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Measuring the Effects of Quality-of-Life Policing

Studying Racial Profiling in North Carolina

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This issue of the *NIJ Journal* focuses on a single important topic—homicides committed by the victim's spouse or other intimate partner. Women are most likely to be the victim in these cases of intimate partner homicide. An overview on page 2 reflects the range of ideas the authors discuss, from aspects of the problem (such as risk factors and the effect of alcohol abuse) to possible steps toward reducing the number of incidents (such as the effectiveness of domestic violence services and the use of fatality reviews). The articles shed new light on a type of crime that continues to have serious social consequences and to present challenges to law enforcement and health providers.

The "At-A-Glance" section reports on research on numerous other criminal justice subjects. The research and programs described include a pilot program in which Florida sheriffs act as child protective service investigators; the new, "gentrified" drug markets of Manhattan's Lower East Side (which offer home delivery to middle-class customers); an evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of multijurisdictional drug enforcement task forces; quality-of-life policing; racial profiling; and advice to police departments on how to get feedback and participation from community residents.

The anniversary of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) is also recognized in this issue. One of the first federally funded clearinghouses, NCJRS helps criminal justice professionals easily access publications and information from NIJ and its sister agencies of the Office of Justice Programs, as well as offering an opportunity for professionals to share their knowledge with one another.

Sarah V. Hart

Sarah V. Hart
Director

NIJ

Building
Knowledge to
Meet the Challenge of
Crime and Justice

National Institute of Justice

Sarah V. Hart
Director

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Intimate partner homicide has declined significantly in the past 25 years. But these declines, while truly significant, mask the important fact that women are substantially more likely than men to be murdered by their intimate partner.

Intimate Partner Homicide: An Overview

by Margaret A. Zahn

About the Author

Margaret A. Zahn, Ph.D., is a professor of sociology and is the former dean of humanities and social sciences at North Carolina State University–Raleigh. She served a 1-year tour of duty at the National Institute of Justice, where she was Director of the Institute's Violence and Victimization Division. She currently heads the Crime and Justice Policy Program at the Research Triangle Institute in Research Triangle Park, NC. She can be reached at mzahn@rti.org.

Intimate partner homicide—the killing of a spouse, ex-spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend—has declined significantly in the past 25 years. The decline in these homicides took place among all race and gender groups, although they were greater for men and for blacks and less pronounced for white women.[1] These declines, while truly significant, mask the important fact that women are substantially more likely than men to be murdered by their intimate partners. The findings presented in the accompanying articles examine which women are most at risk for being a murder victim and consider policies that may help to explain the declines or to result in further declines.

In assessing risk, Carolyn Rebecca Block found three key risk factors in violence against women that predict a lethal outcome. They are the type of past violence (previous choking is a significant risk factor), recency of attack, and frequency of violence. Women who have recently been severely attacked are more likely to be murdered. Phyllis Sharps and her colleagues found strong correlations between partner alcohol and substance abuse and the killing of women by their intimate partners. Men who murdered their partners were more likely to be drunk every day or to use drugs than those who abused but did not murder or than those who did not abuse their partners. Further, Jacquelyn C. Campbell and her colleagues demonstrate the usefulness of risk assessment instruments in predicting eventual murder. They also found drug use, serious alcohol abuse, and gun possession to be highly associated with the murder of women by their intimate partners.

In terms of policies and practices that might explain the reduction in intimate partner homicides, Laura Dugan and her colleagues focus on exposure reduction strategies—that is, strategies that shorten the time that couples are in contact with each other. The results are mixed. The impacts of some criminal justice policies vary by race, gender, and marital status, with unmarried partners often being negatively affected by the policies and married partners helped by them. However, none of the policies examined address the use of drugs or alcohol or the removal of guns from domestic violence situations—all significant predictors of lethal violence.

Neil Websdale recommends the use of fatality reviews as a way to assess where our criminal justice and social services systems fail in preventing homicides. Although the focus of his article is on the utility of these reviews in protecting women against homicide, the same technique could be used to review the deaths of men who are murdered (the largest category of homicide victims). Certainly the viability of these reviews to help reduce or prevent all forms of homicide—not just those committed by intimate partners—should be explored.

In general, these articles lead us forward in determining the risk factors for the murder of women. They also examine the social policies and practices that might be associated with additional preventive measures. Taken together, the articles demonstrate the disconnect between our social policies and the risk factors associated with intimate partner homicide. For example, although alcohol abuse is a clear risk factor, few social policies aimed at reducing intimate partner homicide have focused on it. We must do a better job of linking social policy and practice to identified risk predictors if this social problem is to be resolved. The extent to which victim services and criminal justice systems focus on these factors could lead to a reduction, not only of intimate partner homicide, but of other homicides as well.

The extent to which victim services and criminal justice systems focus on these factors could lead to a reduction, not only of intimate partner homicide, but of other homicides as well.

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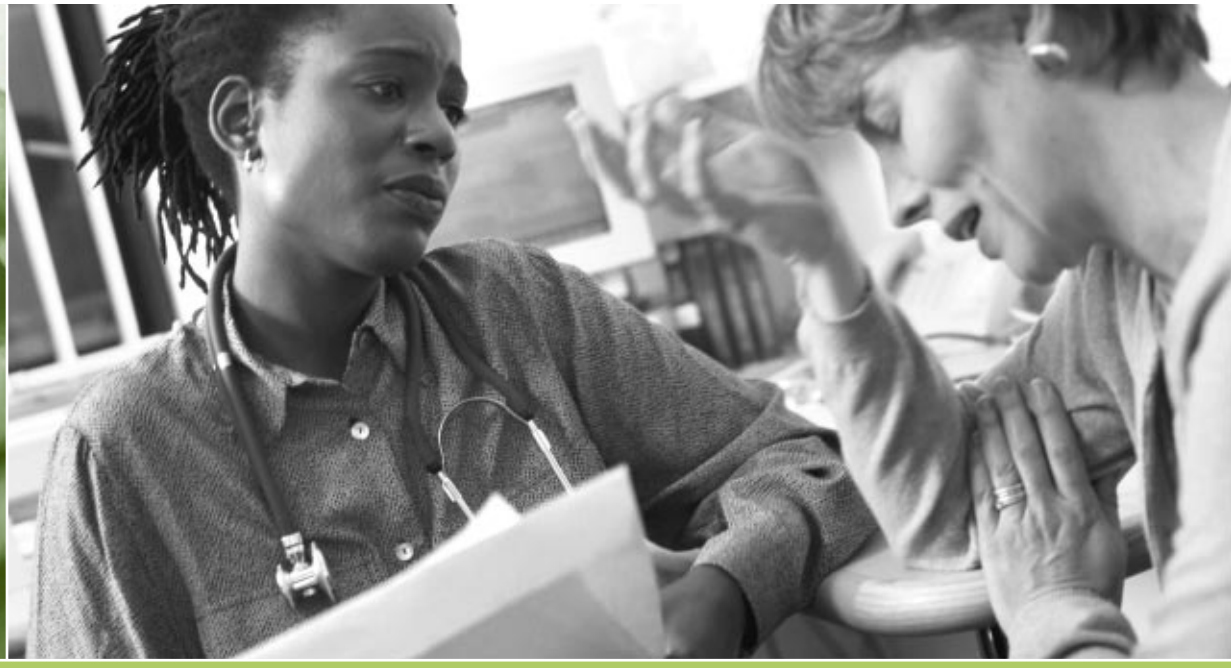
Notes

1. Fox, James Alan, and Marianne W. Zawitz, *Homicide Trends in the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, January 1999: 2 (NCJ 173956). Available at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/homtrnd.htm.

Based on several factors that signal the potential deaths or life-threatening injuries of abused women, a study helps nurses, police officers, and other service providers to lower the risk of abuse for these victims.



How Can Practitioners Help an Abused Woman Lower Her Risk of Death?

by Carolyn Rebecca Block

About the Author

Carolyn Rebecca Block, Ph.D., is a senior research analyst at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. She is the principal investigator of the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, a collaborative study of lethal and nonlethal intimate partner violence. This report is based on the work of over 35 collaborating individuals, representing numerous participating agencies. Contact her at 120 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606, 312–793–8550, bblock@icjia.state.il.us.

When nurses, police officers, and other service providers talk with an abused woman, what should they say or do to lower the risk of severe or possibly fatal violence? The Chicago Women's Health Risk Study identified several factors that signal potential danger of death or life-threatening injury.

Here are some of the study's key findings with implications for practitioners.

Past Violent Incidents

- **Finding.** In the great majority of homicides, the woman had experienced violence at the hands of her partner in the past year. Also, most of the abused women had experienced other incidents in the past. But three particular aspects of past violence are the highest risk factors for future violence: (1) the type of past violence; (2) the number of days since the last incident; and (3) the frequency, or increasing frequency, of violence in the past.

  Implication. Practitioners should talk with women about the nature of the violence she has experienced—when it happened, how frequently it happened, and the kind of violence.

- **Finding.** For a substantial minority of women, about one in five, the fatal or life-threatening incident was the first physical violence they had experienced from their partner. These women have different risk factors for serious injury or death: (1) her partner's controlling behavior or jealousy; (2) her partner's drug use; and (3) her partner's violence outside the home.

  Implication. Even the first incident could be fatal. Practitioners need to be aware of the risk factors for women who have not yet experienced physical violence.

- **Finding.** Her partner's extreme jealousy was the precipitating factor in 40 percent of the murders of a woman by a man in which there was no prior violence.

  Implication. Extreme jealousy exhibited by an intimate partner is a risk factor for possible fatal violence, even if there has been no previous violent incident.

Timing of Past Violence

- **Finding.** No matter how severe the most recent incident of abuse, if it happened recently the woman faces a higher risk. The number of days since the last act of violence was an important risk factor. Half the women killed, and three-fourths of the women who killed, had experienced violence within 30 days of the homicide, some within 1 or 2 days.

  Implication. Recent abuse by her intimate partner, regardless of the severity of the incident, increases the risk of the woman being killed, or of killing her abusive partner.

- **Finding.** Frequency of violence was also an important risk factor. The violence against them was becoming increasingly frequent for almost three-fourths of women who murdered their abusive partners and for over two-fifths of the murdered women.

  Implication. Increasingly frequent episodes of violence by an intimate partner pose a high risk of deadly violence to the victim as well as to the abusive partner.

Type and Severity of Violence

- **Finding.** Almost half of the abused women in the study had experienced at least one "severe or life threatening" incident in the past year (permanent injury, being severely "beaten up," being choked or burned, internal injury, head injury, broken bones, or a threat or attack with a weapon). These women were more likely to have sought help. The abused women who were killed, and especially those abused women who killed their partners, were much more likely to have sought help, compared to severely abused women not involved in homicide.

  Implication. Helping professionals should be aware that, by seeking help, an abused woman indicates that her situation could be serious.

Increasingly frequent episodes of violence by an intimate partner pose a high risk of deadly violence to the victim as well as to the abusive partner.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers screened more than 2,500 Chicago women during 1995–1996 who came to a hospital or health care clinic in areas where the risk for intimate partner violence was high. The brief screening included three short questions about current violence, current sexual abuse, and fear of going home. The researchers interviewed almost 500 women aged 18 or older who were in a relationship and answered "yes" to at least one of the screening questions. A third of those in a relationship who answered "no" to all three questions were also interviewed.

In addition, the researchers reviewed case files of all 87 intimate partner homicides in Chicago in 1995 and 1996 with a woman victim or a woman offender. The researchers also interviewed friends, family, and others who knew the female offenders and victims. They were asked the same questions the clinic women were asked. In addition, the researchers examined the Chicago Homicide Dataset,[1] medical examiner's office and court records, newspapers, and other sources.

1. The Chicago Homicide Dataset, maintained by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), contains information on all homicides in Chicago since 1965. ICJIA is currently updating the data through 2000 with the help of the Chicago Police Department.

- **Finding.** Any past attempt to strangle or choke her is a risk factor for severe or fatal violence. In a fourth of the homicides of a woman by a man, he strangled or smothered her to death. Violent incidents involving choking were more likely to prove fatal.

  Implication. Practitioners should ask an abused woman if her partner has ever tried to choke her or grab her around the neck. Also, in incidents when someone may have been choked or strangled, responding officers should try to ensure that the person receives a medical evaluation of her condition.

The Woman's Response to the Violence

- **Finding.** Most women try to leave an abusive relationship. Three-fourths of homicide victims and 85 percent of women who had experienced severe but nonfatal violence had left or tried to leave in the past year.

  Implication. The answer to the common question, "Why doesn't she leave?" is that women do leave or try to leave.

- **Finding.** Leaving can end the violence. When it does not, however, the continuing violence may become more severe than for women who never tried to leave. Her attempt to leave was the precipitating factor in 45 percent of the murders of a woman by a man.

  Implication. Practitioners should not only provide support and practical advice for women thinking of leaving an abusive relationship, but should also discuss her risks if she leaves and how best to minimize those risks.

