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Victim Offender Overlap in Intimate Partner Violence

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ABSTRACT

ERIN A. MARSH

Victim Offender Overlap in Intimate Partner Violence
(Under the direction of DR. LISA MUFTIC)

Victim offender overlap is a relatively new area of research with most studies having focused on applying this concept to the study of assault and homicide. Research in intimate partner violence has found that there exists a group of victim offenders or individuals who are involved in initiating, sustaining, and engaging in intimate partner violence as both victims and offenders (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Steinmetz, 1980). This Master's thesis explored the concept of victim offender overlap in connection to intimate partner violence (IPV). Bivariate analyses were conducted using Paul C. Friday, Vivian Lord, M. Lyn Exum, and Jennifer L. Hartman's (2003-2005) data, *Evaluating the Impact of a Specialized Domestic Violence Police Unit in Charlotte, North Carolina*. The findings suggest that there is a separate group of individuals involved in intimate partner violence who are both victims and offenders. Furthermore, the three groups (offenders only of IPV, victims only of IPV, and victim/offenders of IPV) were found to be different across gender, past criminal involvement, and future criminal activity as predicted. Suggestions for future research and the implications of the findings are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: victim offender overlap, intimate partner violence, domestic violence

VICTIM OFFENDER OVERLAP IN INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

By

ERIN A. MARSH

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Requirements for the Degree

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2011

VICTIM OFFENDER OVERLAP IN INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

By

ERIN A. MARSH

Approved:

Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

____ July 7, 2011 _____
Date

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my Master's Thesis to my family. This is for my Mom and Dad for their love and support and my Grandparents for their encouragement and faith. Also to my little brother who continues to inspire me. Without your love, I would not be here today. Thank you for always being there for me. Love you all.

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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Student's Name: _____ Erin A. Marsh _____

Street Address: _____ 24 Marlboro Court _____

City, State, and Zip Code: _____ Newnan, Georgia 30265 _____

The Chair of the committee for this thesis is:

Professor's Name: _____ Dr. Lisa Muftic _____

Department: _____ Criminal Justice _____

College: _____ Andrew Young School of Policy Studies _____

Georgia State University
P. O. Box 4018
Atlanta, Georgia 30302-4018

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VITA

Erin A. Marsh
24 Marlboro Court
Newnan, Georgia 30265
Phone: (770) 251-2243
erinmarsh322@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA 2004-2008
Bachelor of Science, August 2008
Major: Psychology
Certificate: Sociology

Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 2009-2011
Masters of Science, August 2011
Major: Criminal Justice

WORK EXPERIENCE

Stone and Associates, Smyrna, GA May 2007-July 2007
Intern

Georgia Institute of Technology Atlanta, GA August 2006-August 2008
Research Assistant

Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA August 2009-present
Graduate Research Assistant

Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA August 2010-present
Graduate Teaching Assistant

HONORS AND PUBLICATIONS

Presented at Southern Criminal Justice Conference September 2010
Modeling Attitudes about Domestic Violence

Presented at Academy of Justice Sciences Conference March 2011
College Students Attitudes towards Prostitution

College Students Attitudes towards Prostitution Publication Pending
Co-written paper with Dr. Brian Payne and Jennifer Cruze

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV), also known as domestic violence, is willful violence, either physical assault, battery, sexual assault, or other abusive behavior, perpetrated by an intimate partner towards another (Domestic Violence Facts, 2007). IPV is a national problem which can lead to physical injury, psychological trauma, and even death. In fact it is estimated that almost a third of all female homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner (FBI, 2001). This epidemic is not bound by age, race, economic status, religion, or educational background. According to Tjaden and Thoennes (2000), one in four women will experience IPV in their lifetime. In fact, each year almost 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by their intimate partner (CDC, 2003). IPV is not only a problem for women, but men as well. Research indicates that one in seven men will be the victims of IPV in their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). While 85% of IPV victims are women, 15% of the victims are males and their victimization is largely ignored in policy and research.

One of the most important national concerns about IPV is the costs. IPV can cost the criminal justice system, health care system, and policy makers a significant amount. However, states are taking new innovative approaches to prevent and address IPV in fact, domestic violence courts and domestic violence police units are new specialized ways of approaching the IPV problem. Georgia specifically has faced numerous problems with IPV and still ranks as one of the most states with incidents of men killing their female intimate partners. It is important for researchers to study IPV now as economic problems may increase the amount of IPV states are faced with (Toone, 2010). However, polices such as mandatory arrest laws have increased the

number of people arrested for IPV, specifically women, therefore, the criminal justice system faces increased costs for IPV cases. The women who are arrested for IPV due to mandatory arrest procedures may face unique challenges that also increase the costs and demands on the criminal justice system.

Costs of IPV

IPV not only affects the victims of this crime, but has a huge impact on both the medical system and criminal justice system. IPV has a significant economic impact on the nation (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). The Center for Disease Control (2003) found that more than 18.5 million mental health visits each year are due to IPV and the cost of IPV is roughly \$5.8 billion a year (not including criminal justice system costs). Medical and mental health costs alone account for four billion of those expenditures. This number jumped significantly in 2007 when the CDC again investigated the costs of IPV. There were 16,800 homicides and 2.2 million medically treated injuries each year due to IPV. IPV can cause victims to miss work and it can be costly for employers specifically loss of productivity from IPV is equivalent to losing almost 8 million days of paid work and more than 32,000 full time jobs (CDC, 2003). This is nothing compared to the strain that IPV puts on the criminal justice system.

It has been difficult for researchers to determine the exact cost of IPV in the criminal justice system. The police resources allocated to IPV differ by state and county. Some states have specific units of the court system and/or police units that deal exclusively with IPV. Due to mandatory arrest laws that have been passed in the majority of states, police agencies must arrest and hold someone when answering a domestic violence call. This is an additional cost on the criminal justice system. The court system also expends a great deal of resources on adjudicating those accused of IPV. Smith, Durose, and Langan (2008) found that defendants who were

charged with felony domestic violence were prosecuted, convicted, and incarcerated at rates equal to or higher than other felony defendants. They also found that domestic violence assault defendants were less likely to gain pretrial release than other felony assault defendants. This may be due to the reluctance of police officers and the court system to release IPV offenders who may come into contact with the victims of their assaults. However, it does mean that additional resources are spent on holding felony domestic violence offenders in the criminal justice system than other felony defendants.

State Responses to IPV

While IPV is addressed at the national level through conferences and publications, the majority of the prevention and response to IPV falls to the states. States handle domestic violence in very different ways. For example, Delaware, Montana, and South Carolina all exclude same sex relationships in their domestic violence laws. One state that has done a recent comprehensive study of IPV in their state is California. Zahnd, Grant, Aydin, Chia, and Padilla-Frausto (2010) found that 3.7 million, or 1 in 6 adults in California report experiencing IPV as an adult. This study found that females are the prominent victims of IPV; however, there were a noteworthy number of males who were also physically or sexually victimized in intimate relationships. Other important findings from this study were that American Indian/Alaska Natives were more likely to be victims of IPV and also foreign born Latinos and Asians were more likely to be victims of IPV than American born Latinos and Asians. This might have to do with cultural differences that are brought from the home country about women and violence towards them. Policy issues are important to this study because based on these findings it is important to have shelters that can address victims' unique cultural issues and the language barrier between the victims and service providers. California must also modify their criminal

justice system to address the needs of victims from a variety of countries and cultures. It may be a deterrent for these victims to report crimes if the police and courts cannot understand them.

Another state that has unique problems and solutions to IPV is Colorado. Colorado has a Domestic Abuse Assistance Program (DAAP) which keeps track of the domestic violence programs funded by it. For example, in 2006 they were able to track the number of people who received shelter, which amounted to 5,601 women and children. They also noted that a major difference in that year from past years is that while the number of individuals requesting shelter had dropped, the victims were asking to stay longer at the shelters as there was a lack of available housing in a number of the communities (State of Colorado Department of Human Services, 2006). In 2006, the National Network Against Domestic Violence (NNEDV) performed a census for programs across the country and 62% of the domestic violence programs participated. In one day the Colorado programs served 667 individuals who needed shelter, housing, or outreach services and 322 hotline crisis calls answered. Colorado had approximately 75,000 criminal cases filed in their county courts in 2006. Only 5.36% or 14,123 of those cases were for domestic violence (State of Colorado Court Administrators Office Website, 2006). Each state faces various problems with domestic violence and therefore each state has developed numerous programs and allocated different amounts of funding to address the prevalence of IPV in our communities.

Domestic Violence Courts

States are using new approaches to prevent and respond to IPV. Domestic violence courts are one of these innovative measures (Gover, MacDonald, & Alpert, 2003). New York was the first U.S. state to introduce a Domestic Violence Court in 1996. One measure of success in the Brooklyn Felony Domestic Violence Court is that no single victim linked to an open case has

been killed. Erie County in upstate New York has also developed a specialized court response and their percentage of repeat offenses has dropped to only 10% (Terzieff, 2005). These courts are designed to handle either all criminal and civil cases that involve domestic violence, all criminal domestic violence cases, or all misdemeanors that incorporate domestic violence. The type of court depends on the jurisdiction.

Another idea that has developed for the courts to respond to domestic violence is a dedicated team of prosecutors that work only with domestic violence cases. Dedicated courts and/or prosecutors are an advantage to the victims and the offenders of the domestic violence cases as these criminal justice actors will be more sensitive to the needs of both the victims and offenders. They will be able to make connections to the important social services that these individuals may need. There is some debate if specialized court judges will become less neutral to their increased involvement in specific cases (The Advocates for Human Rights, 2009). However, the advantages seem to outweigh the possible problems in having specialized courts. As of 2004, there were 200 domestic violence courts around the United States (Keilitz, 2004). These specialized courts seem to be a way for the court system to focus on certain crimes, like domestic violence and drug offenses, and to provide better services and a speedier trial for both the victims and offenders of domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Police Units

The criminal justice system has similarly created specialized police units that focus on domestic violence (DV). As of 2000, 48% of local law enforcement agencies and 10% of state agencies have DV units (Reaves & Hickman, 2004; Townsend, Hunt, Kuck, & Baxter, 2005). There is no uniform procedure or design for the different domestic violence police units but they all have similar goals. They were designed to improve the connection between the police and

court system for domestic violence cases. It is helpful for the police to understand and convey to victims how to get a temporary restraining order and gain other important court services. These police units receive, in some cases, extra training on certain prevalent issues such as stalking and teenage dating violence. Police units are sometimes able to get temporary restraining orders without going through the courts so that in emergency situations the victim and offender can be legally separated. These units also are able to work proactively to combat domestic violence by identifying relationships at risk for DV and using data to find “hot spots” of domestic violence.

Another advantage to specialized domestic violence police units is that police officers receive more training on the specific circumstances surrounding domestic violence. This can improve officer safety in domestic violence situations. One of the most dangerous calls police officers answer are IPV. The police generally refer to this as the “unknown situation” (Goldstein, 2010). Such unknowns include whether the offender is going to come back, if he has a weapon, or if he will turn violent towards the police. Each unknown can affect the safety of the police officers on the scene. In December 2010 in Dallas, Texas, a young rookie officer was killed responding to a DV call. She was under the impression that the offender left and therefore was the only officer at the scene, but he later returned with a gun and shot the officer, his ex girlfriend, and then himself. Even when there are multiple officers, DV offenders can turn violent and harm their victims, the police officer, or themselves. As Jan Edgar Langbein (as cited in Goldstein, 2010), the executive director of the Dallas based Genesis Women’s Shelter, states, “you just have to assume it’s all deadly, if it says domestic violence, it is all potentially deadly” (para. 25).

North Carolina has a specialized domestic violence unit of the state police. In 1995 the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) developed the unit and it was staffed with

one sergeant, one administrative assistant, five detectives, and four counselors (Lord, Arentsen, Bean, Bryley, Carver, Clifton, Erdogdu, Fitch, Kula, Marker, Powell, Ross, & Sazak, 2004). These police officers operate under the CMPD policy of “preferred arrest” which is similar to mandatory arrest. The mandatory arrest policy in DV requires that officers arrest someone so that the two individuals involved in the domestic violent incident are separated. The CMPD domestic violence unit was designed to reduce recidivism by intensively investigating the offenders so that the court system can efficiently adjudicate these individuals. The DV unit provides victim assistance with filing restraining orders. The detectives spend an increased amount of time investigating these cases so that victim testimony is not needed. Therefore, even if witnesses recant their statement the evidence can stand for itself (Lord et al., 2004). These officers are also able to give more social services to the victims such as gift cards for food, referrals to shelters or social agencies, and help the victims develop a safety plan. This DV unit has combined both the mandatory arrest and strong investigation side of domestic violence policing with important social services and victim assistance. This allows the unit to work on two fronts to combat domestic violence in their communities and improve the lives of both the victims and their children.

Intimate Partner Violence in Georgia

IPV has been a continuous problem for women and girls in the state of Georgia. Georgia has had one of the worst ratings for domestic violence in the country. In 2008, Georgia ranked 7th in the nation for its rate of men killing female intimate partners (Georgia Department of Human Resources, 2008). In fact, since this ranking started 9 years ago Georgia has not fallen below the top 20. “Domestic violence and sexual assault are leading causes of injuries for girls and women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the state of Georgia. Reports indicate that 30% of Georgia

women in that age group will be abused at least once by their partners during their lifetimes” (Georgia Department of Community Health, Division of Public Health website, 2007, para. 1). The Georgia Bureau of Investigation reported that law enforcement officers responded to 54,010 family violence incidents in 2006. Also in 2006 there were 96,110 crisis calls made to domestic violence shelters.

