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Gender Differences in Intimate Partner Violence and Subsequent Arrests:

An Analysis of Police Reports in a Small Western City

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April 10, 2013

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ABSTRACT

Although a significant amount of literature addresses the perpetration of intimate partner violence (IPV), there are conflicting results about how gender is related to offending and victimization, and there is no universally accepted model with which to analyze IPV incidents. In the same vein, there are questions about how police officers and other legal system actors should respond to IPV and whether current policies are effective in protecting victims and reducing recidivism. The aim of this study is to conduct a gendered analysis of IPV arrests in a small Western city, both in terms of the identified arrestees' and complainants' gender and the arresting police officers' gender. A sample of 100 IPV-related arrest reports filed in a small Western city was coded both quantitatively and qualitatively to document how gender affects domestic violence (DV) arrests. In general, the results of this study support feminist views that IPV is gendered, but is also consistent with the family violence scholars given the numerous similarities that also exist between genders in the victimization and offending results. Additionally, the findings demonstrate arrestee differences based on both race/ethnicity and sexual orientation. Specifically, they suggest that among those arrested for DV, women are more likely than men to be in same-sex relationships, and Latino and African-American men are more likely to be arrested than White men. Importantly, the analysis also reveals inadequacy of officer recognition of mental health problems. Few differences in officer gender were found regarding these arrests. Finally, implications and suggestions for future direction are examined.

INTRODUCTION

The Nature of IPV

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, intimate partner violence (IPV) "describes physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy" (CDC 2010). One aspect of IPV that distinguishes it from other forms of violence is that it is typically reoccurring within the same partners (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control 2003; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). However, the characteristics of IPV are specific to each couple and can vary considerably in severity and type of violence used.

The CDC proposes that IPV occurs along a continuum from a single hit to severe, chronic battering (2010). There are four primary categories of violence types considered within IPV. They are (1) intentional physical violence with the possibility of injury, death, or other harm (i.e., hitting, scratching, strangling/choking, kicking, biting, using a weapon, pushing, grabbing); (2) sexual violence (i.e., using force to coerce sexual acts, a sex act initiated with someone who is unwilling or unable to give consent, abusive sexual contact); (3) threats of physical or sexual violence; and (4) psychological abuse (i.e., controlling with threats or coercive tactics, withholding information, denying access to resources, stalking) (CDC 2010).

Statement of the Problem

According to the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS), 5.3 million women aged 18 and older experience IPV in the United States annually (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control 2003). This violence results in 2.0 million injuries, 550,000 of which are severe enough to require medical treatment (National Center for Injury Prevention and

Control 2003). These figures might be even higher due to underreporting in this self-report survey.

The negative consequences of IPV include increased risk for poor health, physical injury, chronic disease, disability, and mental diseases (Coker et. al 2002). Some of the negative repercussions in mental health status include increased risk for depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, and suicidality (Golding 1999). In the most severe cases, IPV results in fatality (e.g., Belknap et al. 2012). According to the Uniform Crime Report, nearly one-third of all female homicides are a direct result of IPV (FBI 2001).

Moreover, IPV reaches beyond the individuals involved and has resounding effects on society. These consequences include a substantial financial burden. A conservative estimate suggests that IPV costs exceed $5.8 billion annually; $4.1 billion of which cover the necessary medical and mental health care services of victims (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control 2003). As a result of the violence, IPV victims miss a total of nearly 8.0 million days of paid work and 5.6 million days of household work (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control 2003). These shockingly high figures indicate that changes need to be made to current systemic responses to IPV in order to reduce the negative impacts that it is having on individuals and society.

Societal Responses

To understand the current climate of IPV policies, it is helpful for one to be familiar with the history of this social problem. IPV was once viewed as a private, family matter, remaining a virtually invisible problem (Barner and Carney 2011). In fact, physical punishment of a spouse was even recognized as a man's right in the early history of the United States. Not until 1821 did Alabama rescind this right (Barner and Carney 2011). However, following several women's

empowerment movements including that for women's suffrage and the "Battered Women's Movement" of the 1970's, during which many shelters for victims were established, there was a shift to view IPV as a criminal act and a significant social problem (Barner and Carney 2011).

When the prevalence of IPV became publically known, policymakers and other actors in the public sector attempted to protect victims from intimate partner homicide and continuous violence by passing the Violence Against Women Act and mandatory or preferred arrest policies for incidences involving IPV. These actions transferred the focus from victims to perpetrators with the intent to prevent reoffending (Barner and Carney 2011). Similarly, police action shifted to proactive instead of reactive, requiring officers to be responsible for protecting a possible victim from future violence (Belfrage et. al 2012). While one can argue that these were steps in the right direction for reducing the problem of IPV, the results of this legislation are controversial.

An argument against mandatory arrest policies is that they limit officer and victim discretion, which might negatively affect the victim (Han 2003). Another central reason that this attempt to curb IPV has been somewhat unsuccessful is that IPV situations are complex, making it difficult to determine who the primary aggressor is. This can result in officers making dual-arrests or victim-arrests, furthering increasing the cruelty of the situation for the victim (Archer 2000; Crager, Cousin and Hardy 2003; Durfee 2012; Hamilton and Worthen 2011; Han 2003; Hirschel and Buzawa 2002; Melton and Belknap 2003; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).

Goal of the Current Study

The purpose of this study is to explore patterns of offending and police actions in officially reported IPV in a small Western city. I am interested in looking at the circumstances of the disputes and how officers handle these complex situations with little background

information about the involved parties. The primary importance of the results is to inform law enforcement professionals, scholars, and politicians about the present issues officers face when making domestic violence[1] arrests. After providing a comprehensive overview of the current IPV research, I describe the methods used in the current study to describe the arrest incidents. Next, I present my findings, and finally, I assess how this study might guide future research and implications my findings have for policymakers and police officers.

The desire to better understand the nature of IPV is not unique to my study. Goals have been set by leaders in the field to increase the knowledge of IPV-related issues. In its *Research Agenda* for 2009-2018, the CDC called for research to determine: (1) how social, economic, institutional, and gender-associated differences contribute to the incidence of sexual violence and IPV; (2) what relationship, community, and societal factors contribute to violent conduct; (3) which factors buffer against risk and promote nonviolence and respectful relationships; and (4) what types and subtypes of sexual violence and IPV occur and in what settings they occur (CDC 2009). I believe that this study will help researchers formulate answers to some of these questions. Primarily, my research will focus on how gender and sexual orientation intersect with perpetration of IPV, as this is a frequently debated topic among scholars.

Conclusions

How can we ensure that the incidence of dual-arrests and victim-arrests is reduced? One possible solution is to bring about a better understanding of the current characteristics of IPV arrests and identify patterns that are inconsistent with known rates of offending. Training could then be offered to officers regarding these discrepancies in an attempt to prevent victim-arrest.

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[1] The standard language used to describe violence between current or former romantic intimate partners has evolved to "intimate partner violence" (IPV). However, the offense for which perpetrators of IPV are arrested, charged, and convicted is "domestic violence." For the purposes of this thesis I use the term intimate partner violence or IPV, but it is interchangeable with domestic violence or DV.

In order to make effective policy changes and to guide officer action, there is a need to further understand the nature of IPV, filling gaps and reconciling differing opinions within the current literature. I will attempt to identify the problems with the current systematic response to formally reported instances of IPV. This study will attempt to offer clarification on these issues as they related to a small Western city. Specifically, the following questions are considered in this study: (1) Are different populations (in terms of demographics) affected differently by IPV arrests?; (2) Do men and women perpetrate with similar rates, severity, and forms of violence?; and (3) Are arrest outcomes affected by any offender or victim characteristics?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Gender Controversy

Although it is apparent that IPV is a significant social problem, there are many controversies within the current research that thwart attempts to reduce the prevalence of IPV. Most of the disagreement involves the relationship between gender and IPV perpetration. According to Langhinrichsen-Rohling, the controversies that are related to gender are the debate of symmetry in perpetration; utility of typologies; mutually violent partners; motivations for initiating violence and self-defense; and effectiveness of treatment (2010). These issues, in general, attempt to clarify gendered patterns of IPV, the nature of which is almost always complicated.

There are two primary views concerning the rates and severity of IPV perpetration by gender: the feminist model and the family violence (or family conflict) model. The significance of this controversy is that data presented in the literature often informs policymakers, and it affects how they handle the problem and how they allocate resources. Much of the current research indicates that women are more often victims of IPV than men, and men are more often

the perpetrators than women. The NVAWS, a national study, reported that 22.1% of women and 7.4% of men experience IPV each year in the United States (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). These rates support the feminist view of IPV, that it is primarily men perpetrating abuse of their women partners. However, those who adhere to the family violence or family conflict model believe that women actually perpetrate at similar or higher rates than men. Some of this discrepancy is explained by the use of differing methods of data collection (Archer 2000; Dutton and Nicholls 2005; Melton and Belknap 2003).