- **Finding.** Almost every abused woman in the study had sought some help after a violent incident, either informal help (talking to someone) or formal help (medical, counseling, contacting the police). However, some abused women did not seek help from any source. A fifth of Latina/Hispanic women reporting a severe or life-threatening incident did not seek any help, formal or informal.

  Implication. Helping agencies and practitioners need to find ways to ensure that abused Latina/Hispanic women have culturally accessible and supportive resources available to them.

- **Finding.** Women in the study were much more likely to seek medical help or contact the police than to seek counseling or go to a service agency.

  Implication. This suggests that medical workers and police officers can play important roles in linking abused women to counseling and other community services.

Women Perpetrators

- **Finding.** Abused women who killed their partners differed strongly from all other abused women. They (1) had experienced more severe and increasing violence; (2) had fewer resources (such as employment or education); and (3) were in more traditional relationships (were married, had children, had longer relationships).

  Implication. Some women who feel trapped in an increasingly abusive relationship, with few resources, may resort to violence. It is important to find ways to intervene successfully in these situations.

- **Finding.** Abused women who killed their partners were much more likely to have called the police after a violent incident against them, compared to any other group of women.

  Implication. Helping professionals must be certain not to miss the opportunity to intervene when an abused woman reports the abuse.

- **Finding.** Women abused by women intimate partners contacted the police much less frequently than women abused by men, but they were more likely to seek medical care or talk to a counselor.

  Implication. Medical workers, counselors, and police officers can work together to improve the responsiveness and coordination of services for women abused by a female partner.

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Women in the study were much more likely to seek medical help or contact the police than to seek counseling or go to a service agency. This suggests that medical workers and police officers can play important roles in linking abused women to counseling and other community services.

For More Information

- See the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Web site at http://www.icjia.state.il.us/public/index.cfm and the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/index.html.
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- Block, Carolyn Rebecca, Barbara Engel, Sara M. Naureckas, and Kim A. Riordan, "Collaboration in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study," *Research Brief* 1(1) (June 1999): 1–4 (NCJ 180332).
- Donoghue, Edmund R., "Domestic Violence: Predicting Fatal Outcomes," *Chicago Medicine* 104 (2001): 4–5.

A new study examines the connection between intimate partner violence and alcohol and drug use. Researchers have found that increased substance use results in more severe violence, male perpetrators were more often problem drinkers, and female victims were less likely to use alcohol.

Risky Mix: Drinking, Drug Use, and Homicide

by Phyllis Sharps, Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Doris Campbell, Faye Gary, and Daniel Webster

About the Authors

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This research was supported under the Risk Factors for Homicide in Violent Intimate Relations project funded by the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), and NIJ (R01 DA11156). Dr. Sharps was supported by a Minority Research Supplement Award funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and NIDA.

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A study on patterns of alcohol and drug use in the murder or attempted murder of women by their intimate partners showed a strong and direct relationship between substance use and such violence.

This study examines the connection between alcohol and drug use and intimate partner violence, both during the incident and in the year leading up to it. The researchers found that higher levels of substance use by the offenders (and to a lesser extent, by the victims) tracked closely with more severe violence. Notably, although both partners may have regularly used alcohol before the homicide, attempted homicide, or the most severe violent incident of abuse, more male partners than female victims were problem drinkers. Also, during these violent incidents, more male partners than their female victims used alcohol.

As other articles in this issue state, intimate partner violence, the most common form of violence against women, is a key prelude to the murder of women by their partners. Alcohol and drugs are involved in more than half of these homicides,[1] and men who batter their partners also frequently abuse alcohol.[2] In this study, strikingly high rates of alcohol and drug use were reported for males who murdered or attempted to murder their female partners. These findings reinforce the already documented complex relationship between substance use by men and violence against women.

Table 1: Alcohol and drug use by victims and their partners in the year prior to the killing or attempted killing of women or the worst violent incident

Substance	Homicide/ Attempted Homicide (%)		Abused (%)		Nonabused (%)	
	Women	Partners	Women	Partners	Women	Partners
Alcohol						
Drunk every day	—	35.1	—	11.6	—	1.2
Problem drinker	13.0	49.2	7.0	31.1	1.7	6.2
Drinks per episode						
1–2	64.6	24.4	61.4	35.1	77.7	65.8
3–4	22.9	17.1	27.9	27.2	18.2	25.5
5–6	8.9	24.8	7.9	18.2	3.8	4.8
7+	3.7	33.7	2.9	19.5	.03	3.9
Ever been in alcohol treatment	27.7	13.5	13.3	18.1	57.1	19.2
Drugs						
Use drugs	18.4	54.2	13.4	25.0	6.7	4.3
Ever been in drug treatment	20.6	11.3	3.5	12.4	14.3	21.4

Focus of Study

The researchers looked at women from 10 geographically diverse U.S. cities, examining patterns of substance use by homicide or attempted homicide victims, abuse victims, and nonabused women and by their male partners. The study focused on three groupings: (1) women who were victims of homicide or attempted homicide and their partners, (2) abused women who were not targets of attempted homicide and their partners, and (3) nonabused women and their partners. Because homicide victims and their partners were so similar to attempted homicide victims and their partners—in terms of demographics, the dynamics of the relationship, and other factors such as prior abuse and stalking[3]—the researchers combined these two groups in the study.

Patterns of Alcohol and Drug Use

In the year before the murder, attempted murder, or the most severe violent incident, female victims used alcohol and drugs less frequently than their partners did, and they consumed less of either

Although there is likely a relationship between women's alcohol use and intimate partner violence and homicide, this study found an increased risk of victimization arising primarily from the offenders'—rather than from the victims'—substance use.

Table 2: Substance use during the killing or attempted killing of women or the worst violent incident

	Homicide/Attempted Homicide		Abuse	
	Victims (N=456) %	Perpetrators (N=456) %	Victims (N=427) %	Perpetrators (N=427) %
Substance Use				
Alcohol	14.6	31.3	8.9	21.0
Drugs	3.3	12.6	1.6	6.7
Both	4.7	26.2	0.9	5.8
None	77.4	29.9	88.5	65.8

substance when they did drink or use drugs (see table 1). This pattern largely mirrors that in the general population.[4] Still, 13 percent of the female intimate partner homicide and attempted homicide victims, 7 percent of the abuse victims, and less than 2 percent of the nonabused women were problem drinkers. These rates are similar to those for abused women who went for treatment in hospital emergency departments.[5]

During the homicide, attempted homicide, or the most severe violent incident, the victims also were less likely than their partners to be drinking or using drugs (see table 2).

Previous studies found that almost two-thirds of female homicide victims tested negative for alcohol at the time of death.[6] In this study, more than three-quarters of the victims of the homicide or attempted homicide of women and almost 90 percent of the abused women did not consume alcohol, either at the time of their murder or the most serious violent incident. In contrast, more than 80 percent of males who killed or abused a female partner were problem drinkers in the year before the incident. They drank more frequently than their victims, and they tended to binge drink. Other studies report that more than half of these killers drank just before or at the time of the murder.[7]

The current findings on substance use in the homicide or attempted homicide of women show less use by both parties than prior studies. But the findings confirm the same pattern of male offenders being more likely than their female victims to drink alcohol or use drugs at the time of the incidents.

Several other findings provide insight into the role of substance use in intimate partner violence. For example, during the homicide, attempted homicide, or the most severe incident of violence, the offender typically used alcohol or drugs. Significantly,

- More homicide and attempted homicide offenders than those men who abused or did not abuse their partners were described either as drunk every day or as a problem drinker or drug user (see table 1).
- More than two-thirds of the homicide and attempted homicide offenders used alcohol, drugs, or both during the incident; less than one-fourth of the victims did (see table 2).
- More than one-fourth of the homicide and attempted homicide offenders used both alcohol and drugs during the incident, while just under 6 percent of the partner abusers used both substances during the most violent incident (see table 2).

STUDY METHODS

The researchers studied risk factors for the killing of women in violent intimate relationships in 10 geographically diverse cities: Baltimore, MD; Houston, TX; Kansas City, KS; Kansas City, MO; Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY; Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; St. Petersburg/Tampa, FL; and Wichita, KS.[1]

Cases involving the murder or attempted murder of women by their intimate partners were identified from closed police, district attorney, medical examiner, and trauma records. For the homicide victims, most of the data came from telephone interviews of a proxy informant, a person who knew a lot about the victim's relationship with the offender. Proxy informants most often were mothers, friends, sisters, or other family members of the murdered women.

Similar records helped the researchers identify and contact the attempted homicide survivors. These women survived a gunshot, stabbing, or serious assault carried out by an intimate partner with a clear intent to kill.

The abused women studied were between 18 and 50 years old and were "romantically or sexually involved with the perpetrator at some time during the past 2 years." In the study, a woman was categorized as abused if she had been physically assaulted, threatened with serious violence, or stalked by a current or former intimate partner.

Sample sizes for each city were set based on the annual rate of intimate partner homicide in that city. The nonabused women in the study were selected from the same cities as the homicide and attempted homicide victims and the abused women, using a random-digit-dialing telephone method. The nonabused group also included women who had been romantically or sexually involved sometime during the past 2 years but who had not been physically assaulted, threatened with serious violence, or stalked by a current or former intimate partner.

Details on sample recruitment and on data collection tools and methods are described in "The Role of Alcohol Use in Intimate Partner Femicide."[2] (Femicide is a term that means the murder of women by their intimate partners.)

1. Campbell, Jacquelyn C., "Risk Factors for Homicide in Violent Intimate Relationships" (R01 DA11156), funded by the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and NIJ, 1996.
2. Sharps, Phyllis W., Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Doris Williams Campbell, Faye Gary, and Daniel Webster, "The Role of Alcohol Use in Intimate Partner Femicide," *Journal on Addictions* 10 (2001): 1–14.

Using the Findings to Keep Women Safe

Although there is likely a relationship between women's alcohol use and intimate partner violence and homicide, this study found an increased risk of victimization arising primarily from the offenders'—rather than from the victims'—substance use.[8]

Alcohol or drugs alone do not cause violence between intimate partners. Yet, a significant relationship seems to exist between men's alcohol or drug use and violence by them against their intimate female partners. These findings show that a violent intimate relationship in which the male abuser is a problem drinker—characterized by frequent weekly and binge drinking—or a drug user is

To understand the relationship between violence in intimate relationships and substance use, the context of use—such as the social setting, which can influence the type and amount of use, the rules and norms for behavior, and the meanings each partner attaches to substance use and violent behavior—also must be studied.

particularly dangerous. The findings also point out that serious alcohol use by males who abuse their partners increases the risk for fatal or violent victimization of women involved in such relationships.

Limitations of the Study

This study contained several limitations. First, proxy informants reported on the use of alcohol and drugs by female homicide victims and their partners. Such reports on a lost daughter, sister, or mother may be inaccurate. Perhaps the informants were in denial about the substance use or just wanted to protect the reputation of their relative—or the offender. Or a victim may not have revealed to these informants the full extent of her own or her abuser's substance use.

Second, data on the context of substance use were limited. For example, the study did not ask when substances were used, whether substance use was more likely by the couple alone or with others, or if the victim's use of alcohol or drugs started before or after the abuse. Nor did the study determine how the substance use affected the violence. To understand the relationship between violence in intimate relationships and substance use, the context of use—such as the social setting, which can influence the type and amount of use, the rules and norms for behavior, and the meanings each partner attaches to substance use and violent behavior[9]—also must be studied.

Third, African Americans with limited education and low incomes were overrepresented in the sample of female victims of intimate partner homicide and attempted homicide, perhaps because they had fewer resources to address alcohol and drug problems, including limited social support systems. In addition, African-American males who murdered or attempted to murder their partners more frequently reported that they had a low level of education, were unemployed, and were not looking for work than did others who carried out these same violent acts. An earlier study showed that these same characteristics were directly related to intimate partner violence against women.[10]

It is also possible that the overrepresentation of African-American women among the sample of female victims of intimate partner homicide and attempted homicide resulted from how the sampling was done. African-American abuse victims living in poverty and the proxies of those killed may have been easier to find because they lacked the resources to relocate. Due to the above limitations, generalizing from the results of this study may be somewhat problematic. Still, poverty is an important factor because other research shows that increased alcohol use and violence against women often occur within the context of poverty.

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A team of researchers studied the Danger Assessment and found that despite certain limitations, the tool can with some reliability identify women who may be at risk of being killed by an intimate partner.

Assessing Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide

by Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Rebecca Block, Doris Campbell, Mary Ann Curry, Faye Gary, Judith McFarlane, Carolyn Sachs, Phyllis Sharps, Yvonne Ulrich, and Susan A. Wilt

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Why does domestic violence turn to murder? Can we measure the risk of death for a battered woman? Which women in abusive relationships are most likely to be killed?

One helpful tool for finding answers to these questions is called the Danger Assessment.[1] The series of 15 questions on the Danger Assessment is designed to measure a woman's risk in an abusive relationship. (See figure 1.)