Georgia’s family violence programs provided shelter for 4,588 adults and 4,788 children in 2006 (Georgia Department of Human Resources, 2008). There is also a statewide toll free number that connects the victim of IPV with the nearest family violence agency. Georgia has in total 45 family violence shelters and one family violence program operated by a non-profit agency (Georgia Department of Human Resources, 2008). Public policy in Georgia has created several state agencies to examine the complex issues associated with intimate partner violence and family violence. The main three agencies are the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Georgia Commission on Family Violence, and Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault. All of these agencies were developed to combat domestic violence in Georgia.

The latest Domestic Violence Fatality Review Report shows that Georgia ranks 10th in its rates of men killing women in domestic incidents (Sawicki, 2010). Attorney General Sam Olens has joined with the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Georgia Commission on Family Violence to work to improve victim services and decrease the number of domestic fatalities in Georgia. A significant finding from the fatality report was that since 2004 only 18% of the victims who died in the domestic fatalities were connected to a domestic violence agency (Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review, 2004). Therefore, providing victims with the domestic violence services they need may help to reduce the number of women dying from domestic abuse.

Importance of Topic

There are several reasons why studying IPV is a timely research topic. The main two are 1) the economic situation facing the country and how these problems will affect IPV and 2) the recent policy of mandated arrests and how this policy is affecting the criminal justice system. With the economic crisis facing many average citizens, stress is at an all time high. An article from the Augusta Chronicle, a Georgia newspaper, describes how financial strains such as unemployment, loss of benefits, and rising health care costs can exacerbate already violent situations (Toone, 2010). According to a study by the National Institute of Justice (2009), there is a 4.7% rate of IPV when the male remains employed while the number jumps to 7.5% rate of violence when the male has only one period of unemployment. State Court Solicitor Harold Jones acknowledges that he has seen more violent attacks and more cases that involve weapons recently (as cited by Toone, 2010, para. 9). If IPV violence rates increase when the economic situation of a family decreases, then studying IPV should be a present concern because most states are experiencing some of the highest levels of unemployment in decades and IPV service workers and researchers should be aware that IPV incidents may be increasing.

Reporting IPV

While police records have shown that domestic violence cases have decreased, some experts believe that a consequence of the economic situation is that fewer women are reporting their abuse. Harold Jones, a state court solicitor, states, "Many of these women are dependent upon the spouse or boyfriend for significant support. We are finding that some women are less inclined to prosecute or even report incidents of domestic violence" (as cited by Toone, 2010, para. 3). Many families may be dependent on one income. This makes it difficult for the victim to call the police for help knowing they are likely to arrest the family's only source of income.

Therefore, these women may tolerate the abuse if they are supported financially by their abuser. Shelter attendance and crisis calls have been consistent over time so it seems that only official police statistics of IPV are dropping. This may mean that fewer women are reporting the abuse rather than the incidence of domestic violence decreasing.

Funding for Services

Another economic concern for IPV services is that many states are experiencing declining budgets. One fear is that funding for shelters and crisis hotlines for domestic violence will be cut. Historically shelters and domestic violence services have always been underfunded but to eliminate additional funds would make it more challenging to operate these important services. In the past when the economy is down, so is financial support for community-based safety net providers that offer DV services. Understanding and discussing the prominence of IPV is more important now than ever.

Mandatory Arrests

Finally, studying IPV is crucial at this moment because of the widespread policy of mandatory arrests for IPV across the United States. This movement was designed to separate individuals involved in a domestic violence situation in order to reduce the number of homicides caused by IPV. Mandatory arrest laws were designed to stress the seriousness of IPV and to force police officers to react by arresting at least one individual involved in the domestic violence call. However, some research has shown that arrest does not deter DV offenders (Sherman, 1992). In a series of studies designed to replicate the original Minneapolis domestic violence study conducted by Sherman and Berk (1984), two cities, Colorado Springs and Miami, both found that arrest did deter. However, Charlotte, Milwaukee, and Omaha's offenders recidivated in similar amounts regardless of arrest (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1996; Sherman, 1992).

Subsequent studies have called into question the deterrent effect of mandatory and preferred arrest policies (Hirschel, Hutchinson, & Dean, 1992, Hirschel & Hutchison, 1996; Hirschel, Hutchinson, Dean, & Mills, 1992).

Women Arrested for IPV

An unforeseen consequence of mandatory arrest policies has been the increasing number of women arrested for IPV (Muftic, Bouffard, & Bouffard, 2007; Chesney-Lind, 2002; Miller, 2001). Before mandatory arrest practices, IPV was seen as a crime committed by males towards females. Official arrest statistics supported this view as the overwhelming majority of arrestees were male. There is now more acknowledgement of the role that women play as offenders in IPV, but this finding should be studied in more detail. The context of the situations in which females are arrested as IPV offenders needs to be examined. Males have primarily used IPV as a means of power and control over their intimate partners (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). Some contend that females are merely reacting to their own abuse and retaliating or defending themselves (Barnett, Lee, Thelan, 1997; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Fine, 1995; Hamberger & Potente, 1994; Saunders, 1986). More research should be conducted to examine the female IPV offending. Why do they offend? Is there something that makes some women more likely to retaliate against their abusers while other female victims do not? There should be some acknowledgement, though, that there are male victims and the unique components of their abuse are being ignored.

Motivations of Female Offenders

The context of women abusing their partners has been found to be different from the motivations of male IPV offenders. Feminist researchers believe that women abuse purely as a product of self defense and retaliation against abuse perpetrated on them. However, family

violence researchers such as McNeely and Mann (1990) have found that there is a small group of female IPV offenders who are violent within their intimate relationships and have no past history of victimization. So while the motivation for some women may be defensive in nature, there is also a select group of women perpetrators of IPV who are offensively committing violence in their relationships. Women's motivation for IPV has also been studied using specialization research in connection to IPV and gender.

Specialization in a crime is when an offender is only perpetrating a specific crime. For example, an offender that only is committing rapes (aka a rapist) is considered to be a specialist. Some feminist researchers believed that IPV was somehow different than other types of crime and IPV offenders only committed violence against their intimate partners. However, researchers such as Fagan, Steward, and Hansen (1983) and Moffitt, Krueger, Caspi, and Fagan (2000) found that specialization does not exist for IPV and IPV offenders are violent within their relationships merely as a component of their overall violent criminal activity. Specialization research has started to examine the connection between gender and specialization. For example, Bouffard, Wright, Muftic, and Bouffard (2008) found that female arrestees of IPV have a significantly greater level of specialization than male offenders. This may be evidence that women offenders of IPV specialize and only commit IPV because they are defending themselves against their own victimization. This seems to be in line with the feminist explanations of why most women commit IPV.

Theoretical Framework

This study will examine the connection between victimization and perpetration. Various explanations for IPV have failed to recognize and/or adequately explain the overlap between victims and offenders. As such, the victim-offender framework will be utilized to do so. Victim

offender overlap is defined as “the link between a person’s involvement in criminal activities and his or her experience as a victim of crime” (Pape & Pedersen, 1999, p. 89). Victim/offenders are those individuals whose involvement in crime as an offender can also lead to them becoming a victim of crime as well. This concept has mainly been studied in regard to assaults and homicides and this study may be the first to combine the specific idea of victim offender overlap with the crime of IPV. Due to past studies such as Johnson and Ferraro (2000) and Steinmetz (1980) in which there has been found to be violent intimate relationships where both individuals engage in violence, it would seem that the concept of victim offender overlap could apply to IPV.

This study predicts that there are three unique groups that engage in IPV: pure victims, pure offenders, and the victim/offenders. The pure victims will be those who have only been victimized by IPV and have not engaged in any kind of retaliatory violent action. Pure offenders of IPV will typically use more power and control in their violence and therefore will not be victims themselves. The IPV victim/offender group will engage in both victimization and offending of IPV. This study will also examine if there are certain differences between the expected three groups of individuals. The types of variables to be studied include gender, race, criminal history, repeat criminal involvement, and marital status. It is expected that each group would have differences on some of these select variables.

Implications

The majority of IPV research has focused on females as victims and males as offenders. As such, the possibility of other types of violent relationships have been all but ignored. This denies the reality that there are female IPV offenders (Straus & Gelles, 1986; 1990; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) couples involved in mutually violent relationships (Johnson &

Ferraro, 2000; Steinmetz, 1980; Shupe, Stacey, & Hazelwood, 1987), and IPV that occurs within same sex couples (Renzetti, 1992; Renzetti & Miley, 1996; Tjaden, Thoennes, & Allison, 1999). Further research should concentrate on violent relationships and those who are both victimized and committing IPV. Studying these relationships in several ways through the use of actuarial instruments that capture both the offending and victimization of participants (such as the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996), other victimization surveys, interviews, and official records such as arrests, shelter records, and hospital records will also lead to a better understanding of the connections between IPV offenders and victims. The most important implication to this study is the application of the victim offender overlap idea to a variety of crimes. Participating in criminal activity has been known to be linked to victimization risk so it makes sense that it is possible for certain individuals to be both victims and offenders of crime.

A current limitation with certain social services for IPV is that individuals who are charged as offenders of IPV cannot access them. Some may not see a problem with that, but with the usage of mandatory arrest laws more individuals are being arrested for the crime of IPV who may also be IPV victims. Shelters primarily will only accept those who have no history of IPV offending which may exclude individuals who really need that help. With more acknowledgement of the role of victim/offenders in IPV hopefully certain social services will change their policies to allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex situation and lead to the acceptance of individuals.

Another complex policy issue is the usage of batterer intervention programs for those arrested for IPV. While these programs may be compatible with some people arrested for IPV, programs may not be applicable for women or for offenders who are also victims. IPV

intervention programs typically target males so female offenders of IPV may face a different environment that the rehabilitative program is not accounting for. One implication of this research is that rehabilitative programs may need to retool their treatment to focus on incorporating the complex issue of victim offenders into the curriculum. Specifically female victim offenders need to be examined and unique criminal justice programs might need to be developed to accommodate these individuals.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The goal of this study is to combine two separate research areas pertaining to victim offender overlap and intimate partner violence (IPV). Specifically, demographics characteristics including gender, race, age, and marital status will be studied in relation to victim offender overlap. Other variables such as criminal history, repeat criminal activity, and the victim offender relationship will be examined in connection to the unique groups of pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. Another variable that will be examined is the domestic violence recidivism of all three groups of individuals involved in IPV. The connection between the victim/offender overlap and severity of the triggering event will also be examined. The severity of the triggering event will be measured using the highest offense code according to NIBRS (National Incident-Based Reporting System). Previously the only focus on victim offender overlap research has been on assault and homicide. However, there are certain components of IPV research such as Johnson and Ferraro's (2000) finding of common couple violence which has led the researcher to believe that the victim offender overlap framework can be applied to IPV.

This research study will first examine victim-offender roles in a criminal context. The interaction between victim and offender and the possibility of overlap between criminal roles is an important and understudied concept. Secondly, the researcher will look at intimate partner violence, and specifically the debate on the role that women play in IPV as victims, perpetrators, or as both victims and offenders. Family violence researchers contend that women are offenders of IPV just as much as they are victims, while feminist researchers stress that males are more likely to injure and terrorize their victims making male perpetrated IPV much more severe and

the main type of IPV to be studied. Lastly, the connection between victims and offenders in the context of IPV will be discussed. To date, there have not been any published studies that have examined the overlap between victims and offenders for IPV. However a few studies have discussed the effect that victimization plays in female's becoming IPV offenders (Barnett, Lee, Thelan, 1997; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, & Tolin, 1997; Hamberger & Potente, 1994; Saunders, 1986).

Victim Offender Interactions

Victim offender interactions and the role that victims play in criminal events has always been a crucial component in the study of crime although, most of the emphasis has been on the offender. Kennedy and Sacco (1998) argue that offender-centered explanations for crime assume that there is an overwhelming and endless amount of potential victims. Therefore there is not a need to focus on crime victims. However, research continued to investigate the nature of victims in criminal activity. Victims as a component of crime research became a rising aspect of criminological study and the subfield of victimology began to concentrate on the role a victim may play in his or her own victimization. Not meant to blame the victim, such an approach was designed to help understand why certain people were more likely to be victimized than others. For example, Mendelsohn (1956) makes the assertion that there are six types of victims ranging from victims who can even be "more guilty" than the offenders or victims who are guiltless. This victim typology can be directly related to the treatment victims receive by the police, courts, and their ability to receive victim services. Even more importantly, the guilt and actions of the victim can lead the victim to not report the crime to the police.

The interaction between offender and victim can be seen by some as a duet where it is impossible to decipher who is the victim and who is the offender. The individual who is initially

the victim of a crime may become an offender and vice versa (Von Hentig, 1948). This may be especially true for violent crimes such as assault and homicide where both participants may be initiating and engaging in violence. In fact, Luckenbill (1977) examined homicide rates and found that it is difficult to predict which participant becomes the offender and which the victim, as both play a role in initiating and sustaining the event. It was this research that first made the connection between the potential overlap in criminal roles and the similarities between victims and offenders.

During the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the concept of victim precipitation began to emerge. This line of research was led by Wolfgang (1967) who focused on victim precipitation within homicides. He found that almost 26% of homicides in his study were victim precipitated. More importantly to IPV research, he found that for victim precipitated homicides it was more likely that there existed an interpersonal relationship between the offender and victim and that the offender was female and the victim male. Other research continued in this vein and Amir (1967), a student of Wolfgang, concluded that there was victim precipitation in rape. He defined rape involving victim precipitation as “the victim actually, or so it was deemed, agreed to sexual relations but retracted before the actual act or did not react strongly enough when the suggestion was made by the offender(s)” (p. 495). This definition was strongly rejected by many other researchers, as well as the public. Some argued that Amir (1967) was using the concept of victim precipitation as a tool to justify sexual assault (Clark & Lewis, 1977). Due to this backlash, researchers have tip-toed around the concept of victim precipitation so as not to be accused of victim blaming. Fattah (1991), however, makes a wise argument that the criticism of victim precipitation should “not lie in the concept itself, but in the way the concept was operationalized in some studies” (p. 293).

