

# **LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE IN HOMICIDE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

**Proceedings of the 2004  
Homicide Research Working Group  
Annual Symposium**

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The Homicide Research Working Group (HRWG) is an international and interdisciplinary organization of volunteers dedicated to cooperation among researchers and practitioners who are trying to understand and limit lethal violence. The HRWG has the following goals:

- to forge links between research, epidemiology and practical programs to reduce levels of mortality from violence;
- to promote improved data quality and the linking of diverse homicide data sources;
- to foster collaborative, interdisciplinary research on lethal and non-lethal violence;
- to encourage more efficient sharing of techniques for measuring and analyzing homicide;
- to create and maintain a communication network among those collecting, maintaining and analyzing homicide data sets; and
- to generate a stronger working relationship among homicide researchers.

Homicide Research Working Group publications, which include the *Proceedings* of each annual Intensive Workshop (beginning in 1992), the *HRWG Newsletter*, and the contents of issues of the journal *Homicide Studies* (beginning in 1997), may be downloaded from the HRWG web site, which is maintained by the Inter-University Consortium of Political and Social Research, at the following address:  
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## **FORWARD**

**Dallas Drake, Program Chair**

The Thirteenth Annual Summer Workshop of the Homicide Research Working Group (HRWG) was sponsored by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) in Ann Arbor Michigan June 3-6, 2004. Forty-five group members convened in Ann Arbor to participate in an intimate four-day symposium. In an effort to match the workshop focus with the hosting agency, the theme for this year was "Linking Data to Practice in Homicide/Violence Prevention."

The Homicide Research Working Group is an international, interdisciplinary, group of homicide researchers dedicated to reducing harm from homicide and lethal violence. Though homicide research, dataset development, and intervention programs literally involve life-and-death issues, work in lethal violence had been scattered among numerous disciplines and largely uncoordinated. In an attempt to address this problem, practical and academic homicide experts from criminology, public health, demography, geography, medicine, sociology, criminal justice and a variety of other disciplines created the Homicide Research Working Group.

This year's workshop began with an opening panel presentation highlighting a "view from the field." Three practitioners discussed their efforts to link their research activities to practical use in the field, and consequently to prevent homicide and help citizens and inform policy makers. The next two-and-a-half days consisted of informative presentations covering a range of topics including robbery, femicide, crime theory, linking data to practice, historical perspectives on homicide, and comparisons of lethal and non-lethal violence. The poster presentations included a wide variety of practitioner and research topics, and provided the opportunity for intensive interaction among participants.

Two special components were introduced this year. The first was a series of roundtable discussions centering on the workshop theme of linking data to practice. Roundtables included intimate-partner homicide research and prevention, issues in data and measurement, the National Incident-Based Reporting System, and terrorism and weapons. These free-ranging discussion groups were a well-received addition to the workshop. The nature of these discussions is captured in these proceedings. The second addition included a special demonstration in our capstone session by showcasing the varied use of a cadaver-scent dog in locating buried or concealed bodies of homicide victims.

As always, these presentations were the springboard for many thought-provoking and insightful discussions on a wide variety of issues relating to our fields of expertise that will likely continue into the coming months.

Many thanks are deserved to all of the attendees for their participation. Special appreciation should be directed to the Ann Arbor Host Committee including Kaye Marz, Wendell Willacy and their staff at ICPSR. Also to be credited are the 2004 Program Committee members including Paul Blackman, Becky Block (Poster Chair), Richard Block, Miekko Bond, Dallas Drake (Program Chair), Chris Dunn, Lin Huff-Corzine (HRWG President), Tom Petee (*Homicide Studies* Co-editor), Wendy Regoeczi, and Barrie Ritter. Con-

ference registration was handled by Candice Batton (HRWG Treasurer) and Barbara Homer.

We hope these proceedings prove useful and that you join us in the coming year. The mid-year 2004 meeting of the Homicide Research Working Group will occur at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Nashville, Tennessee, November 17-20. The 2005 HRWG Annual Meeting will be held in Orlando, Florida, from June 3-6, hosted by the University of Central Florida and the University of South Florida.

Respectfully,

Dallas S. Drake  
Center for Homicide Research  
2004 HRWG Program Chair

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**OPENING PRESENTATION**  
**LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE HOMICIDE/VIOLENCE PREVENTION:**  
**THE VIEW FROM THE FIELD**

**Moderator:** Kaye Marz, National Archive of Criminal Justice Data

**Presenters:**

Where in Chicago is the Chicago School? Principles for Practice, Policy-Making and Problem-Solving.

Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Linking Data to Practice in Homicide and Violence Prevention.

Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology

The Culture of Gun Violence in Detroit.

David Martin, Wayne State University College of Urban, Labor and Metropolitan Affairs

**Recorder:** James Noonan, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Analysis Research and Development Unit



**WHERE IN CHICAGO IS THE CHICAGO SCHOOL?  
PRINCIPLES FOR PRACTICE, POLICY-MAKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING  
Carolyn R. Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority**

## **Introduction**

I hope all of you will bear with me, but this is not going to be my usual "data driven" presentation. Instead of talking about tables, time series graphs or Hot Spot Area maps, I would like to talk about the philosophy that underlies those tables, graphs and maps. "Linking Data and Practice" is the theme of the 2004 HRWG Workshop and this opening session, and the meeting is being sponsored by those who maintain a great tool for doing just that — ICPSR, home of the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data. When Lin Corzine asked me to be part of this opening session, I began to think about how much the meeting's theme has influenced what I have done professionally in the last 30 years. At the risk of sounding arrogant, I thought you might be interested in the guiding principles that formed the foundation for such projects as the Chicago Homicide Dataset, the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, Time Series Pattern Description (TSPAT), and Hot Spot Areas (STAC). The principles may sound familiar, because they also underlie the goals of HRWG. Let's see if you agree.

## **The Chicago School: Four Guiding Principles**

Some of you know that my graduate degree is in sociology from the University of Chicago, home of the "Chicago School." Many have tried to summarize the general precepts of the Chicago School (Abbott, 1999; Fine, 1995; Bulmer, 1984; Short, 1971; Faris, 1967), though Becker (1999) argues that the Chicago School never existed as a "unified school of thought" but rather as a "school of activity." From my perspective, the most fundamental contribution of the Chicago School was the way in which it linked thought and activity. Whatever "school of thought" it might represent was grounded in a "school of activity." Theory was inexorably linked to data, and data was linked to practice. The genius of the Chicago School was that it developed methods to link theory to data to practice. The following guiding principles summarize these methods.<sup>1</sup> For me, they define the proper way to go about the "business of research."

1. Pivotal importance of *coordinated and systematic collection of data*.
2. The *meaning of measurement* is an important subject for inquiry.
3. Importance of local data and the use of local areas as a *laboratory*.
4. Research should be both *policy-related and grounded in theory*.

### *Coordinated and Systematic Collection of Data*

Chicago School sociologists defined data as *all* information. They respected all data, regardless of source (surveys, case studies, oral histories or official government statistics) and regardless of format (individual-level, time series, or spatial data like land use, travel patterns, specific locations or Census tract aggregates). In other words, there was none of the "data chauvinism" sometimes seen today. Modern researchers sometimes narrow their focus to one perspective or one kind of data, even though both data quality

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<sup>1</sup>See Block (1991), Block (1990), Block (1989a) and Block (1989b) for earlier discussions of the four guiding principles of the Chicago School.

and availability have improved greatly since the days of the Chicago School. In contrast, Faris (1967: 88) tells us that Albion Small told his graduate students to "proceed as quickly as possible to make everything he taught them out of date."<sup>2</sup> No data chauvinism there.

Chicago School sociologists also realized that scholars who divorce themselves from empirical analysis lose as much as "administrative criminologists" who reject theory and rely on data analysis alone (Block, 1989a). In 1912, George Herbert Mead "was proposing the establishment of a central statistical bureau to consolidate, coordinate, and gather data on local social conditions with a view to making it possible to plan social action and public policy on a scientific basis" (Short, 1971: xxxv).

### *The Meaning of Measurement*

Chicago School sociologists not only campaigned against data chauvinism, but also warned against measurement chauvinism. They were concerned about the "inhibiting consequences of doctrines, schools of thought, and authoritative leaders" (Faris, 1967: 128) on objective measurement. Instead of complaining about the quality of available data, they tried to understand what the data were really measuring, to see meaning in the measurements themselves. The "meaning of measurement" was a worthy and appropriate area of study, indeed the foundation of research.

Chicago sociologists would have agreed with Sir Claus Moser's (1980:12) injunction that, "Any figure that looks interesting is probably wrong." For example, there is no "real" figure for the number of criminal events actually occurring. Despite the arguments that led to the development of the National Crime Survey (see Block & Block, 1984), there is no "dark figure" of crime. Instead, an occurrence is filtered through successive redefinitions, by participants in the incident, by observers of the incident, by societal representatives responding to notice of the incident, and so on (Block & Block, 1980). We should not assume that the number of crimes has changed, just because a crime indicator changes. Until demonstrated otherwise, it is better to assume that the *measurement* has changed. A number of years ago, a rather vituperative series of articles argued about the proper ARIMA models for several series of criminal offenses in Boston. No one noticed that the particular series at issue, armed robbery, began to increase sharply relative to comparable series, and also changed its pattern of seasonal fluctuation, just at the same time as the measurement of "armed" became more specific.

The Chicago School not only sought to understand measurement, but was actively involved in projects to improve measurement quality. Instead of seeing themselves as a class apart from those who collect and maintain official data, they often partnered with data administrators in a joint effort to improve data quality. They did not limit themselves to commenting on the data quality, but worked with public and private agencies, such as the state prison, the Institute for Juvenile Research or Hull House, to collect meaningful data (for example, see the Illinois Crime Survey, published in 1929 by the Chicago Crime Commission (Wigmore, 1929).

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<sup>2</sup>James Short (1971: xiii) reminds us that Albion W. Small was the head of the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago, the first in the US, established in 1892. Other members of the department that year were Charles Henderson, W. I. Thomas and George E. Vincent. George Herbert Mead was hired in the Philosophy Department two years later.

### *Local Laboratory*

The Chicago School was consciously rooted in the empirical. They understood the importance of grounding research in empirically verifiable local measurements, rather than abstract aggregates. From the beginning, the "study of the city" was a foundation of the Chicago School (Park, 1921; Park, Burgess & McKenzie, 1925). James Short (1971: xiii) quotes correspondence from Everett C. Hughes remembering that, "Leonard White told me of a famous meeting at which [Albion W.] Small got all the social science people together and suggested they all undertake study of the city, starting with Chicago." Robert Park taught that,

"Sociological research may very properly begin with the community . . . [because] the community is a visible object. One can point it out, define its territorial limits, and plot its constituent elements, its population, and its institutions on maps." (Park, 1952: 182).

There are many methodological pitfalls in trying to apply national-level research to local-level issues. Whether theory-based or public policy-based, many research questions focus on localities (e.g.: neighborhoods or cities). Data at a more aggregate level (national, for example) may not be appropriate for answering these local questions. Therefore, when researchers abandon the local laboratory, the validity of measurement can be threatened.

In addition, aggregate data can obscure data quality problems that would be apparent if the data were disaggregated. With local data, as opposed to data aggregated to a national level, knowledgeable people are more likely to be able to see egregious errors in data use or interpretation. In general, it is more difficult for poor-quality local data than for poor-quality aggregate data to pass the "giggle test." (When someone who really knows the data can read your tables with a straight face, your analysis has passed the giggle test.)

### *Research Linking Policy and Theory*

The Chicago School saw no disconnect between research grounded in theory and research grounded in policy. Examples abound. The Illinois prison at Statesville employed a "sociologist" on staff; Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay worked at the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR), established in 1909 (Shaw & McKay, 1942); the "state criminologist" was the director of IJR until 1941; the Chicago Area Project, founded by Clifford Shaw in 1932, conducted research-based experimental programs to curb juvenile delinquency in neighborhoods (Schlossman, et al., 1984); and there were many collaborations and other links between the Chicago School and Hull House (Addams, 1895). Jane Addams was the leader and spokesperson of an extensive and influential network of women sociologists, many of whom were connected to the University of Chicago (Deegan, 1978, 1986). Unfortunately, historians have largely ignored the contributions of Addams, as well as the contributions of other non-academic sociologists (see Johnson, 2004), to the Chicago School.

James Bennett (1981: 156), citing Short (1971) maintains that "two of the abiding goals of Burgess's life were the amelioration of social ills and the development of sociology as a science." He saw the two as inseparably linked:

"Sociological research is at present in about the situation in which psychology was before the introduction of laboratory methods, in which medicine was before Pasteur and the germ theory of disease. A great deal of social

information has been collected merely for the purpose of determining what to do in a given case. Facts have not been collected to check social theories. Social problems have been defined in terms of common sense, and facts have been collected, for the most part, to support this or that doctrine, not to test it. In very few instances have investigations been made disinterestedly, to determine the validity of a hypothesis" (Park & Burgess, 1924: 44).

Despite the vision of Park and Burgess, criminology in the 1970s and 1980s often focused on simplistic policy questions divorced from theory. Donald Cressey (1978) was concerned, as was the Chicago School, about the danger of rejecting or ignoring theory in favor of simplistic technology.

"The tragedy is in the tendency of modern criminologists to drop the search for causes and to join the politicians. Rather than trying to develop better ideas about why crimes flourish, for example, these criminologists . . . seem satisfied with a technological criminology whose main concern is for showing policy makers how to repress criminals and criminal justice more efficiently" (Cressey, 1978: 179).

### **Where in Chicago is the Chicago School?**

How did the four guiding principles of the Chicago School provide a foundation for work being done in Chicago currently and over the last 30 years?

#### *Coordinated and Systematic Collection of Data*

The coordinated and systematic collection of data is a hallmark of Chicago today, as it has been since the early days of the Chicago School. Two key examples are the Chicago Homicide Dataset (CHD), begun in the early 1960s by Richard Block and Franklin Zimring with the close cooperation of the Chicago Police Department (Block, 1976, 1977; Block & Zimring, 1973) and continuing today (Block & Block, 1993a); and the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study (CWHRS), a highly collaborative project to link lethal and non-lethal intimate partner violence data (Block, et al., 2000).

The CHD was built on the concept that the systematic collection of comparable data over a long period of time creates an important and extremely useful resource for testing theories and for developing and evaluating public policies.<sup>3</sup> It now includes all homicides that occurred in Chicago from 1965 to 1995 (archived version), and data through 2000 are being added. From its inception, the CHD has included spatial information. Thus, it did and does contain multi-layered perspectives — considerable detail on each homicide incident, each victim and each offender, detailed data on trends over time from the 1960s through the 1990s, and mapped data of all homicide incident locations.

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<sup>3</sup>Beginning in 1968 with the collection of 1965 data and continuing today, the Crime Analysis Unit of the Chicago Police Department has assisted and advised Richard Block, Carolyn Block and others in the Chicago Homicide Dataset project. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority has supported and maintained the Dataset since 1979. Funding for data collection and analysis over the years has been provided by the Joyce Foundation, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Loyola University of Chicago, the Ford Foundation, the University of Chicago, the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Institute of Mental Health.



The CWHRS was designed to give nurses, beat officers and other primary support people information they need to know in order to help women who are experiencing violence at the hands of an intimate partner lower the risk of life-threatening injury or death. To provide this practical information, the CWHRS collaborators created two related intimate partner violence datasets, lethal and nonlethal. No previous research had ever done this. There were tremendous methodological obstacles to overcome, most importantly assuring the safety of participants and making sure that no eligible woman was excluded, especially women who might be at risk of death but who were unknown to any helping agency (Block, et al., 2000). Through of the collaborative work of many individuals and agencies, these problems were solved and the CWHRS is now able to provide potentially life-saving information, such as abused women's decisions not to seek help; risk factors for serious injury or death that are particularly important for Latina/Hispanic women; and the differing constellations of risk factors for women who become homicide offenders versus women who become homicide victims (Block, 2003). To disseminate CWHRS results where they are needed most, the collaboration has archived the data at NCJRS.

The CHD, the CWHRS, and many other datasets collected and maintained by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) are archived at NCJRS. Following Chicago School principles, our goal is for a wide and diverse group of agencies and individuals to be able to use the data as a basis for research, policy making, or designing prevention or intervention programs. A small state agency, ICJIA does not have the resources to create and maintain archived versions of all of its datasets. NCJRS makes it possible.

### *The Meaning of Measurement*

Recent decades have seen a quiet revolution in the quality and availability of data. Sufficient information is available so that basic indicators can be measured at a degree of precision unknown and even unanticipated a few years ago. Often these data are misused, however, because they do not really measure what they may seem to measure (Block, 1991). How can we improve the connection between meaning and measurement? In 1995 and 1996, the National Institute of Justice sponsored a series of workshops focusing on "Measuring What Matters" in law enforcement, where 45 experts confronted this problem (Brady, 1996, 1997). One of the participants, Carl B. Klockars, told the group, "The most important thing about measurement is to define the problem that you want to measure in the proper way" (Brady, 1997: 2).

The CWHRS confronted numerous measurement issues. Just two examples are the Social Support Network (SSN) scale, and the measurement of marital status. Unable to find an instrument that would capture the amount of informal social support available for adult women experiencing intimate partner violence, CWHRS collaborators constructed a new 12-item scale. The SSN measures three aspects of informal support — acceptance and support, emergency help, and access to resources. It has been widely used in studies by other researchers, is archived in the Health and Social Instruments (HaPI) database, and now exists in three languages: English, Spanish and Tagalog.

Studies of intimate partner violence often use marital status as an indicator of cohabitation or estrangement. In contrast, the CWHRS asked each woman specific questions about her current partner (if multiple, the "one you feel closest to"), any partners responsible for violence against her in the past year, her relationship to each partner and whether

the relationship was current or former, and her living arrangements over the past year. This produced a much more accurate reflection of the complexity of women's lives. For example, 11% of "married" abused women were being abused by someone other than a current husband, 67% of "separated" abused women were being abused by someone other than a current or former husband, and 81% of "divorced" abused women were being abused by someone other than a former husband. This other abuser might be another boyfriend, a former intimate partner, or a current same-sex partner — 19% of the women who were being abused by a same-sex intimate partner reported that they were married, separated or divorced.

### *Local Laboratory*

One of the most important themes that emerged in NIJ's "Measuring What Matters" workshops (Brady, 1996: 4) was that measures should be grounded in the local community. As Chief Darrel W. Stephens commented,

"Of greatest importance, if you really want to measure anything [is that] . . . you've got to focus real hard on neighborhoods. You've got to build from the neighborhood up . . . focus our energies and efforts in policing nationally on doing the best we can with neighborhoods and working on problems with those neighborhoods . . ." (Brady, 1996:5).

A hallmark of the local laboratory is research conducted jointly by researchers and practitioners working together. Though collaborative research has become a buzz-word, collaborative methods are still in their infancy. Research partnerships exist, but true collaborations between researchers and practitioners are rare. A truly collaborative research project involves joint decisions at every stage, from developing the initial idea to designing the study, carrying out the study, and analyzing and disseminating the results. Given the Chicago School heritage, it is not surprising that two separate Chicago research projects have been working on the development of methods for collaborative research. The Policy Research Action Group (PRAG), begun by Phil Nyden and Wim Wiewal in the early 1980s (Nyden & Wiewal, 1992), developed methods to use the local community as a laboratory and to build a "sense of partnership" between community organizations and researchers (Nyden, Figert, Shibley and Burrows, 1997; Mayfield, Hellwig & Banks, 1999). In the CWHRS, over 35 individuals and numerous public and private agencies worked together on the project for many years, developing along the way a "collaborative culture" of mutual respect and shared goals (Block, Engel, Naureckas and Riordan, 1999a; 1999b).

### *Research Linking Policy and Theory*

Another obstacle that can prevent researchers and policy analysts from using data is that there is so much information that it is impossible for the human mind to assimilate it. The underlying reason behind the creation of both TSPAT (a tool for the quick and easy description of times series) and STAC (a tool for spatial analysis) was to make it easier for the average person who is not a statistician to visualize and interpret copious data. These tools help decision makers link data to policy decisions.

The spline regression program in TSPAT (Time Series Pattern Description) provides concrete and readily understandable answers to simple descriptive questions about the overall pattern of change over time in a variable. In nonstatistical language, TSPAT tells the user whether the variable generally increased, decreased, or stayed the same during the period in

question; whether there was a change in the pattern (for example, from an increase to a decrease); and, if there was a change, approximately when the change occurred. STAC (Spatial and Temporal Analysis of Crime) is a quick, visual, easy-to-use program for identifying Hot Spot Areas on a map. STAC finds the densest clusters of points on the map, and then fits a standard deviational ellipse to each cluster.<sup>4</sup>

With careful measurement, data analysis can produce results that are important for both theory and policy. For example, the NIJ Research Bulletin, *Street Gang Crime in Chicago* (Block & Block, 1993b), combined lethal and non-lethal gang crime data, mapped it, and asked whether gang-related homicides were located in Hot Spot Areas of gang-related non-lethal crime. It turned out that there were three different kinds of gang crime Hot Spot Areas — dense clusters of violent crime, vandalism (mostly graffiti) and drug-related crime. While the gang-related violent and vandalism Hot Spot Areas tended to overlap with each other, the gang-related drug crime Hot Spot Areas were often spatially distant. Gang homicides tended to cluster within the boundaries of violent and vandalism Hot Spot Areas, but not in the gang-related drug crime Hot Spot Areas. These results suggest that a homicide-reduction program might be more effective by focusing on Hot Spot Areas of gang violence, rather than on Hot Spot Areas of gang drug crime.

## Summary

If there is to be, as the Chicago School argued, no disconnect between research grounded in policy and research grounded in theory, what connects the two? The Chicago School answered: Data. Theory is linked to data and data is linked to practice. To improve the quality of research and policy decisions based on data, we must improve data quality. We do that by developing measures that have meaning and by building accessible analysis tools to answer the practical questions policy-makers ask. Thus, the four guiding principles are tightly related to each other. For example, a researcher using data that are inappropriate to the question at hand commits not only a "data chauvinism" error but also a "meaning of measurement" error.

The Chicago School's great insight was the importance of linking theory to data to practice. It was not deterred by data or measurement chauvinism. A key aspect in the world view of both the founding generation and the second generation, in contrast to most other scholars of the time, was the "openness with which sociology was viewed, both in substance and in method. There was no 'party line,' save for the admonition to 'objectivity' and 'disinterested investigation' in the interests of a developing science" (Short, 1971: xiv). This is, I think, the proper way to go about the business of research.

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<sup>4</sup>STAC is available at no cost in CrimeStat II. See Levine (2002).

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**LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE IN HOMICIDE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION**  
Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program,  
Australian Institute of Criminology

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the most important aspects of research into lethal and non-lethal violence is examining avenues of prevention. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of how data derived from the National Homicide Monitoring Program at the Australian Institute of Criminology is being used to inform practice.

**SLIDE 1**



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Linking Data to Practice in  
Homicide/Violence Prevention:  
The Australian Experience

Dr Jenny Mouzos  
Senior Research Analyst  
Australian Institute of Criminology

**HRWG 2004 Ann Arbor**

## Presentation Outline


The presentation is divided into two main parts. The first part outlines the main homicide data source in Australia – the National Homicide Monitoring Program – and the second part overviews examples of how the NHMP data can be used to inform intervention and prevention policy.

### SLIDE 2


Presentation Outline:

- Establishment of the NHMP;
- Aim of the NHMP;
- Uses of NHMP data:
  1. Identifying at risk groups and risk factors:
    - Indigenous persons;
    - family relationships; and
    - Firearms (handguns).
  2. Impact on policy formation and legislative reforms

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## The National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP)

Prior to the establishment of the National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 1990, there was no ongoing monitoring of homicide in Australia. According to National Committee on Violence (1990) there was a need for systematic information of the most extreme form of violence in Australia, not only to provide for basic public understanding and reassurance, but also to serve as the foundation for the rational formulation and implementation of public policy.

In response to this need for systematic monitoring of homicide in Australia, the National Committee on Violence (1990) in its report *Violence: Directions for Australia* recommended (Recommendation No. 103) the establishment of the NHMP.



### SLIDE 3

#### Establishment of the NHMP

- Prior to establishment of the NHMP there was no systematic monitoring of homicide in Australia;
- This information was needed to:
  - provide for basic public understanding and reassurance; and
  - Serve as the foundation for the rational formulation and implementation of public policy.
- NHMP was therefore established in 1990 to collect data on all homicides since 1 July 1989.



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In brief, the aim of the NHMP is to identify as precisely as possible the characteristics which place them at risk of homicide victimisation and offending, and the circumstances which contribute to the likelihood of a homicide occurring.

### SLIDE 4

#### Aim of the NHMP

- The aim of the NHMP is:
  - To identify as precisely as possible the characteristics of individuals which place them at risk of homicide victimisation and offending; and
  - The circumstances which contribute to the likelihood of a homicide occurring.



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There are two main data sources for the NHMP:

- Offence records derived from each Australian State and Territory Police Service, supplemented as necessary with information provided directly by investigating police officers; and
- State Coronial records such as toxicology and post-mortem reports.

On an annual basis, the NHMP routinely collects information on some 77 variables on all homicides coming to the attention of police services throughout Australia. Data are then arranged into the following three related data sets:

- the incident file, which describes the case and its circumstances (location, time of the incident, status of investigation, etc);
- the victim file, which contains socio-demographic information relating to the victims, and details relating to the cause of death, and type of weapon used to kill the victims; and
- the offender<sup>1</sup> file, which relates to perpetrators or suspects, where one has been identified, and includes data on the socio-demographic characteristics of the offender, his/her previous criminal history, alcohol/illicit drug use, state of mental health, and the offender's relationship to the victim.

## USES OF NHMP DATA: IDENTIFYING AT RISK GROUPS

The following section will discuss the ways in which the NHMP has been used in terms of identifying specific groups that have an elevated risk of homicide victimisation in Australia.



### SLIDE 5

Uses of NHMP data –

1. Identifying at risk groups:

Indigenous persons and intimate/family  
relationships

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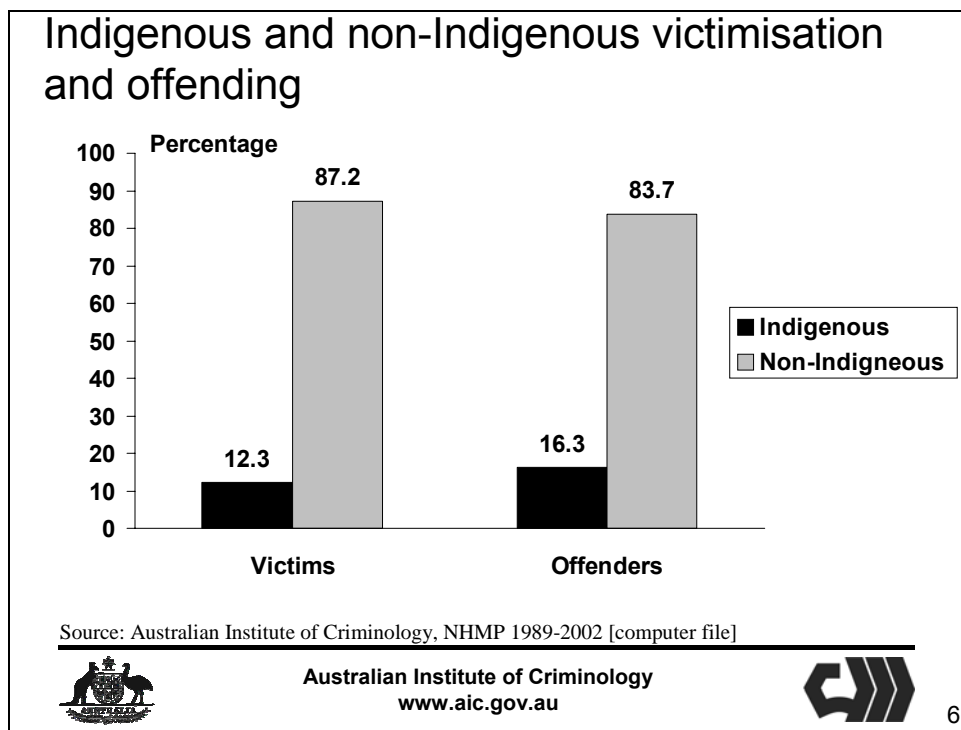
<sup>1</sup>At all times, the term "offender" refers to suspect offenders only, and not to convicted persons.

## Indigenous Persons

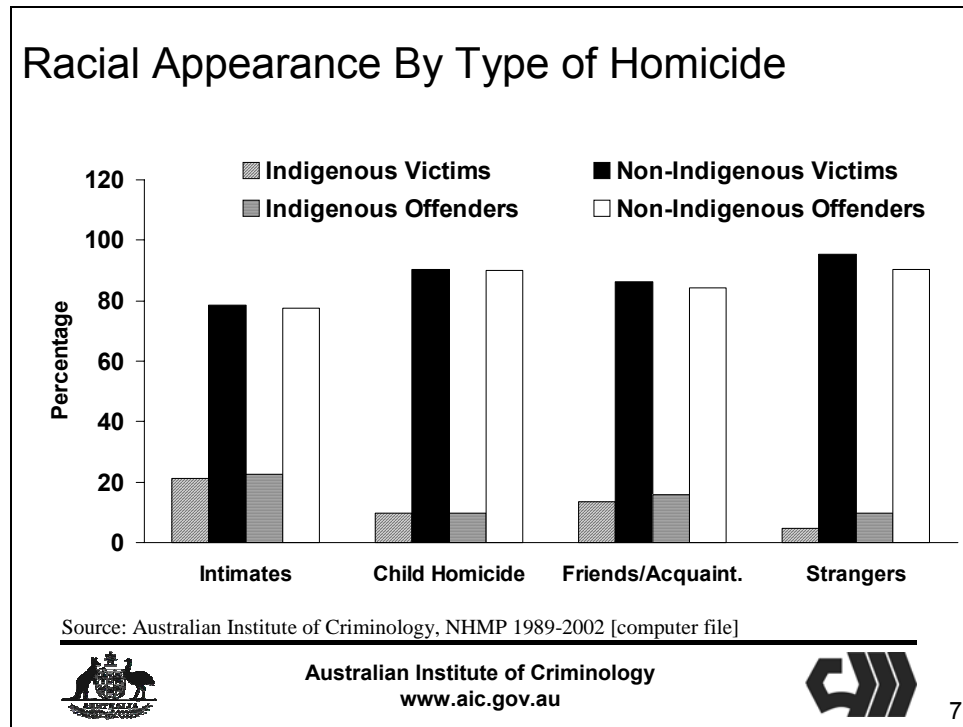
Much research in Australia and overseas has demonstrated that some minority populations often face an elevated risk of lethal and non-lethal violence. Slide 6 illustrates the distribution of Australian homicide victims and offenders according to Indigenous and non-Indigenous status. A word of caution here, as racial appearance recorded in the NHMP is sometimes based on the subjective assessment made by police of the race of the individual concerned. It may not include those persons who identify themselves as Indigenous but do not appear as Indigenous.

Overall, Indigenous persons account for just under 2.5 per cent of the total Australian population. However, as victims of homicide they account for 12 per cent of victims and as offenders of homicide, they account for 16 per cent.

### SLIDE 6



## SLIDE 7



The involvement of Indigenous persons in homicide also varies according to the type of homicide. Slide 7 illustrates that Indigenous persons are more likely to feature in intimate partner homicide than any other type of homicide. This is followed by friends and acquaintances, and child homicide. Of all types of homicide, Indigenous offenders are least likely to be involved in stranger homicide.

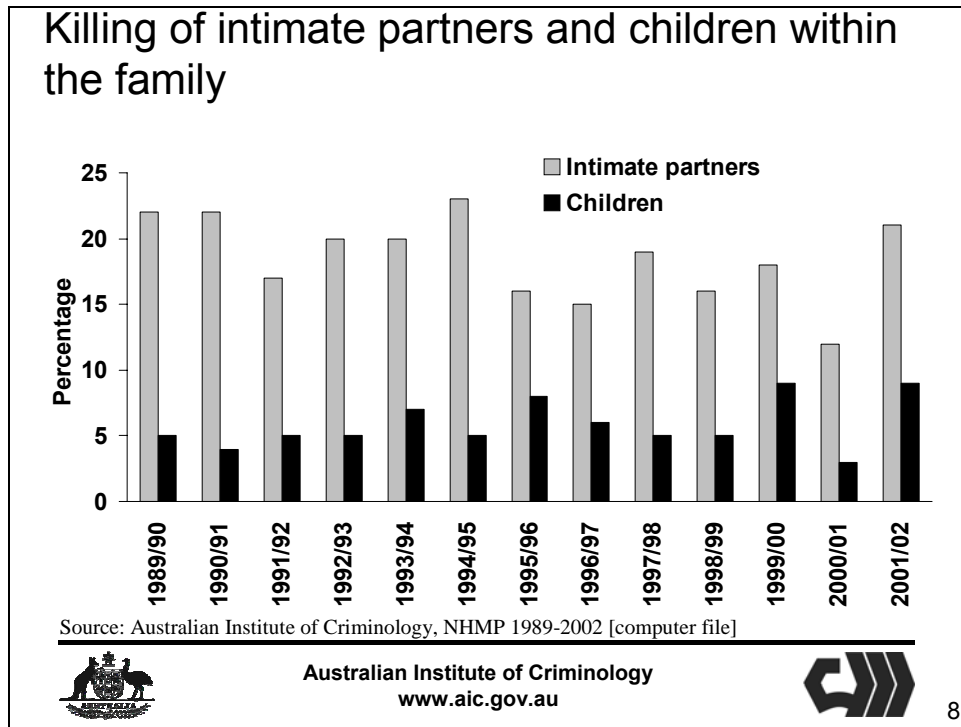
Another differentiating factor worth mentioning is the high level of involvement of alcohol in Indigenous homicides. Close to three-quarters of Indigenous homicides in Australia involved both the victim and offender having consumed alcohol at the time of the incident (Mouzos 2001).

### Intimate and Family Relationships

Overall, the majority of homicides in Australia occur between persons known to each other (about 80%; Mouzos & Segrave 2004). Slide 8 shows trends in the killing of intimate partners and children within the family over a thirteen-year period. Between 17 to 23 per cent of homicides in Australia involve intimate partners, and a further 3 to 7 per cent involve the killing of children within the family.

Over the years, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of children being killed by family members. The NHMP data allows for the identification of this trend, and also the monitoring of such a trend over time to be able to determine whether this increase is sustained.

SLIDE 8



In addition to the monitoring of trends, and the identification of changes in trends and patterns of the sub-sets of homicide, the NHMP data also allows for the more in-depth analysis of specific issues. For example, in-depth research examined the differences in risk between cohabiting (de facto) and marital relationships in Australia (Slide 9), and found that that both men and women who are in cohabiting relationships face an elevated risk of homicide victimisation by their partner than do men and women who are married (see Mouzos & Shackelford 2004; Shackelford & Mouzos forthcoming).

## SLIDE 9

- Differences in Risk in Cohabiting and Marital relationships:
  - Married men were killed by their partners at a rate of **1.3** men per million married men per annum;
  - Cohabiting men were killed at a much higher rate of **21.1** men per million cohabiting men;
  - Married women were killed by their partners at a rate of **4.7** women per million married women per annum;
  - Cohabiting women were killed at a much higher rate of **44.9** per million cohabiting women per annum.



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## USES OF NHMP DATA: IDENTIFYING RISK FACTORS

The NHMP data can also be used to identify risk factors for homicide victimisation and offending. Given the prominence of firearms in homicide in the United States, the following discussion focuses on the use of firearms, and in particular handguns in the commission of Australian homicides.

## SLIDE 10

Uses of NHMP data –  
Identifying risk factors:  
firearms (handguns)



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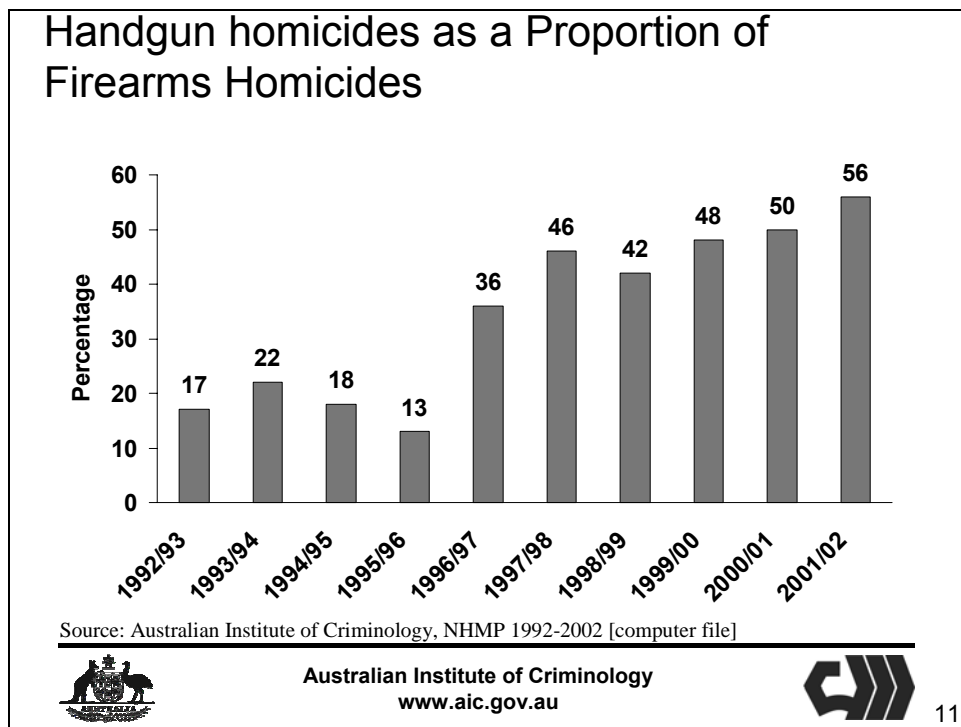
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## Firearms (Handguns) as a Risk Factor

In Australia, less than one in five homicides are committed with a firearm (about 16%). Over the years, there has been a declining trend in the use of firearms in homicide. While the overall use of firearms in homicide has declined, there has been a change in the types of firearms being used in homicide. Slide 11 shows the trend in handgun homicides as a proportion of firearms homicides. Handguns as a proportion of firearms homicides have increased from 17 per cent in 1995/96 to 56 per cent in 2001/02.

As you may be aware, the Australian Government introduced firearms reforms in 1996, which included a Nation wide licensing and registration framework. They also prohibited self-loading rifles and shotguns. Given the focus was mainly on long-arms, the change in the types of firearms used in homicide suggests that as the availability of one type of firearm decreases, people may be turning to other, more readily available types, such as handguns.

### SLIDE 11



11

## USES OF NHMP DATA – IMPACT ON POLICY FORMATION AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

Through the identification of key at risk groups and risk factors, the NHMP data has been used to inform policy formulation and reforms. The last section of this presentation/


paper will focus on providing some examples of how the NHMP data has been linked to practice in homicide/violence prevention.

## SLIDE 12


Uses of NHMP data –

2. Impact on policy formulation and  
legislative reforms

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## Informing Evidence Led Policy on Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage

The NHMP data identified the over-representation of Indigenous persons as victims and offenders of homicide. A number of policies have been developed in order to address the root causes of Indigenous violence, such as Indigenous disadvantage. Slide 13 outlines some of these.

## SLIDE 13

Informing evidence led policy on overcoming Indigenous disadvantage:

- Safe, healthy and supportive family environments with strong communities and cultural identity;
- Positive child development and prevention of violence, crime and self harm;
- Improved wealth creation and economic sustainability for individuals, families and communities.

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The NHMP data have also been used as an indicator to measure and assess programme implementation addressing issues of Indigenous disadvantage (see Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2003).

### **Informing Policy Development in the Area of Relationship & Family Violence**


The NHMP data have also been used to inform policy in the area of relationship and family violence. A number of key initiatives have been put in place to address the issue. The first three examples provided in Slide 14 are focused primarily on building healthy relationships, and providing support for families to address the violence. The last two examples in Slide 14 are initiatives that focus on learning from incidents of violence by asking the question what could have been done differently to prevent them, and similar occurrences in the future.

#### **SLIDE 14**


**Informing policy development in the area of relationship & family violence**

- Education campaigns addressing relationship violence and not just violence within marriage;
- Establishment of “SupportLink” service delivery;
- Establishment of Family/Domestic violence courts based on principles of therapeutic jurisprudence;
- Establishment of Child Death Review Teams;
- Establishment of Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams.

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### **Informing Legislative Reforms: Handguns**

Slides 15 and 16 outline some of the legislative reforms with regard to handguns that were introduced to reduce the number of easily concealable firearms, essentially handguns in the community, and to combat the growing use of handguns to commit violence, and especially lethal violence in Australia.

The legislative reforms focus on the trading of prohibited imports/exports (such as firearms), tightened import restrictions, new regulations to prohibit specific types of handguns (those that are easily concealable), and the establishment of a working group to address the use of handguns in crime.

## SLIDE 15

### Informing legislative reforms: Handguns

- Tougher penalties for trading in prohibited imports/exports (such as firearms) - \$250,000 and/or 10 years jail (1999);
- Establishment of a working group on handguns used in crime (2000);
- Tightened import restrictions on stock limits held by dealers – maximum of 10 handguns can be imported and held by dealers at any one time (2001).



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The new handgun regulations became effective as of 1 July 2003, and were also followed by a buyback of the newly prohibited handguns (Slide 16).

## SLIDE 16

### Informing legislative reforms

- Implementation of new regulations to prohibit the ownership and use of specific types of handguns:
  - A minimum barrel length for semi-auto handguns of 120mm (100mm revolvers and single shot handguns); and
  - A maximum calibre of .38" (up to .45" for specially accredited sporting events).



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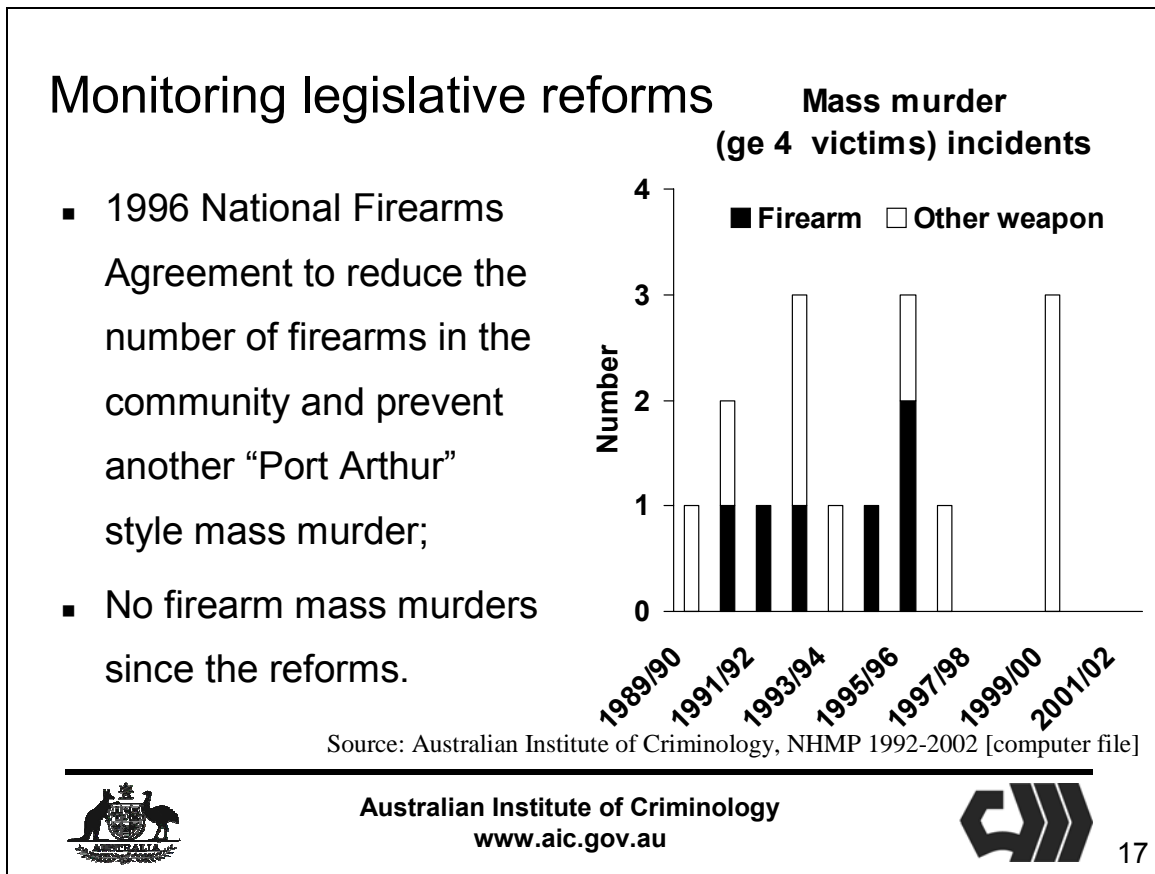


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## Monitoring Legislative Reforms

The NHMP data have also been used to monitor the effectiveness of legislative reforms with regard to firearms (Slide 17).

### SLIDE 17



## SUMMARY

Slide 18 provides a summary of the way in which NHMP data has been used to link data to practice.

### SLIDE 18

#### In summary:

- Some uses of NHMP data:
  1. Identifying at risk groups and risk factors:
    - Indigenous persons;
    - family relationships; and
    - Firearms (handguns).
  2. Impact on policy formation and legislative reforms
    - Overcoming Indigenous disadvantage;
    - Policy development in the area of relationship and family violence;
    - Informing legislative reforms regarding handguns; and
    - Monitoring legislative reforms – firearms.



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**THE CULTURE OF GUN VIOLENCE IN DETROIT**  
**David E. Martin, Wayne State University**  
**College of Urban, Labor and Metropolitan Affairs**

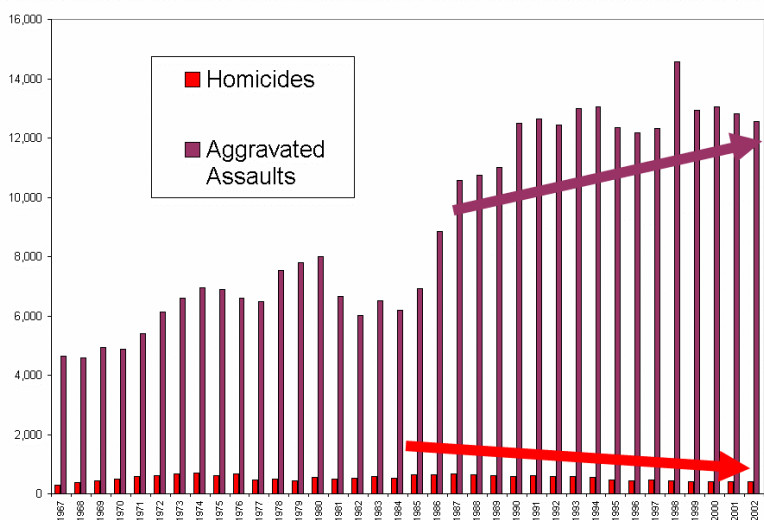
*“We have turned the corner on the murder rate here in Detroit” - Wayne County Prosecutor Michael Duggan with Detroit Police Chief Jerry Oliver in July 2003*

Detroit became the nation’s most violent big city last year, even as crime rates in the city and its largest suburbs generally dropped according to FBI statistics. Detroit’s association with murders and guns is one that simply will not go away. Less than nine months after local, state and federal officials began claiming credit for reducing Detroit’s homicide rate, the city once again made national news for a staggering increase in homicides during the first few months of 2004.

Homicides in Detroit were up nearly 50 percent in the first three months of 2004 compared to 2003. Detroit recorded 102 homicides by April 1. By comparison, the city posted 68 homicides in the first three months of 2003. Detroit finished last year with 361 homicides, its lowest number since 1967 though the city’s population has declined 40 percent since then and now stands at 912,000 (Figure 1).

As of August 1, 2004, Detroit had experienced a 10 percent increase in homicides versus last year’s totals during the same period. In all, 231 persons have been murdered in 2004 so far.

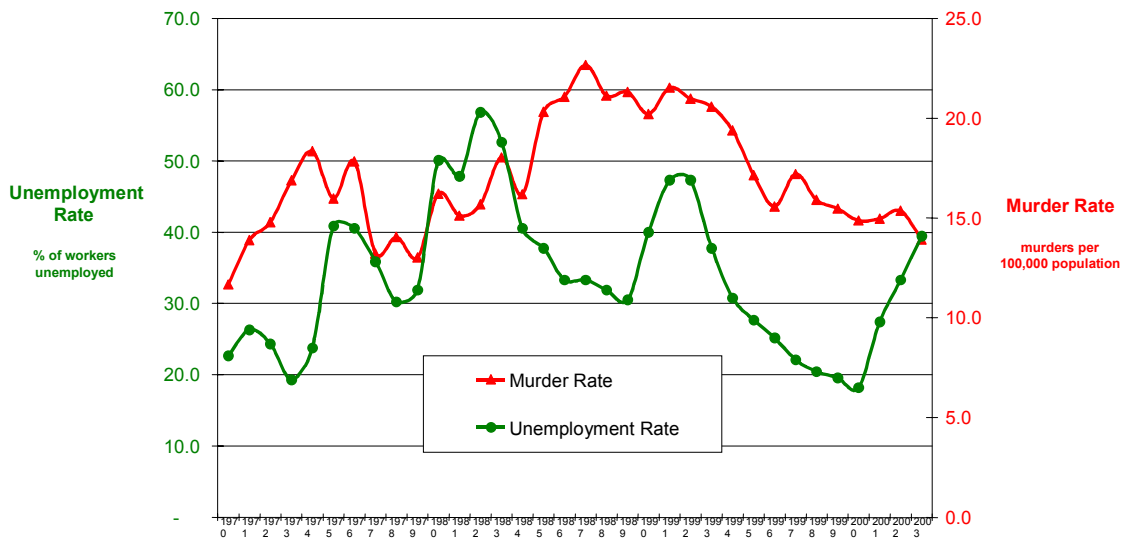
**Figure 1 – Aggravated Assaults and Homicide**



The number of aggravated assaults drives the violent crime rate in Detroit. Assaults have maintained an increasing trend while homicide has declined to its lowest levels in 35 years.

Homicide and violent crime rates in Detroit have exhibited an association with local economic trends (Figure 2). Most notably, the recent sharp increase in the city's unemployment rate may have contributed to the increase in homicides in 2004.