The Family Violence Model

The family conflict camp views "conflict between family members as universal and inevitable" (Lawson 2012:575). According to those who adhere to this model, IPV is either gender-symmetrical or more often perpetrated by females. The proponents of the family conflict theory encourage distribution of resources to victim services for men. Some of the frequent arguments made by supporting scholars are that unidirectional female IPV rates are higher than male unidirectional violence rates, lesbian abuse is more common than male-female IPV, and few males are dominant in their marriages (Dutton and Nicholls 2005).

Most of the evidence of gender-symmetry is found in surveys using the Conflict Tactic Scales (CTS) to measure partner violence among samples of currently married or cohabiting partners (Anderson 2002). The results of these surveys, which support the idea of gender-symmetry, contradict qualitative accounts of IPV by those who work in law enforcement, the courts, shelters, or emergency rooms (Lawson 2012). Miller conducted interviews of professionals who had worked with IPV and reported that respondents believed women's use of violence was not part of the power-control dynamic associated with battering and that women

did not have the same kind of power that men frequently exert in relationships (2001). This shows validity issues of the survey methodology used by family conflict scholars.

There are many criticisms of the CTS as a survey tool within the literature, suggesting that it might present bias, lack reliability, or ignore context and consequences of violence (Anderson 2002; Archer 2000). One example of this is that it does not account for if violence was used as a means of self-defense (Melton and Belknap 2003). A study by Melton and Belknap demonstrated that women were more likely to use violence as a means of self-defense or to resist violence of their male partner (2003). Additionally, many researchers argue that women victims tend to underreport victimization due to fear or shame (Melton and Belknap 2003). This could account for some of the inconsistencies between self-report measures and reports by third parties.

Feminist Theory

The opposing feminist perspective suggests that victims of IPV are disproportionately women as a result of patriarchal societal values (Dobash and Dobash 1984). Dobash and Dobash contend that cultural prescriptions and the history of inequality continue to impact the power distributions within intimate relationships (1984). Feminists maintain that gender must be the unit of analysis when studying IPV as it defines the problem (Lawson 2012). This differs from the family conflict model in which the family is the unit of analysis.

Rates and motivations of perpetration aside, IPV more negatively affects women. This could be a result of differing levels of strength and power (Melton and Belknap 2003). Women are more likely to report injuries, need medical attention, and miss work as a result of physical IPV (Anderson 2002; Archer 2000; Tjaden and Thoennes 1998). Also, women's mental health, in terms of depression and substance abuse, is significantly more affected by IPV than that of

men's (Anderson 2002). Women victims are also more likely to fear physical harm than men (Henning and Feder 2004; Melton and Belknap 2003). Finally, officers see men's actions as more serious (Melton and Belknap 2003). This demonstrates that even if women and men report equal rates of violence, the violence used by men has more serious negative consequences for women victims.

Supporters of the family conflict model claim that the data used to support the feminist view is not without its own limitations. Critics contend that research used by those in the feminist camp focuses on samples consisting primarily of female victims of severe violence or consumers of victim services (Dutton and Nicholls 2005). In other words, they tend to focus on victimization as opposed to what they perceive as a more balanced assessment of both perpetration and victimization (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).

Integrative Perspectives

More recently, scholars have proposed theories that take into account aspects of both the feminist and family conflict models. These theorists have proposed several models that account for many different factors involved in understanding IPV. An example of an aspect of feminism echoed in an integrative view of IPV suggests that there are differences in how men and women are socialized regarding violence, which can legitimize a man's use of violence to gain or maintain a position of authority in a relationship (Anderson 2002). While integrative theorists generally accept that gender inequality can play a role in the violence, they also consider how other factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural norms, personality, and individual learning history play a role in explaining IPV (Lawson 2012).

In one integrative approach, Michael Johnson suggests that there are separate forms of IPV, *patriarchal terrorism* and *common couple violence*. He argues that *patriarchal terrorism* is

a phenomenon that stems from male-dominance in patriarchal cultures and is completely different from the other forms of violence that are equally likely to be used by men and women (Lawson 2012). Data from surveys that do not focus specifically on either the perpetrator or victim show a great deal of overlap of victims and perpetrators of IPV, supporting the idea of *common couple violence*. The National Surveys of Families and Households reported that 64% individuals indicated that they have both perpetrated assaults and have been victimized in their intimate partnership (Umberson et. al 1998). Anderson argues that surveys aimed at victimization tend to include a primarily female sample and surveys of perpetration often include only men, which limits comparison of how IPV is experienced differently by gender (2002). This is one important idea from the integrative wave that could improve the study of IPV. The current study will focus on both perpetration and victimization by coding for any included information given by the arresting officer within the reports thus providing a more comprehensive view of the violence as it differs by gender.

Although the current study will attempt to look at IPV situations as comprehensively as possible, it will be somewhat difficult to assess the motivation for violence. This likely limits the ability to identify when a woman is using violence as a form of self-defense. Weston, Marshall, and Coker found that when women do use violence, they were unlikely to initiate conflicts and that often use self-protective actions, but view them as more retaliatory than self-defensive (2007). This might explain some of the conflicting evidence presented in self-report studies. It is also consistent with another study that reported that most women who are arrested for IPV actually used the physical violence as a means of self-defense from an abusive partner (Henning, Renauer, and Holdford 2006).

Mandatory Arrest Laws and Other Legislative Concerns

In the early 1980's, many states began to implement laws that mandate or encourage arrest without the consent of the victim and without a warrant in incidences where officers have probable cause that an assault has occurred (Barner and Carney 2011). This legislation was passed in an attempt to become more proactive in preventing IPV, to prevent domestic violence fatalities, and to improve consistency in domestic violence interventions. The National Institutes of Justice published empirical support in 1988 for the reduction of recidivism as a result of these laws, and mandatory arrest became the standard in the United States (Barner and Carney 2011). A more recent study including five jurisdictions found that arrest was associated with reduced recidivism when measured by victim interviews, but findings were not significant when looking at recidivism in data from official police records (Maxwell, Garner, and Fagan 2001).

Mandatory or preferred arrest policies often mandate that no contact orders be put in place at the time of arrest between the victim and defendant. There is evidence that once out of the relationship, factors that heightened a woman's sense of security included physical distance and social support (Dichter and Gelles 2012). This might demonstrate the functionality of mandatory no contact orders. However, they might also restrict couples from attempting to use effective coping mechanisms to reconcile the conflict. No-drop domestic violence policies in the courts are similar to the mandatory arrest policies for the police and have also been implemented as a part of the legislation aimed at reducing IPV. No-drop policies require the prosecution of IPV perpetrators regardless of the victim's wishes and often force their participation in the persecution, which limits the victim's autonomy (Barner and Carney 2011).

Despite evidence supporting mandatory arrest legislation, these laws have been met with a great deal of controversy. One of the primary concerns is that arrest might have negative

consequences on the victim. Mandatory arrest might put the victim in more danger as a result of retaliatory violence (Han 2003). One officer describes this phenomenon as a perpetrator's anger being augmented by incarceration, and the officer's action becomes a catalyst for more drastic violence (Horwitz et. al 2011). Eliminating the victim's right not to press charges or to not be involved in prosecution, not only reducing their sense of autonomy, but might also increase the severity of the perpetrator's violence (Han 2003).

Equally troubling to many scholars and practitioners is the fact that victims are sometimes arrested. Since the enactment of pro-arrest laws, rates of women arrested for domestic violence crimes have increased proportionately more than those of men (Busch and Rosenberg 2004; Crager et. al 2003). Similarly, in a study based on data in the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), it was found that these laws disproportionately affect women negatively (Durfee 2012). Additionally, another study found that among heterosexual partners, women who physically injure their partners are treated more strictly than men who cause injuries to their partners (Hamilton and Worthen 2011).

Victim-arrest can fall into two different categories (1) dual arrest in which both parties are arrested or (2) retaliatory arrest, where complaints by the aggressor result in the arrest of the victim (Crager et. al 2003). Hirschel and Buzawa reported a rise in dual-arrests as a result of mandatory arrest legislation (2002), and Melton and Belknap found that women were more likely to be arrested in dual-arrests (2003). Speaking to the second type of victim-arrest, men have been known to call the police even when they are the aggressor in an effort to manipulate the situation (Miller 2003).

Women victims who are arrested face many problems, such as loss of employment, legal costs, and strains on ability to parent (Crager et. al 2003; Johnson 1995). Also, conviction can

limit access to civil rights (i.e. right to vote, right to serve on a jury), access to public housing, welfare benefits, custody, and U.S. residency (for non-citizens) (Crager et. al 2003). It can also result in a loss of victim status and access to victim services. Victims who are arrested are also less likely to turn to the police for help in the future; this disproportionately affects minority women who are more often dependent on police for protection (Kingsnorth and MacIntosh 2004). In interviews of victims who were arrested in Washington, all women said they would never again call the police during an incident of IPV (Crager et. al 2003). A survey of police officers revealed that they had doubt about their ability to identify the primary aggressor (Gover, Paul, and Dodge 2011). With these severe consequences of victim-arrest and the self-doubt expressed by officers responsible for the misinterpretation, something needs to be done to improve the officer's ability to identify the primary aggressor to reduce victim-arrests.

