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FINAL REPORT[1]

An Analysis of Unexamined Issues in the Intimate Partner Homicide Decline: Race, Quality of Victim Services, Offender Accountability, and System Accountability

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An Analysis of Unexamined Issues in the Intimate Partner Homicide Decline: Race, Quality of Victim Services, Offender Accountability, and System Accountability

Final Report

National Institute of Justice Grant #2000-WT-VX-0012

Since 1976, the United States has witnessed a steady and precipitous decline in intimate partner homicides (Fox 1998; Rennison and Welchans 2000).[2] At first glance, the trend appears to signal success brought about by two decades of criminal justice policy improvement and domestic violence resource enhancement, all of which have been designed to reduce intimate partner violence. Upon closer examination, however, the trend signals much work and scientific analysis remains to be done. Most intriguing is the fact that declining male victimization seems to account for much of the noted plunge.

More recently, a few researchers have tackled the complex interaction of variables at play in the homicide decline (Dugan, Nagin, and Rosenfeld 2000, 1999; Rosenfeld 1997) in an attempt to better inform policy decisions, but such efforts have left many questions unanswered. Still, the research has provided important contributions to our understanding of this most persistent social problem. Namely, domestic violence resources, laws, and criminal justice system response do not work equally for all classes of victims and the results of policies are both mixed and enigmatic. For instance, "legal advocacy is associated with *fewer* killings of white wives and *more* deaths of African American unmarried females [emphasis original]." (Dugan et al. 2000, p. 34). The "findings [also] imply that laws designed to protect African American women only work if the woman is married to her offender." (p. 36). On the other hand, "The greater the marriage rate, the higher the rates of both husband- and wife-perpetrated homicides." (Dugan et al. 1999, p. 208). As for domestic violence resources, Dugan et al. 1999 found "little evidence of exposure reduction [such as domestic violence shelters] affecting the female

[2] Intimate partner homicides are defined as one-on-one homicides among current or former spouses, common-law spouses, boyfriends and girlfriends.

victimization rate," (p. 209)

In this report, we build on the work of Dugan et al. (1999, 2000) and Browne and Williams (1989) by examining, in greater detail, the relationship between intimate partner homicide and gender, race, criminal justice system response, and domestic violence services. To that end, we examine the net effect of criminal justice system response and federally-funded domestic violence shelters on victimization of white, African American, and Hispanic males and females. The study period covers 1987-2000 for all 58 counties in the State of California. This represents the first study to date that is able to provide substantive analysis with respect to rural and urban settings as well as Hispanic victims.

CLASSES OF VICTIMS AND NECESSARY AND SUFFICIENT CONDITIONS

Research on the etiology of intimate homicides, particularly with regard to gender differences (e.g., see Johnson et al. 1998 and Browne 1987; Paulsen and Brewer 2000; Rosenfeld 1997), and the experiences of women as they utilize domestic violence services and attempt to leave violent relationships (Sullivan and Bybee 2000; Sullivan and Rumptz 1994) help to frame our analysis of differences in homicide. This body of research suggests that some classes of victims, when faced with a violent partner, may already posses, and therefore muster, the economic and social resources needed to leave that relationship. As Sullivan and Rumptz (1994, p. 276) note, "Women who have financial resources have more options when dealing with abusive men. They can afford private attorneys, more easily move their residence or stay in hotels, and have cars to leave the area." On the other hand, some women, particularly minority women, not only face economic hardship but also must endure constant social and institutional impediments to safety.

Variation by ethnicity in the decline of intimate partner homicide deserves more rigorous

scrutiny, especially as it relates to domestic violence resources and services since it is generally assumed that such services are more readily available in areas with greater overall socioeconomic resources, which typically translates to services for white residents (Rasche 1995). It has been observed that African American women have distrusted and placed little faith in the services of the criminal justice system and other domestic violence resources (Sullivan and Rumptz 1994). Newer data suggests that African American women have begun to report nonlethal intimate violence to the police at higher rates than do white women (BJS 1998), which may mean trust and resource use over time by this group of victims has increased. Hence, it may be that increases in African American female contact with law enforcement agencies and domestic violence resources over time has accounted for some variation in the female victimization rates by race.

In some cases, women who do utilize domestic violence advocates and service resources face more violence because the greater threat such action poses to the power and control of the batterer (Riger and Krieglstein 2000; Sullivan and Bybee 2000). In one study, 35% of the African American female subjects, though no longer involved with their partners and having utilized advocate services, suffered continued abuse by their ex-partners (Sullivan and Rumptz 1994). It is clear, then, that there are levels of appropriate response, depending on conditions that exist with regard to each particular class of victim:

- Class one (lowest risk) — shelters and other resources are not necessary for the victim to mobilize resources and manage to free herself from a potentially lethal relationship.
- Class two (moderate risk) — some shelter and other resource use is necessary and sufficient to reduce the lethal characteristics of the relationship.

- Class three (highest risk) — shelter and resources are necessary but not sufficient to reduce the lethal nature of the relationship. Even reducing exposure to the offender may only have a marginally protective outcome.

Because men and women are thought to commit intimate homicide based on different motivations, reducing exposure of partners might not affect men and women equally. Women tend to commit homicide against a partner as a last resort in a long history of abuse, in which she sees the action as the only option given her isolation and the threat posed by her partner (Browne 1987; Johnson et al. 1998; Wilson and Daly 1992). Reducing exposure between partners will reduce the threat against the male victim since the female's perceived need to respond with lethal violence is reduced. Men tend to commit homicide based on perceived threats to their power and control, sexual jealousy, and other factors that are not directly related to exposure to the victim (Browne 1987; Johnson et al. 1998; Wilson and Daly 1992). Reducing exposure to the batterer, either formally for through informal societal changes (such as declining marriage rates) is thus not always enough to provide for safety of the victim. Continued safety over time may require a host of responses, including coordinated criminal justice response, informal social controls on the batterer, and formal and informal resources for the victim (Sullivan and Bybee 2000; Hassler et al. 2000; Johnson et al. 1998).

The Dugan et al. (1999) study offered an important reminder that men are responsible for their violence and that victim services must coexist in a system that holds males fully accountable for their behavior and attempts to stop male violence. Browne's (1987, p. 240) analysis of interviews with women who killed their partners revealed that an abuser's power to control and harm his partner was supported by societies' lack of awareness of the dangerous situation and by problems associated with gaining meaningful protection. As Hassler et al.

(2000) note, systems that help women separate from violent men may actually increase the rage of the men whom they are leaving, thus resulting in lethal outcomes. Far from suggesting women stay in such volatile relationships to prevent this rage, Hassler et al. (2000) assert that coordinated system response, in such forms as fatality review teams, training of criminal justice system personnel, and shared data systems, are important policy objectives in preventing intimate partner homicides.

It may be that the drop in intimate partner homicides over the last 25 years reflects the effects of victim services, criminal justice response, and the relatively effective but weak intervention provided by "exposure reduction" (Dugan et al. 2000) on the first two classes of victims (class one and two). The relatively static rate of intimate partner homicides among female victims may reflect the importance of class three, and of the breadth of response needed to stop the violence of the batterers in this high risk group. An important line of inquiry then, requires an examination of rates of victimization, especially by race, if and when a combination of quality and quantity of services and resources are identified. To adequately address questions about the effectiveness of services for different types of victims, data must be gathered about access to and actual use of services, in addition to information about the nature of services that individuals receive. This is a daunting challenge for future research.

In sum, to properly measure the effect criminal justice system response and domestic violence resources on intimate partner homicides, we must disaggregate by ethnicity. Thus, we hypothesize, white women, on average, will represent class one. They are able to draw on their status and economic resources, and will likely experience the lowest rates of victimization. The net effect of shelters and criminal justice system response for such women may be limited, however, because this class of victims is not likely to access such services. Further, if shelters and criminal justice responses work to reduce intimate partner homicides, they are likely to show

a positive association with declines in victimization for class two and three women (in general African American and Hispanic), and these women are also likely to experience higher rates of victimization.

METHODS

We used county-level data (n = 58 counties) on intimate partner homicides, on the availability of services for abused women, and on criminal justice system variables in California from 1987 to 2000 to understand variation across time, place, gender, and race and ethnicity. The use of California allows for reliable and standardized data for a large number of counties featuring diversity in population, in rural and urban characteristics, and with a variety of domestic violence criminal justice responses and shelter resources. Previous studies have utilized data from large cities (Dugan et al. 1999) and states (Browne and Williams, 1989) to measure the effects of domestic violence services on intimate partner homicide.

We expand Dugan et al's. (2000) research by including the disparity in intimate homicide decline among Hispanic men and women. In the past, some measures in offender accountability and system accountability over the last two decades have included a "willingness to prosecute" measure. We utilize actual system outcome variables such as case disposition and sentencing. Dugan et al. (2000) note that research suffers from a lack of effective measures on the "broad range of services, multiple sites, and differing victim characteristics." (p. 6) Hence, we attempt to examine actual criminal justice system response to domestic violence and shelter service availability by the use of federally-funded shelter programs.

Homicide data were gathered by the State of California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center and provide detailed information about homicides committed in California from 1987 to 2000, such as the relationship between the victim and the offender, the

county of the homicide, the type of weapon used, and the race, age, and gender of victims and offenders.