**Figure 2 – Unemployment and Murder in Detroit**



In 2002, Dr. David Martin of Wayne State University's College of Urban, Labor and Metropolitan Affairs conducted a study of gun violence patterns in the city of Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan. Police, hospital, public health, medical examiner, and community data were obtained and integrated into a geographic information system. Neighborhood-level gun violence indicators were then constructed by mapping out individual-level data and aggregating the data to census tract areas. The following are highlights from Dr. Martin's research:

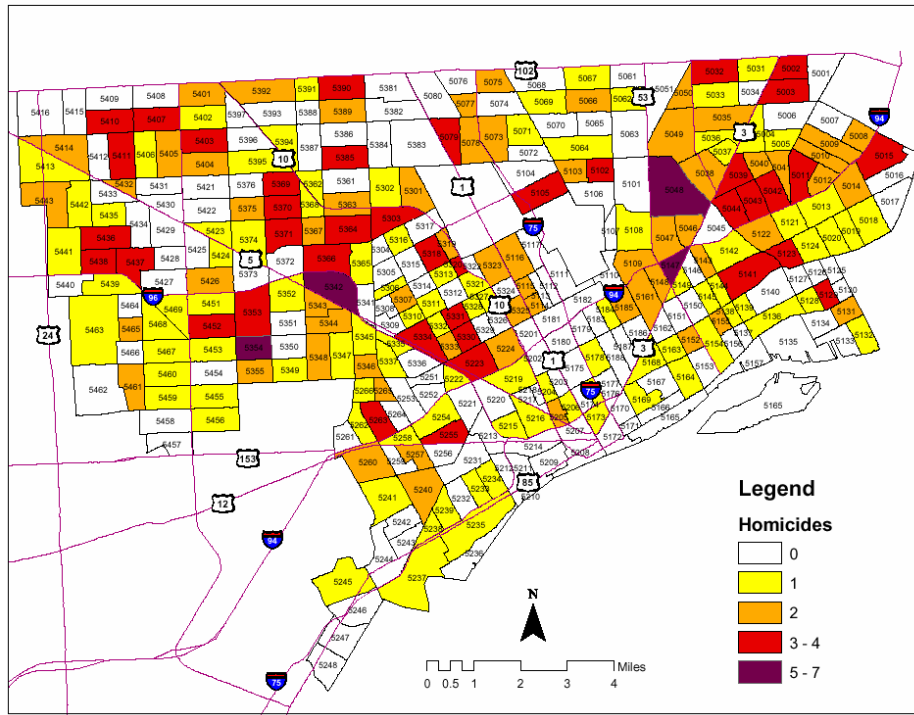
- Of the more than 1 million police calls for service for the city of Detroit in 2001, over 100,000 calls could be classified as incidents involving weapons, shootings, or shots fired.
- The number of weapons-related calls are lowest during the morning hours but steadily increase, peaking at 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. The hours 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. account for almost 40 percent of all weapons-related calls for service.
- Fatal gun violence is a rare occurrence in most communities in Wayne County. Upon mapping available gun violence data, immediately evident are the concentrations of fatal gun violence in certain neighborhoods in the city of Detroit, Inkster and Ecorse.



- The age distribution for all violent crime victims mirrors that of fatal gun violence victims. Persons in the age groups 20-24 and 25-29 account for the largest numbers of both fatal gun violence victims and violent crime victims.
- As a predictor, the level of concentrated poverty exhibits the strongest effect on the level of gun violence across neighborhoods in Detroit and accounts for 50 percent of the explained variation. Age composition is the second strongest predictor accounting for 23 percent of the explained variation. Social capital and residential stability show lesser predictive strength. Residential stability, as expected, is negatively related to the level of gun violence. That is, more stable neighborhoods (e.g., more homeowners, residents with longer tenure) have lower levels of gun violence. In contrast, social capital shows a positive association to the level of gun violence. This relationship is contrary to what was anticipated but may be an indication of the difficulty that exists in measuring the concept of social capital at the neighborhood level.

While media stories capture citywide statistics on the gun violence problem are indeed compelling, they do not capture a crucial aspect of the problem — its geographic nature. Year-in, year-out, the same general neighborhood areas in Detroit account for a disproportionate share of homicide and gun violence problems (Figure 3).

**Figure 3 – Homicides by Neighborhood During 2003**



Over 100 persons have been murdered in one eastside Detroit neighborhood over the past 8 years.

These "broken" neighborhoods are the areas where the culture of violence is most deeply rooted — where lawlessness has become the accepted norm. Broken neighborhoods lack a sense of community among residents and businesses but are also those areas that have been historically neglected by government. It has been said that Detroit's problems are unlike anywhere — racial segregation, concentrated poverty amid a region of tremendous wealth, family instability, local government corruption, dramatic population loss, drugs, etc. The geographic nature of the gun violence problem in Detroit, however, begs for policy solutions that target "broken" neighborhoods and others (usually located nearby) that are on the brink. The solutions need to incorporate more effective policing strategies and more government attention, but also "community building." In fact, community building is perhaps the only long-term solution to restoring broken neighborhoods in Detroit. Despite the city's dramatic population loss, many vibrant, stable neighborhoods exist. Efforts need to build off these still-strong areas and adopt weaker areas one block at a time.

**DISCUSSION: LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE:  
HOMICIDE/ VIOLENCE PREVENTION: THE VIEW FROM THE FIELD  
Recorded by James Noonan**

**Becky Block:** A question for David Martin: Are people in Detroit using this mapping information?

**David Martin:** Yes, particularly for grant proposals, funding, etc.

**Richard Block:** Is there a relationship between the boundaries of Census tracts and policy districts?

**David Martin:** Yes.

**Roland Chilton:** Question for Jenny Mouzos: In what percent of your homicides was the victim/offender relationship family?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Overall, 21% are intimate partner, 23% are child/ parent and 20% are stranger. The others are acquaintances. Most often a knife or blunt object was used. The buy back policy increase in handgun may be due to the increase in barrel length.

**Becky Block:** Question for Jenny Mouzos: Do you have narratives?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Yes, augmented with press clippings, toxicology reports, etc, for cross validation.

**Roland Chilton:** Question for David Martin: Your data are for Census tracts?

**David Martin:** Yes

**Roland Chilton:** How many Census tracts are there in Detroit? How large is a precinct?

**David Martin:** Each of the 13 precincts covers 75 – 100 thousand people and 300 Census tracts.

**Roland Chilton:** A practical conclusion would be that the Detroit PD needs more cars and “stuff.”

**David Martin:** Yes, Detroit officers do a lot of civilian work, and the largest precincts with the most crime have only six patrol cars.

**John Jarvis:** Prevention requires more than police work to be successful. Is there coordination between agencies – such as the New York model?

**David Martin:** Attempts at coordination have failed. These groups do not get along, and work independently, because of politics.

**Dallas Drake:** Question for Becky Block: Have you seen this data as being successful in preventing homicides?

**Becky Block:** I can't say that. But I can say that the datasets have done two things. First, some of the results support what we know and give evidence to support policy. Second, other CWHRs findings go against widely held beliefs, and challenge us to develop policies based on reality. For example, our data show a considerable proportion of women were killed or nearly killed during the first violent incident, instead of the violence building slowly over time.

**Richard Block:** Many officers won't come to me for analysis, but they know what is happening in real time and they know how to use the data to pursue interventions.

**Becky Block:** We need to work with the audience and give them what they need. In Chicago, Citizen ICAM makes mapped crime data available in close-to-real time for anyone. Popularizing data is a good thing.

**Tom Petee:** Regarding the displacement phenomenon — is this temporary? What are the implications?

**David Martin:** Visually, it appears that homicides display clustering. I have noticed that the increasing rates are in areas that have "bottomed out" or in neighborhoods where the adjacent neighborhoods are less so distressed. Policy and social capital can build on these neighborhoods one block at a time, with government intervening to break the cycle.

**Tom Petee:** Neighborhood experience would be necessary, as is the participation of the residents.

**Richard Block:** Displacement in Chicago is pushing crime out of the city.

**David Martin:** Yes.

**Roland Chilton:** Question for John Jarvis: Is Chicago going to have NIBRS?

**Richard Block and Becky Block:** NIBRS is coming to Chicago. Have patience.

**David Martin:** The biggest barrier in Detroit is money. Detroit is a city of tremendous wealth but great income disparity.

**Jacqueline Campbell:** Jenny, I find it very interesting that you mention that wealth creation is part of Australian public policy. Wouldn't it be wonderful if that could be done here in the US?

**Jenny Mouzos:** The police in Australia want to see what they can get from NIBRS before using it.

**John Jarvis:** One thing data does provide is accountability.

**CHAPTER TWO:  
LETHAL AND NONLETHAL ROBBERY  
PANEL SESSION**

**Moderator:** Candice Batton Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha

**Papers:**

A Preliminary Report on Subgroup-Specific Homicide and Robbery Offender Rates for 1980, 1990, and 2000. Wendy C. Regoeczi, Cleveland State University and Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Modeling the Travel Patterns of Chicago Robbery Victims and Offenders. Richard Block, Loyola University of Chicago

**Recorder:** Kim Vogt, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse



# A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON SUBGROUP-SPECIFIC HOMICIDE AND ROBBERY OFFENDER RATES FOR 1980, 1990, AND 2000<sup>1</sup>

Wendy C. Regoeczi, Cleveland State University  
and Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts Amherst

## ABSTRACT

We have two goals in this project. Substantively, we want to assess the durability of Robert Sampson's 1987 explanation for high black murder and robbery rates for the largest cities in the United States and to do this by repeating his analysis using data for 1990 and 2000. An important part of his explanation focused on the limited marriageability of unemployed black men and a correspondingly high level of single parent families that predict high murder and robbery rates. Methodologically, we set out to assess the extent to which the modified arrest rates used by Sampson produce results similar to those produced when we use National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) offender rates. To achieve both goals we analyzed UCR offense and arrest data for 1980-1982, 1989-1991, and 1999-2001 and census data for 1980, 1990, and 2000. In addition, we will examine the variables from the 2000 census with NIBRS data for 1999-2001. The results of our duplication of Sampson's analysis of data for 1980 were essentially similar to his as were the results of our analysis of data for 1990. Our initial comparisons of modified arrest counts and NIBRS offender counts, however, suggest that modified arrest rates may not be an adequate substitute for race-specific offender rates.

## INTRODUCTION

In his 1987 article, Robert Sampson presented the results of a study of the correlates of black and white murder and robbery arrest rates for about 150 U.S. cities. In our view, he was trying to make sense of persistently high black murder and robbery arrest rates for most of America's largest cities. Understanding these high rates was important in the 1980s and is important today. In 1980 the murder rate for a combined set of cities with populations of at least 100,000 was about 16 per 100,000. With over 9,500 arrests for murder, the murder arrest rate for these cities was 13 per 100,000. However, the black murder arrest rate was 40 per 100,000 black residents. This was over four times as high as the white murder arrest rate. Ten years later, in 1990, the murder rate for cities with over 100,000 residents was 15 per 100,000 and the black murder arrest rate for these cities was 42 per 100,000 black residents. This was five times as high as the white murder arrest rate for the same set of cities.

Even after murder rates dropped dramatically during the 1990s, black arrest rates for murder were still relatively high for the years surrounding 2000. Nationally, the high murder rates of the early 1990s were followed by a series of decreases in the number of murders reported. By 2000 the homicide rates for cities of 100,000 or more had dropped to about 9 per 100,000 residents and a large part of this decrease in murder in the United States was the result of decrease in murders of young black men. So it will be important to see how the factors that predicted high murder rates in 1980 and 1990 hold up in 2000.

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<sup>1</sup>Support for this project was provided by the American Statistical Association's Committee on Law and Justice Statistics.

Nevertheless, race-specific arrest rates suggest that even after the black murder arrest rate dropped by 48 percent from 1990 to 2000 (from 42 to 22) it was still three and one-half times as high as the white murder arrest rate. And the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in 2001 that homicide was still the leading cause of death of young black males.

Whether we look at the Center for Disease Control's homicide victimization rate or the Uniform Crime Reports black murder arrest rate, we see that black Americans have been reported as murder victims and murder offenders at higher rates than white Americans for the last four decades. This disparity, which is strongest for America's largest cities, has influenced the work of several criminologists and a growing number of studies have examined the importance of various structural factors for these high rates. Explanations for the situation have focused on racial segregation, concentrated disadvantage, and conditions of absolute and relative deprivation (Blau & Blau, 1982; Corzine & Huff-Corzine, 1992; Harvey, 1986; Hawkins, 1993; Krivo & Peterson, 2000; Parker, 1989; Peterson & Krivo, 1993; Phillips, 1997; Sampson, 1985; 1987; Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996; Shihadeh & Steffensmeier, 1994). Of those attempting to understand the persistently high black murder arrest rates, Robert Sampson stands out. We think his work in this area has been most convincing and that it has had a major impact. If we accept murder and robbery arrest rates as reasonably accurate indicators of the age, race, and sex of murder and robbery offenders, Sampson's work suggests that, at least for the early 1980s, high black murder and robbery offending rates could be understood best as the result of a two-step process. He saw joblessness among black males as contributing to high rates of family disruption by reducing the pool of stable marriage partners. This in turn increased the number of female-headed families and single mothers among black women. These widespread changes in the structure of black families then contributed to higher black murder and robbery rates by reducing the effectiveness of social control.

Because we think this may still be a plausible explanation for the persistently high black robbery and murder rates, we designed a study to assess the extent to which the relationships he reported for 1980-82 could be observed in 1990 and 2000. Our analysis has built on Sampson's work in three ways. First, we reanalyzed his 1980 data to be certain we understood the procedures he followed. Next we repeated the analysis using 1990 data and will repeat it again using 2000 data. In addition, we will extend the analysis by working with cities with fewer than 100,000 residents. Finally, we will use National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data to develop race- and age-specific murder and robbery offender rates. The use of NIBRS data and the inclusion of smaller cities represent efforts to assess the utility of treating modified arrest rates as race-specific offender rates.

Sampson was forced to use such rates as substitutes for offender rates because in the pre-NIBRS UCR program, non-arrest offender counts were only collected in the Supplementary Homicide Reports. For other offenses, only arrest reports showed offender counts by age, race, and sex. To overcome this limitation, Sampson created what he called "offending rates" by multiplying robbery and murder arrest rates by the ratio of robberies to robbery arrests and murders to murder arrests. For example, if an agency reported 4.6 times as many robbery offenses as robbery arrests (robberies/ robbery arrests) and had a robbery arrest rate of 182 per 100,000 residents; its robbery "offending



rate” would be  $4.6 \times 182$  or 838. This modified robbery arrest rate can be viewed as one type of offender rate. But it is not necessarily the rate that is produced by dividing the number of people described as offenders on the basis of the statements from victims and witnesses by an appropriate population count. In the traditional UCR program the only offender information for almost all offenses known to the police is that provided by the Age, Sex, and Race Arrest reports. In the UCR NIBRS program that is currently replacing the traditional program, perceptions of the age, race and sex of offenders are provided by victims and witnesses whether or not any arrests are made in connection with the incident reported. The NIBRS feature that is especially important for this work is that offender information is frequently reported even when no arrest is made. With offender counts by age, race and sex, rather than counts of arrests made of black and white offenders, it should be possible to analyze offender rates directly and to assess the utility of modified arrest rates in the process.

Our study uses both NIBRS offender rates and Sampson’s “offending rates.” This will allow us to assess the impact of the latest development in the UCR program in an area of substantive importance. We can only make this comparison for 2000 because NIBRS data were not collected until the middle of the 1990s. For 1980 and 1990 murder offender rates that are roughly comparable to NIBRS offender rates are available for most cities with populations of 100,000 or more. These Supplementary Homicide Report rates will provide another check on the utility of the 1980 and 1990 murder “offending” rates. However, they are only available for murder.

The primary goals of the study are methodological and substantive. Our methodological goal is to bring some clarity to the issues described above. Our substantive goal is to assess the continuing importance of male unemployment on black and white family living arrangements and to see to what extent the resulting family arrangements are related to race-specific murder and robbery offending rates at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To do this we use race-specific offender and arrest rates and race-specific census measures as explanatory and control variables.

## **DATA**

Four basic types of data were required in our study. Three of these were needed to replicate Sampson’s work and the fourth was introduced to assess the ability of incident-based measures to shed light on important substantive issues. Sampson used (1) reports of murders and robberies known to the police, (2) reports of the age and race of those arrested for these types of offenses, and (3) data from the 1980 U.S. Census to create city arrest rates and to develop the social and economic measures needed to describe the cities involved.

For our study we assembled UCR reports from police departments of the number of arrests of persons classified as black, white, juvenile, and adult for cities with at least 25,000 residents in 1980, 1990, or 2000. To identify each set of cities and compute the necessary rates while capturing measures reflecting city characteristics we used U.S. Census reports for 1980, 1990, and 2000. In addition, we assembled the number of murders and robberies reported to the UCR program by police departments in cities with at least 25,000 residents. Consistent with Sampson’s approach we used three-year averages

to stabilize the rates. For the arrest counts and the offense counts we used reports for 1980 through 1982, 1989 through 1991, and 1999 through 2001. Except for the first time period, the numbers from each of these time periods were used to create three-year averages centered on the census year.

While we await a response from Sampson, we assume he used the years 1980 through 1982 instead of 1979 through 1981 because of changes in the way race and ethnicity were reported before and after 1980 and possibly because of small changes in the way UCR arrest counts were reported. We decided to center our three-year averages on census years but carried out the “duplication” analysis using 1980 through 1982. We used NIBRS data for 1999, 2000, and 2001 in much the same way by creating murder and robbery offender counts for each of the three years. We then used three year averages of these counts with the census counts for 2000 to create offender rates for cities with populations of at least 25,000. This produced a different set of cities with useful murder and robbery offender rates. Most of the cities in this “NIBRS” set have smaller populations than most of the cities in Sampson’s set.

Like Sampson, we had to make a decision in cases where arrest or offender counts were not available for one of the three years selected. We think Sampson decided to create two-year averages when only one count was missing. We decided to drop such cities but to repeat the analysis with two-year averages where necessary to assess the impact of this decision. Our final data set will contain offense known and arrest data for the NIBRS cities. This will allow us to compare the impact of the use of offender rates with the use of modified arrest rates and to compare the rates themselves without regard to their impact on the regression analysis.

## **METHOD**

The steps involved in the analysis are described below. The entire process will be carried out four separate times with the first three analyses using murder and robbery rates derived from traditional UCR arrest data for 1980, 1990 and 2000. In the fourth analysis we will use offender rates derived from NIBRS data for the years around 2000.

Following Sampson’s analytical strategy, we will analyze a series of OLS regression models using two different measures of family disruption as dependent variables. These variables are the percent of black female headed households and the percent of black households with children where no husband is present. They are regressed on the male marriage pool index, which is the number of employed black males per 100 black females, and two sets of control variables. One set of control variables is racially disaggregated. This includes the mean public assistance income and the median age for each city. The other control variables are not race-specific. This set includes region, percent black, population size, and the percentage of rental housing units in structures of five or more units. A subsequent set of Ordinary Least Squares regression models will predict black offending rates for criminal homicide and then robbery separately for juveniles and adults using the same independent variables as the previous model but adding the percent of black households headed by females as a measure of family disruption.

On the basis of these structural equations, direct and indirect effects of the male marriage pool index on black offending rates can be calculated. Following Sampson (1995), we will also analyze models that disaggregate the male marriage pool index into its component parts. These are the sex ratio and the unemployment rate. These variables have been found to have independent effects on black family disruption. The robustness of the findings from these structural equations will be further assessed by employing a series of alternative predictors, such as replacing per-capita income with a measure of the percentage of black families with income less than \$7,499 and its 1990 and 2000 equivalents. Finally, to rule out the possibility that the observed relationships are spurious due to the influence of economic dependence on family disruption and crime rates, the models will be re-estimated with the percentage of total black families receiving public assistance as a measure of social disorganization and using it to replace the mean level of welfare benefits.

To assess the extent to which the observed relationships are a reflection of social control processes generally and not a unique aspect of the black community, an analogous set of models examining the influence of white family structure on white robbery rates will be analyzed using seemingly unrelated regression models. The use of this procedure is necessary to allow for correlated disturbances when comparing models across racial groups. This correlation is expected given the possible exclusion of common structural causes of black and white crime from the model (Sampson, 1987). The findings from these analyses will guide the development of a simultaneous equation model testing whether crime in turn has an impact on family disruption. These reciprocal effects of family disruption and black offending rates will be incorporated into a two stage least squares regression model.

## **PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

Among the tasks required for our replication of Sampson's study using data for 1990 and 2000 was the identification of a set of cities as close to Sampson's study as possible. However, for the 2000 analysis, we will add a set of cities for which there is relatively complete NIBRS data for 1999, 2000 and 2001. Although NIBRS procedures for data submission have yet to be adopted by thousands of law enforcement agencies across the U.S., about 150 cities with populations of 25,000 or more submitted 12 months of NIBRS data for 1999. Although twenty-eight of these cities lacked a sufficient black population for the construction of stable racially disaggregated measures, it appears that there will be about 120 cities for the NIBRS analysis. Since some of these cities are also in Sampson's set, it is possible to compare his "offending rates" with NIBRS offender rates in several cities.

Table 1 shows the results of a preliminary comparison using NIBRS data with traditional UCR offense and arrest data for the year 2000. For each city the offense/arrest ratio (O/A) was used to modify the number of black and white juveniles and adults arrested for murder. The offense column shows the total number of murders reported for each city. The arrest column shows the number of arrests reported for each city. Column 3 shows the adjustment factor—the number of offenses per arrest—for each city. The modified arrest counts shown in columns 5 through 8 were produced by multiplying each of four age- and race-specific murder arrest counts by the adjustment factor. The original arrest counts are

not shown but can be recreated by dividing each of the modified counts by the adjustment factor.

**TABLE 1.  
ROBBERY ARREST COUNTS FOR 12 CITIES, USING SAMPSON'S ADJUSTMENT  
COMPARED WITH NIBRS OFFENDER COUNTS FOR 1999, BY AGE AND RACE.**

City	Off.	Arrest	Off/ Arrest	Modified Arrest Counts (Rounded)				NIBRS Offender Counts			
				BJ	BA	WJ	WA	BJ N	BA N	WJ N	WA N
<b>Austin</b>	100 2	231	4.34	62	43 0	93	43 4	81	517	84	474
<b>Aurora</b>	455	86	5.29	85	22 7	[492 ]	90	66	354	[ 46]	125
<b>Dayton</b>	971	237	4.10	29 5	45 1	[103 ]	12 3	163	672	[ 36]	141
<b>Norfolk</b>	444	41	10.83	14 1	23 8	[ 23]	43	63	356	[ 5]	30
<b>Springfield</b>	490	77	6.36	45	19 7	[ 76]	12 7	38	121	[ 29]	96
<b>Worcester</b>	343	93	3.69	11	63	[ 59]	20 3	6	22	[ 26]	74
<b>Des Moines</b>	267	55	4.85	44	13 6	[ 34]	53	27	185	[ 16]	103
<b>Columbia</b>	518	93	5.57	50	44 0	6	17	59	579	7	42
<b>Akron</b>	400	105	3.80	10 6	21 3	15	57	133	352	22	62
<b>Chesapeake</b>	331	101	3.28	13 8	11 5	[ 30]	46	126	246	[ 14]	25
<b>Newport News</b>	427	106	4.03	64	31 0	4	48	85	393	5	57
<b>Colorado Springs</b>	498	114	4.37	35	18 4	[109 ]	16 6	33	280	[ 84]	299

For these 12 cities we have NIBRS data as well as the traditional UCR data. The last four columns in the table show the number of black and white juvenile and adult offenders reported in the NIBRS data for 2000. These NIBRS offender counts will eventually be combined with similar counts for 2000 and 2001 to compute three-year averages that will be used to compute NIBRS murder offender rates. Since age- and race-specific population counts will be used to compute offending rates similar to Sampson's as well as NIBRS offender rates, we can use this table for a preliminary assessment of the comparability of the two sets of counts.

Looking at Table 1, we see that many of the modified arrest counts are reasonably close to the NIBRS offender counts. The counts in square brackets, however, suggest that for most cities in this set the modified arrest counts overestimate the number of white juvenile offenders — sometimes by factors of 2, 3, 4 or more. The creation of “offending” and “offender” rates using three-year averages for about 120 cities will permit a more complete comparison of the two measures. Regression analyses using both measures will provide additional indications of the utility of the “offending” rates in place of “offender” rates. We know from the comparisons shown in Table 2 that the cities for which NIBRS information is available are both similar to and different from the cities in Sampson's 1980 set. So perhaps our most useful comparison will involve the 1999-2001 traditional UCR “offending rates” and the 1999-2001 NIBRS “offender rates.”

However, our first step was to duplicate Sampson's analysis using data for 1980. This was harder than we thought it would be. We anticipated an easy duplication because Sampson presented his initial list of cities and some of the raw data for his analysis in a file archived at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). We soon realized that the archived data were used in two earlier Sampson studies and that a number of changes had been made in the basic measures for the 1987 study. Still, having the archived material was a great advantage for our attempts to replicate Sampson's results. Although only a few of the archived variables were those actually used in the 1987 study, the file was essential for our understanding of his analysis.

Table 2 contains descriptive statistics reported by Sampson in 1987 and our reconstruction of the same variables. For 1980, the summary statistics for the census variables he used were close to the summary values we computed. But we were less successful in our attempts to duplicate his murder and robbery rates. To duplicate his 1980 “black, juvenile, modified, murder arrest rate,” for example, we computed a three-year average of the numbers of black juveniles arrested for murder in 1980, 1981, and 1982 for each city. We then divided this average by the black juvenile population reported for each city. This produced rates that should have been identical to Sampson's archived “unmodified” three year average arrest rates for black juveniles for each city. For most cities they were. But for dozens of cities there were differences and for a few cities there were substantial differences. After careful examination of Sampson's rates we concluded that our average rates were accurate and that a series of small mistakes and possibly some changes in the UCR data since the mid 1980s accounted for the differences.

After creating the three year averages, Sampson's next step was to modify the averages using an “offense per arrest” ratio. To duplicate this adjustment factor, we

divided the three-year average number of murder offenses reported for each city in the 1980, 1981, and 1982 editions of *Crime in the United States* by the three-year average number of murder arrests reported for each city for 1980-1982. Following Sampson, we then “adjusted” each three-year average arrest rate by multiplying it by this adjustment factor to create “offending rates.” For the year 2000 it is these modified arrest rates that we will be comparing with NIBRS offender rates. But our first step was to use the new modified rates with the 1980 census variables to duplicate Sampson’s regression analysis.

**TABLE 2**  
**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS,**  
**U.S. CITIES, 1980, 1990, 2000**

Structural Characteristics	Sampson 1980 <sup>a</sup> MEAN (SD)	1980 <sup>b</sup> MEAN (SD)	1990 <sup>b</sup> MEAN (SD)	2000 <sup>c</sup> MEAN (SD)
Employed men per 100 women:				
Black .....	52.95 (14.36)	52.04 (18.81)	67.09 (20.92)	74.61 (32.67)
White .....	62.26 ( 7.72)	60.52 ( 8.39)	73.70 ( 8.87)	68.70 ( 9.00)
Mean public assistance income:				
Black .....	2,565 (666)	2,607 (798)	3,844 (1106)	2,283 (1,409)
White .....	2,418 (367)	2,425 (367)	4,164 (748)	2,879 (1,190)
Per-capita income:				
Black .....	3,768 (709)	3,861 (905)	6,785 (1988)	18,095 (7,853)
White .....	6,356 (999)	6,379 (1038)	11,807 (2619)	24,490 (7,172)
Median age:				
Black .....	24.48 (1.78)	24.61 (2.00)	27.60 (2.28)	29.4 (4.7)
White .....	31.81 (3.48)	31.77 (3.47)	34.18 (2.68)	36.0 (5.1)
Percentage of households headed by females:				
Black .....	26.42 (6.13)	25.46 (7.32)	29.21 (7.41)	23.3 (10.0)
White .....	9.26 (1.68)	9.21 (1.66)	9.61 (2.13)	9.2 ( 2.3)
Percentage of households with children headed by females:				
Black .....	43.58 (9.52)	42.21 (11.17)	48.97 (11.95)	39.7 (17.9)
White .....	17.69 (3.70)	17.46 ( 3.81)	18.85 ( 4.64)	18.0 ( 6.1)
Percentage of families on welfare:				
Black .....	22.10 (7.57)	21.13 (8.45)	20.44 (8.40)	6.8 (4.8)
White .....	6.46 (3.16)	6.46 (3.16)	6.45 (3.56)	2.3 (1.4)
Region:				
North .....	0.36 (.48)	0.36 (.48)	0.36 (.48)	
West .....	0.26 (.44)	0.27 (.45)	0.27 (.45)	
Percentage black .....	19.21 (16.63)	19.21 (16.66)	21.09 (17.78)	12.3 (16.5)
Population size ( <i>ln</i> ) .....	12.31 (.76)	12.29 (.75)	12.36 (.74)	10.9 (.67)
Structural density of rental housing (% units in 5+ unit structures)	48.42 (11.42)	48.42 (11.42)	50.34 (11.20)	48.9 (16.1)

<sup>a</sup> N not reported in the original article

<sup>b</sup> N = 171

<sup>c</sup> N = 157 (U.S. cities with populations 25,000 or more participating in the NIBRS program)

For 1980, replicating the regression results for the race-specific structural characteristics reported by Sampson in his 1987 article was almost as challenging as replicating the murder and robbery rates. Although the summary statistics for the census variables we extracted from the 1980 census were similar to those reported by Sampson, our attempt to duplicate his regression results did not produce identical results. Nevertheless, our 1980 results successfully reproduced Sampson's overall substantive conclusions. For example, Table 3 shows the results of a regression model predicting black adult robbery offending in U.S. cities in the early 1980s. Coefficients in parentheses are those reported by Sampson for 1980-82. Although the values of our coefficients differ slightly from Sampson's, the results, as expected, are essentially replicated. Therefore, we too find that family disruption has a significant positive effect on black adult robbery offending and, as shown in column 3, black male unemployment has the largest indirect effect on black adult robbery offending through family disruption.

**TABLE 3**  
**OLS REGRESSION ESTIMATES OF STRUCTURAL EQUATIONS PREDICTING RATES**  
**OF BLACK ADULT ROBBERY OFFENDING IN U.S. CITIES, 1980<sup>a,b</sup>**

Structural Characteristics	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect via Family Disruption
	$\beta$	t-ratio	
<b>Exogenous:</b>			
Employed black males per100 black women ...	-.12 (-.03) <sup>c</sup>	-1.03 (-.27)	-.15 (-.13)
Black median age .....	.00 (.03)	-.06 (.39)	-.05 (-.05)
Black per-capita income .....	-.18 (-.19)	-2.41** (-2.65**)	-.04 (-.05)
Mean black welfare payment .....	.04 (.04)	.45 (.40)	.05 (.06)
North .....	.25 (.29)	2.69** (3.09**)	.03 (.04)
West .....	.62 (.58)	5.68** (5.28**)	-.03 (-.03)
Structural density .....	.38 (.41)	5.18** (5.46**)	.00 (.00)
Population size .....	.14 (.10)	2.06** (1.40)	.01 (.01)
Percentage black .....	-.09 (-.08)	-1.00 (-.89)	.05 (.07)
<b>Endogenous:</b>			
% black households headed by females	.26 (.28)	1.90* (2.24**)	
$R^2 = 0.45, P < .01$			

\* P < .10; \*\* P < .05

<sup>a</sup> using logged adjusted robbery rate

<sup>b</sup> N=156 (excluded cities: Glendale CA, Torrance CA, Lakewood CO, Hartford CT, Hialeah FL, Boise City ID, Sterling Heights MI, Warren MI, Livonia MI, Independence MO, Youngstown OH, Akron OH, Nashville TN, Pasadena TX, Seattle WA)

<sup>c</sup> Coefficients reported in Sampson (1987) Table 4



Tables 4 and 5 present preliminary regression results for 1990. Table 4 shows the regression weights predicting black female-headed households in U.S. cities for 1990. The strongest predictor of the percentage of total black households with a female head is the black Male Marriage Pool Index (MMPI). An increase in the number of employed black men per 100 black women predicts a significant decrease in the percentage of female headed households. This pattern appears to have remained stable from 1980 to 1990. Sampson's major findings from 1980 are also replicated when using the percentage of black households with children that are female-headed as a measure of family disruption. The small pool of employed black men is a major predictor of both measures of family structure for 1980 and 1990.

**TABLE 4**  
**OLS REGRESSION ESTIMATES OF EQUATIONS PREDICTING RATES OF FEMALE-HEADED BLACK HOUSEHOLDS IN U.S. CITIES, 1990<sup>a</sup>**

Structural Characteristics	Percent of Total Black Households With Female Head		Percent of Black Households With Children With Female Head	
	$\beta$	t-ratio	$\beta$	t-ratio
Employed black males per 100 black women .	-.60	-11.78**	-.48	-6.64**
Black median age .....	-.19	-4.54**	.08	1.47
Black per-capita income .....	-.14	-3.15**	-.37	-6.15**
Mean black welfare payment .....	.32	6.24**	.20	2.96**
North .....	.06	1.38**	.31	4.93**
West .....	-.18	-2.75**	.05	0.59
Structural density .....	.04	0.83	.16	2.75**
Population size .....	.01	0.18	-.05	-1.04
Percentage black .....	.21	4.13**	.18	2.59**
	$R^2 = 0.80, P < .01$		$R^2 = 0.63, P < .01$	

\* P < .10

\*\* P < .05

<sup>a</sup> N=170

Finally, Table 5 shows the regression results predicting black adult robbery offending in U.S. cities in 1990. There are a number of similarities between the 1980 and 1990 results. Family disruption, measured as black households headed by women, is a significant predictor of black adult robbery rates. In column 3 we see that male joblessness has the largest indirect effect on black adult robbery rates. Sampson reports that for 1980 the strongest predictors of adult robbery are western region and the structural density of housing units. In 1990, western region is still the strongest predictor, but family disruption now has the second strongest effect, followed by northern locations. Still, these early results suggest that the complete 1989-1991 analysis will produce results generally similar to Sampson's 1980-1982 results.

**TABLE 5**  
**OLS REGRESSION ESTIMATES OF STRUCTURAL EQUATIONS PREDICTING RATES**  
**OF BLACK ADULT ROBBERY OFFENDING IN U.S. CITIES, 1990<sup>a,b</sup>**

Structural Characteristics	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect via Family Disruption
	$\beta$	t-ratio	
<b>Exogenous:</b>			
Employed black males per 100 black women.....	-.09	-.66	-.21
Black median age.....	.22	2.43**	-.07
Black per-capita income.....	-.09	-1.00	-.05
Mean black welfare payment.....	-.01	-.10	.11
North.....	.28	2.74**	.02
West.....	.40	2.89**	-.06
Structural density.....	.25	2.87**	.01
Population size.....	.12	1.56	.00
Percentage black.....	-.23	-2.04**	.07
<b>Endogenous:</b>			
Percent of black households headed by females	0.35	2.17**	
$R^2 = 0.25, P < .01$			

\*\* P < .05

<sup>a</sup> using logged adjusted robbery rate

<sup>b</sup> N=142

An obvious next step in our project is the analysis of traditional UCR offense and arrest rates for 1999-2001 for cities with populations over 100,000. We then need to analyze the NIBRS data for the same period and repeat the analysis of the traditional UCR measures for a set of generally smaller cities providing NIBRS data. The preliminary results discussed above suggest that Sampson's explanation still made sense in the early 1990s. Given the drop in crime rates in the 1990s, the results for 1999-2001 should be very interesting and perhaps very informative.

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**TRAVEL PATTERNS OF CHICAGO ROBBERY OFFENDERS:  
APPLYING TRAVEL DEMAND MODELS TO CHICAGO ROBBERS IN 1997 & 1998:  
A NEW FEATURE OF CRIMESTAT III**

**Richard Block, Loyola University Chicago**

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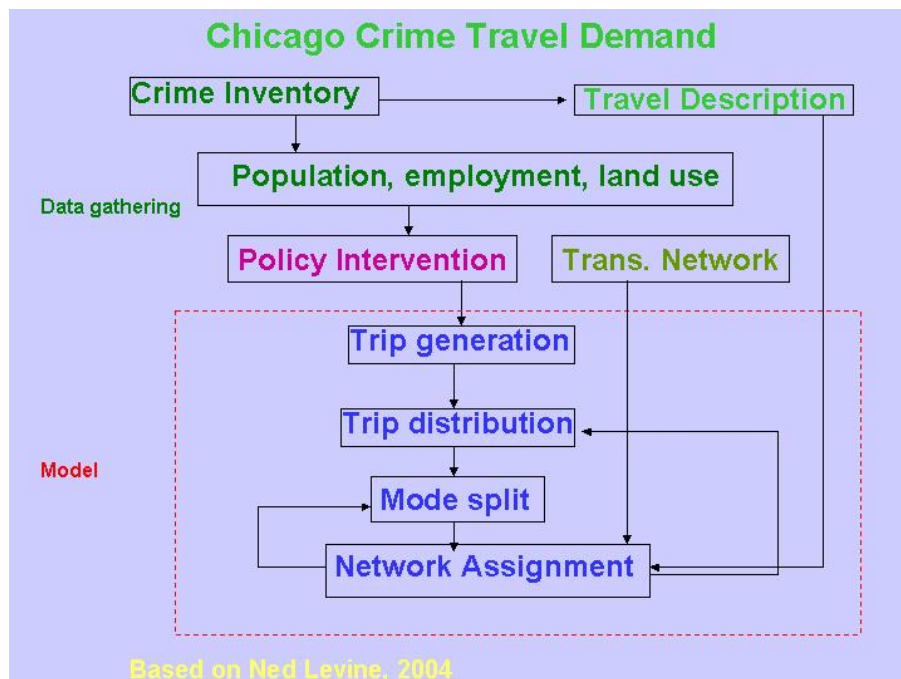
**Travel Demand Models**

The Offender Travel Model is a new application of the Travel Demand Model.

- The travel demand model has been in development since the 1950's.
- It is used in every metropolitan area in the United States.
- As applied to crime, it includes three steps.

**As Applied in Chicago (Figure One)**

- The first step is the depiction of probable travel routes from the offender's home to the incident.
- The second stage is the prediction of travel paths based on community characteristics of incidents and the offenders' home addresses.
- Third, these predictive models are compared to the observed trips and the previous year's trips used as a prediction.



**Figure One**

### The Offender's Crime Trip

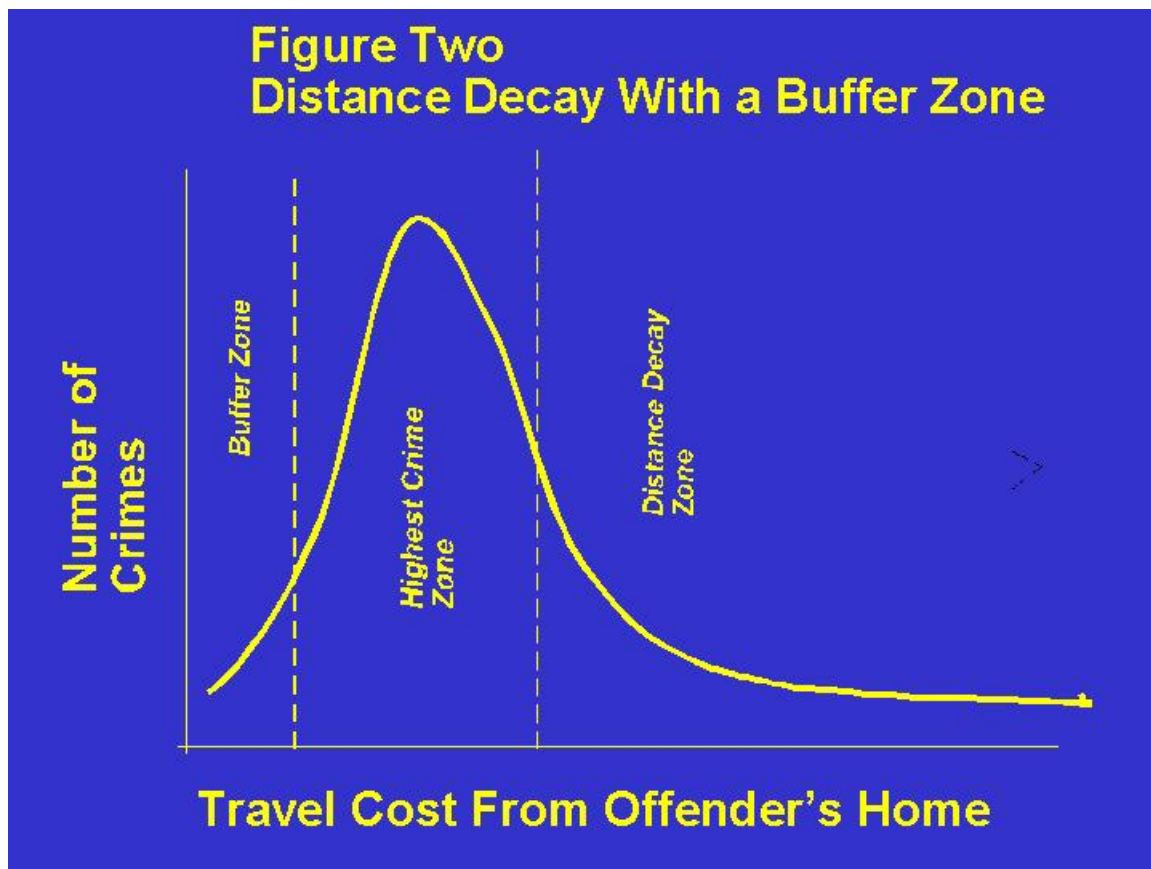
- Trips of Offenders are similar to any repeated activity.
- Most of our activities occur near where we live or work or on the path in between.
- This is our knowledge space.
- Trips within it maximize our efficiency and minimize costs.

### Distance Decay

- Daily purchases occur close to home with a rapid fall off with distance.
- But major purchases are an exception. They may occur far away.
- Distance Decay can be generalized to travel cost decay. The more expensive in time, money and distance, the less likely a trip will occur.
- Applied to Robbery: Most incidents occur close to home, but a bank robber might incur greater costs to find a good target.

### Buffer Zone (Figure Two)

- Most previous research has found that predatory criminals avoid incidents too close to home for fear that they will be recognized.
- Combined with distance decay, this creates a buffer zone of few criminal incidents.
- We did not find a buffer zone.



### **CrimeStat III Applies A Customized Travel Demand Model to Offender Travel**

- Zonal Regression Predictions of Origins (Home Address) & Locations of Incidents.
- Calculation of origin to incident links based on the regression predictions and mathematical curve fitting.
- Prediction of routes on a street network based on shortest distance or time.
- Outputs of these predicted & observed routes to standard geographic Information systems.

### **Data for the Study**

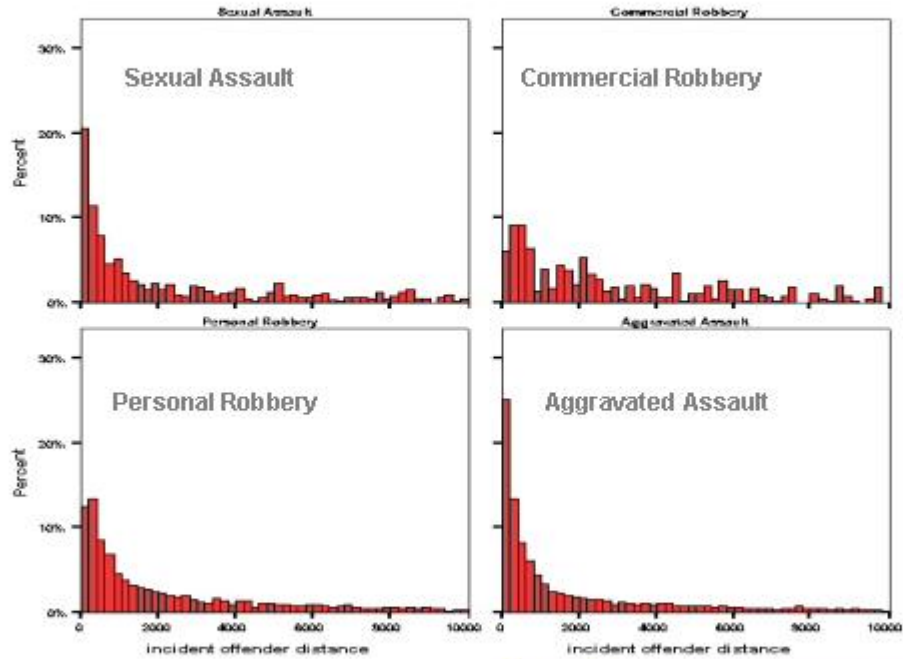
- All Chicago robberies in 1997 and 1998 that had at least one known offender who lived in Chicago. These were geo-coded by the addresses of the incident and all known offenders.
  - Offenders who traveled a long distance are probably under-represented.
  - *If the victim traveled a long distance, no offender was likely to be arrested.*
- About 20% of all reported robberies are included.
  - In 1997, there were 25,000 robberies reported to the police.
  - Of these robberies, 4,636 resulted in the arrest of at least one Chicago resident.
  - Including robberies with multiple offenders, there were 6,643 crime trips.
- 946 Traffic Analysis Zones. O'Hare is excluded.
- Land use, crime and population in these zones.
- Chicago's Transportation Network
  - *Distance*
  - *Travel time by time of day*

### **In Chicago, Within Zone Trips are Frequent**

- Most offenders do not travel very far from home (Figure 3). In 1997, 29% of offender trips were within a zone.
- Standard transportation models correct for this by giving within zone trips a small distance (e.g. ¼ mile).
- In this analysis, within and between zone trips are analyzed separately.

Figure Three

**Manhattan Metric Distance between the Offender's Address and the Incident  
Non-Lethal Index Violence: Chicago 1998  
Incident Did Not Occur at the Offender's Address**

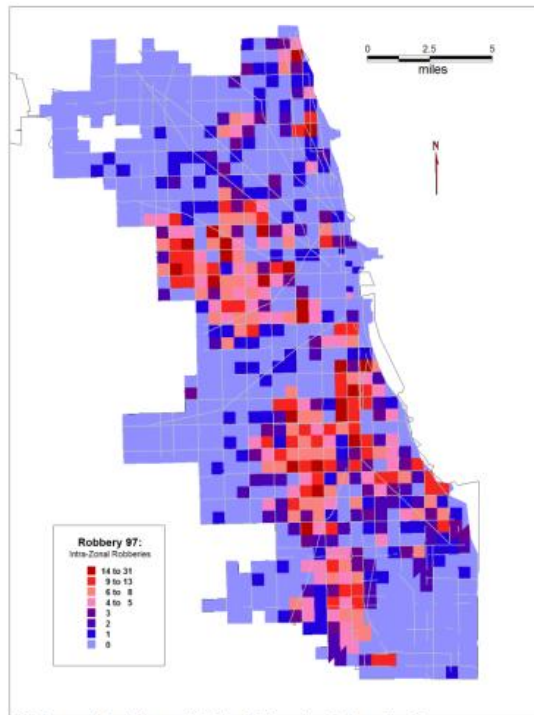


Sources: Chicago Police Department  
Analysis: Richard Block

**Each column is  
a Chicago block.**

**Chicago Robbers  
Often Attack in  
their  
Home  
Neighborhood**

**Within Zone  
Robbery  
1997**



**Chicago Robbery 1997: Offender Lives in Same TAZ as Incident**

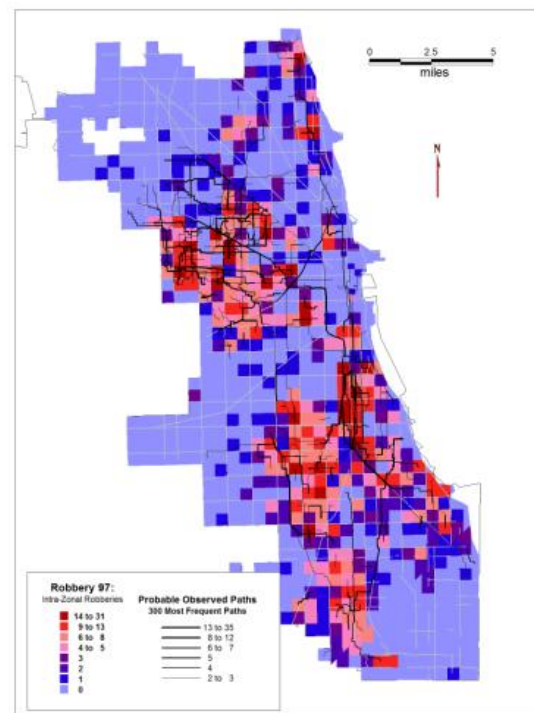
Source: Chicago Police Department Cartography: Richard Block

Figure Four

**They Move Over  
Probable Routes**

**300 Most Frequent  
Observed Trips**

**Between Zone  
Robbery Trips:  
Volume in Each  
Street Segment  
Based on  
Distance.**



**Chicago Robbery 1997:  
Inter and Intra Zonal Robbery**

Source: Chicago Police Department Cartography: Richard Block

Figure Five



### 1997 Regression Predictors

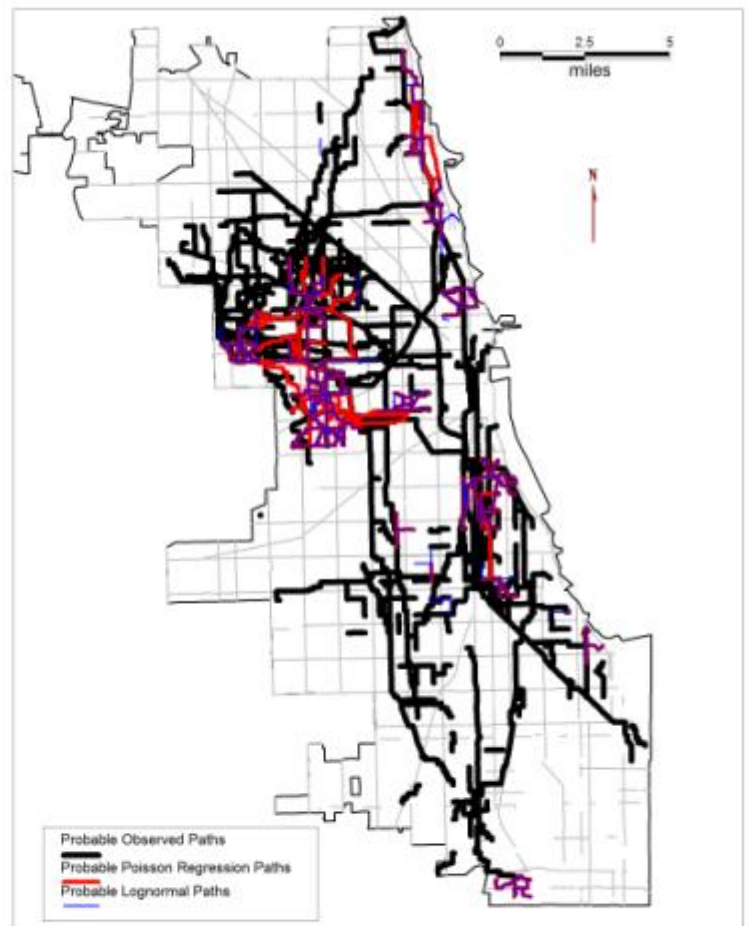
- Within Zones — Poverty, Percent of Dominant Racial or Ethnic group, Population, Pedestrian Environment.
- Between Zones Homes — Poverty, Percent of Dominant Racial or Ethnic group, Population.
- Between Zones Incidents — Poverty, Percent of Dominant Racial or Ethnic group, Population, Drug Arrests, High School, Pawn Shop, Distance to Central Business District (Negative).

Figure Six

Most predicted trips are local to high incident neighborhoods,

But

Both the empirical and lognormal predictions underestimate long trips.



Inter-zonal Robbery 1997: Probable Routes  
Observed, Regression Prediction, Lognormal Prediction

Source: Chicago Police Department  
Cartography: Richard Block, Loyola University

## Predicting Robberies in 1998

- Can the within zone and between zone crime travel models developed in 1997 be used to predict 1998 robbery travel patterns?
- Can the 1997 observed robbery trips 1997 be used to predict 1998 robbery trips?
- Are the travel demand models or the 1997 travel patterns better predictors of 1998?

### Robbery 1998

Within Zones  
Between Zones

Observed between  
Zone Robbery Trips:  
Volume in each street  
Segment Based on  
Distance.