Mental Health Issues & Intimate Partner Violence

IPV presents severe repercussions in the victim's mental health. A meta-analysis of 37 studies revealed that women who experience IPV are two to three-times more likely to meet criteria for major depressive disorder, and evidence suggested that for those already experiencing depressive symptoms, there was a 1.5-2-fold increase in symptoms compared to women who were not exposed to IPV (Beydoun et. al 2012). They also found that experiencing IPV made women more vulnerable to postpartum depression (Beydoun et. al 2012). Posttraumatic stress disorder also frequently co-occurs with IPV. A meta-analysis revealed that 63.8% of victims met diagnostic criteria for PTSD (Golding 1999). Coker et al. state that early intervention in cases of IPV could reduce the impact that IPV has on victims (2002).

Researchers who focus on IPV from the mental health standpoint recommend screening for possible IPV, especially in pregnant women (Beydoun et. al 2012). This would allow for

safety planning, follow-up mental health screenings, and other protective measures to ensure both maternal and fetal health and wellness. However, reducing IPV in general or connecting victims with mental health services would consequently reduce these side effects of the violence.

Mental health issues not only play a role in the victim's life, but mental illness within aggressors should be considered when looking at approaches to reducing IPV. Cerulli, Conner, and Wiseman suggest that some cases of domestic violence may be primarily caused by mental health problems and that it may be inappropriate to pursue perpetrators with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) in the typical manner through the criminal justice system (2004). While individuals with certain mental health concerns may be at increased risk for IPV perpetration due to a hindered ability to maintain healthy relationships. There is also a question of the effectiveness of a protection order or no contact order in cases where the offender suffers from a SPMI (Cerulli et. al 2004). If SPMI changes aspects of the situation, it is indubitably worth investigation and consideration within the systemic response to IPV.

When considering the intersection of mental health issues and IPV, an important issue is the recognition of mental illness by officers. Law enforcement is often the first point of contact in the process of connecting with mental health services (Van den Brink et. al 2012). This is especially true now due to the movement of deinstitutionalization within the field of mental health care. "Police officers are also likely to receive minimal training in mental illness, and mental health difficulties may be particularly difficult to discern in the context of an acute IPV incident" (Cerulli et. al 2004:142). Van den Brink et. al also argue that officers should be trained in dealing with and identifying mental health problems to better connect people with services. They found that when officers made contact with mental health services during a crisis, the individuals were most likely to remain consumers of mental health care (49%) (2012). This is

one aspect of IPV that the current study will address in an attempt to offer improvement to the way the justice system handles IPV.

Police Perceptions, Resources, and Education

To offer the best possible solution within the context of the law, police officers have many responsibilities when responding to and investigating IPV incidences. Officers often report feeling frustrated in dealing with domestic violence calls (Gover et. al 2011; Horwitz et. al 2011). Some of this frustration is a result of the current legislation, which forces officers to arrest when there is probable cause of an assault—something that takes away the discretion they are allowed in other responses. A majority of surveyed officers disagree with mandatory arrest policies (Gover et. al 2011). They desire more discretion in responding to domestic violence, saying that arrest is not always the best solution (Gover et. al 2011). Another study that utilized focus groups to gain insight into an officer's perspective of IPV, paints them as lone actors attempting to prevent IPV. This study concluded that,

> Officers see the problems: unresolved conflict in the couple, legal dispositions that may not fit the crimes, lack of resources for overworked Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) and judges who see DV as an event, rather than a series of knotted fibers woven into the community's fabric, or who cannot levy sentences on perpetrators without evidence. The police know that they cannot make a difference without a shift in the community's agenda (Horwitz et al. 2011:624).

While the mandatory arrest legislation poses problems for officers, there are several other aspects of IPV-related arrests that officers do have control over.

One example of how officers can exercise their discretion is in offering risk management services. "Police now are responsible for assessing and managing the risks posed by IPC

perpetrators, the vulnerabilities of IPV victims, and liaison and coordination with community services" (Belfrage et al. 2012:60). Several assessment tools have been evaluated in assisting police to make difficult decisions involving domestic violence incidents. Risk levels are assigned based on criminal history, psychosocial adjustment, history of IPV, and the severity of the most recent event. The objective is that officers can guide risk management more effectively when they use tools to assess the level of risk for the victim. Different types of risks identified in risk management tools have been shown to influence rates of recidivism (Belfrage et al. 2008). Risk management includes safety planning for the victim, protective action, and initiating a no contact order.

Belfrage et al. found that the level of assessed risk of the perpetrator and the number of risk management strategies a perpetrator is connected with affects their rates of recidivism (2008). Specifically, high-risk perpetrators who are provided with many risk management strategies show lower rates of recidivism. Conversely, low-risk perpetrators who were connected with many risk management services were more likely to have continued interactions with law enforcement. Belfrage et al. offer the theory that these interventions for low-risk perpetrators interfere with their natural coping mechanisms (2008). This demonstrates that it is not always optimally beneficial to initiate or force partners to use protective services, and with low-risk couples, it might be best to let them work through the issues on their own. Understanding and offering risk management based on officer discretion is one possible area of improvement in terms of officer action in response to IPV.

Officers' gender and personality might affect how they handle calls involving IPV. One study comparing officer's attitudes toward IPV and psychosocial characteristics found that officers who supported unconditional law enforcement (e.g., mandatory arrest) were more

empathetic and less sexist. They also tended to see IPV as more serious and felt more personally responsible (Garcia, Garcia, and Lila 2011). While the current study does not have access to information about the officers' personalities, officers' genders will be explored as a possible factor in determining their course of action.

Same-Sex Couples and IPV

IPV among gay and lesbian couples has been largely ignored by all of the national studies, leaving gaps in the currently available data (Barner and Carney 2011). This has resulted in society largely ignoring the problem within this population. However, Messinger recently conducted a secondary analysis of the National Violence Against Women Survey to explore IPV prevalence among same-sex couples, finding that rates of all types of IPV are about twice as high among gay, lesbian, and bisexual partners compared to heterosexual couples (Messinger 2010). This study also found that women in same-sex partnerships are the most likely to be victims of IPV when compared to gay men and heterosexual men and women (Messinger 2010). The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs suggests the rate of IPV in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) communities to be around 20-35% (Crager et. al 2003; National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012). These findings support that IPV is a significant problem in the LGBTQ community.

Despite the prevalence of IPV in the LGBTQ community, there are concerning reports on police responses to these victims and offenders. One of which is the low rate of victims being supported by law enforcement and victim services. Less than half of LGBTQ survivors of IPV report to police, and this figure is an increase from 2010 (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012). Speculation on this phenomenon is victims' fear of homophobia and other negative opinions of law enforcement officers or fear of being "outed" as LGBTQ. This fear is

not unfounded as the results this study also indicated that 11.5% of LGBTQ survivors of IPV found officers' attitudes towards them to be hostile (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012). Another significant issue involving IPV in the LBGTQ community is mis-arrest or victim-arrest. In 2011, slightly less than one third of such respondents to a survey reported experiencing victim-arrest (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012).

Currently available IPV victim services are also confounded by sexual identity. Lesbians are significantly more likely to seek help for IPV than gay men, because they are more knowledgeable about IPV services due to their gender identity and the Battered Women's Movement (McClennen 2005). However, a survey of domestic violence shelter service providers revealed that these places are less likely to recognize women who are in same-sex (as those in different-sex) relationships as victims of IPV (Basow and Thompson 2011). The troubling findings regarding how police and victim services view and interact with members of the LGBTQ community have informed this study to be vigilant of how reports of same-sex partners are different or similar to those of heterosexual couples.

Conclusion

There are currently debates about how IPV should be viewed and what responses are best to reduce recidivism and protect victims. Specifically, questions abound regarding how gender impacts this type of violence, how to handle and prevent mental illness among perpetrators and victims of IPV, how IPV differs between heterosexual couples and same-sex couples, and what officers can do to reduce problems associated with the justice system response to IPV. This study will explore all of these issues through an analysis of public records of IPV-related arrest.

METHODS

Data Collection

In an effort to better understand the circumstances surrounding domestic violence arrests I examined 100 police reports for such arrests in a small Western city. My sample included every police report relating to a domestic violence arrest from September 1, 2012 to November 27, 2012 (the first 100 cases starting September 1, 2012). Consistent with Melton and Belknap (2003) who analyzed domestic violence police reports and quotes from an urban police department, I used mixed methods. First, I created a codebook that I refined as I coded the first twenty reports and realized I needed more variables or had to adapt the existing variables. I went back and fixed the coding for the cases I had completed. Second, I combed through the reports looking for statements/descriptions that police made in the reports that might prove useful in understanding these cases and the quantitative findings, to collect insights into the cases and/or the officers' decision-making. The goal of the quantitative analysis was to identify frequencies and patterns, and, ideally, relationships between variables.

