions of poverty, varying only in its intensity, in which the lack of resources to live on facilitates their entry into prostitution as an alternative for survival^{32,34}. This description was in many IPs: “she began to prostitute herself out of economic necessity”; “she prostituted herself on [avenue] Farrapos, a poor prostitution area”; “she prostituted herself in the bush”, among other statements. The place where they lived, the settings and motives for the crime attested to the futility of the act and the derisory value of these lives, in which poverty aggravated vulnerability, marked the routes and facilitated the perpetration of femicide.

It may be stated that these homicides would happen even if the women were not prostitutes, since executions due to debts and/or problems with trafficking, marital conflicts, and frivolous fights can happen to any woman. However, the empirical data show that when this woman, besides being poor, is a prostitute, lives in an area of trafficking and violence, and works on the streets, her life is worth next to nothing.

“Killed instead of her boyfriend”

She became a prostitute out of financial necessity because she was threatened by drug dealers for stealing 100 crack stones. However, it is suspected that this theft was carried out by her boyfriend. On the day of the murder, screams were heard in a bush near the place where she was prostituting. Even with the screams, there was no help, and she was killed by asphyxiation. Indicted: Careca and Billy (drug dealers). (L., black, 16 years old, IP1)

“She was barefoot and wearing only blue panties”

She was a prostitute on Avenida Farrapos, a poor neighborhood. She lived in a four-room shack with no wall covering. On the night of the crime, she was at home with her brother and two other people. She had left her six-month-old daughter with the child’s father, who did not pay child support and wanted custody of the girl. Around two in the morning, someone forced the door of the house. She got up and asked her family members to hide. She goes to the living room where she is shot. Witnesses are heard, say it was execution by drug dealers. “Cashew hair-dyed. She lay in front of the stove, on the rug laid out on the floor of the kitchen-room. She was wearing only blue panties and had no shoes on. Indicted: none. (A., 20 years old, white, IP2)



“In dorsal decubitus on the cement floor of the kitchen”

Separated from her husband two years ago, after a relationship marked by fights, threats, and physical aggression. She continued to share the house, a two-story house in a humble area of the city, where her ex-husband lived on the first floor and the upper floor was occupied by the victim, her son and her boyfriend. The ex-husband kept on beating her. The boyfriend wanted her to get out of the whorehouse. On the night of the crime, the ex-husband breaks into the kitchen where she was having dinner with her son, assaults her with a knife and finishes executing her with a shot. Indicted: Ex-husband. Confessed the crime. (V., white, 32 years old, IP3)

“She was just a girl”

The victim and the perpetrator had been separated for three months. He accused her of having sex with her boss for money. He was aggressive, and the victim lived with assault marks. She stopped working and studying because he wouldn't allow it. She had gotten a job distributing pamphlets downtown, where she met her current boyfriend. Having not accepted the separation, she was stabbed to death. Indicted: boyfriend (M., white, 16 years old, IP4)

“She was pregnant with Cachorrão's child”

Cafeteria attendant and prostitute in the city center. She told her sister that she was pregnant by her boyfriend, Cachorrão (Big Dog), and that his wife was threatening to kill her. She said Cachorrão intended to marry her. She was found dead in the bedroom-room apartment where she lived in the central zone. Shot. No witnesses: no one saw or heard anything. Indicted: none (M., 23 years old, white, IP5)

“Died for an old pair of pants”

Murdered by gunshots as a result of a fight over the borrowing of a pair of pants. The mastermind, another prostitute, went with the aggressor, her boyfriend, who had been released from semi-open regime that day. He came down with a gun in his hand and the woman shouted: “Do what you have to do and let's go, just shoot her”. Indicted: colleague and her boyfriend (K., white, 24 years old, IP6)

As evidenced by these cases, in a scenario of deepening inequalities of gender, race, and social class, women are the most affected by unemployment and job insecurity. They are left with sex work, whose lowest rank is street prostitution, living in poor and slum areas, and connections to trafficking for their own use, to negotiate debts, to ask for protection, or to be executed^{32,33}.



As they may be easily eliminated, the motives are frivolous: small debts, fights among colleagues, borrowing used clothes, whose value does not exceed two dollars. Society's misogyny has repercussions among the women, who don't show solidarity among themselves and exercise gratuitous violence, accentuated by the trivialization of the use of weapons: "Do what you have to do and let's go, shoot at once", said her "friend" to the hired killer.