Domestic Violence Resources

Dugan et al. (1999) coded services from listings found in the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence service directories. Although the directories list the type of services provided by more than 1,800 service providers in the U.S., such lists do not give a good indication of the scope and quality of services. A more valid metric on services was required. They provided a better measure in 2000 by relying on informants from local agencies. We attempted to use a bit more complete and standardized measure of service quality by relying on data available from the California Department of Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Branch, Domestic Violence Section and the Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Planning, Domestic Violence Branch. Although both state agencies collected detailed reports from domestic violence shelters and hotlines in the state, since 1985 the Office of Criminal Justice Planning has funded shelters and hotlines in the state, and collects reports for mandated objectives. Because reporting periods between the two agencies did not coincide, we relied on Office of Criminal Justice Planning data because these data covered a longer period of time and allowed us to directly measure the length of time a county has received funds for shelter-based organizations. Such reports provide a wealth of information on client demographics, the ability of those services to reach underserved populations, and the coordination of those services with relevant service providers such as law enforcement agencies and hospitals.[3]

Because only recent data (starting in 1997) are available in machine readable format, we

[3] Available variables included the existence of transitional housing, availability of a racially diverse staff, the percent of hotline staff that are bi-lingual, the average stay in shelters by race, the number of requests for shelter beds that are refused because of a lack of space, referrals made to other agencies, agreements with law enforcement agencies and emergency rooms.

accessed archived data in the form of the hardcopy reports from the individual shelter-based service providers in the state. During this process, we discovered several troubling and systemic problems with the reliability and validity of these data.[4] The best solution called for relying on the most reliable and valid measure of shelter services. There were a total of 115 shelters in the state for which such detailed data were available. With regard to the need for a reliable and valid longitudinal measure, one set of facts was known: organizations within counties did receive federally mandated funding to provide shelter and shelter-based resources.

State records indicated the length of years such funding was provided to each community organization. Based on these records, we were able to compute the number of federally funded shelter-based organizations in a given county over time. In order for a shelter to receive federal funds, it must provide for some minimum levels of resources beyond bed space, including such resources as advocacy assistance, outreach to the local population, and cooperative agreements with referring agencies (such as emergency rooms and law enforcement agencies).[5] The federal funding process, then, also provides a standardized control on quality.

Some shelters in the state are not reflected in this measure. These shelters were funded by private donations, or by religious charities. Excluding these shelters was not only motivated by pragmatic reasons, but because we could not be certain the theoretical orientation and quality of services provided by such shelters would match those criteria mandated of the federally-

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[4] Due to limited and often competitively-based and bewildering funding process (Johnson 1981), the system is set up so that nonprofit shelter-based service organizations must constantly demonstrate their needs and their service to the community. As a result, close scrutiny to census and surveys of shelter services found many instances of overstatement of reach and services offered by the organizations. Further, shelters apply for funding with a projected goal of clients to be served in each of the reporting areas, such as crisis line, counseling, business center, shelter beds. In many reports, actual clients served often closely matched projected goals, even though basic statistical assumptions would suggest greater random variation in final outcomes.

[5] Only the Office of Criminal Justice Planning (OCJP) disburses federal shelter funds, and such funding represents about 85% of its yearly disbursements, other funds come from the state. Hence, the tracking of OCJP funded shelters over time most appropriately reflects the disbursement of federal funds and the resulting federal mandates on the use of those funds.

funded shelters.[6] Thus, a measure of the number of federally supported shelter-based organizations within each county, and the rate of such organizations (per 100,000 female population) offers a reliable indicator of the level and quality of services available to residents of that county over time. Our use of federally funded shelters to measure the availability of resources provides the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of this federal strategy. A unique strength of our measure is its direct policy relevance.

Criminal Justice System Interventions

Measures of criminal justice response were available at the county-level and permit an examination of the relationship between accountability and rates of intimate partner homicide. We measure arrests for domestic violence and dispositions following domestic violence arrests. Domestic violence arrests are for California penal code 273.5.[7] Convictions are for any offense that followed an arrest for domestic violence. In other words, these are not necessarily convictions for domestic violence. Measuring any conviction following an arrest for domestic violence, rather than convictions for domestic violence, reflects the criminal justice system using the domestic violence arrest as leverage against the batterer, and therefore may suggest greater attention to bringing the weight of the system to bear on the batterer.[8] Finally, we measure incarceration following these convictions. Incarcerations include prison sentences, jail

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[6] California Penal Code, section 13823.15, gives OCJP the authority to allocate state funds to DV shelters. The OCJP also allocates federal funds through VAWA (Violence Against Women Act), VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) and FVHSP (Family Violence Health Services Program). These funds are awarded to OCJP through an application process and the federal funding guidelines for these programs designate the Governor as the administrator.

[7] The State of California, Office of the Attorney General, collects and reports data on domestic violence as defined by California Penal Code 273.5. However, the California Penal Code provides two separate domestic violence offenses, 273.5 (felony) and 243(e) (misdemeanor). The state does not have the capacity to separate out, and thus count, the 243(e) arrests by themselves, because such arrests are included in aggravated assault statistics. An estimate derived from analysis of individual arrests in one county over a 36-month period suggests 20% of arrests are for misdemeanors. It is therefore possible that our analysis will underestimate the effect of arrest on intimate partner homicide. Our analysis only tests the effects of felony arrest.

[8] Aggregated conviction rates are only for the African American, white, and Hispanic groups because we did not gather disposition data on all other racial and ethnic groups in California. In addition, disposition data were not available for 2000.

sentences, and sentences to probation that include some jail time. We disaggregate these criminal justice system measures by race and gender. All criminal justice system data were collected from the State of California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center. In order to account for population differences and changes over time we compute rates per 100,000 population age 18 and older.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Our analytic plan begins with a description of trends in intimate partner homicide in California. This description provides an understanding of trends in California compared to national trends. Any analysis of intimate partner homicide trends would benefit from understanding the dynamics of homicide among different demographic groups. Thus, we examined victimization trends for various race and gender groups. In the second step of the descriptive analysis we present (1) statewide trends in criminal justice system responses and (2) statewide trends in the availability of domestic violence services. These trends are disaggregated by race and gender in order to assess demographic differences.

The multivariate analysis is aimed at determining the effects that the availability of domestic violence shelters and criminal justice system responses have on intimate partner homicide victimization. Disaggregating the data by county, multivariate regression analyses helps to understand the determinants of between-county variation in intimate partner homicide rates across time (see Ostrom 1990).

The final analysis consists of a detailed examination of the criminal justice system's response to males and females in cases of domestic violence. Preliminary descriptive analyses showed that the rate at which women are targeted for domestic violence grew at a rate greater than men. Even though many more men were arrested for domestic violence and subsequently

convicted and incarcerated, we pay special attention to changes in the rate at which women have been arrested, convicted, and incarcerated.

Intimate Partner Homicide Victimization

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on rates of intimate partner homicides per 100,000 people from 1987 through 2000 in California. The average number of adult intimate partner homicide victims per year from 1987 through 2000 in California was approximately one victim per 100,000 adults. The trends in Figure 1 indicate that the decline in victimization rates exists for both male and female victims. Comparing victimization rates in 1987 and in 2000, female victimization rates fell 49% drop and male victimization rates dropped 61%. We disaggregated victimization rates into six groups according to the gender and ethnicity of the victim. Figure 2 shows that the decline in African American male and female victimization appears dramatic in comparison to the decline experienced by whites and Hispanics.

In relation to national victimization trends during a similar time period we find that victimization declines are greater in California. From 1987 to 1999, victimization rates for white females declined 51% and rates for white males declined 63%. Nationally, during the same time period, white females experienced a 16% decline, while the decline in white male victimization was 48%.[9] Victimization rate trends for African American males and females appear more interesting. In California, victimization rates declined 86% from 1987 to 1999 for African American males and dropped 63% for African American females. Nationally, the percentage declines were more similar for African American males, 62%, than for the decline among African American female victimization, 30%. In sum, national trends on African American and white victimization (no data were available for Hispanics) are more similar for

[9] National rates are calculated from data provided from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/intimates.htm (Feb. 2002),

male trends than for female trends. Declines in California were greater than national declines for both men and women, yet the declines for females tended to be two to three greater in California.

Criminal Justice System Response

Arrests for Domestic Violence. Table 2 and Figure 3 present descriptive statistics on domestic violence (California penal code 273.5) arrest rates per 100,000 adults. Rates increased steadily from 1987 to 1997 in the aggregate as well as for men and women. Rates then declined from 1997 to 2000. Aggregate rates more than doubled from 1987 to 1997 and then declined 23% from 1997 to 2000.

In Figure 4 we disaggregated trends by race and ethnicity and found similar trends but different levels. From 1987 to 2000 arrest rates for domestic violence increased 67% for Hispanics, increased 48% for whites, and increased 37% for African Americans. Table 2 shows that during the study period the, average rate was 627 arrests for African Americans, 343 arrests for Hispanics, and 132 arrests for whites. Disparities between in arrest rates by race and ethnicity remained rather stable over the study period.