The codebook included measures of any demographic information given about both defendant and complainant. Consistent with some other research, I am reluctant to use the words "offender" and "victim" regarding concerns that the arrest may have been of the actual victim. Therefore, I am using the terms arrestee and complainant, with the interpretation that the "arrestee" is the person the police identified as an offender and the "complainant" is the person the police identified as the victim. Clearly, in dual arrest cases, individuals were both complainants (victims) and arrestees (offenders). I am also using the term "arrestee" as that is the term used in the police reports. In many cases, race/ethnicity was not reported for the victim. However, age, sex, and race were recorded when possible. In addition to the arrestee and

complainant characteristics, where possible, I collected information on the responding police officer's gender.

The first page of the police reports also included several questions for the officer to complete, including: "Has inmate made any statement or shown any behavior that you are aware of that would cause you to believe he/she may be suicidal?"; "List any medical conditions the arrestee has that you are aware of."; "Which best describes arrestee's behavior with arresting/transporting officers… Cooperative, Non-Responsive, Verbally antagonistic, or Combative."; "Have you seen any indication that the arrestee suffers from any mental illness?" In addition to their responses to those questions, I recorded the charges filed against the arrestee.

The remainder of the data I collected was part of the narrative section of the reports. From this account of the incident by the officer, I recorded information given about the nature of the parties' relationship (i.e., if they were dating, married, lived together, or shared children). I also coded for violent actions of both the arrestee and victim. Similarly, if the officer revealed information about the injuries sustained by either party or their emotional state, it was noted. Information about property damage, alcohol or drug use or presence, caller information, whether there was a child witness, and finally, whether or not statements were taken from both parties was also collected and coded. In order to account for information that could not be expressed quantitatively, I qualitatively summarized the officers' accounts of the event and any quotes that appeared significant. In recording the injuries of the victim and offender, I determined "severe" to be an injury needed medical attention and "minor" to be anything else reported by the individual or noted by the officer.

Data Entry and Analysis

Data had to be collected within the abused women's shelter for this county (I was not allowed to take the police reports out of the shelter). I entered all of the quantitative codebook data into an excel file that I later transferred into SPSS, a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. I also entered the qualitative data, direct quotes and incidence summaries from the police reports, into the Excel file; although, they were not uploaded into SPSS. With the quantitative data I ran frequencies and cleaned the data. Next, I ran correlations and cross-tabulations with chi-square significance tests, primarily to exam if there were differences in outcomes based on the defendant gender, second to determine if there were differences based on the officer gender, and finally to explore possible differences based on whether the involved parties were of the same-sex or opposite-sex. Given the small size of the sample, these rarely reached significance, and sometimes when they reached significance the expected cell size was less than 5 for one or more of the cells; still, I report the rates as it is likely some of these would reach significance with even a slightly larger sample size.

Limitations

The most substantial limitation of this study is the size of the sample, which limited the possibility of finding significant relationships between variables. Another limitation is that the sample was collected from only one police department's reports of domestic violence related arrests. The cases of domestic violence that the Department sees might not be representative of the types of incidences that occur in other jurisdictions. However, this does provide more information on small cities that are studied less often. Also, the information was reliant upon officers' completion (or lack thereof) in reporting and reflects their opinions of what actually occurred in the incident. Finally, the police reports likely fail to capture whether violent

behaviors were used in self-defense, compounded by the fact that officers must make decisions based on what the parties tell them, which could be lies to cover their own criminal behaviors.

RESULTS

Sample Representativeness and Characteristics

The county in which the city the data used in this study is drawn published annual reports on domestic violence (DV) until 2010 (Libertun 2010). I compared the data collected in my sample to this report to determine how closely my sample of 100 arrests represented the official arrest sample. In 2010, the police department from which I collected my sample filed 419 formal domestic violence (DV) reports. Moreover, the number of DV arrests by this police department decreased by 13% from 2009 to 2010 (Libertun 2010). My sample of 100 reports filed in a 3-month period suggests that this downward trend of decreasing slightly is continuing. The gender representation of arrestees in my sample is fairly consistent with the official data: In 2010, 78.0% of arrestees were men (compared to 75.0% in my sample), and 22.0% were female (25.0% in my sample) (Libertun 2010).

Table 1 reports the demographic characteristics of my sample by arrestee gender. The arrestees in my sample were largely White. However, women arrestees were more homogenous, with 76.0% being White and 24.0% being Latina, compared to men arrestees who were 49.3% White, 42.3% Latino, and 8.5% African-American ($p \leq .05$). Similarly, when combining all categories other than White into a "person of color" category, 50.7% of men arrestees and only 24.0% of women were persons of color, thus men arrested for DV were more than twice as likely as the women arrested for this crime to be persons of color ($p \leq .05$). While it would have been ideal to consider complainants' race/ethnicity, this information was rarely reported in the 100 police reports in my sample.

To determine how the racial/ethnic representation of DV arrestees in my sample compared to the population of the city where my study took place, I compared the arrestees to U.S. Census data for this city. The Census Bureau data for the Western town in from which my data are drawn indicate that the residents are 69.3% non-Hispanic White, 24.6% Latino/a, 3.2% Asian-American, 1.0% American Indian/ Alaska native, 0.9% African-American, 0.1% Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 2.9% reporting two or more races (US Census Bureau 2011). When comparing my sample of DV arrestees to Census data by gender and race/ethnicity, several inconsistencies become apparent (see Table 1). First, among women, although Latinas' arrest rates are identical to their representation in the Census (24%), White women are slightly overrepresented among women arrestees (76.0% versus 69.3% in the Census data). Recall that among women arrestees in my sample, no other races/ethnicities than White and Latina were arrested. Second, White men (49.3%) were arrested far less often than their representation in the population (69.3%); Latino men (42.3%) were arrested at a rate almost twice their representation in the population (24.6%); African-American men (8.5%) were arrested nearly 10 times their representation in the population (0.9%); and Asian-American, American Indian/Alaskan native, Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, and multi-racial individuals were not represented within the sample (not arrested for DV in this Western city). The last observation could be a result of the differing methods of identifying race/ethnicity; the race/ethnicity of my sample was reported by the officer as opposed to the self-report method of the Census.

The ages of men (m = 34.57) and women (m = 32.60) arrestees were fairly similar and did not differ significantly, but the women arrestees' ages were more centrally distributed (less varied). Notably, the ages of the women arrestees' victims were also similarly less widely

distributed than the arrestee men's victims. In terms of the complainant-arrestee relationship (CAR), there were no statistically significant gender differences among the arrestees. However, some of the patterns are worth noting. First, arrested women (17.4%) were almost three times as likely as arrested men (6.3%) to be separated. When I made a dichotomous variable from CAR measuring whether the victim and offender were broken up or still together, although arrested women were slightly more likely to be broken-up (39.1%) compared to arrested men (35.0%), this difference was not significant (see Table 1).

Another arrestee gender difference that did not reach significance but is worth noting is that police officers were more than 2.5 times as likely to indicate that arrested men (13.4%) were suicidal than arrested women (4.8%) (see Table 3). Conversely, there was a tendency for women arrestees (14.3%) to be almost 2.5 times more likely than arrested men (3.2%) to be identified as mentally ill by officers on their police reports ($.05 < p \leq .10$).

Gendered Characteristics of Perpetration and Legal Consequences

Table 2 is a summary of the data on characteristics of the offense, as indicated from the police reports, by arrestee gender. Again, although there were few significant relationships, this is likely due to the small numbers, particularly for the women arrestees, and some of the patterns bear reporting. First, among the arrestees, men (14.0%) were 3 times more likely than women (4.0%) to be charged only with a protection order violation. In these instances, no violence occurred, but the arrestee violated some aspect of the protection order, usually by being within 100 yards of the victim or by contacting them either directly or indirectly. Although the difference was not significant, according to the police reports in my sample, arrested men (57.5%) were slightly more likely to be physically violent than arrested women (52.0%). However, among the arrestees in the sample, police reports indicated that men (23.3%) were

more than five times as likely as women (4.0%) to grab grabbed their victims, and women were almost 9 times as likely as men to scratch their victims, and both of these relationships were significant ($p \leq .05$ level).

There were some other gender patterns among the arrestees worth mentioning, although they did not reach significance in my relatively small sample: men (34.2%) were twice as likely as women to push (16.0%); women (24.0%) punched their victims more often than men (17.6%); women (16.0%) slapped more often than men (6.8%); and women (4.0%) kicked their victims more often than men (2.7%). Some types of violence were specific to men arrestees (never reported for women arrestees): strangling/choking the victim (9.6%), coercing the victim (6.8%), stalking the victim (5.5%), and, finally, poking the victim (1.4%). The only type of violence specific to women arrestees was biting the victim (4.0%). Threatening and using a weapon showed little difference between genders.

Although these differences did not reach significance, it is also worth noting some gender patterns in arrestees' behavior to the police (see Table 2). Women (90.5%) were recorded as being more cooperative than men (80.6%). Arrested men (11.9%) were more often verbally antagonistic than arrested women (4.8%) and were also more often combative (7.5%) than arrested women (4.8%). Although this did not reach significance, when women (37.5%) were arrested, the complainant was more often injured than when men were arrested (26.8%). Women arrestees (57.1%) were more often drinking during the incident than men arrestees (34.8%). In one case in which a female was arrested, she made comments suggesting that her partner was the primary aggressor and was confused after being placed in the officer's vehicle why the officer had not asked her what caused the damage to her car and why her partner was not the one arrested. In this instance, the officer did not take her statement as she was heavily intoxicated,

and the officer might have been misled by the man. The complainant's property was damaged more often when a woman (20.8%) than when a man (15.1%) was arrested. Finally, on average more charges were filed against male arrestees (m = 3.23) than against female arrestees (m = 2.80) (see Table 2). However, this was not a significant difference.