Figure 1: The Danger Assessment Tool

The Danger Assessment Tool was developed in 1985 and revised in 1988 after reliability and validity studies were done. Completing the Danger Assessment can help a woman evaluate the degree of danger she faces and consider what she should do next. Practitioners are reminded that the Danger Assessment is meant to be used with a calendar to enhance the accuracy of the battered woman's recall of events. The Danger Assessment can be printed from http://www.son.jhmi.edu/research/CNR/homicide/DANGER.htm, which also gives directions regarding permission for use.

DANGER ASSESSMENT

Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Ph.D., R.N.

Copyright 1985, 1988

Several risk factors have been associated with homicides (murders) of both batterers and battered women in research conducted after the murders have taken place. We cannot predict what will happen in your case, but we would like you to be aware of the danger of homicide in situations of severe battering and for you to see how many of the risk factors apply to your situation.

Using the calendar, please mark the approximate dates during the past year when you were beaten by your husband or partner. Write on that date how bad the incident was according to the following scale:

1. Slapping, pushing; no injuries and/or lasting pain
2. Punching, kicking; bruises, cuts, and/or continuing pain
3. "Beating up"; severe contusions, burns, broken bones
4. Threat to use weapon; head injury, internal injury, permanent injury
5. Use of weapon; wounds from weapon

(If any of the descriptions for the higher number apply, use the higher number.)

Mark Yes or No for each of the following. ("He" refers to your husband, partner, ex-husband, ex-partner, or whoever is currently physically hurting you.)

____ 1. Has the physical violence increased in frequency over the past year?
____ 2. Has the physical violence increased in severity over the past year and/or has a weapon or threat from a weapon ever been used?
____ 3. Does he ever try to choke you?
____ 4. Is there a gun in the house?
____ 5. Has he ever forced you to have sex when you did not wish to do so?
____ 6. Does he use drugs? By drugs, I mean "uppers" or amphetamines, speed, angel dust, cocaine, "crack," street drugs, or mixtures.
____ 7. Does he threaten to kill you and/or do you believe he is capable of killing you?
____ 8. Is he drunk every day or almost every day? (In terms of quantity of alcohol.)
____ 9. Does he control most or all of your daily activities? For instance: does he tell you who you can be friends with, how much money you can take with you shopping, or when you can take the car? (If he tries, but you do not let him, check here: ____)
____ 10. Have you ever been beaten by him while you were pregnant? (If you have never been pregnant by him, check here: ____)
____ 11. Is he violently and constantly jealous of you? (For instance, does he say "If I can't have you, no one can.")
____ 12. Have you ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
____ 13. Has he ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
____ 14. Is he violent toward your children?
____ 15. Is he violent outside of the home?

_____ Total "Yes" Answers

Thank you. Please talk to your nurse, advocate, or counselor about what the Danger Assessment means in terms of your situation.

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Campbell, Jacquelyn C., *Assessing Dangerousness: Violence by Sexual Offenders, Batterers, and Child Abusers*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1995.

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A tool like the Danger Assessment—or another risk assessment process—may assist women (and the professionals who help them) to better understand the potential for danger and the level of their risk.

A team of researchers studied the Danger Assessment and found that despite certain limitations, the tool can with some reliability identify women who may be at risk of being killed by their intimate partners. The study found that women who score 8 or higher on the Danger Assessment are at very grave risk (the average score for women who were murdered was just under 8). Women who score 4 or higher are at great risk (the average score for abused women was just over 3). The findings indicate that the Danger Assessment tool can assist in assessing battered women who may be at risk of being killed as well as those who are not.

The study also found that almost half the murdered women studied did not recognize the high level of their risk. Thus, a tool like the Danger Assessment—or another risk assessment process—may assist women (and the professionals who help them) to better understand the potential for danger and the level of their risk.

Limitations and Caveats

Eighty-three percent of the women who were killed had scores of 4 or higher, but so did almost 40 percent of the women who were *not* killed. This finding indicates that practitioners can use the Danger Assessment (like all intimate partner violence risk assessment tools) as a guide in the process rather than as a precise actuarial tool.[2]

It also indicates the need for a more precise cutoff score. Perhaps giving greater weight to certain questions, such as those related to guns and threats, could accomplish greater precision.

Cutoff scores should identify those who are at great risk of being killed, not miscategorize women who are not likely to be killed. Both categories are important because if the cutoff score is too high, women in extreme danger may be missed. If the cutoff score is too low, women with a lower risk of being murdered may be scared unnecessarily, and potential perpetrators' liberty may be restricted unfairly. Although finding a realistic cutoff score is difficult, it is crucial and something the researchers will continue to study.

High Correlations: Guns and Threats to Kill

Previous studies have looked at the relationship of gun ownership or possession to intimate partner homicide, particularly when the partners live apart.[3] The Danger Assessment study found that women who were threatened or assaulted with a gun or other weapon were 20 times more likely than other women to be murdered. Women whose partners threatened them with murder were 15 times more likely than other women to be killed. When a gun was in the house, an abused woman was 6 times more likely than other abused women to be killed. (See figure 2.)

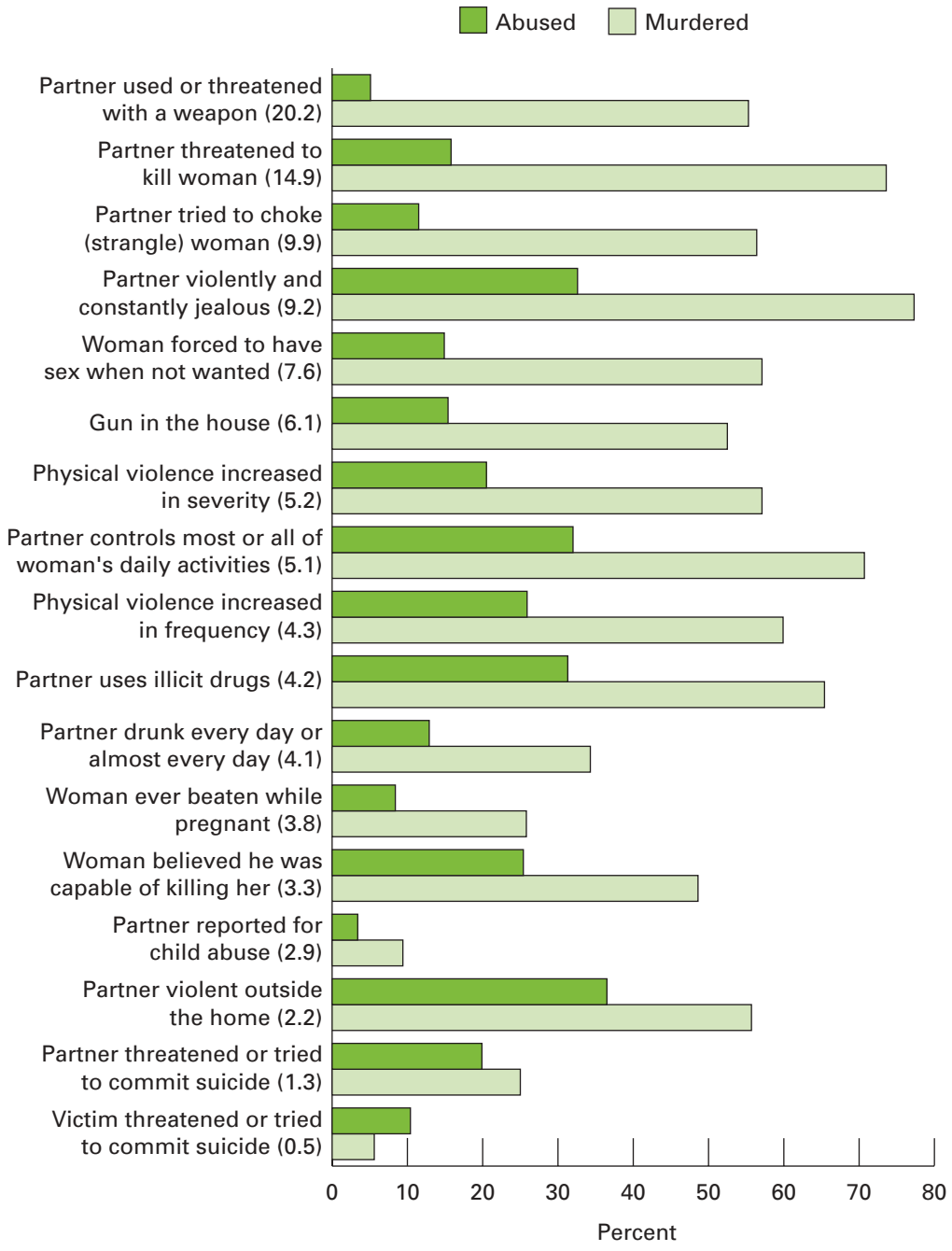
Although drug abuse or serious alcohol abuse (where the abuser was drunk every day or almost every day) also translates into increased risk and tends to separate batterers from intimate partners who kill, threats to kill, extreme jealousy, attempts to choke, and forced sex present higher risks.[4]

Low Correlation: Threatened or Attempted Suicide

Threatened or attempted suicide by either males or females in the study were not found to be predictors of intimate partner homicide. However, there is an increased risk of homicide when the man is suicidal and there has not been any physical abuse. Approximately one-third of the murders studied were homicide-suicides. Further analysis is needed to learn how a man's potential for suicide increases his partner's risk of becoming a homicide-suicide victim.

Figure 2: Danger Assessment Risk Factors Among Murder Victims and Abused Women

(The numbers in parentheses are unadjusted odds ratios and indicate the likelihood of being in the homicide versus the abused group.*)



* All items had significant odds ratio (95 percent confidence interval excludes the value of 1), except the last two factors (partner and victim suicidality).

The Danger Assessment study found that women who were threatened or assaulted with a gun were 20 times more likely than other women to be murdered. Women whose partners threatened them with murder were 15 times more likely than other women to be killed.

In safety planning, an abuser's threats with a weapon or threats to kill should be rated as particularly serious, as should a possible murderer's access to a gun.

THE NUMBERS

Women are killed by intimate partners—husbands, lovers, ex-husbands, or ex-lovers—more often than by any other category of killer.[1] It is the leading cause of death for African-American women aged 15 to 45 and the seventh leading cause of premature death for U.S. women overall.[2] Intimate partner homicides make up 40 to 50 percent of all murders of women in the United States, according to city- or State-specific databases (as opposed to the Federal Supplementary Homicide Reports).[3] Significantly, the Federal report doesn't have an ex-boyfriend/ex-girlfriend category, which accounts for as much as 11 percent of intimate partner homicides of women and for 2 to 3 percent of intimate partner homicides committed by women.

In 70 to 80 percent of intimate partner homicides, no matter which partner was killed, the man physically abused the woman before the murder.[4] Thus, one of the primary ways to decrease intimate partner homicide is to identify and intervene promptly with abused women at risk.

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This study did not examine the risk faced by men of intimate partner homicide when the woman was suicidal, so this factor's weight was not determined.[5] However, since the question of whether a woman is suicidal is important for prevention efforts, the researchers recommend that it remain on the assessment.

The Safety Plan

In safety planning, an abuser's threats with a weapon or threats to kill should be rated as particularly serious, as should a possible murderer's access to a gun. Thus, the researchers suggest that the legal prohibition against gun ownership

for those convicted of domestic violence is especially important to enforce, and any protection order should include firearms search-and-seizure provisions.

However, criminal justice practitioners making decisions about an alleged batterer's bail or sentencing should keep in mind that more than a third of women who had a score of 4 or higher were not murdered. The research showed that only a score of 8 or 9 reliably identified those women who were killed. Thus, while the current cutoff score of 4 suggests the need for great caution and for protective action, it does not reliably identify a woman's risk of death.

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In safety planning, an abuser's threats with a weapon or threats to kill should be rated as particularly serious, as should a possible murderer's access to a gun. Thus, the researchers suggest that the legal prohibition against gun ownership for those convicted of domestic violence is especially important to enforce, and any protection order should include firearms search-and-seizure provisions.

For more information

- Background information on the Danger Assessment plus the full text of the questionnaire is available at http://www.son.jhmi.edu/research/CNR/homicide/DANGER.htm.

Notes

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Policies and services designed to help victims of domestic violence appear to have two possible and opposing effects: either they decrease the abuse and risk of homicide, or they have the unintended consequence of increasing them.