Convictions for Domestic Violence Arrests. Table 3 and Figure 5 illustrate how rates of conviction following arrests for domestic violence increased from 1987 to 1999. On average there were nearly 80 convictions per 100,000 people following an arrest for domestic violence. Similar to arrest rates, conviction rates increased considerably until the late-middle 1990's and then began a period of decline. Overall conviction rates following domestic violence arrests increased approximately 298% from 1987 to 1996 and then declined about 36% from 1996 to 1999.

When disaggregated by race and ethnic group (Figure 6), the trends mirror the overall pattern. Rates of conviction following arrests for domestic violence increased 149% for whites, increased 141% for Hispanics, and increased 95% for African Americans. While percentage

increases were greater for whites and Hispanics than for African Americans, the average conviction rate during this time remained greater for African Americans.

Incarcerations following Domestic Violence Arrest. Table 4 and Figure 7 present descriptive statistics on rates of incarceration given convictions that followed domestic violence arrests.[10] On average, there were 66 incarcerations per 100,000 adults following domestic violence arrests from 1987 to 1999. Like arrest and conviction rates, incarceration rates for men and women increased until the late-mid 1990's and then declined. Aggregate incarceration rates increased approximately 331% from 1987 to 1996 and declined 35% from 1996 to 1999. Figure 8 displays incarceration rate trends by race and ethnicity. In general, rates for the three groups followed a similar trend at different levels.

Shelter-based Domestic Violence Resources

Table 5 and Figure 9 presents trends in federally funded domestic violence shelters in California. The availability of shelters for battered women increased during this time period. The number of shelters increased from 30 in 1987 to 72 in 2000. This growth was not necessarily concentrated in selected counties. The number of counties with at least one shelter more than doubled, increasing from 20 in 1987 to 42 in 2000.

Statewide, from 1987 to 2000, there was approximately one-half of one shelter available per 100,000 women. The growth in shelters per 100,000 women between 1987 and 2000 represents a 100% increase. When we limit the base rate population to only include women who live in counties with shelters, this growth rate is lower.

Multivariate Analysis

Models. In order to isolate the unique the relationship between rates of intimate partner

[10] Aggregated incarceration rates are only for the African American, white, and Hispanic groups because we did not gather disposition data on all other racial and ethnic groups in California. In addition, incarceration data were not available for 2000.

homicides and the measures of the criminal justice system response and the availability of services for victims of domestic violence we estimate multivariate models. Pooling observations across 58 counties and the years 1987 to 2000 yields 812 observations. Multivariate analyses are based on fewer cases because data on dispositions were only available through 1999 and because we lag criminal justice predictor variables one year. Due to the truncated nature of the dependent variable (45% of county years had zero female domestic homicide victims) we chose to use tobit estimation procedures. Tobit is appropriate when a non-trivial portion of cases are truncated at a value of the dependent variable. Statistical models were estimated with Eviews version 4 (Quantitative Micro Software, 2000). Our statistical models take the following form:

$$\text{Female intimate homicide rate} = {}_0 + {}_1 \text{Shelters} + {}_2 \text{Lagged male arrests} + {}_3 \text{Lagged male convictions} + {}_4 \text{Urban} + {}_5 \text{Time} + {}_6 \text{Female non-intimate homicide rate}$$

We estimate a model for all females and models for specific race and ethnic groups. We re-estimate each of these models for male victimizations and separate models for urban and rural counties. By estimating models for urban and rural counties we test whether effects of shelters and criminal justice interventions depend on the urban – rural nature of counties.

Variables. Intimate partner homicide victimization rates per 100,000 act as dependent variables for all multivariate models. Two measures of the criminal justice system response to domestic violence are included in our models: arrest and conviction rates. The arrest rate variable measures the number of arrests for California penal code 273.5 violations per 100,000 adults. The conviction rate variable measures the number of convictions per 100,000 adults following an arrest for penal code 273.5. In all statistical models we lag criminal justice variables one year. Lagging these variables allows us to assess the extent to which arrests and

convictions in one year affect intimate homicides in the following year. Incarceration rate variables are excluded from the multivariate models because of substantial correlations with conviction rates.

The availability of domestic violence services is measured in terms of the number of federally funded service providers in each county and year per 100,000 females. For models based on race and ethnicity the rate variable is measured as the rate for specific race and ethnic groups. In the white female victimization rate model for instance, we measure rates of shelter availability per white female population. Shelter rate measures are not lagged based on the assumption that funding decisions in one year are not affected by intimate homicide victimizations in the same year. Rather, funding decisions are likely made in prior years.

We use three additional variables to indirectly control for factors that affect intimate partner homicide victimization rates. To control for unmeasured time-dependent effects we include a series of 12 dummy variables. We also include non-intimate partner homicide victimization rates to control for county and time factors not included in the model that generally influence rates of lethal violence. In models disaggregated by race and ethnicity this variable measures rates for the corresponding race and ethnic group. Finally, we control for place effects that are related to the urban – rural nature of the county with a single dichotomous variable. This measure is based on official designations by the state of California (Criminal Justice Statistics Center, 1997).

Statewide. Table 6 presents the results of tobit regression models of female victimization aggregated across all counties. Results do not support the prediction that increased criminal justice system interventions with men and greater rates of shelter availability for females are associated with reduced female victimization rates. These results hold true in aggregated and disaggregated models. That non-intimate female homicide victimization trends are not

significantly associated with intimate homicide rates suggests that a different set of macro-level factors influences these two general types of homicides. Table 7 presents for results of models of male victimization rates. Results show a negative relationship between the African American male victimization rate and the African American female shelter availability rate. Criminal justice interventions with females are not significantly related to reductions in male homicide victimization.

Urban Counties. Using all California counties, urban counties are associated with greater rates of white female victimization and some male victimization than are rural counties (Table 1). There may be some unique features of urban environments that affect white female victimization that do not exist for African American and Hispanic females. Tables 8 and 9 present tobit results of analyses for only urban counties. Criminal justice system interventions are not significantly associated with decreases in rates of female intimate homicide victimization rates. While shelter rates are consistently associated with decreases in female victimization rates, the effect is only significant in the model for Hispanic women. Increased rates of shelter availability for Hispanic females are significantly associated with decreased rates at which Hispanic women are the victims of a intimate homicide. Table 9 shows that there is a significant relationship between non-intimate partner homicide and intimate partner homicide rates for African American males. In addition, the negative relationship between the African American male victimization rate and the African American female shelter availability rate found statewide (Table 7) also exists when urban counties are isolated.

Rural Counties. Tables 10 and 11 present results of models estimated with only rural counties. Models were not estimated for Hispanic and African American victimization rates due to the distribution of cases. Intimate partner homicides were rare events for Hispanic and African American men and women in rural counties. Among African American women, only

two county years were associated with victimizations and only 18 county years were associated with victimizations of Hispanic females. Results for the aggregated model show that shelter availability rates are significantly associated with decreased female intimate homicides in rural counties. This finding should be viewed with caution. An examination of model residuals showed that one county year may have had an undue influence on these results. When this county was removed from the analysis the effect of shelter availability remained negative but the probability associated with the coefficient increased to .07. Shelter availability rates did not have a significant relationship with white female victimizations and did not exhibit relationships with male victimizations. Criminal justice system interventions were not significantly related to lower victimization rates in models presented in Tables 10 and 11.

System Backlash

During the descriptive analysis it became clear that changes in criminal justice interventions were not distributed equally among men and women. Even though many more men continued to be arrested, convicted, and incarcerated, the trends in system interventions with women stand out. As shown in Table 2, the percentage increase in arrest rates for females is dramatically greater than for males. Expressed in a different way, the percent of all domestic violence arrests that were of females also increased. In 1987 arrest of females for domestic violence accounted for 5% of all domestic violence arrests and in 2000 female arrests accounted for 18% of all domestic violence arrests. Despite these changes Table 2 shows that raw rates of arrest remained substantially greater for males during this time.

We also observe that the system showed increased severity toward both men and women following arrest. When expressed as percentage change in conviction and incarceration rates, the magnitude of change for females stands out. Two percent of all convictions following domestic violence arrest were of females in 1987 and 9% of all such convictions were of females

by 1999. These different growth rates may be a function of the very low rate at which females were convicted at the beginning of the study. There were 1.11 convictions per 100,000 females in 1987 compared to 61.77 convictions for men. Even small increases in conviction rates for females would translate into large percentages. Further, Table 3 shows that average rates of conviction following arrests for domestic violence were much greater for men (= 150.78) than for women (= 7.76) from 1987 to 1999.

DISCUSSION

Homicide versus Non-Intimate Partner Homicide and National Trends

The patterns reveal that different factors may affect each of these types of victimizations. Considered together, the patterns suggest that trends in non-intimate partner homicide victimization rates may not account for a considerable amount of variation in intimate partner homicide victimization trends. A notable exception in the patterns is with white females, because both trends follow a similar track over the study period, and with African American males since there is a significant relationship between non-intimate partner homicide and intimate partner homicide with this class of victims.

California is similar to the nation in trends for male victimization, but not so for female victimization. As noted earlier, California saw declines in female victimization anywhere from two to three times as great as national declines. This result is in keeping with the theory that small doses of intervention may be sufficient to reduce female motivations to homicide, hence a uniform national effect is likely, but more sustained, coordinated, and effective measures may be needed to reduce male violence toward women. California is one of a few states that has aggressively pursued the reduction of domestic violence, both through policy and legal code enhancement and through funding of domestic violence resources. Hence, the larger declines in

California compared to national declines may suggest the effectiveness of these efforts.