Current research has examined the concept of victim offender overlap more in depth, but these studies have only recently emerged and even then the focus has been on homicide and assaults (Dobrin, 2001; Klevens, Duque, & Ramirez, 2002; Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2000; Piquero, MacDonald, Dobrin, Daigle, & Cullen, 2005). Most of these studies have examined the similarities and differences between victims and offenders and how this relates to the study of crime and theory. Few studies have been conducted to examine other violent crimes, such as IPV (for an exception see Muftic, Bouffard, & Bouffard, 2007), in connection to victim offender roles.

Similarities Between Offenders and Victims

Victims and offenders have been found to share several characteristics. In fact, many studies have found that the demographics of offenders are very similar to the demographics of victims (Cohen, Kluegel, & Land, 1981; Gottfredson, 1986; Hindelang, 1976, 1981; Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garofalo, 1978). For instance, both violent offenders and victims of violent crime tend to be young, black males who live in urban areas (Hindelang, 1976, 1981; Hindelang et al., 1978; Gottfredson, 1986). The “principle of homogamy” can be used to explain the similarities in demographics between offenders and victims (Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990), with the overall premise being that associating with criminals increases a person’s risk of victimization. This principle contends that individuals who are victims will have certain sociodemographic characteristics that may lead them to spend more time with offenders that share similar sociodemographic characteristics thus increasing their overall victimization risk (Cohen, Kluegel, & Land, 1981). The connection between victims and offenders makes sense as offenders are more likely to associate with others in their environment, therefore, the victims of

their crimes will be people who are similar to the offenders on such characteristics as race, socioeconomic status, and neighborhood.

However, demographic characteristics are not the only way in which offenders and victims are similar. They also engage in similar behaviors. Several studies have found that the frequency of offending is positively correlated with the amount of violent victimization, and in a lesser extent the amount of other types of victimization (Jensen & Brownfield, 1986; Lauritsen, Laub, & Sampson, 1992; Lauritsen, Sampson, & Laub, 1991). The findings from these studies have criminological implications. Significant correlations between offending and victimization may render specialized theories on crime and victimization unnecessary (Kennedy & Sacco, 1998). This was similar to an idea discussed by Hindelang (1976) that criminological theory could be applied to not only offenders, but victims of crime due to their demographic similarities.

While these studies discuss the similarities between offenders and victims of violence, Wolfgang (1958) and Singer (1981) make the assertion that offenders and victims are one in the same. These researchers contend that victims and offenders are similar because they are the same individuals and it is only their role in the violent episode that differs. Drawing from the subculture of violence theory, they explain that offenders and victims react to situations in similar ways which makes the likelihood that a victim could be an offender (or vice versa) extremely likely. Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) argue that a new value system, which promotes violence and other behaviors typically not endorsed by mainstream culture, can emerge in certain subgroups of the population and in certain areas. These subgroups and areas typically feel segregated from the general population and they decide to solve their own problems and complaints in a way which does not involve mainstream means of resolution.

Singer (1981) applies the subculture of violence theory to the dynamics between victim and offenders. In doing so, he determines that members of a subcultural system have a higher likelihood of being both a victim and offender of violent crime. Instead of going to the police about a complaint of an assault or rape, members of this subculture of violence who were victimized will take matters into their own hand by retaliating with violence at their previous abusers.

Similarly, Elijah Anderson (1999) discusses this in his book *Code of the Street*. Anderson (1999) argues that members of a subcultural system react to provocation in a very violent way. This type of aggressive behavior can easily lead an individual to begin an incident as an offender but leave the same incident as a victim (or vice versa). Those involved in a subcultural value system can also be easy to anger in what other would consider a “normal” situation such as someone staring at them for too long or someone rolling their eyes at them. Concurrently with the ease to anger, individuals involved in the subcultural system react to their own violence with retaliation which is typically also violent. Therefore, it is very likely that a person will go from being a victim to becoming an offender or vice versa.

Differences Between Offenders and Victims

While research has indicated that offenders and victims may be one in the same, there is also a substantial body of evidence suggesting that offenders and victims are different (Klevens, Duque, & Ramirez, 2002; Schreck, Stewart, & Osgood, 2008; Broidy, Daday, Crandall, Sklar, & Jost, 2006; Loeber, Pardini, Homish, Wei, Crawford, Farrington, Stouthamer-Loeber, Creemers, Koehler, & Rosenfeld, 2005). This is especially important to the current study as most studies on victim offender overlap have found intrinsic differences between the three types of individuals involved in violence: victims-only, offenders-only, and then victims who are also offenders. It is

important to note these differences so that we can understand why some individuals are only ever victims, some are only offenders, and others are in both victims and perpetrators.

Victims and offenders can be clearly differentiated for violent offenses. Loeber and colleagues (2005) used a longitudinal approach to predict violence and homicide among 1,517 male youth participants in Pittsburgh. They found that specific child, family, school, and demographic characteristics were able to predict violent offending, however only a small group of these risk factors also predicted homicide victimization among the offenders. There was little crossover in predictive variables for both violent offending and violent victimization.

Specifically, the variable of age has been found to be significantly different for individuals who are offenders versus victims. For instance, Schreck, Stewart, and Osgood (2008) found that age can be used to predict the role of an individual in violent crime. Older teenagers were more likely to be victims than offenders. This is consistent with previous research that finds that individuals “age out” of crime (Sampson & Laub, 1993). While people may grow out of criminal offending, victimization may have less of an aging effect which would explain why victimization is still strong for older individuals but offending is lessened.

Another way to differentiate between individuals who are victims and individuals who are offenders is by the degree to which people engage in risky behaviors. Case in point, Klevens, Duque, and Ramirez (2002) found that victims who were not involved in criminal activity themselves were more likely to avoid risky activities than victims of violence who also were offenders. This makes sense as individuals involved in risky behaviors such as drinking excessively, staying out late at night, or even criminal activity will have not only increased possibility of victimization, but also offending.

Victim Offender Overlap

Past studies had found that there were demographic similarities between victims and offenders and this led to the idea that victims and offenders could be one in the same. However, other studies have found crucial differences between offenders and victims which means that while there may be overlap between offenders and victims, there is also role differentiation between the two (Klebens, Duque, & Ramirez, 2002; Schreck, Stewart, & Osgood, 2008; Broidy et al., 2006; Loeber et al., 2005). Some individuals are more inclined to be victims of violent crime while others are involved in activities which lead to their perpetration of violent crime. The “pure” groups (i.e., victims-only or offenders-only) have been found to be distinctly different from each other. For example, the involvement in criminal activity and risky behaviors has been found to be a main difference between the groups as offenders who are typically more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as drinking and drug use while victims do not. There are certain factors that can lead a person to become a victim versus a person who is an offender. This is where victim offender overlap comes in. Victim offender overlap is defined as “the link between a person’s involvement in criminal activities and his or her experience as a victim of crime” (Pape & Pedersen, 1999, p. 89). However, the concept of victim offender overlap means that while victim-only groups differ from offender-only groups, there may also be important differences between these “pure” groups and a group of victim/offenders.

One of the prominent studies on victim offender overlap was conducted by Mustaine and Tewksbury (2000). They argue that there are three types of individuals involved in violence each with their own “lifestyle”: victims only, offenders only, and victims who are also offenders. Victims are more likely to have consumed alcohol, attend regular activities such as community festivals, and be friends with offenders. Neighborhood characteristics such as living near

disruptive behaviors also influenced the risk of victimization. Offenders were more likely to be friends with other criminals and their risk of offending was influenced by certain neighborhood characteristics such as lack of convenience stores, perception by the offender that the neighborhood does not have a crime problem, and finally the neighborhood having vacant buildings and homes. Individuals who are both victims and offenders are most likely to have committed other crimes, consumed alcohol frequently, and used or sold illegal drugs.

Victim/offenders are also more likely to live in neighborhoods which have a nearby park. There are several similarities between the three groups of victim-only, offender-only, and victims who are offenders (e.g. gender, race, and neighborhood characteristics), however most notable are the differences between the three groups (Broidy et al., 2006; Dobrin, 2001; Lauritsen et al., 1991; Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2000; Wolfgang, 1958).

The same researchers found that the overlap between victims and offenders does not just occur in violent crimes (i.e., assault and homicide) but also in minor offenses (i.e., vandalism) (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2000). A majority of the studies, though, have studied victim offender overlap in connection to violent crimes. For example, Dobrin (2001) found through using homicide records that those individuals who were victims of a homicide were more likely to be involved in criminal activity than non-victims, which he randomly selected using Department of Motor Vehicles records. Homicide victims statistically were more likely to have had a past arrest than the non-victims. Other studies have found that victims of crime are more likely than non-victims to report involvement in criminal behaviors (Gottfredson, 1984; Jensen & Brownfield, 1986; Mawby, 1979; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990). When controlling for neighborhood and individual characteristics, criminal offending increases the risk of homicide victimization (Piquero, MacDonald, Dobrin, Daigle, & Cullen, 2005). Several studies have found that

offenders were more likely to be victims of crime than non-offenders (Esbensen & Huizinga, 1991; Jensen & Brownfield, 1986; Kulhorn, 1990; Lauritsen, Sampson, & Laub, 1991; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990; Singer, 1981).

Criminal Activity as a Predictor of Victimization

There are several reasons why participating in criminal activities can put an individual at greater risk of being victimized. There has been some suggestion that involvement in crime may, in fact, be the most victimogenic of lifestyles (Jensen & Brownfield, 1986). The nature of crime, increased contact with offenders, and the lowered probability that a victim of a crime who is also an offender will report this incident to the police or even be believed if they do report the crime to the police are all factors that play in making criminal offenders attractive targets and highly likely to become victims themselves. Offenders also engage in activities such as drinking and drug use which can lower their guardianship potential leading to their own victimization.

Several criminal and violent activities and behaviors have been found to be associated with a number of behaviors typically connected with routine activities theory such as drinking, drug use, and spending large amounts of time away from the home regardless of demographic variables (Osgood, Wilson, O'Malley, Bachman, & Johnston, 1996; Riley, 1987). Offending behavior is an important factor for victimization and there are a high proportion of offenders who are also victims, therefore, ideas on criminal behavior should also be applied to victimization. Using explanations for offending in connection to victimization could help to lower rates of victimization.

Women and Victim Offender Overlap

One unique group that has been ignored when examining victim offender overlap is women. Past studies on victim offender overlap examined the unique group of victim/offenders

within high risk groups. For example, Fagan, Piper, and Cheng (1987) used students from inner city high crime neighborhoods and Durant and colleagues (1994a and 1994b) studied black adolescents living in urban deprived areas (Durant, Cadenhead, & Pedergrast, 1994a; Durant, Pedergrast, & Cadenhead, 1994b). Gang members (Decker & Kempf-Leonard, 1991), prison inmates (Lake, 1993), and homeless street youth (Baron, 1997) have also been the focus of other previous studies on victim offender overlap. All of these studies found substantial overlap between victims and offenders of crime. As previously mentioned, the role of women in victim offender overlap has been neglected, even when theories and ideas by researchers have alluded to the fact that women may also experience victim offender overlap.

There was a great deal of discussion indicating that women offenders have substantial histories of victimization (Wellish & Falkin, 1994). Empirical support has substantiated this claim. In fact, research conducted through a national study of jails and prisons found that between 40% and 57% of female inmates had been physically or sexually abused prior to their incarceration. The majority of these women reported that their abusers were their intimate partners (Wolf Harlow, 1999; Chesney-Lind, 2002; Dugan & Castro, 2006; Snell, 1994).

Some research has found that women's pathways in and out of crime were related to their history of victimization and, specifically victimization inflicted by intimate partners (Leverentz, 2006; Richie, 1996). This previous research is important to this study as the role that victimization inflicted by intimate partner violence plays on future and past criminal offending is crucial to studying victim offender overlap for those individuals involved in intimate partner violence.

Interestingly, there have been no theories on intimate partner violence that also include women's criminality as a risk factor for their victimization (Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin, & Petrie,

2004). Without the crucial aspect of women's criminality and offending incorporated into theories and studies on IPV, there will never be a complete encompassing grasp on the role that IPV plays on women.

Intimate Partner Violence Research and Victim Offender Overlap

Recently IPV research has also indicated that there are groups of individuals who are both the victims and perpetrators of IPV. Early research conducted by Straus and Gelles (1986) found that "women are about as violent within the family as men" (p. 470). Their idea was supported by the increasing number of women arrested for IPV following the adoption of mandatory arrest laws. This led some theorists from the family violence perspective to assert that women were just as likely to be offenders of IPV as victims. They believed there was gender symmetry in IPV. Gender symmetry is when a crime is committed equally by women and men. In contrast, feminist theorists argued that even if women do commit IPV it is the context of their aggression which should be studied. They asserted that women are acting merely in defense of violence perpetrated on them. However, Johnson and Ferraro (2000) found that a great many IPV relationships are "common couple violence", also referred to as mutual combat, which is where both the male and female in the relationship engage in offensive and defensive violence.