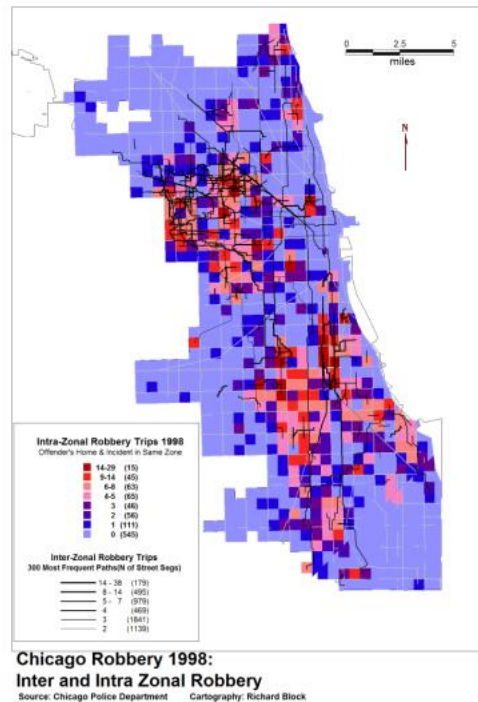


Figure Seven

Within Zone  
Robberies

Observed  
Difference in  
Incidents  
1998-1997

A Better  
Prediction Than  
Regression

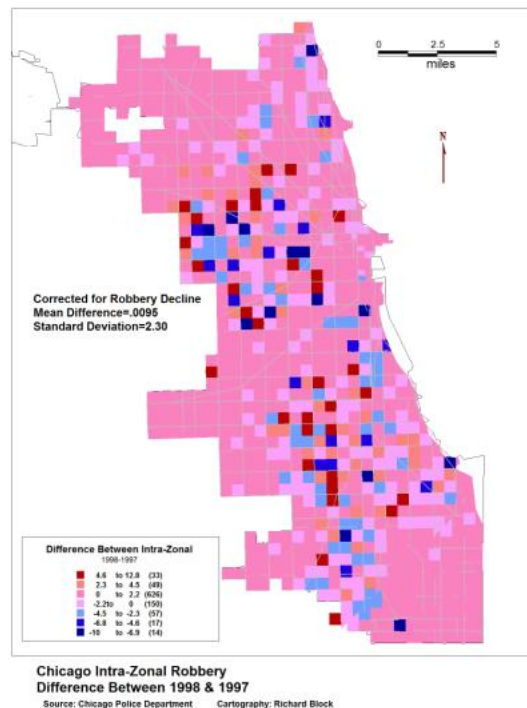


Figure Eight

Distance From Offender's Home to Incident is Nearly Identical for Between Zone Incidents for 1997 and 1998

- With 50 Distances, Coincidence Ratio is .89.

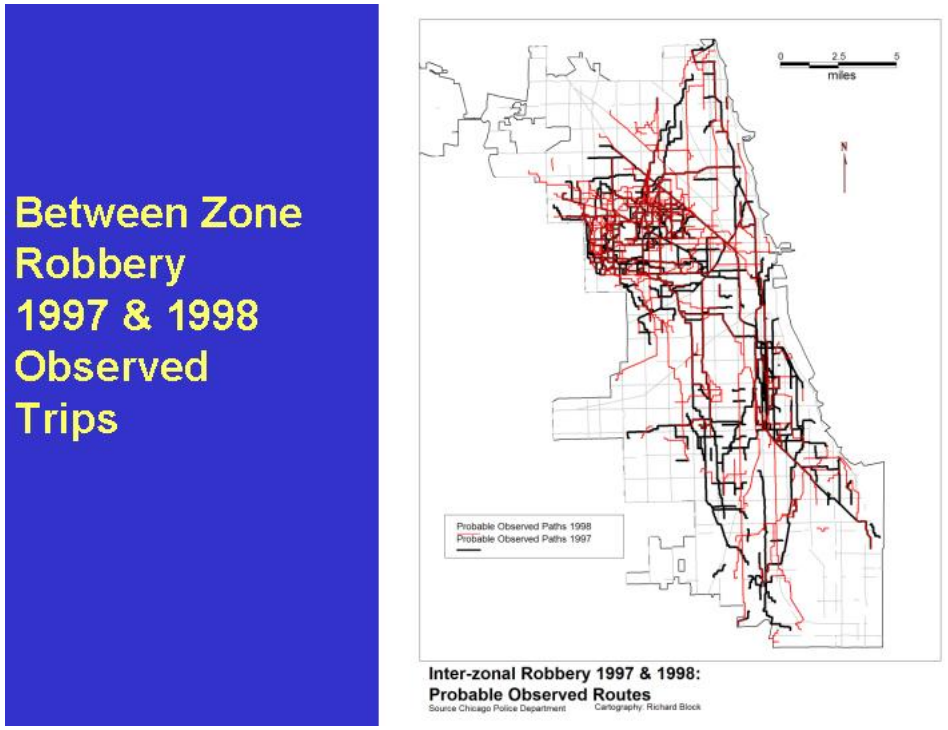


Figure Nine

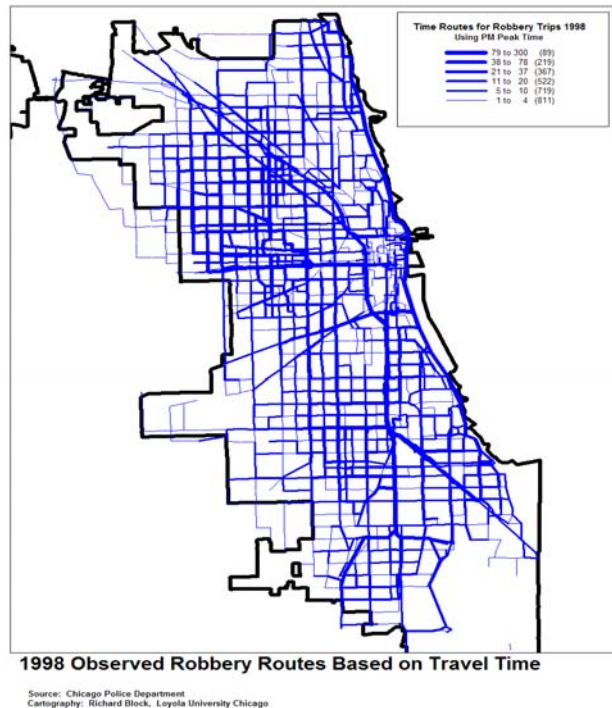


Figure Ten

### 1998 Regression Predictors Almost The Same as 1997

- Within Zone — Poverty, Percent of Dominant Racial or Ethnic group, Population, Pedestrian Environment and Entertainment Venues (Negative).
- Between Zone Origins — Poverty, Percent of Dominant Racial or Ethnic group, Population.
- Between Zone Incidents — Poverty, Percent of Dominant Racial or Ethnic group, Population, Drug Arrests, High School, Pawn Shop, Pedestrian Environment.

**Robbery 1998  
Neither  
Empirical or  
Lognormal  
Predictions  
Are Very Good  
Predictors of  
Observed Travel  
Patterns**

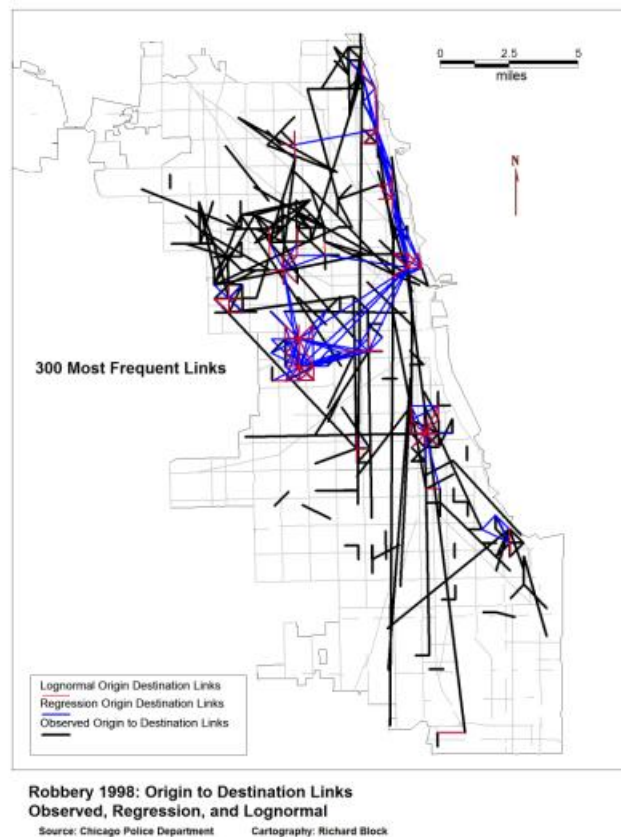


Figure Eleven

**Crime Travel Modeling can use the tools of Travel Demand Modeling, but it is different.**

- Information on trips is automatically gathered as a function of policing.
- These trips have never been described. Description before explanation or prediction.
- *Description, change and stability over several years must come first.*
- The crime travel demand model is better at description and short term prediction than long term prediction of travel patterns.
- Police work on an existing transportation network rather than constructing for long term needs — acute rather than chronic problems.
- In Chicago, the police rarely have to estimate long term effects.

## **Limitations**

- Only crimes with at least one known offender are analyzed.
- The offender's home address may be inaccurate.
- The model must be crime and city specific.
- Routes are from the center of a zone.
- The model assumes that the trip from home to incident is direct.
- Statistical tests of the accuracy of predictions are inadequate.

## **Value for Police**

- Tactically: To identify street segments that have a high flow of crime trips.
- To plan and assess interventions. Where should roadblocks be set up in a drug marketing area to intercept purchasers?
- To forecast the effect of street, housing, environmental, or attractor changes on crime patterns.
  - *Builders are required to ask the CPD to assess the effects of development. Crime travel demand modeling is a tool to do this.*

## **Conclusions: Chicago**

- Chicago is a city of isolated neighborhoods.
- In Chicago, many robberies occur very close to the home address of the offender. Even when offenders travel they tend to stay in the neighborhood.
- Downtown Chicago is relatively free of robbery incidents.
- Between zone patterns in 1998 are similar to those in 1997.
- Within zone robbery patterns in 1998 are very similar to those in 1997.
- Regression predictors for home and incident were similar in 1997 and 1998, but not policy useful.
- Travel time is a much more realistic description than travel distance.
- Models for crime travel patterns are not useful for robbery in some neighborhoods because robbery can occur anywhere.
- Chicago is a mature city. Neighborhoods change slowly and, traditionally, have been very isolated.
- Large scale changes in housing, poverty, or attractors do occur — the destruction of public housing. When this happens travel patterns should change.
- Chicago's trip pattern is very different than Las Vegas or Baltimore County.

## **Speculation: The Chicago School**

- Social Disorganization and Collective Efficacy, two major theories of crime, were based on research in Chicago.
- The structure of Chicago — isolated neighborhoods with crimes committed close to home — may not be typical of most cities.
- The validity of "Chicago School" crime theory may be limited to Chicago.

**DISCUSSION: LETHAL AND NON-LETHAL ROBBERY**  
**Recorded by Kim Vogt, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse**

**Jay Corzine:** Regarding Table 3, there are 15 cities identified as missing, why are the data missing?

**Roland Chilton:** The black population in many of these cities is too small to create valid rates. The cut-off used was a minimum black population of 1,000. This was the same criteria Sampson used. Some data were missing for one or more of the time periods.

**John Jarvis:** It is refreshing to see the replication of other research using NIBRS data. We should encourage using NIBRS data in a variety of ways to see what we can get out of it.

**Roland Chilton:** Regarding the problem of not being able to replicate exactly Sampson's data: Data in the archives do change, for example census data are updated.

**Becky Block:** The central issue is the quality of available race data and arrest estimates. It is interesting to look at NIBRS data, victim survey data, etc., to see if reports of characteristics of the offender (perceptions) compare versus the characteristics of the offender in arrest data. Have you used NIBRS to compare offender reported characteristics vs. UCR arrest data?

**Jim Noonan:** In Table 2, can you determine why there is a gap in offender race vs. Arrest statistic race? Is there any research that explains the discrepancy?

**Roland Chilton:** None that I know of. Howard Snyder has some research on differences in robberies.

**Jenny Mouzos** inquired about the possibility of using ADAM drug arrest data to verify offender/arrestee race accuracy.

**Becky Block** mentioned that the researchers should be careful to understand that the meaning of the welfare measurement has changed over time.

**Dick Block:** The incident statistical tool box was developed with support from NIJ. Works with any major GIS system.

**Jim Noonan:** Is Chicago PD looking at "crime corridors?"

**Dick Block:** The Police Department is very interested in crime corridors. They are interested in techniques for slowing purchases of drugs, for example, places to set up blockades. They want to predict what will happen to traffic because of the blockades. Where does the drug traffic go?

**Jim Noonan:** Take care to pay attention to time of day. Activities in an area vary significantly by time of day. You might develop weights to apply to an area based on time of day.

**John Jarvis:** How accurate is the time of the incident?

**Dick Block:** Depends on the type of crime — very good for homicide and robbery, poor for burglary.

**Chris Dunn:** What is the criterion variable unit of measure?

**Dick Block:** The unit is Traffic Analysis Zones, a grid laid down over the metropolitan area map. Traffic Analysis Zones were developed for transportation purposes, and are independent of Census geography (such as blocks or tracts). This varies across cities, but in Chicago, the grid is a 1/2 sq. mile grid, and 1/4 mile grid in the Loop. In addition, to the database, I added data characteristics, like pawn shops and dance clubs/bars.

**Jenny Mouzos:** Can repeat offenders be picked up with these data?

**Dick Block:** Yes, but I have not done it yet.

**Jim Noonan:** How does mode of transportation make a difference?

**Dick Block:** The Intra-zonal level includes a lot of walking. The Police Department plans to interview offenders to ask them how they got to the robbery scene.

**Jim Noonan:** Methods examined with robbery on travel patterns could be applied to homicide. For example, we used similar ideas in the sniper shootings in DC, determining which routes to close and trying to catch criminals.

**CHAPTER THREE:  
FEMICIDE I  
PANEL SESSION**

**Moderator:** Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology

**Papers:**

Strangulation as a Risk Factor for Intimate Partner Femicide: Summary Report.  
Nancy Glass, Oregon Health & Science University; Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing; Carolyn Rebecca Block, IL Criminal Justice Information Authority; Jane Koziol-McLain, Auckland University of Technology; Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy & Research; and Ginger Hanson, Oregon Health & Science University

Extent and Perpetrators of Prostitution-Related Homicide: Extended Abstract.  
Devon D. Brewer, Interdisciplinary Scientific Research; Jonathan A. Dudek, Private Practice; John J. Potterat, independent consultant; Stephen Q. Muth, independent consultant; and Donald E. Woodhouse, Lock Haven University

Do Gender, Race, and/or Class Affect the Variance in Femicide Rates in Large U.S. Cities?  
Jo-Ann Della-Giustina, City University of New York Graduate Center

**Recorder:** Vickie Titterington, University of Central Florida





## **STRANGULATION AS A RISK FACTOR FOR INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE: SUMMARY REPORT**

**Nancy Glass, Oregon Health and Science University;  
Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing;  
Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority;  
Jane Koziol-McLain, Auckland University of Technology;  
Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research;  
and Ginger Hanson, Oregon Health & Science University**

### **PURPOSE AND METHODS**

The purpose of this study is to examine use of strangulation by intimate partner perpetrators as a risk factor for major assault, or for attempted or actual partner femicide. A case control design was used to describe strangulation among intimate partner femicide and attempted femicide victims ( $n = 506$ ) and abused controls ( $n = 427$ ). Telephone and face-to-face interviews of proxy respondents (e.g. family members or friends of femicide victims) and survivors of attempted femicide were compared with data from abused controls, identified via random digit dialing in 11 cities. Data was derived using the Danger Assessment (DA).

### **RESULTS**

#### **Demographic Differences Between Women Who Had and Had Not Been Strangled**

Women in the abused control, attempted femicide and completed femicide groups were stratified further to investigate whether there were demographic differences within these groups between women who had and had not been strangled by their partner. These differences were tested using chi-squares or t-tests depending on the nature of the variables being tested. The results are summarized in Table 1.

The results indicated that there were significant differences in age, ethnicity, and relationship status between controls who had been strangled by their partner or ex-partner compared to those who had not been strangled. Among the controls, women who had been strangled were younger ( $M = 27.07$ ) on average than those who had not been strangled ( $M = 30.40$ ); this same pattern was seen in the attempted and completed femicide groups although it was not statistically significant. Controls who were strangled were largely African-American (46%), with Whites making up 31.7% of the group, Hispanics 12.2%, and other races 9.8%; where as controls who had not been strangled were largely White (49.2%), with African-Americans making up 20.3% of the group, Hispanics 22.9%, and other races 7.6%. Among the controls, women who had been strangled were more likely to report abuse by an ex-partner (57.9%) than women who had not been strangled (38.5%).

Among the attempted femicides only length of relationship was significantly different between women who had been strangled by a partner and those who had not been strangled. Attempted femicides who reported being strangled were more likely to have been in a relationship with the perpetrator for more than a year (86.2%) than women who

had not been strangled (72.2%); the control and completed femicide groups displayed a similar pattern however, no significant differences in length of relationship were found in those groups.

No significant differences were found between women who had and had not been strangled by their partners among the completed femicide group.

## Logistic Regressions

We conducted two hierarchical logistic regressions; the first logistic regression estimated the odds of becoming an attempted femicide versus an abused control if the woman had previously been strangled by their partner or ex-partner, the second logistic regression estimated the odds of becoming a completed femicide versus an abused control if the woman had previously been strangled by their partner or ex-partner. When conducting the hierarchical logistic regressions, we entered all of the demographic predictors in the first block. Then to assess whether adding strangulation as a predictor improved the fit of the model, it was added in the second block.

In the first logistic regression, which estimated the odds of becoming an attempted femicide versus an abused control, the addition of strangulation significantly improved the fit of the model over a model with only the demographic predictors,  $\chi^2(1) = 58.73$ ,  $p < .001$ . The odds ratios are shown in Table 2. Controlling for the demographic predictors, the odds of becoming an attempted femicide increased almost seven fold (OR 6.78, 95% CI 4.06-11.34) for women who had been strangled by their partner. Controlling for all other predictors, there was a 6% increase in the risk of becoming an attempted femicide for each year increase in age (OR 1.06, 95% CI 1.03-1.08). African-American women were four times more likely than White women to become an attempted femicide (OR 4.07, 95% CI 2.44-6.78). Women who finished high school were 50% less likely to become an attempted femicide (OR .50, 95% CI 0.29-0.85) than women who did not complete high school. Women who were employed were 62% less likely to become an attempted femicide (OR .38, 95% CI 0.23-0.64) than women who were not employed. Finally, women were almost twice as likely to become an attempted femicide if they were no longer in a relationship with their partner than if they were in a relationship with their partner (OR 1.68, 95% CI 1.05-2.68).

- Age was significantly different, between those strangled and not strangled for the abused controls only,  $t(425) = 2.38$ ,  $p = .02$ .
- Length of relationship was significantly different,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.58$ ,  $p = .02$ , between those strangled and not strangled for the attempted femicides only.
- Ethnicity was significantly different, between those strangled and not strangled for the abused controls,  $\chi^2(3) = 15.58$ ,  $p = .001$
- Relationship status was significantly different,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.30$ ,  $p = .02$ , between those strangled and not strangled for the abused controls only.

In the second logistic regression, which estimated the odds of becoming a completed femicide versus an abused control, the addition of strangulation significantly improved the fit of the model over a model with only the demographic predictors,  $\chi^2(1) = 29.80$ ,  $p < .001$ . The odds ratios are shown in Table 2. Controlling for the demographic

predictors, the odds of becoming a completed femicide increased almost four fold (OR 3.52, 95% CI 2.21-5.62) for women who had been strangled by their partner. Controlling for all other predictors, there was a 4% increase in the risk of becoming a completed femicide for each year increase in age (OR 1.04, 95% CI 1.03-1.06). African-American women were over three times as likely than white women to become a completed femicide (OR 3.41, 95% CI 2.25-5.18). Women who finished high school were 43% less likely to become a completed femicide (OR .57, 95% CI 0.36-0.88) than women who did not complete high school. Women who were employed were 52% less likely to become a completed femicide (OR .48, 95% CI 0.31-0.73) than women who were not employed. Finally, women were 52% more likely to become a completed femicide if they were no longer in a relationship with their partner than if they were in a relationship with their partner (OR 1.52, 95% CI 1.04-2.21).

**Table 1**  
**Comparisons of Demographic Characteristics Abuse Groups by Strangled versus Not Strangles**

	Abused Controls		Attempted Femicides				Completed Femicides					
			No		No		No		No			
	Strangulation		Strangulation		Strangulation		Strangulation		Strangulation			
	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
	(SD)		(SD)		(SD)		(SD)		(SD)		(SD)	
Age	27.07 (6.86)	41	30.40 (8.66)	386	32.06 (8.14)	86	34.27 (9.82)	108	31.82 (9.24)	89	34.80 (12.93)	220
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Length of Relationship		40		385		87		108		89		220
< 1 Year	17.5%		30.6%		13.8%		27.8%		14.6%		23.2%	
>= 1 Year	82.5%		69.4%		86.2%		72.2%		85.4%		76.8%	
Ethnicity		41		380		86		106		89		221
Black	46.3%		20.3%		65.1%		51.9%		50.6%		42.5%	
White	31.7%		49.2%		18.6%		23.6%		22.5%		29.9%	
Latino	12.2%		22.9%		12.8%		20.8%		25.8%		20.4%	
Other	9.8%		7.6%		3.5%		3.8%		1.1%		7.2%	
Education		40		384		87		107		87		213
< High School	20.0%		16.1%		35.6%		31.8%		43.7%		25.4%	
>= High School	80.0%		83.9%		64.4%		68.2%		56.3%		74.6%	
Employment		41		386		85		107		89		220
No	95.1%		85.0%		68.2%		63.6%		74.2%		67.7%	
Yes	4.9%		15.0%		31.8%		36.4%		25.8%		32.3%	
Relationship Status		38		327		87		106		88		220
Current	42.1%		61.5%		75.9%		70.8%		69.3%		73.2%	
Former	57.9%		38.5%		24.1%		29.2%		30.7%		26.8%	

**Table 2**  
**Odds Ratios and 95% Confidence Intervals From Two Hierarchical Logistic**  
**Regressions Predicting Abuse Categories**

	Attempted Femicide Verses Abused Control*		Completed Femicide Verses Abused Control <sup>†</sup>	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Model 1				
Age	1.04	1.02-1.07	1.04	1.02-1.06
Length of Relationship (Referent < 1 Year)	1.26	0.76-2.07	1.13	0.75-1.70
Ethnicity (Referent White)				
Black	5.28	3.27-8.52	3.81	2.53-5.72
Latino	1.16	0.62-2.16	1.33	0.82-2.16
Other	1.51	0.59-3.89	1.67	0.81-3.45
Education (Referent < High School)	.45	0.27-0.75	.48	0.32-0.74
Employment (Referent Unemployed)	.42	0.26-0.68	.52	0.34-0.78
Relationship Status (Referent Current)	1.56	1.01-2.41	1.42	0.99-2.05
Model 2				
Age	1.06	1.03-1.08	1.04	1.03-1.06
Length of Relationship (Referent < 1 Year)	.99	0.58-1.67	1.10	0.67-1.55
Ethnicity (Referent White)				
Black	4.07	2.44-6.78	3.41	2.25-5.18
Latino	1.39	0.72-2.67	1.43	0.87-2.34
Other	1.38	0.50-3.83	1.82	0.87-3.80
Education (Referent < High School)	.50	0.29-0.85	.57	0.36-0.88
Employment (Referent Unemployed)	.38	0.23-0.64	.48	0.31-0.73
Relationship Status (Referent Current)	1.68	1.05-2.68	1.52	1.04-2.21
Strangulation (Referent No Strangulation)	6.78	4.06-11.34	3.52	2.21-5.62

OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval.

\*Model 1 with all of the demographic predictors was a significantly better fitting model than the constant only model,  $\chi^2(8) = 116.01, p < .001$ . The addition of strangulation in Model 2 significantly improved the fit of the model over Model 1,  $\chi^2(1) = 58.73, p < .001$ .

<sup>†</sup>Model 2 with all of the demographic predictors was a significantly better fitting model than the constant only model,  $\chi^2(8) = 101.93, p = .49$ . The addition of strangulation in Model 2 significantly improved the fit of the model over Model 1,  $\chi^2(1) = 29.80, p < .001$ .



**EXTENT AND PERPETRATORS OF PROSTITUTION-RELATED HOMICIDE:  
EXTENDED ABSTRACT**

**Devon D. Brewer, Interdisciplinary Scientific Research;  
Jonathan A. Dudek, private practice;  
John J. Potterat, independent consultant;  
Stephen Q. Muth, independent consultant;  
and Donald E. Woodhouse, Lock Haven University**

In a recent prospective study, prostitute women who worked in Colorado Springs, CO, between 1967 and 1999 had a higher homicide mortality rate (229 per 100,000 person-years; standardized mortality ratio = 18) than any set of women ever studied (Potterat, et al., 2004, *Am J Epidemiol*). Nearly all homicides observed in this study occurred while the women were soliciting. Extrapolating from this observed homicide rate and an empirical estimate of the prevalence of prostitute women in Colorado Springs yields an estimate that 2.5% of all female murder victims in the U.S. in recent decades were prostitute women.

We analyzed several homicide data sets (Chicago 1965-95, St. Louis 1979-96, Washington state 1981-6, California 1990-9, Supplemental Homicide Reports 1976-99, and two national samples of prostitute homicides 1965-2004 [from law enforcement and media sources]) to estimate the extent of prostitute homicide in other parts of the U.S. In addition, we examined the frequency of such homicides over time and the roles of perpetrators (prostitute, pimp, client, other) in prostitution-related homicides.

The estimated percentage of female homicide victims who were prostitutes ranges from 0.3% to 6% across data sets. The frequencies of observed prostitute and client homicides were similar and remained relatively steady from the 1960s through the mid-1980s, but then climbed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Pimp homicides were less frequent and no longer observed by the late 1980s. Clients are the primary perpetrators of prostitute homicide, prostitutes are the main perpetrators of client homicide, and pimps are the predominant perpetrators of pimp homicide. The available evidence also suggests that prostitute homicides were substantially undercounted in these data sources.

Prostitution has been and continues to be a common context for homicide, and disproportionately affects women involved in the trade. The increase in prostitute and client homicides and disappearance of pimp homicides in the late 1980s seems to be related to the concurrent upsurge in crack cocaine use by prostitutes. Although prostitute homicides are among the most difficult to solve, victims come from a small pool of women who are relatively easily identified. Perpetrators also are a definable set of men who can be observed in public when patronizing prostitutes. These facts suggest that video surveillance of prostitution strolls and collection of DNA and other samples from both men and women arrested for prostitution could prove to be useful tools in deterring and solving prostitute and client homicides.





**DO GENDER, RACE, AND/OR CLASS AFFECT THE VARIANCE  
IN FEMICIDE RATES IN LARGE U.S. CITIES?**  
Jo-Ann Della-Giustina, The Graduate Center, City University of New York

**ABSTRACT**

Femicide, the homicide of women, is the ultimate form of violence against women. This study is a macro-social structural analysis of the possible effects of gender equality, race equality, and economic status on the fluctuation in femicide rates among large U.S. cities for the years 1998-2001. Further, community stability is investigated as a possible mediating factor between gender, race, and economic status and the femicide rate.

**INTRODUCTION**

Femicide, the homicide of women (Grana, 2001; Frye & Wilt, 2001; Radford & Russell, 1992), is the fourth leading cause of death for all women under the age of 45 in the United States and the leading cause of death for African American women aged 15 to 34 years old (Moracco, Runyan, & Butts, 1998; Oliver, 2000). U.S. women face a higher risk of being murdered than women in most industrial countries. In 1993, the femicide rate for U.S. women was 4.2 per 100,000 women whereas the femicide rates for Western European women ranged from 0.5 to 2.4 per 100,000 women, and 12.18 per 100,000 Russian women (Human Rights Watch, 1997; Salfati, 2001; The Moscow Center for Gender Studies, 1996).

Early research on violence against women examined a limited set of non-lethal crimes against women, such as wife battering, rape, incest, and pornography, while general homicide research primarily focused on men. Only in the last decade has homicide research been disaggregated on the basis of gender so that homicide patterns can be better understood (Pridemoor, 2002). Because men comprise approximately three-fourths of all homicide victims, any unique gendered patterns or differences among those victims can be obscured by the overwhelming number of male homicide victims (Moracco et al., 1998). Therefore, we cannot assume that the factors associated with homicide against men affect women in the same manner. It is important to study women homicide victims separately to begin to determine whether the risk factors leading to femicide are different from the risk factors involved in the homicide of men. Moreover, femicide research needs to go beyond the study of intimate partner femicide. While women are 60 percent of the victims of intimate partner homicide, research shows that the majority of femicide victims are killed by someone who is not an intimate partner (Greenfeld et al., 1998).

**This Study**

This study examines Crenshaw's (1991) intersectionality theory as it might apply to femicide, and to understanding the patterns and correlates of femicide. The intersectionality theory argues that the interconnection between gender inequality, racial inequality, and economic deprivation explains violence against women of color. It rejects the idea that women of color must decide whether they are more oppressed by racial inequality or gender inequality. Women are affected not only by their gender, but by all aspects of their

lives, including their race or ethnicity and their socio-economic class. To focus on only one area of a woman's life ignores her as a full human being. Not all women are similarly situated so that treating them in the same way may obscure important distinctions that could help to explain the causes of violence against them. Although the intersectionality theory was developed in the context of women of color, I will examine whether this theory can also be used to explain violence against white women.

To understand better the factors related to the femicide rate, this study examines the effect of several macro-social structural factors on the femicide rates. While it is important to recognize individual-level factors, an individual's behavior occurs within the context of his/ her life. Individuals do not live in a vacuum. Their attitudes and behavior are a response to their specific situation within a community so that the community's characteristics and structures affect the individual's actions. For that reason, this study will focus on social structural factors as predictors of the femicide rates in large U.S. cities.

Moreover, this multi-dimensional approach differs from previous macro-social research on femicide. A number of empirical studies have investigated the relationship between femicide and socio-structural factors, including women's socioeconomic status, social disorganization, and domestic violence resource availability. There has been support for the hypotheses that the femicide rate is related to social disorganization (Avakame, 1999; Brewer & Smith, 1995; Frye & Wilt, 2001; Smith & Brewer, 1992) and non-gendered socio-economic factors such as overall employment, unemployment, education, and welfare benefits (Bailey & Peterson, 1995; Frye & Wilt, 2001; Gartner, 1990; Gartner, Baker, & Pampel, 1990; Marvell & Moody, 1999). However, studies that have tested whether the status of women in society has an effect on the femicide rate have produced inconsistent results (Avakame, 1999; Bailey & Peterson, 1995; Brewer & Smith 1995; Dugan, Nagin, & Rosenfeld, 1999; Marvell & Moody, 1999; Smith & Brewer, 1995; Stout, 1993; Vieraitis & Williams, 2002; Whaley and Messner, 2002). Studying the intersection of structural gender inequality, racial inequality, and economic inequality is a new approach.

## **Methodology**

The dependent variables in this study are the femicide rates (murder and non-negligent homicide) in 88 large U.S. cities as reported in the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Reports for the years 1998-2001. Rates are computed as the femicide rate per 100,000 women disaggregated by race into the categories of black women and white women. For example, when examining the femicide rate of black women, that rate will be calculated as the rate per 100,000 black women. I was unable to include Latinas because many cities do not report the ethnicity of homicide victims. The final 88 cities included the 100 largest cities with populations over 190,000 minus those cities that did not report homicide statistics or had less than 3% black population for the years observed.

Four macrostructural theoretical concepts are incorporated as independent variables in this study: gender inequality, racial inequality, economic affluence, and community instability. These data were gathered from the U.S. Census data, Small Business Administration, and web pages of the cities. Separate indices, each constructed from individual independent variables, will be developed to test these concepts.

The gender variables include joblessness, poverty, median income, existence of Small Business Administration centers for women, education, elite occupations and elected officials. The race variables include joblessness, poverty, median income, education, elite occupations and elected officials. The economic variables include each city's general level of education, income, elite occupations, poverty and unemployment. The community instability variables are comprised of vacant housing, residential instability, renter-occupied housing, density, female-headed households with children under 18 years old, and city size.

### Preliminary Analysis

As a preliminary analysis, I conducted bivariate correlations and an OLS regression of the individual independent variables.

**TABLE 1. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS OF GENDER VARIABLES WITH THE FEMICIDE RATES OF WHITE WOMEN AND BLACK WOMEN**

	White Femicide Rate	Black Femicide Rate
Female Joblessness	-.109	-.336 ***
Female Poverty	-.109	-.199*
SBA Women's Centers	-.145	-.369***
Female Median Income	-.119	-.128
Female College Education	-.210**	-.159
Female Elite Occupations	-.402***	-.160
Male City Council Members	-.333***	-.253**
Male Mayors	-.009	-.027

- \* Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed)
- \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
- \*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

These gender variables were measured as inequality measures (men relative to women) so that a negative correlation means that the femicide rate decreases as gender inequality increases. Such a correlation suggests a backlash effect.

The race variables were measured as inequality measures (white relative to black) so that a positive correlation means that the femicide rates increase as racial inequality increases. The negative correlations mean that the femicide rate decreases as race inequality increases.

These economic variables measure a city's affluence (the opposite of the gender, race, and community variables, which measure inequality). Therefore, the negative correlations mean that the femicide rate decreases as the city's affluence increases.

**TABLE 2. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS OF RACE VARIABLES WITH THE FEMICIDE RATES OF WHITE WOMEN AND BLACK WOMEN**

	<b>White Femicide Rate</b>	<b>Black Femicide Rate</b>
Black Unemployment	-.053	.355***
Black Poverty	-.183*	.132
Black Median Income	-.102	.140
Black College Education	-.014	.263**
Black Elite Occupations	-.016.	.113
Black City Council Members	-.450***	-.261**
Black Mayors	-.283***	-.105

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**TABLE 3. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS OF ECONOMIC VARIABLES WITH THE FEMICIDE RATES OF WHITE WOMEN AND BLACK WOMEN**

	<b>White Femicide Rate</b>	<b>Black Femicide Rate</b>
City's Median Income	-.277***	-.137
City's College Education	-.491***	-.023
City's Elite Occupations	-.442***	-.099
City's Population At or Above Poverty Level	-.479***	-.221**
City's Total Employment	-.543***	-.164

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**TABLE 4. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS OF COMMUNITY VARIABLES WITH THE FEMICIDE RATES OF WHITE WOMEN AND BLACK WOMEN**

	<b>White Femicide Rate</b>	<b>Black Femicide Rate</b>
Vacant housing	.290***	.325***
Moved in last 5 years	-.197*	.065
Renter-occupied	.219**	.051
Density	.117	-.030
Female-headed with children	.571***	.147
City size	.067	.034

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The community variables were measured as inequality measures so that a positive correlation means that the femicide rates increase as community instability increases. The negative correlations mean that the femicide rate decreases as community instability increases.

**TABLE 5. OLS REGRESSIONS. GENDER INEQUALITY VARIABLES.**

	White Femicide Rate	Black Femicide Rate
	$\beta$	$\beta$
Female Joblessness	.100	-.208
Female Poverty	-.085	-.044
SBA Women's Center	-.094	-.287*
Female Median Income	.302**	.084
Female College Education	.004	.019
Female Elite Occupations	-.521***	-.043
Male City Council Members	-.247**	-.156
Male Mayor	-.002	-.057

R2 = .267 for white femicide rate

R2 = .218 for black femicide rate

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level

\* Significant at 0.10 level

**TABLE 6. OLS REGRESSIONS. BLACK INEQUALITY VARIABLES.**

	White Femicide Rate	Black Femicide Rate
	$\beta$	$\beta$
Black Unemployment	.019	.299*
Black Poverty	-.130	.074
Black Median Income	-.013	.088
Black College Education	-.145	.081
Black Elite Occupations	-.163	-.350
White City Council Members	-.247**	-.156

R2 = .188 for black femicide rate

R2 = .309 for white femicide rate

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level

\* Significant at 0.10 level

**TABLE 7. OLS REGRESSIONS. ECONOMIC AFFLUENCE VARIABLES.**

	White Femicide Rate	Black Femicide Rate
	$\beta$	$\beta$
Total Median Income	.041	-.020
Total College Education	-.423*	.417
Total Elite Occupations	.140	-.340
Total Population At or Above Poverty Level	-.101	-.207
Total Employment	-.311	-.026

R2 = .077 for black femicide rate

R2 = .352 for white femicide rate

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level

\* Significant at 0.10 level

**TABLE 8. OLS REGRESSIONS. COMMUNITY INSTABILITY VARIABLES.**

	White Femicide Rate	Black Femicide Rate
	$\beta$	$\beta$
Vacant housing	-.114	.441***
Moved in last 5 years	.301**	.364**
Renter-occupied	-.065	-.127
Density	.108	.170
Female-headed with children	.821***	.079
City size	.082	.094

R2 = .170 for black femicide rate

R2 = .380 for white femicide rate

\*\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level

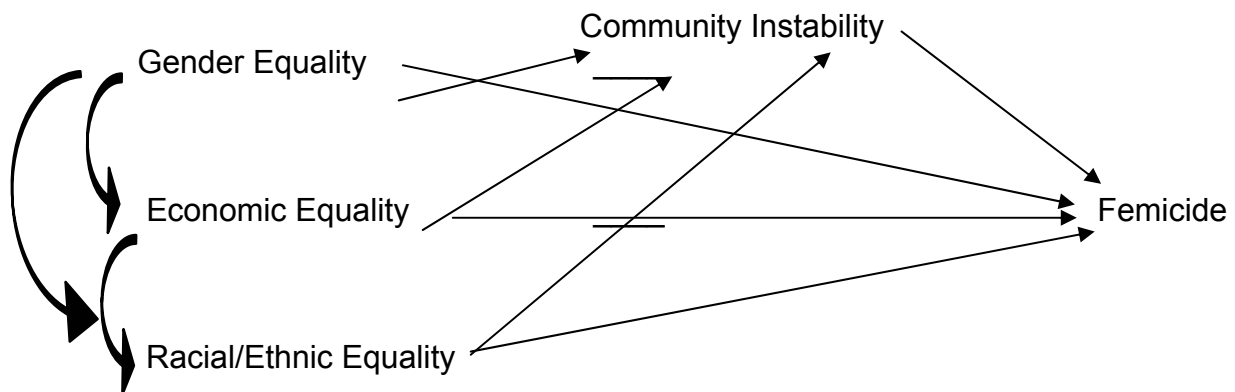
\* Significant at 0.10 level

The results seem to be inconsistent. Although this could be explained by multicollinearity, an examination of the bivariate correlations indicate only that possible multicollinearity exists between the following variables: black education with black income, black education with black occupation, city with density, renter-occupied with density, and female headed households with children under 18 years old with several variables. Further examination is necessary.

### Conclusion

Several methods will be used to correct for the problems of multicollinearity. First, indices will be derived from Factor Analysis results: Gender Inequality Index, Race Inequality Index, Economic Affluence Index, and Community Instability Index.

Also, the final study will be a path analysis of the relationship of the femicide rates to the four indices. The project model will be as follows:



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**DISCUSSION: FEMICIDE I**  
**Recorded by Vickie Titterington, University of Central Florida**

“Strangulation as a Risk Factor for Intimate Partner Femicide”

Q. Vance McLaughlin: How do you define strangulation?

A. Nancy Glass: Manual, asphyxiation, ligature?

Q. Tom Petee: Are there any differences based on the type of (technique) of strangulation?

A. Nancy Glass: Yes, we need to look back at the data more carefully.

A. Becky Block: For Chicago, we can get that, but for the Attempted Homicides and the Controls, we had two other questions:

1) “Has he ever tried to choke or strangle you?”

2) “Has he tried to choke or strangle you in the past year?”

Q. Tom Petee: Isn't there an implied intentionality, based on the method?

A. Becky Block: Not necessarily. The weapon (including strangulation) may be whatever is convenient.

Q. Tom Petee: But with manual strangulation, there may not be an intent to kill.

A. Becky Block: Daly & Wilson in their book, *Homicide*, make the point that the concept of intention is often ambiguously defined. We should be collecting better data on this.

Q. David Etnoyer: Have you tried to get emergency rooms to look at this more carefully?

A. Jackie Campbell: We're trying to get that attention to the issue. We've tried to train ER docs to look at that; but there are often multiple injuries and strangulation may not be the most obvious.

A. Becky Block: There's a movement among police officers to be better trained about the immediate need for emergency medical treatment and the importance of the history of that behavior (strangulation) when intervening in domestic violence cases.

“Extent and Perpetrators of Prostitution-Related Homicide”

Q. Roger Trent: You said that prostitution deaths didn't show up in the SHR. What did you mean by that?

A. Devon Brewer: There are a couple of reasons why a prostitution-related homicide might not show up in the SHR. The homicide might not be included in the SHR at all, for example there was no report of any kind related to a victim's death. Also, the homicide might be included in the SHR but the victim was not identified as a prostitute, client or pimp, at least not by the time the SHR was submitted.

Q. Kim Davies: When you create rates, are you including indoor and outdoor incidents?

A. Devon Brewer: We're including it all. There's a lot of speculation regarding the relative size of the indoor versus outdoor prostitution. Our anecdotal observations suggest that street prostitution accounts for the large majority of the trade. Also, a significant proportion of prostitutes who work off-street — a majority in some communities — also work in the streets.

Q. Kim Davies: On the Internet, I'm looking at this by searching escort agencies. What is your opinion of the quality of that information?

A. Devon Brewer: There are actually lots of agencies that feed through the same pool of people. The large number of agencies gives people a deceptive picture of how many prostitutes are involved with escort agencies.

Q. Tom Petee: Regarding your extrapolation techniques, there might be a problem with your percentages if your extrapolation is from the numbers in urban areas. 2.5% seems high.

A. Devon Brewer: The 2.5% estimate is an extrapolation from Colorado Springs (actually the whole of El Paso County, Colorado). This area mirrors the nation as a whole in terms of the proportion of urban and rural residents. The real point here is that the estimates from other data sets — two cities and one whole state — are in the same neighborhood as the extrapolated estimate.

Q. Jenny Mouzos: Did they mention prostitution elsewhere in the police reports?

A. Devon Brewer: Yes, in some reports, it's coded correctly. In others, there's mention of prostitution in the police narratives. The vast majority were killed while working.

Q. Jackie Campbell: It's great that you're paying attention to this group. Is there any data on the percentages of these cases that are solved?

A. Devon Brewer: I haven't looked at this specifically and, still, they may not be labeled as prostitutes.

A. Becky Block: I'm looking at the 1965-1995 Chicago narratives to try to find this information and am systematically filling it into the data set.

Often these cases are in the press or in the state's attorney's office, including whole histories i.e. of serial homicide cases, where the prostitute victims (their occupations) weren't initially noted; nor in the circumstance descriptions. These additional data sources, including much richer data like "prostitute not paid, went to pimp, pimp killed client," will ultimately be available in the Chicago file. At that point, we will probably be closer to the 6% that you first estimated.

Q. Roland Chilton: Why did you divide the clients from the prostitutes? Why didn't you focus on the *clients* as homicide victims?

A. Devon Brewer: The clients are a huge population, and currently no good estimate exists for the size of that population. So we are just reporting the absolute number of client homicides in these data sets and are not attempting to compute rates yet. Prostitutes are a smaller population and there are reasonable empirical estimates of their prevalence, so that's why we focus on homicide rates for prostitutes.

“Do Gender, Race, and/or Class Affect the Variance in Femicide Rates in Large U.S. Cities?”

Q. Becky Block: What do you think is related to your white city council members finding?

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: The only bivariate correlation I can think of is the income level of white city council members.

Q. Jim Noonan: I have a recommendation. Do a factor analysis of your last regression. Gender and race may be significant when combined into a scale.

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: I do want to ultimately do a path analysis.

Q. Jenny Mouzos: There may also be some interaction among variables.

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: I know there's some multicollinearity among the economic variables; among gender and race variables, for example.

Q. What about cities with no city councils?

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: All of the cities in my sample do have them.

Q. Dick Block: Did larger cities have larger city councils?

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: Not necessarily.

Q. Roland Chilton: How did you select the cities?

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: I picked the largest 100, in population, as of the year 2000. But the sample is now down to 88.

Q. Roland Chilton: Did you think of creating race-specific independent variables, since your dependent variable is race-specific?

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: I'm considering doing that.

Q. Wendy Regoeczi: Jo-Ann, how did you know the race of city council members? Where did you get that information?

A. Jo-Ann Della-Giustina: Through their web pages. The city web pages included gender as well as race.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: CRIME THEORY**

**Moderator:** Chris Dunn, College of Health and Human Sciences, Bowling Green State University

**Papers:**

Can Criminal Histories be Used to Predict and Prevent Homicide?  
James H. Noonan and David P. Etnoyer, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Analysis Research and Development Unit

Crime-scene Message Construction: Exploring Offender Use of Symbolic Interaction in Homicide Incident Communication: A Work in Progress.  
Dallas S. Drake, Center for Homicide Research

**Recorder:** Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida



**CAN CRIMINAL HISTORIES BE USED TO PREDICT AND PREVENT HOMICIDE?**  
**James H. Noonan, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Analysis Research & Development Unit**  
**and David P. Etnoyer, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Analysis Research & Development Unit**

**INTRODUCTION**

- Top priorities for Law Enforcement since 9/11
  - Prevention
  - Predictive modeling
- Computer efficiency and data management
  - Allows the use of advanced statistical theory
  - Increases need for accurate highly detailed data
- Need for information sharing across disciplines and agencies critical to success.
  - Law Enforcement Agencies (crime data)
  - Government Agencies (i.e. census data)
  - Independent Academic Research and Data
- There is an unprecedented need and ability to predict and prevent crime.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Examine victim criminal histories as a variable for predicting murder.
- Examine law enforcement murder and aggravated assault circumstances to develop prevention strategies during the incident.
- Examine visual representation of data to predict crime and enhance prevention strategies.

**LINKING HOMICIDES TO VICTIMS' CRIMINAL HISTORIES**

- Washington Post, (February 15, 2004) reports, "Most D.C. Homicide Victims Had Arrests."
- Chicago Homicide Dataset for 1966-1995 show a marked increase in the percent of victims with criminal records, from < 50% in 1960's to >70% in 1990's.
- "Homicide victims are 10 times more likely than non-victims to have been arrested for a crime,"
- The risk of being a homicide victim increases by 60 percent with each additional arrest, when age, race and gender are taken into account." (The Center for the Advancement of Health, Nov. 13, 2003, "Rap Sheet Increases Odds of Being a Homicide Victim.")



- Indianapolis, Indiana “Quick Facts for 2002 Homicides” cites:
  - 57 of 83 victims (69%) had local adult criminal histories
  - The average age of first adult arrest was 20
  - 29 (51%) had a previous weapons arrests
  - 43 (75%) had a previous drug arrest
  - 46 (81%) had a previous crimes against persons arrest

“To draw conclusions about the value of criminal records in predicting crime it is important to have information regarding the criminal records of ordinary people, not just those who are identified when involved in serious crime.” (Rochester SACSI Research Working Paper #17 7/19/02, “Criminal Records in High Crime Neighborhoods”)

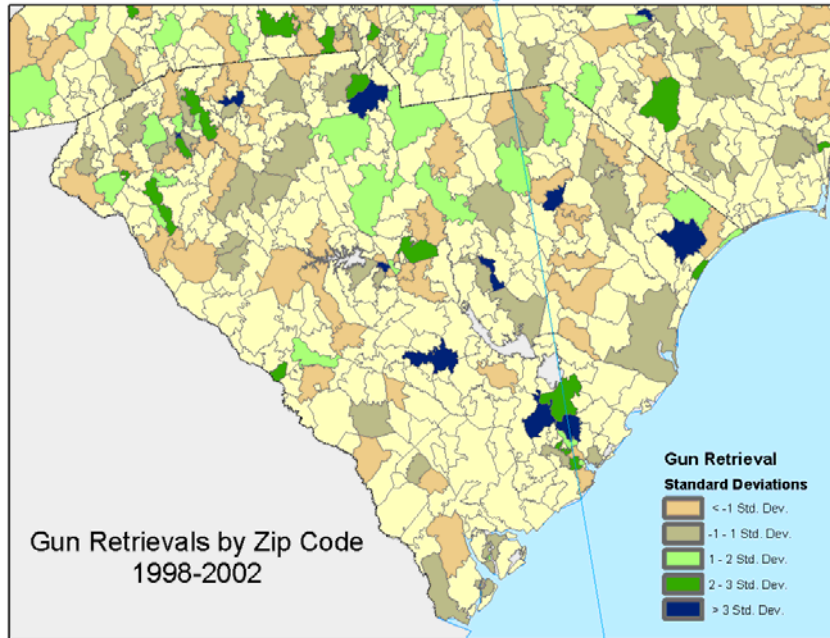
## CONCLUSIONS

- Analyze Victims’ Criminal Histories for clues to cause of crime.
- Educate the Public: Homicide is a consequence of risky behavior. Reduce risk by avoiding contact with individuals, neighborhoods with high crime activity. (“Take Personal Responsibility for Your Safety”, “Take a Bite out of Crime”)
- Collect broad-based victim data to target behavior, neighborhoods requiring increased Crime Prevention Budget & Resources.
- Possible visual correlation between rates of gun retrieval and murder (higher incidents of retrieval indicate higher murder rates).
- Further research is needed to isolate a causal relationship.
- Maps and spatial relationships with data integrating information from many sources may lead to targeted research.
- Aggregation of geographic areas may tell different stories.
- Interagency data sharing is critical in developing
  - Macro and micro level criminal theory (one size does not fit all)
  - Prevention policies
  - Resource allocation strategies

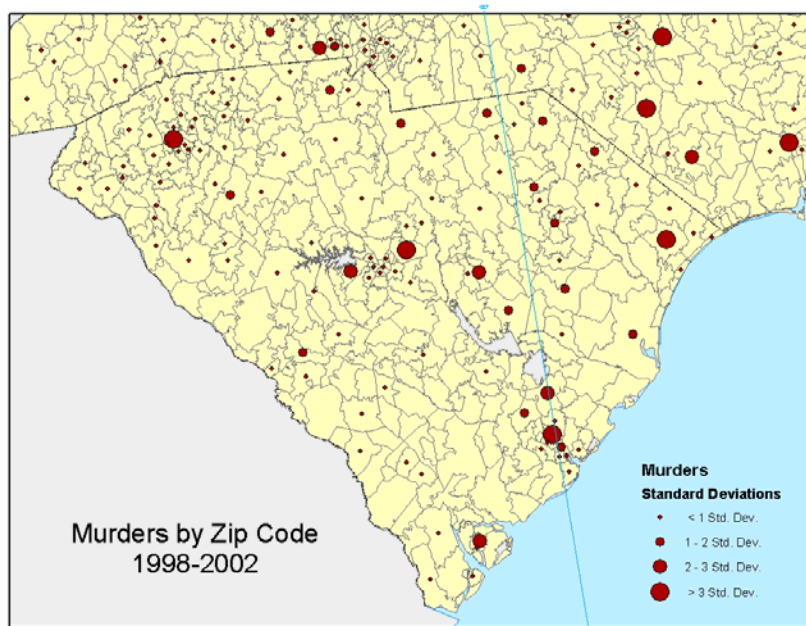
## FUTURE RESEARCH

- Obtain victim criminal record information to merge with UCR data.
- Hypothesis: Persons with records are more likely to be the victim of a homicide.
- Map victim criminal record information and other demographics with UCR data to determine spatial correlations and crime rates.