Criminal Justice System Disparity and "System Backlash"

The intent of most policy is to reduce violence against females through the deterrent effects of the criminal justice system. Our findings imply that the net effect of arrests, convictions, and incarceration is not to reduce female victimization, but to ensnare more women in the criminal justice system net. Again, the net effect is our concern here. While it may be that one county employs arrest effectively, engages in aggressive prosecution, and follows an advanced probation model, another county may respond to domestic violence very poorly. When aggregated for analytic purposes, the effects of interventions will balance each other out.

Given the apparent weakness of criminal justice system response, a more important point of discussion centers on our rather shocking discovery of the disparity between gender and race in criminal justice system action. Again, if we begin with the premise that much of the intended policy and enhancement in criminal justice system response to domestic violence has been designed with the chief goal of protecting women, then a "system backlash" effect may be taking place. Over the study period arrests for domestic violence of male suspects increased a total of 37% but female arrests increased 446%. Along with gender disparity is a strong racial disparity.

Disparity in convictions and incarcerations were even greater. Convictions for an offense following a domestic violence-related arrest grew by 131% for males, but by 1,207% for females between 1987 and 1999. For Hispanics, the differences were even greater. There was a 126% increase in convictions among Hispanic males, and a 1,650% increase among Hispanic females. Incarceration rates showed similar patterns of disparity across gender and race. Because these findings are somewhat surprising, a more thorough analysis of this phenomenon was beyond the scope of this current project.

It was hypothesized that the criminal justice system variables would have a more

influential role in reducing male homicides of female intimate partners. It is not surprising that the criminal justice system plays a relatively weak role in such declines, as the theory predicts certain classes of victims need far greater resources and protective factors than most traditional interventions provide. What is surprising is the degree to which women are being arrested, convicted, and incarcerated in response to policy that is essentially designed to provide for their safety.

Protective Factors and Shelter-Based Services

Finding from the study also seems to imply an important policy statement: Federal funds spend on domestic violence shelter-based organizations are associated with declines in female victimizations. This effect is true for Hispanic women in urban settings and true for aggregated women rural settings. If our class of victims hypotheses are correct, then we would suspect white females not to use and, hence, not benefit from any protective factor provided by shelter-based organizations. This is an assumption, however, because we do not have actual data on shelter access by ethnicity. Then again, the fact that urban environments are associated with higher rates of intimate partner homicides for white women, but not for Hispanic and African American women may provide tacit support for the hypothesis. Consider that in urban environments there are a multitude of other resources (attorneys, friends, legal services, counseling) a woman might attempt to employ before relying on a shelter. The data would imply that unfortunately such other resources are not likely to provide the level and quality of protective factors as can a fully funded and monitored shelter-based organization. This is merely one of several potential hypotheses to explain the finding. One direction for future research is to begin documenting trends in the use of services by race and ethnicity and across social settings.

We can also suggest a hypothesis to explain the difference in Hispanic female and African American female victimization. If shelters show an effect for Hispanic females, and an effect

for reduced African American *male* victimization, we might conclude that African American females, like their Hispanic counterparts, are utilizing shelters, but unlike their Hispanic peers, are most likely class three victims. For such victims, shelters may not provide enough protection.

Might criminal justice interventions with females and the availability of shelters for victims of domestic violence have the unanticipated consequence of greatly decreasing the number of men killed by intimate partners? Yes. Then again, this is a welcome unintended consequence to the extent that fewer intimate partners are killing one another. An unwelcome unintended consequence is the degree to which the criminal justice system disparity between gender and race has grown in relation to this social problem. This is problematic because our data show that federal funds for shelter-based services and resources show a robust relationship to reductions in homicide among certain classes of victims without the additional burden or incarceration and costs to the criminal justice system.

It is possible that part of the answer to this effect lies with the exposure reduction theory forwarded by Dugan et al. (1999). Shelters do reduce exposure of the victim to the offender to be sure, but so does incarceration in jail and prison, and yet no equally compelling relationship between incarceration and reduce female victimization exists. A more likely scenario is that shelters which receive federal funds will offer a host of resources to a victim, of which bed and space are just one. The bed and space may reduce exposure to the offender for a limited time, but as Sullivan and Bybee (2000) found, violence can occur some time even after the relationship is finished and the victim has separated from her partner. A modern, federally funded shelter is mandated to provide from a continuum of resources which include individual and group counseling, resume writing and job search help, transitional housing assistance, referrals to other social service agencies, legal advocacy, transportation assistance, and

counseling for children. Taken together, this rich array of services may help the victim reduce the social and economic isolation her batterer must create to maintain power and control. That these resources seem to work well for protecting some women but not all is a positive note on the ability to reach traditionally underserved populations. It is also a potential indicator that for some victims, either they simply do not access shelter services or the services are not enough. Thus, efforts to counter male control, to reduce his violence, and to ensure the safety of his partner require more resources than are presently available.

Figure 1 Statewide trends in intimate partner homicide victimization rates by gender.

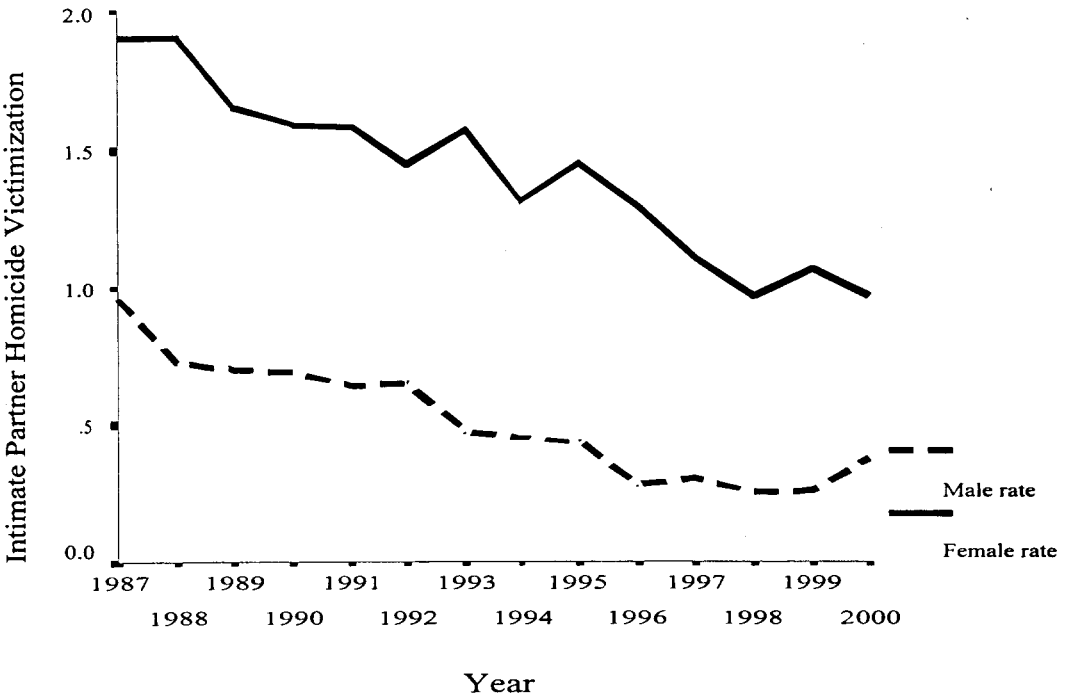

Figure 2 Statewide trends in intimate partner homicide victimization rates.

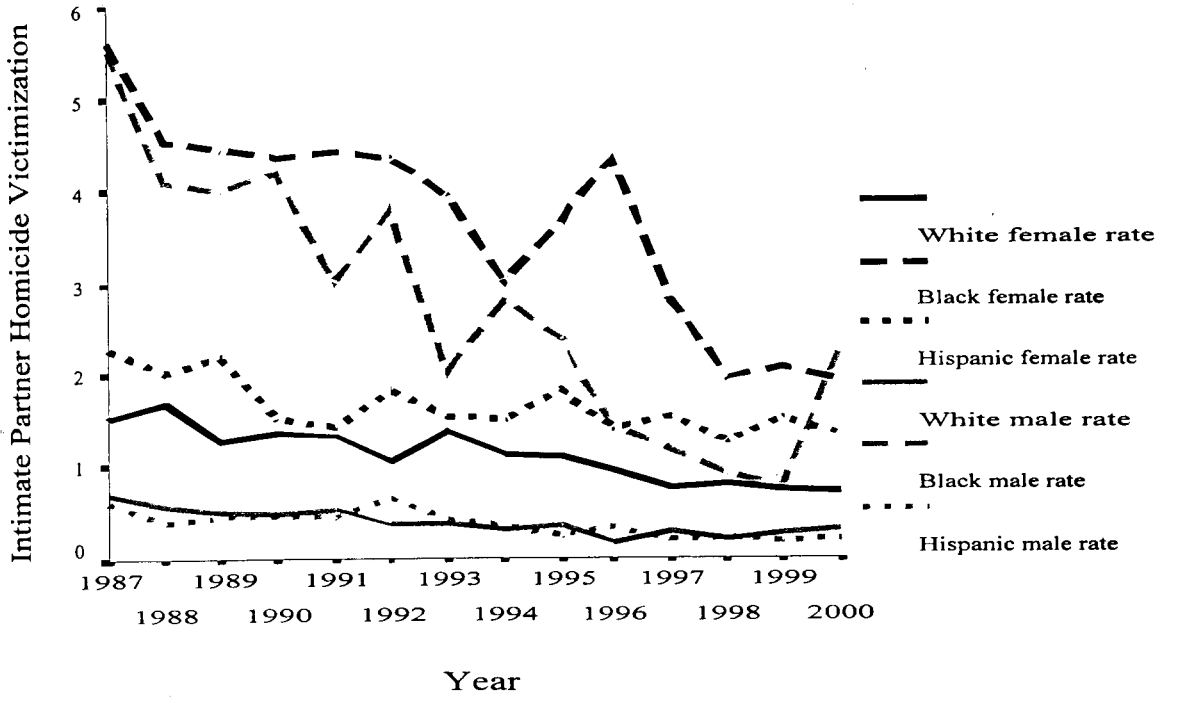

Figure 3 Statewide trends in domestic violence arrest rates per 100,000 population.