The qualitative analysis revealed another troubling trend that some female arrestees might have been victims of mis-arrest. One particular case showed how an officer might have made a mistake in determining the primary aggressor and arrested a female-victim. In the officer's narrative, the man and woman presented the conflicting stories:

> She claims: She grabbed his shirt, causing it to rip. He then pushed her away and "got on top of her and slapped her with open hands in the head and face about ten times. I did not see any injury on Jen's face to indicate this occurred." He then threw her down the stairs causing her to fall about four to five stairs, scraping her toe. "I saw a small piece of skin was lifted at the top joint of her second toe. She said she kicked him too, so that may have happened then, but she wasn't sure. She threw a flip-flop at him, and then he grabbed her and threw her up against the wall. Her head hit the wall hard, and she fell to the ground. There was bruising on her arms from where he had grabbed her. She looked for her phone to call 911 but couldn't find it. She asked him to call it so she could find it, but he refused. She threw bleach on his back and his clothes at this point. He grabbed her again and threw her down on the floor. He hit her again with an open hand."
>
> He claims: He went to the house to get his things. She grabbed him by the shirt causing it to rip, and he pushed her away. He went downstairs to get his things and pushed her away because she was in the way. He used one of the bins to keep her away from him. Once outside, she poured bleach on him and his clothes. He had some scratches on his stomach.

This situation resulted in only the woman being arrested, which is alarming as throwing someone against a wall could cause a great deal of injury. Also the man in this situation refusing to call the police is coercive. The injuries and stories seemed to corroborate the woman's claims that he did use violence against her.

Gendered Characteristics of Victimization

Keeping in mind that the sample included same-sex couples, we cannot assume that the following are differences in the genders of victim, but rather describe the characteristics of by victims of a certain gender of arrestee. Complainants of women arrestees (24.0%) were slightly more likely to be physically violent to the arrestee than the complainants of men arrestees (19.2%). However, the violence used by complainants of women arrestees was primarily limited to pushing (12.0%), slapping (12.0%), and grabbing (8.0%). The violence used by complainants of men arrestees was more varied and included pushing (8.2%), scratching (8.2%), slapping (2.7%), biting (2.7%), punching (2.7%), choking/strangling (1.4%), threatening (1.4%), using a weapon (1.4%), and kicking (1.2%) (see Table 2).

Same Sex Couples

There were 9 cases in which the involved parties were of the same sex (3 involving male couples and 6 involving female couples). Table 3 reports the demographic characteristics of my sample by same-sex and heterosexual couples. The only significant difference in terms of demographics between these two groups was that in cases where both parties were the same sex, the arrestee (66.7%) was more often a woman than in cases involving parties of the opposite sex (21.1%) (at the $p \leq .05$ level). Although not significant, no same-sex couples experienced a dual-arrest. The following findings were insignificant: arrestees in heterosexual disputes (45.3%) were more than twice as likely to be people of color compared to those in same-sex

disputes (22.2%); All of those arrested in same-sex disputes were "cooperative" with police, compared to 82.3% of heterosexual arrestees; Heterosexual couples (35.1%) were less likely to be broken-up than same-sex couples (50.0%); Finally, no arrestees in same-sex couples were reported as mentally ill by officers compared to 6.8% of arrestees in heterosexual couples.

Table 6 describes the differences in offense characteristics by the type of relationship (same-sex or heterosexual). Although not significant, the arrestees in heterosexual partnerships (58.4%) were more likely to be physically violent than arrestees in same-sex relationships (33.3%). The only significant difference in perpetration among same-sex couples was that no arrestees in same-sex relationships pushed their victims compared to 32.6% of arrestees in heterosexual relationships ($p \leq .05$). Although not significant, more than twice as many same-sex arrestees (11.1%) coerced their victims than heterosexual arrestees (4.5%). The following types of violence were specific to arrestees in heterosexual relationships (never reported for arrestees in same-sex relationships): pushing (32.6%), grabbing (20.2%), throwing something at the victim (10.1%), strangling/choking (7.9%), stalking (4.5%), scratching (4.5%), kicking (3.4%), biting (1.1%), and poking (1.1%) (see Table 6).

Similar to the differences in gender, patterns can be seen in arrestees' behavior to the police depending on kind of relationship they were in (same-sex versus heterosexual) (see Table 6). However, these differences did not reach significance. Arrestees in same-sex relationships (100.0%) were recorded as being more cooperative than arrestees in heterosexual relationships (82.3%). Arrestees in heterosexual relationships (11.4%) were more often verbally antagonistic than arrestees in same-sex relationships (0.0%) and were also more often combative (6.3%) than arrestees in same-sex relationships (0.0%). Although this did not reach significance, in same-sex relationships the complainant (44.4%) was more often injured than in heterosexual relationships

(27.9%). Arrestees in same-sex relationships (42.9%) were more often drinking during the incident than arrestees in heterosexual relationships (39.8%). The complainant's property was damaged more often in in heterosexual disputes (17.0%) than in same-sex ones (11.1%). Finally, on average more charges were filed against arrestees in heterosexual relationships (m = 3.11) than against arrestees in same-sex relationships (m = 2.78) (see Table 6), but the difference was not significant. The differences in victim behavior were not shown in this table as no significant differences were found.

Table 7 shows the differences between same-sex couples in which both parties were women and all other couples. In cases involving same-sex couples of which both parties were women (n = 6), complainants (66.7%) were more than twice as likely to be injured than in all other couples (27.0%) ($p \leq .05$). Although not significant, woman arrestees in same-sex cases (83.3%) were more often White than in other cases (55.1%), were less often Latina (16.7%) than in other cases (38.2%) and were never African-American compared to 6.7% in other cases. Similarly, they were less often persons of color (16.7%) than in other cases (44.9%). Women arrestees in same-sex relationships were less likely to show signs of suicidality or mental illness (0.0% and 0.0%) compared to other arrestees (12.2% and 6.5% respectively), but these differences were not significant.

Table 8 shows the differences between men arrestees in same-sex relationships and all other couples. Fewer men in same-sex relationships (0.0%) were physically violent than arrestees in all other types of relationships (57.9%), which showed a tendency towards significance ($.05 < p \leq .10$). Men in same-sex cases were slightly more often White (66.7%) than others (65.5%), slightly less often Latino (33.3%) compared to others (37.0%), and no same-sex men arrested were African-American compared to 6.5% of other arrestees. Similarly,

men in same-sex cases were less often persons of color (33.3%) than in other cases (43.5%). Although not significant, men in same-sex relationships more often demonstrated suicidality (33.3%) than others (10.7%) and less often reported as mentally ill (0.0% compared to 6.3%).

Officer Gender

In addition to arrestee gender, my analysis included officer gender. When coding for officer gender, I determined the gender from the officer's name, as officer gender is not readily available information. For gender-neutral names, I originally coded them as "missing" and later had a contact in the police department ask the chief if they could let me know the officer gender from the badge numbers on the police reports. The chief agreed. I then recoded those originally missing genders with the correct gender. The following results should be considered with caution as this method is recognizably flawed. While there were noticeable trends regarding arresting officer gender, there were only 17 cases in which the officer was a woman. This limited the results, offering many cell size problems and few statistically significant relationships between officer gender and other variables. Nevertheless, these results do yield some notable patterns that call for future study.

Although not significant, the first finding was that 13.7% of men officers reported "yes" to "Has inmate made any statement or shown any behavior that you are aware of that would cause you to believe he/she may be suicidal?" while no women officers reported yes to this question. With a tendency toward significance, more men officers (14.6%) charged arrestees with other protection order violations compared to women officers (0.0%). The arrestees were more often cooperative with men officers (84.7%) than with women officers (75.0%) (not significant).

Surprisingly, several patterns were found between the relationship status of the couple and officer gender. Significant at a $p \leq .05$ level, couples were more likely to be married when the arresting officer was a man (24.3%) compared to when the officer was a woman (0.0%). The couples were more often dating when the officer was a woman (56.2%) compared to when the officer was a man (34.3%) ($.05 < p \leq .10$). The following differences were not significant: When the officer was a man, couples were more often divorced (5.7% compared to 0.0%), separated (10.1% compared to 5.9%), cohabitating (42.4% compared to 31.2%), ex-cohabitating (32.1% compared to 15.4%), or shared children (43.1% compared to 41.2%); When the officer was a woman, couples were more often ex-dating (31.2% compared to 28.4%) or common-law married (11.8% compared to 2.9%). Another difference in couples' relationship status was that they were slightly more often broken-up when the arresting officer was a man (36.4%) compared to when the officer was a woman (31.2%), but this difference was also not significant. The final difference when looking at officer's gender was that the complainant's property was damaged more often when the arresting officer was a woman (41.2%) than when it was a man (11.4%) ($p \leq .05$).