Do Domestic Violence Services Save Lives?

by Laura Dugan, Daniel S. Nagin, and Richard Rosenfeld

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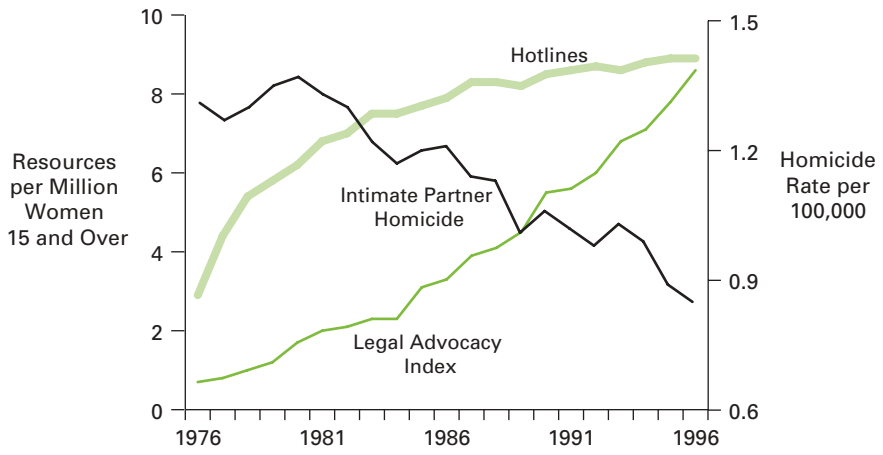
Policies and services designed to help victims of domestic violence appear to have two possible and opposing effects: either they decrease the abuse and risk of homicide, or they have the unintended consequence of increasing them. Some interventions that reduce contact between intimate partners in violent relationships also reduce opportunities for further abuse and potential homicide attempts.[1] But certain interventions designed to help victims gain access to helpful resources may actually increase the risk of homicide—they have a backlash or retaliation effect. The outcome depends on the type of intervention and the characteristics of the victim and the offender.

Researchers have examined the effects of many domestic violence resources and their impact on intimate partner homicide to determine whether any conclusions could be drawn about the relationship between the policies or services used and the risk of death or further injury. Although clear conclusions cannot be drawn and additional research is needed, current findings suggest that certain interventions (such as warrantless arrest laws and economic assistance for victims of domestic abuse) may help reduce domestic violence homicides. In addition, life circumstances of the parties involved seem to play a role in homicide rates. For example, unmarried black women may be especially vulnerable to homicide if they elect to use domestic violence resources.

Resources Up, Murders Down

In the United States, rates of homicide by intimate partners—spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriends, and girlfriends—have fallen over the past 25 years. During that same time, public awareness of and policy responses to intimate partner violence have intensified. As a result, domestic violence policies and programs expanded dramatically beginning in the early 1970's, when the battered women's movement began pressing for greater response to the needs of women abused by their spouses.[2] The movement prompted officials to redefine domestic violence as a criminal offense rather than a private matter. Policymakers responded with stronger criminal justice sanctions, specialized procedures, and services for victims.

Figure 1: U.S. Intimate Partner Homicide Rates and Domestic Violence Services, 1976–1996



Source: Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976–1996, and the authors.

Specifically, the number of domestic violence legal advocacy programs and hotlines grew sharply from 1976 to 1996 in 48 of the country's largest cities, as the intimate homicide rate declined (see figure 1). Legal advocacy resources increased ninefold, with especially rapid growth after the mid-1980's. The number of hotlines shot up in the late 1970's, then stabilized at between 8 and 9 per million women after the late 1980's. During the 20 years of the study period, the intimate partner homicide rate dropped from roughly 1.3 to 0.9 victims per 100,000, a decline of about 30 percent.[3]

The decline in intimate partner homicide varied by the victim's sex, race, and relationship to the offender. Larger decreases occurred among men, blacks, and married victims than among women, whites, and unmarried partners.[4] The rate for married 20- to 44-year-old black men dropped a surprising 87 percent, from 18.4 to 2.4 per 100,000. These numbers highlight the importance of assessing the effect of domestic violence resources by characteristics of the victims.

The risk of intimate partner homicide is highest when a victim of domestic abuse tries to leave the relationship.

Demographic Influences

Because most intimate partner killings involve married couples,[5] perhaps the most crucial factor in reducing intimate partner homicide has been the sharp drop in marriage rates among young adults during the past 25 years. At the same time, separation and divorce rates have increased.[6] Fewer marriages may translate into less exposure to abusive partners. This decrease in exposure may lower the risk for intimate partner homicide. Fewer marriages also could mean that the marriages that do take place are different: those who marry may be more selective in choosing partners and, thus, less likely to marry abusers.[7] Finally, violent relationships may more likely end in divorce.[8]

In addition, women's economic status has improved. Women are now more likely to finish college and to have a job—both in absolute terms and in relation to men. Women's incomes also have increased.[9] This improved status means that women may depend less on intimate partners, including abusive partners. But at the same time, such gains may sometimes provoke retaliation from men who fear loss of status or control in their intimate relationships and thereby contribute to increased violence.

Women on welfare reportedly are more likely than others to experience domestic violence.[10] But for women with children living in poverty, public assistance may help cushion the financial blow of leaving an abusive partner.

Weighing Exposure Reduction Against Retaliation

Reducing exposure. One might assume that anything that makes it easier for an abuse victim to leave a violent relationship will reduce the contact between the intimate partners and lower the chance that one will kill the other. This approach is called "exposure reduction." For example, welfare benefits may give a woman and her children the financial resources they need to leave an abusive man and thereby reduce their exposure to violence. But sometimes factors designed to reduce a woman's exposure may cause an abusive partner to retaliate.

Research shows that two policies support exposure reduction: (1) warrantless arrest laws and (2) higher Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefit levels.

Warrantless arrest laws have been associated with a decrease in intimate partner homicides. Reductions in AFDC benefits have been associated with an increase in intimate partner homicide.

Warrantless arrest laws allow police to arrest abusers who violate protection orders without an officer first having to obtain a warrant. These laws are associated with fewer deaths of white women, whether or not they are married. According to the research, the period during which a woman seeks to obtain a warrant is the most dangerous because a batterer is more likely to be antagonistic after the police intervene. The effect of warrantless arrests was especially noticeable among unmarried white females.

Reductions in AFDC benefit levels have been associated with an increase in homicides of unmarried men, particularly unmarried black men. When welfare payments were lowered, there was an associated increase in women killing their boyfriends.[11] This suggests that cuts in AFDC may limit opportunities for unmarried women with children to live independently of their abusers: perhaps when women see no other alternative, they are more likely to kill their abusers. Conversely, increases in AFDC benefits may provide opportunities for unmarried women to live independently of their abusers, thereby reducing exposure and the likelihood that these women will kill their abusers.[12]

For unmarried black women, cuts in AFDC benefit levels appear to endanger their lives. For white women, however, cuts seem to have no effect.[13] Blacks may be more sensitive than whites to changes in AFDC benefits. That interpretation is in line with blacks' higher AFDC participation rates.[14]

DATA AND METHODS

The homicide data for this study were from the Supplementary Homicide Reports of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program.[1] The researchers looked at the relationship between homicide among heterosexual intimate partners and domestic violence resources in 48 large U.S. cities between 1976 and 1996. The researchers controlled for marriage and divorce rates, the relative education of women and men, and other factors. The researchers also looked at the number of homicides in each city over time by the victim's sex, race, and marital relationship to the offender.[2] Married people included ex-spouses and common-law couples; unmarried people included boyfriends and girlfriends.

The researchers developed 11 variables in an effort to measure exposure reduction and retaliation:

Variable	Measure
State Statutes	
Warrantless arrest	An indicator variable identifying States that have a warrantless arrest law for when protection orders are violated.
Mandatory arrest	An indicator variable identifying States that have a mandatory arrest law for when protection orders are violated.
Violation index	An index that sums the total number of the following consequences for violating a protection order: contempt (either civil or criminal), misdemeanor, or felony.
Exposure reduction index	An index that increases by one increment for each of the following statute provisions: no-contact order and custody relief (if married) and protection beyond cohabitation and no-contact order (if unmarried).
Local Policies	
Police arrest index	An index totaling the number of the following arrest policies: pro-arrest for violation of a protection order, mandatory arrest for violation of a protection order, and mandatory arrest for domestic assault.
Police commitment index	An index that increases by one increment if the department has a domestic violence unit, and by one increment if it offers domestic violence in-service training to officers.
DA willingness index	An index that increases by one increment if the prosecutor's office takes cases of protection-order violation, and by another increment if the office has a written policy standardizing the prosecution of such cases.
DA specialization index	An index that increases by one increment if the prosecutor's office has a domestic violence unit, and by one increment if the office has trained legal advocates on staff.
No-drop policy	An indicator variable that identifies cities with prosecutors' offices that have no-drop policies.
Programs	
Legal advocacy index	Index that sums the number of agencies with a separate budget for legal advocacy with the number of agencies that have lawyers on staff, adjusted for the number of women over age 15 years (14 years in 1970) in the city.
Hotlines	The total number of hotlines adjusted for the number of women over age 15 years (14 years in 1970) in the city.

1. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports 1976–1996. Machine-readable files and documentation were obtained directly from the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, 1998.
2. The analysis was conducted using 6 waves of data, with 3 years in each wave.

The risk of intimate partner homicide is highest when a victim of domestic abuse tries to leave the relationship.[15] Such a *retaliation effect* or backlash may also be triggered by an intervention—such as a restraining order, arrest, or shelter protection—that angers or threatens the abuser without effectively reducing contact with the victim.

Backlash. Two policies appear to provoke backlash: (1) prosecutor willingness to

Only more research documenting both successful and unsuccessful cases of relief from partner violence will help in the design of policies to better meet victims' safety needs.

take cases of protection order violation and (2) the relative education of the partners. As prosecutors' willingness to pursue such cases increased, the research seemed to indicate an increase in the murder of married white and unmarried black partners and in the victimization of unmarried white women. Thus, it could be that the prosecutor's willingness to pursue protection order violations may aggravate these conflicted relationships.

The researchers also noted that as the relative education of black women to black men grows, there is an associated increase in the number of black husbands killed and in the number of black unmarried partnerships that end in homicide. The large difference in education between black men and women may add more stress to already contentious relationships, creating a backlash.

Other factors supporting the backlash theory were the availability of hotlines in the city, the presence of domestic violence units or training programs in police departments and prosecutors' offices, and the employment of trained legal advocates on the prosecutor's staff. Each of these factors was designed to assist abuse victims, but they also appear to be associated with retaliation by abusive partners.

Factors That Can Cut Both Ways

The research found a number of factors that supported both exposure reduction and backlash theories, but only among different groups, based on marital status, gender, and race. These factors included:

- State laws requiring mandatory arrest for violating a protection order.
- The availability of contempt, misdemeanor, or felony charges for violating a protection order.
- State laws providing for no-contact orders, custody relief, or protection beyond cohabitation.
- Agencies with dedicated budgets for legal advocacy and with lawyers on staff.
- Pro-arrest and mandatory arrest policies for protection order violations and mandatory arrest for domestic assault.

Policy, Planning, and Prevention

The fact that retaliation occurs doesn't mean that prevention strategies are a bad idea. Instead, prevention should be tailored to individual needs. These results also imply that reducing exposure just a little—or failing to meet promises of exposure reduction—can be worse than doing nothing at all for persons in severely violent relationships. For them, exposure reduction is crucial, although it may not be easy to achieve.

Much research has looked into failed efforts by abuse victims to leave their abusers. Case reports and interviews often provide rich details of the events leading to a homicide. Yet, that is only half the story. How people in severely violent relationships can avoid deadly consequences must be understood.[16] Only more research documenting both successful and unsuccessful cases of relief from partner violence will help in the design of policies to better meet victims' safety needs.

NCJ 196548

For more information

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3. The intimate homicide rate is driven primarily by the population between the ages of 20 and 44, the age category in which intimate homicides are heavily concentrated. The data are from the Supplementary Homicide Reports at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/intimates.htm.

4. Greenfield, Lawrence A., Michael R. Rand, Diane Craven, Patsy A. Klaus, Craig A. Perkins, Cheryl Ringel, Greg Warchol, Cathy Maston, and James Alan Fox, *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends*, Bureau of Justice Statistics Factbook, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, March 1998 (NCJ 167237); Rosenfeld, Richard, "Patterns in Adult Homicide: 1980–1995," in *The Crime Drop in America*, ed. Alfred Blumstein and Joel Wallman, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 130–163 (NCJ 185238).

5. Ibid.

6. Saluter, Arlene F., and Terry A. Lugaila, *Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1996*, Current Population Reports (P20-496), Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, March 1998.

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8. For evidence supporting the relationship between domesticity and intimate partner homicide, see Dugan et al., "Explaining the Decline in Intimate Partner Homicide"; and Rosenfeld, "Patterns in Adult Homicide."

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10. Allard, Mary Ann, Randy Albelda, Mary Ellen Colten, and Carol Cosenza, *In Harm's Way? Domestic Violence, AFDC Receipt, and Welfare Reform in Massachusetts*, Boston: University of Massachusetts, McCormack Institute and Center for Survey Research, 1997; Browne, Angela, and Shari S. Bassuk, "Intimate Violence in the Lives of Homeless and Poor Housed Women: Prevalence and Patterns in an Ethnically Diverse Sample," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 67(2) (1997): 261–278; and Tolman, Richard M., and Daniel Rosen, "Domestic Violence in the Lives of Women Receiving Welfare," *Violence Against Women* 7 (2001): 141–158.