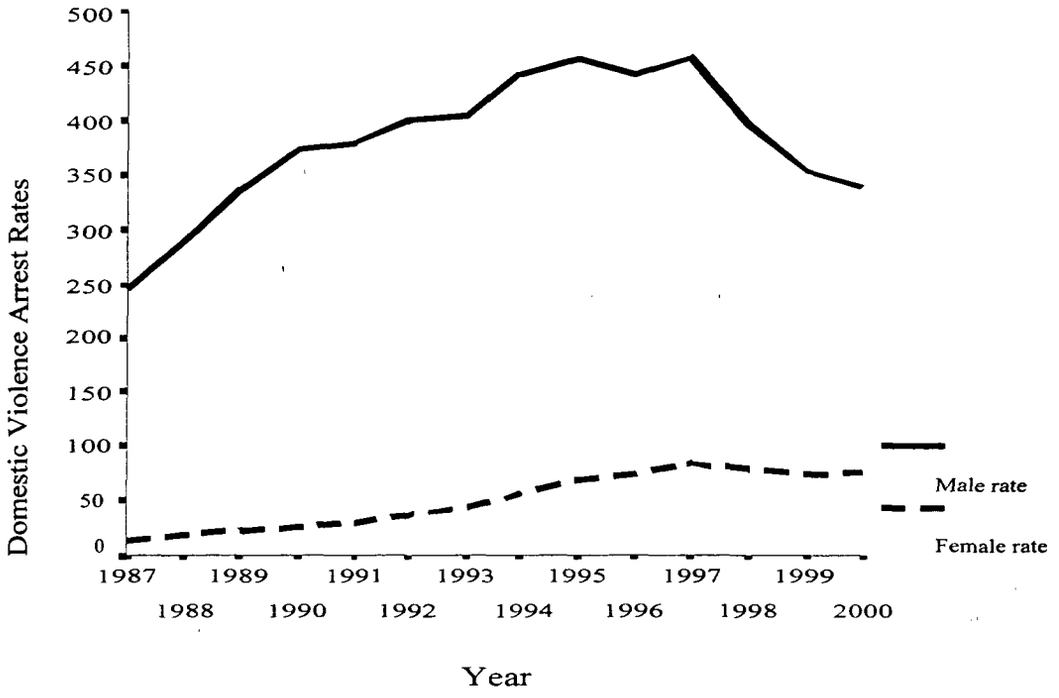

Figure 4 Statewide trends in domestic violence arrest rates per 100,000 population by race and ethnicity.

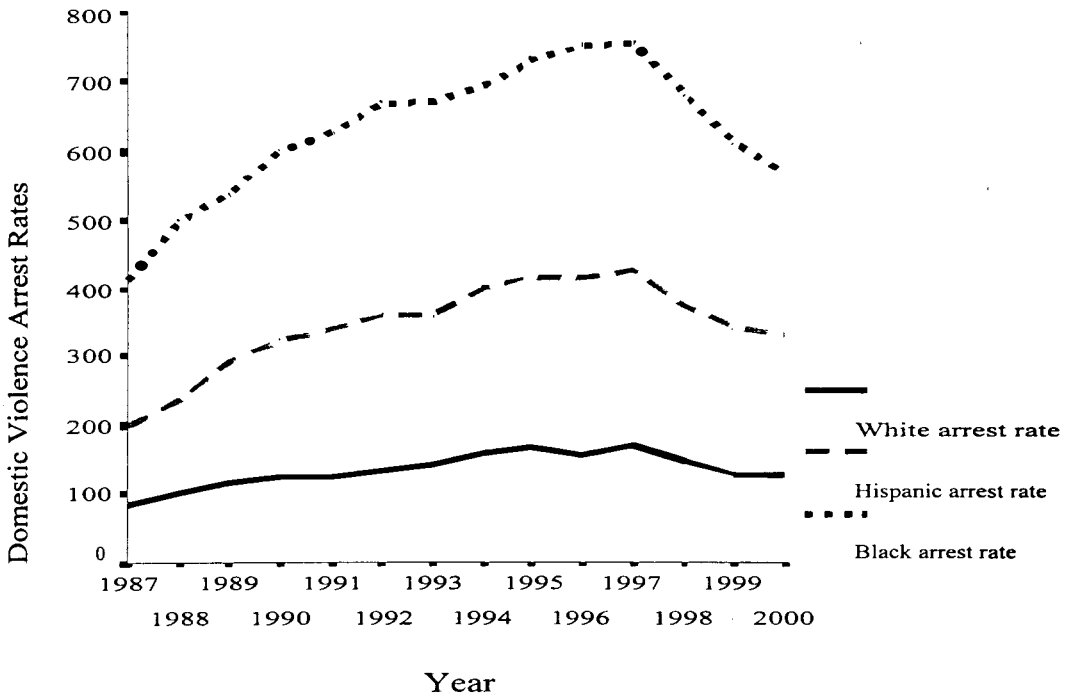

Figure 5 Statewide trends in convictions rates following arrest for domestic violence.

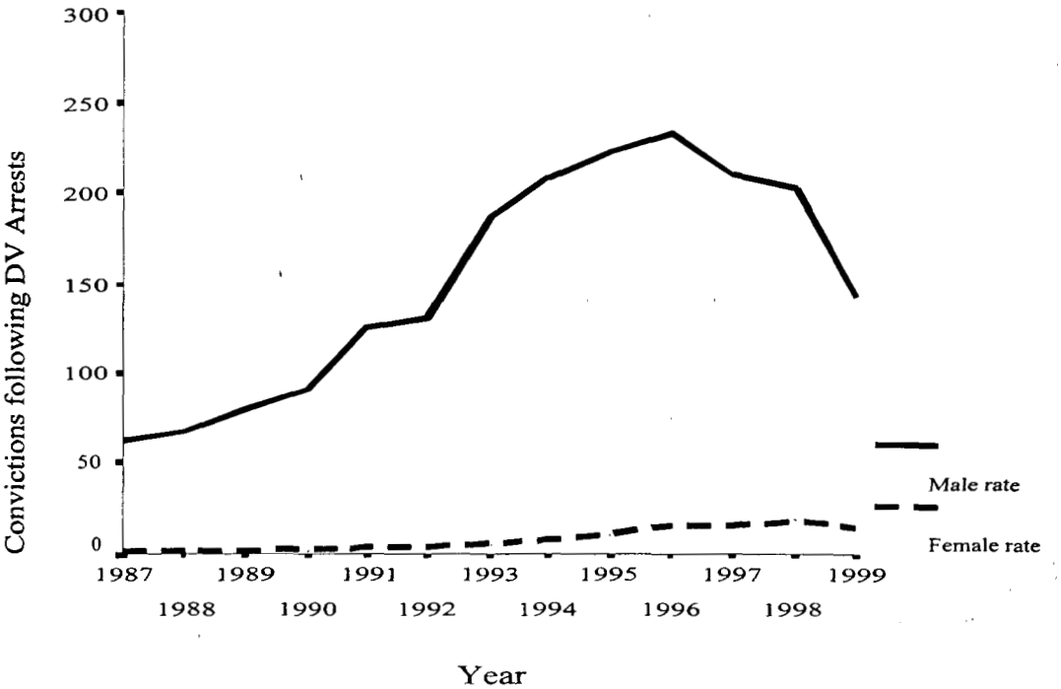

Figure 6 Statewide trends in convictions rates following arrest for domestic violence by race and ethnicity.