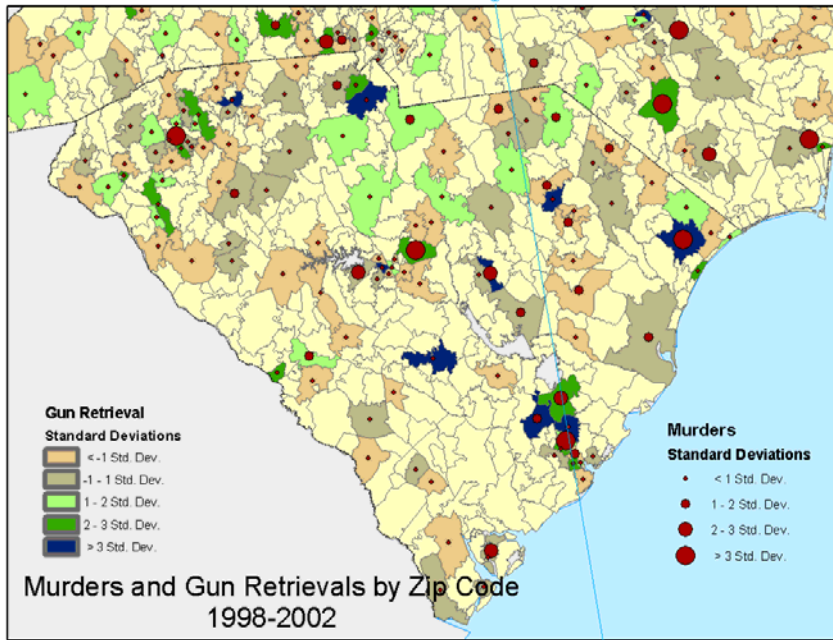
- The following graph illustrates data collected from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) on gun retrievals in South Carolina, geo-coded by address of the Federal Firearms Licensee:



- The next graph illustrates corresponding data on homicides reported to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), geo-coded by reporting agency address:



- The final graph illustrates visual correlation of gun retrieval and homicide data that is possible by overlaying the two above sets of geo-coded data:



**CRIME SCENE MESSAGE CONSTRUCTION:  
EXPLORING OFFENDER USE OF SYMBOLIC INTERACTION  
IN HOMICIDE INCIDENT COMMUNICATION  
A WORK IN PROGRESS**

**Dallas S. Drake, Center for Homicide Research, Minneapolis, MN  
Senior Honor's Thesis, University of Minnesota  
Senior Honor's Advisor: Erin Kelly, Ph.D.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Many homicide crime scenes contain messages constructed by the offender. According to Franco (2000), "Violence can be viewed as a problem, a message, and a challenge" (163). He goes on to explain that, "Every violent fact is a message to be deciphered" (180).

Rotella (1998) provides another example of offender messages in his description of homicide along the U.S.-Mexico border during the 1990s. He writes that, "You shoot someone in the back, it means they betrayed someone. You shoot them in the face, it means they talked. It all has meaning. It is like a language" (39). Rotella understood that killings had meaning beyond the surface level of the incident and provided a degree of understanding for cases that may have seemed senseless.

This paper investigates how we make sense of homicide and how we seek to establish a criminological explanation for it. In their theory of differential association, Sutherland, Cressey and Luckenbill (1992) propose that "criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values (90). Homicide is a social interaction between two or more persons that is marked by relational conflict, often resulting from trivial arguments (Wolfgang 1958). While some homicide incidents contain overt indicators that offenders are trying to send a message to the victim or survivors, other crimes seem to be a byproduct of an indifferent victim-offender relationship. I wish to investigate the overt interactions that appear filled with apparent signs that the offender is attempting to express a message. These incidents have been identified in the literature as *expressive* homicides (Block and Block 1991, Block and Block 1992).

### **Expressiveness & Crime**

While it is uncertain whether all homicides contain messages, or even if these messages are intended (though some are), the instrumental/expressive paradigm (Feshbach 1964, Toch 1969, Block and Block 1991, 1992, Miethe and Drass 1999, Salfati 2000) was introduced in an attempt to distinguish between two frequent types of criminal behavior. Instrumental behavior denotes a crime committed for financial or monetary gain. Expressive crimes are those committed for sex, revenge or anger. An important distinction lies with how necessary the action is for the completion of the illegal act. Expressive acts are viewed as unnecessary behaviors and therefore labelled *signature* behavior (Douglas and Munn 1992).

The instrumental/expressive pairing was first conceptualized as an exclusive dichotomy (Feshbach 1964, Toch 1969). Current theories more correctly recognize the potential for it being a relative mixture, paving the way for all homicides to contain some expressiveness (Block and Block 1991, 1992, Miethe 1999, Salfati 2000). Miethe and Drass (1999) and Salfati (2000) determined that these terms were unclearly defined. Miethe and Drass (1999), using an analytical technique called Small Space Analysis, Salfati (2000) determined that 30% of homicide cases were hybrid varieties on instrumental/ expressive types and that 8% were not classifiable.

### **Importance of Determining an Expressive Motive**

Of particular interest for crime researchers and homicide investigators is the offender's motivation for the behavior and the procedures that he or she follows while committing such crime (Douglas and Munn 1992). It is necessary to understand homicide offender motives for several reasons. First, motive is thought to be an important investigative device (Osterburg and Ward 2000). Understanding the reason underlying why someone kills can point to a "particularized motive" (8) since the motive helps investigators connect the victim to a particular offender. Motive also is commonly used to identify the cause or explain why lethal violence is employed, and thus may be a fundamental key to homicide prevention (Mercy and Hammond 1999). Zahn and McCall (1999) warn, however, that data on motive are "particularly difficult to obtain and interpret" (14).

These behaviors sometimes include activities commonly used in the communicative process, such as by writing notes for whomever discovers the death, derogatory positioning of the corpse, and the carving of designs or symbols into the victim's flesh. Behaviors also include actions that are unclear or ambiguous and cause the scene to appear bizarre. Decker (1996) describes several such incidents and labels these homicides as *deviant homicide*.

### **Communications Theory**

In communications theory (DeVito 1999) it is proposed that messages are sent purposefully through a medium and that the receiver recognizes the presence of a message. This occurs based on pre-agreed upon conceptions defining what messages are and with respect to their format. Communication is viewed as a regenerative process where each message demands a response or acknowledgement. For the cycle of communication to be complete, a receiver must understand the message and respond.

Homicide incidents therefore must be noticed to be received. A common medium must be present such as a recognized form or package of some type, and receivers must share some common meanings with offenders. We do this (recognize messages) daily. The offender is the sender. The police and community are the receivers. The medium is the crime scene. It is here that the message is carried in the form of physical evidence. In many cases we rely on experts or the police to tell us what the evidence means. They act as the interpreters.

## Symbolic Interactionism Theory

The preceding theories do not adequately situate the phenomenon of crime scene messaging. Instead we turn to symbolic interaction theory which has previously been used by Wilkinson and Fagan (2001) to detail theories of adolescent violence. In Blumer's (1969) formulation of symbolic interactionism, he lays out the groundwork of a far-reaching process for communication based on an interactionist perspective. At the root of social interaction is behavior that occurs at the micro level of sociology where individuals interact with other individuals. "Group life necessarily presupposes interaction between the group members," Blumer argues (7). They do this based on shared meanings between the actors and negotiate their meanings using an interpretive process. Meanings are shared based on their inclusion in a mental dictionary called a lexicon.

Blumer also proposes that actions are symbols and that we "*define* each other's actions" (79). Meanings are attached to these actions. Therefore, behavior becomes symbolic. Furthermore, human beings indicate certain objects to which prior meaning has become attached through a negotiated process. He also states "that action is constructed," and is not a "mere release" (81). Bromberg (1965), a criminal psychiatrist, describes how for some offenders "the criminal act may be the expression of an [accidental] emotional storm" (100). Bromberg continues by conceding that this expression is still a creative act, though he doesn't consider it very important for his purposes.

In the case of the homicide crime scene, the offender has constructed a scene by designating objects that have symbolic meaning. The arrangement of the crime scene can be understood using Goffman's (1959) theatrical frame commonly known as *dramaturgy*. Every situation is constructed by an actor, played out on a stage, and witnessed by an audience. Oftentimes the action follows a familiar script that is followed by the actors who play various roles, though the action is considered to be expressive. Bromberg (1965) explains that aggression has a "subsurface of creativity" (101).

This matches the crime scene in the sense that the actors are the victim and offender, and witnesses, the police, and the media who become the audience and interpret the event. The crime scene is transformed, using Goffman's theory, into a theatrical stage with various props that can be drawn on to symbolize necessary ideas. To answer the question of whether an offender is aware of messages sent, the answer is that he or she doesn't need to be and that people possess "involuntary expressive behavior" (Goffman 1959:2). Offenders use two kinds of symbols: verbal language and physical signs. Physical signs are subsequently incorporated into messages (Hodge and Kress 1988).

## Crime Scenes

The crime scene can be any number of physical locations where criminal activity took place. Crime scenes are commonly viewed as multiple locations. They include the location where the victim first encountered the offender, where the first assault was made by the offender against the victim, where the victim was actually killed, and where the body was disposed of (Wellford and Cronin 2000; Ressler, Burgess and Douglas 1988). In some instances, the body is disposed of in multiple locations e.g., the corpse is dismembered and distributed around the region. Each of these sites would be considered a crime scene.

The scene includes the immediate real property involved in the incident. Sometimes a vehicle is part of the crime scene such as when it was used to transport the body. Not all crime scenes are discovered. For example, a victim might be abducted and the body disposal site might never be determined. Some messages may therefore go undiscovered.

Some crime scenes are disturbed. This occurs when humans, animals or the natural elements of wind, water or rain and the like, contaminate or otherwise disturb the scene. This disturbance can alter or destroy any message that an offender has left. In communications theory, this is called interference or noise (DeVito 1999). Sometimes the offender purposefully alters the crime scene in an attempt to mislead the investigator (Turvey 2002; Douglas and Munn 1992). This could be conceptualized as a form of intentional miscommunication. Crime scenes also are occasionally altered by family members in an attempt to avoid stigma related to the condition the body might be found in. In homicides, sometimes relatives cover the corpse for modesty. In other instances, they might cut the rope of a hanging corpse to prevent the survivor's mental anguish. These effects must be taken into account during any attempt to interpret crime scene messages.

## **Messages**

Detecting and interpreting messages is extremely important. If offender messages are being sent and received, then it is important that an attempt is made to accurately identify and interpret them. As in the case of terrorism, failing to detect a threatening message can have devastating results. If in the case of homicide a threat goes undetected or unheeded, additional victims might die and offenders will remain at large. It is possible too, that if messages are present to be detected, we may have reason to understand some of the more bizarre of these homicide incidents, and they may form a basis for constructing programs for homicide and violence prevention.

The purpose of crime scene messaging can be interpreted in many ways. Franco (2000) writes that, "Violence can be viewed as a problem, a message, and a challenge" (163). He goes on to explain that "Every violent fact is a message to be deciphered," (180). I propose that one motivation, perhaps the overriding impetus for committing every homicide, is the purpose of communicating a message. This issue implicitly surfaces in the criminology and investigative literature repeatedly, yet criminologists do not address this issue directly or theoretically. Perhaps the idea of crime as communication is assumed or viewed to be unimportant or unintended and so the role of communication in the context of criminal behavior evades critical discussion.

The importance of detecting and decoding or interpreting these messages will help facilitate criminal investigations. Snyder (1977) says, "Establishing a motive...may greatly facilitate an investigation" (14). The issue of motive is continually problematic. Wolfgang (1958), a criminologist, found that most homicides evolve out of trivial motives. Some homicides are particularly distressing to the investigator or the researcher since they appear to lack any motive and are thus labelled motiveless (Snyder 1977; Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas 1988) thereby impeding their solution. Samenow (1984) however refers to these as "senseless crimes" which are committed for express purpose of thrill. These acts could just as easily be defined as a means of communicating status or

competence (Bartol 1999). The author's focus however is on the content rather than the process of how that content is transmitted.

According to Osterburg and Ward (2000), motive serves to link the victim to a particular suspect thus facilitating identification of the offender. He says this occurs because motives evolve out of the victim-offender relationship. But this relationship between the victim and the offender is an interactive one (Wolfgang 1958). Throughout the interaction messages are sent and received.

Messages are a necessary form of interpersonal communication (DeVito 1999). They can be "verbal or non-verbal" (14). They include the content of information sent between two people. Messages are necessarily part of the interaction between an offender and a victim during most homicide incidents. Therefore, the victim helps construct the message although we are not considering the victim here, since the offender has the final word. Another consideration is that some homicides may contain few indications of a message such as when the victim is shot from a long distance. Others seem rife with them like the incident includes substantial interaction between the offender and victim, before and after death.

Many homicides include planned pre-meditated killings, but most homicides are the result of eruptive arguments often referred to as motivated by heat of passion (Wolfgang 1958). These killings are relatively spontaneous events that preclude correct implements or choice locations necessary for constructing useful messages. Goffman (1969) states there are two types of impression producing behavior. First he says that there are the actions that provide the intended meanings, that are in his words, "given" (4). He goes on to point out that there are also actions where unintended meanings leak out in what he denotes as, "expressions given-off" (4). Regardless of how hard we try, these signs and messages are constructed by us, and inherent in our actions.

Several components of this phenomenon have not been adequately investigated. In part this is due to the theoretical linkage between masculinity and instrumentality. A salient view is that crime is predominantly a masculine phenomenon (Daly and Wilson 1988) and therefore instrumental behavior. The basis of labelling male behavior as instrumental is grounded in work by Bale (1950) who in his study of small-group interactions determined that men were more task oriented and women were more expressive. This view was later taken up and expanded upon by feminist theorists in an attempt to explain rape and gender-related crimes (Brownmiller 1975, Groth 1979). This assumption, that males are instrumental and females are expressive, precludes a discourse which would allow male criminality to be interpreted as expressive.

## **Sign Identification**

Signs are the physical evidence of a message (Nöth 1990) as constructed by an offender. Examples include: written or verbal, symbolic (semiotic), human, contextual (location), weapon, and sequencing. Many of these signs can be identified through the crime scene – its location, material artefacts, and through alterations. The body of the victim is also a material artefact (Welton 1999) that can be examined for such signs as patterning of wounds, mutilation, amputation or dismemberment, or artificial positioning.



The disposition of the body also can provide a message about degree of exposure by examining whether the body is left in the open as opposed to burying, or if clothing is removed or not.

Methods of crime scene communication have been documented anecdotally for some time in the form of forensic evidence and crime scene interpretation. Identification of various types of messaging can be found in books on forensic pathology (DiMaio and DiMaio 1993), death and homicide investigation (Geberth 1996), forensic science and criminology (Siegel 2000). What I am proposing is simply that we seek to uncover sign activity that is related to homicide and that is previously identified in the already mentioned forms of crime literature.

### **Perceptual Dangers**

Manipulation of the crime scene points to the difficult practice of making sense of nonsensical events. Death investigators sometimes reference the problematic nature of the homicide crime scene (Geberth 1996). Attempting to understand the sequence of events after-the-fact requires taking into account the diverse behavior that can occur as the result of non-thinking or impaired participants. These impairments might result from alcohol or drug intoxication, mental illness, or fugue-like mental state that oftentimes occurs in an emotionally charged situation attached to committing a murder. Understanding crime scene messages does not necessarily require that we understand sequencing however, only that we be able to recognize and read the signs we are seeing.

### **Are offender messages intentional?**

If, as is posed in the argument of interactionist theory, all behaviors have meaning and the interpretation of messages is constructed based on shared meaning, it is probable that offenders seek to express themselves. Criminologists have argued that many crimes are expressive in nature. The intentionality of the messages is not a critical issue. Offenders convey information through their criminal activity regardless of their awareness of this process. Not only do they transfer their own physical evidence (based on Locard's Exchange Principle (Saferstein 1998)), they also place their signature mark on the crime scene no matter how hard they try not to (Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas 1988).

### **Research Questions & Hypotheses**

The purpose of this paper is to investigate what messages, if any, are being communicated by an offender during a homicide incident. I will pose two additional questions including "How do offenders construct messages at homicide crime scenes?" and "Do offenders use violence as a form of communication?"

My hypotheses are as follows: 1) All crime scene actions have a purpose. 2) The purpose of some of these actions is to create a message. 3) Homicides can be analyzed to determine the frequency of various signs.

Messages are a complex phenomenon. All homicide scenes contain signs, sign patterns, cues, and contextual staging in the forms of physical evidence that can be

detected. I propose that homicide cases be analyzed to determine the frequency of various signs as identified in the literature. The identification of these signs helps to establish the basis for future examination of other portions of this research question.

## **Research Method**

For this research project I propose using a content analysis of secondary data. This data will be the police homicide case files of a mid-sized police department. These administrative records include the investigative details of all homicide incidents over the period of years 1991-2001. The proposed locale experiences between 60 and 90 homicides per year. The unit of analysis would be the homicide incident.

The variables I will seek to identify are the types of messages as differentiated by purposive content. These include: threat, victim valuation, emotional expression (anger, jealousy), sexual interest, provocation, self image, deceit, intensity of interest, and taunting. Since messages are made up of signs, I will seek to identify the following proposed signs as indicators of such messages. These include: weapon type, body positioning or movement, objects stolen or interjected, sexual behavior, signs of torture, restraint use, writing or drawing, and proximal range of attack.

Examination of the data will be limited to descriptions or photographs of the homicide crime scene. It will not include messages sent to the media or to the law enforcement agency. It could include multiple locations however, since some incidents are spread over a variety of geographical locations. It will include anything in the investigative file that sheds light on the crime scene such as contextual information that assists in interpreting of signs.

## **Conclusion and Implications**

Research has shown that crime results from conflict but that conflict is seldom viewed as a form of communication. The situating of messages within the communication process as outlined in symbolic interaction theory has yet to be explored for homicide or crime incidents. By investigating this process, increased numbers of crimes may eventually be solved. This will be facilitated by determining the prevalence of sign types and their correlation with particular message types. The foundation of knowledge will be expanded as we specify what is meant by the term expressive homicide. This research will also help us to understand the purpose and motive of violence, thus leading to homicide prevention. The greater purpose however, is to lead us to a new understanding of the role and connection that communications have in the realm of interpersonal violence.

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**DISCUSSION: CRIME THEORY**  
**Recorded by Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida**

**Roland Chilton:** My understanding is that the FBI has 20 to 25 years of computerized criminal history data. Will they be made available to researchers?

**John Jarvis:** No. The FBI will not release criminal histories. I hope there may be some type of access in the future.

**James Noonan:** Information can be retrieved without the court identifying the history of the individual.

**Richard Block:** I am reminded of the research of Ken Pease and Sylvia Chenery on repeat victimization in England — the history of victims and offenders and members of their households. They link the data to recidivism.

**Vance McLaughlin:** Another important variable in North Carolina is the number of permits to purchase handguns issued by sheriffs.

**James Noonan:** Integrating different sources of data is important for future work. States have different sets of rules concerning guns.

**Becky Block:** The arrest histories of victims may be useful for intervention. Early intervention can be life saving. There are different types of arrests, for example drug arrests as well as violent arrest histories. What have you thought of?

**James Noonan:** As of now, we're stuck on square one. Getting access to the data is the first step.

**Becky Block:** There was a discussion of the risk of victimization for juvenile offenders at the California meeting in Santa Monica. The issue is how you identify someone at risk.

**Dave Etnoyer:** These ideas relate to hate crimes. There are ways to recognize and classify hate crimes.

**Dallas Drake:** Hate crimes are not the only type of offenses to include expressive elements, including ideas of aggressiveness.

**Jenny Mouzos:** Dallas, I have a question about the data. What elements are included?

**Dallas Drake:** Do you mean, what is in the case files?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Did you have access to case files?

**Dallas Drake:** We have been working with the police since October. We have some limited access to their data.

**Wendy Regoeczi:** I applaud your ambition. I have been looking at five years of data in Cleveland for a pilot study. Messages are not included in many case files in Cleveland.

**Dallas Drake:** There are detailed data in the files I am using. You often have to add to data collected for other purposes. And you can see how it goes.

**Devon Brewer:** I would urge caution. You need to get the offender's interpretation. There is body positioning with sexual meanings for example.

**Dallas Drake:** You have to gather the data to see what is available. Animal activity can destroy evidence, and staging is sometimes missed by investigators.

**Becky Block:** Finding nothing would be valuable. Knowledge is often based on unusual cases.

**Richard Block:** This is a very difficult area of research. David Cantor and Gabrielle Salfati would agree.

**Dallas Drake:** Do you mean death scenes?

**Richard Block:** Yes. Who else is working in this area?

**Dallas Drake:** There's not much work being done involving quantification.

**Richard Block:** Do you use Medical Examiner reports too?

**Jacquelyn Campbell:** Is there a lot of stuff that is symbolic?

**Dallas Drake:** Like what?

**Jacquelyn Campbell:** Overkill. Positioning. Handcuffed before shooting.

**John Jarvis:** Dallas, I would advise you to be very careful about making assumptions without asking who the meaning is coming from. Is it from the offender or is it second or third person?

**Dallas Drake:** When a message is created, you can read something into it. Detectives do it all the time. Misinterpretations abound.

**Chris Dunn:** The topic would benefit from triangulation methodology. A data set of known cases linked to known offenders would be useful.

**Dallas Drake:** That would be a good strategy.

## CHAPTER FIVE LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE

**Moderator:** Esther Jenkins, Chicago State University and the Community Mental Health Council, Inc.

**Papers:**

Merging Research and Practice: An Examination of Contract Killings in Australia.  
Jenny Mouzos, Australian Institute of Criminology and John Venditto, South  
Australia Police

Multiple Staffing to Prevent Robberies: Linking Questionable Data to Practical  
Interventions.

Patrick D. Walsh, Loyola University New Orleans; William E. Thornton Loyola  
University New Orleans; and David R. Kent, Loyola University New Orleans

Perceptions and Procedure: A Quantitative Analysis of Gay Homicide Case Solva-  
bility for the City of Minneapolis (1989-1999).

Joseph A. Riemann, Center for Homicide Research

The Characteristics of Cleared Murders Reported to NIBRS

Lynn A. Addington, American University

**Recorder:** Joe Shulka, Center for Homicide Research





**MERGING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE:  
AN EXAMINATION OF CONTRACT KILLINGS IN AUSTRALIA**  
Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of  
Criminology  
and John Venditto, Major Crime Investigation Branch, South Australia Police  
Service

## **INTRODUCTION**

In undertaking the present research the confluence of researcher and practitioner has brought about a valuable partnership and produced the first study of its kind in Australia relating to contract killings and the largest of its type in the world. This presentation will summarise some of the main findings of the study<sup>1</sup> into attempted and completed contract killings in Australia, and demonstrates what can be achieved when practitioners and researchers work together towards a common goal, that is, a deeper understanding of the correlates of lethal violence and how such events can be prevented.

### **Purpose of the Research**

The category of 'contract killing' makes up a small percentage of total homicides in Australia (about 2% between 1989/90 and 2001/02). However, its immense public fascination and the misconception of who is usually involved, together with the dearth of research in this area makes it a poorly understood category of homicide and worthy of further research.

Given the lack of research in this area, there were many knowledge gaps, specifically in relation to how such research can inform proactive investigative strategies and lead to a better understanding of the conduct leading to the commission of contract killings. Analysing the preparatory nature of the contract together with the proposed method of execution and steps taken to avoid detection by the instigator are of particular value to future investigations.

The study explored attempted and completed contract killings in Australia over a 13-year period 1 July 1989 and 30 June 2002 and examined the following:

- factors that differentiated successful and unsuccessful contract killings;
- the characteristics of attempted and completed contract killings, including who are the victims, and who are the principal instigators;
- typologies of contract killings, including why are contract killers sought; and
- the nature and level of police intervention in preventing the completion of contract killings.

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<sup>1</sup>See Mouzos, J., & Venditto, J. 2003 *Contract Killings in Australia*, Research and Public Policy Series No. 53, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.

## **PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

In examining the extant literature on contract killings, it soon becomes apparent that there have been very few systematic studies undertaken in Australia and elsewhere exploring this phenomenon. Apart from the research that provides descriptive accounts of the murders of specific contract killers (see for example, Jones 1995; Joey 1973; Montefiore 1993; Polk 1994), there have been less than five documented explorations of the dynamics of contract murder in Australia and elsewhere, only one of which was undertaken in Victoria, Australia. A review of the substantive issues to arise from this previous research suggests that they can be divided into three main themes: (1) the processes involved in contract killing; (2) motivational patterns of the instigator or contractor; and (3) types of contract murderers.

### **The processes of contract killing**

Dietz (1983) identified a number of processes involved in contract killing. The first of which involves the setting up of the contract, known in Detroit, United States as “putting out a paper”. This is the initiating stage where the instigator decides that they wish to hire the services of a third party – the contract killer. According to Black and Cravens (2000), solicitors all have what they perceive to be some type of intractable if not insurmountable problem that can best be resolved by the target of the problem being killed by someone other than themselves. For criminal organisations that have killers on the pay roll, the initiating process is simple. They contact the employee and provide information regarding the “target” (i.e., the victim).

However, for instigators hiring freelance killers, there are three main methods in which the instigator and killer come together. The first method involves the instigator announcing that they are looking to hire the services of a killer. A friend or an acquaintance acts as an intermediary between instigator and killer, and informs the instigator that the killer accepts the contract. The second method involves the instigator directly approaching a known “contract killer” and providing details of the target and determining whether the killer is interested in carrying out the contract. This is usually arranged over the telephone, between people who have not had any prior personal contact (Levi 1981). The third method also involves the instigator approaching a third party, however, this third party is not known to be a contract killer as such, but rather someone who has a violent criminal history. The instigator asks this person whether they would be interested in a contract. However, in most cases the instigator and the contract killer do not meet until the actual hit has been carried out.

Once the contract killer has been identified and the contact has been initiated between the instigator and the contract killer, the next stage involves negotiating the contract. Discussions centre on the fee for carrying out the murder, location and methods. “Most seem to agree, however, that the details are the prerogative of the person(s) paying for the contract. These persons may specify weapons, locations and time schedules” (Dietz 1983, p. 98). However, as part of the negotiations, the contract killer will try and determine the difficulty of the “hit”, and how determined the contractor is proceeding with the contract. “These considerations determine his [or her] price” (Levi 1981, p. 52).

Following this, the contract killer undertakes a series of steps in planning the contract killing. This may involve the acquisition of equipment to facilitate in the killing, arranging transportation, and in some cases locating additional personnel to assist. A hit man also has to be fairly skilled in the use of weapons. “The hit man’s reputation, and the amount of money he makes depend on his skill, his effective ability to serve as a means to *someone else’s ends*” (emphasis in original) (Levi 1981, p. 54).

Locating the target or “stalking” is the next step, which involves identifying the target’s movements, places they frequent and their “routine activities.” This allows the contract killer to identify the “killing location”, and when the target will be at this location. The actual carrying out of the contract is the next step, and this includes disposing of the body, and “getting away”. The final task in contract killing is collecting the fee from the instigator.

Similarly, Black (2000) and Black and Cravens (2001) explained the processes involved in contract killing through the conceptual components of script theory. In brief, “a script is a hypothesized cognitive structure that when activated organizes comprehension of event-based situations” (Abelson 1981; cited in Black and Cravens 2001, p. 84). When applied to contract killings, Black and Cravens (2001, p. 86) indicate that scripts have certain requirements:

- (a) a stable cognitive representation of a particular script;
- (b) an evoking context to present to others; and
- (c) action rules/policies for entering the script.

On the basis of these requirements, the process of contract killing begins with the solicitors or instigators cognitively concocting the killing script, and conceiving a personal problem that can only be resolved by having someone else do the killing for them. Once the solicitor reaches the decision to hire the services of a third party, they need to present their scheme to the third party and to convince them to carry out the murder for them. Black and Cravens (2001) suggest that this involves the solicitor’s cognitive representation of the problem to be transformed from a cognitive script to a participatory script for the contract to be accepted, the participation of the contract murderer to be evoked and the murder to be committed. This is an important step “in the transition from a simple cognitive idea about killing to a solicitation to commit murder” (p. 87). It is through the “evoking context” that the specific contract is constructed between the “hit man” and solicitor.

In accordance with script theory, the term “tracks” is used to differentiate between the various evoking contexts of contract killings. Black and Cravens (2001) distinguished between the situations where the solicitor approaches someone known to them, such as an intimate friend or acquaintance (termed the “intimate track”) and those where the solicitor approaches someone not known to them or an undercover law enforcement officer (termed “staged track”). Both these tracks provide selected *paths* by which the third party or “hit man” enters the script. In order to evoke the participation of the “hit man” in his or her script, the solicitor will use what are referred to as “priming scripts”. These can take the form of offers of money, property, sex, and so on.

The solicitor’s cognitive script transforms into the contract killing script only when the hit man enters the contract killing script, and they, that is the solicitor and hit man are

working from the same script. It is then that “concerns shift to *contracting*, that is determining what is in it for the hit man, and *plotting* how the killing will be accomplished” (Black & Cravens 2001, p. 88).

The final process in contract killing scripts involves exiting the script. The outcome can be murder, attempted murder or in the case of police intervention, the apprehension of the solicitor.

### **Motivational patterns of the instigator**

Research has consistently indicated that the relationship between the offender and the victim is of the utmost importance in trying to understand the possible motivating factors that leads to lethal violence. However, most research focuses specifically on one-on-one interactions. In cases of contract killing which involve one-on-many interactions, they are a distinctive subtype of multiple offender murders that contain three very different types of interrelationships: (1) the solicitor/hit man relationship; (2) the solicitor/target relationship; and (3) the hit man/target relationship (Black 2000). In most cases, the actual person who commits the murder may not be previously known to the victim. In trying to understand the reasons for the killing in contract murder, it is important to focus not only on the person who actually commits the murder, but on the instigator (contractor or solicitor), as it is they who want the target dead. Just as important is focussing on all aspects of the victim’s personal and professional life, their associations and history which may also provide valuable evidence or intelligence that could lead to establishing a motive or even the identity of the contractor(s).

Blackshaw (1996) undertook an empirical examination of contract assassination and incitement to commit murder in Victoria between the years 1989 to 1995 inclusive as part of a Master of Arts in Criminological Studies degree. He grouped the cases into the following five motive-based categories:

1. Sexually intimate relationships;
2. Non-intimate family relationship;
3. Business;
4. Criminal network; and
5. Undetermined (Blackshaw 1996, p. 43).

The examination of the twelve cases (six cases of incitement (incitement and solicitation are the same) to commit murder and six cases of contract assassination) revealed that contrary to the romanticised view of contract killing portrayed in media where it usually involves the criminal underworld, the majority of cases of incitement to murder and actual contract killings in Victoria involved intimate partners procuring the services of a contract killer in order to resolve disputes related to property settlements, custody issues arising from children of the relationship, love triangles and life insurance payouts.

The frequency of the occurrence of certain motives was found to differ between cases of incitement to commit murder and contract killings. While motives associated with sexual intimates was the most common category for both incitement to commit murder cases and contract killings, the second most common category for cases of incitement to commit murder were those involving non-intimate family relationships, such as siblings,

parents and in-laws. Again the central theme in these three cases was the existence of a conflict sufficient enough that a contract killer was hired to murder as a means of conflict resolution.

There were two additional cases of incitement to commit murder that involved instigators outside of the family circle. The first case involved conflict over legitimate business interests, and the second case, which according to Blackshaw (1996, p. 50) "is set apart from the other incitements reviewed because the protagonists, including the intended victim, have shady backgrounds and associations, some have serious criminal histories".

In contrast, Blackshaw (1996) found that the second most common category of contract killings in Victoria is where there exists a nexus to a criminal network. All four cases were unsolved. This is an interesting finding, and will be further explored later on in the present study. The first unsolved case of contract killing that could be linked to a criminal network was set within the "sub-cultural perimeters of illicit drug trafficking" (Blackshaw 1996, p. 56). The second case involved the target owing substantial amounts of money to organised crime interests, and the third and fourth cases were characterised as drug-related with the execution style murder of two drug dealers.

The last category of contract killings includes two cases where the motive is unclear, however there are indications of the involvement of a third party to carry out the murder. Again these two cases are unsolved. Similar to Blackshaw (1996), Polk (1994) observed that in some of the cases of contract or professional killings that he examined (a total of five killings), a common characteristic of these deaths was that information was lacking and that it was impossible to state for certain what had happened, apart from that the victim was somehow involved in criminal activity.

An important finding noted by Blackshaw (1996) was that in only two of the twelve cases that involved the procurement of a third party to commit murder were charges laid and the cases solved. In other words, murders where there is evidence to suggest that contract killers have committed them have a low solvability rate. "If a conspiracy is able to progress from incitement to kill to substantive contract killing, then the case is likely to remain unsolved" (p.61). Given the small number of cases analysed in the Blackshaw study such conclusions should be treated with caution.

Blackshaw (1996, p. 69) in discussing the policy implications of his finding for police and the administration of the criminal law highlighted the importance of the establishment of the Victoria Police "Covert Unit" during 1992, and the detection of the majority of the incitement to commit cases following the establishment of the unit. This suggests that the availability of trained and equipped undercover police to infiltrate murder plots is a means of preventing the occurrence of a homicide. While this may seem plausible, the present study will also examine detection methods in incitement, procurement or solicitation to commit murder through the services of a 'contracted' murderer.

Black (2000) and Black and Cravens (2001) also undertook a study of 30 murder-for-hire events that involved 60 participants (17 women and 43 men) in Tennessee, United States (year not stated in the articles). In examining both attempted and completed

contract killings, they noted a number of salient characteristics of the participants involved in the events. These are outlined in Table 1.

**TABLE 1:  
CHARACTERISTICS OF MURDER FOR HIRE IN TENNESSEE, UNITED STATES**

	<b>Characteristics</b>
<b>Solicitor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about as many women as men</li> <li>• White</li> <li>• between the ages of 19 and 41</li> <li>• prior arrest record</li> </ul>
<b>Hit Man</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most frequently male</li> <li>• White</li> <li>• between the ages of 16 and 30</li> <li>• prior arrest record</li> </ul>
<b>Target</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequently male</li> <li>• White</li> <li>• Between the ages of 26 and 49</li> </ul>
<b>Incident</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involved a shooting</li> <li>• Between 2.00am and 7.59am</li> <li>• At the victim's house</li> <li>• Ending with a murder.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Cravens and Black (2001) and Black (2000)

They noted that the most interesting findings pertaining to their research was that about as many women (47%) as men (53%) were involved in murder-for-hire events as solicitors, that nearly all participants were white (91%), and that events (65%) that did not involve an undercover law enforcement officer resulted in murder, attempted murder or both.

### **Types of contract murderers**

The solvability status of a homicide is significantly linked to certain incident, victim and offender characteristics (see Mouzos & Muller 2001). As noted above, unsolved contract killings tended to be more closely linked to criminal networks, than to conflicts between sexual intimate partners. As there are differences in who would procure the services of a contract killer, there are also differences in the actual contract killer. Revitch and Schlesinger (1981) and Schlesinger (2001) identified three general types of contract murderer:

1. The professional;
2. The semi-professional; and
3. The amateur.

There are a number of differentiating factors between the three types of contract murderers. These are outlined in Table 2. The professional contract killer is either an employee or member of organised crime network who carries out the killing “out of a

loyalty to that organization” (Maas 1968; Schlesinger 2001), or an independent contractor (i.e., a “freelance agent”) who is not connected to any particular group, who hires his services for a fee. The semi-professional and amateur contract killers do not rely on committing murder as a means of employment, and only engage in the act on a one-time (or two-time) basis.

**TABLE 2: DIFFERENTIATING PATTERNS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONTRACT MURDERER**

	<b>Amateur</b>	<b>Semi-Professional</b>	<b>Professional</b>
<b>Method of killing</b>	Poorly planned; often impulsive and disorganised	Planned, orderly, systematic	Highly planned, orderly, systematic
<b>Crime scene</b>	Some physical evidence left	Little physical evidence left	Little physical evidence; elaborate body disposal; effective staging
<b>Typical target</b>	Spouse or intimate partner	Business associate or criminal	A criminal or a person associated with organised crime
<b>Contractor’s motive</b>	Mostly personal	Business related	Business related and consistent with crime organization’s goals
<b>Personality organisation</b>	Unstable with marginal adjustment	Less instability	Minimal overt disturbance

Source: Schlesinger (2001, p. 1120).

Similar to the findings of Blackshaw (1996) pertaining to the situation in Victoria Australia, Schlesinger (2001) notes that most contract murders in the United States appear to be carried out by amateurs commonly hired to eliminate a spouse or intimate partner. These amateur contract killers can be characterised as individuals with a history of psychopathology, instability, and marginal adjustment, and some prior involvement in criminal activity. They mostly take on the contract for a specific gainful purpose, and in some cases, “their behaviour may be partly rationalised and serves as a vent for built-up aggression and hostility” (Schlesinger 2001, p. 1120). Douglas, Burgess, Burgess, and Ressler (1992) noted that in cases where there is secondary criminal activity, such as, robbery, this may mean that the offender is youthful, amateur, or of lower intelligence.

In comparison, the semi-professional contract killer displays a more sophisticated modus operandi (MO), but they appear to be less competent than the professional contract killer. Schlesinger (2001) citing the work of Gibbons (1968) described the semi-professional contract killer as individuals who believe that the only way that they can achieve success in their lives is through criminal behaviour. They are offenders who “often eschew conventional values and hard work” (Schlesinger 2001, p. 1120). Psychological assessment of semi-professional contract killers reveals that they have less overall personality disturb-



ance than that found amongst amateur contract killers. However, semi-professional contract killers were found to have a history of violent, anti-social behaviour. It is important to note that there have been very few studies based on psychiatric assessments or "psychological autopsies" of hit men (Douglas, Burgess, Burgess, and Ressler 1992).

A number of non-fictional accounts of professional contract killers seem to suggest that most of the professional contract killers seem to be connected some way or other to organised crime (Kidner 1976; Joey 1974). "Such individuals often achieve adequate adjustment within the values of their group, and the murders that they carry out are logical, adaptive, and consistent with the purpose of the organization" (Schlesinger 2001, p. 1120). To the professional contract killer, "killing is conceptualised as a 'business' or as 'just a job'" (Levi 1981, p. 53). It seems that the most alarming fact about professional contract killers is that the majority of them are never caught. "They go about their business unobtrusively, indistinguishable from their fellow citizens, and frequently maintaining strong family and community ties" (Hurwood 1970, p. 129).

Staging of the crime scene is another indication of the hit man's level of experience. Professional hit men may engage in complex staging of the crime scene (e.g., cut motor vehicle brake lines) to make the death appear as accidental. Similarly, staged secondary criminal activity such as the victim may be positioned in a particular way to infer that this was a sexually motivated homicide, thus masking the primary motive of the murder (Douglas et al., 1992, p.24).

Forensic findings can also distinguish between the types contract killers. In their *Crime Classification Manual* Douglas and colleagues (1992, p. 24) noted that "the veteran professional killer, for example, may chose a weapon that is difficult to trace and focus on the area of injury to the victim's vital organs, especially the head. There are few wounds and overkill is rare. A blitz or ambush style attack also is common to this style of killing".

## **DATA AND METHODS**

The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) provides a comprehensive and unique data set on homicide incidents, victims and offenders in Australia since 1989 through the National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP). The data provides researchers and practitioners alike with a rich source of homicide statistics that enables a detailed examination of the many types of homicide in Australia. However, the category of "contract killing" of course also includes the many incidents where the contract has been unsuccessful through some type of intervention, usually intervention by police, and the victim is not killed. In these circumstances, such data are not collected by the NHMP despite having considerable value in terms of research and operational relevance.

In response to this void, a separate data collection of attempted contract killings (inchoate offences) was undertaken. The research therefore examined both the completed offences where the victim has been killed and also attempted offences<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup>Attempted offences include those where the instigator of the contract solicits, incites or procures another person to kill the victim and the instigator(s) is/are not present at the murder. The attempted offences examined in this report involve the contract being detected by police, offender(s) being charged and the death of the victim being prevented.

## What is a Contract?

The desire to kill another person in a “contract” situation is a means of settling a dispute that is fundamentally no different to the standard categories of murder other than it involves a third party or perpetrator not necessarily engaged in the dispute. In most cases, the victim is unknown to the contract killer. Black’s (2000) definition is particularly useful in describing the nature of contract killing applied in this research:

*... a continuous sequence of interactions by one or more persons in which one person solicits another person to have a third person killed for gain, monetary or otherwise. An event begins with the initial exploration of the possibility of having someone killed, and terminates with a murder, attempted murder or police intervention (p. 241)*

A contract is usually an unwritten agreement to provide a sum of money and in some cases some other item of value to a second party who agrees, in return to commit a designated murder (Joey 1974, p. 9).

For the purpose of the research a contract was entered into if:

- it includes payment or a promise of payment of a financial or other fee or gratuity from the instigator of the contract or;
- the instigator of the contract derives or believes he/she will derive a real or material benefit or advantage from instigating the death of the victim; and
- the instigator of the contract does not take part or does not intend to take part as a principal (in the first degree) in the murder.

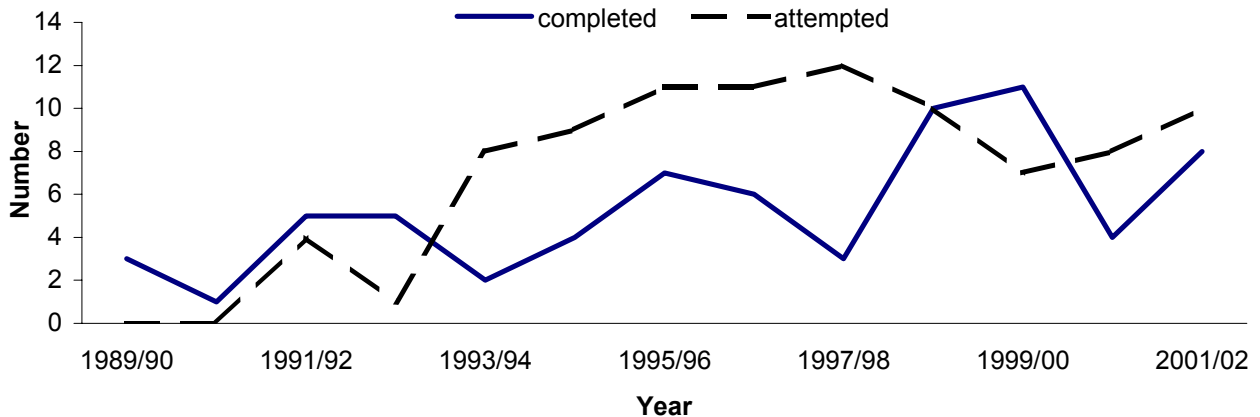
## RESULTS

In total, there were 163 attempted and completed contract killings that occurred in Australia between 1 July 1989 and 30 June 2002 that were included in the study. Based on NHMP data, the present study identified 69 probable contract killings (66 incidents) in Australia that occurred over the thirteen-year period. Of these contract killings, 34 are still considered unsolved, that is an offender(s) has yet to be charged with the murder of the victim. There were 94 attempted contract killings also included in the present study.

### Trends in Contract Killing

Over the thirteen-year period examined there appears to be a slight increasing trend in the frequency of these events (Figure 1). However, it is important to note that the numbers are quite small. For example, there were on average seven attempted contract killings per year and five completed contract killings per year over the thirteen-year period.

**FIGURE 1: ATTEMPTED AND COMPLETED CONTRACT KILLINGS IN AUSTRALIA (n=163)**

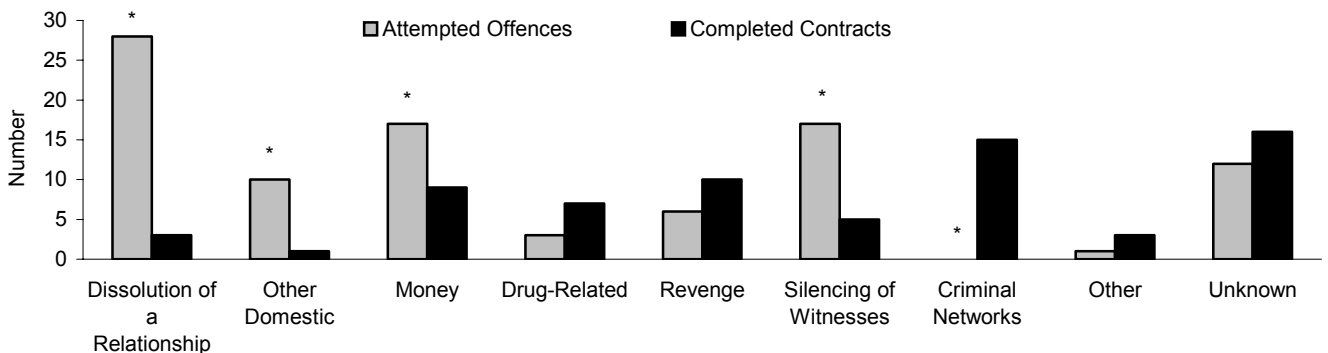


Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, Attempted and Completed Contract Killings 1989 – 2002 [computer file].

### Typology of Contract Killings

A typology of contract killings (attempted and completed) was developed based on the alleged motive of the instigator, and the relationship between the instigator and target (the intended victim). A total of nine categories of contract killings were identified and examined (see Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2: TYPOLOGY OF CONTRACT KILLINGS (ATTEMPTED AND COMPLETED) IN AUSTRALIA (n=163)**



\* statistically significant  $p < .001$

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, Attempted and Completed Contract Killings 1989 – 2002 [computer file]

A brief discussion of these categories ensues:

### ***Dissolution of Relationship***

Conflict associated with the “dissolution of a relationship” was the most common motive of contract killings in Australia (see Figure 2). There were a total of 28 attempted contract killings and three completed contract killings that fall in this category (a total of 29 incidents). Typically, the services of a contract killer are sought by a current or former intimate partner in order to prevent him/her from pursuing a relationship with someone else or in revenge for having done so. Other cases involved a lover who incited or solicited a hit man to eliminate their current partner so that they can be with their lover.

### ***Other Domestic Related***

There were 11 other contracts where the central theme was some sort of domestic conflict not related to the dissolution of the relationship (a total of 10 incidents). Ten out of the 11 contracts did not result in the death of the target.

### ***Money/Financially Motivated***

The next most common motive (where the motive was known) was financially motivated (n=26). These cases involve a beneficiary organising the killing of a third party to expedite a payout from an insurance policy, superannuation or last will and testament. Often these situations involved domestic scenarios although some of the cases were committed for commercial gain.

### ***Drug-Related***

One of the least common motives found to be associated with attempted offences and completed contract killings was in relation to drugs (see Figure 2). Cases that fall within this category there is some indication that a hit man was sought in order to resolve some conflict in relation to dealing or supply of drugs. There were ten such cases in the sample examined, seven of which were completed contract killings. Of these seven completed contract killings, five were unsolved at the time of data collection.

### ***Revenge***

This category envisages situations where a third party is engaged to kill a person for no particular material or financial reward other than personal satisfaction or the redeeming of personal honour. It seems that in these cases the target has “wronged” the instigator in some way or other, and that the instigator not being able to enact revenge themselves, tried to hire the services of a third party to enact revenge on their behalf. There were a total of six attempted and ten completed contract killings that fall in this category.

### ***Silencing of Witnesses***

There were a total of 17 attempted and five completed contract killings that fall in this category (14 incidents) where a third party is hired to kill a target to prevent them from

providing potential testimony or evidence to the police or courts against the instigator. Twenty of these cases occurred between a non-intimate/family victim and instigator. Most of the incidents involved a single target (10 out of 14), although there was one incident that involved five victims. Similarly, most of the incidents involved one offender (10 out of 14), and there was one unsolved completed contract killing.

### ***Criminal Networks/ Organised Crime***

The cases that fall within the category of “criminal networks/organised crime” involve killing in the furtherance of a criminal enterprise or to facilitate criminal behaviour. The research did not identify a single attempted offence associated with criminal networks or organised crime. Of the 15 contract killings in this category, the majority (n=12) were unsolved at the time of data collection. It should also be noted that given that most of the cases that fall within this category are unsolved, it is important to keep in mind that these cases are based on the inference that third parties have been contracted.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that there were no reported or detected attempted offences in this category is not generally surprising from a law enforcement perspective. Persons operating within this category are not likely to assist police investigations and would be reluctant to come forward in the first place. This reluctance could stem from a number of reasons, which includes self-interest or preservation, as quite often persons with intimate knowledge of contracts in this category are heavily involved themselves in crime and criminality. Secondly, this category invokes a real fear amongst protagonists where disloyalty would almost certainly prove fatal.

### ***Other Motive – Personal Advancement***

This category describing contract murder involves cases where the motive falls under the heading “other”. There were only four targets (and incidents) in this category, of which three resulted in the successful completion of the contract and the death of the victim. Included in this category is one contract killing that could be described as a political assassination. Such cases are the most notorious and abhorrent to Australian society and involve the killing of a third party for the purpose of advancing the status or future prospects of advancement of the instigator. All persons involved in these cases were male. Similarly, the seven offenders were also male.

### ***Unknown Motives***

In addition to the attempted offences and completed contract killings described above where the motive of the contractor was apparent, there were a further 25 incidents (28 targets) identified where they did not fall into one of the eight categories. The motive of the instigator for wanting the target dead was not apparent in the reading of the offence reports. These cases have therefore been grouped in the “unknown motive” category. In total, there were 12 attempted and 16 completed contract killings where the motive of the instigator was not known.

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<sup>3</sup>Any inferences drawn as to whether the offence constitutes a contract killing are taken from available information, which includes offence reports and information provided by the investigating police officers.

There were also a number of differences identified between the motives associated with the attempted versus the completed contract killings. Table 3 provides a summary of the distinguishing features of attempted and completed contract killings based on the derived typology.

## **CASE STUDY**

The following case study illustrates one of the categories of contract killing – Dissolution of a Relationship:

### **Dissolution of a Relationship: The Murder of CM**

KM was married to the victim, CM and was the father of their three children. For some time KM had also had a relationship with MB and had promised her that he would leave the victim to be with her.

In an attempt to rid himself of his wife, KM obtained the assistance of MB (who was motivated by lust and greed), who solicited the services of a hit man, DK to carry out the murder. DK was at the time also having an affair with MB and agreed to kill the victim on her behalf for a sum of \$50,000 (presumably from an existing \$100,000 life insurance policy taken out by KM on his wife).

On the agreed evening both MB and DK went to the KM AND CM's home at an agreed time when KM had taken the three children to the local video shop to ensure that the victim, CM was home alone. DK confronted the victim and showed her the 'contract' (a document containing her photo and personal details) in an effort to ensure that she was the correct person. MB then punched the victim in the face and the victim was then stabbed seven times by DK in the chest and once in the back. During this attack the victim attempted to fight back by defending herself from DK with a frying pan. MB watched on as DK continued the assault, encouraging him and then afterwards laughing about the crime. Afterwards MB telephoned the offender KM to tell him the job had been completed at which time he and the children returned home. KM ensured that his children made the horrific discovery.

After police confronted DK with overwhelming forensic and other evidence, he pleaded guilty to the murder and agreed to give evidence for the prosecution against the others. DK received a sentence of life imprisonment with a 20-year non-parole period. KM AND MB were both found guilty of the murder and sentenced to the mandatory life imprisonment with each receiving a 30-year non-parole period.

## SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

This presentation provides a brief overview of the findings of a larger study that examined attempted and completed contract killings in Australia. Some of the findings outlined included that there were differences in attempted and completed contract killings. Differences emerged not only within the various categories identified in the typology of contract killings, but also between the attempted and completed contract killings.

Many of the principal findings of the main study may provide or identify preventative strategies that could be applied not only to future police operations but also in early intervention mechanisms.

Most homicide research focuses predominantly on the characteristics of the main players in the homicide drama – the victim and offender – and the immediate lead up to the victim's death. Rarely does homicide research venture into the study of those victims who are not killed (with the exception of research into robbery and robbery-homicide; Mouzos 2003), especially as a result of police intervention. Much can be learnt about the characteristics of offences that come to police attention and those that evade detection. Similarly, it is also important to highlight that had it not been for the many contracts that had not been completed due to police intervention, Australia's homicide rate would be much higher than what it currently is (about 1.9 per 100,000 population; Mouzos 2003).

The findings raise a number of implications for policing and policy. These include: using police operations (covert operations) as a homicide intervention strategy, the handling of informants and increasing public confidence of the police, protecting witnesses, prosecution of instigators, and focusing on illegal firearms in the community.