Mental Illness

One alarming aspect of the results was the officers' inability to recognize mental illness. When officers reported that inmate showed signs of suicidality, they noted that they did not see any sign that the individual suffered from a mental illness 77.8% of the time ($.05 < p \leq .10$). This pattern was echoed in the qualitative analysis. In one case, the complainant stated that the arrestee had a substance abuse problem and made suicidal threats, and still the officer said that they saw no signs of mental illness in the arrestee. In another narrative, the officer quoted the arrestee saying, "If you (complainant) leave, I am going to f**king kill myself." However, the

officer checked the box indicating that the arrestee showed no signs of suicidality. In another example, the complainant stated in the narrative:

> Approximately a half of year ago [arrestee] had injured himself at work and has been struggling with ongoing back problems. Since [arrestee] was laid off he has been self medicating with various prescription medications. Along with [arrestee]'s abuse of medications his moods and behavior have been worsening and [complainant] believes he was becoming more depressed. He has not made any direct comments about wanting to commit suicide, but [complainant] has feared for some time that she might find him dead one morning from an intentional overdose.

The officer indicated in the report that the arrestee had expressed suicidality but yet again failed to recognize possible mental illness in this instance.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The general findings of my study support the idea that IPV is gendered. Specifically, consistent with the feminist view of IPV, 75.0% of arrestees were men and 25.0% were women. This signifies that in 75.0% of the cases, officers viewed a man as the primary aggressor in the situation. Using data from the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS), Hirschel et. al found that national arrest rates for IPV are 82.3% for men and 17.7% for women (2007). This shows that more women were affected by IPV arrests in the current study. It could be the case that some of the women arrestees were actually not the primary aggressors in the relationship, as was evidence by several qualitative findings. Henning, Renauer, and Holdford found that only 9.0% of women arrested for IPV were actually the primary aggressors in the relationship (2006). This troubling finding suggests that perhaps mandatory arrest policies, which sometimes result in victim-arrests, are not the most effective way for society to protect victims of IPV. While

changing the mandatory arrest policies might propose benefits in the far future, a more short-term approach to reducing victim-arrest could be for officers to use risk assessment tactics. These tactics allow officers to look at criminal histories, which might reduce the frequency of which officers mistake women as the primary aggressors. Also, further officer education is suggested involving the nature of coercive tactics used by aggressors, for example how to determine if the aggressor is attempting to have their victim arrested and how to identify physically violent self-defense tactics of victims.

Consistent with the study conducted by Melton and Belknap, there was a high level of similarity in IPV perpetration and victimization by gender, but there were also several important differences (2003). Two significant differences revealed in this study were that men are more likely to grab their victims, while women are more likely to scratch their victims. While not significant, men arrestees were slightly more likely to be physically violent. Some of the violent acts specific to men (i.e., strangling/choking, coercing the victim, and stalking) were more severe than types shared by both genders, which might cause more fear in their victims. Several characteristics of strangulation should be considered to explore how it differs in severity from other forms of violence. Strangulation can result in death, difficulty breathing, vomiting, stroke, nightmares, depression, insomnia, loss of consciousness, and difficulty swallowing, demonstrating that it is one of the most serious forms of physical violence in IPV (Joshi 2012; Sheilds et. al 2010). Consistent with the current study, Archer also found that men were more likely to choke or strangle their victims (2002). The fact that this type of severe violence was only employed by men is consistent with studies that have found that victims of male aggressors feel more threatened by IPV than victims of female aggressors (Henning and Feder 2004; Melton and Belknap 2003). There were fairly equal rates of men and women using weapons and making

threats in this study. Both of these findings are inconsistent with a previous finding that men more commonly make threats and women use a weapon more frequently, which was theorized as an attempt to "level the playing field" (Melton and Belknap 2003). Men arrestees also had more charges on average than women arrestees, supporting the idea that these situations were more serious.

Women arrestees being more cooperative with police than men arrestees might be due to women-victims who were arrested assuming that the officer would see them as the victim. It could also be that men arrestees were still experiencing the strong anger that led to the perpetration of violence and caused fear in their victims. Women arrestees more frequently consuming alcohol during the incident might show how a man could coerce the officer into arresting the woman, and literature has shown that men aggressors sometimes call the police with the intention of having their victim arrested (Miller 2003). One study found that when only the victim was drinking, the officer was nearly two times less likely to arrest the offender (Hirschel and Hutchison 2010). The authors claimed this was because the victim was considered to be an unreliable witness and the officer was less likely to accept the victim's account of the event (Hirschel and Hutchison 2010). I theorize that a similar trend is true for my study, but that when the female arrestee is drinking, the officer is more likely to believe the man complainant's version of events. The finding that the victim's property was more often damaged during an incident in which a woman was arrested is important, but property damage does not necessary cause injury to or fear in a victim.

The data from this study show that more males are arrested for solely violating a protection order. This is consistent with Tjaden and Thoennes who reported that female victims are more likely to obtain a protection order against their partner than male victims (2000). It is

also consistent with a similar study by Henning and Feder, which found that more male arrestees violated existing protection orders during DV arrests (2004). This could be due to women victims being more likely to fear their assailant and being more motivated to seek this type of legal protection. However, in some of these cases in this study the complainant initiated the contact, which sheds light to another side of this argument that men are discouraged from help seeking by cultural norms. Future research should investigate the gendered differences in obtaining protection orders and the circumstances of PO violations. Agencies should work to reduce the stigma against men seeking protection. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that many women complainants had previously sought legal protection out of fear for their health and safety, implying that they believed the abuse was likely to continue.

The finding that officers more often identified women arrestees as mentally ill could be due to women showing more emotions in front of officers or being more frequently diagnosed with mental illnesses. It could also suggest that officers were more likely to arrest a female if they believed she was mentally ill. This finding is inconsistent with one study that found that officers were not more likely to arrest the mentally ill in IPV situations (Finn and Stalans 2002). One interesting social norm to consider when looking at these two findings is the level of acceptance of emotionally expressive men and how this might alter how they act in front of authority figures such police officers. Men arrestees more frequently showed suicidal signs in this study. This could either suggest that more male aggressors experience suicidal thoughts or that they are more likely to make these types of comments in front of officers. It could be yet another form of coercive control over their victim, making them feel forced to stay with the man. Officers should consider the context of suicidal threats when determining the primary aggressor. Another possible way to improve how officers handle situations involving the mentally ill is to

implement Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT), which scholars and practitioners have suggested improves officers' interactions with those experiencing mental illness, diverting them from the criminal justice system and instead directing them to mental health services (Watson et. al 2008). The current study supports the notion that some measure such as the use of CIT could help to improve this problem within the legal system.

My findings also show that there are inequalities in terms of how different races are affected by DV-related arrests. Male minorities were disproportionately affected by DV arrests, while females were more or less arrested at rates consistent with the demographics of the city where the study was conducted. While there is no obvious explanation for this difference, perhaps it could be that the majority of officers were white men and subconsciously did not want to arrest other white men or that victims of men of color are more likely to call the police. More research is suggested to explore this trend and possible explanations.

When considering police involvement with same-sex couples experiencing IPV, several trends were exposed. Same-sex couples involved in DV arrests were more likely to be women in this study. This could indicate that lesbians are more often experience IPV or that officers more frequently recognize their disputes as "domestic violence" compared to disputes involving gay men. One study showed that in 16.0% of police interactions with LGBTQ survivors of IPV, officers failed to classify the situation as IPV (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012). This same study indicated that more LGBTQ women had police classify their incidents as domestic violence cases. The alternative explanation is that lesbians experience IPV at higher rates than gay men. Messinger proposes that the social constructionist gender theory can be used to see how sexual orientation affects the versions of gendered norms performed by an individual, suggesting that lesbians might prescribe to more masculine social roles, and men are more often

socialized to be violent (Messinger 2010). The fact that no dual-arrests in this study involved same-sex couples is inconsistent with the literature, but this itself is surprising given that the literature also states that it is more difficult for the officer to distinguish the primary aggressor among this population (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012). Officers should be encouraged to more frequently ask about the nature of same sex individuals' relationships in an attempt to minimize the misclassification of same-sex IPV as another kind of assault.

Some other patterns within the same-sex subset of this sample was within that same-sex partners, the arrestee is more likely to be physically violent, to push their victim, to use coercion, to be cooperative with the police, to be drinking, and to damage the victim's property. The complainant was more likely to be injured in same-sex cases, which was statistically significant for lesbian arrestees. This is consistent with figures from a national survey, which demonstrated lesbians were almost 2 times as likely to experience physical violence (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs 2012). This finding might show that officers are less likely to arrest in same-sex IPV unless there is an injury, supporting the idea that mandatory arrest laws are not helping this sub-set of the population as much as others.