There was a longstanding belief that there existed specialization in IPV. In other words, those who commit IPV only commit IPV and do not participate in other crimes, non-violent or violent. It was difficult for researchers to measure specialization in any type of violent crime and it was even more difficult to study specialization within IPV. This was due to most feminist researchers believing that IPV is special because, unlike other crimes, IPV is influenced by patriarchal cultural values that dictate the behavior of male perpetrators (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). However, recent research has found that perpetrators of IPV also commit other general

types of crime (Moffitt, Krueger, Caspi, & Fagan, 2000). It is not that everyone who commits IPV commits general crime or vice versa, but there seems to be a distinct group of individuals who are involved in both types of crimes (Bouffard, Wright, Muftic, & Bouffard, 2008).

Gender symmetry, common couple violence, and specialization/generalization for IPV all lead to the idea that there are distinct individuals in IPV where there exists victim offender overlap. Past research by Johnson and Ferraro (2000) found that those in “common couple violence” are often both are victims of IPV and perpetrators of IPV. Therefore, an overlap between victims and offenders would exist. While this overlap would be only for IPV, the specialization versus generalization research on IPV leads to possible victim offender overlap for IPV and other types of crime.

Women as IPV Victims

Women have traditionally been seen as victims of IPV, and not perpetrators. Feminist researchers contend that women are more likely to be victimized by their intimate partners through physical violence, verbal abuse, emotional pain, coercion, and/or fear. Even today women make up the majority of victims of IPV when examining hospital records, arrest reports, and shelter attendance (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Johnson, 1995; McLeod, 1984; Saunders, 1986). While these are some of the more serious cases of abuse they indicate that most women are victims and most men are offenders of IPV. Feminist researchers contend that women are primarily victims of the most serious forms of IPV and even if they do perpetrate IPV the context of their offending is much different than men. Females rarely are motivated by power and control when perpetrating IPV, unlike males, and they are more likely to report reacting to their own abuse as the reason for their assault against their partner.

Women as IPV Perpetrators

The introduction of mandatory reporting laws was the catalyst to research on female perpetrators of IPV as the number of women arrested for IPV offending grew. In 1975, Straus and Gelles used a national survey in which 2,143 married or cohabiting persons were interviewed in person and they found that women reported higher rates of engaging in spousal violence, even severe violence, than males. In later studies also conducted by Straus and other associates, the results were that husbands and wives engaged in similar rates of violence within their marriage (Straus and Gelles, 1986; 1990; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). However, this research was conducted using the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) to measure the rates of domestic violence and some argue that the CTS overestimates incidents of IPV (Cantos, Neidig, & O'Leary, 1994; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Dobash et al., 1992; Morse, 1995; Smith, 1994; Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994). Due to this research many believe that IPV should not be examined as a "male-only" crime, but more as a family violence problem (Morse, 1995).

It should also be noted that several studies have found that women are actually more likely to be the perpetrators of violence and males the victims of IPV when the violence is less serious (Morse, 1995; Madgol, Moffitt, Caspi, Fagan, & Silva, 1997; Moffitt & Caspi, 1999). Morse (1995) found using the National Youth Survey in 1983, that 54.5% of the sample reported at least one assault, minor or severe. Out of the 54.5% of the sample that reported an assault, 36.7% of this abuse was male to female IPV, while 48.0% of this sample consisted of female to male IPV. An earlier study in 1992 found similar results with smaller percentages but they also concluded that female to male IPV was higher than male to female IPV. Other studies have found that the proportion of IPV perpetration by women ranged from 36.4% to 51.3% across three studies while male perpetration ranged from 21.8% to 43.0% (Madgol, Moffitt, Caspi,

Fagan, & Silva, 1997; Moffitt & Caspit, 1999). Straus (2006) has identified “more than 150 studies showing equal or higher rates of assaults by women” (p. 1086). All of this research has concluded that females are just as likely, and sometimes more likely, to perpetrate IPV as males.

One of the main conclusions we can draw from this research is that women perpetrators of IPV do exist. Past research had almost solely concentrated on male offenders of IPV; these new studies though have opened a whole new line of research. While women may be perpetrating less violent incidents of IPV, women offenders of IPV are just as numerous as males. It is important for researchers to acknowledge and devote time and energy to studying the unique circumstances and individual characteristics of those who are female offenders of IPV.

Women as IPV Victims/Offenders

There has been some discussion by Steinmetz (1980), Johnson and Ferraro (2000), and Shupe, Stacey, and Hazelwood (1987) on whether certain couples and relationships are more violent than others. In these relationships there is violence on the part of both individuals instead of the common assertion that one person is battering another. They are both the victim and the perpetrator of violence in their intimate relationships. These relationships have been deemed “mutual combat” where both partners are violent even though the partners do not have to be violent at the same time (Steinmetz, 1980). Another term for these relationships, developed by Johnson and Ferraro (2000), is called common-couple violence. This type of IPV involves aggression that is low in severity and frequency, it often occurs in both directions, and it rarely leads to a pattern of escalating violence over time. Both of these terms, mutual combat and common-couple violence, seem to explain the same phenomena where relationships are violent but it occurs rarely and involves few injuries. However, both partners in the relationship may

initiated the violence or participated in the violence, therefore both partners have been victims and perpetrators of IPV.

Straus (1980) found in their study on violent relationships that mutual combative relationships were the most common. In fact, 49% of the relationships examined contained violence during the survey year. Relationships where only the husband was violent accounted for 28% of the sample while 23% of the relationships reported that only the wife was violent. Of all the wives who were subjected to violence, 64% of them also reported being violent themselves during that time. Steinmetz concluded from the results of Straus and Gelles' survey that women and men are symmetrical when it comes to violence in intimate relationships. Therefore according to Steinmetz, IPV is not a solely a problem of men beating their wives, but of "violent couples" and "violent people" (Shupe, Stacey, & Hazelwood, 1987).

This does not mean that every form of IPV is mutual combat or common couple violence. Johnson and Ferraro (2000) have also found a separate group of IPV which they label patriarchal terrorism or its newer term, intimate terrorism. This type of violence is a form of control that typically males force on their female partners which is caused by the tradition in history of men having absolute social and legal control over women. Some women who are victims of patriarchal terrorism have few opportunities to leave their household as they may not have an outside job but they may be stay-at-home moms, dependent on their husbands for economic support. Patriarchal violence is usually more serious, occurs over a longer period of time, and is more likely to escalate into lethal violence. This is the type of violence that causes women to leave their home and go to shelters and is the type of violence that is more likely to lead to police and hospital reports. The different types of IPV, common couple violence and patriarchal terrorism, may be an explanation for why there are so many differences in research on female

perpetrators of IPV. Family violence researchers have found that women are just as likely to perpetrate IPV as males. Some researchers contend that women perpetrate IPV due to their own abuse, however, another explanation could be that female perpetrators are really victim/offenders of common couple violence. Therefore, the type of research conducted by feminist researchers where they examine shelter attendance and hospital records is overwhelmingly male perpetrated IPV and common couple violence is being ignored.

Swan and Snow (2002) examined the concept of different types of female IPV perpetrators. They used data based on comparisons between the women's victimization and perpetration scores on scales assessing severity of violence and coercion. The results showed that males typically use more coercive control than females. However, they assigned the respondents into groups and found that 34% of women were primary victims (partner higher on severe violence and coercive control) and 12% were primary aggressors (female scores higher on severe violence and coercive control). The remaining couples were either classified as mixed male coercive (32%; women equally or more violent but the partner had higher coercive scores), or mixed female coercive (18%), or not classified (4%). This results show that it is hard to fully classify someone as a pure IPV victim or pure IPV offender. Pure offenders are those individuals who are only perpetrating crimes. IPV pure offenders are more likely to be the batterers discussed in feminist research who use power and control over their victims. Pure victims for IPV are those who are only victimized by IPV and make no action in defending themselves or retaliating against their abuse. There is a lot of overlap between the two and women who are considered victims may also participate in violent or coercive acts.

Explaining Victim Offender Overlap

There has been some discussion in both the family violence and the feminist literature regarding the context of female perpetrated IPV. Are females actually perpetrating against their male partner, or are they merely defending themselves from an abusive partner? The context of the IPV is something that many family violence theorists have not taken into account, but it is important to know the causes of female perpetrated IPV. The specialization of IPV is also something that has recently been discussed. Some contend that males do not specialize in IPV, they commit numerous crimes and their involvement in IPV is just a continuation of their overall criminality, while females are more likely to specialize and only participate in IPV. This may be due to female perpetrators of IPV only reacting in a defensive nature towards their own abuse. Both the defensive versus offensive arguments and the recent discussion on IPV specialization are topics that must be talked about when applying the victim offender overlap framework to IPV.

Defensive versus Offensive Female Perpetrated IPV

Many feminist researchers contend that women may perpetrate IPV but the motivation for their violence is defending themselves against the abuse of their partner (Barnett, Lee, Thelan, 1997; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, & Tolin, 1997; Hamberger & Potente, 1994; Saunders, 1986). Susan Miller and Michelle Meloy (2006) discuss the categories of women who abuse their partners. The first category is women who are using violence as a self defense technique to escape or protect themselves from abuse. Another category is those women who use protective violence even though they may not be in immediate danger of abuse because they have long histories of victimization. The final category of women discussed in Miller and Meloy (2006) is the primary aggressors or women who are initiating violence and using it

against their partners. Most consider defensive violence to be the women who are defending themselves from immediate violence from their partners. Offensive violence is when the female in the relationship initiates the violence against their partner. A study was conducted by Barnett, Lee, and Thelan (1997) which states that women may resort to self defense in abusive relationships because they are economically dependent and therefore they have nowhere to go if they try to escape the relationship. There was a belief by Fine (1993) that self defense and revenge are the distinct motives for abuse of women against their male partners. Women are more likely to use violence against their partners when they are expressing emotions, escaping violence, and defending themselves (Barnett et al., 1997; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Hamberger et al., 1997; Hamberger & Potente, 1994; Saunders, 1986).

While females and males may both commit IPV, more serious forms of IPV seem to be mainly committed by males. Even when females are committing offensive IPV towards their partners, it is unlikely that the males will suffer the same amount of injuries or fear that male perpetrated IPV can cause. Females are more susceptible to fear and intimidation in abusive relationships than males. This fear is what can lead the women to lash out and retaliate against their partners. Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly (1992) assert that women who engage in violence are responding to being victims of violence or being threatened with violence. Battered wife syndrome, which is now a well known defense to violent crimes, is when abused women react violently due to a long history of victimization and abuse. It is well researched that women who are abused and victimized can “snap” and react in a violent way. Studies of intimate partner homicide support this idea as results have shown that victim precipitation is more likely to be involved in homicides against a husband by a wife than when husbands kill their wife (Browne, Williams, & Dutton, 1999; Felson & Messner, 1996).

Feminist researchers have primarily contended that women who perpetrate IPV are doing so defensively as opposed to offensive engagement. However, some research has found that 50% of women arrested for IPV had also committed violent offenses against non-intimates (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003). Therefore, there is a unique group of female offenders of IPV who are also violent outside of intimate relationships. McNeely and Mann (1990) found that women are more prone to engage in severely violent acts than men in marital relationships. They also state that more men are victimized by their intimates each year. There may be a unique group of females who are offensive in their violent intimate relationships. Research conducted by McNeely and Mann (1990) contends that women can be violent in intimate relationships without there being prior victimization and abuse. In addition, women have been found to be more hostile and engage in more verbal conflict when a relationship is violent and rocky (Vivian & O'Leary, 1987). Therefore, there may be something unique to the women in abusive relationships, which is why they are more violent in both their intimate relationships and in the general population than women not involved in violent relationships.

IPV Specialization

Many feminist researchers believe that IPV is a special crime where there are patriarchal cultural values that influence male perpetrators and therefore there is no crossover between IPV and other criminal activity (Dobash et al., 1992). However, specialization has been found not to exist in IPV. Specialization is when the perpetrator of a specific crime only commits that type of crime. For example, offenders who are labeled as rapists or robbers are assumed to only commit rapes or robberies. In term of IPV specialization, researchers contend that offenders of IPV are only committing violence against their intimate partners. In fact, Moffitt and his colleagues (2000) state that past research has relied on an “unexamined premise that batterers are specialists

in violence who specialize further, victimizing women intimates exclusively as victims” (p. 201). Recent research has examined specialization in connection to IPV and most results have found that offenders of IPV are more likely to be generalists, (i.e., they participate in all types of crime) than specialists. Fagan, Steward, and Hansen (1983) used interviews of victims of IPV and asked the victims questions about their partners’ demographics and prior history and they found that almost half of the batterers had also engaged in violence outside of their intimate relationships. The batterers who were the most violent in their intimate relationships were found to be the ones most likely to also be violent outside of the relationship. Based on this study, it seems that instead of a person only being violent in their relationships, specializing in IPV, it is more likely that if someone is violent inside of their relationship that violence will carry over into the outside world. This supports the argument by Moffitt and her colleagues that IPV offenders are not specialists and their violence inside of their relationships is merely a component of their overall violent natures. However, studies have also found that IPV offenders do not even specialize in violent crimes but rather have prior criminal history for both violent and non-violent offenses (Piquero, Brame, Fagan, & Moffitt, 2006).

While some studies have found that IPV offenders also participate in general crimes, one study by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) found that there are different subtypes of offenders of IPV and the levels of specialization differ according to such groups. The three subgroups are “family only batterers”, “generally violent/antisocial batterers”, and “dysphoric/borderline batterers”. The first group, “family only batterers”, is the group who are categorized as IPV specialists; they are less likely to be involved in crime and violence outside of their families and even the abuse within their family is less severe. This group is thought to be the largest group represented in community samples (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). The

“generally violent/antisocial batterers” are generalists and they are violent not only to their families but to the general population. They may also participate in more deviant behavior such as alcohol and drug abuse. The abuse within the family from this group is more likely to be moderate to severe abuse and may include psychological and sexual abuse (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). This group will be more likely to be researched when sampling hospital and shelter records. The last group is “dysphoric/borderline batterers” and this group is a mix of interfamily violence and crime outside of the family.