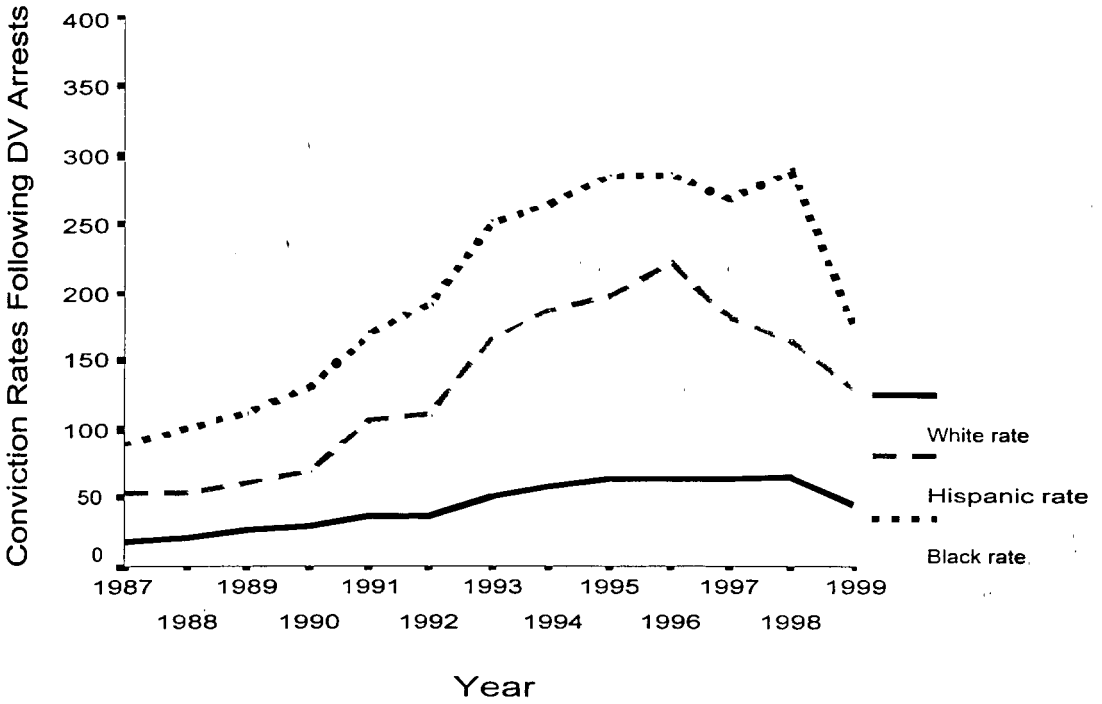

Figure 7 Statewide trends in incarceration rates following arrest for domestic violence.

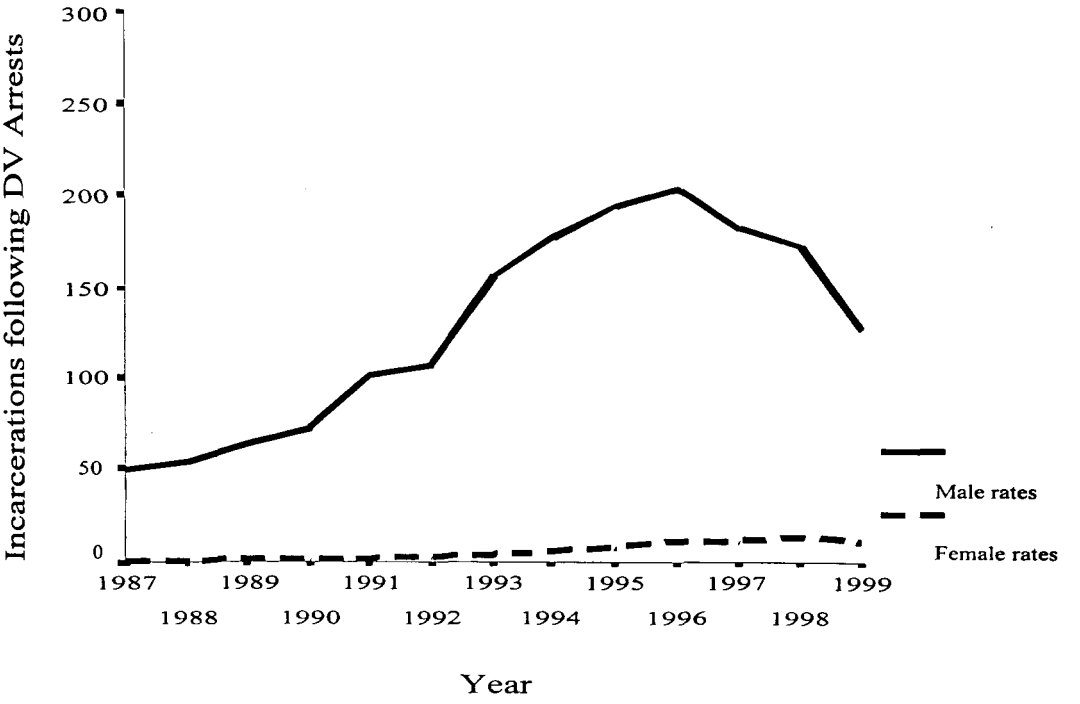

Figure 8 Statewide trends in incarceration rates following arrest for domestic violence by race and ethnicity.

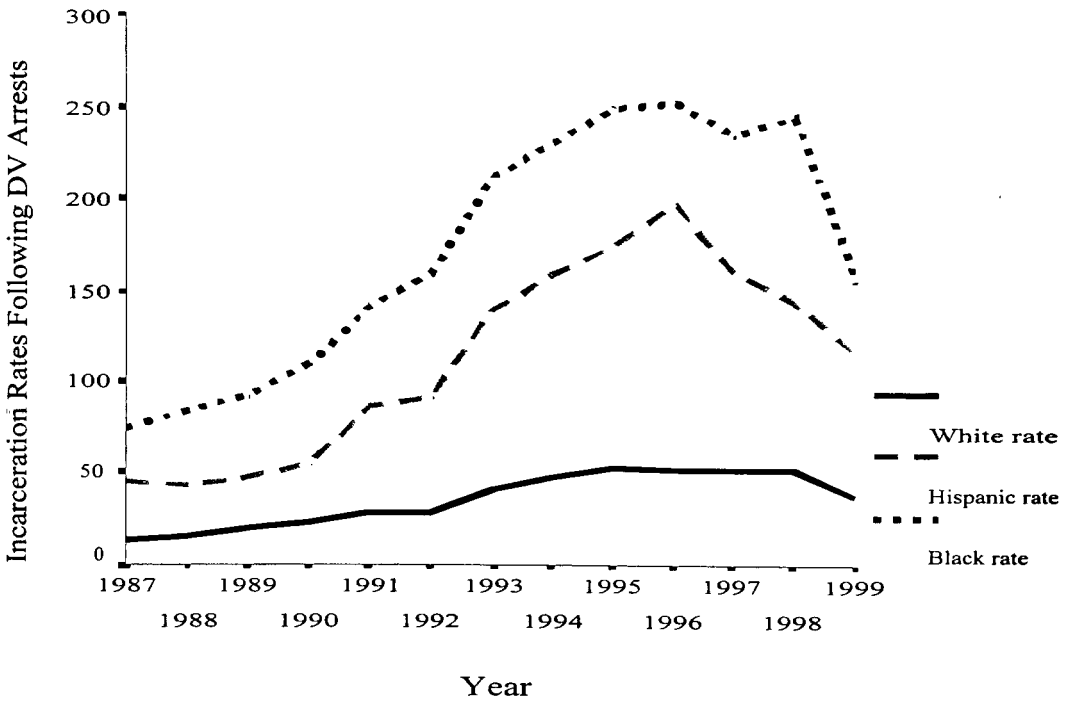

Figure 9 Statewide trends in the rates of domestic violence shelters per female population.

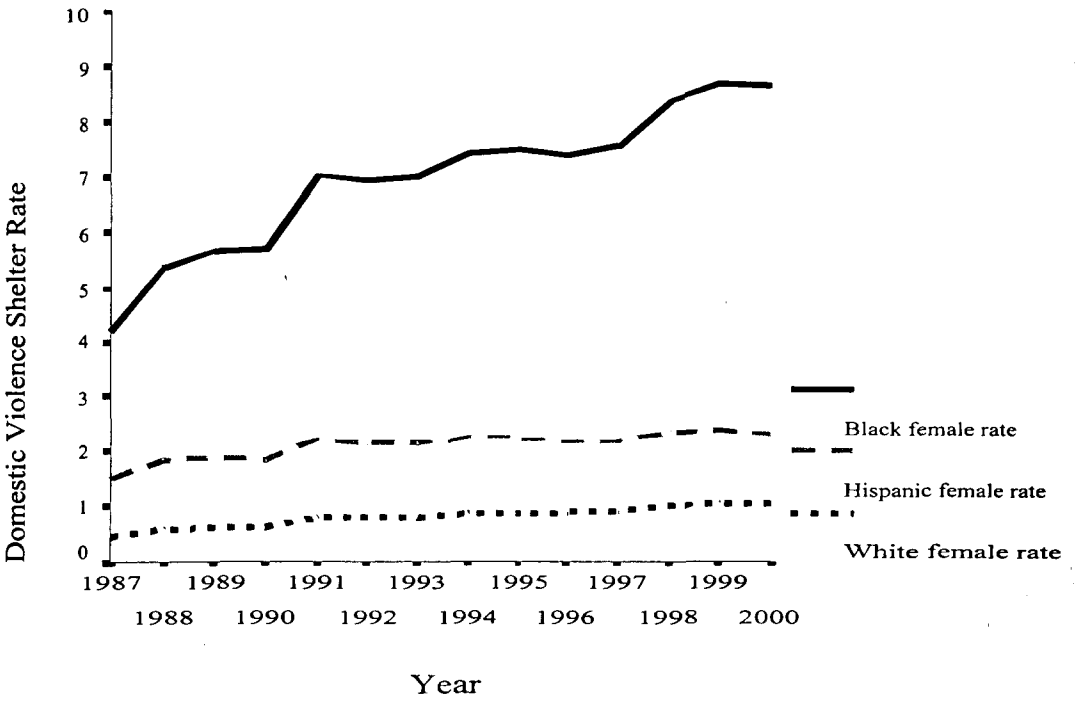

Table 1 Rates of intimate partner homicide victimization per 100,000 adults in California from 1987 through 2000 (n = 14).