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13. Dugan et al., *Exposure Reduction or Backlash?*; Dugan, Laura, "Identifying Unit-Dependency and Time-Specificity in Longitudinal Analysis: A Graphical Methodology," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 18(3) (2002): 213–237 (NCJ 196843).

14. Committee on Ways and Means, *1996 Green Book*, Washington, DC: U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means, November 4, 1996; Dugan et al., *Exposure Reduction or Backlash*?

15. Bernard, M.L., and J.L. Bernard, "Violent Intimacy: The Family as a Model for Love Relationships," *Family Relations* 32 (1983): 283–286; Campbell, Jacquelyn C., "If I Can't Have You, No One Can: Power and Control in Homicide of Female Partners," in *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, ed. Jill Radford and Diana E.H. Russell, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992: 99–113.

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Increasingly, criminal justice professionals and other practitioners are using a tool that may help reduce the many deaths due to intimate partner homicide. It's a fatality review.

Reviewing Domestic Violence Deaths

by Neil Websdale

About the Author

Neil Websdale, Ph.D., is a professor of criminal justice at Northern Arizona University–Flagstaff. He is the author of *Policing the Poor: From Slave Plantation to Public Housing* and co-editor of *Making Trouble: Cultural Constructions of Crime, Deviance, and Control*. His publications also include *Understanding Domestic Homicide and Rural Women Battering and the Justice System*, 1999 winner of the Outstanding Book Award from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. He can be reached at 928–523–9205 or neil.websdale@nau.edu.

Every year in the United States, 1,000 to 1,600 women die at the hands of their male partners, often after a long, escalating pattern of battering.[1] The estimated number of deaths due to intimate partner violence does not include those women who kill themselves to exit violent relationships, or who die homeless on the streets avoiding batterers. (See "What Is the Actual Death Toll Due to Domestic Violence?")

Increasingly, criminal justice professionals and other practitioners involved in domestic violence cases are using a tool that may help reduce the many deaths due to intimate partner homicide. It's a fatality review.

Like the reviews conducted after an airplane crash, a fatality review helps determine what went wrong and what could have been done differently to prevent the tragedy. (See "Borrowing an Airline Industry Strategy—The Post Mortem," page 28.)

What Are Fatality Reviews?

In a fatality review, community practitioners and service providers identify homicides and suicides resulting from domestic violence, examine the events leading up to the death, identify gaps in service delivery, and improve preventive interventions.

The review team asks many questions: Did the victim approach a social service or law enforcement agency? If so, what services and interventions were provided? How might these have been provided more effectively? How might the victim have been better protected? In short, a fatality review identifies relevant social, economic, and policy realities that compromise the safety of battered women and their children.

Fatality reviews can reveal trends and may lead to changes to the system that could prevent future deaths. They may also enhance prevention and intervention programs aimed at reducing the death toll from acts of domestic violence.

Reviewing domestic violence deaths over time might identify broader issues with social policies, criminal justice intervention strategies, and political initiatives. Such reviews might also highlight success stories.

Fatality reviews can reveal trends and may lead to changes to the system that could prevent future deaths. They may also enhance prevention and intervention programs aimed at reducing the death toll from acts of domestic violence.

WHAT IS THE ACTUAL DEATH TOLL DUE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Even more deaths than those directly associated with an act of domestic violence can be traced to domestic violence if the women who die from conditions that are byproducts of domestic crimes are included in the count. For example, many female deaths are attributed to HIV, the consequences of homelessness, and prostitution. Because battered women are somewhat more vulnerable to HIV infection than other women,[1] some deaths of women currently attributed to HIV or its complications might be traced to a woman's status as battered. The same could be said of women who die on the streets, where roughly half of homeless women report "fleeing abuse" as the primary reason for their homelessness.[2] Likewise, prostitutes typically experience extensive interpersonal abuse and sometimes even death at the hands of male intimates, family members, and clients.

1. Websdale, Neil, and Byron Johnson, "Battered Women's Vulnerability to HIV Infection," *Justice Professional* 10(4) (1997): 183–198.
2. Zorza, Joan, "Woman Battering: A Major Cause of Homelessness," *Clearinghouse Review* 25(4) (1991).

BORROWING AN AIRLINE INDUSTRY STRATEGY—THE POST MORTEM

Commercial airline crashes draw a lot of attention and quickly become high-profile news, mostly because many deaths occur at once and the event increases general anxiety about flying. The airline industry responds by conducting reviews to find ways to prevent future crashes. Such investigations cost millions of dollars and use enormous amounts of technical expertise. The expensive, sophisticated, and systematic investigation of airline crashes has many benefits, not the least of which are the specific precautions that are subsequently introduced to prevent similar crashes from occurring.

In the United States, deaths traceable to domestic violence are more numerous than those stemming from airline crashes. This raises the question of why comparable amounts of time, money, and expertise are not applied to investigating the causes of domestic violence deaths. Most intimate partner homicides are stylized killings that exhibit common patterns and antecedents.[1] Although they share many of the characteristics of abuse cases that do not result in death, many of the cases that do end in death may be preventable. Nevertheless, most domestic violence homicides are not subject to any systematic review, and substantial resources are not spent trying to learn ways to better protect future victims of domestic violence.

Despite limited funding for in-depth local fatality reviews, some States and local jurisdictions are exploring the reasons for and causes of domestic violence-related deaths.[2] Approximately 27 States and the District of Columbia conduct or plan to conduct some form of domestic violence fatality review. In some regions, the reviews dovetail with or build upon existing coordinated community responses to domestic violence.

For example, without any funding or protective legislation, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, with support from the district attorney's office, has been reviewing all deaths (not just domestic violence cases) of women ages 15 to 60.[3] The Santa Clara County, CA, review team has examined domestic homicides since 1994. This team generates a wealth of information on what happened in the lives of both the perpetrators and their victims before the death. Fatality reviews are increasingly part of an expanding arsenal of multiagency, interdisciplinary strategies for addressing the effects of violence against women. Underpinning these strategies is a concern about the risks of harm faced by women and other family members and a desire to improve the accountability of individual service agencies and to enhance the effectiveness of interagency coordination efforts. If conducted thoroughly and thoughtfully, fatality reviews may yield a more comprehensive understanding of the causes of and prevention strategies for domestic homicide.

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1. See Websdale, Neil, *Understanding Domestic Homicide*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999; Dobash, Russell P., R. Emerson Dobash, Margo Wilson, and Martin Daly, "The Myth of Sexual Symmetry in Marital Violence," *Social Problems* 39(1) (1992): 71–91; Ewing, Charles Patrick, *Fatal Families: The Dynamics of Intrafamilial Homicide*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997; Heide, Kathleen, *Why Kids Kill Parents: Child Abuse and Adolescent Homicide*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995.

2. The following States have some form of domestic violence fatality review activity. The letter "L" in parentheses after a State means that State has passed fatality review legislation; the letters "EO" in parentheses denote the issuance of an Executive Order to formally initiate the process. Alaska, Arizona, California (L), Colorado, Delaware (L), District of Columbia (L), Florida (L), Illinois, Indiana (L), Iowa (L), Kentucky (L), Maine (L), Michigan (L), Minnesota (one county only, local legislation), Nevada (L), New Hampshire (EO), New Jersey (EO), New Mexico (EO), North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma (L), Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee (L), Vermont (L), Virginia (L), Washington (L), West Virginia. The United States Department of Defense is considering adopting domestic violence fatality reviews throughout the four branches of the military.

3. This includes deaths classified as homicides, suicides, unintentional injury, undetermined cause, those with inadequate certificates, and peculiar circumstances (i.e., asthma, AIDS).

The Review Process Varies with Local Needs

Fatality reviews may vary with the locale. They can be formal or informal. Some review teams track basic demographic data. These teams may have fewer resources that might prevent in-depth analysis. However, other teams, even those with few resources, conduct very detailed reviews including a critical examination of interagency cooperation or lack thereof.

Reviews Lead to Tailored Services

Fatality reviews can uncover a region's special needs, such as a need for language services. For example, in Washington State, a report from a fatality review of a domestic homicide noted that "a law enforcement officer had to ask a 6-year-old child to translate for the family member...who had discovered the bodies of the two victims."[2] In another case, a hostage situation, "the young hostage had to provide translation while the murderer held a gun to her head."[3] In addition to the potential trauma associated with having victims, family members, or bystanders translate in such circumstances, the use of untrained translators may impede case investigations of all domestic assaults.

The Washington State report recommended that "law enforcement, hospitals, domestic violence programs, and Temporary Aid to Needy Families offices...create collaborative relationships with grassroots organizations based in limited English-speaking communities."[4] The report continued, "Law enforcement agencies should conduct investigations of domestic violence crimes with qualified interpreters."[5]

In African-American communities, particularly those in inner city public housing, the domestic homicide rate is almost six times higher than that of the white population. This overrepresentation appears to be largely a product of poverty.[6]

Reviews of domestic violence deaths in poor black neighborhoods reveal that African-American women display a deep suspicion of police, social services, shelters, housing agencies, and the courts. Community policing and its emphasis on greater and more varied forms of surveillance seems to make little difference to domestic violence in these acutely disadvantaged areas. Fatality reviews might offer one means of enhancing dialogue between inner-city minority citizens and political authorities. This dialogue might include discussion of the war on drugs, public housing rules,

WHAT DO FATALITY REVIEWS DO?[1]

- Identify deaths—both homicides and suicides—caused by domestic violence.
- Examine the effects of all domestic violence interventions that took place before the victim's death.
- Consider changes in prevention and intervention systems to help prevent such deaths in the future.
- Develop recommendations for coordinated community prevention and intervention initiatives to reduce domestic violence.

1. Barbara Hart, Legal Committee, Domestic Violence Death Review, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, February 9, 1995 (unpublished).

The challenge is timeliness: the review must be recent enough that the findings—usually from public records—can inform and guide discussions about improving existing policies and procedures. Such reviews have produced a wealth of information about homicide-suicide deaths.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROVOKES SUICIDES

A significant number of the 6,000 or so women who commit suicide in the United States each year likely do so because of being abused by an intimate male partner.[1] Evan Stark and Anne Flitcraft found that "among the medical histories of the 176 women who attempted suicide, 29.5 percent were battered" and "22.2 percent... had at least one documented incident of domestic abuse in their records."[2]

1. During the 1990's, approximately 30,000 people per year took their own lives. Of these, approximately 6,000 were female. Retrieved from the World Wide Web site http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/suifacts.htm, August 9, 2002.
2. Stark, Evan, and Anne Flitcraft, *Women at Risk: Domestic Violence and Women's Health*, London: Sage Publications, 1996: 107.

welfare-to-work initiatives, the mass incarceration of black people, the ongoing loss of meaningful and relatively well-paid jobs from the inner city, and other policies that limit battered women's ability to exit dangerous intimate relationships.

Removing Barriers to Review

Fatality reviews—like many processes that seek to save lives—raise liability issues and make some agencies nervous. Some States have reduced the concern associated with liability by enacting confidentiality laws to shield the deliberations and findings. These laws immunize teams from civil suits and disciplinary action.

In Florida, 16 review teams operate under immunity legislation that protects their deliberations. Florida's fatality review process began after a statewide initiative recommended examining the particulars of all domestic homicides.[7] Team deliberations "are not subject to discovery or introduction into evidence in any civil action or disciplinary proceeding by any department or employing agency... A person who has attended a meeting of a domestic violence fatality review team may not testify in any civil action or disciplinary proceeding as to any records or information produced or presented to the team during meetings or other activities authorized by this section."[8]

The Florida statute stipulates that data collection procedures be consistent throughout the State. The data are used to write Florida's annual report on domestic violence fatalities, which goes to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.[9]

The downside of requiring that data be in a standardized format is that local review teams, typically underfunded and frequently staffed by volunteers, often do not willingly complete standard government forms. The upside is that such a system can generate comprehensive statewide data, which, when reviewed by key decisionmakers, can advance policy development.

In States without confidentiality protections, reviewing only closed cases (e.g., homicide-suicides) in which all the parties involved have died and where there are no pending civil or criminal legal proceedings, can reduce concerns about liability. The challenge is timeliness: the review must be recent enough that the findings—usually from public records—can inform and guide discussions about improving existing policies and procedures. Such reviews have produced a wealth of information about homicide-suicide deaths.

For example, in Washington State, reviewers noted the dangers that suicidal abusers pose and recommended that "officers...routinely ask victims about the abuser's history of making homicidal or suicidal threats." If such threats have been made, officers should "urge the victim to call a domestic violence program for help with safety planning."[10] The report also recommended expanding the contents of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Model Operating Procedures on screening for suicide and responding to suicidal abusers.[11]

What the Future Holds

It is up to local jurisdictions and agencies to decide if they can assign resources to fatality reviews. Although the benefits of conducting such reviews have yet to be measured on a broad scale, preliminary results indicate that fatality reviews can have a positive effect in addressing domestic violence. Nevertheless, decisionmakers can weigh the time and money needed for the reviews against the time and money being spent on answering domestic violence calls and managing death scenes—not to mention the number of lives that could be saved by acting on the information that fatality reviews uncover.