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**TABLE 3: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VARIOUS TYPOLOGIES OF ATTEMPTED AND COMPLETED CONTRACT KILLINGS IN AUSTRALIA (PERCENTAGES)**

<b>Characteristic of the Contract Killing</b>	<b>Dissolution of Relationship (n=31)</b>	<b>Other Domestic (n=11)</b>	<b>Money/ Financial (n=26)</b>	<b>Drug Related (n=10)</b>	<b>Revenge (n=16)</b>	<b>Silencing of Witnesses (n=22)</b>	<b>Criminal Networks - Organised Crime (n=15)<sup>(e)</sup></b>	<b>Other – Personal Advancement (n=4)</b>	<b>Unknown (n=28)</b>
<b>Single Victim Incident</b>	95	91	84	100	63	71	93	100	88
<b>Single Offender Incident <sup>(a)</sup></b>	69	70	96	50	31	71	100	25	25
<b>Male Victims</b>	52	46	92	100	81	73	100	100	86
<b>Male Offenders</b>	63	55	85	100	75	95	100	100	82
<b>Victims aged 25-49 years</b>	74	46	73	70	50	73	73	75	57
<b>Offenders aged 25-49 years <sup>(b)</sup></b>	44	50	78	25	50	74	50	100	73
<b>Firearms used as weapon</b>	41	33	44	90	55	77	100	50	84
<b>Victim not killed <sup>(c)</sup></b>	90	91	65	30	38	77	0	25	43
<b>Involved Intimates</b>	65	82	26	0	33	5	7	0	11
<b>Unsolved <sup>(d)</sup></b>	0	0	12	50	13	5	80	0	43

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, Attempted and Completed Contract Killings 1989 – 2002 [computer file].

(a) Refers to a single contract killer without accomplices other than the instigator.

(b) Where an offender has been identified.

(c) Refers to attempted contract killings.

(d) All attempted contract killings were solved.

(e) Only two offenders have been identified in this category.

**MULTIPLE STAFFING TO PREVENT ROBBERIES  
LINKING QUESTIONABLE DATA TO PRACTICAL INTERVENTIONS  
Patrick D. Walsh, Loyola University New Orleans;  
William E. Thornton Loyola University New Orleans;  
and David R. Kent, Loyola University New Orleans**

**ABSTRACT**

In 1998, the United States Department of Labor — Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued its “Recommendation for Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in Late-Night Retail Establishments”, concerning violent crimes in the late-night retail industry. Among its recommendations was the issue of multiple staffing at such retail establishments. While the OSHA report footnoted that no studies indicated any conclusive statistical significant establishing a relationship between increased staffing and reduced robbery, increased staffing was still issued as a recommendation. Prior research concerning this proposed intervention will be reviewed. This proposed research reviewed available robbery data from four geographical regions to determine if there appears to be any significant deterrence of selection as a robbery target when multiple persons are present.

**ROBBERY COUNTERMEASURES**

- Lighting
- Staffing
- Cash Control
- Visibility
- Closed Circuit Television w/Public View Monitor
- Signage (notification of in-place countermeasures)

**ASSUMPTIONS OF COUNTERMEASURES**

- Rationality-contained within a non-rational act
- Non-impaired thought process
- Calculus of reward versus punishment
- Prior knowledge of countermeasures
- Belief that countermeasure is in effect- is cash on hand really only \$50 or less?

**MULTIPLE STAFFING**

- Assumes that potential offender will bypass potential robbery target if multiple persons (not only employees) are present.
- Assumes that offender would bypass due to increased risk of identification, resistance, and/or increased risk of complications due to more persons being present.

## **CURRENT STATUS**

- Some jurisdictions have legislated mandatory multiple staffing as robbery deterrent.
- Legislation usually allows for option of two persons or bullet resistant barrier.
- OSHA, while not mandating, has recommended multiple staffing as a robbery deterrent in late-night businesses.
- Most staffing legislation/guidelines utilize 11pm as their enforcement point.
- Florida law requires multiple staffing/ bullet resistant barrier/ security personnel in locations that have suffered violent criminal act in past 24 months.

## **ISSUES** Does the amount of reward affect the deterrent value of multiple staffing (banks)?

- Do customers impact “multiple staffing” – do one employee and one customer equal two employees?
- Does multiple staffing reduce the potential for robbery evenly across all time periods?

## **PRIOR LITERATURE**

### Offender Studies

- Crow, Erickson & Scott (1987) number of clerks/customers ranked 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in importance (out of 11) in target attractiveness. Ninety-one percent of armed offenders indicated they would take on two or more persons.
- Note — 1996 Erickson study of offenders ranked number of clerks/ customers 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> respectively (out of 14).

### Environmental/ Situational Crime Prevention Studies

- NIOSH Nine-State Study (1996) two clerks not seen as deterrence to robbery.
- LaVigne (1991) number of clerks unrelated to robbery.
- Figlio (1991) no impact on robberies noted by presence of two clerks; however, sites with robberies with one clerk did not suffer revictimization with two clerks.
- White (1987) — Gainesville — number of clerks strongest predictor of robbery.
- Swanson (1986) two clerks seemed to be primary element in deterring robbery.
- Jeffery et al (1987) less likely to be robbed if more than one clerk on duty.
- Hunter (1988,1990,1992) site less likely to be robbed if more than one person on duty.
- Clifton (1987) Gainesville study — two clerks primary impact.
- Calder, et al. (1992) — significant at <.001, equal to location of checkout counter (but in positive direction).
- Loomis, et al. (2002) — intervention most likely to reduce homicides of employees at work is not being alone.

## **METHODOLOGY**

- Convenience sample of convenience stores that were robbed.
- Company-owned locations (not “mom-and-pop” stores).
- Selected from four geographical regions (Louisiana, Florida, Arizona, and California) over a two-year time period.

## RESEARCH

- N = 363 robberies of company-owned (chain locations) convenience stores.
- Variables included:
  - Time (7am-3pm, 3pm- 11pm, 11pm-7am)
  - Number of victims (employees and customers)
  - Day of week, month of year
  - Number of perpetrators
  - Repeat victimization

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

### Homicides - Two

- One involved an employee/customer victimization — offender died as result of police justified shooting at location.
- Second case involved mandatory two clerk Florida location that only had one employee on duty.

### Non-lethal violence

- Twenty-one acts of violence.
- No statistical difference between one and more than one persons present .
- Most violence took place on 11 pm - 7 am shifts — the time period when most robberies occurred.

## Table I

Table I notes that 53% of the studied robberies involved only one victim (including both employees and customers).

### VICTIM

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	192	52.9	52.9	52.9
	2.00	118	32.5	32.5	85.4
	3.00	38	10.5	10.5	95.9
	4.00	12	3.3	3.3	99.2
	5.00	1	.3	.3	99.4
	6.00	2	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	100.0	

**Table II**

Table II notes the distribution of robberies calculating only employees.

**EMPLOYEE**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	248	68.3	68.3	68.3
	2.00	104	28.7	28.7	97.0
	3.00	11	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	100.0	

**Table III**

Table III notes the distribution of robberies by time, with 73% of the robberies occurring in the 11pm-7am time period.

**TIME**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7a-3p	18	5.0	5.0	5.0
	3p-11p	79	21.8	21.8	26.7
	11p-7a	266	73.3	73.3	100.0
	Total	363	100.0	100.0	

**Table IV**

Table IV notes the time distribution by geographical location.

**TIME \* GEOGRAPH Crosstabulation**

Count

		GEOGRAPH				Total
		Louisiana	Florida	Arizona	California	
TIME	7a-3p	3	5	8	2	18
	3p-11p	31	19	17	12	79
	11p-7a	81	59	84	42	266
Total		115	83	109	56	363

Based on the preliminary findings of this limited research, it appears that robbery selection may be predicated more on time than the number of employees (or others) present as noted by the distribution of robberies in Florida when two employees are present. Based on early analysis, the data indicates that more robberies occur on the 11pm-7am shifts when two employees are present than on the 3pm-11pm shift where often only one employee is present.

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**GAY HOMICIDE SOLVABILITY:  
AN ANALYSIS OF GAY HOMICIDE CLEARANCE RATES FOR MINNEAPOLIS  
(1989-1999)**

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*This research project would not have been possible if it not for the assistance and supervision of Dallas Drake, principle researcher for the Center for Homicide Research, Rob Warren, PhD., assistant professor with the Department of Sociology at the University of Minnesota, and the cooperation and support of the Minnesota Health Department and the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.*

**ABSTRACT**

The solvability of a homicide is the rate at which homicide cases are solved. Many authors in criminological and sociological fields have stated that homicides involving homosexual victims have a lower solvability rate than homicides involving heterosexual victims. In order to add empirical evidence to this commonly held understanding, I have studied the difference in solvability rates for all 694 gay and non-gay homicide cases occurring between 1989 and 1999 in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Using data obtained by the Center for Homicide Research, the Minnesota Health Department, and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, I have found no significant difference in the solvability rate of gay and non-gay homicides. This finding is contrary to popular notions and suggests an apparent misperception about gay homicides. The findings are, of course, confined to the specific time and place of the study. Minneapolis has a large and active gay community, and local law enforcement has been proactive towards improving its relations with the gay community. While Minneapolis may not be an adequate representation of the entire country, the empirical data found in this study suggests the importance of further studies. More information will increase the ability to make fact-based generalizations about the solvability and characteristics of gay homicides, and provide information towards improving solvability rates and prevention of all homicides.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study will deal with the solvability of homicides involving gay and non-gay victims. The solvability of a homicide is the rate at which homicide cases are solved, also referred to as case clearance. While the occurrence of gay homicide is nominal in comparison to heterosexual homicide, the solvability rate of gay homicides is understood to be lower (De River, 2000; Geberth, 1996; Karmen, 1996; Minnesota Gay Homicide Study, 2003; Tomsen, 2003). The solvability rate for gay homicide varies in its estimated prevalence and the low solvability assumption is made without any steadfast empirical research. Prior information may inhibit the investigation procedure and affect solve rates through the process of a self-fulfilling prophecy. In other words, if investigators believe that gay homicides are harder to solve, they may not be as ambitious or confident in their ability to solve the case. The literature that specifically addresses gay homicide suggests a disproportionately low solvability for these cases, and often implies that police bias or the abnormal nature of these incidents explain the lower solvability rate. Without clear evidence of disproportionate solvability, the proposed causes and solutions for this problem are potentially unwarranted.



A review of research articles on homicide case solvability and the relationship between police and the gay community shows that there is very little research on either topic. Numerous authors note the lack of research on the subject of police and GLBT community relations (Bernstein and Kostelac, 2002; Jenkins, 1994; Younglove et. al., 2002), and treatment of gay individuals within the judicial system (Hill, 2000; Olivero & Murataya, 2001). Others noting minimal research include articles on general homicide and law enforcement solvability rates for homicide cases (Jensen, 1994; Keppel & Weis, 1994; Wellford & Cronin, 2000), and investigative procedure on general homicide cases (Horvath & Meesig, 1995; Horvath & Lee, 2001).

Three general themes run through the extant literature. The first theme is the relationship between law enforcement or the judicial system and the GLBT community. Some studies suggest that one of the most important variables affecting homicide case solvability is the interaction between law enforcement officers and their surrounding community (Geberth, 1996; Horvath, 1995; Horvath, 2001; Karmen, 1996; Puckett & Lundman, 2003, Tomsen, 1994). This is a main argument for development and implementation of Community Oriented Policing (COPS, 2004). There is a general assumption within the GLBT community that the police are extremely biased against gay individuals. This claim is supported by documentation of police officers as anti-gay offenders (NCAVP, 2002). Gay victims and witnesses of sexual assault or hate-based crimes have a low reporting rate due to fear of law enforcement bias, harassment or abuse (Bel Bruno, 1997; Bernstein & Kostelac, 2002; De River, 2000; Meers, 1997). Lack of assistance from the surrounding community affects solvability of a case because it decreases the amount of information investigators can collect (Puckett & Lundman, 2003). The GLBT community has a long history of mistreatment not only from law enforcement but also by the general public. The sad irony of this pattern is that the GLBT community compromises its own safety and security in its reticence to reach out to law enforcement for assistance (Younglove et. al, 2002), and the police risk damaging their professional image and possibly the solvability of cases by not effectively reaching out to the GLBT community.

There are other studies that provide evidence that anti-gay biases of police may be present in perception but not in practice (Bernstein & Kostelac, 2002; Younglove et. al., 2002). There is some information suggesting negative treatment towards the GLBT community by law enforcement officers (Bruno, 1997; Olivero & Murataya, 2002) while contrasting empirical research has shown no reason to assume more bias among police officers and police investigations than exists in the general public (Bernstein & Kostelac, 2002; Younglove et. al., 2002). While these latter findings are not very encouraging due to the prevalent homophobia in our society, no empirical reason exists to assume an increased intolerance toward the gay community by police officers.

Because investigating officers act on intuition and “gut feeling” (Keppel, 1994), it is important to understand the role of homophobia in those instinctive actions. Men are generally more homophobic, and there is a disproportionate amount of men involved in law enforcement (Olivero & Murataya, 2002), but this does not address the actual practice of police officers, merely their attitudes. According to Bernstein and Kostelac (2002), there seems to be “little evidence for a direct relationship between general attitudes towards gays and lesbians and actual discriminatory behavior towards gays and lesbians” (322).

While this finding is heartening, it does not change the fact that negative perceptions of law enforcement by GLBT people may negatively impact gay homicide solvability. However, personal prejudice is not the only place where bias might exist.

The second theme in the literature looks at the bias within the investigative protocol. Detectives follow written procedures outlining the manner and method of investigating any homicide incident. Police may be affected by the structure of these institutionalized procedures that are themselves inherently biased, rather than on any explicit individual biases towards gay victims. For instance, investigators may be instructed not to ask about a victim's sexual practices. Additionally, the training provided to officers about these procedures may contain misinformation or biased accounts about gay practices and behaviors or gay culture. This training conveys connotative meanings and valuations about how officers should conduct their investigation.

An example of biased training in investigative procedures is depicted in the self-proclaimed "Bible" of homicide investigation (Brooks in Geberth, 1996: Foreword), *Practical Homicide Investigation: Tactics, Procedures, and Forensic Techniques* by Vernon J. Geberth (1996). This nationally recognized investigation manual includes an entire chapter devoted to homosexual homicide investigation. The chapter is filled with an abundance of graphic photographs, some merely pictures of sexual techniques that some, but not all, gay men practice. In addition, the author employs atypical examples and derogatory language to describe homosexual relationships, describing intimate practices by homosexuals as "disgusting," (461) "abnormal," (463) and "deviant," (463) regardless of the fact that the practices described are performed by heterosexual and homosexual couples alike.

The book, *Practical Homicide Investigation*, is widely accepted and considered the most practical and conventional information available to detectives responsible for conducting investigations (Geberth, 1996). Geberth's work is cited throughout many of the criminal profiling and investigative textbooks (Bennet & Hess, 1998; Osterburg & Ward, 2000; Turvey, 2002), and exists as one of very few sources on homicide investigation in this field (Turvey, 2003). Yet, as noted, the section on gay homicide investigation portrays and perpetuates negative stereotypes that cast the gay community as a deviant subculture. The problem with information like this and similar literature is that "the basis for these texts is limited to the practical experiences of each author, and is not the result of generalizations made from empirical research" (Keppel, 1994:387).

The investigating officer is the most important variable in the solvability of any homicide case (Wellford & Cronin, 2000; Franklin, 2002). Olivero & Murataya (2001) found that an increase in the presentation of GLBT issues within law enforcement curriculum could actually produce reductions in homophobia among students of law. On the other hand, the institutionalization of biased attitudes in law enforcement curriculum could lead to a justification of homosexual discrimination (Quist, & Weighland, 2002), perhaps negatively affecting the solvability rate of gay homicide cases.

Researchers have suggested that solvability is mainly determined by the actions taken during initial response of law enforcement personnel, the number of officers working the case, and the amount of incident specifics that are obtained by investigating officers (Horvath, 2001; Keppel, 1993; Wellford & Cronin, 2000;). The initial response to most

homicides will involve a patrol officer, yet patrol officers have the least amount of training and agency in the investigative process (Horvath, 2001). Many of the problems faced by today's police are also attributed to financial constraints, which decrease the number of assigned officers (Wellford & Cronin, 2000), and cut into resources for proper officer training. Alternatively, Puckett & Lundman (2003) found that the experience level and workload of an investigator had no effect on solvability rate. This lack of pertinent training and available officers may affect the ability of a police force to solve a homicide, but the extent of that affect is unknown.

The second concentration of solvability factors involves victim characteristics. One of the most important of these is the presence of drugs or alcohol (Auerhahn & Parker, 1999). If drugs are involved in any way (use or distribution), the case is less likely to be solved (Wellford & Cronin, 2000). However, if the victim is solely under the influence of alcohol, the case is more likely to be solved (Wellford & Cronin, 2000). Some studies suggest that victimization of gay individuals occurs as a result of "cruising" or finding sex partners at gay bars (Comstock, 1991; Geberth, 1996; Harry, 1982; Jenkins, 1994; Van Gemert, 1994; Weinberg, 1994;). Due to the presence of drugs and alcohol at these establishments, the solvability could be affected.

The effect of victim characteristics on the solvability of a homicide is debatable. If the victim is African American or Hispanic the case is more likely to be solved (Wellford et. al., 1999). Research done in Australia also shows that if the victim's age is above 30, or if the victim works in the labor force, the solvability rate decreases (Mouzos & Muller, 2001). These findings are relevant because the characteristics of the majority of homicides in Australia are similar to gay homicides in the United States (kill method, victim/offender relationship, location, etc.) (Mouzos, 2000), and are interesting to note since a large number of gay homicides nationwide and the majority of Minnesota cases consist of white males over the age of 30 (Drake, 2003). Contrary to the aforementioned research, Puckett & Lundman (2003) have found that victim characteristics do not have a significant effect on homicide solvability, the characteristics of the surrounding community is the more significant variable. If race, age, and occupation have any significant affect, these may be crucial variables to the solvability of gay homicides.

If the victim did not know the offender the case is less likely to be solved (Smith & Zahn, 1999). One of the many characteristics of gay homicides is that a majority are not stranger killings, in other words, the victim and the offender know each other (Drake, 2003). Because the victim and offender had a prior knowledge of one another, these cases should be easier to solve.

The type of method used to kill the victim also plays a substantial role in the solvability of the case (Mouzos & Muller, 2001; Puckett & Lundman, 2003; Wellford et. al., 1999). If the victim is stabbed, beaten or strangled the case is more likely to be solved (Mouzos & Muller, 2001; Wellford et. al., 1999). This is interesting because a majority of gay homicides involve stabbings, strangulations, or beatings as the kill method (Bell & Villa, 1996; Drake, 2003), compared to the majority of homicides in the United States which involve shootings as the kill method (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1999, 2002). This information would suggest that gay homicides should be more likely solved.

If the homicide occurs in a private residence it is more likely to be solved (Mouzos & Muller, 2001, Wellford et. al., 1999). This probably results from the domestic nature of the relationship between the victim and the offender. Many gay homicides occur at the victim's residence (Drake, 2003). Though the relationship of the participants in a gay homicide incident may be difficult to establish, this information suggests that gay homicides should also be easier to solve due to incident location.

The last incident characteristic found in previous research that affects solvability is the occurrence of a homicide in the course of another crime, otherwise known as a felony crime. Many criminologists assert that a major characteristic of gay homicides is the occurrence of a robbery in the course of the crime (De River, 2000; Drake, 2003; Geberth, 1996; Swigert, 1976; Tomsen, 1994; Van Gemert, 1994). Many gay homicides are attributed to a robbery gone wrong rather than an incident defined by the sexuality of the victim or even a sex homicide. This perception may impact solvability of gay cases since a homicide is harder to solve if it occurs in the course of another crime (Mouzos & Muller, 2001; Riedel & Rinehart, 1996). If robberies do occur more frequently during gay homicides, this may negatively affect the solvability rate of the homicide.

Overkill, or excessive violence above what is necessary to kill the victim, is often referred to as a prominent characteristic of gay homicide (Bell & Villa, 1996; Drake, 2003; Geberth, 1996; Karmen, 1996; Swigert, 1976). Overkill is usually associated with homicides between intimate partners and a predominant characteristic of many non-gay homicides involving female victims (Browne, Williams, & Dutton, 1999). While this extremely violent behavior may be attributed to the use of knives or physical violence (i.e. strangulation or beatings), it may suggest a certain type of homicide and possibly require a special categorization for gay homicides. Therefore, gay homicides may necessitate a slightly different investigative procedure than is currently practiced.

There is very little information on gay homicide issues specifically. Due to the lack of information on specific numbers of cases nationwide and a coherent understanding of gay homicide characteristics, there are many difficulties that stand in the way of empirical research on the subject. Researchers often note inadequacies within the existing research. These include low sample sizes, convenience sampling, personal bias, and lack of previous research. In this study, assumptions made about gay homicides will be tested and add to the body of empirical evidence on case solvability.

Further studies like this one will not only add to our collective knowledge on gay homicide issues and increase solvability rates, but may also help in homicide prevention. Homicide prevention can be attributed to having a clear definition of all the characteristics involved in the incident (i.e. demographic characteristics of the persons involved, temporal and geographic characteristics of the incident, etc.) (Mercy & Hammond, 1999). Reporting the specifics of typically gay homicides can also decrease victim vulnerability by suggesting safety measures for potential victims. Finally, increased solvability may increase deterrence of possible offenders and will facilitate the relationship and communication between law enforcement officers and the GLBT community.

## METHODS

This study is a quantitative analysis of homicide case solvability for Minneapolis, MN from 1989 to 1999. The secondary data used for this research was obtained from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Center for Homicide Research (CHR), and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (MBCA). All cases were drawn from the same enforcement jurisdiction to guarantee the same investigative training, practices, and personnel. The National Crime Victimization Survey does not report on homicides and therefore was not useful for this research study.

The MDH collects data on injury-related deaths based on death certificate information provided by the Minnesota Center for Health Statistics. While the data is subject to error from “under-registration, informant or respondent errors, sampling errors, and data processing errors,” (MDH, 2003), it is the most accurate information on death statistics that exists for Minnesota. Information from the MDH provides valuable information on the number of injury related deaths that occur and gives specific information about the victim and incident specifics of the case.

The MBCA collects information on crime from police reports retrieved from urban and rural police departments. The guidelines of reporting correspond with the national guidelines of the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports. Statewide reporting rates for Minnesota were 97% in 2002, with Minneapolis’ reporting rate at 100% (MBCA, 2003). According to the MBCA, while there may be some errors in reporting accuracy, the data they provide “is as accurate as currently available in the state ... [there is] no other suitable method of collecting criminal statistics” (MBCA, 2003).

The Minnesota Gay Homicide Study, a program of the Center for Homicide Research (CHR), includes every GLBT homicide incident in Minnesota from 1970-2000. It contains cases meeting any of the following three criteria: “the victim is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT); the offender is LGBT; there is an LGBT element involved in the homicide” (MGHS, 2003). This study will specifically deal with those homicides involving a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender *victim*. According to information obtained from the CHR, there are a total of 25 documented homicides involving GLBT victims that occurred in Minneapolis between 1989 and 1999. CHR determines sexuality of the victim through media accounts, family and acquaintance testimony, local GLBT anti-violence and advocacy information, and a determinant sexual behavior that may have taken place in the course of the homicide, therefore separating orientation from behavior of the victim.

While it is possible that not all of the gay cases are known, the data retrieved by the Minnesota Gay Homicide Study is the most extensive and inclusive dataset in existence. While the subject is debated quite often, there has been empirical data presented suggesting that population of openly gay individuals is close to 4% of the U. S. population (Cameron, 1993; Black et. al., 1999; Laumann, 1994). The 25 GLBT cases represent 4% (.037) of the total number of Minneapolis homicides and resonates with some of the suggested population estimating on the average number of homosexual individuals in the United States.

Also included in this study is a comparison group of non-gay cases. As indicated by information obtained from the MBCA, there were a total of 694 homicides reported for the years 1989 to 1999 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. That leaves a comparison group of 669 non-gay cases after the 25 gay cases are removed.

According to information from Uniform Crime Reports and the MBCA, a case is considered solved when an offender is charged with the crime, or charges cannot be made against the offender because of circumstances beyond the control of law enforcement personnel (this would involve instances of a murder-suicide or double murder where two persons kill each other). Solvability rate is calculated by dividing the number of solved homicide cases by the total number of cases reported for a given time period. High solvability rates suggest proficient law enforcement capabilities; low solvability rates suggest difficulties on the part of the investigating police force.

## RESULTS

As indicated by a cross tabulation comparison of homicide case solvability with victim's sexuality, there seems to be no significant difference. As shown in Table 1, there is a 66% solvability rate for non-gay cases and a 68% solve rate for gay cases, with an odds ratio of 1.12; the difference in solvability rates is not statistically significant at a .05 level. The solvability rates of both non-gay and gay cases are consistent, if not slightly higher than the national solvability rate of 64% (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2002). There is no empirical evidence that sexuality affects the solvability rate of a homicide.

**Table 1**  
**Homicide Solvability Rates for Minneapolis (1989 – 1999)**

<b>Sexuality</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Solved</b>	<b>Solvability Rate (%)</b>
<b>Non-gay</b> (N=669)	<b>669</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Gay</b> (N=25)	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>68%</b>

- *Data obtained from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and Drake, D. (2003).*
- *The term gay refers to all victims of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender orientation.*

## DISCUSSION

Numerous authors have stated that homicides involving gay victims are harder to solve. According to the findings of this study, this is not the case for Minneapolis from 1989 to 1999. The solvability rates were essentially the same for non-gay cases (66%) and gay cases (68%). Misperceptions about gay homicide solvability may stem from assumptions made about gay homicide characteristics. It is commonly understood that these cases are more brutal and are exceptionally violent in nature compared to other homicides. These

characteristics, added to a general assumption of police bias against the GLBT community, may lead to misunderstandings about gay homicide solvability.

There is a very large and active gay community in Minneapolis, which may influence police response to cases involving gay victims. A number of the gay cases included in this study received a vast amount of local and national media coverage, which may have warranted police action above and beyond normal practice, but the findings do not suggest any differential treatment for either gay or non-gay cases.

There is also an added factor of a progressive police force in Minneapolis. The Minneapolis police department employs many openly gay officers, and works in a city with openly gay local and state government officials. While this is not necessarily absent from cities nationwide, it may have some affect on public and law enforcement attitudes toward gay issues. The employment of gay officers may help in easing tensions between the local police and the gay community, helping the process of information retrieval about cases and understanding possible cultural differences within the GLBT community.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH**

The findings presented in this study offer empirical evidence that challenge the perceptions offered by many authors, and commonly held in various fields of sociological interest. While the characteristics of gay homicides are considerably different from generally non-gay cases, the sexuality of the victim does not seem to affect the solvability of the case. These new findings may help to clear up prior misperceptions about investigative practices and solvability factors.

The findings presented in this study and others like it will promote increased solvability rates, facilitate police relations with the gay community, and further homicide prevention strategies. In-depth homicide definitions and descriptions of homicide characteristics will help law enforcement officers in profiling and investigative techniques. Police departments with higher solvability rates can set standards and give helpful suggestions to more inadequate police departments nationwide. Increased solvability rates and increased attention to gay homicide issues will also promote closer relations between law enforcement and the GLBT community. Finally, clearly defined homicide characteristics will increase prevention strategies and decrease victim vulnerability (Drake, 2004; Mercy & Hammond, 1999). The information presented in this study suggests the importance of replicated studies nationwide with perhaps a more in-depth analysis of individual case specifics.

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# **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CLEARED MURDERS REPORTED TO NIBRS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

One limitation of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program's Supplementary Homicide Report is the inability to determine if a particular homicide was subsequently cleared. Currently the UCR is undergoing a large-scale conversion from the traditional summary system and its SHR to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). One benefit of NIBRS is its collection of arrest and clearance information for a particular murder incident. While NIBRS provides a new and important source of clearance information, researchers have largely ignored these data. This paper uses NIBRS data to examine the characteristics of cleared homicides.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Although clearance rates are of interest to researchers and policymakers, only a handful of studies have examined factors related to homicide clearance. One reason for this dearth of research is the lack of available data. While the Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR) and its Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR) are important sources of homicide information, they suffer from serious limitations for studying factors related to arrest and other forms of clearance. The summary UCR collects arrest information; however, these data are collected at the aggregate level and provide no information as to whether a particular homicide resulted in arrest or was otherwise cleared. The SHR provides incident-level details, but arrest data are not collected. As a result, researchers interested in studying clearance issues must rely on aggregate UCR arrest data (e.g., Borg & Parker, 2001) or generate proxy clearance measures for use with SHR data (e.g., Regoeczi et al., 2000; Riedel & Rinehart, 1996). Otherwise researchers must resort to collecting data from law enforcement agencies. The time and expense of such studies limit coverage to a single police department or only a small number of jurisdictions (e.g., Puckett & Lundman, 2003; Wellford & Cronin, 1999).

An alternative data source is provided by the redesigned UCR data collection system known as NIBRS (the National Incident-Based Reporting System). NIBRS collects incident-level information including arrest and clearance data for homicides. While NIBRS provides an important source of information on homicide arrests and clearances, researchers have largely ignored these data (but see Chilton & Jarvis, 1999). This oversight is unfortunate since NIBRS provides the arrest information the SHR lacks and the incident-level clearance data missing from the summary UCR.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

This paper uses the incident-level attributes of NIBRS to compare particular characteristics associated with cleared homicides with those of uncleared cases.

## DATA AND METHODS

### Data

Data from the 2001 NIBRS are used since these constitute the most recently available public use data (FBI, 2004). The cases analyzed are all murders and nonnegligent manslaughters. Both offenses are referred to as “murder” for shorthand. The unit of analysis is murder victims.

One caveat in analyzing NIBRS data is its limited coverage. NIBRS is a substantial departure in crime data collection for law enforcement agencies and requires a lengthy certification process. As a result, conversion to NIBRS has been gradual. NIBRS agencies covered only 17% of the U.S. population in 2001 (BJS, 2004). Since participation in NIBRS is voluntary, these agencies do not constitute a random sample of U.S. law enforcement agencies. In 2001, only 21 states were NIBRS-certified (BJS, 2004). Within these 21 states, not all agencies submit data in NIBRS format. Only 7 states fully report in NIBRS; the other 14 states have less than full participation in NIBRS. Law enforcement agencies that participate in NIBRS tend to represent smaller populations areas. In 2001, no agency covering a population of over 1 million participated in NIBRS. These factors result in a large case selection bias that may affect the quality of data provided by these agencies (Addington, 2004). In addition, only a fraction of murders are reported to NIBRS. In 2001, only 1,958 of the 15,980 U.S. murders (or 12%) were reported to NIBRS.

This non-representativeness of NIBRS suggests exercising caution when interpreting results and drawing conclusions from these data. At the same time, however, understanding the capabilities of NIBRS for studying issues such as factors related to clearance is important as more states and agencies convert to NIBRS.

### Variables Utilized

#### Clearance measures

This paper compares cleared murder cases with uncleared ones. Murders are classified as *uncleared* or *cleared* either *by arrest* or *exceptionally*. Exceptionally cleared cases occur when a suspect is identified but events beyond the law enforcement agency’s control prevent an arrest because of the death of the offender, prosecution declined, or extradition denied (FBI, 1992). In 2001, 66% of NIBRS murders were cleared and the vast majority of these were cleared by arrest (Table 1).

**Table 1: Clearance Status of Murders, NIBRS 2001**

<b>Clearance Status</b>	<b>2001 Murders</b>
<b>Arrest</b>	1,197 (61%)
<b>Exceptional Clearance</b>	90 (5%)
<b>No Clearance</b>	671 (34%)
<b>Total</b>	1,958

## Incident characteristics

The variables used to examine incident characteristics include victim demographics as well as incident details. The demographic variables include: age, race, and sex. For ease of comparison, *age* is categorized into groups based upon categories used in prior studies. For *race*, whites and non-whites are compared due to the small number of minorities who are not African American (e.g., Asians and Native Americans). Sex is categorized as male and female.

The incident details include victim-offender relationship and location.<sup>1</sup> *Victim-offender relationship* is grouped into intimate partner, other family, other known, stranger, and unknown.<sup>2</sup> *Location* is grouped as home, street, parking area, field or woods, and other or unknown.

## **Analyses Conducted**

This paper uses bivariate analyses to compare the characteristics of cleared and uncleared cases.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Victim Demographics**

Female victims have a higher overall clearance percentage than male victims (Table 2). This is due to the much higher percentage of exceptional clearances involving female victims. Additional analyses found almost all of these exceptional clearances involved an intimate partner where the offender killed himself. White victims have slightly higher clearance percentages than victim whose race is non-white or unknown (Table 3). Younger victims have a higher percentage of clearance than older victims (Table 4).

**Table 2: Clearance Status of Murders by Victim Sex, NIBRS 2001**

Clearance Status	Victim Sex		
	Female	Male	Unknown
<b>Arrest</b>	350 (60%)	841 (62%)	6 (40%)
<b>Exceptional Clearance</b>	59 (10%)	31 (2%)	0 (0%)
<b>No Clearance</b>	175 (30%)	487 (36%)	9 (60%)
<b>Total</b>	584	1,359	15

N = 1,958

<sup>1</sup>Other comparisons were conducted and are available upon request from the author.

<sup>2</sup>Intimate partners are current, former and common law spouses, boy/girlfriends, and homosexual relationships. Other family are parents, children, in-laws, siblings, step-parents, step-children, step-siblings, grandparents, and grandchildren. Other known includes friends, acquaintances, neighbors, employers, and employees.



**Table 3: Clearance Status of Murders by Victim Race, NIBRS 2001**

Clearance Status	Victim Race		
	White	Non-White	Unknown
Arrest	640 (62%)	538 (61%)	19 (39%)
Exceptional Clearance	71 (7%)	19 (2%)	0 (0%)
No Clearance	315 (31%)	326 (37%)	30 (61%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>49</b>

N = 1,958

**Table 4: Clearance Status of Murders by Victim Age, NIBRS 2001**

Clearance Status	Victim Age Group (age range in parentheses)				
	Baby (under 1)	Child (1-12)	Teen (13-19)	Adult (20-59)	Adult (over 60)
Arrest	22 (82%)	62 (74%)	112 (63%)	849 (60%)	104 (62%)
Exceptional Clearance	1 (4%)	7 (8%)	9 (5%)	61 (4%)	9 (5%)
No Clearance	4 (14%)	15 (18%)	58 (32%)	504 (36%)	56 (33%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>1,414</b>	<b>169</b>

N = 1,873 (omitted 85 cases missing victim age)

**Incident Characteristics**

Murders in which the victim and offender knew each other have a higher percentage of clearance (Table 5). Murders involving family members had the highest clearance percentage. As noted above, intimate partners have a high percentage of exceptional clearances. Most homicides occur in a home and these have the highest clearance percentage of any location (Table 6). NIBRS does not specify whose home, so it cannot be discerned if it is the victim's home. The "other or unknown" column reflects a fairly high clearance percentage partly due to the decision to group certain known (but infrequently occurring) locations in this category such as bars or hotels.<sup>3</sup> Murders in open locations such as streets and woods have a low clearance percentage.

**Table 5: Clearance Status of Murders by Victim-Offender Relationship, NIBRS 2001**

Clearance Status	Victim-Offender Relationship				
	Intimate Partner	Other Family	Other Known	Stranger	Unknown
Arrest	187 (64%)	133 (78%)	489 (80%)	146 (76%)	241 (35%)
Exceptional Clearance	50 (17%)	13 (8%)	16 (3%)	4 (2%)	6 (1%)
No Clearance	55 (19%)	25 (14%)	105 (17%)	42 (22%)	443 (64%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>690</b>

N = 1,955 (omitted 3 cases where victim was offender)

<sup>3</sup>Other and unknown locations must be grouped together since NIBRS does not distinguish generic "other" locations from "unknown" locations in its data collection.

**Table 6: Clearance Status of Murders by Location, NIBRS 2001**

Clearance Status	Location				
	Home	Street	Parking Area	Field/ woods	Other or Unknown
<b>Arrest</b>	705 (65%)	197 (53%)	64 (60%)	41 (47%)	190 (63%)
<b>Exceptional Clearance</b>	68 (6%)	6 (2%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)	11 (4%)
<b>No Clearance</b>	314 (29%)	172 (46%)	39 (37%)	44 (51%)	102 (34%)
<b>Total</b>	1087	375	106	87	303

*Note:* Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

N = 1,958

## DISCUSSION

Overall, the results obtained are consistent with those found in prior research conducted with more restricted data. Clearances are associated with knowing characteristics of the murder. In addition, particular types of information lend themselves to clearances. For example, a higher percentage of homicides involving younger victims are cleared. These cases often involve a family member or known offender, which is associated with a high percentage of cleared cases. Similarly a higher percentage of murders that occur in homes are cleared. This private location likely provides police with identifiable witnesses and suspects as well as protects possible evidence. The confirmation provided here is important, since unlike prior research this study examined actual clearance information from agencies across the United States. It should be reiterated, though, that NIBRS data have their own limitations, particularly the small agency bias and the non-representativeness of the sample of agencies.

In addition to confirming previous research, this study demonstrated the capability of NIBRS to identify patterns related to clearance. For example, female victims had a much higher percentage of exceptional clearances than male victims. The detailed incident information collected in NIBRS permitted these cases to be explored further which resulted in finding most of these cases involved an intimate partner who killed himself.

## CONCLUSION

This study provides confirmation of prior research that relied on proxy clearance measures or a small number of police agencies. It also demonstrates the capability of NIBRS as a tool for exploring clearance patterns. While this study highlights the important attributes of the NIBRS data for studying clearance, incident characteristics are only one aspect of clearance. A drawback of NIBRS is its limited information about the police agency. Future research should examine ways to include additional law enforcement agency information with NIBRS incident details.

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**DISCUSSION: LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE**  
**Recorded by Joe Shulka, Center for Homicide Research**

**Merging Research and Practice: An Examination of Contract Killings in Australia**  
*Jenny Mouzos and John Venditto*

**Paul Blackman (National Rifle Association)** – Regarding the attempted contract killings, how many of the offenders charged that they were entrapped?

**Jenny Mouzos** - None.

**Vance McLaughlin (University of North Carolina)** – How did the research take into account monetary or non-monetary gain where no actual money exchanged hands (i.e. the potential insurance settlement)?

**Jenny Mouzos** - The definition for the research was broad enough to include these. These were included in the definition under “financial gain.”

**Becky Block (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority)** – Was the exchange of money necessary to fit the definition? Such as drugs, gang affiliation, get “rid of someone”)

**Jenny Mouzos** -The exchange of money was not necessary. This was especially the case in the underworld killings. In these cases, the person was on staff specifically to carry out these killings.

**Vance McLaughlin (University of North Carolina)** – In case in the U.S., the ATF has a scripted procedure in place that will make the prosecution’s case more effective. It is very similar to a rehearsed play.

**Devon Brewer** – How many of the hit men were paid?

**Jenny Mouzos** – All offenders that we had information in relation to payment.

**Roland Chilton (University of Massachusetts)** – How were the unsolved contract killings defined?

**Jenny Mouzos** – No one is charged, but the evidence is sufficient to determine that it was a hit.

**Becky Block (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority)** – In the case where the victim and the contract purchaser were intimates, is there the danger of entrapment?

**Jenny Mouzos** – Most of the intimate partner contract killings involve amateurs. They leave much more evidence for the police or are turned in by informants.

**It Sounded Like a Good Idea: Linking Questionable Data to Practical Interventions**  
*Patrick Walsh, David Kent and William Thornton*

**Paul Blackman (NRA)** — Do you believe that in the mind of offenders, more clerks working equates to more money available on site?

**Pat Walsh** — That may be the case.

**Dick Block (Loyola University)** — The incidents in Florida indicate that robberies don't occur when there are two attendants on duty?

**Pat Walsh** — In Florida, this is time sensitive. Two attendants are needed later in the night. Offenders know this and may be shifting their robberies to times when there is only one attendant on duty.

**Vickie Titterington (University of Central Florida)** — Is there any descriptive information available, such as clearance data?

**Pat Walsh** — No, only date, time, place, etc.

**Dwayne Smith (University of Central Florida)** — Did any of the stores have uniformed or plain clothed security personnel on staff at the time?

**Pat Walsh** — No.

**John Jarvis (FBI)** — Was there any similarity between the sites? There can be some sites where there is merchandise displayed in front of windows and less visibility.

**Pat Walsh** — All the stores researched were company-owned, so they all had policy on lighting, visibility, etc so were very similar in their store characteristics.

**Dallas Drake (Center for Homicide Research)** — Is there a way to measure whether the offenders are picking up visual clues from the staff that may be leading to victimization?

**Pat Walsh** — Only company-owned stores were studied, because they have a policy for employees in a robbery: Don't fight back, don't provoke the offender, hand over the money, let them leave the store, etc.

**Dallas Drake (CHR)** — Are younger clerks and other employees robbed more often?

**Pat Walsh** — Don't know. This wasn't studied.

**Paul Blackman (National Rifle Association)** — Is there a breakpoint where it's better for stores to close in the evening than to have two people on staff?

**Pat Walsh** — In most cases, the cost of closing outweighs the cost of having extra staff.

**Jenny Mouzos (National Homicide Monitoring Program)** — Is there evidence of the victim's resisting their attacking and this provoking their attackers?

**Pat Walsh** — No. The offenders attack first and are generally unprovoked. Staff are trained to not resist.

**David Etnoyer (FBI)** — Do any of them use disguises?

**Pat Walsh** — Very few offenders use disguises and most are very aware that they are being videotaped.

**Dwayne Smith (UCF)** — Are homicides more likely to occur in the “mom and pop” stores than in the company-owned?

**Pat Walsh** — Yes. The attendants are more likely to fight back and the robbers know that they are likely to have more cash on hand than the company-owned stores.

**Roland Chilton (University of Massachusetts)** — We are assuming that offenders are rational and making balanced decisions.

**Pat Walsh** — They are not rational. Many make stupid mistakes.

**Dick Block (Loyola University)** — Many of the robberies are opportunity crimes.

**Pat Walsh** — Yes. Most of the offenders studied robbed a convenience store that was within .71 miles of their own home.

**Perceptions and Procedures: A Quantitative Analysis of Gay Homicide Case Solvability for the City of Minneapolis (1989-1999)**

*Joe Riemann*

**Mark Foxall (Douglas County Dept. of Corrections)** — Did you look at race and ethnicity?

**Joe Riemann** — No. The sample was very small.

**Valerie Pottie Bunge (Canadian Center for Justice Statistics)** — Did you look at the relationship between the victim and the offender?

**Joe Riemann** — Yes. In most cases, there was a previous relationships, either as friends or intimates.

**Dick Block (Loyola University)** — How would the research look at serial offenders, such as Jeffrey Dahmer? Would they be considered gay homicides?

**Joe Riemann** — They would be included in the study, but none were present in the sample.

**Becky Block (ICJIA)** — You cannot always assume that no relationship means no relationship. More follow-up should occur with intimate partner, race, etc.

**Joe Riemann** — True. The original source data was to have been police records, but because of access issues, health department data was used.

**David Kent (Kent Agency)** — You may also want to look at police factors, such as what precinct the offence happened, is one department more professional than another, etc. These can significantly affect solvability.

**Jenny Mouzos (National Homicide Monitoring Program)** — You may also want to look at the other characteristics of the homicides (weapon type, evidence, etc.) that may have made these cases more easy to solve.

### **Using NIBRS Data to Study Homicide Cleared by Arrest**

**Lynn Addington**

**Vickie Titterington (UCF)** — Do you have any details on the one case where an infant was cleared by exception?

**Lynn Addington** — No additional information is known.

**Roland Chilton (University of Massachusetts)** — Can you define exceptional clearance?

**Lynn Addington** — The homicide is cleared because the offender is killed (either by his own actions or by police), prosecution is declined, or extradition is denied.

**Steve Wilson (University of Nebraska)** — Is there any witness data in NIBRS?

**Lynn Addington** — There is no witness data in NIBRS.

**John Jarvis (FBI)** — As a clarification to NIBRS, there is additional information available in the state and local NIBRS databases, but that is not aggregated to the national data.

**Roland Chilton (University of Massachusetts)** — Where did you get the NIBRS files from?

**Lynn Addington** — The source files came from ICPSR and contained over 3 million incidents.

**Becky Block (ICJIA)** — Is it possible to compare the arson homicides in NIBRS in the same manner as the research conducted by Dallas Drake and her using the Chicago Dataset?

**Lynn Addington** — There are some limitations to NIBRS that make this comparison difficult. Arson is not a “weapon” in NIBRS *per se*. But arson is an offence, and NIBRS tracks multiple offences in each incident.

**CHAPTER SIX:  
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS: LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE**

**INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RESEARCH AND PREVENTION**

Moderated by: Nancy Glass, Oregon Health and Science University

Recorded by: Esther Jenkins, Chicago Sate University & Community Mental Health Council, Inc.

**ISSUES IN DATA AND MEASUREMENT**

Moderated by: Tom Petee, Auburn University

Recorded by: Kim Vogt, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse

**NIBRS**

Moderated by: Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Recorded by: Wendy Regoeczi, Cleveland State University

**TERRORISM AND WEAPONS**

Moderated by: John Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Recorded by: Dallas Drake, Center for Homicide Research





**LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE:  
INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RESEARCH AND PREVENTION  
Roundtable Discussion Recorded by  
Esther Jenkins, Chicago State University & Community Mental Health Council, Inc.**

**Moderated by:** Nancy Glass, Oregon Health and Science University

**Attending:** Jason Van Court, Valerie Pottie Bunge, Kim Davies, Nancy Glass, Esther Jenkins, Carolyn Rebecca Block, Jo Ann Della-Giustina

Discussion began with group presenting research focus for discussion

1. Increased risk of intimate partner homicide in households with children who are not the biological child of the abusive partner. Houston data reported having a child in the home that was not the biological child of the murderer was a 4-fold increase in risk for intimate partner homicide, similar finding was reported in the 11-city risk factors for femicide study. Data sets often do not include specifics on family structure — even with the data, household and family structure is complex and is often difficult to figure out.
  - a. An additional issue related to household/family structure included an examination of household density and relationship to poverty and risk for homicide.
  - b. Practice and policy implication — judges in Portland, OR are including assessment of children in the home, including questions related to stepchildren when issuing protective/retraining orders. Safe Haven (Child custody) program in Oregon includes Danger Assessment, lethality assessment that includes stepchild (non-biological child of abusive partner) question.
2. Definition of intimate partner violence is critical in the examination of prevalence, etc. Group was directed to CDC definition for IPV (Saltzman et al., 1998).
3. Examination of estrangement as a risk factor for intimate partner homicide. How long after a woman leaves a relationship is she at increased risk? Do we have evidence that risk decreased over time—is it 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, one year or more that women remain at risk for femicide following estrangement.
  - a. Practice implications — what do we tell women about increased risk in the short-term and long-term when planning to end the relationship?
4. Power and control in lethal and non-lethal violence. What about relationships where there is no history of physical or sexual violence prior to the lethal or non-lethal serious violence?
  - a. Practical implications — important to include history of controlling, jealous partner with threat of violence—these items should be included on lethality assessments.

- b. There are cases where no pattern of physical, sexual, psychological abuse is documented, however rare. Referred to Nicoladis et al., (2003), *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.
- 5. Violence against elderly men and women. Vulnerability of this population with little research on appropriate interventions. Group discussed risk of violence by caregiver, adult children or relatives, as well as intimate partner.
- 6. Concern about homicide-suicide being defined under “exceptional clearance” rather than separate category in NIBRS database.

**LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE: ISSUES IN DATA AND MEASUREMENT**  
**Roundtable Discussion Recorded by**  
**Kim Vogt, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse**

**Moderated by: Tom Petee, Auburn University**

Attending: Dave Etnoyer, Jay Corzine, Jenny Mouzos, Tom Petee, Kim Vogt, Dick Block

There are many problems linking police data with other data. Linking multiple data is a problem because there are no linked identification numbers.

In Chicago, everyone can have access by the web ICAM data on crimes. Citizen ICAM is a "sanitized" CPD database, containing no individual identifiers or specific street addresses, with expanded UCR code data. You can access two weeks of data at a time for the last six months.

Problems with definitions of crimes that differ locally and nationally. Data differences are problematic.

Discussions centered on access to data from police departments and linking this data with other data. Differences in access to data in the U.S. and Australia were discussed. Confidentiality issues, relationships with gatekeepers to data and lack of common or linking identification numbers in various datasets were discussed as significant blocks to using homicide and other crime data.



**LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE: NIBRS  
Roundtable Discussion Recorded by  
Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida**

**Moderated by: Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts Amherst**

The roundtable began with a discussion of the representativeness of NIBRS data. The basic issue for NIBRS data is: What population do NIBRS data represent?

**Lynn Addington** raised the issue of what adjustments are made to NIBRS after the initial investigations.

**James Noonan** noted that changes can be made for up to two years.

**Lynn Addington** commented that they do not seem to be using the updates, and **James Noonan** responded that errors seem to be corrected.

Several aspects of using NIBRS data were mentioned by different participants. These included:

1. When working with a file, a researcher needs to be careful about the selection of a year, e.g., 2002 may contain 2001 cases.
2. There is a problem with generating too many offenders.
3. NIBRS data are better for studying violence against children. **Howard Snyder** has done work in this area.
4. The coding of cases as justifiable homicide reflects the police decision stage only.

It was noted that federal agencies are not participating in NIBRS. Most federal crimes would be classified as 902 (“other”) in NIBRS. Offenses occurring on federal property should be reported.

The question was raised if NIBRS data will be published in the annual *Crime in the United States*. Some type of summary publication on NIBRS would be useful to allow researchers to cross check their own figures.

Another question is whether states and other jurisdictions that drop in and out of NIBRS are dropping out of the UCR reporting system or only out of NIBRS.

The participants agreed that political pressure is needed to convince agencies to participate in NIBRS.



**LINKING DATA TO PRACTICE:  
TERRORISM AND WEAPONS  
Roundtable Discussion Recorded by  
Dallas Drake, Center for Homicide Research**

**Moderated by:** John Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation<sup>1</sup>

**Attending:** Greg Weaver, Mark Foxall, Joseph Riemann, Bill Edison, Jason Van Court, David Kent, Dallas Drake and John Jarvis.

**Introduction by John Jarvis:**

The definitions of terrorism vary with the agency and the function of each particular agency. Basically it includes the instilling of anxiety and fear in a population and includes violence or the threat of violence. Victims are random while the target is not. Census versus sample. Ethnic cleansing is ongoing while terrorism is sporadic. Motives for terrorism are still unclear. For instance the D.C. Sniper was believed to be, in part, directed toward law enforcement. The cause is not always the cause with the real motive not readily being apparent. Splinter groups are most dangerous. Many times terrorism has been successful such as the attack in Spain and their subsequent withdrawal of troops from Iraq. American History X (movie). The real motive is lost similar as in personal relationships. As a weapon, terrorism has some connection with instrumentality.

**Drake:** The use of terrorism might have some relation to the concept of using creativity in crime and what has been previously termed “Carnival of Crime.” Each incident is created to be visual and leave a lasting impression.

**Jarvis:** Terrorism tends to create a sense of hypersensitivity. You cannot be always on your guard. It is also a social phenomenon. It was drugs in the 60s and now terrorism in the 90s. It needs to be hooked up with the paid research agenda. Now it’s obesity in the arena of public health research.

**Jarvis:** Concerning the role of researchers in terrorism, there needs to be an international focus. We need to look at basic premises of criminology. Do they fit or not fit? We also need to analyze the success or failures of the terrorist attacks. We could also research the effects of the Transportation Safety Authority. There are many related issues of data, privacy and public safety.

At this point, there was some general discussion in the group regarding whether or not the success or failures of terror attacks should be published. For instance, pointing out foiled attacks, publishing the amount of funding increases, etc. to show the terrorist that it would be hopeless. Concern was expressed that it may just shift the nature of terror operations.

