

Deaths In Los Angeles County Jails

Research Summary by Dr. Terence Keel, UCLA

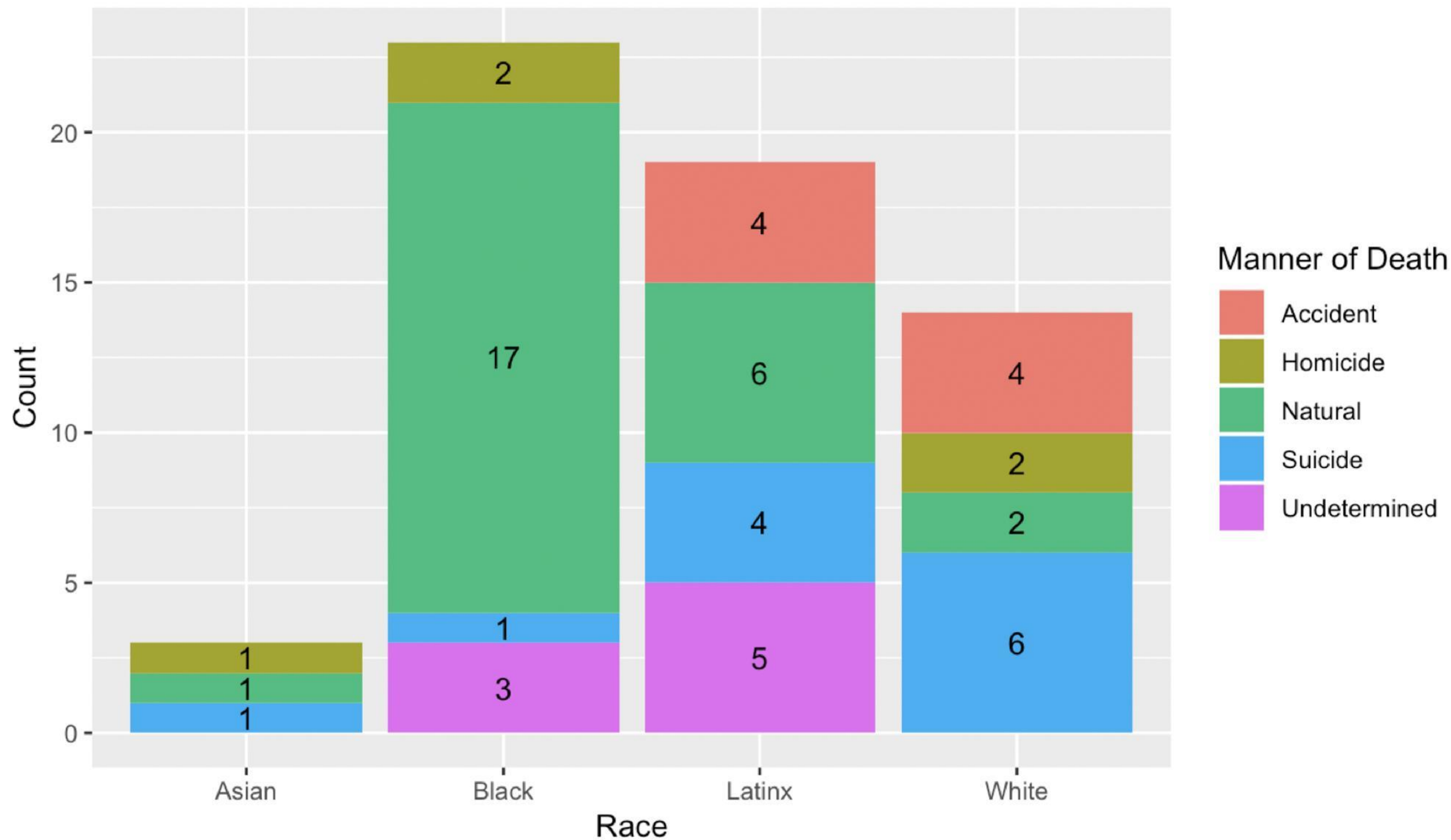


The BioCritical Studies Lab

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Report 1: "Natural Causes?" 59 Autopsies Prove Otherwise