Past research has concluded that there exists no specialization for IPV offenders. These offenders typically are involved in various amounts of criminal activity and the violence that engage in through their intimate relationships is just a component of their overall violent criminal activity. It would then stand to reason that if IPV offenders are involved in all types of crime then they will be both victims and perpetrators of other crimes. Involvement in criminal activity as an offender has been linked to victimization risk (Jensen & Brownfield, 1986). Since IPV specialization has found that most offenders of IPV are criminally involved in various crimes, the overlap of IPV offenders who become victims in other crimes should be high.

Gender and Specialization

Research that focused on specialization of IPV has primarily focused on males as offenders. Recent discussion of women as IPV perpetrators means that the role that women play regarding the specialization of IPV should also be examined. Are men violent in both relationships and in the general population while females are not? There has been debate on the motives behind female perpetrators of IPV and there has been a lot of discussion on whether female offenders are merely defending themselves from abuse or if they actually initiate and sustain the violence themselves. If females are just defending themselves it would stand to

reason that they would specialize in IPV and would not be involved in other types of crime and violence. Research by Henning and Feder (2004) supports this claim. In their study, males were more likely to have a prior offense record, have substance abuse problems, and to have been involved in prior instances of violence and nonviolence outside of their relationships than females. Therefore, males were more likely to be generalists, involved in IPV but also involved in other types of crime, and females were typically more specialists. Similarly, Bouffard, Wright, Muftic, and Bouffard (2008) found that female arrestees of IPV have a significantly greater level of specialization than male offenders.

While the aforementioned research did support the assertion that female IPV perpetrators are engaging in defensive violence only, a study conducted by Babcock and his colleagues (2003) found that just like with males there are separate subgroups of female perpetrators of IPV and the level of specialization versus generalization depends on these subgroups. The majority of female perpetrators of IPV report that their primary motivation was defense however studies have found that there is a group of women who report motivations like power and retaliation (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003; Henning, Renauer, & Holdford, 2006). Using the model created by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994), Babcock and his colleagues designated women who are motivated by self defense into a group of offenders who are only violent within their intimate relationships. This group is the most specialized. Another group of female offenders of IPV are violent in all aspects of their lives, inside and outside of relationships. These women may have extensive criminal histories. While there is a small group of female perpetrators who are generally violent, the majority of females involved in IPV are specialists who are only perpetrators of IPV (Babcock et al., 2003). A conclusion that can be made from this study is that

a majority of women offenders of IPV only commit IPV as a way to defend themselves from abuse, and therefore females specialize in IPV and it is the only crime they commit.

Conclusion

Research has failed to examine the connection between victim offender overlap and IPV; however, separate research in both disciplines has discussed a distinct group of individuals who are involved in crime as both victims and offenders. Victim offender overlap research has developed three unique groups: pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. The pure victims are solely victimized and the pure offenders are the ones perpetrating the crimes. The victims never become the offenders of crime or vice versa. The victim/offender group involves individuals who participate in crime as perpetrators but due to their involvement in criminal activity they also are victimized by crime and violence. This group has mainly been studied using homicide records and assault self reports.

Mandated arrest laws have increased the number of female perpetrators of IPV. Family violence theorists believe that women perpetrate IPV just as often as males. They have utilized instruments like the Conflict Tactics Scale to argue that women self report being as violent towards their partners as men. Feminist researchers argued that the assaultive actions of female IPV offenders are primarily defensive in nature as these women were merely reacting to their own abuse. However, both sets of researchers acknowledge that there are a select group of individuals, both males and females, who are both victims and perpetrators of IPV. Johnson and Ferraro (2000) understood these victim/offenders of IPV and they developed the idea of common couple violence where both partners in the relationship are victims and offenders of IPV. Straus (1978) has concluded that, “violence between husband and wife is far from a one way street” (p.

447). These mutual combative relationships involve violence on the part of both individuals in the relationship.

Another recent development in IPV research has been the examination of specialization in IPV. There was a belief that IPV perpetrators were only involved in IPV and they did not participate in other types of crime. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stewart (1994) concluded that there are three subgroups of IPV offenders and the level of specialization versus generalization depends on their placement in each group. Babcock and colleagues (2003) later applied this to female perpetrators of IPV but the premise stays the same that there is a select group of individuals involved in IPV who are also involved in other types of crime. While IPV research on gender symmetry and the family violence perspective has led to the possibility of a select group of individuals involved as both offenders and victims of IPV, recent research on the specialization of IPV has led to the possibility that there also exists a unique group of individuals involved as offenders of IPV but also victims/offenders of other types of crime.

This study will test to find if there are three separate groups of individuals involved in IPV. This would be consistent with the past victim offender overlap research on assaults and homicides in which there exists pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. The data was collected as part of an overall evaluation of the North Carolina Domestic Violence Unit of the state police. For this study, several hypotheses on the characteristics of the different groups were developed. These hypotheses will be tested to see what differences if any exist between the three victim offender overlap groups. It will be interesting to see if the victim offender overlap framework holds up the same as a majority of the past research on the topic was done using victimization surveys and examined assaults and homicides.

CHAPTER III

Hypotheses

This study was designed to examine whether or not victim offender overlap can be applied to the study of intimate partner violence (IPV). Victim offender overlap framework was originally developed from past research that indicated a connection between victims and offenders with studies investigating the similarities among victims and offenders. Sampson and Lauritsen (1990) stated that the reason that there were demographic similarities between victims and offenders (i.e., both victims and offenders typically being young black Urban males), was due to involvement in criminal activity increasing an individual's risk for victimization. Therefore, it stands to reason that a person who is an offender can also be a victim. If this is true for crimes such as assault and homicide, why would it not be true for other crimes in which there are strong interactions between offenders and victims, like IPV? In order to further explain the victim offender connection to IPV the following hypotheses were developed:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a separate group of individuals involved in IPV that are only victims of crime and these individuals will be predominately female.

Research involving the study of IPV has predominately focused on female victims and male perpetrators of IPV. As a result, feminists have come to conclude that within the context of violent relationships, male partners are typically motivated by power and control and they are abusive as a way to express that control over their female partners

(often referred to as patriarchal terrorism, Johnson and Ferraro, 2000). Women who are victims of patriarchal terrorism find it very difficult to leave their abuser as they may be dependent on their abusers for economic support. Patriarchal violence typically involves more serious forms of violence that occurs over a long period of time and may eventually lead to the death of the victim. As such, within the context of IPV it is hypothesized that there exists a subgroup of individuals who can be characterized as solely victims (aka pure victims). Pure victims will involve individuals who are only victims in the complaints inputted in the data set. There were 418 individuals who are pure victims and they make up 33.3% of the overall sample.

It is important to note that, according to feminist research, victims of patriarchal terrorism are female. Therefore, it is likely that the pure victims group will be predominately female. Within the pure victims group, females will be the majority of the sample. Since this study is based on arrest records, police officers are more likely to arrest a male as an offender and treat the female in a domestic violence situation as a victim. While females are being arrested more for IPV, males still make up the majority of arrests. As previously discussed, Johnson and Ferraro (2000) identified a type of IPV called patriarchal terrorism. This type of IPV is all about the power and control that IPV perpetrators inflict on their victims. In these relationships, males are the typical aggressors and offenders, while females are usually the victims. This type of extreme violence occurs frequently so while there may be a number of arrests and complaints throughout the two year follow up in this study, these females will remain victims throughout the complaints.

Finally, it is expected that individuals in the pure victims group will be more likely to be married than the other groups (i.e., pure offenders or victim/offenders). Those in patriarchal

terrorist relationships tend to be economically dependent on their partners and they have few opportunities to leave their household.

Pure victims will also be less likely to be involved in certain risky behaviors such as past criminal history and future criminal involvement than other groups. The pure offenders and victim/offenders are more likely to be involved in a criminal lifestyle thus the reason they are offending. This means that their involvement in risky behaviors linked to a criminal lifestyle such as past criminal activity and future criminal involvement will be higher than the pure victims. In fact, victim/offenders should have the highest level of risky behaviors such as prior criminal involvement and continued criminal activity. Pure offenders will then have the next highest level with the pure victims having the least amount of risky behaviors.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a separate group of individuals involved in IPV that are only offenders of crime and this group will consist of mainly males.

On the flip side to the pure victims argument, it is expected that there is a separate group of individuals who are pure offenders (i.e., have only a history of officially recorded offending and no officially recorded record of victimization). These individuals are typically involved in patriarchal terrorism against their intimate partners. Pure offenders for this study will include those individuals who were originally offenders of IPV and continued being offenders (as opposed to victims) in any future criminal complaints. Based on past research, it is predicted that the majority of the offenders only group are male. There are 327 pure offenders in this sample they make up 26.0% of the overall population.

The individuals in this group will be more likely to be involved in serious triggering events such as rape/sodomy and aggravated assault. They will also be more likely to have high

levels of past criminal involvement, however, they will not be as likely to be involved in future criminal activity or past criminal involvement as the victim/offender group.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a final group of individuals involved in IPV who will be both victims and offenders of crime.

IPV research has begun to explore relationships where common couple violence occurs (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; or what Steinmetz, 1980, defines as mutual combat). In these relationships, both individuals are victims and offenders of IPV. Past research using self reports concluded that women were just as violent in their intimate relationships as males (Straus, 1980). It would seem that these mutually combative relationships would involve a subgroup of victim/offenders similar to those designated in the victim offender overlap framework. Therefore, since past research is unclear about the effect of gender on victim/offenders the hypothesis for this study has gender as non directional for victim/offenders.

Individuals in the victim/offender group will be more likely to be involved in risky behaviors such as criminal involvement both past and future. Offenders often engage in activities such as drinking and drug use which can lower their guardianship potential leading to their own victimization. Past research by Johnson and Ferraro (2000) on common couple violence found that these relationships typically involve violence that is low in intensity and frequency. These individuals in the victim/offender group will have less serious triggering events. This group will have high levels of past criminal involvement and they will be the group that will have the highest levels of continued criminal involvement. This is because if an individual is a victim/offender criminal activity is a component of their whole life.

This study predicts that there are three unique groups that engage in IPV: pure victims, pure offenders, and the victim/offenders. This study will also examine if there are certain differences between the expected three groups of individuals. The types of variables to be studied include gender, race, criminal history, future criminal involvement, and marital status. It is expected that each group would have differences on some of these select variables.

CHAPTER IV

Methods

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the overlap that exists between victims and offenders of violent crime. This study specifically examines the victim offender overlap between men and women involved in intimate partner violence (IPV).

Data

The data to be used for this research was originally obtained through funding by the National Institute of Justice and was collected by Paul Friday, Vivian Lord, Lyn Exum, and Jennifer Hartman from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. Their study was called *Evaluating the Impact of a Specialized Domestic Violence Police Unit in Charlotte, North Carolina, 2003-2005*. They collected data on the North Carolina Domestic Violence Unit so as to evaluate the effectiveness of a domestic violence unit of the police. They wanted to examine the selection process that goes into some incidents of IPV making it into a domestic violence unit while other cases do not. The researchers tracked domestic violence cases processed through the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) and into the court system to see if involvement in a domestic violence unit affected the system's response to these cases of IPV.

The population for the study included all IPV incidents that were reported to the police in Charlotte, NC in 2003. There were a total of 6,892 IPV complaints. The researchers used a randomized stratified sampling method to finish with a total of 1,000 domestic violence cases in the sample. The researchers decided to only include cases with single victims and single offenders' incidents of multiple victims or multiple offenders

were excluded. The researchers also eliminated all dual-arrest cases meaning the final sample consisted of 891 domestic violence cases with 891 victims and 891 offenders. It should be noted that these 891 offenders of IPV were only suspects of IPV in the original incident. For this study, the outcomes of that original incident will not be discussed. This study will make no distinction between offenders of IPV who were sentenced and convicted for the original incident of IPV and those offenders who received no punishment.

The data come from several sources. The first is KBCOPS which is the police department's computerized database. These variables pertain to the crime and include victim and suspect information such as demographic data, victim/offender relationship, highest offense category, weapon usage, and victim injury. Another source of data is police narratives and they contain more refined information on the victim/offender relationship, weapon use, and victim injury. The last source of data comes from tracking data. The original sample was collected in 2003. In 2005, after a twenty four month follow up period, information was examined about future incidents of crime, court data, and amount of jail time for criminal instances. The researchers documented both past and future incidents of domestic violence and other crimes to look at future recidivism of domestic violence while controlling for past instances of domestic abuse.

Sample

This study will only examine cases of IPV instead of the broader criminal definition of domestic violence cases which may include violence between parents and children and violence between siblings. The researcher eliminated all cases which were not IPV-related, making the total of cases examined for this study 628. These cases included examples of violence between boyfriend/girlfriend, boyfriend/girlfriend live-in, boyfriend/girlfriend estranged, spouse,

estranged spouse, divorced spouse, child in common, and same sex partners. There were 263 cases deleted as they were not IPV related.

Measures

Victim/Offender Overlap

Each individual in the data set was coded according to the role they played in the original domestic violence situation. There were 628 individuals who were originally coded as victims and 628 individuals who were coded as IPV offenders. For this study, each case was examined to determine what role (if any) each individual (victim and offender in original IPV incident) played in any subsequent criminal complaints. There were up to five additional complaints, not including the original complaint, which were tracked in the 24 month follow up period of the original study.

Pure victims are those individuals who are only victimized by crime. For this study, pure victims are coded as 0. Pure offenders were those who were only labeled as offenders in their criminal activity. Pure offenders were coded as 1. Finally, there is a unique group of individuals who are both victims and offenders of crime. They could have originally been victims and then later become involved in crime as an offender or vice versa. This group was coded as 2.