Victim Group		*standard deviation*	*% Change*
Total	.97	.26	-53%
Male	.51	.22	-61%
Female	1.42	.31	-49%
Black Male	2.73	1.44	-59%
Black Female	3.67	1.14	-66%
White Male	.38	.15	-57%
White Female	1.12	.31	-54%
Hispanic Male	.36	.15	-67%
Hispanic Female	1.65	.31	-41%

Table 2 Rates of arrest for domestic violence per 100,000 adults in California from 1987 through 2000 (n = 14).

Group	*mean*	*standard deviation*	*% Change*
Total	213.47	40.52	60%
Male	379.74	62.27	37%
Female	49.55	25.14	446%
Black Male	1142.34	159.06	17%
Black Female	138.92	66.02	378%
White Male	230.36	35.59	22%
White Female	38.40	18.89	405%
Hispanic Male	601.03	106.77	47%
Hispanic Female	60.83	33.62	569%

Table 3 Rates of conviction following a domestic violence arrest per 100,000 adults in California from 1987 through 1999 (n = 13).

Group	*mean*	*standard deviation*	*% Change*
Total[1]	79.05	33.90	153%
Male[2]	150.78	62.73	131%
Female[2]	7.76	6.16	1,207%
Black Male	389.79	143.84	79%
Black Female	20.59	14.66	946%
White Male	83.28	30.94	121%
White Female	5.96	4.78	1,114%
Hispanic Male	241.60	109.14	126%
Hispanic Female	8.48	7.04	1,649%

[1] Totals are for African American, white, and Hispanic offenders of reported and non-reported gender.
[2] Totals are for African American, white, and Hispanic offenders with reported gender.

Table 4 Rates of incarceration following a domestic violence arrest per 100,000 adults in California from 1987 through 1999 (n = 13)[1].

Group	*mean*	*standard deviation*	*% Change*
Total[2]	66.43	30.25	179%
Male[3]	127.45	56.55	156%
Female[3]	5.78	4.76	1,683%
Black Male	336.75	129.29	90%
Black Female	16.57	12.25	1,025%
White Male	67.66	27.06	153%
White Female	4.22	3.50	1,706%
Hispanic Male	208.20	100.06	145%
Hispanic Female	6.50	5.66	2,557%

[1] Incarceration includes prison sentences, jail sentences, and probation with jail sentences.
[2] Totals are for African American, white, and Hispanic offenders of reported and non-reported gender.
[3] Totals are for African American, white, and Hispanic offenders with reported gender.

Table 5 Measures of federally funded domestic violence shelters in California from 1987 through 2000 (n = 14).

Variable	*mean*	*standard deviation*	*% Change*
Number of federally funded shelters	55.07	12.66	140%
Number of counties with shelters	34.43	6.17	110%
Number of shelters per 100,000 women	.48	.09	100%
Number of shelters per 100,000 women in counties with shelters[1]	.53	.08	27%

[1] This rate is based on the number of adult women in counties with federally funded shelters. Female populations of counties without shelters are excluded.

Table 6 Statewide Female Victimization: Tobit regression of female intimate partner homicide victimization rates on criminal justice system response, availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and control variables.

	Female victimization rate	African American female victimization rate	White female victimization rate	Hispanic female victimization rate
Constant	8.02	-.23	-1.61	.97
	(4.79)	(5.40)	(.98)	(2.69)
Shelter rate	-.12	-.00	-.06	-.00
	(.17)	(.00)	(.04)	(.01)
Lagged male arrest rate	-.00	-.00	-.00	-.00
	(.01)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)
Lagged male conviction rate	-.00	-.00	.00	-.00
	(.01)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)
Non-intimate female homicide victimization rate	-.08	.04	.08	-.01
	(.31)	(.02)	(.07)	(.13)
Urban	-1.05	1.12	2.95*	-.59
	(3.45)	(2.90)	(.54)	(1.45)
Time[a]	18.10	52.71*	25.23*	80.38*

NOTE: Standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .05$

[a] ^{2} value used to test the joint contribution of the time dummy variables. ^{2} is calculated by subtracting the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors and all time dummy variables from the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors without time dummy variables.

Table 7 Statewide Male Victimization: Tobit regression of male intimate partner homicide victimization rates on criminal justice system response, availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and control variables.

	Male victimization rate	African American male victimization rate	White male victimization rate	Hispanic male victimization rate
Constant	-3.15*	-70.11*	-4.39*	-.19
	(.90)	(12.87)	(1.30)	(.48)
Shelter rate per female population	-.00	-.44*	.02	-.00
	(.04)	(.16)	(.05)	(.00)
Lagged female arrest rate	.01	-.01	.00	-.00
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.00)
Lagged female conviction rate	-.04	-.00	-.05	.00
	(.02)	(.01)	(.03)	(.01)
Non-intimate male homicide victimization rate	.06*	.15*	.03	.00
	(.02)	(.05)	(.04)	(.01)
Urban	2.50*	36.38*	3.05*	-.22
	(.59)	(9.91)	(.84)	(.44)
Time[a]	19.34	6.292	21.93*	[b]

NOTE: Standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .05$

[a] ^{2} value used to test the joint contribution of the time dummy variables. ^{2} is calculated by subtracting the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors and all time dummy variables from the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors without time dummy variables.

[b] Unexpectedly, model log likelihood value increases rather than decreases when time dummy variables are introduced into the model as a group. Results are from the model without time dummy variables.

Table 8 Female Victimization in Urban Counties: Tobit regression of female intimate partner homicide victimization rates on criminal justice system response, availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and control variables in urban counties.

	Female victimization rate	African American female victimization rate	White female victimization rate	Hispanic female victimization rate
Constant	1.59*	1.66	1.50*	-2.19
	(.46)	(3.72)	(.51)	2.33
Shelter rate	-.01	-.00	-.16	-.42*
	(.11)	(.00)	(.10)	(.11)
Lagged male	.00	.00	.00	-.00
arrest rate	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)
Lagged male	.00	.00	.00	.01
conviction rate	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)	(.00)
Non-intimate	.05	-.00	-.10	.39
female homicide victimization rate	(.06)	(.03)	(.07)	(.19)
Time[a]	30.97*	.71	31.43*	17.61

NOTE: Standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .05$

[a] ^{2} value used to test the joint contribution of the time dummy variables. ^{2} is calculated by subtracting the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors and all time dummy variables from the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors without time dummy variables.

Table 9 Male Victimization in Urban Counties: Tobit regression of male intimate partner homicide victimization rates on criminal justice system response, availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and control variables in urban counties.

	Male victimization rate	African American male victimization rate	White male victimization rate	Hispanic male victimization rate
Constant	.26	-8.79*	.01	-4.14*
	(.24)	(3.03)	(.37)	(1.23)
Shelter rate per female population	-.03	-.12*	-.00	-.09
	(.07)	(.04)	(.08)	(.05)
Lagged female arrest rate	-.00	-.01	-.01	.01
	(.00)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Lagged female conviction rate	-.00	.02	-.00	-.02
	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.03)
Non-intimate male homicide victimization rate	.03*	.06*	.03	.08
	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Time[a]	12.53	6.51	7.65	6.73

NOTE: Standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .05$

[a] ^{2} value used to test the joint contribution of the time dummy variables. ^{2} is calculated by subtracting the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors and all time dummy variables from the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors without time dummy variables.

Table 10 Female Victimization in Rural Counties: Tobit regression of female intimate partner homicide victimization rates on criminal justice system response, availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and control variables in rural counties.

	Female victimization rate	Non-white female victimization rate[a]	White female victimization rate
Constant	-6.33	—	-11.06*
	11.77		(5.03)
Shelter rate	-1.17*	—	-.23
	(.56)		(.16)
Lagged male arrest rate	-.01	—	-.00
	(.02)		(.01)
Lagged male conviction rate	.03	—	.02
	(.05)		(.02)
Non-intimate female homicide victimization rate	.81	—	.34
	(.77)		(.25)
Time[b]	18.07	—	23.75*

NOTE: Standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .05$

[a] Hispanic and African American female groups are aggregated due to small number of left uncensored observations for the disaggregated groups. There were only 2 uncensored observations for the African American female group and only 18 uncensored observations for Hispanic female group.

[b] ^{2} value used to test the joint contribution of the time dummy variables. ^{2} is calculated by subtracting the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors and all time dummy variables from the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors without time dummy variables.

Table 11 Male Victimization in Rural Counties: Tobit regression of male intimate partner homicide victimization rates on criminal justice system response, availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and control variables in rural counties.