Death Classifications of 59 Cases in Los Angeles County Jails by Race, 2009-2019



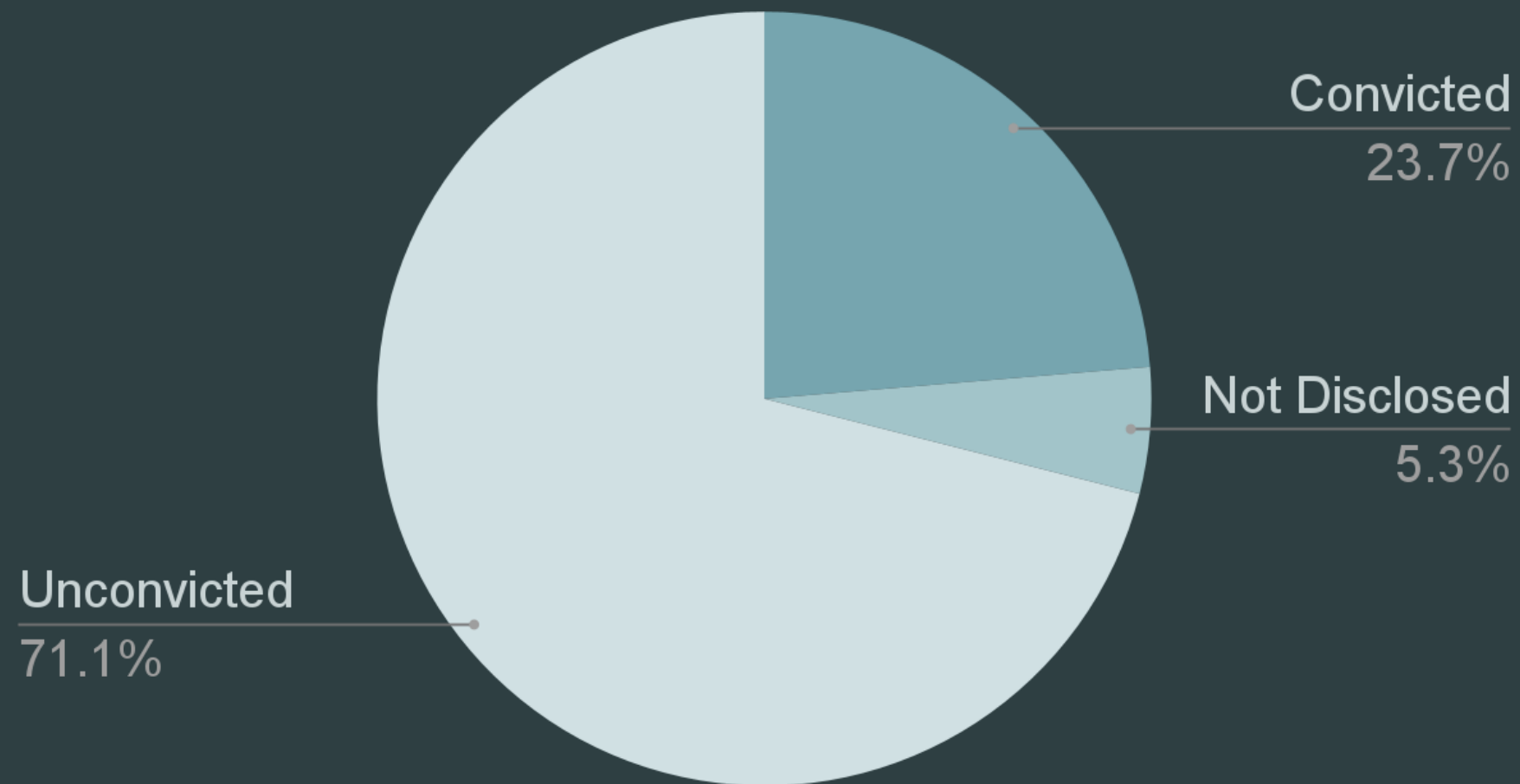
- ❖ In a sample of 59 cases, 26 deaths (44%) were ruled natural
 - 65% of these natural deaths were Black individuals
- ❖ More than 78% of the people in the sample died before standing trial

Of 260 total recorded jail deaths between 2009-2019, only 59 (23%) were publicly accessible; the other 201 (77%) were on security hold.