Pure Victims. For those individuals who were originally victims in the first incident of IPV, the victims could be either pure victims or victim/offenders. Individuals who were only involved in the original incident and had no future complaints were included in the pure victims group. Other individuals included in the pure victims group were those individuals who were originally victims and then their role in future complaints also continued as a victim. Individuals who were victims in the original IPV incident, but then were involved in a future criminal incident as offenders are categorized as victim/offenders and this group will be discussed in

further detail later. There are 418 individuals (33.3%) who are pure victims in the sample of interest.

Pure Offenders. These individuals were offenders in the original incident of IPV. They either had no future complaints or they played the role of offender in all of future complaints against them. For this study, 26.0% (n=327) of the population are pure offenders.

Victim/Offenders. These were the individuals who were involved originally as victims but had at least one incident in their future complaints where they played the role of offenders. The victim/offender subgroup could also include the people who were offenders in the original incident of IPV but were documented in the future complaints as being a victim. If an individual's role in a future complaint was either/or, the individual was also placed in the victim/offender group. When the police documented an individual's role in a complaint as either/or, this meant that they could not differentiate if the individual was a victim or an offender. Therefore, these individuals were placed in the victim/offender group since there was confusion as to what role they played in the criminal incident, suggestive of victim/offender overlap. There are 511 individuals (40.7%) who are victim/offenders.

Table 1.1 Victim Offender Overlap

	N	%
Pure Victims	418	33.3
Pure Offenders	327	26.0
Victim/Offenders	511	40.7
Total	1256	100.0

Independent Variables

Gender. The gender of both victims and offenders of the original intimate partner violence incident is examined using the police database called KBCOPS. The measure for

victim's gender is a dichotomous variable coded as 0=female and 1=male. There were 545 female victims of intimate partner violence making up 86.8% of the sample. Male victims were 13.2% of the sample or 83 individuals. Offender's gender was coded the same way as the victims. Females made up 13.2% (n=83) of the sample of intimate partner offenders and males were 86.7% of the sample (n=539). There were six offenders whose gender information was missing.

Race. Race was inputted for both victims and offenders of IPV. The race was originally inputted as 0=White, 1=Black, 2=Asian/Pacific Islander, 3=Indian/Alaskan native, 4=unknown, and -99 = missing. Friday, Lord, Exum, and Hartman (2003-2005) recoded the race of both victims and offenders into 0=White, 1=Black, and 2=Other. The Other group only included 4 individuals for offenders and 5 individuals for victims. Since both of these groups are so small a dichotomous variable was created representing White and Non-White (Black and Other combined). There were 33.7% (n=212) of the victims who were White, while 66.2% (n=416) of the victims were Non-White. The offenders were recoded the same way as the victims for race making a dichotomous variable of White and Non-White. For the offenders, there were 185 White (29.6%) and 439 Non-White (70.4%) individuals. Non-Whites seem to make up both the majority of victims and the majority of offenders of IPV.

Age. The age of both offenders and victims of intimate partner violence were documented from KBCOPS, the police database. In the current study, age will be examined as an interval level variable, measured in years. The minimum age of the victims in this study is 15.77 and the maximum age of victims is 69.02. The average age of victims in this study is 32.17 with a standard deviation of 9.67. The range for the data is 53.25. Six individuals' age data was missing from the victims' information. Offenders' minimum age in this study is 17.02 and the maximum

age of offenders is 69.23. The average age of offenders in this study is 33.73 with a standard deviation of 9.58. The range for the data is 52.21. There were 29 individuals whose age was missing from the offender data.

Marital Status. Both victim and offender's marital status were examined using the police database called KBCOPS. The measures for these variables include single (coded as 0), divorced (coded as 1), separated (coded as 2), and married (coded as 3). Victims were primarily single making up 55.1% (n=244) of the sample excluding the missing data. There were 122 married individuals in the victim data making up 19.4% of the sample. However, there were 185 individuals whose data was missing and 28 victims had unknown marital statuses. Marital status was measured the same way as for offenders. There were 181 offenders who were single making up 50.0% of the sample excluding the missing data. There were 266 individuals whose data was missing from the offender data.

Table 1.2 Demographic Characteristics

	Offenders		Victims	
	N	%	N	%
Gender				
Male	539	86.7	83	13.2
Female	83	13.2	545	86.8
Race				
White	185	29.5	212	33.8
Black	439	69.9	411	65.4
Age (years)	32.17		33.73	
Marital Status				
Single	181	50.0	244	55.1
Divorced	14	2.2	16	2.5
Separated	25	6.9	33	7.4
Married	106	29.3	122	19.4

Severity of Triggering Event. To measure the severity of the original IPV incident, a variable was used that measures the highest NIBRS offense code. This is the highest, most

severe label of what the original incident of IPV was documented by the police. These were coded as aggravated assault (coded as 0), forcible rape/sodomy (coded as 1), simple assault (coded as 2), and all other offenses (coded as 3). There were 92 incidents of aggravated assault and this made up 14.6% of the sample data set. Only 10 incidents were forcible rape and sodomy which made up the smallest amount of the sample at 1.6%. Simple assault was the most common offense code with 56.2% (n=353) of the sample. There were 173 other offenses making up 27.5% of the sample.

Table 1.3 Offense Categories

	Frequency	Percent
Aggravated Assault	92	14.6
Forcible Rape/Sodomy	10	1.6
Simple Assault	353	56.2
All other offenses	173	27.5

Previous Criminal Involvement. In the data set there were two variables that examined previous records before the triggering event of IPV (one was for the offenders and one was for the victims). Friday, et al. (2003-2005) did an electronic search for the name of the victim or the offender and any criminal incidents these individuals had before the triggering incident. The number of incident reports was included in the data set. This variable was recoded because it was an interval variable with the exact number of records on file. The variable then became a dichotomous variable of 0=no records on file and 1=any number of files on record. This meant that there was 0=no previous criminal involvement and 1=previous criminal involvement. For victims the results were split down the center with 43.5% of the victims (n=226) not being involved in crime while 56.5% (n=294) of the victims having criminal histories. There were 206 offenders (33.9%) that had previous recorded criminal involvement in crime before the

triggering event. However, 402 individuals (66.1%) who were offenders for the triggering event were criminally involved before the incident.

Table 1.4 Criminal Involvement for both Offenders and Victims

	No Previous Criminal Involvement		Previous Criminal Involvement	
	N	%	N	%
Offender	206	33.9	402	66.1
Victim	226	43.5	294	56.5

Repeat Criminal Involvement. An important variable to study when examining IPV is repeat involvement in criminal activity. To measure the continued involvement in criminal activity or future involvement in crime of both the offenders and victims of IPV, Friday and colleagues (2003-2005) tracked both the offenders and victims of the original IPV incident for a span of twenty four months as the original incidents occurred in 2003 and the tracking information was accumulated in 2005. To measure the victims' recidivism, a variable tracked by the original researchers was used where they keep track of all the number of records on file with the police that included the victim's name after their original incident of IPV. This was tracked for a twenty four month span as the original incident of IPV occurred in 2003 and the researchers gathered the follow up data in 2005. The researchers had an exact number of how many records but for this study that variable was recoded into a dichotomous measure with no future records on file being coded as 0 and 1+ future records for the victim being coded as 1. This meant that 0 was for no future criminal involvement and 1 meant that the individual was involved in future criminal activity. There were 54.8% of the sample (n=285) who did have records with the police for future criminal incidents after their original incident of IPV. However, 235 individuals or 45.2% of the sample did not have any future records on file with the police. There is no mention

in these records as to the victims' role in each of the police records so there is no way of knowing if they were offenders or victims in any of their future criminal activity.

Each offender was tracked for twenty-four months after their original incident of IPV in the same way as the victims. The researchers, Friday, Lord, Exum, and Hartman, also entered in any new police records after the original incident for the offenders. This was recoded the same way as was the variable for victims. It was changed into a dichotomous variable with 0 meaning no new police records and no future criminal activity and 1+ police records being coded as 1 for future criminal involvement. There were 377 individuals or 62.0% of the sample of offenders who did have continued criminal activity in the twenty four month follow-up period. However, 38.0% (n=231) of the sample did not have any continued criminal involvement after their original incident of IPV.

Table 1.5 Continued Involvement in Criminal Activity for Offenders and Victims

	No		Yes	
	N	%	N	%
Offender	231	38.0	377	62.0
Victim	235	45.2	285	54.8

Domestic Violence Recidivism for Offenders. Included in the recidivism information, the researchers (Friday, Lord, Exum, and Hartman, 2006) also documented if each of the future complaints were noted by the police as being domestic violence complaints. The number of future domestic violence complaints for the victims was so small that it will not be examined; however, there was a sufficient number of offenders who had future domestic violence complaints. To determine the amount of domestic violence recidivism, for this study each future complaint in the tracking data was examined to see whether it was checked for being IPV. All of the Domestic Violence Recidivism variables for each complaint were added together. There were

170 offenders or 27.1% of the sample who were involved in future IPV incidents. This percentage of recidivism related to future IPV increases as there were a total of 486 offenders who recidivated for any crime, and 170 of those offenders recidivated for IPV. This means that of all the offenders who recidivated almost 35% of the future criminal incidents were for IPV. However, there were 458 offenders (72.9%) whose data was missing.

Plan of Analysis

The goal of this study is to determine whether the victim offender interaction framework applies to the study of intimate partner violence. It is expected that like other violent crime, there are three different groups of individuals involved in IPV: pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. Once the three groups are separated, a bivariate analysis will be conducted to see if there are individual level risk factors that can be identified. The main variables to be studied in connection to the victim offender overlap are gender, race, marital status, age, past criminal involvement, continued criminal activity, severity of triggering event, and IPV recidivism for offenders. Since there are three groups that will be compared, an ANOVA or analysis of variance test will be used to see if there is a statistical significant difference on the variables between the three groups. If there is a difference in the means between the groups, a Post Hoc test will be run to show where the differences in the means are. The Post Hoc test to be used is the Tukey HSD. For this analysis, only age will be tested using the ANOVA measure as it is the only interval variable being tested. The rest of the study will be analyzed with the Pearson's chi-square. Chi-square is used for nominal variables to see the probability of an independent measure and a dependent measure occurring simultaneously and its significance. For this analysis, the chi-square test will be used to analyze the victim offender overlap independent measure against the repeat criminal involvement dependent measure and the

severity of the triggering event variable. Other demographic measures such as the gender, race, and past criminal involvement will also be tested using the chi-square statistical test.

CHAPTER V

Results

The goal of this study is to examine if there are unique differences between the three victim offender overlap groups outlined in Chapter IV: pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. It was hypothesized that each group would differ demographically (i.e., gender and marital status) and behaviorally (i.e., severity of the initial triggering incident, prior criminal involvement, and future criminal activity). Past research conducted by Mustaine and Tewksbury (2000) and Klevens, Duque, & Ramirez (2002) found differences in victim offender groups for crimes such as assault and homicide. The current study extends this line of research to the study of intimate partner violence (IPV).

Pure Victims

The first hypothesis to be tested involves those in the victim offender group who are solely victims of crime. It was hypothesized that these individuals will be more likely to be females and they will also be more likely to be married than other groups. In terms of behavior, it was hypothesized that individuals categorized as victims only would be less likely to be involved in risky behaviors such as past criminal history and future involvement in crime than the other victim offender overlap groups. To test these hypotheses, bivariate analyses was performed for the pure victim group on several independent measures. The results are shown in Table 2. Using the chi-square test of correlations at .05 level of significance, three independent variables showed statistically significant relationships for the dependent measure of victim offender overlap.

Gender. It was hypothesized that pure victims would almost solely consist of females. Results support this hypothesis revealing that pure victims were overwhelmingly female (93.8 percent; n=392) supporting the hypothesis. Further analysis found statistically significant differences in gender across victim offender groups. Specifically, sole victims are significantly more likely to be female (93.8 percent) compared to sole offenders (7.4 percent) and victim-offenders (41.7 percent). The chi-square statistic for gender across all the victim offender groups was $\chi^2(2) = 569.45, p=.000$.

Marital Status. It was originally hypothesized that more married individuals would be in the pure victim group when compared to the other victim offender overlap groups. For the pure victims group, single individuals made up the majority of the sample (54.1 percent; n=166), followed by married (27.7 percent; n=85), separated (8.5 percent; n=26), and divorced (3.9 percent; n=12). Results, however, do not find support for this hypothesis as no statistically significant differences related to marital status were found across groups. Furthermore, the majority of individuals for each group were single (54.1 percent of sole victims, 51.1 percent of sole offenders, and 52.6 percent of victim offenders), not married. The chi-square statistic for marital status and the victim offender overlap measure was $\chi^2(8) = 9.25, p=.322$. Therefore, the pure victims group is not comprised of a majority of individuals who are married.

Prior Criminal Involvement. It was also hypothesized that for the pure victims group certain risky behaviors, such as prior criminal activity and future criminal offending, would be less likely when compared to the other two victim offender overlap groups. Among the pure victims group, roughly half (55.6 percent; n=202) of the individuals were not involved in any prior criminal activity. When compared to the other victim offender overlap groups, similarities were found between the pure victims group (55.6 percent had not been previously involved in a

criminal incident) and pure offenders (56.0 percent of pure offenders had not been previously involved in a criminal incident). Differences were found, however, when pure victims were compared to victim offenders, of which only 12.7 percent of victim offender had no previous criminal involvement as either a victim and/or offender. This is a statistically significant relationship. The chi square statistic for prior criminal involvement and the victim offender overlap is $\chi^2(2) = 214.43, p=.000$.