NCJ 196549

Notes

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2. Hobart, Margaret, *Honoring Their Lives, Learning From Their Deaths: Findings and Recommendations From the Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review*, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2000: 48.
3. Ibid., 49.
4. Ibid., 9.
5. Ibid., 9.
6. See Centerwall, Brandon S., "Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Domestic Homicide, Atlanta, 1971–1972," *American Journal of Public Health* 74 (1984): 813–815; and Centerwall, Brandon S., "Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Domestic Homicide," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 273(22) (June 14, 1995): 1755–1758. For a recent analysis of the relationship between race, poverty, and domestic homicide, see Websdale, Neil, *Understanding Domestic Homicide*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999: 204–236.
7. See Websdale, *Understanding Domestic Homicide*. For the most recent statement on the status of the Florida fatality review teams, see Websdale, Neil, and Byron Johnson, *Implementing and Monitoring New Fatality Review Teams*, Tallahassee: Florida Department of Children and Families, 2001.
8. Florida Statutes 741.316 s.6
9. Florida Statutes 741.316 s.3
10. Hobart, *Honoring Their Lives*: 12.
11. Ibid., 11. The report recommends that law enforcement officers immediately call in mental health professionals when batterers threaten suicide (p. 35).

NCJRS—Sharing Information for More Than 30 Years

by Cheryll Bissell and Jonathan Witte

About the Authors

Cheryll Bissell and Jonathan Witte are with the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Ms. Bissell oversees networking and outreach activities, and Mr. Witte is a senior writer/editor.

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Cross-Cultural Issues in Domestic Violence

Final report submitted to NIJ, Cultural Issues Affecting Domestic Violence Service Utilization in Ethnic and Hard-to-Reach Populations*, Kirsten Senturia, Marianne Sullivan, Sandy Ciske, and Sharyne Shiu-Thornton, grant number 98–WT–VX–0025, available from NCJRS (NCJ 185357).*

Many victims of domestic violence share the same fears: exacerbation of their abuser's anger, lack of shelter, loss of the abuser's economic support, and the possibility of a wrongful arrest. For immigrant women, these fears are compounded by additional worries caused by language barriers and possible immigration problems for themselves and their extended families. Like many minority crime victims, these women also face personal and cultural obstacles when they try to access the justice system—for example, they may find that language is a significant barrier; they may believe that the police will not take action on their complaints or that the police are insincere when dealing with same-sex domestic violence; they may even feel such shame and embarrassment that they are unwilling to involve the police.

To understand better how cultural factors affect services for victims, researchers in the Seattle area joined forces with five community-based agencies, the City of Seattle's Domestic Violence Council, and local university researchers.

The researchers conducted 38 focus groups and 16 one-on-one interviews, each of which was conducted in the participant's first language. A total of 254 members representing 9 minority populations in the Seattle area participated in the study: 39 African Americans, 47 American Indians/Alaskan Natives, 18 Amharic-speaking Ethiopians, 39 Cambodians, 13 Filipinas, 9 Latinas, 24 Russian-speakers, 43 Vietnamese, and 22 lesbians/bisexuals/transgenders.

Responding officers must consider the underlying social context of these women's lives, including racism, homophobia, and low economic status. This social context not only shapes the experience of domestic violence, but also the survivors' and justice system's responses.

Key Findings

Researchers learned that victims of domestic violence in these communities face a complex set of challenges. They may face acculturation problems and racial, sexual, and economic oppression in their new social setting, after already experiencing major social upheavals and political oppression. These issues increase the difficulty they experience in obtaining assistance and may exacerbate the view that what help is available is culturally and linguistically inappropriate.

In fact, services provided by the criminal justice system received mixed ratings from the study participants. Simply put, when police officers responded with sensitivity, the women reported positive experiences. However, when the police response was perceived as insensitive, the women viewed the experience as negative.

Implications for Criminal Justice

The authors suggest that innovative solutions are needed to resolve the unique problems of minority victims of domestic violence in overcoming barriers to the justice system. Responding officers must consider the underlying social context of these women's lives, including

racism, homophobia, and low economic status. This social context not only shapes the experience of domestic violence, but also the survivors' and justice system's responses.

The report makes several recommendations based on participants' suggestions and on the authors' interpretation of the data. The recommendations address three areas—systems, services, and community. The authors call for providing more low-income housing and childcare services for victims and for conducting culturally and linguistically appropriate domestic violence education campaigns in the community.

The authors recommend more outreach on domestic violence by the police to ethnic and sexual minority communities and multiple options for services to survivors of domestic violence. Also recommended are giving greater attention to the special needs of children who have experienced the pain and horror of domestic violence and explaining the variety of victim assistance services that are available at no cost.

For more information

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Florida Sheriffs Take on Child Abuse Investigations

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "The Police as Child Protective Service Investigators: An Evaluation of the Transfer of Responsibility for Child Maltreatment Investigations in Four Counties in Florida," Richard J. Gelles, Susan Kinnevy, and Burton J. Cohen, grant number 00–IJ–CX–0002, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 189634).

A study in which four Florida counties shifted responsibility for investigating child abuse and neglect cases from child welfare agencies to sheriffs' offices found no adverse consequences and detected improved police attitudes.

At the close of the 1990's, Federal courts supervised almost half of the Nation's child welfare systems because of deficiencies in foster care, adoption, and child welfare responsibilities. To improve the handling of child maltreatment investigations in Florida, the State legislature required three counties—Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas—to transfer all investigations of child maltreatment cases from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to the sheriff's office. A fourth county—Broward—voluntarily shifted its child investigative functions to the sheriff's office.

Some thought that this transfer of duties would be beneficial because: (1) police officers might be better trained and equipped than DCF staff to investigate child abuse and neglect hotline reports and (2) the shift might allow DCF personnel to focus on improving family support services. Critics were concerned because officers have, at times, been viewed as insensitive to the needs of child abuse victims and perpetrators.

Researchers tested the hypothesis that the shift would lead to fewer service referrals, more foster care placements, and more arrests for child abuse and neglect offenses. The resulting trend would be toward criminalization of child abuse cases.

In a Research in Progress seminar held at NIJ, Richard J. Gelles, Susan Kinnevy, and Burton J. Cohen from the University of Pennsylvania presented encouraging preliminary findings from their study of the four Florida counties and three comparison counties.

Two Approaches to Child Abuse Cases

Traditional approach. In traditional child abuse programs, DCF workers take action based on incoming calls to a hotline. They visit the child, conduct a risk assessment, and provide support services to the family based on the assessment. If the case needs criminal investigation, DCF may ask a police officer either to meet with the DCF worker at the child's location or to conduct a separate investigation (see figure 1).

Experimental approach. In the four experimental counties, a civilian child protective investigator employed by the sheriff and a deputy make the initial visit. Together they assess the risk and, if necessary, refer the case to DCF for services. If a criminal investigation is required, they contact a detective from the sheriff's Crimes Against Children office (see figure 2).

No Dire Consequences Found

The researchers found that the possible negative consequences—such as increases in emergency placements and the growth of foster care rolls—were not evident.

Although it may be too soon to conclude that children reported as maltreated were any safer over time in the experimental counties, the findings indicate that child abusers were no more likely to be arrested in the experimental counties than they were in the comparison counties. Researchers believe that this is due to the lack of significant criminal penalties for child abuse in all of the counties studied.

Figure 1: Investigating Process in Traditional (Comparison) Counties

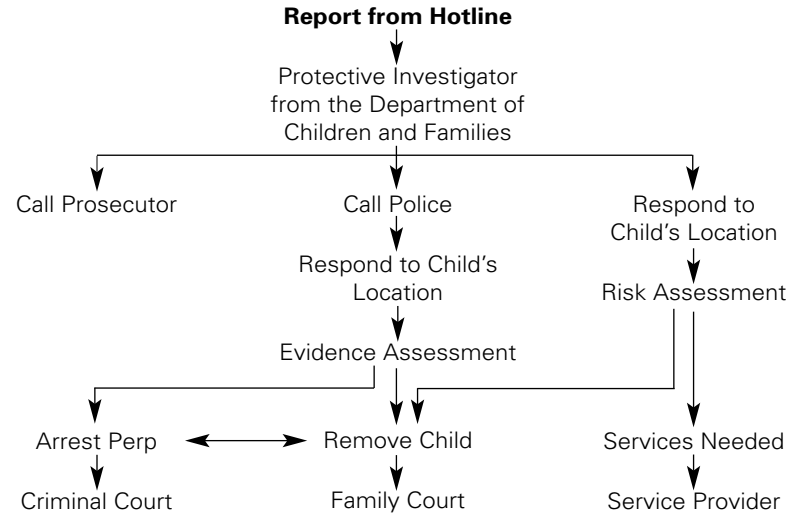
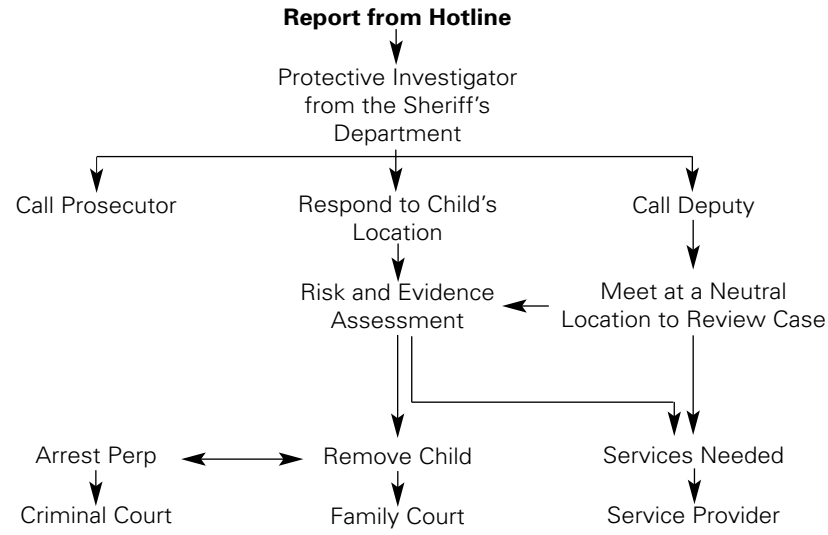


Figure 2: Investigative Process in Experimental Counties



Police Attitudes Improved

The study found that police officers' attitudes toward child welfare cases appeared markedly more sensitive after the restructuring. One officer stated, "I'm more aware of the 'gray' areas…I can see the connection with poverty better." Another said, "I

feel better about what happens to kids when there isn't any crime…I know the services they get…" Significantly, when the officers were asked, "What is the purpose of maltreatment investigations?" they uniformly answered, "To find out what the family needs."

Further consideration of regional differences may help clarify the findings. The researchers will review the data from 2001 and expand the study to cover related issues, including criminal penalties for child abusers and evaluations of legal representation provided in such cases.

For more information

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The Gentrification of Drug Markets

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "We Deliver: The Gentrification of Drug Markets on Manhattan's Lower East Side," Richard Curtis and Travis Wendel, grant number 99–IJ–CX–0010, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 193405).

Researchers investigating sales of illegal drugs on Manhattan's Lower East Side have found that the current business model more closely resembles Domino's Pizza than the stereotyped media image of the urban drug market. Rapid gentrification of the area, they found, has brought a new set of characters to the drug trade: white middle-class customers, who are now the majority of area buyers and want the convenience of home delivery. Although some long-time users still prefer crack and heroin, the three top drugs here now are marijuana, powder cocaine, and ecstasy.

Richard Curtis and Travis Wendel, anthropologists with the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, studied drug transactions on the Lower East Side and in the East Village from January 1999 to January 2001. This was a period of dramatic reductions in every category of crime in New York City. Curtis and Wendel discussed their findings at an NIJ Research in Progress seminar.

The researchers combined direct observation with qualitative interviews, talking with 73 dealers and 93 users of various drugs. About half of those interviewed were white and the rest were African American, Hispanic, or mixed heritage. Only five were female, and all were 18 or older. Naturally, many of the dealers and users approached for interviews were reluctant to talk about their experiences.

Organization of Drug Markets

Initially, the researchers found large street-level "corporations" doing business in the area. By the end of the study, however, most street sales had disappeared, as middle-class users came to prefer the convenience of having prearranged drug deliveries made to their homes—like any other good or service in Manhattan that delivers—and the security of avoiding arrest. Thus, direct delivery became the typical transaction.

Buyers used acquaintances and networks to obtain drugs they previously would have purchased through anonymous street markets. As those markets disappeared, first-time users in particular had to rely on personal contacts to buy drugs. Generally, white heroin users bought from white dealers, while minority heroin users found the drug in their predominantly Hispanic public-housing complexes.

Drug distribution was carried out by three types of organizations: freelance distributors acting independently; distributors with a social bond, such as having the same religion or growing up in the same neighborhood or ethnic group; and individuals operating like a corporation, complete with job titles and a hierarchy, focused solely on making money. Large distributors had to downsize as drug sales moved off the streets. Employees developed franchising relationships with their former employers, obtaining drugs on credit from their old bosses and selling them to their established customers.