**Jarvis:** This is also an opportunity to look at criminal networks.

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<sup>1</sup>The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors/participants and do not represent official positions of the Department of Justice nor the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



**Foxall:** It also includes finances including frauds, small sums over the course of time and U.S. involvement in financing overseas.

**Jarvis:** There are lessons to be learned. The question is, are we safer today?

**Van Court:** Money can't prevent all terrorism.

**Kent:** There is no way to ensure it but we are much safer.

**Drake:** Keep in mind that symbolic acts require far fewer incidents. We won't necessarily be evaluating larger numbers of events but events with more impact.

The question was posed as to why there were no suicide bombers in the U.S.

**Foxall:** Iraq and other countries have fewer controls.

**Jarvis:** America rallies well against outside threats.

**Weaver:** Patience of groups is effective.

**Jarvis:** Vigilance requires resources and effort.

**Foxall:** A sustained attack would be difficult in the U.S.

**Jarvis:** Community awareness and cooperation is important.

**Van Court:** Known methods won't be used. The surprise and thus the impact is gone now.

**Jarvis:** Target specification – for example, train tracks. There are thousands of miles of track.

**Foxall:** We need to consider the macro structural issues as well as the micro ones.

**Jarvis:** We need to consider which of the routine activities links should be focused on.

**Riemann:** We should consider the ideology behind the attacks and evaluate reducing conflict via addressing their concerns.

**Van Court:** It might be a matter of perceptions and having two right sides.

**Edison:** Winners get to write the history books.

**Riemann:** South Dakota had a lot of missile silos and there was fear that these would become terrorist targets.

**Jarvis:** But they [terrorists] need to gain exposure through the event. It's a form of conflict management strategy with the example of a contract killing. Terrorism like contract killers,

view it as a version of “self-help.” Negotiation is a conflict management style, but we don’t negotiate with terrorists.

**Van Court:** Feedback might be considered. Not giving in, but addressing or clarifying issues.

**Jarvis:** Absolutism is not useful. We need to at least take in what is being communicated.

**Jarvis:** What can criminologists do? LaFree looks at types.

**Riemann:** The issue is safety. How safe do you feel now?

**Jarvis:** Fear of terrorism is closely connected with element of certainty – like a hurricane.

**Van Court:** Terrorism is a rare act.

**Jarvis:** There are a small number of cases. The opportunity for data is now. It is everything’s turn to be feared. Debate should be informed by empirical data.

**Note:** *The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the participants and do not represent official positions of the Department of Justice or the Federal Bureau of Investigation.*



## **CHAPTER SEVEN: HISTORICAL HOMICIDE**

**Moderator:** Richard Block, Loyola University, Chicago

**Papers:**

Historical Trends in Police Murders, 1947-1998.

Steve Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska and Candice Batton, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha

Modern U.S. Healthcare Serial Killings: An Exploratory Study and Work in Progress.

David R. Kent, Loyola University – New Orleans and Patrick D. Walsh, Loyola University – New Orleans

The Atlanta Ripper: Fact or Fiction?

Vance McLaughlin, University of North Carolina – Pembroke

**Recorder:** Kim Davies, Augusta State University



## **HISTORICAL TRENDS IN POLICE MURDERS, 1947-1998**

**Steve Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha  
and Candice Batton, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha**

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores historical trends in the killing of law enforcement officers in the line of duty in the U.S. from 1947 to 1998. Preliminary analyses of data from the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund show a parabolic or inverted U-shaped distribution of police murder rates that peaks in the early 1970s. Time series analyses indicate a structural break occurring around that time. The goals of this study are to 1) identify the correlates of temporal trends in police murder rates for both periods, and 2) compare and contrast the models that are constructed to gain a better understanding of the factors associated with trends in police murders. The structural break is likely related to changes in the nature of police work that occurred as a result of the 1965 Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement Administration and 1967 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders.

### **INTRODUCTION**

On any given day law enforcement officers are asked to perform a wide range of tasks that can expose them to dangerous persons and situations. While the vast majority of police encounters with the public are peaceful, some incidents result in officers being injured or even killed. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation ([FBI], 2002) reports that 56 law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty in 2002. The risk of violent death is not limited to inexperienced or careless officers in that, of the officers killed in 2002, 42% had more than 10 years of experience and approximately 66% were wearing body armor (FBI, 2002). Neither is the threat of being killed on the job limited to officers working in large metropolitan areas. In 2002 less than half of officers killed in the line of duty were working in cities with populations greater than 10,000 people (FBI, 2002).

Research on historical trends in police murders indicates that the rate of police murder has steadily declined since the early 1970s, from nearly 38 per 100,000 officers in 1971 to about 10 per 100,000 in 1992 (Quinet, Bordua, & Lassiter, 1997). As these authors indicate, the downward trend indicates something more than just a simple drop during this period. Unfortunately, time series research on factors that may influence police murders is limited. Early studies of police homicides focused primarily on cross-sectional data and descriptive statistics (Boylen & Little, 1990; Bristow, 1963; Cardarelli, 1968; Chapman, 1976, 1986; Edwards, 1995; Kobler, 1975; Konstantin, 1984; Little, 1984; Margarita, 1980; Pinizzoto & Davis, 1992; Wilbanks, 1994). Studies incorporating bivariate (Lester, 1978, 1978a, 1984) and multivariate analyses of cross-sectional data soon followed (Bailey & Peterson, 1994; Chamlin, 1989; Fridell & Pate, 1995; Jacobs & Carmichael, 2002). More recently, researchers have focused on trends in the murder of police officers over time by comparing cross-sectional models from contiguous years (Bailey, 1982; Bailey & Peterson, 1987; Peterson & Bailey, 1988) and by analyzing longitudinal and panel data (Brown & Langan, 2001; Lott, 2000; Quinet et al., 1997).

Despite increasingly scholarly interest in historical trends in the murder of police officers, only two studies to date have incorporate econometric time series techniques into their research designs (Kaminski & Marvel, 2002; Southwick, 1998). A likely explanation is that, until recently, a major impediment to time series research existed in the absence of a sufficient span of historical data on police murders. However, Kaminski and Marvell (2002) recently made available annual, national level data on felonious police murders in the U.S. for 1930-1998, obtained from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF). As Kaminski and Marvell (2002) note, these data provide new opportunities for research on historical trends in police murders.

The current study attempts to expand our understanding of police murders in the U.S. by employing econometric and time series regression techniques to study annual national level NLEOMF data for 1947-1998. We examine the impact of a variety of theoretically and historically relevant factors on trends in police murders drawing specifically on social disorganization and social control theories, economic deprivation and strain theories, and deterrence theory. Although Kaminski and Marvell (2002) analyze NLEOMF data for 1930-1998, their analyses are limited in terms of the social and economic factors considered as potential explanatory variables. This is likely at least in part a function of the absence of reliable historical indicators dating back to 1930. By initiating the study period in 1947, the current study is able to examine the impact of a variety of potentially important theoretical and historical variables on trends in police murder over time that have not been previously studied.

## **THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

With the exception of a few studies, (Bailey, 1982; Bailey & Peterson, 1987, 1994; Chamlin, 1989; Jacobs & Carmichael, 2002), the majority of previous research on police murder is atheoretical. Stated differently, many studies in this area do not attempt to develop and test theoretical causes of police killings. Two studies, however, examined the extent to which police murder rates and total murder rates are a function of the same explanatory variables (Kaminski & Marvel, 2002; Peterson & Bailey, 1988). Nevertheless, such an approach does not involve any systematic application of criminological theory to the topic. To date, no study has used an econometric time series design to test specific theories that can explain the causes of felonious police murders. In this study, we approach this topic by drawing on three prominent criminological perspectives and consider their implications for studying historical trends in police murder and its correlates. In the following, we discuss the different theoretical perspectives used in this study.

### **Economic Deprivation and Strain Theories**

Economic deprivation/strain posits that limited economic opportunities lead to levels of absolute and relative deprivation, which in turn produce frustration and anger that are ultimately manifested in violent behavior (Merton, 1938). Absolute deprivation refers to the lack of material goods necessary for the survival and minimum well-being, which produces strain and frustration that leads to violent behavior. Relative deprivation, on the other hand, occurs when people make a comparison between their living standards and those who have higher incomes and more material goods. Anger and frustration often results from inequality, which can be manifested in violent behavior (Vold, Benard, & Snipes, 2002).

Because the police are the most visible representatives of a deprived system, homicides rates should increase when economic opportunities are limited (Jacobs & Carmichael, 2002).

### **Social Disorganization and Control Perspectives**

Social disorganization and social control theories emphasize the importance of social structures and institutions that facilitate the establishment and maintenance of strong social and emotional bonds between individuals as these bonds are important for social control mechanisms. These perspectives account for social structures, relationships, or acts that contribute to social order (Liska, 1992). Breakdowns in these mechanisms impede the development of social bonds and group solidarity, leaving people free to commit crime (Bursik, 1988). Applying this theory to the police, we expect murder rates to be associated with breakdowns in social institutions.

### **Deterrence Perspective**

Deterrence rests on a model of human choice based on the calculation of costs and benefits whereby people compare the benefits obtained from criminal behavior with costs associated with punishment (Vold et al., 2002). Criminal behavior is deterred when benefits outweigh punishment. Conversely, criminal behavior is more likely if the certainty, celerity, and severity of punishment are not severe enough to outweigh the benefits of a crime. Because the possibility of arrest, prison, and execution are intended to discourage violent behavior, these rates should be inversely associated with police homicide rates. Also, high crime rates indicate gains outweigh punishment and should be associated with high police homicide rates. The police may be at a greater risk when crime rates are high.

## **DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

As reported in table 1, we utilized national level data from numerous sources to test the causes of police murders over time. Because this study utilizes national data rather than state, county, or city levels social disorganization might have been obscured by such a high level of aggregation. While this loss of information is unfortunate, because police homicides are a rare event, time series analyses from these lower levels are not feasible. Although such limitations should be acknowledged, we feel valuable insights into the causes of police homicides can be gained in this study.

### **Variables**

The endogenous variable, police murder rates, was operationalized per 100,000 individuals in the U.S. population. Data for the number of officers murdered came from NLEOMF as compiled by Kaminski and Marvell (2002). These data include felonious line-of-duty deaths of full-time, part-time, and volunteer law enforcement officers with arrest power in the United States. Federal, state, local, and noncombatant military police officers are also included in the data.

The effects of several social structural and economic factors on police murder rates were examined. Multiple indicators of social disorganization/control, economic deprivation/



strain perspective and deterrence perspectives were included in the analyses. Additionally, several control variables that may influence police homicide rates were used, including percent aged 15-24, percent aged 25-34, hospital rates and a dummy variable indicating years the U.S. was involved in a foreign war.

## **Analytical Approach**

To explore the correlates of police murders, we employ econometric time series regression techniques. We begin with a series of univariate tests geared toward assessing stationarity. Stationarity is problematic in time series analyses because spurious relationships, which occur if variables trend together over time, may be mistakenly identified as causal (Gujarati, 1995). As is common in studies of time series data, several of our variables were found to be nonstationary.

The usual remedy for nonstationarity is differencing the data. However, this can be problematic as it changes the nature of the data, which has implications for hypothesis testing (Greenberg, 2001). Data that have been differenced no longer embody historical trends; instead, the data now represent annual fluctuations (Jensen, 1997). When differenced data are used to test theories of long-term historical change, it is not surprising that the original theory is often disconfirmed. Often over-looked is that the theory has been disconfirmed by procedures that remove or adjust most of the history of the phenomenon to be explained (Batton & Jensen, 2002; Jensen, 2000). Furthermore, when removing unit roots by differencing, all variables in the model must be differenced, which in effect creates nonstationarity in variables not characterized by unit roots in levels (Cromwell, Labys, & Terraza, 1994).

To address problems associated with nonstationarity, we took several approaches. First, analyses were initially performed on level measures with the goal of modeling the effects of trends and eliminating autocorrelated error terms through the inclusion of theoretically and historically relevant variables. By inspecting the residuals plot and thinking more deeply about history and theory, potential missing variables can often be discerned because the spans of time in which the dependent variable is consistently under- or over-estimated become apparent (Jensen, 2000).

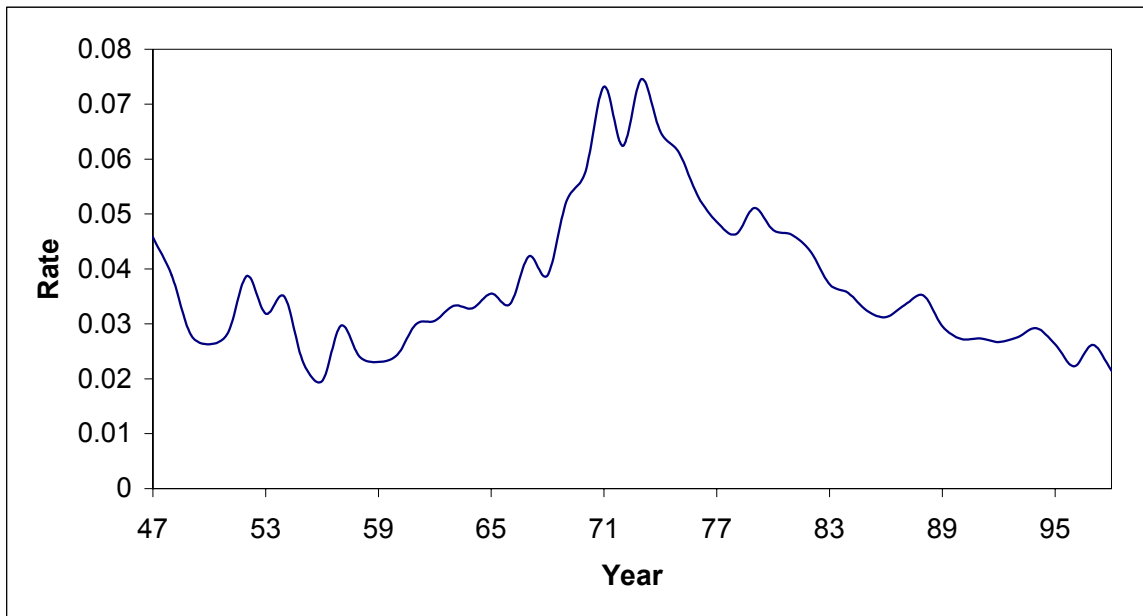
We also analyzed differenced data to be consistent with convention. The differenced data were also logged to stabilize the variance of the series over time, an approach consistent with previous research (Cantor & Land, 1985; Devine, Sheley, & Smith, 1988). By comparing and contrasting the findings from both the levels and logged, differenced models, we attempt to overcome the limitations associated with looking at only one or the other type of model. While we cannot totally discount individual findings derived from either approach, results that are consistent across both levels and differenced models are likely more reliable than those significant in only one model.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In preliminary analyses, police killing rates were plotted over time to identify trends and historical periods. As Figure 1 shows, police homicide rates have two distinct time periods, from 1947 to the early 1970s and from the early 1970s to 1997. Specifically, with

the exception of a few time points, police killing rates were dropping in 1947 when this series begins and continued to drop until 1959. After 1959, rates increased exponentially, reaching an apex in the early 1971 and two years later in 1973. After the peak, police murder rates dropped again, and were still dropping in 1998 when this series ends. Figure 1 also shows that in 1973 police officers were being killed at a rate almost three times more than they were in 1956.

**Figure 1: Rates of Police Homicides per 100,000 Persons in the U.S., 1947-1998.**



To explore these periods further, the data were further divided the data into two periods, from 1947 to 1971 and from 1972 to 1998, so that we could compare and contrast the regression results between the periods. This technique borrows from a historical sociological approach whereby econometric OLS analyses would test whether factors associated with homicides rates are historically constant or temporally variant across time periods (Aminzade, 1992; Batton & Jensen, 2002; Griffin, 1992; Isaac & Leicht, 1997).

Table 1 shows the time series regression results for both time periods and across both the levels and logged differenced measures. Only variables significant in the final models were included in the table. The results indicate that two distinct time periods exist in the history of police murders. While some factors are significant predictors of police murders in both the earlier and latter period, others were only significant in one model or the other. Considering evidence of historically distinct factors first, consistent with the economic strain/deprivation perspective, we found increased levels of inflation were associated with increased police killings from 1947 to 1971, but were not significant from 1972 to 1998. Several indicators of deterrence also exhibited temporal variation across time. Increased levels of incarceration, for example, were associated with reduced rates of police killings in the former period, but not the latter period. Analyses also found evidence

that increased murder rates were associated with increased police killings, but only in the later period.

**Table 1.**  
**Least squares model predicting police murder rates in the U.S. for 1947-1998, based on both level ( $Y_t$ ) and logged, differenced ( $\log Y_{t-1}$ ) measures.**

	1947-1971		1972-1998	
	$Y_t$	$\log(Y_{t-1})$	$Y_t$	$\log(Y_{t-1})$
<b>Constant</b>	-.376***	-0.063	-.273***	-0.027
<b>Economic Deprivation/Strain</b>				
Public Assistance			-.544**	
Gini Index (-1)		5.661***	.238***	2.004*
Unemployment	.811***	11.826***	.442**	
Inflation	.006***	3.910**		
<b>Deterrence</b>				
Murder Rate			.004***	.377** <sup>a</sup>
Executions (-1)	.351***			--
Incarceration (-1)	-.054***	-2.207**		
<b>Controls</b>				
Cirrhosis		1.647***	.004**	1.381***
<b>MA(1)</b>				-0.997**
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.912	0.686	0.96	0.615
<b>Durbin Watson <i>d</i></b>	2.189	2.279	2.111	2.536
<b>Breusch-Godfrey LM test (3 lags)</b>				
<b>F Values</b>	.23	1.18	.12	.98
<b>Obs*R<sup>2</sup></b>	1.01	4.46	.36	2.50
<b>Q-Statistics</b>	Okay	Okay	Okay	Okay
<b>N</b>	24	23	27	27

\* Significant at .05

\*\* Significant at .01

\*\*\* Significant at .001

<sup>a</sup> Lagged one year

The results also indicate the effects of some factors are temporally invariant. Consistent with economic deprivation/strain perspectives, increased levels of unemployment and inequality (i.e., Gini index) were associated with police murder rates. A positive association between cirrhosis death rates and police murders was also discerned. While measures of alcohol consumption have not been utilized in past studies of police homicide, cirrhosis death rates have been used in studies of homicide and murder rates in general as

a proxy measure of alcohol consumption (Batton & Jensen, 2002; Jensen, 2000). It is argued that alcohol consumption has a disinhibiting effect that tends to undermine social norms (Fagan, 1990; Parker & Rebhun, 1995).

The social disorganization perspective was not supported in this study. This result might be due, at least in part, because we used national level data. Because this study does not utilize state, county, or city levels data; factors associated with social disorganization, which are more prevalent in urban areas, may have been lost in the national aggregation.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The current study employed econometric regression techniques to study historical trends in police murders from 1947-1998. Drawing on economic deprivation/strain, social disorganization and control, and deterrence perspectives, we examined the impact of a variety of theoretically and historically relevant factors on trends in police murders. Our findings add to the knowledge base of police murders in three important ways: 1) two distinct historical periods were identified (i.e., 1947-1971, 1972-1998), 2) support for strain/economic deprivation theories exists across historical periods, and 3) support for deterrence theories exists in the earlier period.

Two potential explanations for the drop in police homicide rates that began around 1970 have been discussed in the literature. The first observes that advances in police training, technology (e.g., bullet-proof vests), and better community relations have occurred as a response to criticism of the police made by the 1965 President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice and the 1967 National Advisory Commission on Civil disorders. These advances can be traced to the birth of Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) when the federal government began to assume the responsibility improving law enforcement (Seaskate, 1998; Wadman & Allison, 2004). The number of police killings may have dropped as a function of officers becoming better prepared to face dangerous situations in the latter period than the earlier period (Brown & Langan, 2001; Quinet et al., 1997). A second explanation for the decline in police murder rates over time is that there has been a reduction in the number of police/community violent encounters (Quinet et al., 1997). It is also possible that the impact of factors that cause deadly confrontations between citizens and the police have declined over time. While these explanations are feasible, data are not available that would allow explicit tests of these theories.

Another important discovery made by this study is that economic strain/deprivation perspectives appear to be the most consistent predictors of police homicides. Adverse economic conditions are likely to generate anger and frustration, which in turn is translated into violent and aggressive behavior. As Jacobs and Carmichael (2002) note, it is possible that the frustration and anger associated with not looking for work and inequality ultimately manifest themselves in violent behavior toward the most visible representatives of the "system" the police.

Third, support for deterrence theory was found for the earlier period, but not the latter. More specifically, incarceration and execution rates were found to be linked with

police murder rates in the earlier period, but not the later period. Furthermore, it is quite possible that the association between general and police murders found in the second period is a byproduct of the lack of a deterrence effect in the later period. The finding of a historically variant effect is important and deserves additional research, especially given the exponential increase in incarceration rates associated with the war on drugs that has occurred since the 1980s. It is possible that there may be some type of tipping point concerning the fear of incarceration. Because so many people were incarcerated in the later period, potential police killers may have been less deterred as prison time became normalized in the criminal population.

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## **MODERN U.S. HEALTHCARE SERIAL KILLINGS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY AND WORK IN PROGRESS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This work-in-progress reviews the literature, legal proceedings and news-article content relating to thirty-seven, U.S. healthcare serial killers during the past forty years. The descriptive analysis summarizes an in-depth examination of the nature and extent of healthcare patient serial homicide committed by clinical personnel. It includes an analysis of characteristics for offenders, victims and offenses committed against patients by medical staff in healthcare settings. Prior documentation on this category of serial murder has been comparatively limited to journalistic reports, despite the present climate of relentless malpractice and civil liability faced by healers. The research will introduce a renewed focus on high-volume, fixed-location, repeat victimizations by female perpetrators who have all but evaded serious medical and/or criminological study. Offending patterns and recurring motives lend an appearance of easy solvability that has proven to be far more elusive than ever anticipated. Owing to institutional obstruction and cover-ups, a few doctors, nurses and therapists have persistently avoided detection and were able to repeat their killings, some for decades. A lack of faith and the absence of full cooperation between death investigators, healers and hospital administrators surfaced throughout this study and served to seriously impair investigative success in a number of cases. While it has been fairly easy thus far to assign cause and effect circumstances, attempts to explain the why and wherefore of such bizarre and pernicious occurrences required the use of descriptors such as “recreational” and “incidental” murders.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Thirty-seven serial-killer clinicians were identified for this study, which excluded common mercy killers, including Dr. Jack Kevorkian, as well as numerous of patient-murderers with less than three known completed offenses. Targeted victims involved very young and very old patients. One or more homicidal healers worked and murdered patients at six different US Veterans Administration (VA) Hospitals. It was common for older victims to fall through the cracks of our death investigation and reporting systems, mainly because all of these healthcare victimizations were initially recorded as “natural” deaths, primarily because they occurred in a hospital and/or under the active care of a physician.

#### **Issues Not Involved in Study**

Euthanasia - Malpractice - Treatment Misadventures - Natural Deaths

#### **Common Euphemisms**

Angels of Mercy - Involuntary Euthanasia - Terminal Sedation

## OFFENDING CLINICIANS

Modern medicalized murderers were found to be four doctors, two dentists, eighteen nurses, three respiratory therapists and five nurses' aides. All known offenders were white, with slightly more males (19) than females (17).

**Table 1. Offender characteristics or 37 killer clinicians**

<b>Clinician</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Physician</b>	4			4
<b>Dentist</b>	2			2
<b>Nurse</b>	7	11		18
<b>Therapist</b>	2	1		3
<b>Aide</b>	3	2		5
<b>Unknown</b>	1	3	1	5
<b>Total</b>	19	17	1	37

## DATA ANALYSIS

Several recent cases were brought to light purely through analytical examination of historical mortality figures that identified the exact shift and precise department where the abnormally high patient-deaths were occurring (Yorker, 1994). Since hospitals no longer routinely perform autopsies, the only method of raising legitimate suspicion was by the linkage between the out of proportion mortality data that clustered by ward and time of day. Rate ratios and relative risk appraisals have been employed to ascertain the frequencies at which patients seized while the various nursing complements were on duty, compared to when each worker was off duty.

### Attributes of an Epidemic

Time - Place - Agent - Person - Transmission Mode

In one southern US Air Force base hospital 32 infants barely survived near-lethal Lidocaine attacks that left each with neurological damage. Top military brass never invited the CDC or FBI to assist them and ultimately allowed the enlisted technician off the hook, despite having to pay \$ 27 million in injury claims (Weaver, 1997). The local US Attorney vigorously defended the US interests, including prescription motions that disallowed claims by the parents of other victims. In spite of the insidious lack of official cooperation by some hospital administrators, federal epidemiologists from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were usually successful in identifying the cause of a mysterious epidemic as having resulted from the intentional acts of a staff caregiver (Sacks et al., 1988).

## INDEX OF SUSPICION

When withheld care, smothering or disconnected equipment is involved, it is impossible to establish an element of proof without witnesses. Additionally, there is no evidence

to be found in cremated remains. Few crime laboratories can run the variety of tests necessary to screen for all those potentially toxic substances that are readily available to healthcare workers. Without informants or whistleblowers, successful prosecutions can be highly expensive and very difficult to obtain.

## **SUSPICIOUS DEATHS**

Once the mortality figures indicate an inordinately elevated death incidence, epidemiologists begin looking for the source and cause of the trouble. The first indicator is usually a suspicious cluster of patient deaths that can be associated with one particular shift. Elderly patients with DNR chart entries and those experiencing multiple Codes are generally at elevated risk. In a few cases studied, the average monthly mortality may have been about 2.5 deaths by unit, yet administrators and front-line managers were reluctant to cry out when the monthly average jumped between 10 - 15 ICU deaths. One professional nurse reported that many colleagues only witness two or three patient deaths in treatment over a twenty-year career.

### **Caregiver Serial Homicides**

In all cases found, clinicians were believed to have intentionally inflicted life-threatening distress upon their victim patients. Every situation, however, was not for the purpose of causing death. Inferred or acknowledged motives included monetary, workload reduction, sexual excitement, retaliation, power and control, peer recognition and advocacy expression. Factitious disorder symptoms of Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy were common in novice and lower-volume offenders, many of whom were responsible for multiple incidental deaths resulting from failed resuscitations. Patients were used for recreational and experimental purposes in some cases. Patients were occasionally killed just so the offending caregiver could get off early, as they didn't have anyone to attend.

**Suspicious Death Clusters \*** Patient has DNR - Patient Recovering - Patient Not Terminal

- \* Patient Subject to Multiple Codes Blue
- \* Patient Expired Within Subject's Shift or 1 Hour After Getting Off
- \* Patient Demise Inconsistent with Treatment Course

### **Case Notes**

Michigan – 35 patients stopped breathing on 51 occasions in 6 weeks, with 3 in 15 minutes.

Indiana – 67 deaths in 5 month period; one death for every 23.1 hours the suspect worked; patients 49.2 times more likely to perish when suspect on duty. Other shift personnel would place wagers on which patient was most likely to die.

Massachusetts – 63 suspicious deaths on one ward in 4 months.

Ohio – MD killed 19-year-old female auto accident victim in ER with minor foot injury. He confessed 12 years later, but not in time to save the vehicle's college-age driver from a prison sentence for vehicular homicide.

Maryland – caregiver in 57 of 144 cardiac arrests at hospital; patients on her shift 47.5 times more likely to suffer cardio-pulmonary arrest and 100 times more likely if on 11 pm - 7 am shift.

Alabama/Georgia – co-worker testified that suspect never had a shift in which no patient “coded.”

Florida – 12 patient deaths in 13 days, with 5 in one day.

Ohio – 41 suspicious deaths in 8 month period, 2 in one day within 37 minutes of each other, while a third victim survived.

California – 60 suspicious deaths; 12 in 13 day period, 5 on one day.

New Jersey – 3 young female patients died from nitrous oxide, 2 in 6 days.

Michigan – doctor with 25 medical board complaints murdered 3 female patients and two women office employees.

## REGIONAL OFFENDING EXPERIENCES

**Table 2. Geographical dispersion of clinical killers**

### GEOGRAPH

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid northeast	5	13.5	13.5	13.5
midwest	11	29.7	29.7	43.2
south	15	40.5	40.5	83.8
west	6	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total	37	100.0	100.0	

**Table 3. Regional victimization by volume range of decedents**

### FATALVOL \* GEOGRAPH Crosstabulation

Count		GEOGRAPH				Total
		northeast	midwest	south	west	
FATALVOL	3-9	3	6	6	2	17
	10-29			4	2	6
	30-59	2	4	2	1	9
	60-99			1		1
	100+		1	2	1	4
Total		5	11	15	6	37

## VICTIMIZATION ESTIMATES

At this early stage, the calculus of healthcare killing volume is tied to two estimated ranges and one known discrete figure. The known number is based on the actual figure that perpetrators have been convicted of, or plead guilty to killing. The first and largest number is reached from the highest figure that investigators and prosecutors have jointly identified as “suspicious deaths” upon initiating their investigations. The next, or middle-number, comes from an estimate of potential, prosecutable cases where reasonable grounds and probable cause exist in sufficient weight to secure an indictment and conviction.

No high-volume medical murderer has ever been prosecuted for triple-digit killings, primarily because of the expense and time considerations. What usually happens is that about a half dozen or so charges are instituted and a smaller number are held over the offender’s head, so to speak. These are saved until the prior complaints are adjudicated, just in case of unfavorable appellate verdicts, mistrials and acquittals.

The estimated homicide volume by category at this writing is:

- Total Suspicious Deaths — 2,659
- Probable Prosecutable Files — 489
- Actually Closed by Conviction — 112

A comparative offending magnitude between some better-known conventional serial killers with the most prolific medical murderers reveal a fairly large difference by number of their suspected victims.

<b>Serialist</b>	<b>Victims</b>	<b>Clinician</b>	<b>Convictions</b>	<b>Suspected</b>
Stano	41	Saldivar	6	1050
Gacy	33	Cullen	13	450
Kennedy	28	Shipman	15	425
Corll	27	Majors	6	166
Corona	25	Akin	1	150
Bundy	23	Harvey	37	105
DeSalvo	13	Diaz	12	60
Kemper, III	10	Swango	3	60

**Table 4. Status of individual prosecutions of clinical offenders, June 1, 2004.**

Pled Guilty	11
Found Guilty	9
Not Prosecuted/Case Refused	3
Found Not guilty	7
Not Prosecuted/Dismissed	2
Open	2
Unknown	3
Total	37

## **TOXIC SUBSTANCES**

Some of the most common substances relied upon by bedside killers involved the same three pharmaceuticals deployed on death row with well-publicized efficiency:

- (1) Potassium Chloride (KCL);
- (2) Pavulon (pancuronium bromide); and
- (3) Sodium Pentothol.

## **OFFICIAL COVER-UPS**

Following completed cases, investigators sometimes announced how friends, co-workers and/or spouses often had prior knowledge of deliberate patient deaths. This knowledge by work associates was scary, as indicated by wagering on which patient would next fall victim to the "Magic Syringe", "Killer Joe" or "OO Swango." Foreknowledge was found among ward nurses, therapists, medical students, boy and girlfriends, security departments and administrators.

A few offenders were fired or encouraged to resign during internal investigations. In one case a Texas public hospital shredded 9,000 pounds of pharmacy records after receiving a grand-jury subpoena for those documents. The absence of interagency cooperation clearly raised the difficulty variables encountered by death investigators conducting hospital inquiries.

## **CURTAILED INVESTIGATIONS**

While most other serial killer investigations receive full cooperation from federal, state and local agencies, caregiver associated offender cases regularly encounter frustrating levels of obfuscation, disinterest, obstruction, concealment and denial. This was particularly true in government institutions, where near insurmountable levels of friction between the FBI and Inspectors General added confusion and interminable delays such that dozens of murder cases prescribed prior to completion of the investigation. One Missouri VA hospital case exceeded ten years and it literally took Congressional intervention to allow state authorities to intervene after Federal criminal jurisdiction lapsed.

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Both the total number of cases and those with the highest victim counts were found in the South. The strongest victimization numbers were seen on the 11 pm - 7 am shifts. Some of the more obvious cases revolved around the ICU's, but more research is needed to identify prevalence in specific units within the various hospital pavilions. Early indications suggest that the average age of victims decreased with some perpetrators as their volume numbers of patient killings increased. More research is indicated in the victimology domain.

Hospitals and nursing homes were most vulnerable to multiple patient victimizations, but two physician and two dental offices also emerged from the occurrence location analysis. Migratory offenders accumulate substantially larger victim counts than those who remain in one area or work in just a few different facilities. A slight bias was seen towards male offenders.

## COUNTERMEASURES

The completed study is expected to generate a comprehensive deterrence program, but a few countermeasures have become obvious at this point of the research:

- (1) applicant screening;
- (2) better pharmaceutical accounting;
- (3) pattern-analysis software programmed for Code Blue, DNR and age-related mortality;
- (4) random forensic autopsies;
- (5) death-review team conferences in under/over age parameters, and
- (6) confidential anonymous ethics hotlines.

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## **THE ATLANTA RIPPER: FACT OR FICTION?** **Vance McLaughlin, University of North Carolina – Pembroke**

### **INTRODUCTION**

On May 12, 1912, the *New York Times* carried the following story:

ATLANTA, Ga., May 11

“Jack the Ripper” claimed his twentieth woman victim in Atlanta some time last night. Like the other nineteen victims he has slain in the last nine month (sic), she was a comely yellow girl and has not yet been identified.

Her body was found this morning by a party of laborers in a secluded alley. The clothing had been removed and was piled nearby. Death was caused by two stabs in the neck, one of which cut the jugular vein. After these fatal stabs the ripper, as in the case of the other nineteen girls, made other cuts on the body

So far the detectives have been unable to find a clue to the slayer. The negroes, who are in a state of terror and try to keep their women off the street at night, have offered a large reward for the arrest of the murderer (“Another ripper”, 1912, p. 6).

Based on the above story, it would seem that Atlanta had its own Jack the Ripper. Jack the Ripper was a serial murderer who killed five white female prostitutes in London from August 31<sup>st</sup> to November 9<sup>th</sup> in 1888.

Serial murders create fear, but they also fascinate. A murderer continuing to stalk a specific type of victim and killing him/her until he/she quits or is caught is a great story for the media. The cliché that if “it bleeds, it leads” is especially true when a “lone wolf” is out among the “sheep”. In contrast to the fascination and excitement, criminologists examine crime methodically and attempt to generate “light” instead of “heat”.

The phenomenon of the Atlanta Ripper has received scant attention for a number of reasons. First, it occurred almost one hundred years ago and the passage of time always leads to the loss of important data. Second, information that would be vital today when investigating a serial murder was not considered relevant at the turn of the twentieth century, and therefore this data was not gathered and recorded. Third, the murderer was never positively identified. This lack of closure is problematic because the psychological dissection of the killer after capture provides a clearer understanding of motive and methods.

### **POSSIBLE VICTIMS OF THE ATLANTA RIPPER**

Preliminary research suggests that the following list are possible victims of the Atlanta Ripper. All of the victims were Black females. The date attributed to the homicide was probably accurate, even though sometimes the body was not discovered for days, and methods of determining time of death were less accurate than they are today.

Victim	Cause of Death	Date
1. Maggie Brooks	unknown	September 4, 1910
2. Rosa Trice	skull fractured, throat cut, jaw stabbed	January 22, 1911
3. Unknown	skull fractured	February 18, 1911
4. Mary Walker	throat jaggedly cut	May 27, 1911
5. Addie Watts	skull fractured, throat cut	June 15, 1911
6. Lizzie Watkins	throat cut	June 24, 1911
7. Lena Sharpe	skull fractured, throat cut	July 1, 1911
8. Sadie Holley	skull fractured, throat cut	July 10, 1911
9. Eva Green	skull fractured, throat cut	October 21, 1911
10. Minnie Wise	skull fractured, throat cut	November 10, 1911
11. Mary Putnam	slashed throat, breast, heart beside her	November 21, 1911

### Were These Crimes the Work of a Serial Murderer?

The term serial killer was unknown at this time. Journalists and police tried to explain the murders in a variety of ways. First, some felt it was the same person who was killing all of the victims. Second, a murder could be referred to as a “Ripper type crime”, which meant the victim was a Black female and had been killed with a knife. Third, the “Atlanta Ripper” could have killed some of the victims, but not all of them. These different paradigms affected how different newspapers counted the number of victims and how detectives investigated the crimes.

There are two difficulties that arise when trying to identify the murders that a serial killer has committed. The first problem is to discover when the first murder occurred. It is possible that the killer has committed prior murders in geographical area that is outside the interest of the law enforcement agency investigating the current murder. It is also possible to have a series of murders in one relatively small geographic area and still have difficulty in pinpointing the first. The time between murders can vary and lag times can exist.

The second problem is attributing murders in the series examined as ones that can be attributed to the serial killer. It is possible that other criminals committed these crimes. Two examples of this are the copycat who starts to commit the same type of murder and the victim who happens to fit the profile by accident or design.

### Explanations Offered at the Time of the Murders

The first suggestion in an Atlanta newspaper that a serial murderer may be responsible for the murders of black women occurred on June 16, 1911. The *Atlanta Journal* reported that unidentified police believed certain homicides could be attributed to an insane killer like Jack the Ripper (“Another Negress,” 1911). On June 26, the newspaper reinforced this viewpoint and pointed out that the “most insignificant” of clues were not found by the Atlanta police (“Is a,” 1911). Detectives said that Lena Sharpe and Addie Watts were killed in exactly the same manner (“Two more,” 1911). On July 11<sup>th</sup>, the *Atlanta Journal* reported:

Every movement in the crime of Monday evening corresponds to moves in the series of Saturday night crimes. For seven consecutive Saturdays a Negro woman was murdered by an unknown maniac. In every instance the Negress was knocked in the head with a blunt instrument, twice found to be large rocks and then the bodies were dragged from the roadway where the women's throats were cut, all in the same manner. Their throats having been cut the bodies were always dragged a bit further and carelessly thrown out of sight of the scene of the first blow. The series of crimes was broken on last Saturday night, principally through the terror into the terror into which the Negro women have been thrown by the maniac's work ("Eighth victim," 1911, p. 2).

During the trial of a black man in Atlanta on July 18, 1911, the defendant Jim Murphey was convicted of threatening to slit his wife's throat. The judge, N.R. Browles said "There are a thousand Negroes in Atlanta ready to cut a woman's throat in any moment of jealous passion." Browles did not believe that there was one man who was the Ripper ("The 'ripper'," 1911). The Fulton County Police arrested Ed Ward on July 21, 1911 for the murder of Sophie Jackson. She had been killed a few weeks earlier a Saturday and some had felt she was the latest Ripper victim. Ward had cut her throat but had no connection with the other murders. The Fulton County Police had operated under their theory that there was no Ripper because they felt that the murders did not have the "attendant circumstances" of real Ripper crimes ("Another ripper is," 1911). A woman, Katie Cochran, planned to murder Mattie Alexander. Alexander had been dating Cochran's husband. Cochran, who was tall, dressed in a black suit, a large Stetson hat, and put a handkerchief around her neck, in an attempt to match the Ripper's description. She then put a straight razor in her pocket and went to Alexander's address. She planned to slit Alexander's throat and drag her body into some bushes. She was unable to convince Alexander to leave home and ended up confiding her plan to two other women. One of them turned her in and she was given a thirty day sentence on July 25, 1911 ("Dressed as," 1911; "'Mary the," 1911).

When Lizzie Watts was killed, the *Atlanta Constitution* had attributed it to cocaine and whiskey ("Negro woman is found with," 1911). On July 16, 1911, Reverend H.H. Proctor, preached to his congregation at the Black First Congregational Church. His sermon was titled, "Hand of God as seen in work of the Ripper". After reading the names of the seventeen Negro women murdered in the in the past two years and supporting Prohibition and the general fight against lawlessness, he said:

"But this bloody hand points to the sins of the colored people themselves. Our churches are doing good work, but they are not doing enough. They do not sufficiently relate their efforts to actual life. They have been getting people ready to die when they should have been preparing them to live. The best preparation for the next world is to live right in this. Our churches are not progressive enough. Shut up six days a week, the people pass by them on to the places prepared for them. The places for evil are never shut." ("Hand of," 1911, p. 7).

On November 28, 1911, Sheriff Plennie Minor was at the courthouse for the Huff trial. He suggested that he felt that jealous negro women were responsible for the murders instead of men. The police officers and detectives laughed at this theory and accused Minor of being inebriated ("Negro's trial", 1911).

On November 15, 1911, the *Atlanta Constitution* reported that Harlee Branch, the Mayor's secretary had written a letter to a detective agency who had offered help in solving the Atlanta murders. Branch said that the number of killings had been greatly exaggerated by certain publications and that the 200 police and 15 detectives were more than ample to protect Atlanta ("Murder stories," 1911).

In a sermon given by Reverend H.H. Proctor on December 12, 1911, he was going to suggest that there was not one "ripper" but the murders were the result of a crime wave. He was going to suggest that Black detectives were needed to capture the murderers ("Proctor has", 1911).

Another problem seems to be that the police did not accord much interest to the murder of a Black ("Black "Jack," 1911). This may have meant that the initial crime that may have been committed by the Ripper was never really investigated and that after the Ripper scare wore off, subsequent murders of Black women were again relegated to minor interest by the police. A series of robberies in which Whites were the usual victims was of major concern. As the *Atlanta Constitution* reported:

The White people of the community, indignant over the robberies which have been of so frequent occurrence, and aroused as well over the murders which has intensified the servant problem ... ("Reign of," 1911, p.14).

## CONCLUSION

Why is Jack so well known and the Atlanta Ripper has been lost to time? There were four major differences between Jack and the Atlanta Ripper. First, each of the five murders were perpetrated by only Jack the Ripper. There seems to be no question that the same person did them. Second, the fact that all the women had the same occupation of prostitute and their internal and sexual organs were mutilated seemed to titillate public interest. Third, letters attributed to this murderer were sent to the police and published in the London newspapers. He called himself Jack the Ripper and taunted the police for their ineptness. Fourth, much of the original material, including information gathered by the police and letters were saved.

Concomitantly, there was a touch of apathy on the part of the white community, including the police, in Atlanta because the victims were Black females. This is not to say that anyone supported the murders of these women or that they didn't try to solve the case. The murder of a Black woman has traditionally excited less interest in the United States as compared to Whites. An example of this double standard for newsworthiness can be illustrated by the bizarre case of Mrs. Daisy Elizabeth Grace. The couple was White and had some sort of altercation in which Mr. Grace was shot. He did not die and testified that she shot him and she said that he accidentally shot himself. This case became a cause celebre in Atlanta. In just two ("Here is", 1912, "Grace Case", 1912) of the many

stories written about the incident in the *Atlanta Journal*, more newspaper space was given to this assault than to all the alleged murders of the Atlanta Ripper.

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Black "Jack the Ripper" slays another Negress (1911, July 2). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 7.

Dressed as "Jack the Ripper" woman with a razor, seeking vengeance, terrorizes Negroes (1911, July 25). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 3.

Eighth victim is claimed by bloody "Jack the Ripper" (1911, July 11). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 2.

Grace case gone to the jury (1912, August 2). *Atlanta Journal*, p.1.

"Hand of God seen in work of the ripper" (1911, July 17). *Atlanta Constitution*, p. 7.

Here is Mrs. Grace's own story of the shooting, as told to the jury (1912, August 1). *Atlanta Journal*, pp. 1-3.

Is a black "Jack the Ripper" slaying Negro women here? (1911, June 26). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 1.

Jack the Ripper caught at last, say detectives (1912, August 10). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 1.

"Mary the Ripper" has Jack beaten to a fare-ye-well (1911, July 18). *Atlanta Constitution*, p. 1.

Murder stories are greatly exaggerated (1911, November 15). *Atlanta Constitution*, p. 11.

Negro woman is found with her throat cut (1911, June 26). *Atlanta Constitution*, p. 5.

Negro's trial begins on 'Jack the Ripper' charge (1911, November 28). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 7.

Proctor has solution to "ripper" question (1911, December 12). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 11-12.

Reign of crime grips Atlanta (1911, July 12). *Atlanta Constitution*, p. 1, 14.

The "ripper" theory is scouted by recorder (1911, July 18). *Atlanta Journal*, p. 13.

Two more victims of Negro fiend (1911, July 12). *Atlanta Constitution*, p. 1-2.



**DISCUSSION: HISTORICAL HOMICIDE**  
**Recorded by Kim Davies, Augusta State University**

**“Police Homicides” by Wilson and Batton**

**Roger Trent:** Why do you use U.S. population and not the number of police as the denominator in your dependent variable?

**Steve Wilson:** The number of police was not always available and the U.S. population and police population are correlated when measured on a national level.

**Roland Chilton:** Why was rate of police homicide so high in the 1971-72 period?

**Steve Wilson:** From a theoretical point of view, economic deprivation was strong at this time and in the sixties there was a lot of turmoil in the U.S. as well as changes in Law Enforcement after 1968.

**Becky Block:** I’m very impressed with the stationarity attention because looking at the trend is what is interesting and what you are looking at. However, the relationship is not illustrated well with a chart. I would like to see time series analyses data – graphs of time series and it would be good to see this broken down by parts of the country.

**Steve Wilson:** One of the weaknesses in the data is that it can’t be broken down lower than the national level or we might see more deterrence.

**Becky Block:** Does it trend with UCR data?

**Steve Wilson:** Yes but it doesn’t go back as far.

**Becky Block:** Plus it would be good to have some qualitative stuff, such as police training, in the paper.

**Candace Batton:** We do have some now in the paper.

**Kim Vogt:** Maybe there is some quantifiable data on money for training that may not go back as far but could be looked at as well.

**Valerie Pottie Bunge:** Why the time split?

**Steve Wilson:** Because police organization in the U.S. really changed in 1968. LEAA created in 1969, so changes in policing suggest two different periods falling into pre and post commission period.

**Candace Batton:** If you do know of other indicators that reflect changes in policing, we would like to hear about them.

**Tom Petee:** On an individual case basis – the experience of police officers may factor in but not sure how you would measure this.



**Mark Foxall:** What does crime overlay look like on these?

**Steve Wilson:** Depends on the crime.

**Roland Chilton:** The murder rate had not yet peaked at the time of the police homicide peak.

**Dick Block:** Seems that the trend followed homicides until 70-72, then it diverges.

**Becky Block:** You might want to look at general causes of general homicide, and what in addition to general causes might cause police homicides.

**David Kent:** From 1971 to 1974, black nationalists contributed 15 to 20 cases of sniper killings of police.

**“Modern U.S. Healthcare Serial Killing” by David R. Kent and Patrick D. Walsh**

**Vickie Titterington:** Could you clarify the V.A. hospital as a subject of scrutiny?

**David Kent:** US government can hire a doctor in one state who is not able to be a doctor in another state.

**Roland Chilton:** Do those who kill learn on the job or what?

**David Kent:** Not sure. They seem to practice with elderly and work their way to the young. Toward the end, those in hospital wager who will be next to go. Though, there are some that seem to be tied to sexual liaisons.

**Roland Chilton:** Is the technique the same?

**David Kent:** Mostly, but after 20 victims, they will often vary methods some.

**Paul Blackman:** Do you have a rough estimate of annual national figures?

**David Kent:** We focus on historical offending. We found 1-3 per year and an increase during the 1990s.

**Kim Vogt:** Where did your data come from?

**Patrick Walsh:** Personal knowledge, Lexis Nexis, JAMA and other journals.

**Kathleen Heide:** What is the motivation? Any sense of people who use the opportunity and intent to kill rather than to draw attention to self?

**David Kent:** Many women are classic Munchhausen by Proxy. One interesting factor for males is that some found fooling the doctors to be fun.

**Kathleen Heide:** If the objective stayed the same even with the age of victim changing, it seems that calling it serial murder is a problem. It seems that it is a byproduct of pathology (because intent is not to kill).

**David Kent:** In the case of female offenders, some would have a sexual liaison after, with say, a security guard. Therefore, Munchhausen by Proxy was not the cause.

**Jason Van Court:** It seems like a power trip for workers to take away a life that would be saved, just to have a power trip when saving lives.

**David Kent:** There was one doctor who killed four or five when he decided to become a mercy killer advocate.

### **“The Atlanta Ripper” by Vance McLaughlin**

**Roland Chilton:** What did you conclude?

**Vance McLaughlin:** Probably three consecutive Saturday nights could be but I would like all of the data.

**Candace Batton:** Is the day important in determining whether there is a serial killer?

**Vance McLaughlin:** It could show a pattern of when available, but it would not surprise me if it did not fit.

**Esther Jenkins:** Did the women share commonalities?

**Vance McLaughlin:** Most worked as cooks and domestics. Whites became concerned after about 15 cases, because they wanted their workers to make it to work. Many of the women were mulatto women, but not sure of this. It was in papers.

**Candace Batton:** So you could not get all death data?

**Vance McLaughlin:** No, I could not get death data if I did not have a name.

**Joe Riemann:** If Atlanta would have used NIBRS in 1910, would this have been appropriate data?

**Candace Batton:** I applaud the effort on trying to get historical data. It is difficult.

**Jay Corzine:** Are there any data in African American newspapers of the time?

**Vance McLaughlin:** The difficulty is in finding them. I have found another fascinating case, but getting any newspapers is very difficult. I will check more in Atlanta newspapers, but many times, the information did not go across the country.

**JoAnn Della-Giustina:** Have you checked *Chicago Defender*? They did cover all lynchings.

**Joe Riemann:** I agree with Candice – this is difficult research, but the papers are in someone's hands.

**Vance McLaughlin:** Right, I will be looking and even breaking and entering does not bother me.

**Dick Block:** The Chicago Historical Dataset may be helpful. It has every homicide recorded by police from 1870 to 1930. H.H. Holmes was in the data set.

**Roland Chilton:** Is this archived?

**Kaye Marz:** It is not archived yet.

**Dallas Drake:** First, let me say that the use of a genealogist's services is an excellent resource. We are doing this, too. We have used it in Florida. Second, were there any cops in the areas where the women were found?

**Vance McLaughlin:** I believe that there were only 20 detectives for the entire city.

**Mark Marsolais:** I am interested in railroad theory – you may check with police there.

**Becky Block:** One of the weapons related to rails. Could the offender be a railroad worker?

**Vance McLaughlin:** I think this is a far out theory, but they did know something about the railroad.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: LETHALITY

**Moderator:** Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

**Papers:**

Historical Relationships Between Lethal and Nonlethal Violence Rates in the United States and Their Usefulness in Forecasting Future Relationships.

Candice Batton, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha and John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Gun and the Knife: Weapon Instrumentality and Homicide Revisited.

Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida; Lin-Huff-Corzine, University of Central Florida; John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Janice E. Clifford Wittekind, Auburn University; Greg S. Weaver, Auburn University; and Thomas A. Petee, Auburn University

**Recorder:** Steve Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska



# HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LETHAL AND NONLETHAL VIOLENCE RATES IN THE UNITED STATES

## AND THEIR USEFULNESS IN FORECASTING FUTURE RELATIONSHIPS

Candice Batton, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska  
and John Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation

### ABSTRACT

This study focuses on historical trends in violent crime rates in the United States. Of particular interest is the extent to which rates of lethal and nonlethal violence are related to one another over time. To study this matter, we utilize econometric and time series regression techniques to analyze revised *Uniform Crime Reports* data on whites and nonwhites for 1960-2001. We also attempt to develop multivariate explanatory models for both lethal and nonlethal violence by drawing on traditional criminological theories, a historical contextual approach, and the findings of previous research.

*Note: The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not represent official positions of the Department of Justice or the Federal Bureau of Investigation.*

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, the U.S. has witnessed dramatic changes in crime rates. In the early 1990s, both violent and property crime rates seemed to be climbing to unprecedented heights. However, by 2000, crime rates had dipped to levels not seen since the 1970s. As a result of these fluctuations, researchers have increasingly turned their attention to historical trends in an effort to understand the factors associated with changes in crime rates.