Repeat Criminal Activity. The last variable to be analyzed was repeat criminal activity as it was hypothesized that risky behaviors such as repeat criminal involvement would be less likely for the pure victims group, compared to the other victim offender overlap groups. This hypothesis held true as 57.6 percent (n=209) of the pure victims had no future criminal activity (as either victims or offenders), compared to pure offenders (54.4 percent were not involved in repeat criminal incidents) and victim offenders (12.7 were not involved in repeat criminal incidents). These differences are statistically significant. The chi square statistic for repeat criminal activity and the victim offender overlap groups is $\chi^2(2) = 149.92, p=.000$. Therefore, the hypothesis that pure victims would be less likely to be involved in future criminal activity was found to be true as pure victims had the lowest amount of repeat criminal involvement.

Overall, the independent measures of prior criminal involvement, gender, and continued criminal involvement were found to be related to the victim offender overlap variable as predicted. Marital status was not found to be related to the victim offender overlap variable among pure victims.

Pure Offenders

The second hypothesis to be tested involves those in the victim offender group who are solely offenders of crime. It was hypothesized that these individuals will be more likely to be

male. In terms of behavior, it was hypothesized that individuals categorized as offenders only would be more likely to be involved in risky behaviors such as past criminal history and future involvement in crime than the pure victims group. However, it was hypothesized that the pure offenders group would be less likely to be involved in past criminal activity and future criminal involvement than the victim offenders group. It was also hypothesized that pure offenders would be more likely to be involved in serious triggering events such as aggravated assault and rape than the other victim offender overlap groups. To test these hypotheses, bivariate analyses were performed for the pure offenders group on several independent measures. The results are shown in Table 2. Using the chi-square test of correlations at .05 level of significance, three independent variables showed statistically significant relationships for the dependent measure of victim offender overlap.

Gender. It was hypothesized that pure offenders would be predominately male. Results support this hypothesis revealing that pure offenders were overwhelmingly male (92.6 percent; n=300). Further analysis found statistically significant differences in gender across victim offender groups. Specifically, sole offenders are significantly more likely to be male (92.6 percent) compared to pure victims (6.2 percent) and victim-offenders (58.3 percent). The chi square statistic for gender and the victim offender groups is $\chi^2(2) = 569.45, p=.000$.

Severity of Triggering Events. It was originally hypothesized that pure offenders would be more likely to be involved in serious triggering events such as aggravated assault and rape than the other victim offender overlap groups. For the pure offenders group, the majority of initial domestic violence incidents consisted of simple assaults (56.3 percent; n=184), followed by other offenses (26.3 percent; n=86), aggravated assaults (15.6 percent, n=51), and forcible rape/sodomy (1.8 percent, n=6). Results, however, do not support the hypothesis that pure

offenders would be more likely to be involved in serious triggering events such as aggravated assault and rape as statistically significant differences were not found related to the severity of triggering events across groups. Furthermore, the majority of individuals, regardless of victim offender overlap group, were involved in simple assaults (57.2 percent of sole victims, 56.3 percent for sole offenders, and 55.4 percent for victim offenders), not aggravated assaults or rapes. The chi square statistic for severity of the triggering event and the victim offender overlap measure was $\chi^2(6) = 3.84, p=.699$.

Prior Involvement in Crime. It was hypothesized that for the pure offenders group certain risky behaviors, such as prior criminal activity and future criminal offending, would be more likely when compared to the pure victims group. However, the pure offenders will have fewer instances of prior criminal involvement and future criminal activity than the victim offenders group. Among the pure offenders group, roughly half (56.0 percent, $n=172$) of the individuals had no previous officially recorded criminal activity. When compared to the other victim offender overlap groups, similarities were found between the pure offenders group (44.0 percent had been previously involved in a criminal incident) and pure victims (44.4 percent had been previously involved in a criminal incident). Differences were found, however, when pure offenders were compared to victim offenders, of which 87.3 percent had previous criminal involvement as either a victim and/or offender. This is a statistically significant relationship. The chi square statistic for prior criminal involvement and the victim offender overlap is $\chi^2(2) = 214.43, p=.000$. Police records were used to determine the prior criminal involvement of each individual and it should be noted that these records made no mention as to the role the individual played in the criminal activity.

Repeat Criminal Activity. The last variable to be analyzed was repeat criminal activity and it was hypothesized that risky behaviors such as repeat criminal involvement would be more likely for the pure offenders group, compared to the pure victims group. However, when pure offenders were compared to the victim offenders group it was hypothesized that their likelihood of repeat criminal activity would be less than the victim offenders. This hypothesis held true as 45.6 percent (n=140) of the pure offenders were involved in future criminal activity (as either victims or offenders), compared to pure victims (42.4 percent were involved in future criminal incidents) and victim offenders (80.3 percent were involved in repeat criminal incidents). These differences were statistically significant. The chi square statistic for repeat criminal activity and the victim offender overlap groups is $\chi^2(2) = 149.92, p=.000$. Therefore, the results are consistent with the hypothesis that pure offenders would have fewer individuals involved in future crime than victim/offenders, however, pure victims have the least amount of involvement in future criminal activity.

Overall, the independent measures of prior criminal involvement, gender, and continued criminal involvement were found to be related to the victim offender overlap variable pure offenders as predicted. Severity of the triggering event was not found to be related to the victim offender overlap variable among pure offenders.

Victims/Offenders

The last hypothesis to be tested involves those in the victim/offender group who are both victims and offenders of crime. It was hypothesized that the predominate gender makeup of the victim offender group could not be predicted for this group as some research has documented females as more likely to be involved in crime as both victims and offenders and some has males making up the majority of the victim/offender group. In terms of behavior, it was hypothesized

that individuals categorized as the victim/offender group would be the group most likely to be involved in risky behaviors such as past criminal activity and future involvement in crime when compared to the other victim offender overlap groups. It was also hypothesized that the victim offenders group would be the individuals least likely to be involved in serious triggering events such as aggravated assault and rape compared to the other victim offender overlap groups. To test these hypotheses, bivariate analyses were performed for the victim/offenders group on several independent measures. The results are shown in Table 2. Using the chi-square test of correlations at .05 level of significance, three independent variables showed statistically significant relationships for the dependent measure of victim offender overlap.

Gender. It was hypothesized that gender would be non directional for the victim/offender group.. Results show that there was a slight majority of males (58.3 percent, n=296) in the victim/offender group. Further analysis found statistically significant differences in gender across the victim offender overlap categories. Specifically, sole victims are significantly more likely to be female (93.8 percent) compared to pure offenders (7.4 percent) and victim/offenders (41.7 percent). In contrast, sole offenders are significantly more likely to be males (92.6 percent), compared to pure victims (6.2 percent) and victim/offenders (58.3 percent). Finally, victim/offenders were roughly split down the middle with males constituting 58.3 percent of the sample and females constituting 41.7 percent). The chi-square statistic for gender across all the victim offender groups was $\chi^2(2) = 569.45, p=.000$.

Prior Criminal Involvement. It was also hypothesized that for the victim/offender group certain risky behaviors, such as prior criminal involvement and future criminal activity, would be more likely when compared to the other two victim offender overlap groups. Among the victim/offender group, a majority (87.3 percent, n=400) of the individuals were involved in prior

criminal activity. Similarities existed between the pure victims (44.4 percent had been previously involved in a criminal incident) and pure offenders (44.0 percent had been previously involved in a criminal incident) while the main difference was between victim/offenders who had 87.3 percent that were involved in prior criminal activity. This is a statistically significant relationship. The chi-square statistic for prior criminal involvement and victim offender overlap is $\chi^2(2) = 214.43, p=.000$.

Repeat Criminal Activity. The last variable to be analyzed was repeat criminal activity. It was hypothesized that risky behaviors, such as repeat criminal involvement, would be more likely for the victim/offender group, compared to the other victim offender overlap categories. This hypothesis held true as 80.3 percent (n=368) of the victim/offenders had continued criminal activity (as either victims or offenders), compared to pure victims (42.4 percent were involved in future criminal incidents) and pure offenders (45.6 percent were involved in future criminal incidents). These differences are statistically significant. The chi-square statistic for repeat criminal activity and the victim offender overlap groups is $\chi^2(2) = 149.92, p=.000$. Therefore, the results were consistent with the hypothesis that victim/offenders were the group most likely to be involved in repeat criminal activity.

Severity of Triggering Events. It was originally hypothesized that victim/offenders would be less likely to be involved in serious triggering events such as aggravated assault and rape than the other victim offender overlap groups. For the victim/offender group, simple assaults made up the majority of the initial DV incidents (55.4 percent; n=283), followed by other offenses (28.2 percent; n=144), aggravated assaults (15.5 percent; n=79), and forcible rape/sodomy (1.0 percent; n=5). Results, however, do not find support for this hypothesis as no statistically significant differences related to severity of triggering events were found across

groups. Furthermore, the majority of the individuals for each group were involved in simple assaults (57.2 percent of sole victims, 56.3 percent of pure offenders, and 55.4 percent of victim offenders). The chi-square statistic for severity of triggering event and the victim offender overlap measure was $\chi^2(6) = 3.84, p=.699$.

Overall, the independent measures of prior criminal involvement, gender, and continued criminal involvement were found to be related to the victim offender overlap variable, victim/offenders, as predicted. Severity of the triggering event was not found to be related to the victim offender overlap variable among victim offenders.

The main hypothesis behind this study was that there were unique differences between the three groups of individuals involved in IPV. This hypothesis was based on the growing body of victim offender overlap research that indicates that most crime involves three types of groups: pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. This research finds differences in race, gender, risky behaviors, and criminal involvement between these groups. This study found similar results in regards to individuals involved in intimate partner violence. Specifically, statistically significant differences were found across the variables of gender, prior criminal involvement, and future criminal activity. Each victim offender group: pure offenders, pure victims, and victim/offenders were found to differ in their levels of prior and future criminal involvement. However, there were several limitations to this study and those will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Recommendations for future research and how further studies can expand on the knowledge gained from this study will also be discussed.

Table 2 Bivariate analyses of Victim Offender Overlap

	Pure Victims		Pure Offenders		Victim/Offenders		χ^2
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Gender*							569.45(2)
Male	26	6.2	300	92.6	296	58.3	
Female	392	93.8	24	7.4	212	41.7	
Marital Status							9.25(8)
Single	166	54.1	96	51.1	163	52.6	
Divorced	12	3.9	9	4.8	9	2.9	
Separated	26	8.5	17	9.0	15	4.8	
Married	85	27.7	48	25.5	95	30.6	
Prior Criminal Involvement *							214.43(2)
No Prior Involvement	202	55.6	172	56.0	58	12.7	
Prior Involvement	161	44.4	135	44.0	400	87.3	
Repeat Criminal Activity*							149.92(2)
No Future Criminal Victimization	209	57.6	–	–	–	–	
No Future Criminal Offending	–	–	167	54.4	–	–	
No Future Criminal Offending or Victimization	–	–	–	–	90	19.7	
Severity of Triggering Event							3.84(6)
Aggravated assault	54	12.9	51	15.6	79	15.5	
Forcible rape/sodomy	9	2.2	6	1.8	5	1.0	
Simple assault	239	57.2	184	56.3	283	55.4	
All other offenses	116	27.8	86	26.3	144	28.2	

* p<.001

CHAPTER VI

Discussion

Research examining the concept of victim offender overlap is relatively recent (Broidy et al., 2006; Klevens, Duque, & Ramirez, 2002; Loeber et al., 2005; Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2000; Pape & Pedersen, 1999; Schreck, Stewart, & Osgood, 2008). The concept of victim offender overlap asserts that there are three types of individuals involved in crime, those who are only victims of crime (i.e., pure victims), those who are only offenders of crime (i.e., pure offenders), and those who are involved in a criminal lifestyle where they are both victims and offenders (i.e., victim-offenders). This line of research has concentrated on the application of the victim offender overlap framework to the study of assault and homicide, finding support for the existence of the aforementioned groups. It is not known, however, whether or not these same groups are found in intimate partner violence (IPV) cases. Research conducted by Johnson and Ferraro (2000) on common couple violence and similar research by Steinmetz (1980) on mutual combative relationships suggest that there is a group of individuals who resemble victim-offenders, however, no direct application or tests of this framework have been conducted. As such, the application of the victim offender overlap framework to the study of IPV may be beneficial.

The current study provided one of the first known attempts to combine IPV with the victim offender overlap framework. Specifically, it was proposed that like other types of crime, within IPV there exist three distinct groups of individuals involved: pure victims, pure offenders, and victim-offenders. These groups are distinguishable because

of marked differences related to demographic characteristics (i.e. gender, age, and marital status) and involvement in risky behaviors (i.e. prior criminal involvement, severity of IPV incident, and future criminal activity). As such, it was predicted that victim-offenders would be the group most likely to engage in prior and future criminal activity. Pure victims, on the other hand, would have the least involvement in prior or future criminal activity, and would be predominately female and married. Finally, pure offenders were hypothesized to be predominately male, and would be involved in the most types of IPV.

Utilizing official police data from the state of North Carolina, IPV incidents were examined (Friday, Lord, Exum, & Hartman, 2003-2005). Specifically, the number of domestic violence incidents occurring in 2003 that were reported to the police and that included a single IPV offender and a single IPV victim were analyzed. Individuals were labeled as pure victims, pure offenders, or victim/offenders dependent upon their role in the original IPV incident and subsequent criminal incidents on file. Differences between groups in demographics and behavior were then analyzed using bivariate statistical models.