In Porto Alegre and as pointed out by other authors^{19,31}, these feminicides occurred in poverty settings, commercial sex in dangerous places, proximity to crime areas, drug use, and relations with the drug trade. In these locations, poverty and machismo are accentuated, and we can add racialization and violence, which act synergistically in producing the premature death of these young women.

Sexual crimes: gender victims

Sexual violence goes hand-in-hand with the lives of girls and women and keeps thousands of them in situations of sexual exploitation¹⁵⁻¹⁷. Sexual violence occurs in a commercial relationship when the type of sexual intercourse is unwanted or not agreed upon, when the client refuses to use a condom, when there is pain, discomfort, or bleeding, when the woman asks to stop and the client does not comply, when objects are introduced into the genitals causing pain, when there are practices that put the woman's life at risk. It includes rape, harassment, forced sex, unwanted sexual practices, and genital injuries, which can lead to genital mutilation and death^{35,36}.

Prostitutes have a higher exposure to sexual violence, a situation resulting from the unequal power relationship established between the woman and the client, since in the act of buying sex, the man also feels entitled to rape the prostitute⁵.

In the inquiries analyzed, it was reported that some of them were found naked: "she was wearing only blue panties and was barefoot"; "the body was found with her clothes off (pants and panties)"; they presented aggression marks, bleeding and genital lesions, additionally to used condoms next to the bodies "near the body a key chain, two used condoms, a lighter, a crack pipe".

Raping is among the practices used to impose territorial control, including over dead bodies, says Ana Carcedo¹⁴, and women murdered by gangs, trafficking, militias, and war conflicts are raped and stripped of their clothes, while men do not go through this sexualized exposure, since stripping a body naked after death means a form of feminized humiliation.

There were seven feminicides in which sexual violence occurred, if hate crimes are included in this category, in addition to sexual crimes. Although the killers can be any men from the women's relationships or strangers, feminicides of prostitutes are usually perpetrated by clients or pimps³¹. "She went to serve two clients, in Vila Cruzeiro"; "prostitute and dancer in nightclub, supported her boyfriend and pimp". In this context, men consider themselves owners of female bodies, especially of sex workers, feeling liberated to use them and discard them when they are no longer useful for them.



“Next to the body, three used condoms, 2 IDs and a bank card in the client’s name”
Young woman who was prostituting herself on the street. She went to meet two clients, father and son, in a house in Vila Cruzeiro (a poor area with drug traffic). She was stabbed to death and left in the house wrapped in a rug. She showed signs of a struggle. Neighbors heard screams, saw a man digging a ditch in the courtyard and leaving with a bag. In the house there were signs of a struggle, fallen furniture, blood and three used condoms, confirming the rape. Indicted: father and son still at large (C., black, 19 years old, IP7)

“Naked, shot in the head”
Prostitute and nightclub dancer, supported her boyfriend and pimp. He was violent, always armed, and demanded a toll for the other girls in the club. She wanted to end the relationship, permeated by violence, and go live with her mother. This was the reason for the fight on the day of the murder. He left the apartment in the morning, returned at noon, went upstairs and came running back, telling the doorman that they had had a fight, that she had committed suicide, and that he was going to get help, but he never showed up again. The homicide was motivated by improper motive, since it occurred because the author had a feeling of possession/property towards the victim Indicted: pimp. Preventive custody requested. (T., white, 24 years old, IP8)

“I choked her out of pity”
Found dead by the owner of a house who, upon arriving from a trip smelled a strong odor and said he thought of a dead animal. The body was in a state of putrefaction, which hinders the necropsy, hidden under the sofa. The house owner’s partner confessed to the crime. He said that he had a sexual relationship with the girl and that she fell down the stairs, as she was suffering he choked her out of pity. He hid the body because he is a fugitive from justice, had killed his employers, and had a warrant for his arrest. Indicted: Companion of the owner of the house. Preventive custody requested. (F., 25 years old, white, IP9)

The feminine hierarchization into categories, in which prostitutes are in a less privileged position, means that these deaths do not produce empathy in society, not even among other women, and it is usual to put the blame on the victims themselves.