Report 2: Los Angeles County Jail Deaths 2009

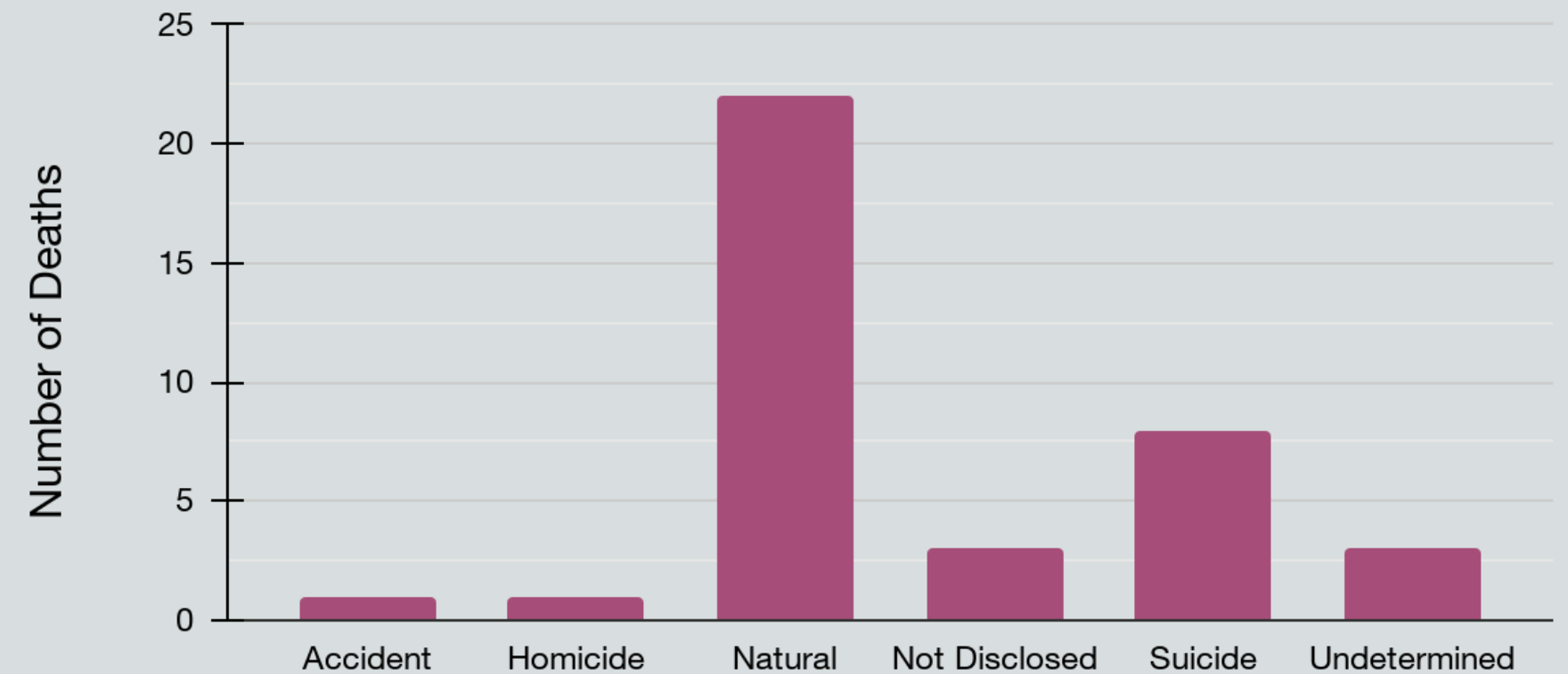
2009 was the **most lethal year** in LA County Jails before the COVID-19 pandemic (38 total deaths)

Percent of Deaths by Custody Status (2009)



- ❖ **71%** of the death cases from 2009 occurred pre-trial
 - **70%** of these pre-trial deaths were Black or Hispanic people

Number of Deaths by Manner of Death (2009)



- ❖ 58% of jail deaths in 2009 were deemed natural by the LAMEC
 - Average age at death (natural) : 49 years
 - Black and Hispanic people constituted 73% of the natural deaths

Recommendations

- ❖ Increased efforts towards decarceration and jail diversion programs (ex: Close MCJ Campaign)
- ❖ Implement procedures that prevent underreporting of data on in-custody deaths (CA AB 2761)
- ❖ Eliminate security hold practice for in-custody cases (jail deaths or street deaths of Los Angeles)



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