Middle-class users came to prefer the convenience of having pre-arranged drug deliveries made to their homes—like any other good or service in Manhattan that delivers—and the security of avoiding arrest. Thus, direct delivery became the typical transaction.

Digital Divide

The study found that the increased use of delivery services and technology by buyers and sellers contributed to a growing division of drug markets along class lines. Both buyers and distributors used pagers, cell phones, and computers to form exclusive drug markets not accessible to other groups. High-tech devices also helped those who used them to communicate with one another while remaining off the street and out of sight of the police.

Customers typically called cell phones, pager numbers, or answering machines to order drugs. In some cases, dispatchers answered phones and assigned deliveries, as if they worked for a legitimate messenger service.

Dealers Unarmed

With the change in drug sales from street markets to private deliveries, dealers felt little incentive to carry guns. None of the dealers interviewed for this study did so. The new sales strategy brought an end to fights over territory, as dealers came to realize that the criminal penalties for firearms possession were much greater than for drug possession. One result was that unarmed dealers were often robbed by criminals who recognized that dealers represented good sources of cash who could be victimized with impunity. White dealers regarded robbery as the greatest risk to their business, while African-American and Hispanic dealers were more concerned about arrest and imprisonment.

Message for Police

The presence of the police in public places helped drive the corporations out of most on-street drug sales. But while the police were effective in getting drug markets off the streets, dealers in the home-delivery trade reported little contact with police as they conducted their business. Law enforcement officials should note the frequent armed robberies of dealers. Although many in law enforcement might regard investigation of these violent crimes as less important than imprisoning dealer-victims, it may be that it is not helpful to society to feed the appetites of violent predators.

For more information

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Evaluating Multijurisdictional Drug Enforcement Task Forces

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "The Evaluation of Multijurisdictional Task Forces," David Hayeslip and Malcolm Russell-Einhorn, grant number 99–DD–BX–0034, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 191963).

When local agencies band together to confront drug problems, the results outweigh what a single agency can do alone. Sounds like common sense. But to what extent do multiagency efforts work better than single-agency efforts? And are there tools for figuring out whether these multiagency efforts are worth the Federal funding that ranges from $200 to $360 million each year?

These questions were at the heart of a study of Byrne Program-funded multijurisdictional task forces (MJTF's) conducted by David Hayeslip, a former senior researcher at Abt Associates who is now a senior research associate at the Urban Institute, and Malcolm Russell-Einhorn, a former researcher at Abt Associates who is now the associate director of the University of Maryland's IRIS Center. (For more information, see "The Byrne Program," page 41.) These two researchers hoped to provide drug MJTF's with tools to conduct meaningful evaluations of their own effectiveness. Byrne Program State Administrative Agencies (SAA's), which usually allocate the funding to MJTF's, could also use such tools. Hayeslip and Russell-Einhorn discussed preliminary findings of their study and future plans at a Research in Progress seminar at NIJ.

Initial Findings

The researchers found that data gathering at the local level is limited and data analysis is scant. Most of the data collected by task forces are for reporting to the SAA's the numbers of arrests and amounts of drugs seized. Fewer than a dozen studies conducted over the past decade—all of them using outside researchers—purported to serve as true evaluations of task force operations and to assess outcomes as well as activities and outputs.

Hayeslip and Russell-Einhorn worked toward the development of what could be called a menu of various evaluation tools that States and individual task forces could use to help MJTF's better assess the impact of their work on drug crime, drug availability and use, drug-related crime, and law enforcement organizational effectiveness.

According to Russell-Einhorn, "Visits to 18 sites revealed a diversity in task force environments and missions and the complexities of task force evaluation." This complexity necessitates the development of tools that are similarly adaptable. The researchers reported that the site visits yielded the following insights:

- Most MJTF's play a critical frontline drug enforcement role. As a result, they must often mix street-level enforcement with the upper-level enforcement strategies that are more commonly associated with task force work.
- Rural or semirural jurisdictions face special challenges. They often cover larger areas than MJTF's in more populated areas and may have to address multiple problems concurrently, such as low-level trafficking in towns, highway interdiction, and crop eradication, along with longer term investigations of criminal organizations. In addition, local customs influence drug enforcement priorities and can create distinctive patterns of drug-related activities, such as regular drug sales at regional rodeos or airports.
- The varied demands of member agencies, citizens, and political leaders sometimes complicate MJTF strategic

THE BYRNE PROGRAM

Through the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (the Byrne Program), the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) provides leadership and guidance on crime and violence prevention and control and works in partnership with State and local governments to make communities safe and improve criminal justice systems. BJA develops and tests new approaches in criminal justice and crime control and encourages replication of effective programs and practices by State and local criminal justice agencies. The Byrne Program, created by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (Public Law 100–690), emphasizes controlling violent and drug-related crime and serious offenders and fosters multijurisdictional and multistate efforts to support national drug control priorities.

BJA makes Byrne Program funds available through two types of grant programs: discretionary and formula. Discretionary funds are awarded directly to public and private agencies and private nonprofit organizations; formula funds are awarded to the States, which then make subawards to State and local units of government.

planning. Some task forces have formed separate, highly flexible units to deal with covert (or overt) work stemming from these competing demands.

- Most studies overlook the important benefits of MJTF's, such as better information-sharing among local law enforcement agencies. Also, participating police officers gain invaluable practical experience from their association with a task force (although many task force personnel "graduate" to Federal or State investigative agencies, leaving personnel shortages in local departments). In addition, multiagency efforts generally result in cases that are better prepared for prosecution.

- Dissatisfaction with current reporting requirements among MJTF's is widespread because there is a common assumption that quantitative tallies of arrests and seizures can give a meaningful picture of task force effectiveness and value. Instead, officers in the field would like to see reporting and evaluation that considers changing missions and tactics and that pays more attention to local impact such as effects on drug-related crime (e.g., assaults and burglaries).

Most MJTF's play a critical frontline drug enforcement role. As a result, they must often mix street-level enforcement with the upper-level enforcement strategies that are more commonly associated with task force work.

Toward Developing the Toolkit

"Task force leaders need better ways to collect and analyze data," said Russell-Einhorn. "The only way that researchers can evaluate the effectiveness of these task forces in the long term is through adequate and consistent data collection." The researchers' focus was on relatively easy-to-use tools that would fit the expertise and budgets of most SAA's and task forces. Data could range from statistics on drug crime, to interview information from burglary detectives (on drug-related crime impacts), to interview information from prosecutors (on the quality of cases prepared by MJTF's).

As a result of the surveys and site visits, the researchers developed a set of recommendations as a basis for developing the specific evaluation tools. They pretested the recommendations with both NIJ staff and key SAA members and held focus groups with task force personnel. They used the recommendations to draft a wide range of evaluation questions to meet diverse evaluation needs. The goal was to produce a multidimensional menu of tools that would balance questions about process, outcome, and impact.

For more information

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Social Changes and Their Effects on Homicide Rates

Journal article, "A Comparison of Changes in Police and General Homicides: 1930–1998," Robert Kaminski and Thomas Marvell, Criminology *40(1) (2002): 701–719.*

Two researchers compared the rate of police officers killed in the line of duty to the rate of homicides among the general public. They wanted to determine if changes in the Nation's economic condition, prison population, or other major events over a 68-year period resulted in significant parallel effects on homicide rates. Robert Kaminski, with NIJ, and Thomas Marvell, with Justec Research, reviewed the number and rate of murders in the comparison groups (police officers and the general public) from 1930 to 1998 to determine if they shifted in similar fashion.

The researchers found that three separate factors in American society appeared to have the largest impact in reducing the number of police officers killed in the line of duty: declining inflation, economic growth, and increased prison populations.

The lowest homicide rate among police officers was recorded in 1943–44, when the United States was fighting in World War II. Fifty officers were killed in 1941, compared to 33 in 1944. The researchers observed that during that war, any potential criminals serving in the military were probably partly incapacitated and thus less able to try to kill police officers.

These same factors also decreased public homicide rates, but the effects were generally smaller. For example, for each 1 percent added to the prison population between 1932 and 1998, police homicides declined by about 2.1 percent while total homicides dropped by 1.1 percent. The researchers also noted that the impact of growth in personal income was apparently larger in reducing police homicides than general homicides.

The researchers pointed out that the harder the economic times and the greater the economic uncertainty, the higher the murder rates were for both police officers and the general public. Following that trend, the highest police homicide rate was in the 1930's during the Great Depression. In contrast, when the economy was booming in 1998, the rate for police homicides was more than 80 percent lower than in 1930.

Explaining the Effects

Existing police homicide theories cannot explain why these factors caused greater decreases in police homicides compared to those among the general public. One possible explanation, though, is that these same variables could affect criminals' opportunity and motivation to commit murder. The researchers again cited the importance of incapacitation through imprisonment and military service. As noted earlier, the impact of factors such as the growth in the prison population was nearly twice as strong for police homicides.

Although police generally have more frequent contact with offenders than do members of the general public, providing more opportunities for officers to be killed, this fact by itself cannot explain the greater reductions in homicides among law enforcement officers. The researchers speculate that because criminals have more opportunities than the general public to assault police, the effect of their lack of availability—due to imprisonment or military service—on police homicides may be magnified. The authors suggest that opportunity factors, such as criminals' motivation and availability to commit crime, might help to explain the rate differences during the period studied, but they call for more research in this area.

The researchers pointed out that the harder the economic times and the greater the economic uncertainty, the higher the murder rates were for both police officers and the general public.

Correcting Past Research on Risk

Police homicide research in the 1990's found that the riskiest period per capita for officers in American history was during the 1970's. But based on analysis of new data compiled by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund in 1998 and used in this study, it turns out that the highest rate of murders per capita among police officers was actually during the late 1920's and early 1930's, when Prohibition was in effect.

For more information

- Contact Robert Kaminski at NIJ at 202–616–9135, kaminski@ojp.usdoj.gov, or visit http://www.mmarvell.com/justec.html.

Getting Residents' Feedback and Participation

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "Defending the Community: Results of a Citizen Survey on Coproduction and Community Policing," Cheryl Maxson, Karen Hennigan, and David Sloane, grant number 96–IJ–CX–0069, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 193404).

Citizen participation has become an important element of community policing, and police agencies continue to look for feedback on the effectiveness of community policing programs and input on better ways to work with neighborhood residents to control crime.

Researchers have some helpful ideas about how police can get that information from residents.

With the support of the Los Angeles Police Department, Cheryl Maxson of the University of California–Irvine and Karen Hennigan and David Sloane of the University of Southern California are studying citizen participation. They

The researchers concluded that community participation was influenced by residents' recognition of disorder in their neighborhoods, their connections with their neighbors, and their trust in the police.

are examining some of the obstacles to and opportunities for successful police-community partnerships.

Their findings can help other police departments and their research partners devise better ways to collect and analyze systematic information to improve their working relationships with residents.

Mail Surveys Work Better Than Telephone Surveys

The Los Angeles research team carried out experiments to test the effectiveness of mailed surveys versus random-digit-dialing telephone surveys. They concluded that self-administered mail surveys, with rigorous followup of nonrespondents, were more effective in capturing community residents' attitudes and experiences on sensitive crime and policing issues. They also determined that the length of mail surveys was not a significant factor. That means departments can use mail surveys to gather more detailed feedback than previously thought possible if they use careful survey procedures.

The surveys were mailed to residents in four police divisions of Los Angeles between October 1997 and March 1998. The areas were selected for their demographic diversity and included poor and wealthy neighborhoods; stable and transitional residents; minority, immigrant, and white communities; and some of the highest and lowest property and violent crime rates in Los Angeles. The overall response rate to the survey was 57 percent, with some variation among areas.

Why Do Residents Help the Police?

Researchers analyzed the surveys to determine why residents participate in crime control activities. Citizen participation was defined as volunteering at the station, attending crime and safety meetings, and talking with police officers on patrol. The researchers concluded that community participation was influenced by residents' recognition of disorder in their neighborhoods, their connections with their neighbors, and their trust in the police.

Disorder and social cohesion. The more disorder there was in a community, the greater the level of citizen participation. However, although individuals in disordered communities were willing to participate, they faced obstacles because of low social cohesion among neighbors and less willingness to intervene for the common good. Despite success in involving residents with the police in highly disordered areas, these issues limited the effectiveness of community-police crime control efforts.

Sociability. Citizens who engaged in friendly interactions with their neighbors were more likely to relate well with the police. Sociability is an important characteristic connecting police and community residents, and it is significantly related to citizen participation. The researchers suggest that police identify sociable residents of a neighborhood and build networks to include them as one means of developing stronger police-citizen relationships that then produce safer neighborhoods.

Trust in and contact with police. Data revealed a positive two-way relationship between trust in the police and participation in local crime control activities: the more trust the respondents had in the

police, the more they participated in such activities, and the more they participated, the more trust they gained. Informal contacts with police at events like community meetings were shown to contribute to positive opinions about the job the police were doing in the community and to help build trust and enhance cooperation among residents in working with police to produce safe neighborhoods.