The occurrence of feminicide, a type of crime linked to the patriarchal system that makes women vulnerable to a greater or lesser degree, stems, in the case of prostitutes, from the fact that they are women available to everyone. This arrangement makes the man who buys the service feel like the possessor of a body and flesh that for him no longer represents a human being, but becomes an object^{5,37}: “I choked her out of pity”.

Hate crimes: victims of cruelty

Hate crimes are considered those committed against a person because of their belonging to an ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, social, physical or mental condition. The aggression is carried out to affect the group to which the victim belongs and to manifest the desire for extermination or elimination of a group of people³⁸.

Law No. 13104³⁹, known as the “femicide law,” enacted in Brazil in 2015, categorizes the deaths of women for gender reasons as feminicides, considered a type of qualified homicide, included in the list of heinous crimes or hate crimes against women.

Femicide, an act of control by men over women, functions supporting patriarchy⁴⁰ and when it occurs in terror and hate scenarios, it is not limited to death, and there is rape, torture, mutilation, or collective rape before the murder. The goal is to destroy the victim’s identity by striking her face, disfiguring her features, making her unrecognizable, and establishing total control over the woman’s body and sexuality, used as territory to be not only occupied but also destroyed. In this way, it is not just about killing the victim, but dominating her.

The use of cruelty is a way to show that the aggressors control the lives, the bodies, and the sensations of their victims, configuring the logic of the torturer, carrying out true terrorism on women, to frighten and paralyze them if they transgress the masculine mandate¹⁴.

By Law 13.104, all feminicides, regardless of class, race, sexual orientation, age, or occupation, are considered heinous crimes. The cases presented below are categorized as hate crimes, which mean that these killings were perpetrated with extreme cruelty and in terror scenes:

“38 knife wounds”

Body found near the Mexico Square, a hotspot of street prostitution and drug trafficking. Near the body, a key chain, two used condoms, a lighter and a crack pipe. There were no statements or witnesses, because the residents did not want to be identified. As per the number of wounds and defensive injuries, the victim was attacked by more than one person and this number of stab wounds constitutes a hate crime. Indicted: none. (C., 24 years old, white, IP10)

“She was running desperately after having left with her client”

He was working on the street in the harbor area. According to the security guard of a company near the crime scene, on the night of the murder, the woman was on the sidewalk when a young white man on a motorcycle approached her. After a conversation they got on the motorcycle and went to the vacant lot around the corner, where street prostitution is usual. After a while he observed the woman running back, apparently desperate. She disappeared from his view and later he learned that she was found dead in a nearby place. The body was found with her clothes off (pants and panties), with signs of sexual violence and condoms around her. Killed with seven stab wounds. There was no indictment (M., 36 years old, white, IP11)

“Said he was leaving because he messed up and killed a little whore on the strip”
Killed by mechanical asphyxia, rape and torture. She used to prostitute herself near the place where she was found, in the Restinga neighborhood, which has a rural area and bushes. She was found in the woods on all fours, without underwear, tied to a tree by her neck with an extender and a steel cable. Anal and vulvar region bloodied, with traces of violent aggression, she had been raped before being killed. Two condoms beside the body, one of them with unidentified liquid. Indicted with a criminal record: rape and sexual assault, still at large. (F., 21 years old, white, IP 12)

Rape happening in hate crimes has as its objective the annihilation of the victim’s will, who is expropriated of the control over her body-space. For Rita Segato⁴¹ this act is political and repeats with a specific woman the colonial process of subordination of poor populations from peripheral countries. Thus, there is a message when a woman is eliminated with an absurdly high number of shots or stabs, “there were 38 wounds produced by a knife”, since it doesn’t take more than a shot from a firearm or a stab wound to take someone’s life. The writing on the victim’s body represents a male message, that in reality a weak and powerless man, to show off in front of other men.

An analysis on serial crimes in the United States, showed that although they have decreased over the last twenty years, when they occur there is a high probability that the victim is a prostitute and, the men who commit this type of crime go on to kill other victims⁴².