Patterns regarding officer gender emerged in this study, but should be considered within a large sample, as there were few women officers in the current sample. Nevertheless, the findings demonstrated that when the arresting officer was a woman, the complainant's property was more frequently damaged. When the arresting officer was a man, the arrestee was more likely to only receive a PO violation charge and the couple was more likely to be married. Future research could show what types of offenses officers of different gender view as more serious. While Novak et. al demonstrated that officer gender has little effect on arrest decisions, this research did not solely consider IPV arrests (2011). However, this study did find that women officers

were more likely to arrest when their supervisors were present and less likely when officer peers were present (Novak et al. 2011). My finding that suggested arrestees are more cooperative with men officers could show that arrestees view men's authority as superior to that of women. Past research has demonstrated that women officers are more likely to provide support to citizens involved in IPV but that men and women are equally likely to use controlling actions (Sun 2007). The current study did not have access to information to corroborate or dispute these findings.

In sum, the results of my study indicate that certain subgroups of the population (specifically Latino males, African-American males, and women in same-sex relationships) are disproportionately arrested for domestic violence. Although my data cannot address whether they "happen" to be more likely to be intimate partner abusers whose cases result in a police response, this seems unlikely. There are several important differences in perpetration and victimization by gender and sexual identity, several of which pose greater threat to women's safety. Finally, there is a possibility of improvement in how officers handle individuals with evident mental illness. While the sample size of my study limits the conclusions that can be inferred, future research is needed to improve how officers use their "limited" discretion to handle IPV calls and mental illness. Future research should attempt to determine if the above subgroups of the population are more often arrested on national levels and why that is the case. The effectiveness of mandatory arrest laws should be reexamined to determine how to minimize the incidence of victim-arrests and discretionary police actions that harm men of color.

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TABLE 1: Demographic Characteristics by Arrestee Gender (N = 100)

Variable	Men Arrestees (N = 75) N	%	(n)	Women Arrestees (N = 25) N	%	(n)	Test Stat.
Complainant Sex/Gender	74			25			55.96***
Man		4.1	(3)		76.0	(19)	
Woman		95.9	(71)		24.0	(6)	
Arrestee Race/Ethnicity	71			25			6.10*[a]
White		49.3	(35)		76.0	(19)	
Latino/a		42.3	(30)		24.0	(6)	
African-American		8.5	(6)		0.0	(0)	
Arrestee Person of Color?	71			25			5.36*
Yes		50.7	(36)		24.0	(6)	
No		49.3	(35)		76.0	(19)	
Arrestee Age	75			25			2.13
19-24		28.0	(21)		24.0	(6)	
25-39		36.0	(27)		52.0	(13)	
40+		36.0	(27)		24.0	(6)	
Complainant Age	71			20			0.74
19-24		28.2	(20)		20.0	(4)	
25-39		45.1	(32)		55.0	(11)	
40+		26.8	(19)		25.0	(5)	
Complainant-Arrestee Relationship[b]							
Dating	61	36.1	(22)	23	43.5	(10)	0.39
Ex-Dating	61	27.9	(17)	23	34.8	(8)	0.38
Married	65	21.5	(14)	23	13.0	(13)	0.79
Divorced	65	4.6	(3)	23	4.3	(1)	0.00
Separated	64	6.3	(4)	23	17.4	(4)	2.52
Cohabitating	56	42.9	(24)	20	30.0	(6)	1.02
Ex-Cohabitating	49	26.5	(13)	18	33.3	(6)	0.30
Common-law Married	65	4.6	(3)	23	4.3	(1)	0.00
Shared Children	60	43.3	(26)	23	39.1	(9)	0.12
Was Couple Broken-Up?[c]	60			23			0.12
Yes		35.0	(21)		39.1	(9)	
No		65.0	(39)		60.9	(14)	
Other Characteristics[b]							
Arrestee Suicidal	67	13.4	(9)	21	4.8	(1)	1.19
Arrestee Mentally Ill	62	3.2		21	14.3		3.39[+]

[+] Tendency toward significance .05 < p ≤ .10, *p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01, *** p ≤ .001.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.
[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.
[c] The variable was made by combining ex-dating, divorced, separated, or ex-cohabitating as "yes," and combining dating, married and common-law as "no."

TABLE 2: Offense Characteristics by Arrestee Gender (N = 100)

	Men Arrestees (N = 75)			Women Arrestees (N = 25)			Test Stat.
Variable	N	%	(n)	N	%	(n)	
Offense was only Prot. Order Viol.	75			25			2.02
Yes		14.7	(11)		4.0	(1)	
No		85.3	(64)		96.0	(24)	
Arrestee was Physically Violent	73			25			0.23
Yes		57.5	(42)		52.0	(13)	
No		42.5	(31)		48.0	(12)	
Complainant was Physically Violent	73			25			0.27
Yes		19.2	(14)		24.0	(6)	
No		80.8	(59)		76.0	(19)	
Arrestee Behavior[a]							
Pushed	73	34.2	(25)	25	16.0	(4)	2.98
Punched	74	17.6	(13)	25	24.0	(6)	0.50
Grabbed	73	23.3	(17)	25	4.0	(1)	4.62*[b]
Threatened	73	11.0	(8)	25	12.0	(3)	0.02
Slapped	73	6.8	(5)	25	16.0	(4)	1.87
Threw Something at	73	8.2	(6)	25	12.0	(3)	0.32
Used a Weapon	73	8.2	(6)	25	8.0	(2)	0.00
Strangled/Choked	73	9.6	(7)	25	0.0	(0)	2.58
Coerced	73	6.8	(5)	25	0.0	(0)	1.80
Stalked	73	5.5	(4)	25	0.0	(0)	1.43
Scratched	73	1.4	(1)	25	12.0	(3)	5.38*[b]
Kicked	73	2.7	(2)	25	4.0	(1)	0.10
Bit	73	0.0	(0)	25	4.0	(1)	2.95
Poked	73	1.4	(1)	25	0.0	(0)	0.35
Complainant Behavior[a]							
Pushed	73	8.2	(6)	25	12.0	(3)	0.32
Scratched	73	8.2	(6)	25	0.0	(0)	2.19
Slapped	73	2.7	(2)	25	12.0	(3)	3.30
Grabbed	73	0.0	(0)	25	8.0	(2)	5.96+[b]
Bit	73	2.7	(2)	25	0.0	(0)	0.67
Punched	74	2.7	(2)	25	0.0	(0)	0.69
Strangled/Choked	73	1.4	(1)	25	0.0	(0)	0.35
Kicked	73	1.2	(1)	25	0.0	(0)	0.35
Threatened	72	1.4	(1)	25	0.0	(0)	0.35
Used a Weapon	73	1.4	(1)	25	0.0	(0)	0.35

+ Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, *$p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.
[a]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.

[b]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.

TABLE 2: Offense Characteristics by Arrestee Gender (N = 100)

(Continued)

	Men Arrestees (N = 75)			Women Arrestees (N = 25)			Test Stat.
Variable	N	%	(n)	N	%	(n)	
Behavior Towards Police	67			21			1.17
Cooperative		80.6	(54)		90.5	(19)	
Verbally Antagonistic		11.9	(8)		4.8	(1)	
Combative		7.5	(5)		4.8	(1)	
Arrestee was Cooperative	67	80.6	(54)	21	90.5	(19)	1.10
Complainant Injured	71	26.8	(19)	24	37.5	(9)	1.00
Arrestee Drinking	69	34.8	(24)	21	57.1	(12)	3.35
Complainant's Property Damaged	73	15.1	(11)	24	20.8	(5)	0.44
Number of Charges	75			25			12.70
1		16.0	(12)		8.0	(2)	
2		21.3	(16)		28.0	(12)	
3		30.7	(23)		24.0	(6)	
4		10.7	(8)		12.0	(3)	
5		8.0	(6)		4.0	(1)	
6		5.3	(4)		0.0	(0)	
7		6.7	(5)		0.0	(0)	
8		1.3	(1)		0.0	(0)	
9		0.0	(0)		4.0	(1)	

[+] Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, $*p \leq .05$, $** p \leq .01$, $*** p \leq .001$.
[a]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.
[b]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.