Age and other respondent characteristics. Citizen participation increased with age from 18 to 65, but then it declined. Residents' level of education and income, ethnicity, and size of household did not impact the rate of participation. Rather, it was neighbors' willingness to act for each other and to trust in one another along with the police department's commitment to interact informally with residents that propelled community participation.

For more information

- Hennigan, Karen, Cheryl Maxson, David Sloane, and Molly Ranney, "Community Views on Crime and Policing: Survey Mode Effects on Bias in Community Surveys," *Justice Quarterly* 19(3) (September 2002): 565–587.
- Maxson, Cheryl, Karen Hennigan, and David Sloane, *Factors That Influence Public Opinion of the Police,* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 2003 (NCJ 197925).

- Contact Cheryl Maxson, Associate Professor, Criminology, Law & Society, University of California–Irvine, 2309 Social Ecology II, Irvine, CA 92697–7080, 949–824–5150, cmaxson@uci.edu.

Crime Victims Compensation Programs Needs Assessed

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "Crime Victims Compensation: Evaluation Findings and Policy and Program Administration Trends and Strategies for the Future," Lisa Newmark, grant number 98–VF–GX–OO16, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 189632).

Almost $1 billion in Federal funds have gone to compensate crime victims since the Victims of Crime Act became law in 1984. Claimants say that the money is making a difference. In a study of compensation programs, victims generally reported positive perceptions of the compensation process.

In an NIJ Research in Progress seminar, Lisa Newmark, a senior research associate at the Urban Institute, presented findings from an ongoing study of crime victims' compensation programs. The study surveyed 452 compensation claimants in 6 States, plus compensation and assistance administrators in all 50 States. Selected State administrators, members of oversight bodies, advocacy group representatives, and direct service providers were also interviewed.

Research Reveals Needs

More than two-thirds of the crime victims who were approved for compensation suffered an average financial loss of $600. Ongoing research shows a need for expanded outreach to victims, consideration of expanded benefits, higher compensation caps, revised eligibility criteria, and increased funding if victim support programs are to truly reach their potential.

Expand benefits. Generally, only certain types of expenses are eligible for compensation. The survey findings showed that additional compensation to cover items such as moving expenses would

help a considerable number of victims who suffer crime in or near their homes. Claimants also suggested that States should consider raising the compensation limits for reimbursements of funeral and burial costs, mental health counseling, medical treatment for catastrophic injuries, and other such expenses.

Expand eligibility requirements. Because the monetary effects of crime are often complex, reaching beyond the primary victim alone, expanding compensation for secondary victims of crime—including victims' dependents and other relatives—should be considered.

Extend deadlines. Filing deadlines are being extended for certain types of victims (for example, victims of child abuse who may not report such incidents until long afterwards). The research suggests that reports to authorities other than the police might be considered in determining eligibility and that requirements of notification of insurance companies might be reconsidered in cases in which claimants could be negatively affected by the filing of an insurance claim.

Improve case processing. Some programs are streamlining the processing of claims for compensation, which currently can take up to 6 months. For claims to be processed faster, improvements must be made in the claims verification process.

Improve training. Better training of the direct service providers who assist victims with the claims process is also needed. In addition, more diverse groups—particularly those who work effectively with minorities—could be brought into the claims process to increase the number and diversity of compensation claims.

Explain the program. Claimants say they want greater knowledge of the claims process. Compensation programs need better publicity and better explanations of claims procedures for potential claimants. More than half of the crime victims surveyed whose claims were denied said that they weren't given a reason for the denial.

Funding These Innovations

Taking steps to improve program operations, with the goal of providing more benefits to more victims, means more funds will be needed, including money to support administrative activities.

For more information

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Measuring the Effects of Quality-of-Life Policing

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "Measuring the Impacts of Policing Among Arrestees in New York City: Veracity of Self-Reports, Deterrence Effects of Quality-of-Life Policing, and Net Widening," Bruce D. Johnson and Andrew Golub, grant number 00–7353–NY–IJ, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 190638).

When police increase efforts against disorderly conduct, such as loitering, trespassing, and urinating in public, does it make a difference? Bruce D. Johnson and Andrew Golub, of the National Development and Research Institutes, studied this issue in New York City and found that it does. Arrestees report that they are aware of the New

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program as a research platform for understanding the impact of recent New York City policing initiatives on arrestee behavior. During the second half of 1999, 892 New York City arrestees were interviewed. For this analysis, researchers compiled the responses to the standard ADAM questionnaire, ADAM drug test results, responses to a special New York City Policing questionnaire, and official New York State criminal histories.

York City Police Department's (NYPD's) various "quality-of-life" (QOL) initiatives, and many have changed their behavior accordingly. Further, such programs do not appear to "widen the net" and bring people into the criminal justice system who would otherwise not be involved with it. Johnson and Golub discussed their study at an NIJ Research in Progress Seminar.

Offenders primarily cited an increased police presence and a consciousness on the street of a stepped up police focus on QOL behaviors—rather than their personal contact with the criminal justice system—as the reason for changing their behavior.

Quality-of-Life Policing

Initiatives against publicly annoying behaviors, such as loitering, panhandling, transit farebeating, urinating in public, public consumption of alcohol or marijuana, and overall disorderly conduct, are called QOL policing. The NYPD wanted to know if offenders were aware that police had stepped up efforts to control QOL offenses, and, if so, what their response was. As a related issue, the department wanted to know if those arrested for QOL offenses are truthful about their other criminal activities in their post-arrest interviews.

Offenders Get the Message

Johnson and Golub found that the arrestees appeared to be getting the message. Arrestees reported their awareness that police were targeting people for a variety of QOL offenses. On average, about half of the offenders said that in response they had stopped or cut down on those activities in the past 6 months. (The greatest decrease was among farebeaters. Almost 70 percent reported that they had stopped or decreased their farebeating after becoming aware of QOL initiatives.)

Offenders primarily cited an increased police presence and a consciousness on the street of a stepped up police focus on QOL behaviors—rather than their personal contact with the criminal justice system—as the reason for changing their behavior. The researchers concluded that QOL policing initiatives can provide a general deterrent to these types of activities.

Widening the Net?

The researchers compared those arrested for felony drug and index crimes with those charged with a QOL offense and found them to be highly comparable. The two groups had similar demographic characteristics, prior arrest records, and self-reports of QOL offenses. According to the researchers, this lack of differences, plus the fact that individuals without prior police records were generally not brought in on QOL charges, indicates that the QOL initiatives did not widen the pool of arrestees (at least not in New York City

in 1999). Moreover, the researchers note that QOL enforcement provides police with additional opportunities to monitor and possibly intervene in the lives of long-term criminal offenders who routinely pass through the city's criminal justice system.

Do Arrestees Tell the Truth?

The arrestees interviewed were generally open and honest about their lifelong record of arrest and imprisonment, but not so candid about the details. While most accurately reported their use of marijuana, few volunteered that they had committed more serious crimes, particularly violent crimes; this was true even among those arrestees who initially were honest about their prison time—they were less honest about the serious criminal actions that led to their incarceration.

For more information

- Contact Bruce D. Johnson, Director, or Andrew Golub, Principal Investigator, Institute for Special Populations Research, National Development and Research Institutes, Inc., 71 West 23rd Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10010, 212–845–4400, http://www.ndri.org.

Studying Racial Profiling in North Carolina

NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "Studying Racial Disparity in Traffic Stops and Outcomes: Lessons Learned in North Carolina," Matthew T. Zingraff, William R. Smith, and Donald Tomaskovic-Devey, grant number 99–MU–CX–0022, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 188064).

Racial profiling by law enforcement officials in traffic stops can lead to bias and disparity in arrests, searches, citations, and other interventions. It may also lead to increased distrust of police.

A study by researchers from North Carolina State University found a small degree of racial disparity in the actions of the North Carolina State Highway Patrol and a higher level of distrust of police among African-American drivers. The preliminary findings were presented at a Research in Progress seminar at NIJ. The complete findings will address individual and organizational practices, the racial composition of drivers on specific roads, differences in driving behavior, and variations in other factors correlated with driving behavior.

Sources of Data

The researchers used two data sets. The first set included North Carolina State Highway Patrol data on citations, written warnings, and search files for 1998 and 2000, as well as "stop" records for 2000. Additional data were collected by the researchers from focus groups, a telephone survey of 1,500 white and 1,500 African-American licensed drivers in North Carolina, and on-road observations. These additional data were used to gauge the extent of driving violations, independent of official police records.

Findings

Who gets stopped and why. The telephone survey found that the people who were stopped more often drove more miles per year, reported more speeding and risky driving behaviors, and expressed a greater desire to avoid getting speeding tickets. Specifically, drivers stopped most often were younger drivers, drivers in older cars, and African Americans. However, African-American

drivers reported that the highway patrol stopped them less often than did officers from other law enforcement agencies.

More African Americans than whites reported that officers gave them a discretionary reason for stopping them. African-American drivers also related more disrespect on the part of the officer during the stop than did white drivers. Both African-American and white drivers reported a similar distribution of citations and written and verbal warnings.

Officer bias. In focus groups conducted by the researchers, some officers indicated that cognitive bias—the perception of race or ethnicity as a reason for a person's behavior—does not affect their behavior. Some officers said that they know whether they will write a citation, issue a written warning, or give a verbal warning before they know who is driving. Other officers said they decide what action to take based on the circumstances of the stop, including the demeanor of the driver. For these officers, cognitive bias is possible.

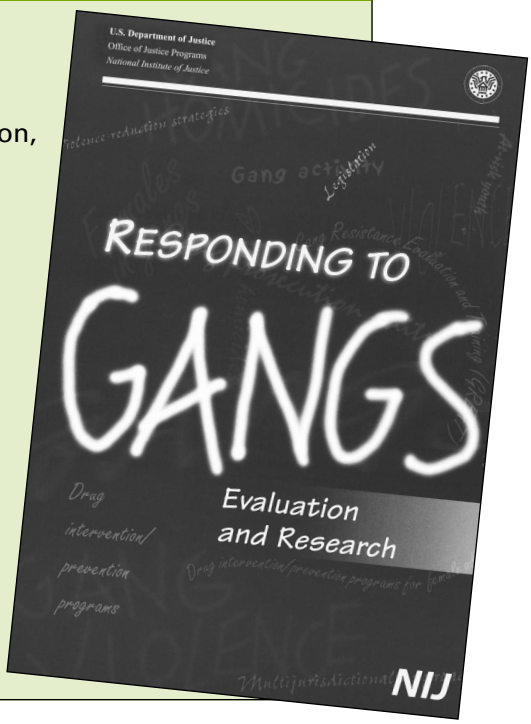
Level of trust. To measure trust in the police, respondents were asked to rank their trust on a scale of one to five, with one representing a belief that police are always fair and five representing a belief that police are never fair. The average for African-American respondents was 2.53, while the average for white respondents was 1.89. Respondents cited negative stop experiences, a belief that racial profiling exists, and a general distrust of government as reasons for their lack of trust of the police.

Patterns in traffic stops. To gather on-road observations, the researchers selected 14 four-lane highway segments

Responding to Gangs: Evaluation and Research Presents the Findings of a Decade of Study on Youth Gangs

This compendium of NIJ-sponsored research, edited by Winifred L. Reed and Scott H. Decker, contains 10 chapters of evaluations of intervention, prevention, and suppression methods. Programs addressed include Boston's Operation Ceasefire; the middle-school-based G.R.E.A.T.; and the JUDGE program, a multijurisdictional task force in San Diego.

Responding to Gangs: Evaluation and Research (NCJ 190351) can be downloaded from the NIJ Web site at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/190351.htm. Print copies are available through NCJRS at http://www.puborder.ncjrs.org, 1–800–851–3420 (TTY toll free 1–877–712–9279).



Ideas Welcome

The *NIJ Journal* welcomes your ideas for articles on crime and justice. Practitioners, policymakers and their staff, researchers, and anyone else with an interest in criminal justice are invited to contact Managing Editor David Fialkoff, dfialkoff@palladianpartners.com, 301–650–8660 (ext. 122).

of 10–15 miles in length. These road segments were located in areas with a substantial number of highway patrol stops and a significant presence of African Americans. Researchers traveled the 14 highway segments for approximately 24 hours over several weekdays, recording the speed and demographic characteristics of the drivers.

Across the 14 highway segments, the percentage of those stopped for speeding who were African American was highly correlated with the percentage of drivers who were African American and were observed speeding (r=.91). The researchers found a pattern for speeding stops along the highway segments and a bias against African Americans. In 12 of the 14 highway segments, officers stopped more African Americans than non-African Americans. However, in only 2 of the 12 sites was the difference statistically significant.

The researchers explained that the results from the on-road observations can be generalized to the same highway in the same county. However, different highways in the same county may yield different results, suggesting limits to generalizing to other highways.

For more information

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