In these deaths, considered hate crimes, the violence directed toward the annihilation of the other, in this case an unknown, poor woman, working as a prostitute in the homeless space of the street, occupying the lowest step in the social hierarchy, was so disproportionate that it goes back to the crimes that occurred in Ciudad Juarez⁴³, a territory of a peripheral capitalist country where the law of the militias, the maras, the gangs, and drug trafficking is in force, and where feminicides occur to reinforce the toxic masculinity of these groups.

Even in the presence of violence in a (perhaps) smaller dimension, this type of femicide also happens in Porto Alegre, where a young woman “was found in the bushes, on all fours, without underwear, tied to a tree with an extender and steel cable”.

Final considerations

The present article analyzes a series of cases of feminicides on women who practiced prostitution in the city of Porto Alegre between the years 2006 and 2010. A social case study, it is also a piece of denunciation research, which showed the high frequency of feminicides, including hate crimes, and sexual violence perpetrated on poor women and sex workers.

A limitation of this study is that not all homicides of sex workers are gender-related, as considered by the United Nations study³¹, therefore not all of these deaths are typified as feminicides. However, when considering the precarious and violent settings in which these 12 women lived, we included all the sex worker victims in this analysis, even the four feminicides perpetrated by an intimate partner, one of them a pimp, and the two

executions by traffickers. The fact of being a prostitute means being stigmatized and segregated, it means having no support network and no family support, increasing her vulnerability to all types of violence, including lethal violence. This vulnerability is socially expressed, as these crimes do not produce any commotion or empathy, since the moralistic view that considers prostitutes to be “easy-lifers” is still in effect; concealing the fact that they are, in reality, “easy-dead women”⁴⁴.

An additional fact to be considered is that these data were retrieved from the Police State Department of Porto Alegre until the year 2015, but were not published and represent a problem still scarcely studied in the literature, in addition to maintaining the rising prevalence of this type of death, related to new femicide scenarios: the networks of sexual exploitation and criminal groups linked to trafficking^{14,16}, currently affecting trans women^{45,46} who perform sex work.

Finally, feminicides of sex workers are common in the patriarchal system, in which there is eroticization of violence, dehumanization, and treatment of women as objects. This context imprints a connection between aggressive masculinity and pleasure, so that femicide comes to represent the maximum expression of sexuality as a form of power³⁷.

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Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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Este artigo analisa inquéritos policiais referentes a feminicídios de trabalhadoras sexuais ocorridos no município de Porto Alegre entre 2006 e 2010. Trata-se de um estudo de caso que investigou 12 relatos de feminicídios ocorridos com prostitutas e identificados em 94 inquéritos policiais referentes a assassinatos de mulheres, disponibilizados pela Delegacia de Homicídios do município. Os feminicídios foram classificados segundo três categorias: crimes da miséria, pois todas as mulheres mortas eram muito pobres; crimes de ódio, nos quais houve estupro, mutilações, tortura e uso extremado de instrumentos letais; e crimes sexuais, nos quais houve violência sexual. No período estudado, os feminicídios de trabalhadoras sexuais apresentaram frequência elevada em relação a outras mulheres. Essas mortes expressam o descaso e a misoginia da sociedade patriarcal e a pouca valia dessas vidas humanas.

Palavras-chave: Feminicídios. Assassinatos de mulheres. Trabalhadoras sexuais. Prostitutas.

Este artículo analiza investigaciones de la policía relativas a feminicidios de trabajadoras sexuales habidos en el municipio de Porto Alegre entre 2006 y 2010. Se trata de un estudio de caso que investigó 12 relatos de feminicidios ocurrido con prostitutas e identificados en 94 investigaciones de la policía referentes a asesinatos de mujeres, puestos a disposición por la Comisaría de Homicidios del municipio. Los feminicidios se clasificaron en tres categorías: crímenes de la miseria, puesto que todas las mujeres muertas eran muy pobres; crímenes de odio, en los cuales hubo violación, mutilaciones, tortura y uso extremado de instrumentos letales; y crímenes sexuales, en los que hubo violencia sexual. En el período estudiado, los feminicidios de trabajadoras sexuales presentaron una frecuencia elevada con relación a otras mujeres. Esas muertes expresan el poco caso y la misoginia de la sociedad patriarcal y el poco valor dado a esas vidas humanas.

Palabras clave: Feminicidios. Asesinatos de mujeres. Trabajadoras sexuales. Prostitutas.