TABLE 3: Demographic Characteristics by Opposite-Sex or Same-Sex Couples (N = 99)

Variable	Heterosexual Couples (N = 90) N	%	(n)	Same-Sex Couples (N = 9) N	%	(n)	Test Stat.
Complainant Sex/Gender	90			9			9.00*[a]
Man		78.9	(71)		33.3	(3)	
Woman		21.1	(19)		66.7	(6)	
Arrestee Race/Ethnicity	86			9			1.97
White		54.7	(47)		77.8	(7)	
Latino/a		38.4	(33)		22.2	(2)	
African-American		7.0	(6)		0.0	(0)	
Arrestee Person of Color?	86			9			1.78
Yes		45.3	(39)		22.2	(2)	
No		54.7	(47)		77.8	(7)	
Arrestee Age	90			9			0.10
19-24		26.7	(24)		22.2	(2)	
25-39		40.0	(36)		44.4	(4)	
40+		33.3	(30)		33.3	(3)	
Complainant Age	83			8			0.03
19-24		26.5	(22)		25.0	(2)	
25-39		47.0	(39)		50.0	(4)	
40+		26.5	(22)		25.0	(2)	
Complainant- Arrestee Relationship[b]							
Dating	77	39.0	(30)	7	28.6	(2)	0.29
Ex-Dating	77	28.6	(22)	7	42.9	(3)	0.63
Married	81	19.8	(16)	7	14.3	(1)	0.12
Divorced	81	4.9	(4)	7	0.0	(0)	0.36
Separated	80	8.8	(7)	7	14.3	(1)	0.24
Cohabitating	70	40.0	(28)	6	33.3	(2)	0.10
Ex-Cohabitating	63	28.6	(18)	4	25.0	(1)	0.02
Common-law Married	81	4.9	(4)	7	0.0	(0)	0.36
Shared Children	76	43.4	(33)	7	28.6	(2)	0.58
Was Couple Broken-Up?[c]	77			6			0.54
Yes		35.1	(27)		50.0	(3)	
No		64.9	(50)		50.0	(3)	
Other Characteristics[b]							
Arrestee Suicidal	79	11.4	(9)	8	12.5	(1)	0.01
Arrestee Mentally Ill	74	6.8	(5)	8	0.0	(0)	0.58

[+] Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, *$p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.
[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the “yes” answers.

[c] The variable was made by combining ex-dating, divorced, separated, or ex-cohabitating as "yes," and combining dating, married and common-law as "no."

TABLE 4: Offense Characteristics by Same-Sex or Different-Sex Couples (N = 99)

Variable	Heterosexual Couples (N = 90)			Same-Sex Couples (N = 9)			Test Stat.
	N	%	(n)	N	%	(n)	
Offense was only Prot. Order Viol.	90			9			0.01
Yes		12.2	(11)		11.1	(1)	
No		87.8	(79)		88.9	(8)	
Arrestee was Physically Violent	89			9			2.09
Yes		58.4	(52)		33.3	(3)	
No		41.6	(37)		66.7	(6)	
Complainant was Physically Violent	89			9			0.02
Yes		20.2	(18)		22.2	(2)	
No		79.8	(71)		77.8	(7)	
Arrestee Behavior[a]							
Pushed	89	32.6	(29)	9	0.0	(0)	4.17*[a]
Punched	89	18.0	(16)	9	22.2	(2)	0.10
Grabbed	89	20.2	(18)	9	0.0	(0)	2.23
Threatened	89	11.2	(10)	9	11.1	(1)	0.00
Slapped	89	9.0	(8)	9	11.1	(1)	0.04
Threw Something at	89	10.1	(9)	9	0.0	(0)	1.00
Used a Weapon	89	7.9	(7)	9	11.1	(1)	0.12
Strangled/Choked	89	7.9	(7)	9	0.0	(0)	0.76
Coerced	89	4.5	(4)	9	11.1	(1)	0.74
Stalked	89	4.5	(4)	9	0.0	(0)	0.42
Scratched	89	4.5	(4)	9	0.0	(0)	0.42
Kicked	89	3.4	(3)	9	0.0	(0)	0.31
Bit	89	1.1	(1)	9	0.0	(0)	0.10
Poked	89	1.1	(1)	9	0.0	(0)	0.10
Behavior Towards Police	79			8			1.69
Cooperative		82.3	(65)		100.0	(8)	
Verbally Antagonistic		11.4	(9)		0.0	(0)	
Combative		6.3	(5)		0.0	(0)	
Arrestee was Cooperative	79	82.3	(65)	8	100.0	(0)	1.69
Complainant Injured	86	27.9	(24)	9	44.4	(4)	1.07
Arrestee Drinking	83	39.8	(33)	7	42.9	(3)	0.03
Complainant's Property Damaged	88	17.0	(15)	9	11.1	(1)	0.21

[+] Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, *$p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.
[a] Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.

[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.

TABLE 4: Offense Characteristics by Same-Sex or Different-Sex Couples (N = 99)

(Continued)

	Heterosexual Couples (N = 90)			Same-Sex Couples (N = 9)			Test Stat.
Variable	N	%	(n)	N	%	(n)	
Number of Charges	90			9			1.44
1		14.4	(13)		11.1	(1)	
2		27.8	(25)		33.3	(3)	
3		28.9	(26)		33.3	(3)	
4		11.1	(10)		11.1	(1)	
5		6.7	(6)		11.1	(1)	
6		4.4	(4)		0.0	(0)	
7		4.4	(4)		0.0	(0)	
8		1.1	(1)		0.0	(0)	
9		1.1	(1)		0.0	(0)	

[+] Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, $*p \leq .05$, $** \ p \leq .01$, $*** \ p \leq .001$.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.
[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.

TABLE 5: Differences Between Lesbian Couples and Other Couples (N = 100)

	Other Couples (N = 94)			Lesbian Couples (N = 6)			Test Stat.
Variable	N	%	(n)	N	%	(n)	
Complainant Injured	89	27.0	(24)	6	66.7	(4)	4.26*[a]
Arrestee Race/Ethnicity	89			6			1.90
White		55.1	(49)		83.3	(5)	
Latino/a		38.2	(34)		16.7	(1)	
African-American		6.7	(6)		0.0	(0)	
Arrestee Person of Color?	89			6			1.83
Yes		44.9	(40)		16.7	(1)	
No		55.1	(49)		83.3	(5)	
Other Characteristics[b]							
Arrestee Suicidal	82	12.2	(10)	5	0.0	(0)	0.70
Arrestee Mentally Ill	77	6.5	(5)	5	0.0	(0)	0.35

[+] Tendency toward significance .05 < p ≤ .10, *p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01, *** p ≤ .001.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.
[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.

TABLE 6: Differences Between Gay Couples and Other Couples (N = 100)

Variable	Other Couples (N = 97) N	%	(n)	Gay Couples (N = 3) N	%	(n)	Test Stat.
Arrestee Physically Violent	95	57.9	(55)	3	0.0	(0)	3.96[+a]
Arrestee Race/Ethnicity	92			3			0.26
White		56.5	(52)		66.7	(2)	
Latino/a		37.0	(34)		33.3	(1)	
African-American		6.5	(6)		0.0	(0)	
Arrestee Person of Color?	92			3			0.12
Yes		43.5	(40)		33.3	(1)	
No		56.5	(52)		66.7	(2)	
Other Characteristics[b]							
Arrestee Suicidal	84	10.7	(9)	3	33.3	(1)	1.46
Arrestee Mentally Ill	79	6.3	(5)	3	0.0	(0)	0.20

[+] Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, $*p \leq .05$, $** p \leq .01$, $*** p \leq .001$.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.
[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.

TABLE 7: Arrest Report Characteristics by Officer Gender (N = 99)

Variable	Policemen (N = 82) N	%	(n)	Policewomen (N = 17) N	%	(n)	Test Stat.
Arrestee Showed Suicidality	73			15			2.32
Yes		13.7	(10)		0.0	(0)	
No		86.3	(63)		100.0	(15)	
Charged Only with PO Violation	82			17			2.83[+a]
Yes		14.6	(12)		0.0	(0)	
No		85.4	(70)		100.0	(17)	
Arrestee was Cooperative	72	84.7	(61)	16	75.0	(12)	0.88
Complainant- Arrestee Relationship[b]							
Dating	67	34.3	(23)	16	56.2	(9)	2.62[+]
Ex-Dating	67	28.4	(19)	16	31.2	(5)	0.05
Married	70	24.3	(17)	17	0.0	(0)	5.13*[a]
Divorced	70	5.7	(4)	17	0.0	(0)	1.02
Separated	69	10.1	(7)	17	5.9	(1)	0.29
Cohabitating	59	42.4	(25)	5	31.2	(5)	0.65
Ex-Cohabitating	53	32.1	(17)	13	15.4	(2)	1.42
Common-law Married	70	2.9	(2)	17	11.8	(2)	2.47
Shared Children	65	43.1	(28)	17	41.2	(7)	0.02
Was Couple Broken-Up?[c]	66			16			0.15
Yes		36.4	(24)		31.2	(5)	
No		63.6	(42)		68.8	(11)	
Complainant's Property Damaged	79	11.4	(79)	17	41.2	(7)	8.94*[a]

[+] Tendency toward significance .05 < p ≤ .10, *p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01, *** p ≤ .001.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.
[b]The categories below are individual dichotomous variables, with yes/no option. The percentages reported are the "yes" answers.
[c] The variable was made by combining ex-dating, divorced, separated, or ex-cohabitating as "yes," and combining dating, married and common-law as "no."

TABLE 8: Mental Illness Recognition by Officer
(N = 100)

Variable	Suicidal (N = 9) N	%	(n)	Not Suicidal (N = 73) N	%	(n)	Test Stat.
Arrestee Mentally Ill	9			73			4.59[+a]
Yes		22.2	(2)		4.1	(3)	
No		77.8	(7)		95.9	(70)	

[+] Tendency toward significance $.05 < p \leq .10$, $*p \leq .05$, $** \ p \leq .01$, $*** \ p \leq .001$.
[a]Should be interpreted with caution because 1 or more cells had expected frequencies of less than 5.