	Male victimization rate	Non-white male victimization rate[a]	White male victimization rate
Constant	-11.76*	—	-15.43*
	(5.51)		(6.78)
Shelter rate per female population	-.04	—	-.01
	(.20)		(.22)
Lagged female arrest rate	.03	—	.03
	(.03)		(.04)
Lagged female conviction rate	-.11	—	-.12
	(.13)		(.16)
Non-intimate male homicide victimization rate	-.03	—	.02
	(.15)		(.17)
Time[b]	17.60	—	18.60

NOTE: Standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < .05$

[a] Results for non-white male victims are not presented due to the small number of uncensored cases (n = 4).

[b] ^{2} value used to test the joint contribution of the time dummy variables. ^{2} is calculated by subtracting the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors and all time dummy variables from the log likelihood associated with the model that includes predictors without time dummy variables.

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An Analysis of Unexamined Issues in the Intimate Partner Homicide Decline: Race, Quality of Victim Services, Offender Accountability, and System Accountability

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to explore racial and gender disparities in intimate partner homicide declines and to measure the effects of criminal justice system responses and domestic violence services on victimization in California. Specifically, the study examines the net effect of criminal justice system response and federally-funded domestic violence shelter-based organizations on victimization of white, African American, and Hispanic males and females.

County-level data on intimate homicide victimization rates, federally-funded shelter availability rates, and criminal justice response rates from 1987 to 2000 were collected from the State of California. A descriptive analysis of statewide trends was conducted to understand changes in rates of intimate partner homicide victimization as well as changes in resources and criminal justice system responses over time. Next, multivariate regression analyses modeled the effects of the determinants of variation in intimate partner homicide rates.

Rates of intimate partner homicide victimization declined for all demographic groups. Percentage declines were, however, greater for male victims (61%) than for females (49%). Results show that federally-funded shelter availability rates increased over time. Criminal justice system response to domestic violence, as measured with arrest, conviction, and incarceration rates, also increased during the period under investigation. Interventions with females increased at rates greater than interventions with males. For instance, arrests for domestic violence increased 446% for females and 36% for males. Convictions for an offense following a domestic violence-related arrest grew by 131% for males, but increased over 1,000% for females.

Results of multivariate analyses show that arrests and convictions are not significantly associated with decreased intimate homicide victimization for men and women. Rates of shelter availability are significantly associated with decreased rates of female victimization in rural counties, with decreased rates of Hispanic female victimization in urban counties, and with decreased rates of African American male victimization.

AN ANALYSIS OF UNEXAMINED ISSUES IN THE INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE DECLINE

Race, Quality of Victim Services, Offender Accountability, and System Accountability

National Institute of Justice Grant #2000-WT-VX-0012

William Wells and William DeLeon-Granados[1]

Since 1976 the United States has witnessed a steady and precipitous decline in intimate partner homicides. At first glance, the trend appears to signal success brought about by two decades of criminal justice policy improvement and domestic violence resource enhancement, all of which have been designed to reduce intimate partner violence. However, the trend signals much work and scientific analysis remains to be done. In this report, we examine in greater detail the relationship between race, criminal justice system response and domestic violence services to provide a description of the decline over time and across place. We also explore explanations for the decline, by providing for a test of the role that criminal justice system interventions and domestic violence shelter resources may or may not play in the safety of women.

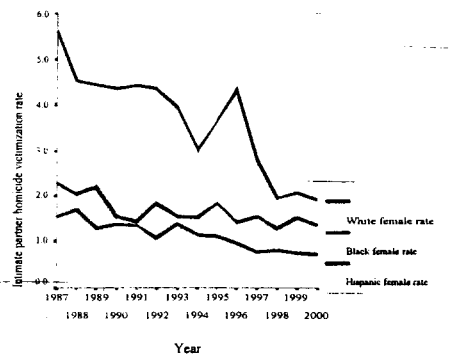
METHODS

We used county-level data (n =58 counties) on intimate partner homicides, on the availability of services for women, and on criminal justice system variables in California from 1987 to 2000 in order to understand variation across time and place and to understand racial disparities. The use of California allows for reliable and standardized data for a large number of counties featuring diversity in population, in rural and urban characteristics, and with a variety of domestic violence criminal justice responses and shelter resources. In the first stage of our analysis we describe statewide trends in rates of intimate partner homicide victimization, disaggregated by race and gender of victim, trends in criminal justice system response, and the availability of services for victims of domestic violence. In the second stage we employ multivariate models to understand relationships between homicide trends, criminal justice interventions, and the availability of services for domestic violence victims

FINDINGS

From 1987 to 2000 California experienced declines in rates of intimate partner homicides among both men and women: female victimization rates fell by .93 victims (a 49% drop) and male rates fell .59 victimizations (a 61% drop). We observe differences in victimization trends between African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. In terms of rates, African American victimizations declined dramatically. Rates of victimization declined 3.48 (63%) for African Americans, .61 (55%) for whites, and .65 (46%) for Hispanics.

We observe slight differences between the racial and ethnic groups in terms female victimization rates trends. Rates declined 66% among African American females while rates declined 54% for white females and 41% for Hispanic females. Trends in non-intimate homicides differ from intimate trends. Thus, a common explanation does not likely account for trends in these two general classes of lethal violence.



The availability of services for victims of domestic violence increased during the study period, as did three criminal justice interventions in domestic violence: arrest, conviction, and incarceration rates. We uncovered differences in criminal justice interventions across gender and race and ethnicity. For instance, even though males are arrested at much greater rates than females, percentage increases in rates of arrest, conviction, and incarceration for women outpaced that for men. We also observe increased disparities in terms of arrest, conviction, and incarceration between African Americans, Hispanics, and whites over the study period. Multivariate analyses imply that there are important relationships between rates of female intimate partner homicide victimization, the availability of services for victims of domestic violence, and criminal justice interventions with males.

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[1] *William Wells is an assistant professor in the Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency, and Corrections at Southern Illinois University - Carbondale. William DeLeon-Granados is an independent social science researcher who lives and works in San Francisco, California.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Analysis of Unexamined Issues in the Intimate Partner Homicide Decline: Race, Quality of Victim Services, Offender Accountability, and System Accountability

A Final Report to the National Institute of Justice

by William Wells and William DeLeon-Granados[1]

Purpose of Research

To explore racial and gender disparities in intimate partner homicide declines; to measure the effect of criminal justice system response and domestic violence services on victimization. The study examines the net effect of criminal justice system response and federally-funded domestic violence shelter-based organizations on victimization of White, African American, and Hispanic males and females.[2] This represents the first study to date that is able to provide substantive analysis with respect to rural and urban settings and Hispanic victims.

Methods

The study period covers 1987-2000 for all 58 counties in the State of California. California maintains detailed data on intimate partner homicides, criminal justice system response, and shelter services, and offers data from a diverse and population rich state. Criminal justice system interventions and offender accountability were measured by arrest, conviction, and incarceration rates for domestic violence related offenses in each county. Domestic violence victim services were measured by the rate of federally-funded shelter-based organizations in each county per 100,000 women by race.

Data were structured along two primary dimensions: time and place. First, a descriptive analysis of statewide trends was conducted to understand changes in rates of intimate partner homicide victimization as well as changes in resources and criminal justice system responses over time. Second, multivariate regression analyses modeled the effects of the determinants of between-county variation in intimate partner homicide rates across time.

Key Findings

Shelters.

- In urban counties, federally-funded domestic violence shelter-based organizations were associated with declines in Hispanic female victimization but not African American or White female victimization.

- In urban counties, shelters were associated with declines in African American male victimization but not African American female victimization. This finding supports the different motivations driving male- versus female-perpetrated

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[2] For purposes of this study, the term "victimization" is defined as homicide committed by an intimate partner of the victim.

intimate partner homicides.

- In rural counties, shelters were associated with overall declines in female victimization.

Criminal Justice System.

- There was no net relationship between any criminal justice system response and victimization by either gender or race.

- Women generally experienced larger percentage increases in arrest, prosecution, and conviction than men. This result was labeled "system backlash" since criminal justice system interventions were designed to protect women, but seem to ensnare them in a net-widening effect rather than provide protective factors.

  For example:
  - In 1987 arrest of females for domestic violence accounted for 5% of all domestic violence arrests and in 2000 female arrests accounted for 18% of all domestic violence arrests.
  - Over the study period arrests for domestic violence of male suspects increased a total of 37% but female arrests increased 446%.
  - Convictions for an offense following a domestic violence-related arrest grew by 131% for males, but by 1,207% for females.
  - There was a 126% increase in convictions among Hispanic males, and a 1,650% increase among Hispanic females.

Overall victimization

- White female victimization was greater urban environments than in rural; meaning something unique to urban environments increases intimate partner homicides among White females.

Policy Implications

More work is needed to explore the complex relationship between gender, ethnicity, and intimate partner homicide. More analysis of shelter-based services is highly warranted.

The findings are surprising in terms of the relative weak, or null, overall net effect of criminal justice system response.

The difference in shelter effects for Hispanic, African American, and White women may have to do with (a) the possibility White women may tend not to use shelters as a resources and (b) African American women may need more extensive resources to maintain their safety.

The findings are surprising and somewhat shocking in terms of the unintended consequence of system response to women, or the degree to which the criminal justice system has increased arrests, convictions, and incarceration of women. More theoretical and empirical examination of this phenomenon is required.

If policymakers are saddled with limited resources and funds, the findings imply funds may do more good if directed toward improving the reach and quality of shelter-based organizations, rather than focusing solely on criminal justice system response to domestic violence.