Of particular interest in this study is the relationship between rates of lethal and nonlethal violence over time. More specifically, to what extent are rates of lethal and nonlethal violence related to one another over time? We use multivariate time series and econometric regression techniques, such as ARIMA modeling and cross-correlations, to decompose the trends in these variables over time and determine the nature of the relationship between the variables. From there we attempt to develop multivariate models for lethal and nonlethal violence rates using a variety of social structural and economic indicators. In consideration of research indicating distinct historical trends in crime rates for whites and blacks, we analyze racially disaggregated data.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### Historical Trends in Violence Rates

Any attempt to understand recent trends in U.S. crime rates must begin with a discussion of historical trends in crime rates. Unfortunately the paucity of valid and reliable data make this a difficult topic to study. The majority of information available on crime rates at the national level, both past and present, comes from two sources: Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Compiled by the FBI, UCR data became fully national in 1933. NCVS data extend back to 1973, and therefore,

do not have the same longevity as UCR data. However, they provide valuable information on the dark figure of crime and are a good source of comparison. While UCR and NCVS data can be used to study the recent past, detailed records are simply not available for the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Gurr, 1989). Of the records that do exist, those for homicide are the most valid and reliable. Not only is homicide "the least definitionally ambiguous ... [it is also] ... the most likely to be reported and 'cleared' by arrest" (Monkkonen, 1989:82).

Using homicide as an index of violence in general, violence levels generally declined throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Lane, 1989; Monkkonen, 1989). This decline was punctuated by minor surges beginning in the 1850s and again around the turn of the century (Gurr, 1989). From there, homicide rates climbed sporadically into the early 1930s at which point they dropped precipitously and remained low throughout the 1940s and 1950s (Eckberg, 1995; Zahn & McCall, 1999). Beginning in the early 1960s homicide rates rose sharply, peaking around 1980 (Donohue, 1998). Homicide rates dipped slightly in the mid-1980s before climbing again and peaking in the early 1990s (Blumstein, 2000; Donohue, 1998). Since then, murder rates have declined sharply, sinking to lows not seen since the mid-1960s (LaFree, 1998).

Rates for other violent crimes (i.e., rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) also increased sharply in the 1960s and 1970s (LaFree, 1998, 1999). According to UCR data, robbery rates paralleled murder rates by dipping in the mid-1980s before increasing into the 1990s, but rape and aggravated assault rates climbed steadily into the early 1990s before starting to decline (Blumstein, 2000; LaFree, 1998). NCVS data paint a slightly different picture. LaFree (1998) notes that, over the last 30 years, rape rates have fluctuated, but generally declined. Robbery rates have also fluctuated, but remained fairly stable. Finally, while aggravated assault rates have declined slightly, simple assault rates have remained fairly stable. Steffensmeier and Harer (1999) speculate that the difference between the UCR and NCVS in assault rates stems from changes in definitions of assault and a lower tolerance for assaultive behavior as well as victims being more likely to report.

## **Factors Affecting Violence Rates**

In keeping with the idea that phenomena should be situated in their broader social and cultural context, we recognize that crime rates are potentially affected by a variety of social structural factors. Therefore, while the relationship between lethal and non-lethal violent crimes is our focus, we attempt to control for the potentially confounding influences of other social and economic factors. As such, we draw on predominant criminological perspectives and the results of previous research in determining which factors to examine as is discussed below.

### Economic Conditions

The idea that crime rates are related to economic conditions is embedded in a number of theoretical perspectives (Allen, 1996; LaFree, 1999). According to strain theory, economic deprivation is a source of strain and frustration that hinders individuals from achieving culturally valued goals through socially acceptable means (Agnew, 1992; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Merton, 1938). From the social disorganization perspective, crime rates are likely to be higher in socially disorganized neighborhoods, which tend to be characterized by higher rates of unemployment, poverty, and female headed households (Park,

Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925; Shaw & McKay, 1942). Finally, conflict theorists would argue that the lower and working classes are more likely to be targeted by the justice system than the middle-upper classes who are more likely to be in positions of power and authority in society.

### Incarceration

Proponents of deterrence perspectives would argue that incarceration has a deterrent effect on violence. General deterrence occurs as the larger society is discouraged from engaging in violence when individuals are imprisoned for violent behavior. Specific deterrence also occurs as incarceration deters imprisoned individuals from engaging in future violence. Incarceration also decreases violence rates because it incapacitates criminals; while in prison, offenders are prevented from committing additional crimes in the community (Ekland-Olson, Kelly, & Eisenberg 1992).

### Drug Offenses

A connection between drugs and crime is self-evident to many although the nature of the relationship is complex. Illicit drugs may increase the risk of violence and aggression as a result of their pharmacological effects (Goldstein, 1985). Drugs may also be related to crime to the extent that estrangement from family and friends increases exposure to victimogenic situations (Hamid 1998). Finally, the drug trade itself is related to violence as a result of competition over illegal drug markets and because drug dealing itself is a crime (Goldstein, 1985; Inciardi & Pottieger, 1995). A number of studies have linked high juvenile violence rates with the spread of crack cocaine in the mid-late 1980s (Baumer, Lauritsen, Rosenfeld, & Wright, 1998; Blumstein, 1995; Messner & Rosenfeld, 2001).

### Divorce

As Durkheim (1897) noted over 100 years ago in *Suicide*, it is through bonds and attachments to others that individuals are subject to informal social control mechanisms. The underlying assumption is that marriage facilitates the establishment and maintenance of strong social ties and emotional attachments between individuals. This, in turn, results in higher levels of social integration as individuals are bonded to one another through their social interactions and emotional attachments. In this context, divorce is seen as an indicator of social disintegration or instability in interpersonal relations and as resulting in feelings of social isolation and estrangement from others. When divorce rates are relatively high and social integration levels relatively low, norms prohibiting violence may be less constraining of behavior because of the diminished level of interaction in intimate social groups, the family in particular.

### Immigration

Immigration is rarely considered in analyses of contemporary crime and violence rates, but it has proven to be an important factor for understanding historical trends in U.S. violence. More specifically, surges in homicide rates that occurred in the mid-1800s and early 1900s have been attributed at least in part to immigration and the social disruption that accompanied it by researchers studying 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century levels of violence. Lane (1986) links violence with immigration noting that immigrants have not had a chance to adjust to new behavioral and cultural norms. Furthermore, a period of lower economic well-being frequently follows immigration, contributing to frustration and levels of violence.



### Alcohol

Research indicates that alcohol is related to violent crime rates. At the individual level, the link can be described by Parker and Rebhun's (1995:34) theory of selective disinhibition. In the absence of alcohol consumption, both passive and active constraints work in conjunction with societal norms to regulate individual behavior and suppress the use of violence and aggression as means of conflict resolution. However, alcohol consumption undermines active constraint and reduces the regulative control of norms over individual behavior. As a result, alcohol consumption increases the likelihood of violence and aggression. At the community or neighborhood level, alcohol outlets can be thought of as "great attractors," places that draw people looking to get away from the normal constraints of school, family, work, and so on, such as restaurants, bars, convenience stores (Parker & Cartmill, 1998). The social atmosphere in conjunction with the ready availability of alcohol contributes to the relaxation of behavioral norms and controls in these areas. Under these conditions it is not surprising that the likelihood of violence and aggression is heightened.

### Armed Forces and War

Involvement in a foreign war is likely to be related to trends in violent and property crime rates. Although females are joining the armed forces in increasing numbers, military service has historically been a predominantly male activity. During wartime, the size of the military swells, effectively removing a large number of young males from the general societal population. Given that this segment of society is disproportionately represented among crime statistics, it makes sense that violent crime rates would be related to military factors.

### Structure of the Population

The size of the youthful population has frequently been posited as a correlate of crime rates, especially violence rates (Gurr, 1989; LaFree, 1999). Allen (1996) notes age structure is important because young people are more likely to have the physical skills needed to commit property crime as well as relatively little formal education and job training needed for legitimate employment. Furthermore, "the loss of parental control, the lack of responsibilities, and peer pressure" also undergird the connection between youth and crime (Allen, 1996:296).

## **DATA AND METHODS**

This study uses econometric and time series regression techniques to examine annual, national level data on violent crime rates in the U.S. The analysis of national-level data is important, because the findings potentially have implications for legislative, economic and social policies. Because of changes in the coding and collection of UCR data, calling into question the reliability of pre-1960 data, we focus on 1960-2001.

It is well established that crime rates vary by race with minorities having higher levels of criminal involvement, both as victims and offenders, than whites. Research also indicates that there are racial differences in how crime rates vary over time. In consideration of these issues, we analyze racially disaggregated data for whites and nonwhites.

## Measures

This study focuses on the relationship between lethal and non-lethal violence rates. Consistent with the *Uniform Crime Reports*, we define violent crimes as murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Arrest data constitute the only source of national-level time series data available for studying racial differences in criminal behavior. Although arrest data have shortcomings, research indicates biases in official data diminish as the seriousness of the crime increases. While arrest data may not accurately reflect the total incidence of crime, they are useful for estimating relative differences in crime rates for age, sex, and race groups and do not simply reflect the ability to avoid arrest.

Racially disaggregated arrest rates are not available in UCR data. Following LaFree, Drass and O'Day (1992), we calculate race specific arrest rates for whites and nonwhites as,

$$\text{RATE} = [\# \text{ ARRESTS} / (\text{UCR POP} * \% \text{ RACE})] * 100,000$$

Arrest statistics were obtained from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and consist of revised, unpublished UCR data on arrests by race.

Race-specific (i.e., white, nonwhite) indicators were used to assess the effects of economic deprivation and drug offense arrests on violence rates. Also examined were measures of the effects of incarceration, divorce, immigration, alcohol consumption, military factors (i.e., foreign war involvement, participation in armed forces), and more general economic conditions (i.e., business failures, CPI, GDP). Controls for the demographic structure of the population (i.e., age, race, sex) were also included.

## Analytical Approach

To examine trends in crime rates over time, we use time series regression techniques. The information obtained in the course of testing for stationarity is then used in conjunction with the Box-Jenkins approach to decompose each series into its deterministic and stochastic components with the goal of documenting the lag structure of each variable. The Box-Jenkins approach involves modeling a series by using autoregressive (AR), integrated (I), and moving average (MA) terms. ARIMA models are checked diagnostically to make sure that autocorrelation is not present. Autocorrelation refers to the presence of correlated error terms and it is problematic because it results in variable effects being falsely found as significant.

Once the nature of the distribution and lag structure of each series is ascertained, we assess bivariate relationships using cross-correlational analyses, following Cappell and Sykes (1991). A cross-correlation matrix contains correlations between residual values of two or more series at current and lagged values and is used to determine if the residuals of the two variables are correlated (McCleary & Hay, 1980). Cross-correlations are calculated using white noise series where variation caused by autocorrelation, trend, and drift has been removed to prevent spurious relationships (Gartner & Parker, 1990; McCleary & Hay, 1980).

Multivariate models are then constructed beginning by testing various models comprised of substantive exogenous variables. ARIMA terms are then added to render the residuals a white noise process. The results of both sets of models are then compared to determine the extent to which variation in the dependent variable is linked with other substantive variables as opposed to the past history of the dependent variable itself. In this sense, we employ a modified Box-Jenkins approach since the right-hand side variables consist of both substantive exogenous variables and ARIMA terms.

In constructing multivariate explanatory models, we consider the possibility that the strength and direction of relationships vary over time. Isaac and Griffin (1989) address this issue in their discussion of ahistoricism where they argue that time series analyses often fail to adequately conceptualize time and historical change. In this study we attempt to determine the extent to which relationships are temporally variant. Following Cappell and Sykes (1991), we have drawn on theory and previous research to identify a list of potentially relevant substantive variables, but we also rely on empirical tools to assist in the identification and refinement of explanatory models. This approach is supported by the findings of several recent studies that have identified historically contingent relationships with respect to the impact of imprisonment (Jarvis, 1998), collective action (LaFree & Drass, 1997), and unemployment (Carlson & Michalowski, 1997) on crime rates and a variety of factors on 20<sup>th</sup> century homicide rates (Batton, 1999; Batton & Jensen, 2002).

## **FINDINGS**

Cross-correlation analyses were used to examine the nature of the relationship between lethal and nonlethal violence over time for whites, nonwhites, and the total population. The data indicate that, while lethal and nonlethal violent crime rates are related over time, that relationship is not characterized by a lag structure. Instead, the relationship is a contemporaneous one with lethal and nonlethal violent crime rates being cross-correlated (at lag 0) at .75 for whites, .83 for nonwhites, and .78 for the total population.

After ascertaining the nature of the lethal-nonlethal violence relationship over time, the next step was to begin constructing multivariate models. At the time of the Annual Meeting, only analyses of lethal violence had been initiated. The results are contained in Table 1. The data indicated that several factors were associated with historical trends in lethal violence. While some of these factors were race-specific, others were common across all three of the models. More specifically, the preliminary results indicated that rates for whites, nonwhites, and the total population were all responsive to economic conditions, divorce rates, the size of the prison population, involvement in the armed forces, and the size of the youthful population. However, differences were also found. For whites, lethal violence was associated with alcohol consumption and immigration rates. For nonwhites, lethal violence was associated with arrests for drug offenses.

These results are preliminary and do not represent our final models. However, they do illustrate the importance of race-specific models. While some similarities exist across the models, there are significant differences as well. This suggests that some structural level factors are criminogenic regardless of race and their presence contributes to lethal

violence rates. Other factors are related to historical trends in either white or nonwhite murder arrest rates, but not both.

**TABLE 1. Preliminary autoregressive time series models of murder arrest rates for the total population, whites, and nonwhites.**

	<b>Murder Arrest Rates</b>		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Nonwhites</u>
<b>Drug Arrests*</b>			+
<b>Armed Forces</b>	+	+	+
<b>Alcohol Consumption</b>		+	
<b>Divorce</b>	+	+	+
<b>Prison Population</b>	—	—	—
<b>Immigration</b>		+	+
<b>CPI</b>	+		
<b>Unemployment*</b>		+	
<b>Non-employment*</b>		+	
<b>War Year</b>	+		
<b>Post-war Year</b>	+		
<b>% 15-34</b>	—	—	—

\* Race-specific measures.

## CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

At this point, all of the univariate and bivariate analyses have been conducted and we are in the process of model building. This involves comparing and contrasting different models in terms of their goodness of fit and assessing the extent to which lethal and non-lethal violence rates are related to one another over time while controlling for the impact of other explanatory factors. We are also looking more closely at property crime rates and their relationship to historical trends in violence rates.

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**THE GUN AND THE KNIFE:  
WEAPON INSTRUMENTALITY AND HOMICIDE REVISITED<sup>1</sup>**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Homo sapiens have exhibited a significant level of creativity in devising ways to kill others of their species but, in the contemporary United States (U.S.), guns and knives are the predominant weapons used in homicides. The 1999 Uniform Crime Report (UCR) shows that firearms are used in 65.2% of “murders and non-negligent manslaughters,” while knives or cutting instruments comprise the weapon of choice in an additional 13.2% of illegal killings (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2000). The role of guns and knives in assaults is less pronounced, however. For the same year, 22.7% of the assaults identified in the UCR involved firearms, and another 24.9% were committed with a knife or other sharp object. It is clear that knives (as well as blunt objects, automobiles, poisons, etc.) have the potential to become lethal weapons when employed by an aggressor, but the overrepresentation of firearms in physical assaults leading to death is the foundation for the long-standing policy debate over guns in the U.S.

### Instrumentality

Zimring (1968, 1972) was the first researcher to enunciate the “weapon instrumentality effect” that asserts the pre-eminence of firearms in killings results from their greater inherent lethality compared to other commonly available and used weapons, i.e. knives. Zimring’s basic argument is that if guns were less available, the percentage of interpersonal assaults that lead to death would be reduced because weapons that may be substituted for firearms are less lethal. This position is supported by Cook (1991) and others, and several studies have provided at least indirect evidence supporting the contention that guns are more lethal than knives (Chu and Kraus 2004; Cook 1979, 1980; Felson and Messner 1996; Kleck and McElrath 1991), by a ratio of as much as five to one.

Several investigators have urged caution before concluding that a substitution of knives or other weapons for firearms in interpersonal assaults would lower the rate of killing in the U.S. In his classic *Patterns of Homicide*, Wolfgang (1958) took the position that many homicide offenders are strongly motivated to kill their victims and, in the absence of a gun, they would expend the additional effort necessary to accomplish their goal by using other weapons. As developed by Wright, Rossi and Daly (1983) and supported by others (Kleck 1997), the argument is that individuals with a strong motivation to kill are more likely to choose guns as weapons. In essence, the intent of the offender plays a role in determining the weapon. Consequently, the greater lethality of guns is potentially

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<sup>1</sup>The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors/participants and do not represent official positions of the Department of Justice nor the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



a spurious relationship with the strength of the motivation to kill as the true explanatory variable. The idea that a high percentage of homicide offenders possess a strong, pre-existing desire to kill their victims has been challenged by Zimring (1972), who counters that most killers exhibit ambiguous intentions.

The present study revisits the question of the relative lethality of guns and knives by analyzing newly available NIBRS (National Incident Based Reporting System) data collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). NIBRS data do not suffer from some of the shortcomings inherent in data sources used for previous investigations of weapon lethality and allow an empirical assessment of common assumptions that have rarely, if ever, been tested (e.g., that long guns are more lethal than handguns). Following a review of past studies and further elaboration of the conceptual issues surrounding weapon instrumentality and substitution, we discuss the advantages of NIBRS data and develop models for testing some of the unresolved issues raised by proponents of these two competing arguments. The policy implications of the findings are discussed.

### Offender Intentions and Weapon Choice

The relationship between offender intent and weapon choice is varied. At one end of the continuum are cases involving an eventual offender who reaches a deliberate decision to kill a specific person, devises a method to do so, chooses the appropriate weapon and successfully follows through with the plan. It is reasonable to assume that a high percentage of these individuals opt for a gun because of their ease of use and greater lethality, but this presumption is probably correct in a larger percentage of cases involving male aggressors. At the other end are homicides arising from altercations that develop in the course of everyday interaction that involve no prior intent to kill by any of the participants. In-depth case studies of homicide incidents demonstrate that a significant number of killings follow this basic scenario, and it is often difficult to identify the offender and victim until the altercation reaches a fatal conclusion (Luckenbill 1977). Combatants in this type of dispute typically use a weapon that are available at the scene but sometimes leave and return with one. The issue of offender motivation determining weapon choice is thus dependent on the percentage of homicides that involve prior intent to kill. Unfortunately, there are no data providing an empirical answer to this question, and it would be very difficult to determine when or if the motivation to kill a disputant was formed in the mind of the offender. A reasonable position is that it is possible that highly motivated offenders are more likely to make a strategic choice to use a firearm to kill an intended victim, but we do not know their overall representation in the population of persons who kill. A related assumption is that if a gun was unavailable, some of these individuals would opt for another weapon to use in the assault. In many cases, it would be a knife.

Interestingly, discussions of offender motivation as a possible complication in evaluating the policy implications of the greater lethality of firearms over knives by Wright, Rossi and Daly (1983) and Kleck (1997) have ignored the intended victim's relative ability to successfully resist an offender armed with various weapons. We assume that all intended victims have a strong urge to accomplish self-preservation, i.e. to survive the attack. In hand-to-hand combat, a knife is arguably a more versatile weapon, because serious injury can be inflicted by either stabbing or slashing motions. A gun that is not pointed at a prospective victim will likely do little or no damage, although fatal blows are sometimes delivered by using the gun as a club. On the other hand, some firearms can inflict lethal

wounds at a distance of several hundred yards, thus negating any advantage that knives may have when an aggressor is within arm's length of a victim. Similarly, guns are often touted as an equalizer that eliminates the advantages of size and strength and, therefore, as an important self-defense mechanism for women. While acknowledging exceptions, our position is that intended victims of assaults are better able to defend themselves against assailants armed with knives than with guns, regardless of the strength of the attacker's motivation to kill. It is a strong empirical possibility that a substitution of knives for guns would produce a decreased body count holding the strength of the offender's motivation constant. Gun control proposals have often targeted handguns, however, and a substitution of rifles and shotguns instead of knives for handguns may well produce a higher fatality rate.

Zimring's (1968) analysis of Chicago data for the middle 1960's reported a 2.4% fatality rate for knife attacks versus a 12.2% fatality rate for gun attacks, producing a ratio of approximately five to one. Cook (1979) reports a fatality ratio of approximately three to one for gun robberies versus non-gun robberies. No reported study shows a higher death rate for knife wounds compared to firearms wounds (Wright, Rossi and Daly 1983), although an early study of abdominal wounds by Wilson and Sherman (1961) show a fatality rate from pistols only slightly higher than those for ice picks and butcher knives. Whether the findings of their study can be generalized is questionable on two grounds, however. First, it is not clear that findings from abdominal wounds would be duplicated for wounds to the chest or head, areas of the body with more protection from the skeletal structure. Second, pistols are considered less lethal than rifles or shotguns, while presumably ice picks and butcher knives are among the more lethal members of the family of "knives and cutting instruments." In a broader perspective, it is not clear if these investigations using 30 or 40 year-old data are relevant to the current context. The characteristics of weapons, particularly firearms, and the effectiveness of trauma care for penetrating wounds have changed substantially during the last several decades.

Kleck and McElrath (1991) provide the first "modern" attempt to determine the variables that are related to lethality of violent encounters, including weapon effects. Combining National Crime Survey (NCS) data on assaults with Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR) records on murders and manslaughter, they examine the effect of several variables reflecting demographic characteristics of the offender and victim, assault circumstances, weapon, population size of the offense's location, season, time of day and location. Their findings show that victims who are wounded by guns and knives are more likely to die from their injuries, with firearms proving more lethal than knives. Furthermore, victims injured in the course of a robbery are less likely to die, presumably because offenders' intent emphasizes pecuniary goals rather than causing the death of the target. This distinction between robberies and other types of interpersonal violence is important for examining the issue of offender motivation.

An important shortcoming of Kleck and McElrath's work is that their analyses are limited to assaults and killings involving strangers (Felson & Messner, 1996). This restriction of cases increases the percentage of assaults occurring during robberies and excludes domestic cases. In addition to all of the problems associated with self-report data sources, Cook (1985) shows that the NCS seriously underestimates the number of gun

assaults involving injury to victims. This omission could produce a bias toward finding a higher lethality rate for firearm assaults.

Felson and Messner (1996) adopt the basic procedure of merging self-report data from the NCVS (the successor to the NCS) on assault victimizations with SHR data on criminal homicides used by Kleck and McElrath (1991), but they do not exclude cases involving non-stranger relationships. They analyze the crime situation (assault, robbery and rape), the sex and race of the victims and offenders, stranger vs. non-stranger relationships, weapon and number of offenders. A strong weapons effect remains with these other variables controlled, however, so that victims wounded with a gun or a knife are more likely to succumb to their injuries. In fact, Felson and Messner (1996) find that assailants using a gun are more than 40 times more likely to kill their victims than offenders who use no weapon and those using a knife are between 4 and 5 times more likely to kill. For robbery cases that presumably do not involve offenders with a strong a priori intent to kill (Wright and Decker, 1997; Wright and Rossi 1986), the use of a gun is the only significant predictor of lethality. This finding strongly supports the “weapon instrumentality” argument that firearms increase the lethality of interpersonal violence apart from offender’s intent to kill. Wright and Rossi (1986) report that armed robbers do not carry guns or other weapons because they have any a priori intent to kill or even injure victims. Instead, their goal is to coerce persons to surrender cash and other valuables and to protect themselves from victims who may physically resist.

In a recent study of fatal assault among the elderly using NIBRS data, Chu and Kraus (2004) report that assaults involving firearms are 12.97 times more likely to be lethal than those involving personal weapons, while the similar ratio for assaults with knives or cutting instruments is 3.04. Chu and Kraus do not provide a separate analysis of robbery incidents, however, so there is no means of controlling for offender motivation.

Although written more than 20 years ago, Wright, Rossi and Daly’s (1983) conclusion that the strongest evidence supporting the weapon instrumentality thesis is the higher death rate for gun robberies versus non-gun robberies is still warranted. There are several shortcomings in the existing literature, however. First, with the exception of Chu and Kraus (2004), investigations have relied on victimization survey data to identify the characteristics of nonfatal assaults. As noted above, the NCS undercounts gun injuries by a significant margin, and it is difficult to gauge the degree of resulting bias in the findings reported by Kleck and McElrath (1991) and Felson and Messner (1996). Additionally, victimization studies undoubtedly include numerous minor assaults with knives that involve superficial cuts inflicted with pocket knives, table knives and forks, and so on. By definition, these incidents are very different from serious assaults that produce life-threatening injuries that are much more likely to come to the attention of the police, and combining these heterogeneous cases results in a comparison of apples and oranges. Second, the focus of previous work in this area of research has been on the relative lethality of guns versus knives, with little attention given to the equally important comparison of the lethality of handguns versus rifles and shotguns. The impacts of policies that limit handgun availability on homicide rates are dependent on two decisions by prospective offenders; whether they substitute another weapon and the lethality of the alternative weapon. To make an obvious point, the choice of a shotgun versus a hunting knife versus no weapon is important. Third, many of the studies discussed in the literature employ data that are several decades

old, and Harris et al. (2002) have recently argued that advances in trauma care have significantly reduced the fatality rate from serious wounds that are not self-inflicted. They do not claim that improvements in medical care have had a differential impact on the fatality rate of firearm wounds versus knife wounds, but this is a possibility. The correct implications of weapon lethality on policy decisions, however, can only be determined from studies analyzing data that are contemporary with the current context of medical care for penetrating wounds.

The NIBRS data used in the analyses reported below resolve the difficulties with prior studies outlined above. They reflect incidents serious enough to be reported to the police and omit many of the minor attacks that pose no risk of death or serious injury that are included in victimization studies. Therefore, our findings are based on a more homogeneous grouping of cases than those in most previous studies of weapon instrumentality. Second, NIBRS data disaggregate data on attacks involving firearms into the three categories of handguns, rifles and shotguns. Previous researchers have been unable to compare the lethality of various types of guns. Finally, the data are from the years 1995 to 2000 and reflect any impact of recent advances in medical care on weapon lethality.

## **DATA AND METHODS**

Data for the present study are derived from the 1995-2000 files of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). For each year, administrative, victim, offender, and incident files, respectively, were obtained from ICPSR and merged into a single dataset. The unit of analysis is the incident, comparing specifically how key offender, victim, and contextual variables influence the lethality of an event. That is, how do the aforementioned factors influence whether an incident is more likely to be an aggravated assault or a murder? Please note that only those incidents involving a single offender and victim are included in this study.

### Dependent Variable

The dependent variable utilized is a dichotomous measure indicating whether the incident is a murder or an aggravated assault, coded 1 and 0, respectively.

### Independent Variables

*Victim and Offender Characteristics.* Victim Age and Offender Age are measured in years. Victim Gender and Offender Gender are coded (1= male) and (0= female). Two additional variables reflect Victim Race and Offender Race, coded (1= black) and (0= non-black).

Additionally, a *Victim-Offender Relationship* variable is included. The original categories in NIBRS have been collapsed into the following general groups, and are coded as follows: (1= family), (2= acquaintance), (3= unknown relationship), (4= stranger). This measure is included as a contrast variable (contrast category is "family") in the models that follow.

*Contextual Variables.* All models include a variable indicating whether each case (incident) also involved a robbery, dummy coded (1= yes) and (0= no). Location of the incident was created by collapsing the original 24 categories into 9 (categories), and is coded

as follows: (1= home), (2= bar), (3= office), (4= commercial/retail), (5= street/ parking lot), (6= other outside location ), (7= school/college), (8= restaurant), and (9= other location).

*Time.* The approximate reported hour of each incident has been organized according to four, six-hour blocks (Midnight - 5:59 a.m.; 6:00 a.m. - 11:59 a.m.; 12:00 p.m. - 5:59 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.). (Contrast category is 6:00 a.m. to 11:59 a.m.)

*Weapon.* A primary objective of this paper is to identify the influence of weapon type on the lethality of an incident. To that end, only those incidents involving firearms, knives or personal weapons (hands and/or feet) are included in the analyses that follow. Model 1 compares the influence of guns and knives to personal weapons. Model 2 examines differences between firearms versus knives. Finally, Model 3 examines the influence of firearm type (handgun/rifle/shotgun) on lethality. All weapon measures are included as dummy variables, with the corresponding reference category noted for each model.

Because this study incorporates a dichotomous dependent variable – lethal versus non-lethal incidents – the logistic regression procedure will be used. The analyses that follow are conducted using SPSS.

## FINDINGS

The results of our analyses are presented in Tables 1 through 3. For the purpose of parsimony, only significant relationships are reported in these tables. Table One presents the results for the analysis comparing the lethality of firearms and knives versus personal weapons such as the use of hands or feet. As can be seen from this table, both firearms and knives are significantly predictive of a lethal outcome. Firearms are more than 12 times as likely to result in a lethal outcome ( $\alpha= 12.201$ ;  $b=2.502$ ;  $p < .01$ ) than personal weapons, and knives are more than 2.5 times as likely to end in the death of the victim ( $\alpha= 2.575$ ;  $b=.946$ ;  $p < .01$ ). In terms of control variables entered into this model, the only unexpected finding had to do with the circumstances surrounding the offense, and then only in terms of the magnitude of the relationship. In this analysis, situations involving a robbery were more than 92 times as likely to end in a lethal outcome than other situations ( $\alpha= 92.844$ ;  $b= 4.531$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Of the remaining control variables, the patterns for victim and offender characteristics and offense location are consistent with previous research (Weaver *et al.*, 2004).

Table Two contrasts the use of a firearm as a weapon with the use of a knife. As this table indicates, firearms are associated with a higher likelihood of a violent encounter ending in the death of the victim. When compared directly with each other, firearms are more than 4 times as likely to end in a lethal outcome as knives ( $\alpha= 4.659$ ;  $b= 1.539$ ,  $p < .01$ ). As in the previous model, robbery situations were more likely to result in the victim being killed ( $\alpha= 85.650$ ;  $b= 4.450$ ;  $p < .01$ ), although the magnitude of the odds are slightly lower in this model. The patterns for the other control variables did not change discernibly.

Finally, Table Three presents the results of the analysis where handguns are contrasted with other firearms. As can be seen from this table, handguns are only marginally more likely to result in a lethal outcome than other firearms ( $\alpha= 1.186$ ;  $b= .171$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Again, as in the previous analyses, robbery situations were much more likely to result in

the death of the victims than other situations ( $\alpha = 90.381$ ;  $b = 4.504$ ;  $p < .01$ ), and the net effects for the other control variables are similar to the previous models.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Our findings demonstrate the relative effects of various weapon types in determining whether or not a violent encounter results in a lethal outcome. When compared to personal weapons such as the use of hands or feet, both firearms and knives were significantly more likely to end in the death of the victim. When the comparison shifted to examining firearms directly to knives, firearms were more likely to result in a lethal outcome. Finally, violent encounters involving handguns were only slightly more likely than other firearms to result in a homicide.

Our results are generally consistent with the findings of other researchers who have examined the lethality of various weapons in assaultive incidents. However, the relative lethality of firearms in our data is less potent than some studies have reported (see Felson and Messner, 1996). On the other hand, the relative lethality of knives is fairly consistent with the findings of previous research (see Chu and Kraus, 2004; Felson and Messner, 1996).

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**Table 1.**  
**Logistic Regression Predicting Odds of Lethality with Use of Firearms, Knives and Personal Weapons**

	b	S.E.	$\alpha$
Victim Characteristics			
Victim Age	.014	.002	1.014**
Male Victim	.409	.050	1.505**
Offender Characteristics			
Offender Age	.006	.002	1.006**
Male Offender	.320	.068	1.377**
Victim-Offender Relationship <sup>1</sup>			
Acquaintance	-.270	.065	.763**
Stranger	-.989	.106	.372**
Context			
Robbery	4.531	.220	92.844**
Location <sup>2</sup>			
Street/Parking Lot	-.273	.066	.761**
Other Outside Location	1.106	.127	3.023**
School/College	-2.022	.710	.132**
Other Location	.252	.084	1.287**
Weapon Use <sup>3</sup>			
Firearm	2.502	.071	12.201**
Knife	.946	.082	2.575**
Time of Incident <sup>4</sup>			
12:00 p.m.- 5:59 p.m.	-.420	.075	.657**
6:00 p.m. – 11:59 p.m.	-.427	.069	.652**
Constant	-6.297		

Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p<.01; n = 154,471;  
b = unstandardized regression coefficient; S.E. = standard error;  $\alpha$  = odds ratio.

<sup>1</sup>Familial relationship is the contrast category for victim-offender relationship.

<sup>2</sup>Home is the contrast category for location.

<sup>3</sup>Personal weapon is contrast category for weapon use.

<sup>4</sup>6:00 a.m.-11:59 a.m. is contrast category for time of incident.



**Table 2.**  
**Logistic Regression Predicting Odds of Lethality with Use of Firearms and Knives**

	b	S.E.	$\alpha$
Victim Characteristics			
Victim Age	.021	.002	1.022**
Male Victim	.419	.054	1.520**
Offender Characteristics			
Offender Age	.004	.002	1.004**
Male Offender	.414	.075	1.513**
Victim-Offender Relationship <sup>1</sup>			
Unknown	.255	.082	1.290**
Stranger	-.863	.114	.422**
Context			
Robbery	4.450	.255	85.650**
Location <sup>2</sup>			
Street/Parking Lot	-.234	.070	.791**
Other Outside Location	1.023	.138	2.783**
School/College	-1.444	.711	.236*
Other Location	.214	.094	1.239*
Weapon Use <sup>3</sup>			
Firearm	1.539	.059	4.659**
Time of Incident <sup>4</sup>			
12:00 p.m.- 5:59 p.m.	-.415	.082	.660**
6:00 p.m. – 11:59 p.m.	-.383	.076	.682**
12:00 a.m.-5:59 a.m.	.180	.079	1.197*
Constant	-5.842		

Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p<.01; n = 78,772;  
b = unstandardized regression coefficient; S.E. = standard error;  $\alpha$  = odds ratio.

<sup>1</sup>Familial relationship is the contrast category for victim-offender relationship.

<sup>2</sup>Home is the contrast category for location.

<sup>3</sup>Knife is contrast category for weapon use.

<sup>4</sup>6:00 a.m.-11:59 a.m. is contrast category for time of incident.

**Table 3.**  
**Logistic Regression Predicting Odds of Lethality with Use of Firearms**

	b	S.E.	$\alpha$
Victim Characteristics			
Victim Age	.019	.002	1.019**
Male Victim	.497	.063	1.645**
Offender Characteristics			
Offender Age	.004	.002	1.004*
Male Offender	.210	.093	1.233*
Victim-Offender Relationship <sup>1</sup>			
Acquaintance	-.232	.086	.793*
Unknown	.217	.094	1.243*
Stranger	-1.077	.131	.341**
Context			
Robbery	4.504	.348	90.381**
Location <sup>2</sup>			
Bar/Nightclub	.345	.153	1.412*
Street/Parking Lot	-.276	.079	.759**
Other Outside Location	.914	.157	2.495**
Other Location	.220	.112	1.247*
Weapon Use <sup>3</sup>			
Handgun	.171	.083	1.186*
Time of Incident <sup>4</sup>			
12:00 p.m.- 5:59 p.m.	-.409	.093	.664**
6:00 p.m. – 11:59 p.m.	-.375	.087	.687**
12:00 a.m.-5:59 a.m.	.196	.092	1.217*
Constant	-4.098		

Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p<.01; n = 33,367; b = unstandardized regression coefficient; S.E. = standard error;  
 $\alpha$  = odds ratio.

<sup>1</sup>Familial relationship is the contrast category for victim-offender relationship

<sup>2</sup>Home is the contrast category for location

<sup>3</sup>Other firearms (rifle and shotgun) is contrast category for weapon use

<sup>4</sup>6:00 a.m.-11:59 a.m. is contrast category for time of incident



## DISCUSSION: LETHALITY

Recorded by Steve Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska

*Candice Batton and John Jarvis. "Lethal and Nonlethal Violence Rates: To What Extent are Trends Related Over Time?"*

**Becky Block:** Did you use white predictors for white models and black predictors for black models?

Response: We used race-specific data for the dependent variable and some of the independent variables. Race-specific data are not available for all independent variables. For example, prison population data is not broken down by race.

BB: What about the armed forces variable?

Response: These data are not race specific.

**Dick Block:** Did you try to model periods of dramatic upswing in your model, that is, upswings and downswings?

Response: We found three periods in the data using upswings and downswings. It's hard to identify periods by looking at the patterns. We may use dummy variables.

**Joseph Riemann:** Did you include educational attainment variables?

Response: We don't have that data, because it is not available consistently for the time periods we used. It is only available sporadically.

**Roland Chilton:** Do you have graphics by race? I am a very visual person and like seeing the trends.

Response: No, not here in this presentation.

RC: Graphs of interesting periods, tracking up and down together, should be included.

Response: Good point – there are techniques that examine small trends.

**Becky Block:** What about the SHR data?

Response: We are examining lethal models here; we are also examining nonlethal and property models.

**Dave Etnoyer:** What about measures of recidivism? Can you adjust the rates for likely perpetrators who are in circulation?

Response: That's something to consider, not sure exactly how to go about that though.

**Becky Block:** What about instrumentality? In Chicago we find murder is weapon related and crack cocaine changed the instruments used. Blumstein found the same thing in different cities.

Response: We do not have data on weapon here.

BB: Can you disaggregate by weapon?

No – this is annual, national level data and it is not possible to link weapon type with data using this unit of analysis. The best we could do is to create a variable that reflected, say, the percent of murders in a given year involving firearms.

**Joseph Riemann:** When examining arrest rates, what about the ability of the police to make an arrest?

Response: We don't have that either, but deterrence theory may be able to capture this?

*Jay Corzine and Tom Petee. "The Gun and the Knife: Weapon Instrumentality and Homicide Revisited."*

**Roger Trent:** Listening to this presentation really separates public health from criminology for me, and how data determines the research question. From the public health point of view, we are just as interested in an attack that results in an injury only vs. one that results in a homicide. We will be looking at emergency room treatment data. This will provide a different perspective as there may be a difference between those who report an assault to the police vs. those who go to the ER for treatment.

Response: I agree that these data are different. We use NIBRS. We will also use aggravated assault that does or does not result in injury.

**Becky Block:** What about successful resistance cases?

Response: We are looking at violent attacks regardless of success.

**Paul Blackman:** Are you only taking into account gun or knife threatened or not used? What about the type of gun or knife?

Response: No, NIBRS depends on public records, we don't have that information available.

PB: Your results may be due the fact that shotguns and rifles bring more cooperation, people who use these guns may not have to shoot at all.

Response: Yes, this is possible. We will look at robbery to control for distance and see what happens to the handgun findings in the robbery context. Also, NIBRS allows you to break down the three weapon categories into automatic and non-automatic.

**Roger Trent:** The results may be due to wounds, as large-caliber weapons cause larger wounds and increase the likelihood of death, the bigger the wound ....

Response: NIBRS does not break down by type of injury.

**Roland Chilton:** You can possibly use murder as seriousness of assault.

**Vance McLaughlin:** What about distance? The police like to use shotguns to intimidate suspects (in high risk warrant services) and reduce the chance of violence.

Response: Distance is definitely a factor. For example, karate as a means of defense. When defending against a gun or a knife, distance is definitely a factor. Very close up a knife is hard to defend against, but not far away. A gun is very difficult to defend against at a distance. Using robbery in the models may help in controlling for distance when looking at lethality.

## CHAPTER NINE FEMICIDE II

**Moderator:** Nancy Glass, Oregon Health and Science University

**Papers:**

Risk of Death or Serious Injury for Abused African American Women.

Esther J. Jenkins, Chicago State University & Community Mental Health Council, Inc.; Carolyn Rebecca Block, IL Criminal Justice Information Authority; and Jacquelyn Campbell, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing

Women's Experiences of Male Lethal and Non-lethal Violence in Australia  
(Research in Progress).

Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology

**Recorder:** Dallas S. Drake, Center for Homicide Research



**RISK OF DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY FOR ABUSED AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN**  
**Esther J. Jenkins, Chicago Sate University & Community Mental Health Council, Inc.**  
**Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority**  
**and Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing**

**ABSTRACT**

The current study examined factors associated with intimate partner homicide among African American women using data from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study (CWHRS; Block, 2000). In comparison to women with no abuse or less severe abuse in the previous year, homicide victims and those who suffered life-threatening violence had more mental health and substance abuse problems and were more likely to have experienced abuse during pregnancy. Partners of homicide victims and severely abused women were marginal in terms of education and employment and high in power and control. Fatal and near-fatal relationships were marked by threats with weapons, and an increase in the severity and frequency of the abuse, although for a number of women the only incident in the previous year was life threatening. Findings from the study appear consistent with those from a large multi-site study of femicide (Campbell, et al., 2003).

**INTRODUCTION**

Despite declines in intimate partner violence over the last decade or so (Greenfeld, Rand, Craven et al., 1998), the abuse and murder of African American women in this country remains a serious problem. In a representative sample of American women, 30% of black women reported at least one incident of rape, physical assault, and/or stalking (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Homicide remains a leading cause of death among black women, and is the second leading cause of death for young African American women between the ages of 15-24 (Anderson & Smith, 2003). An analysis of data from the recent Supplementary Homicide Report (Fox, 2001) shows that 25% of homicides of black women were committed by a current or former spouse or boyfriend, and an additional 15% were committed by a male "acquaintance." Between 1977 and 1999, African American women, who comprise less than 8% of the U.S. population, accounted for over one-third of women killed by a partner (Fox, 2001).

Though generally recognized as being over-represented among victims of intimate partner abuse and femicide, little of the existing body of research on intimate partner violence (IPV) specifically addresses issues of domestic violence for black women. This oversight is nowhere more serious than in the study of risk factors for intimate partner homicide – itself an emerging field of study – as this information has the potential for immediately affecting the premature death rate of African American women.

Data on the correlates of abuse among African Americans have yielded important information (see Hampton & Gelles, 1994), but we do not know if these factors are related to lethal violence. Given the prevalence of IPV, it is obvious that not all abused women are at equal risk for death or life-threatening injury. Thus, from an intervention perspective, it is important to determine factors that distinguish abusive relationships from potentially lethal relationships. Several important studies on risk factors for serious injury and femicide



(Campbell, Webster, Koziol-McLain et al, 2003; Thompson, Saltzman & Johnson, 2003; Thompson, Saltzman & Johnson, 2001) have done just that, but we do not know if these risk factors operate the same or have the same power of prediction for African American women, for whom the dynamics of the abuse may differ (Pressman, 1994; West & Rose, 2000). For example, in the 11-city study of risk factors for intimate partner femicide, what appeared to be an increased risk for intimate partner femicide for African American women was subsumed by perpetrator unemployment in the multivariate analysis (Campbell et. al., 2003).

The current study examines factors associated with the murder and life threatening abuse of African American women, using data from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study (CWHRS). One of 11 sites for a national study on femicide (Campbell et al., 2003), the CWHRS provides data on all 87 intimate partner homicides occurring in Chicago in 1995 or 1996 and which involved at least one woman (the victim or offender or both), as well as data on a sample of 705 women coming into Chicago health clinics and hospitals (located in areas of the city where the intimate partner homicide rate was highest) for any reason (such as a traffic injury, a well-baby or maternity checkup, or asthma). The CWHRS randomly screened 2,616 women as they entered the clinic or hospital, and interviews were conducted with all women who screened "positive" to current abuse by an intimate partner, and with a random sample of women who did not screen positive. (Some women screened positive and interviewed negative, and others screened negative and interviewed positive.) At the end of the interview process, the CWHRS "clinic/hospital" sample contained 495 women who had experienced physical violence or the threat of violence from an intimate partner in the past year, and 208 women who had not. The 495 women were followed up with one to three interviews over the following year, with a followup rate of 66%.

Interviews included a "calendar history" of important events in the women's lives, and each incident of abuse. The calendar histories cover a retrospective year before the date of the initial interview, and a prospective year after the initial interview. This process produced a retrospective data file of 4,975 abuse incidents, with dates and seriousness information for each incident.

Data for the 87 homicides include interviews with one to three "proxy" respondents (people who knew about the relationship and could respond to interviews containing the same questions as the clinic/hospital interviews),<sup>1</sup> interviews with women who had killed their partner, and data from official or public sources (such as police and medical examiner records, newspaper obituaries, Order of Protection records, etc.).

The present analysis focuses on those women in the CWHRS who identified themselves as black or African American. The sample consists of four groups: 207 women who, at the initial interview, indicated that they had experienced severe life threatening violence within the past year (e.g. beaten up, choked, miscarriage, broken bones, head injury, loss of consciousness, threatened with or use of a weapon), 138 who had experienced abuse that was not severe or life threatening (e.g. slapping, pushing, threats), 129 women who

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<sup>1</sup>For more information about the Proxy Respondent methodology of the CWHRS, see Block, et al. (1999).

had not experienced intimate partner violence in the past year, 39 women killed by a male partner, and two women killed by a same-sex partner.<sup>2</sup> In the present analysis, we do not include the 39 women who killed a male partner.

## RESULTS

### Demographics, Health, and Pregnancy History

Somewhat surprisingly, the homicide victims were doing relatively well in comparison to the other women in terms of income, education and employment (see Table 1). Women who were killed by their mates reportedly had the highest incomes, were most likely to be employed, and as likely as non-abused and less severely abused women to have some college education. In contrast, women suffering severe or life threatening abuse had the lowest income, and were the least likely to complete high school or to be employed.

As shown in Table 2, homicide and severe violence victims were a bit more likely to have fair or poor physical health but were considerably more likely to have mental health problems. Women who had suffered severe abuse were almost twice as likely as non-abused women to report feelings of depression, three times more likely to have attempted or threatened suicide, and at least 2 1/2 times more likely to answer questions consistent with a PTSD diagnosis. Both homicide victims and severe violence victims were more likely to have had histories of alcohol and substance abuse.

The majority of women in each group had children, with homicide victims and those reporting severe violence almost twice as likely as victims of less severe violence to report abuse during a pregnancy. Among women pregnant in the last year, almost 1 in 3 severely abused women reported a miscarriage compared to 1 in 5 of less severely abused women (see Table 3).

### Children in Household

As shown in Table 4, the majority of the women lived in a home with children younger than 17, though not necessarily those of the woman and frequently not those of the male partner. Women often lived with a family member or woman friend who had children, and many of the younger women lived with their parents and young siblings. Children in the home were often young; the majority of children of the victims, regardless of severity, were age four or younger. The victims frequently had minor children, 20-30% of whom were age four or younger, who were not residing with them. About 4 in 10 mothers who were victims of homicide or severe abuse had minor children who did not live with them, compared to 1 in 5 of the less severely abused women and 1 in 10 of the comparison group. The presence of partner's stepchildren did not seem to be associated with abuse severity; from 1/4 to 1/3 of the total sample had children living in the home who were not fathered by their partner, with abused women no more likely to report this than those in the comparison group.

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<sup>2</sup>Interviewed women were asked, "How would you describe your race or ethnicity?" Five of the 705 women refused to answer, and seven gave specific multi-racial answers.

## **Woman's Relationship to Partner**

The women's relationship to their partners is shown in Table 5. Reflecting the status of marriage in the African American community, few of these women were married to their partner, with non-abused women the most likely to be married. Homicide victims and abuse victims were more likely than non-abused women to have lived with their partner at some point in the past year. At the time of the interview, however, the majority of women reporting severe life threatening violence no longer lived with nor considered themselves in a relationship with the abusive partner. Twenty-five to forty percent of the entire sample had children by their mates, with homicide victims least likely to have a child by the offender.

Across all abuse groups, women typically had been in their relationships for four years or fewer, although a considerable minority had been in the relationship for 10 years or more. There are some differences when the woman's age is controlled. For example, women over age 30 were much less likely to have been in the relationship at least ten years if she was in the homicide victim group (14%) or the "severely abused" group (18%), compared to the "less severe" group (41%) or the "non-abused" group (38%).

## **Partner Characteristics**

The homicide offender or abusive partner for women severely abused are much worse off in terms of social and mental health indicators than the abusive partner for women less severely abused or for the current partner of comparison women. This is particularly so for homicide offenders. As shown in Table 6, these men were poorly educated, most likely to be unemployed, and least likely to be looking for work. Only 1/3 of homicide offenders and one-half of partners of severely abused women were employed or in school compared to about 3/4 of partners of the comparison group and less severely abused women. Homicide offenders were more than twice as likely as perpetrators of severe violence, and almost four times as likely as mates of women in the comparison group, to have not completed high school. Unemployed abusers typically were not looking for work, and one in four of the unemployed homicide offenders were involved in illegal activities.

In comparison to partners of women experiencing no violence in the last year, abusers were much more likely to have histories of drug and alcohol problems and to have threatened or attempted suicide. The more severe the violence, the more likely partners were to have these problems.

## **Power and Control**

As shown in Table 7, abusive relationships differed sharply from non-abusive relationships on issues of power and control, with perpetrators of severe or life threatening violence being the most controlling. In comparison to women experiencing less-severe violence in the last year, partners of women who were severely abused were at least twice as likely to have denied the women access to family income, left threatening messages, destroyed something of value, frightened or threatened friends or family members, followed her and threatened to take her kids if she left. They were three times more likely to have

threatened to kill her if she left and almost six times more likely to have scared her with a weapon.

### **History of Violence**

Victims of homicide and life threatening violence experienced severe violence, involving weapons that increased in severity and frequency. In comparison to women who were not so severely abused, women who had experienced life threatening IPV were more than twice as likely to report that the violence had increased in severity and frequency in the past year or that her partner had tried to choke her; they were more than three times as likely to report that her partner had threatened to kill her, had beaten her when pregnant, had hit her with an object, or had beaten her up. These women were almost three times as likely to believe that their partners were capable of killing her and twice as likely to report that her partner was violent outside of the home.

### **The Fatal Incident**

Not shown in the tables, are data gathered on circumstances of the fatal incident. In the actual incident in which the woman was killed, her leaving or attempting to leave the relationship was an immediate precipitating factor in half of the cases, and she, her partner, or both were drunk in over half of the fatal incidents. A third (36%) of the women homicide victims had experienced violence at the hand of her partner during the week that she was killed, some the same day.

### **Risk of Severe or Fatal First Incident**

Although violence tended to escalate in frequency and severity, for a number of women in the study the first incident of physical violence at the hands of her partner was fatal or life threatening. For the homicide victims, this was determined in the proxy interviews, counting only those proxy respondents who were knowledgeable about the couple's relationship. For the clinic or hospital sample, this was determined in the initial interview, when women told us about only one incident in the past year, and that incident was very severe or life-threatening (e.g.: it "could have been" homicide).

By this definition, of the 35 women homicide victims for which reliable information was available, three (9%) had not experienced physical violence at the hands of the partner who killed her for 35 of the 104 women in the "abused" clinic/hospital sample who had experienced only one incident in the previous year, for 35 that single incident had been very severe or life-threatening (22 beaten up or choked, or severe contusions, broken bones or burns or a miscarriage; 7 sustaining a head, internal or permanent injury, loss of consciousness, or threatened weapon use; and 6 who experienced attempted murder or weapon use). In comparison to the 69 clinic/hospital women who had one abusive incident that was less severe, those reporting a severe or life threatening single incident were more likely to report that their partner was violently and constantly jealous (53% vs. 31%), tried to limit her their contact with friends and family (66% vs. 32%), or called her names to put her down or make her feel bad (77% vs. 45%). He or she was also twice as likely to use drugs (47% vs. 22%), twice as likely to have threatened or attempted suicide (30% vs.

13%), and she was twice as likely to say he/she was violent outside of the home (43% vs. 19%).

## DISCUSSION

African American women who were killed or severely abused were in relationships that *appeared* dangerous: the abuse involved lethal weapons and attempts to inflict serious injury from mates who frequently were psychologically abusive and violent outside of the home. The abusive partners were likely to be marginalized in terms of education, income and employment, with histories of alcohol and drug use.