In regards to the three groups studied, three statistically significant variables were found: gender, prior criminal involvement, and future criminal activity. Overall, pure victims were more likely to be female, had fewer prior criminal incidents, and had little subsequent criminal activity. This is consistent with the feminist view of IPV where females are considered to be the primary victims of IPV. According to the feminist perspective on IPV, female victims are also unlikely to be criminally involved. The results of this study support this argument as pure victims were also less likely to have prior criminal involvement (55.6% of pure victims had no prior criminal activity) or repeat acts of IPV (57.6% of pure victims had no subsequent criminal involvement) compared to pure offenders (56.0% and 54.4% respectively) and victim-offenders

(12.7% and 19.7% respectively). This finding, however, may be a result of measurement. To measure prior criminal involvement and subsequent criminal acts, police records were used. Therefore, only the criminal incidents that were reported to the police were used. As such, some incidents may have not been included into either the measure of prior criminal involvement or future criminal activity. There is also no way from the police records to determine the role the individual played in either the prior records or the subsequent reports. Therefore, the pure victims could have prior records of victimization or they could have been offending in the prior records there is no way to determine.

The original hypothesis predicted that pure victims were more likely to be married than pure offenders or victim-offenders. Differences in marital status were not found to be statistically significant. Somewhat surprising, a majority of the pure victim group were single. It should be noted that all of the groups were predominately single. This may be because while IPV occurs at all ages like most crime, IPV is more likely to happen when individuals are young. In fact, Rennison and Welchans (2000) found that domestic violence is more prominent among women aged 16 to 24. Therefore, since domestic violence occurs when most victims are young it would also be less likely that younger individuals would be married.

Another victim offender overlap group is pure offenders and they were also analyzed and there were several significant differences found for that group. This line of research was based on studies conducted by Johnson and Ferraro (2000) which indicated that within IPV there is a distinct type of IPV referred to as patriarchal terrorism. Patriarchal terrorists are by and large men who engage in more serious and longer lasting forms abuse directed towards their female partner. Based on this line of research, it was originally hypothesized that pure offenders would be similar to patriarchal terrorists and therefore they would be men who had long criminal

histories and to have committed serious (i.e., aggravated assault, sexual assault, rape) original IPV incidents.

Consistent with this perspective, this study found that pure offenders were more likely to be male and recidivate. Somewhat unexpectedly, of the three groups studied, pure offenders were the least likely to have a prior criminal record. This finding, however, may have been due to the measure of prior criminal involvement being based on police records. Pure offenders may have more criminal incidents that were not documented by the police. Therefore, while for this study their prior criminal involvement appears low it may actually be higher. More research should be conducted to see if lower levels of prior criminal involvement for pure offenders are consistent across studies or if there was something unique to this study and/or IPV.

Differences in triggering events (i.e., serious versus non-serious) were also not found. Rather, regardless of offender victim overlap grouping, the majority of incidents involved simple assaults, followed by “other” offenses (i.e., violation of a restraining order, stalking, etc.). This is consistent with past research. For example, Catalano (2007) found that between 2001 and 2005, only 5% of women suffered serious injuries due to IPV assaults. This means that most IPV is relatively minor in terms of physical injuries to the victims. Police officers must now respond to any case of IPV and due to mandatory arrest laws, they must arrest at least one individual for the incident. In the past, police officers could use their discretion to determine if someone needed to be arrested or if the situation could be resolved without involving the criminal justice system. In many cases, less serious cases of IPV were never included in police records as officers let the couple figure their problems out themselves. Mandatory arrest laws may have forced officers to take action for less serious IPV which in the past would have been unlikely to be included in police records. Policies such as mandatory arrest laws have increased the amount of time and

energy that police officers put into IPV incidents. Therefore, in the past the crime of IPV had to be relatively serious to warrant the same amount of attention that police are required to give to IPV crimes now.

The final group studied was victim/offenders. No clear gender differences were found among this group. This is not surprising since there has been no prior research to indicate whether or not individuals who were involved in IPV as both victims and offenders would be more likely to be male or female. Research by Johnson and Ferraro (2000) that has examined common couple violence (also family violence perspective) asserts that men and women *equally* engage in IPV. In fact, the family violence perspective states that females are just as likely to be abusive towards their male partners as males are towards females. This may be why there is no real gender difference manifested in the victim-offender group. Furthermore, research examining victim offender overlap in general has not concentrated on the potential effects gender may play within each victim offender group.

While there were no clear gender differences manifested within the victim/offender group, other differences were found. First, an overwhelmingly number of victim/offenders had criminal histories. In fact, victim/offenders had the highest amount of involvement in both prior and future criminal activity of all three groups studied. One explanation for this finding may lie with the fact that criminal activity has been found to be a predictor for victimization (Jensen & Brownfield, 1986). Therefore, the more involved in a criminal lifestyle a person is the greater the risk of victimization that individual faces. This may be one of the reasons why offenders become victims in future criminal incidents. However even individuals who were categorized as victims in the original IPV incident had higher levels of past criminal involvement than the pure victim group. This level of past criminal history may be why they were more likely to become offenders

and to be involved in future criminal incidents. Therefore, their involvement in crime as both offender and victim may be an inevitable consequence of their criminal lifestyle.

Understanding the relationship between victim offender overlap research and IPV is very important not just for the research community at large, but also for policy makers. According to Tjaden and Thoennes (2000), one in four women will experience IPV in their lifetime. The national costs for IPV according to the Center for Disease Control (2003) were estimated to be around \$5.8 billion a year (not including criminal justice system costs). It is hard to estimate the criminal justice costs to IPV as each state and county are different in terms of their response to IPV. All parts of the criminal justice system (police, courts, and victim services) deal with substantial costs caused by IPV. One of the primary victim services that are essential to helping IPV victims are shelters. These shelters are by and large independent in terms of their rules and policies, however, victims of IPV who also have a past criminal history (i.e., domestic violence charges or other violent criminal incidents) are not accepted at most shelters (Cramer, Cousin, & Hardy, 2003). Very few shelters allow IPV victims with an IPV criminal history record, and these shelters are hampered by bed availability. Shelters are crowded and therefore shelter workers may turn away victims with a past criminal record (i.e., victim/offenders) in favor of victims without a record (i.e., pure victims). This can mean that they are not allowed to stay in shelters or to receive other important services that pure victims are given.

Policy makers have sought to improve police response and the criminal justice system's actions towards IPV victims. One way to do that is through the introduction of mandatory arrest laws and the more recent inclusion of primary aggressor laws. Mandatory arrest laws were designed to stress the seriousness of IPV and to force police officers to react by arresting at least one individual involved in the domestic violent call. However, several unseen consequences of

the laws emerged. One of the main problems with the mandatory arrest law is that it encourages dual arrests. Dual arrests occur when police officers cannot determine who the IPV offender is. As a result, both individuals involved in the incident (offender and victim) are arrested. Many feminists have asserted that dual arrests result in the revictimization of the victim and should be stopped. To address the issue, some states have enacted primary aggressor laws. These inclusions to the mandatory arrest laws give the police the authority to determine who the primary aggressor is in the IPV situation and only arrest that individual. As of 2002, Hirschel and Buzawa confirm that twenty four states have primary aggressor laws with Georgia being one of them.

While policy makers strive to improve how the criminal justice system responds to individuals who are IPV victim offenders, researchers have sought to explain why certain people are victimized and subsequently become offenders of IPV. Feminist researchers have concentrated on the motivations of female IPV offenders. These motivations are typically more defensive in nature when compared with male IPV offenders, with most women reporting assaulting their intimate partners as a means of self defense or retaliation from their own victimization. This research is the right start in understanding IPV victim offenders but there needs to be more acknowledgement of male victim/offenders and an understanding of their motivations and circumstances. There is so much concentration on males as batterers and females as victims that individuals who participate as both victims and offenders of IPV are being ignored. This is true for both male and female IPV victim/offenders.

This study has shown that there is a group of individuals involved in IPV who are both victims and offenders. If there is little acknowledgment by policy makers and researchers of this unique group, then a large number of victims are not receiving the help they need. Policy makers

must make changes to the current restrictive policies and format new creative ways to serve victim offenders of IPV in both victim services and in the criminal justice process. Researchers should also strive to improve the understanding of IPV victim offenders and the motivations and predictors for this behavior.

Limitations

While an important first step in applying the victim offender overlap framework to the study of intimate partner violence, this study is not without limitations. The current study relied on a pre-existing data set that contained officially recorded incidents of IPV criminal involvement. While the data set was rather large (N=1,256) and recent (2003-2005), it has limitations that should be noted. The first limitation to the study was the usage of police records. The majority of both victim offender overlap research and IPV research on mutually combative relationships has been conducted using victimization surveys. Police records typically underestimate crime; particularly crime in which the offender and victims know each other, like IPV. For the study of IPV, this is especially troubling as a great deal of IPV incidents are not brought to the attention of the police, hence not making it into police records.

Second, several variables that have been found to be important in differentiating between victims, offenders, and victim-offenders in previous studies were missing from the dataset utilized for this study. For example, when studying victim offender overlap the main variables that Klevens, Duque, and Ramirez (2002) found to be key were related to risky behaviors. For example, Klevens and colleagues (2002) had several variables on guardianship that were not present in this study. Specifically, variables on alcohol and drug use would have been useful to see if any differences existed between the groups. There were several variables about intoxication in the data set however these variables were dependent on the police filling them in

and for the most part the variables were left blank. In fact, for the intoxication variable there were only 131 individuals (10.4%) who were coded as intoxicated and the rest of the sample (89.5%) was left as unknown. There was no way of determining whether these individuals were actually intoxicated (or not), whether the police were unsure of their intoxication and hence did not indicate so in the police report, or whether the police just forgot to enter the information into the system. The lack of variables measuring risky behavior is a definite limitation of the current study.

Third, another limitation of this study was the variables used for prior criminal involvement and subsequent criminal activity. Both of these variables were based on the records on file with the police (prior criminal involvement was the record on file before the original IPV incident and future criminal activity was the record on file after the original IPV incident). However, none of the police records state what role the individual played in the criminal incidents. Therefore, it is impossible to determine if a pure victims' prior criminal involvement is due to their prior victimization or if they were actually involved in prior offending. The same is true for pure offenders and victim/offenders, as well as for future criminal activity. A better way to study prior criminal involvement is to interview victims and offenders about their criminal involvement. One of the main problems with using police records to determine criminal activity, both prior and subsequent, is that some crime is not reported to the police. In particular, IPV is a very private crime and victims are less likely to report a crime when the offender is someone they know. Therefore, there may be higher levels of both past criminal involvement and future criminal incidents when the individuals self report their criminal involvement as opposed to basing it on police records.

Finally, the current dataset only includes the first five subsequent complaints for the twenty four month follow up period to the original IPV incident. However, when going through the data sets there were several victims whose offending started on the fourth or fifth complaint (prior to this they were categorized as the victim in subsequent complaints). If more subsequent complaints were used, it is possible that more individuals who were included in one of the pure groups (pure victims or pure offenders) would have joined the victim/offender group. Subsequent studies should not truncate the number of complaints studied.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first limitation that was discussed was the lack of variables concerning risky behaviors. Therefore, future research should concentrate on the inclusion of more variables representing risky behaviors including alcohol/drug use, guardianship, and criminal history. Case in point, research conducted by Testa, Livingston, and Leonard (2003) found a connection between women's use of illicit drugs (i.e. cocaine, heroin) and their odds of experiencing IPV. While their study did not find a connection between women's drinking and IPV victimization, other studies have found that males who are heavy drinkers are more likely to perpetrate serious IPV (Collins, Kroutil, Roland, & Moore-Gurrera, 1997; Cunradi, Caetano, & Schafer, 2002; Murphy, Winters, O'Farrell, Fals-Stewart, & Murphy, 2005). Future research should concentrate on the possible connection between alcohol and drug use and IPV.

Assortative mating is similar to lifestyle routine activities theory in that it asserts that engaging in a criminal lifestyle, or in this case being married to a criminal, increases the risk of an individual being both offending and victimization (Carbone-Lopez & Kruttschnitt, 2010). This idea was developed after studies found that incarcerated women had disproportionately high rates of prior victimization (Wellish & Falkin, 1994; Wolf Harlow, 1999; Chesney-Lind, 2002;

Dugan & Castro, 2006; Snell, 1994). Along these lines, the assortative mating perspective contends that a women's own criminality may increase their odds of starting an intimate relationship with a male offender (Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rudolph, 2002; Leverentz, 2006), which may then serve to increase their risk of IPV behaviors (as victims and offenders). This study has found that there is a strong connection between victimization and offending for both female and males involved in IPV. Future research should examine this connection and see if assortative mating could better explain the existence of IPV victim/offenders.

Future research should also examine the motivations behind female victim/offenders of IPV. The first step to doing this is a qualitative study using a small sample of women to properly understand how these women become involved in IPV as victims and offenders. Is there something unique to these women that differentiates them from the pure victims and pure offenders groups? There is some suggestion in the literature that women perpetrate IPV as a reaction to their own victimization and thus are acting in self defense or retaliation (Barnett, Lee, Thelan, 1997; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, & Tolin, 1997; Hamberger & Potente, 1994; Miller & Meloy, 2006; Saunders, 1986). More research, however, is needed to examine the motivations and situational contexts behind IPV and these distinct groups of individuals involved as victim, offenders, and victim/offenders.

Conclusions

This study sought to tie two separate avenues of research together: victim offender overlap and IPV. Separately both areas of research have dealt with the unique concept of individuals who are both victims and offenders of crime. The current study found that three separate groups of individuals involved in IPV do exist: pure victims, pure offenders, and victim/offenders. There exist demographic and behavioral differences between the groups. It is

important for future research to study these differences in more depth so researchers can understand why some individuals are more predisposed to be both victims and offenders of crime as opposed to others who only play only one role in criminal incidents.

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