In comparison to victims in the 11-site study of femicide (Campbell et al., 2003), in which 30% of the sample was African American, the women in the current sample were somewhat poorer, less likely to be married to the perpetrator, and more likely to have drinking and drug problems. However, overall, these bi-variate analyses are quite consistent with those from the larger study in which femicide was predicted by an unemployed mate not seeking work, the presence of stepchildren in the home, a highly controlling partner, threats with a weapon, and the victim attempting to leave the relationship. With the exception of the presence of stepchildren, which does not appear to be that different across the groups, these same relationships occur in the current study. Further analyses will determine if there are other statistically significant relationships in the data.

It is interesting to note that the severely abused women often scored "higher" on many of the indicators of risk than the homicide victims for whom information was provided by a proxy. This difference was most likely to occur on those items that are arguably least accessible to a third party and that would have to be explicitly shared by the victim, i.e. feelings, emotional states, and certain relationship dynamics. However, despite these limitations, data from the proxies is generally consistent with the expected relationships. These findings, and the similarity of the circumstances of the homicide and near fatal cases, highlight the usefulness of combining information from these two groups in future analyses.

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**Table 1**  
**Woman's Demographics**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>3</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>4</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused: No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Her age: <sup>5</sup>				
18 - 20	12.2%	15.0%	26.8%	15.5%
21 - 25	22.0	15.5	12.3	13.2
26 - 30	4.9	18.4	13.0	15.5
31 - 40	46.3	36.2	37.0	27.1
41 - 50	12.2	14.0	8.0	22.5
51 - 62	2.4	1.0	2.9	6.2
Maximum age	54	54	62	56
Mean age	32.39	30.84	29.67	33.35
(N missing)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Household income:				
< \$5,000	25.7%	43.9%	27.7%	26.2%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	20.0	20.7	18.5	20.5
\$10,000 - \$19,999	17.1	16.2	23.8	22.1
\$20,000 +	37.1	19.2	30.0	31.1
(N missing)	(6)	(9)	(8)	(7)
Her education:				
< high school	33.3%	51.7%	35.0%	34.4%
high school degree	30.3	20.8	31.9	28.1
some college, vocational, trade	33.3	23.7	32.1	32.8
college graduate	3.0	3.9	1.5	4.7
(N missing)	(8)	(0)	(1)	(1)
Her employment:				
Employed or in school	60.0%	34.3%	52.2%	55.0%
Unemployed	40.0	65.7	47.8	45.0
(N missing)	(6)	(0)	(0)	(0)

<sup>3</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>4</sup>See note 2, above.

<sup>5</sup>Note that the clinic/hospital sample excluded women under age 18, and homicides of women under 18 were also excluded (in order to make the fatal and nonfatal samples comparable).

**Table 2**  
**Woman's Health**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>6</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>7</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Limited in past month due to physical condition?				
Yes	11.1%	40.1%	24.6%	24.8%
Mentions condition(s), but says "not limiting"	22.2	NA	NA	NA
No	66.7	59.9	75.4	75.2
(N missing)	(5)	(0)	(0)	(0)
General health (last month)				
excellent	8.3%	15.0%	13.8%	17.1%
very good	33.3	17.4	18.8	22.5
good	22.2	30.9	38.4	34.9
fair	25.0	30.0	26.1	20.9
poor	11.1	6.8	2.9	4.7
(N missing)	(8)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Limited in past month due to emotional condition				
Yes	33.3%	38.6%	24.1%	21.7%
Mentions condition(s), but says "not limiting"	5.6	NA	NA	NA
No	61.1	61.4	75.9	73.8
(N missing)	(5)	(0)	(1)	(0)
Depression mentioned as "emotional condition"	30.6%	28.6%	20.3%	14.0%
Total depressed feelings (count of "none" or "little" happy or calm; "most" or "all" blues or dumps; % 0 of 4 items)	55.6%	34.8%	50.0%	67.4%
Ever threatened or attempted suicide?	6.3%	36.9%	19.0%	12.6%
PTSD diagnosis?	27.3%	70.5%	40.6%	25.8%
Ever had a problem with alcohol? (% yes)	36.1%	32.9%	17.4%	10.9%
Ever had a problem with drugs? (% yes)	44.1%	44.0%	27.5%	16.3%

<sup>6</sup>See note 1, above

<sup>7</sup>See note 2, above.



**Table 3**  
**Woman's Past and Current Pregnancy**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>8</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>9</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
% who had ever had any children	77.8%	79.2%	74.5%	71.1%
Pregnant now or in past year?				
Yes, at initial interview or death	2.9%	5.8%	6.6	7.0%
Yes, in past year	17.1	23.2	19.1	14.8
Yes, both	.0	1.0	.0	.0
Not pregnant at homicide, past year unk.	8.6	NA	NA	NA
No	71.4	70.0	74.3	78.1
(N missing)	(6)	(0)	(2)	(1)
Violence by partner while pregnant? (1 or more incident/ women pregnant "now" or in past year)	71.4%	79.0%	37.1%	.0%
(N women pregnant now or in last year)	(7)	(62)	(35)	(28)
Pregnancy outcome (for women pregnant in past year):				
Live birth	66.6%	56.0%	69.2%	73.7%
Abortion and life birth <sup>10</sup>	.0	2.0	.0	.0
Abortion	33.3	8.0	11.5	15.8
Miscarriage(s) <sup>11</sup>	.0	32.0	19.2	10.5
(N pregnant last year)	(6)	(50)	(26)	(19)

<sup>8</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>9</sup>See note 2, above.

<sup>10</sup>One severely abused woman had both an abortion and a live birth in the past year. A second severely abused woman had two miscarriages in the past year (these were counted once).

<sup>11</sup>One homicide victim had a live birth seven months before the homicide, but at least two miscarriages prior to that, both caused by her partner's beatings. "He would stomp her in the stomach."

**Table 4**  
**Woman's Household**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>12</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>13</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Homeless or living "wherever she could"	11.1%	1.4%	.0%	.0%
Living by herself	5.6	8.2	4.4	7.0
Living in a group home, treatment center	2.8	19.8%	8.0	1.6
Living with other(s)	80.6	70.5	87.6	91.5
(N missing)	(5)	(0)	(1)	(0)
<b>Children in Household</b>				
Any children < 17 living in household?	52.8%	61.8%	72.3%	63.6%
Any of her children living in household?	47.2%	53.3%	51.1%	53.1%
Her children in household: age of youngest				
Infant (< 12 months)	17.6%	26.6%	22.9%	18.8%
age 1 to 4	35.3	31.6	42.9	29.0
age 5 to 17	41.2	39.2	31.4	37.7
18 or older	2.8	2.5	2.9	14.5
(N women with children in household)	(17)	(79)	(70)	(69)
Her children in household: age of oldest				
Infant (< 12 months)	2.8%	11.4%	14.3%	7.2%
age 1 to 4	29.4	19.0	21.4	17.4
age 5 to 17	47.1	63.0	52.9	50.7
18 or older	17.6	6.6	11.4	24.7
(N women with children in household)	(17)	(79)	(70)	(69)
Any minor children living elsewhere?	38.9%	40.3%	22.6%	9.9%
Age of her youngest child living elsewhere				
Infant (< 12 months)	6.7%	9.0%	4.8%	2.9%
age 1 to 4	13.3	29.0	16.7	2.9
age 5 to 17	53.3	32.0	45.2	17.1
18 or older	26.7	30.0	33.3	77.1
(N women with child not living with her)	(15)	(101)	(42)	(38)
Stepchildren <18 (any of her children, not partner's) living in her household? (% yes)	33.3%	27.1%	28.7%	35.4%

<sup>12</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>13</sup>See note 2, above.

**Table 5**  
**Woman's Relationship to Intimate Partner<sup>14</sup>**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>15</sup>			
	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>16</sup> )	Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Partner's relationship to her				
Husband	8.3%	7.2%	10.1%	16.3%
Ex-husband	.0	4.8	2.9	2.3
Commonlaw (co-reside)	30.6	.5	.0	2.3
Ex-commonlaw	.0	1.4	.0	.0
Boyfriend	27.8	33.8	44.2	58.9
Ex-boyfriend	25.0	42.5	35.5	14.7
Same-sex partner	2.8	4.3	1.4	.8
Ex same-sex partner	.0	1.0	.7	.8
Other <sup>17</sup>	5.6	4.3	5.1	3.9
(N missing)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Current or former relationship?				
Current	75.0%	46.9%	55.8%	81.4%
Former or ex	25.0	53.1	44.2	18.6
(N missing)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Lived together past year?				
Lived together all year	44.4%	13.5%	21.7%	28.3%
Yes, but now living apart	8.3	57.5	33.3	11.0
Periodically in last year (on & off)	11.1	not asked	not asked	not asked
Recently moved in together	.0	5.8	2.9	3.9
No, but lived together in previous years	.0	3.9	3.6	4.7
Never lived together	36.1	19.3	38.4	52.0
(N missing)	(5)	(0)	(0)	(2)
Length of relationship:				
One year or less	8.8%	18.4%	18.8%	23.3%
13 months - 4 years	64.7	52.2	47.1	43.4
5 - 9 years	14.7	16.9	13.8	9.3
10 years or more	11.8	12.6	20.3	24.0
(N missing)	(7)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Any child(ren) with partner?				
Yes	25.0%	35.7%	39.1%	28.3%
No, but pregnant now or in past year by him	2.8	3.4	.0	3.1
No	72.2	60.9	60.9	68.5
(N missing)	(5)	(0)	(0)	(2)

<sup>14</sup>"Partner" for homicide victims is the intimate partner who killed her; for abused women, "partner" is the intimate partner abusing her (women who had more than one abusing intimate partner in the past year were asked to chose one to talk about in the interview); and for women who had not been abused in the past year, "partner" is her intimate partner "currently or in the past year" (if she has more than one partner, it is the partner she "currently spend the most time with and feel closest to").

<sup>15</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>16</sup>See note 2, above.

<sup>17</sup>"Other" responses include friend, lover, child's father, fiancé.

**Table 6**  
**Partner Demographics<sup>18</sup>**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>19</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>20</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Age discrepancy				
She is 16+ years older	.0%	.0%	.0%	.8%
She is 13-15 yrs older	.0	.5	1.4	.8
She is 10-12 yrs older	4.9	.5	.7	1.6
She is 7-9 yrs older	4.9	4.4	.7	.8
She is 4-6 yrs older	17.1	5.4	5.8	4.7
She is 1-3 yrs older	12.2	8.8	14.5	16.5
Same age	4.9	5.9	6.5	15.7
P is 1-3 years older	24.4	27.8	29.0	18.1
P is 4-6 years older	7.3	20.5	19.6	14.2
P is 7-9 years older	7.3	10.2	8.0	11.0
P is 10-12 years older	9.8	5.4	8.7	9.4
P is 13-15 years older	7.3	5.9	2.9	1.6
P is 16-20 years older	.0	.5	1.4	3.1
P is 21+ years older	.0	4.4	.7	1.6
(N missing)	(0)	(2)	(0)	(2)
% woman 4+ years older	26.9%	10.8%	8.6%	8.7%
Partner employment:				
Employed, in school	34.3%	49.0%	72.7%	76.0%
Unemployed	65.7	51.0	27.3	24.0
(N missing)	(6)	(13)	(6)	(4)
Unemployment type:				
Looking for work	8.7%	18.2%	13.9%	36.7%
Not looking for work	34.8	69.7	66.7	46.7
In jail, prison <sup>21</sup>	.0	8.1	8.3	.0
Drug dealer, gang member, other illegal <sup>22</sup>	39.1	2.0	2.8	.0
Other <sup>23</sup>	17.4	2.0	5.6	16.7
(N unemployed)	(23)	(99)	(36)	(30)
Partner's education:				
< High school	79.3%	34.9%	28.9%	21.4%
High school degree	17.2	45.3	36.4	42.0
Some college, vocational, trade	3.4	15.1	24.8	29.5
College graduate	.0	4.7	9.9	7.1
(N missing)	(12)	(35)	(17)	(17)

<sup>18</sup>See note 17, above.

<sup>19</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>20</sup>See note 2, above.

<sup>21</sup>Note that none of the homicide offenders could have been in prison at the time of the homicide. (There were no contract murders.)

<sup>22</sup>Other illegal includes "steals cars."

<sup>23</sup>"Other" includes disabled, retired, laid off.

**Table 6**  
**Partner's Health**

Situation at Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>24</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>25</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Does partner use drugs?(% yes)	66.7%	47.8%	27.8%	5.6%
(N missing)	(11)	(6)	(5)	(3)
Does partner have an alcohol problem? (% yes)	53.6%	56.1%	43.4%	21.3%
(N missing)	(13)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Has partner ever threatened or tried suicide? (% yes)	38.5%	28.9%	16.2	4.8%
(N missing)	(15)	(6)	(2)	(5)

<sup>24</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>25</sup>See note 2, above.

**Table 7**  
**Power and Control in Past Year**

Partner's Behavior in Past Year before Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>26</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>27</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
Jealous, didn't want her to talk to other men (women)	82.9%	92.8%	81.2%	40.3%
Tried to limit her contact with family or friends	48.6%	76.8%	42.8%	13.2%
Insisted on knowing who she was with and where she was at all times.	60.0%	89.4%	73.9%	30.5%
Called her names to put her down or make her feel bad.	74.3%	88.4%	52.9%	18.0%
Prevented her from knowing about or having access to family income, even if she asks (of women with shared income)	31.8%	63.2%	30.6%	10.2%
Scared her with a weapon.	37.0%	52.4%	8.7%	1.6%
Threatened to harm her pet.	.0%	27.0%	15.9%	1.4%
Threatened to kill him/herself if she left (refused to return)	35.5%	34.3%	21.0%	5.5%
Called her on the phone and hung up.	23.3%	57.0%	43.4%	19.5%
Left threatening messages on her voice mail or telephone answering machine.	11.5%	22.0%	10.2%	2.5%
Tried to get her fired from her job.	15.0%	32.5%	8.4%	2.1%
Followed her.	46.7%	67.0%	31.2%	2.3%
Sat in a car or stood outside her home.	21.2%	53.6%	31.2%	7.0%
Destroyed something that belongs to her or that she likes very much.	40.7%	64.7%	32.6%	7.8%
Frightened or threatened her family.	25.8%	26.1%	9.4%	1.6%
Threatened to harm the kids if she left (refused to return).	10.5%	12.1%	1.1%	.0%
Threatened to take the kids if she left (refused to return).	.0%	17.4%	8.5%	1.2%
Left notes on her car.	9.5%	18.1%	10.5%	.0%
Threatened to kill her if she left (refused to return).	45.2%	57.5%	18.8%	3.1%
Showed up without warning	34.4%	75.4%	57.2%	19.5%
Made her feel like he/she can again force her into sex.	50.0%	62.8%	33.3%	6.3%
Frightened or threatened her friends.	21.9%	42.0%	14.5%	2.3%
Agreed to pay certain bills, then didn't pay them.	31.0%	55.6%	44.9%	19.5%
Reported her to the authorities for taking drugs when she didn't.	.0%	16.4%	5.1%	.0%

<sup>26</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>27</sup>See note 2, above.

**Table 8**  
**Violence at Hands of Intimate Partner**

Violence "Ever" or in Year before Initial Interview or Fatal Incident	Homicide Victims (N = 41 <sup>28</sup> )	Clinic/Hospital Women, Initial Interview Abuse Status, Previous Year <sup>29</sup>		
		Severe or Life-Threatening (N = 207)	Abused, No Severe, Life-Threatening Incident (N = 138)	No Violence or Threat of Violence in Past Year (N = 129)
"Ever" (by current or abusive partner):				
Is partner violent outside home?	71.0%	61.3%	28.4%	4.0%
Partner threatened to kill her.	66.7%	65.2%	20.0%	not asked
She feels partner is capable of killing her.	43.3%	72.6%	41.7%	.8%
She thought her life was in danger.	48.4%	71.2%	24.4%	not asked
Partner beat her when she was pregnant.	15.6%	33.5%	10.3%	not asked
Forced her to have sex when she did not wish to do so.	44.4%	55.8%	30.1%	.8%
Partner's violence against her in past year:				
Has increased in frequency <sup>30</sup>	41.4%	48.5%	19.9%	NA
Has increased in severity <sup>31</sup>	41.4%	50.5%	18.4%	NA
Threatened or used a knife against her	39.3%	45.4%	.0%	.0%
Threatened or used a gun against her	34.5%	30.9%	.0%	.0%
Choked her or tried to strangle her	60.0%	83.1%	41.3%	.0%
Hit her with an object that could hurt her	53.3%	58.3%	15.3%	.0%
Beat her up; hit her repeatedly	45.5%	71.0%	22.5%	.0%

<sup>28</sup>See note 1, above.

<sup>29</sup>See note 2, above.

<sup>30</sup>Women who had not experienced any previous violence are counted as missing.

<sup>31</sup>Women who had not experienced any previous violence are counted as missing.

**WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF  
MALE LETHAL AND NON-LETHAL VIOLENCE IN AUSTRALIA  
(RESEARCH IN PROGRESS)  
Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program,  
Australian Institute of Criminology**

## **INTRODUCTION**

There is much research in Australia and the international arena on the risk factors associated with the male perpetrated violence against women. This research consistently finds that women are most at risk of both lethal and non-lethal violence from a male intimate partner (Mouzos 1999; 2000; 2003; ABS 1996; Browne 1997; Russell & Harmes 2001; Wilson, Johnson & Daly 1995). However, there are two limitations associated with this research: the focus has been predominantly on intimate partner violence; and there have been few comparisons made between incidents of lethal and non-lethal violence against women in order to determine whether the patterns are similar. Another issue is that most research in terms of non-lethal violence has relied predominately on police records, which tend to under-report the levels of violence experienced by women. Victim surveys are seen as a much more reliable measure of non-lethal victimisation.

### **Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of the research is to compare the circumstances and characteristics of lethal and non-lethal violence against women in Australia and to identify the risk factors associated with lethal and non-lethal violence against women.

The research will seek to compare the following:

- a) Incident characteristics (location of the incident, number of offenders);
- b) Socio-demographic characteristics (age, Indigenous status, marital status, employment status, alcohol/illicit drug consumption); and
- c) Relationship between the victim and offender.

### **DATA SOURCES**

The research will analyse data on lethal and non-lethal violence from two main data sources:

#### ***National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP):***

Data on lethal violence will be sourced from the NHMP, which collects information on all homicides coming to police attention across Australia since 1 July 1989. Information is collected on the circumstances and the characteristics of the homicide incidents (location, number of offenders, etc), victims and offenders (socio-demographic characteristics, illicit drug/alcohol involvement), and the relationship between the victim and offender.



### ***International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS):***

Data on non-lethal violence will be sourced from the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women Survey. The IVAWS is an international comparative survey designed to collect information on women their experiences with violence perpetrated by males. The interviews were conducted using a Computer Aided Telephone Interview (CATI) questionnaire. The IVAWS interviews were conducted in Australia between 2002-2003 using a representative stratified national probability sample of women aged between 18 and 69 years. A total of 6,677 women related their experiences of violence.

Of relevance to the proposed research, the IVAWS collected data on women's experiences for the following types of violence perpetrated by males:

- a) Non-partner violence (relative, friend/acquaintance or stranger);
- b) Current intimate partner violence; and
- c) Previous intimate partner violence.

Information was collected on violence experienced by the women during the 12 months prior to the survey (2001/2002) and five years prior to the survey (1997/1998 – 2001/2002), as well as over the lifetime. Socio-demographic data (age, Indigenous status, marital and employment status) were collected for the women and their current partners. In addition, data were also collected in relation to the most recent incident of violence from a male partner and non-partner on the following:

- d) Location of the incident;
- e) Number of offenders involved; and
- f) Alcohol/illicit drug use by the male.

### **METHODS**

In order to maximise comparability and have an increased sample size for comparisons from the IVAWS, the circumstances and characteristics of lethal and non-lethal violence against women will be calculated and presented for two time periods: 2001/2002 and 1997/998 to 2001/2002.

As the IVAWS was conducted on a sample of women in the Australian population and not the whole population, the data were weighted to represent the total female population by age and area. Non-lethal violence rates will be computed as rates per 100 women, while the lethal violence rates will be computed as rates per million women for the various incident factors and socio-demographic characteristics of the victims and offenders.


### **RESULTS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Forthcoming.

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## PRESENTATION SLIDES



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**Research in Progress:**  
**Women's experiences of male lethal  
and non-lethal violence in Australia**


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Australian Institute of Criminology

**HRWG 2004 Ann Arbor**


**Presentation Outline:**

- Background – Why study both non-lethal & lethal violence?
- Purpose of the Study
- Methodological Issues
- Data Sources
- Methods
- Where to from here?

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## Background – Why study both non-lethal & lethal violence?

- Several reasons:
  - To be able to identify risk factors that do not lead to the death of the victim;
  - Differences and similarities in incidents irrespective of the end result (victim is/is not killed); and
  - Facilitate the linkage of data to practice in homicide prevention.



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## Methodological Issues – Previous Research

- Much Australian and international research finds that women are most at risk of violence from a male intimate partner (Mouzos 1999; 2002; 2003; ABS 1996; Block & Christakos 1995; Block et al 2000; Browne 1997; Russell & Harmes 2001; Wilson et al 1995; to name a few).
- However, there are two limitations:
  - Focus has been predominantly on intimate partner violence and not on all types of violence; and
  - Few comparisons between incidents of lethal and non-lethal violence (esp. in Australia) to determine if patterns are the same.



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## Methodological Issues

- Two main data sources on non-lethal violence:
  1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) aggregated data on selected offences (assault, sexual assault, armed robbery, attempted murder, etc); and
  2. Offence reports from state and territory police services.



## Methodological Issues

- Both sources limited because they underestimate the levels of violence experienced by women due to problems associated with under-reporting.
- Not much of a problem for lethal violence research (most homicides get reported).
- Therefore, victim-surveys only other option.



## Purpose of the Current Study

- Compare the circumstances and characteristics of non-lethal and lethal violence against women in Australia;
- To identify the risk factors associated with non-lethal and lethal violence against women; and
- To identify intervention points – can we prevent violence becoming lethal?



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## Data Sources: Non-Lethal Violence

- International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS):
  - A total of 6,677 women aged between 18 and 69 were interviewed in 2002/2003 using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) questionnaire;
  - Women were asked about their experiences of physical and sexual violence in the past 12 months, 5 years and since the age of 16 by any male intimate partner (current or former) or any other male (other relative, friend/acquaintance or stranger);



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## Data Sources: Non-Lethal Violence

- International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS):
  - Socio-demographic characteristics of victims and perpetrators (age, marital/employment status, minority population status);
  - Characteristics of the most recent incident of partner and non-partner violence:
    - Severity of violence (injury, fear for life);
    - Location of incident;
    - Number of offenders involved; and
    - Alcohol/ drug involvement.
  - Relationship between the victim and offender.



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## Data Sources: Lethal Violence

- National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP):
  - Collects details on all homicides coming to police attention since 1 July 1989;
  - Data Sources:
    - Police offence reports +
    - Post-mortem reports (toxicology results) +
    - Press clippings.
  - Current data sets include:
    - 4,409 incidents;
    - 4,745 victims (1,749 female victims; 37%); and
    - 4,813 offenders.



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## Methods – What I plan to do

- Compare IVAWS and NHMP data over two time periods:
  - Past 12 months (2001/2002); and
  - Past five years (1997/1998 to 2001/2002).
- Use weighted data for IVAWS (by age and geographic area);
- Calculate rates for various incident and socio-demographic factors:
  - Non-lethal violence rates per 100 women;
  - Lethal violence rates per million women.



## Where to from here?

- Any suggestions from the Working Group?







**DISCUSSION: FEMICIDE II**  
**Recorded by Dallas Drake**

**Risk of Death or Serious Injury for Abused African American Women**

**Vance McLaughlin:** Can personality be changed?

**Esther Jenkins:** We're not focusing on batterers.

**Nancy Glass:** It's not an issue of a short fuse.

**Roger Trent:** We're talking about people without options.

**Esther Jenkins:** We're not talking about offenders.

**Roger Trent:** These are women who are underserved in healthcare.

**Esther Jenkins:** I'm not sure.

**Becky Block:** We were looking for women not seen in shelters. Doctors, nurses, etc. are the gatekeepers.

**Roger Trent:** Income looks like it is below West Coast standards.

**Becky Block:** We're looking at women with little material resources who found help anyway.

**Vickie Titterington:** Short fuse is inadvertently used as a justification for violence similar to alcohol use.

**Nancy Glass:** We're really talking about social justice.

**Roland Chilton:** Are you confident about using proxy informants?

**Esther Jenkins:** Some items are more reliable than others.

**Becky Block:** "Don't know" is treated as missing. Proxy methodology is published.

**Roland Chilton:** How comfortable with using proxy data?

**Nancy Glass:** There are some items that are difficult to report, but we use multiple proxies.

**Candace Batton:** Do these women realize how much danger they are in?

**Esther Jenkins:** I don't know. It has a lot to do with their options. That's why public education programs are so important.

**Becky Block:** Jackie Campbell always says, "Ask the woman, she's the one who knows." However, the 11-city study has discovered that some women really do not know how much danger they are in. One solution is to use the Danger Assessment instrument with the woman.

**Lin Huff-Corzine:** Those more trusting could be more likely to be abused.

**Joe Riemann:** Was the number of children taken into account?

**Becky Block:** Yes, a very complex issue, but yes.

**Esther Jenkins:** Step-children in the home tends to increase the risk.

**Dallas Drake:** How did women know that choking was a message?

**Esther Jenkins:** They know.

**Nancy Glass:** It occurs within the context of past abusive behavior.

### **Women's Experiences of Male Lethal and Non-lethal Violence in Australia**

**Roger Trent:** Does data include only intimate partners or all killing of women?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Yes, the data matches up. It would include violence by a stranger as well.

**Dick Block:** Women were much more likely to be victim of robbery close to home. There is really a strong gender relationship of violence near home, even not in intimate partner relationships.

**Jenny Mouzos:** Stranger victimizations are more likely to occur on the street.

**Dave Etnoyer:** Why did assault questions stop being asked at age 16?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Generational violence. I couldn't compare it to national monitoring data.

**Becky Block:** Could you talk about the fear of crime stuff?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Level of fear was associated with former partners. It was related more to fear of the unknown.

**Becky Block:** Was there a question about fear of violence on their own block?

**Jenny Mouzos:** No.

**Roland Chilton:** Did you have data access to police data?

**Jenny Mouzos:** No, it will not be available. Data by memoranda contains names in the raw data.

**Roland Chilton:** Do you have to clear publications with the police?

**Jenny Mouzos:** Courtesy copies are provided to the police. We don't necessarily have to clear it, but more of a courtesy for them to comment on it.

**Becky Block:** We're training people on NIBRS at the ASC. Can you bring data & training to the ASC? We should include it there.

**Vickie Titterington:** Yes, maybe at Orlando as well.



**CHAPTER TEN**  
**POSTERS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND LITERATURE DISPLAYS**  
**Organizer: Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority**

National Database of GLBT Homicide: 1970-2003  
Dallas S. Drake, Joe Shulka and Joseph Riemann

NIJ Resources and Research on Lethal and Non-Lethal Violence  
Kara Emory

Latino Homicide Victimization: The Influence of Ethnic Residential Segregation  
Mark Foxall

Human Evidentiary Remains Detection: The K9 as a Homicide Investigatory  
Instrument  
Mark Marsolais

Resources of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research  
(ICPSR) and the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD)  
Kaye Marz and Wendell Willacy

The Chicago Project for Violence Prevention: Evaluating CeaseFire  
Tim Metzger

Sixth Annual Statistical Report of the Violent Injury Reporting System (VIRS)  
Carrie Nie

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Reports on Child Homicides  
Valerie Pottie Bunge

An Examination of Intimate Partner Homicide in Houston, Texas: 1985-1994 &  
1996-1999  
Victoria B. Titterington and Laura Harper

JRSA'S Incident-based Reporting Resource Center  
Lisa Walbolt Wagner



**NATIONAL DATABASE OF GLBT HOMICIDE: 1970 - 2003**  
**Dallas Drake, Joe Riemann and Joe Shulka**

The Center for Homicide Research will present a preview of the National GLBT Homicide Database. This database is being developed to provide data for analysis of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual homicide incidents. The database currently contains 125 variables on approximately 2,400 cases. Although many of the cases remain uncoded, it is possible to get a sense of what this database has to offer. It is possible for fellow researchers to have input into the selection of variables and coding schema. The database consists of victim, offender, and incident level data elements. It will be displayed on a laptop computer along with a hardcopy of the current code-book.

The Center for Homicide Research (formerly the Minnesota Gay Homicide Study) is an independent, academic, all-volunteer nonprofit organization based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the unique nature of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual homicide through sound empirical research, critical analysis and effective community partnerships. The three-fold goals of the Center for Homicide Research are to increase the solvability of gay homicides, articulate gay homicide issues, and ultimately, to determine what steps can prevent gay homicides from occurring.

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## NIJ RESOURCES AND RESEARCH ON LETHAL AND NON-LETHAL VIOLENCE

Kara Emory, National Criminal Justice Reference Service

### ABSTRACT

The NIJ/NCJRS literature display included single copies of relevant NIJ publications and order forms. These displayed publications are also available online at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij).

### DISPLAY OVERVIEW

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service, one of the most extensive sources of information on criminal and juvenile justice in the world, provides services to an international community of policymakers and professionals. These publications, as well as other criminal justice, juvenile justice and drug policy related materials, are available free to download from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at [www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org) and also from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Web site at: [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij).

Paper copies of the items listed below are available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS). To order, you may call NCJRS at (800) 851-3420 to talk to a publication specialist. Orders of 3 (three) or more documents require prepayment for shipping and handling charges.

### LITERATURE DISPLAYED

The following selected publications are available from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ):

**NCJ199425 Report to the Attorney General on Delays in Forensic DNA Analysis**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/199425.htm>

**NCJ190351 Responding to Gangs: Evaluation and Research**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/190351.htm>

**NCJ188741 Reducing Gun Violence: The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/188741.htm>

**NCJ188740 Reducing Gun Violence: Evaluation of the Indianapolis Police Department's Directed Patrol Project**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/188740.htm>

**NCJ194972 Youth Victimization: Prevalence and Implications**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/194972.html>

**NCJ194197 Using DNA to Solve Cold Cases**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/194197.htm>

**NCJ184482 National Evaluation of the Youth Firearms Violence Initiative**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/184482.htm>

**NCJ188564 Documenting Domestic Violence: How Health Care Providers Can Help Victims**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/188564.htm>

**NCJ184894 An Update on the “Cycle of Violence”**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/184894.htm>

**NCJ186049 Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods— Does it Lead to Crime?**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/186049.htm>

#### **CONTACT NCJRS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

**Email:** [askncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto:askncjrs@ncjrs.org)

**Internet:** [www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org)

**Write:** NCJRS, PO Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000

**Call:** 1-800-851-3420 (Toll free)  
301-519-5500 (Local or international)  
1-877-712-9279 (TTY Service for the Hearing Impaired)  
301-519-5212 (Fax)

## **LATINO HOMICIDE VICTIMIZATION: THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION**

Mark Foxall, University of Nebraska at Omaha

### **ABSTRACT**

According to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the second leading cause of death for Latinos ages 15 to 34 is homicide. For Latinos ages 5-9, homicide is the fourth leading cause of death. Ramiro Martinez (1996) argued that Latinos have been virtually left out of the research on homicide offending and victimization. This study seeks to add to a very limited body of knowledge by examining the influence of ethnic residential segregation on rates of Latino homicide victimization in large California cities for 1999. Latino homicide rates are based on data obtained from The California Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control Branch.

### **RESEARCH EXPECTATIONS**

- Ethnic residential segregation among Latinos will be positively associated with Latino homicide victimization rates.
- Social isolation among Latinos will be positively associated with Latino homicide victimization rates.
- Absolute poverty among Latinos will be negatively associated with Latino homicide victimization rates.
- Economic inequality among Latinos will be positively associated with Latino homicide victimization rates.
- Concentrated poverty among Latinos will be positively associated with Latino homicide victimization rates.
- Measures of residential segregation, social isolation, poverty and concentrated poverty will be higher for blacks than for Latinos. Consequently, blacks will have higher homicide victimization rates than Latinos.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

While much research studying the relationship between race/ethnicity and homicide has focused on economic deprivation, this investigation examines the influence of residential segregation. Two macro-level theories that fall within the structural tradition will serve as the basis for the present study — social disorganization and “social structure and anomie.” Both perspectives take a macro social or community level approach to the explanation of crime and delinquency.

- Concentric Zone Model of City Life (Park and Burgess, 1925)
  - Central business district
  - Zone in transition
  - Zone of workingmen’s homes
  - Residential zone
  - Commuter zone
  
- Social Disorganization Theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942)  
 Poverty, residential mobility, and racial and ethnic heterogeneity —
  - Promote high rates of crime
  - Social Disorganization
  - Ineffective system of local social control
  
- Racial segregation concentrates poverty and influences the growth and development of racial and ethnic underclass populations (Sampson and Wilson, 1995)  
 Social isolation —
  - Structural barriers, and
  - Cultural adaptations
  - Undermine social organization and the control of crime.
  
- “Social Structure and Anomie” (Blau & Blau, 1982; Merton, 1968; Logan & Messner, 1987)
  - Motivational Variant —  
 Segregation produces frustration which results in the emergence of criminal motivations.
  - Social Control Variant —  
 Racial segregation and attendant high levels of anomie diminish a community’s social control network and eventually weaken its ability to defend itself from criminal victimizations.

## DATA

### Data Source

California Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control (EPIC) Branch, Violent Injury Surveillance Program, Linked Homicide File, 1990 – 1999, October 2001.

- The data set contains information on victims and circumstances of 34,584 homicides that occurred in the State of California.
- The information was obtained from the Department of Justice (DOJ) Homicide File and the Department of Health Services (DHS) Vital Statistics Death Record File (32,163 records).
  - The two files were linked using information common to both data sets.
  - Combines the strengths of law enforcement reporting and medical reporting in one data set.

## Units of Analysis

115 California cities with population of 50,000 or more and with at least 5,000 Latinos in 1999

## Variables

- **Dependent Variable**
  - Homicide Victimization Rate
  - White, Black, Latino homicide victimizations per 50,000
  
- **Independent Variables**
  - Residential Segregation
    - Index of Dissimilarity
  - Social Isolation Index
    - The probability that a randomly drawn Latino (or Black) person in a city interacts with another non-Latino (or Black) person.
  - Poverty (Absolute)
    - Race-specific percentage of persons below the federal poverty line.
  - Income Inequality
    - Gini coefficient
  - Concentrated Poverty Index
    - The probability that a randomly drawn poor Latino (or Black) person interacts with another poor Latino (or Black) person.
  
- **Control Variables**
  - Family disruption
    - Percentage of Latino and Black households that are female-headed.
  - Education
    - Percent of Latino (Black) high school dropouts aged 25 and older.
  - City Population (logged)
  - Percent of Latino and Black males ages 15 to 24
  - Percent Latino and Black of the total population
  - Unemployment
    - Percentage of Latinos (Blacks) in the labor force who are not working.
  - Rental Housing
    - The percentage of households that are renters as opposed to home owners.
  - Vacant Housing
    - Vacant housing rate.

## RESULTS: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

This is a work in progress, and only the descriptive analysis has been completed at this point. I would greatly appreciate the feedback, suggestions and comments of the group. For the descriptive analysis, please see Table 1 (Age of Victims), Table 2 (Gender of Victims), Table 3 (Education Level of Victims), Table 4 (Victim/Offender Relationship),

Table 5 (Weapon Used in Homicide), Table 6 (Location of Homicide) and Table 7 (Circumstances of Homicide).

**Table 1**  
**Age of Victims**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Age of Victims**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
<b>15 and Under</b>	<b>14</b> 5.0%	<b>27</b> 6.3%	<b>36</b> 6.3%	<b>77</b> 6.0%
<b>16 - 21</b>	<b>28</b> 9.9%	<b>93</b> 21.8%	<b>190</b> 33.3%	<b>311</b> 24.3%
<b>22 - 34</b>	<b>66</b> 23.4%	<b>174</b> 40.7%	<b>239</b> 41.9%	<b>479</b> 37.4%
<b>35 - 30</b>	<b>104</b> 36.9%	<b>107</b> 25.1%	<b>83</b> 14.5%	<b>294</b> 23.0%
<b>51 and Over</b>	<b>70</b> 24.8%	<b>26</b> 6.1%	<b>23</b> 4.0%	<b>119</b> 9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>282</b> 100.0%	<b>427</b> 100.0%	<b>571</b> 100.0%	<b>1,280</b> 100.0%

**Table 2**  
**Gender of Victims**

**Descriptive Statistics for Gender of Victims**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
<b>Male</b>	<b>191</b> 67.5%	<b>362</b> 84.8%	<b>498</b> 87.2%	<b>1,051</b> 82.0%
<b>Female</b>	<b>92</b> 32.5%	<b>65</b> 15.2%	<b>73</b> 12.8%	<b>230</b> 18.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b> 100.0%	<b>427</b> 100.0%	<b>571</b> 100.0%	<b>1,281</b> 100.0%

**Table 3**  
**Education Level of Victims**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Education Level of Victims**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
Less Than High	64 24.2%	125 29.6%	352 62.1%	541 43.1%
High School Graduate	122 46.0%	210 49.8%	169 29.8%	501 40.0%
1 - 4 Years of College	56 21.1%	83 19.7%	43 7.6%	182 14.5%
More Than Five Years	23 8.7%	4 0.9%	3 0.5%	30 2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>422</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>567</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,254</b> <b>100.0%</b>

**Table 4**  
**Victim/Offender Relationship**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Victim and Offender Relationship**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
Intimate Partner	45 15.9%	21 4.9%	31 5.4%	97 7.6%
Family	26 9.2%	21 4.9%	23 4.0%	70 5.5%
Friend/Acquaintance	57 20.1%	86 20.1%	65 11.4%	208 16.2%
Stranger	73 25.8%	84 19.7%	136 23.8%	293 22.9%
Gang Member	5 1.8%	30 7.0%	102 17.9%	137 10.7%
Unknown Relationship	77 27.2%	185 43.3%	214 37.5%	476 37.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>427</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>571</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,281</b> <b>100.0%</b>



**Table 5**  
**Weapon Used in Homicide**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Type of Weapons Used**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
Firearm	139 49.1%	345 80.8%	455 79.7%	939 73.3%
Knife/Sharp	49 17.3%	41 9.6%	63 11.0%	153 11.9%
Personal	54 19.1%	22 5.2%	36 6.3%	112 8.7%
Missing/Unknown	1 0.4%	2 0.5%	1 0.2%	4 0.3%
Other	40 14.1%	17 4.0%	16 2.8%	73 5.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>427</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>571</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,281</b> <b>100.0%</b>

**Table 6**  
**Location of Homicide**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Incident Locations**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
Residence	148 52.3%	144 33.7%	192 33.6%	484 37.8%
Business, Restaurant	23 8.1%	38 8.9%	48 8.4%	109 8.5%
Outside, Vehicle,	104 36.7%	244 57.1%	324 56.7%	672 52.5%
Other	8 2.8%	1 0.2%	7 1.2%	16 1.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>427</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>571</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,281</b> <b>100.0%</b>

**Table 7**  
**Circumstances of Homicide**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Incident Characteristics**

	White (Non-Latino)	Black (Non-Latino)	Latino	Total
Felony	<b>52</b> <b>18.4%</b>	<b>33</b> 7.7%	<b>40</b> 7.0%	<b>125</b> <b>9.8%</b>
Nonfelony	<b>164</b> <b>58.0%</b>	<b>162</b> 37.9%	<b>210</b> 36.8%	<b>536</b> <b>41.8%</b>
Gang	<b>14</b> 4.9%	<b>106</b> 24.8%	<b>205</b> <b>35.9%</b>	<b>325</b> <b>25.4%</b>
Negligence	<b>1</b> 0.4%	<b>1</b> 0.2%	<b>2</b> <b>0.4%</b>	<b>4</b> <b>0.3%</b>
Justifiable	<b>15</b> 5.3%	<b>28</b> <b>6.6%</b>	<b>26</b> 4.6%	<b>69</b> <b>5.4%</b>
Narcotics (Not OD)	<b>10</b> 3.5%	<b>27</b> <b>6.3%</b>	<b>22</b> 3.9%	<b>59</b> <b>4.6%</b>
Unknown	<b>27</b> 9.5%	<b>70</b> <b>16.4%</b>	<b>66</b> 11.6%	<b>163</b> <b>12.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>427</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>571</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,281</b> <b>100.0%</b>



**HUMAN EVIDENTIARY REMAINS DETECTION:  
THE K9 AS A HOMICIDE INVESTIGATORY INSTRUMENT  
Mark Marsolais, Northern Kentucky University**

*No technology has yet been invented that can beat a properly selected, trained, and managed canine at quickly searching for and locating human remains evidence.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Human remains detector (HRD) canines are sophisticated search instruments that have been utilized in homicide investigations for approximately three decades. They are specially trained canines that are typically paired with expert handlers and are programmed (trained) to locate the organic compounds emanating from a decomposing human body and/or its associated parts (e.g., body fluids, tissue and muscles, bones, teeth, hair). Furthermore, an HRD canine detects evidence that has come into contact with human tissue or fluid such as a knife bloodied by its use in a stabbing. Anecdotal reports and limited research demonstrate that HRD canines are capable of locating a variety of human remains evidence across a wide spectrum of scenarios (e.g., a murder victim dumped in a landfill, a suicide victim hanging in a remote forest, a rape and torture victim buried in a shallow grave, the scattered skeletal remains of a natural death victim in a desert, a bloody cloth dropped a substantial distance from an urban robbery-murder scene).

Generally, an HRD team (handler plus canine) will be part of a law enforcement agency's canine detail or affiliated with a citizen search-and-rescue (SAR) group. Occasionally, an autonomous HRD team — a team that is not associated with a law enforcement agency or a citizen SAR group — can be found. Regardless of the type of team affiliation, there has been a significant surge in the number of HRD canine teams across the nation.

This rise has been fuelled in large part by several converging factors and events. These include: America's continuous love affair with its canines; the public's fascination with forensics and criminal investigations; the media's attention and coverage of mass casualty events (e.g., the Oklahoma City bombing, the Kenyan Embassy bombing, several Turkey earthquakes, the Shuttle disaster, the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks, and the uncovering of mass burial sites in Kosovo, Bosnia and Iraq); and the criminal justice system's increasing reliance on physical evidence in determining guilt or innocence. For many citizens, becoming part of an HRD team is a rewarding way of combining their love of working with dogs with their fascination for crime solving and disaster response. For many law enforcement agencies, having their own HRD teams assisting in criminal investigations and local disaster response has become the norm.

One major shortcoming of the growth in the number of HRD canine teams is the lack of guidelines of what constitutes a capable team. Not all HRD teams perform equally well. Currently, there are no national HRD canine team standards. How, therefore, can criminal investigators determine if an HRD team — whether civilian or police — is competent for assisting in the search for human remains evidence? In short, investigators have to size up the canine, the operator/handler and the team. What follows are some guidelines

that investigators should evaluate when determining whether an HRD team is an appropriate and competent tool for bringing into an evidentiary search.

## **HRD CANINE**

When an investigator or crime scene specialist selects equipment to aid in the investigation of a crime, he has several criteria he wants met. The equipment must be rugged, portable, flexible, and durable. More importantly, the equipment must be valid and reliable. That is, the equipment must accurately and consistently do what it was designed to do. If not, the investigation will suffer. For example, in searching a shooting homicide scene for bullets and cartridge cases, the investigator must have a metal detector sensitive enough to find small metal pieces yet rugged enough to work in heavy undergrowth and inclement weather. A poorly constructed or designed metal detector may break or fail to locate important pieces of criminal evidence. Correspondingly, an investigator must see that an HRD canine meets the same criteria prior to it being used in human remains search work.

First, the investigator should note the breed (model) of the canine. Although dogs from a number of breeds as well as mixed breeds have successfully worked as HRD canines, the most accomplished search canines come from the herding and hunting breeds. German Shepherds, Belgian Malinois, Border Collies, Golden Retrievers, and Labrador Retrievers dominate the HRD field. These canines come from “working” stock; they have been historically bred to be very task-oriented (e.g., locating livestock, hunting for game). This background improves the ability of a canine to transition into search work. Additionally, these breeds are known for their ruggedness and are adept at working across a wide range of climates (e.g., hot, cold, dry, humid).

Second, an HRD canine must be sociable and integrate well with humans. This is very important as HRD teams often work side-by-side with investigators and crime scene personnel. Investigators do not need aggressive canines that expend their energies growling and biting at observers and on-scene personnel. Third, an HRD canine must be enthusiastic about playing. Playing is a very useful tool for the trainer-handler in teaching the range of difficult tasks required of a search dog and it provides a way of relieving stress at search scenes.

Fourth, an HRD canine must be athletic and healthy. Frequently, searches for human remains occur in demanding environments (e.g., landfills, swamps, collapsed structures) that physically tax dogs as well as humans. Larger breed dogs such as Bloodhounds are not as mobile and agile as these dogs; they have trouble moving adroitly through, around and over barriers. Smaller breed dogs, although mobile and agile, expend tremendous energy searching through difficult terrain and may not have the endurance of these medium-sized canines. Injured and ill canines either will quit or will not work efficiently at search sites.

Investigators should only utilize HRD canines with demonstrated confidence and courage. Confidence and courage are often referred to as the nerve strength of a canine. Nerve strength is the ability of a canine to adapt to or overcome stress-producing stimuli found at challenging and chaotic environments and surroundings (e.g., a burial site in a construction zone, a homicide scene next to a busy highway or shopping mall, a collapsed high-rise in an earthquake zone). A timid dog will not search, quit searching or withdraw from a search scene.

Finally, an investigator must utilize an HRD canine that consistently demonstrates that it can locate human remains exclusive of any other material (e.g., dead wildlife, cattle carcass). A specific exercise for observing this criterion is discussed in the **HRD TEAM** section below.

## **HRD OPERATOR-HANDLER**

The handler is the operator/technician on an HRD team. She is a specialist who is responsible for properly training, maintaining, operating and deploying the search tool — the canine. In most cases, the handler is not a forensic specialist. That is, she has not received a formal education in the traditional sciences (e.g., chemistry, biology, physics) associated with forensics. Additionally, she is not usually employed in a forensic or police lab or a medical examiner's office. Nonetheless, she must meet several criteria prior to claiming to be an HRD handler. Additionally, a homicide investigator should only choose an HRD handler who has met these criteria as ultimately a handler has the potential of providing a sworn deposition, appearing before a grand jury, or testifying in criminal court. Her statements may be pivotal in a case and provide the necessary information that leads to an indictment or a conviction.

First, a handler must establish her expertise via a verifiable résumé. In addition to the standard information (e.g., employment history, education), a handler's résumé must contain a comprehensive list of all canine and search-related experiences, training and certifications. These items in the list must include the dates, location, and the organization or agency sponsoring the training, certification, or providing the experience. Information in the résumé should document that the handler has extensive canine training and deployment skills, that she understands the principles of conducting searches across a multitude of circumstances, that she will be a professional and knowledgeable witness in any legal proceedings, and that she has reputable references. The investigative agency requesting an HRD team is responsible for verifying the information in a handler's résumé prior to allowing it onto a search scene. (The requesting agency is also responsible for conducting a criminal history check of the handler.) Failure of an agency to verify a handler's background or criminal history can lead to problems ranging from public embarrassment to jeopardizing the outcome of criminal and/or civil cases.

A handler's training and search logbook is the second most important documentation that an investigator must request from a handler. This logbook must be comprehensive; it should contain an HRD canine's résumé, logs of a team's training, and logs of a team's search deployments. Individual logs of training should contain routine information concerning training periods (e.g., date, time, location); type of training (e.g., known, unknown, evaluation); environmental conditions (e.g., rain, snow, urban, rural); training aids

used (e.g., tissue, blood, bone); and a handler and observer's general and pointed observations of the training session and a canine's performance. Deployment logs should contain information on the requesting agency, the case, type of search, the handler's observation of her canine, and the results of the search(s). The handler must diagram all training and deployment searches. These must be attached to the appropriate training or deployment log.

As a final check of the handler's suitability for working in a human remains search, the lead investigator must interview the handler. An interview gives an investigator a chance to determine if he is comfortable with an HRD handler, especially if she is from outside the agency. Additionally, an interview provides the investigator with an opportunity to clarify any issue raised by a handler's résumé or her logbook. Of particular interest to an investigator are the questions that a handler asks about the case. The majority of her questions should concentrate on the purpose of the search and any tips that could benefit her HRD search strategy. In many circumstances, an HRD handler does not need to know the details of a case she has been asked to assist with. For example, she does not need to know if the police have a suspect in custody — rarely is this information germane to a search for evidence. Finally, if an investigator does not have confidence in an HRD team he can ask the handler to recommend another team. A first-rate handler will not hesitate to provide an investigator with the contacts of several other HRD teams.

## **HRD TEAM**

As previously noted, an HRD team is composed of a canine and a handler. An investigator is charged with screening each for its suitability for a criminal investigation and evidence search. Upon a finding of acceptability for each team component, an investigator should examine the team. The best method for observing a team is for an investigator to set up a search problem or search problems for the team. An HRD handler should not object to an investigatory agency conducting an evaluation of her team. In fact, good handlers will encourage these evaluations. Evaluation searches do not have to be complex and an investigator can locate some suggested scenarios from various certifying canine associations found on the internet.

There are several perfunctory and non-intrusive observations of an HRD team that an investigator can conduct at an evaluation (and at an actual scene). First, the investigator should observe the interaction between the canine and the handler; it must be attentive but relaxed. Both should appear ready to work. The canine should readily respond to a handler's voice; heavy-handed handler corrections suggest that a canine cannot be easily controlled at a search site. A handler should give her canine a bathroom break away from the search area so as not to contaminate it and to acclimate the canine to the general area. The handler should introduce the canine to members of the investigation and brief them on how the canine will work the scene. Finally, the HRD handler should explain her canine's alert once it locates human remains or evidence containing human remains. Because an alert is one of the most important parts of an HRD canine's training and deployment, it bears closer examination.

## **HRD Canine Alert**

An alert refers to the canine's trained response it gives when it has located human evidentiary remains after being commanded to search for them. In essence, this alert is the canine's way of announcing that, "Come here! I found human remains, they are right here!" Some of the more common alerts include: a) the bark alert where the canine actively barks at and around the area of human remains; b) the sit alert where the canine sits immobile adjacent to the human remains; c) the down alert where the canine lays down at the human remains; and d) the dig alert where the canine actively paws at the ground and area where there are human remains. In addition, there are canines that have been trained to give a combination alert such as a down-and-bark or dig-and-bark. Regardless of the alert chosen by the handler, all working HRD canines must have a pronounced and demonstrable one. No canines should be deployed in HRD investigations that have not been fully trained to indicate the discovery of human remains with a solid alert.

By having an alert-trained HRD canine at a scene, investigators (and the victim's family) can avoid the consequences of an unsuccessful, time-consuming, expensive, and disappointing search for evidence. For example, in 1998 a volunteer handler-canine team was brought to an area thought to contain the remains of a rape-murder victim. Although the handler claimed her canine had been fully-trained as an HRD canine, she had never trained the canine to indicate the presence of human remains with a solid alert. The handler informed investigators that when her canine "showed an interest" in an area, it indicated that there was a very high probability that human remains were there. The lead investigator permitted the handler and her canine to conduct numerous searches. During this search sequence, the canine "showed an interest" in two areas: the ground surrounding a burnt stump and a small pond. The stump area was excavated and the pond was drained; no human remains evidence was discovered. Over two days were taken up processing these areas. (Months later, hunters discovered the victim's body over three miles from the "showed-an-interest" search sites.)

Contrast that scenario with the following. In 1999, a local police department requested HRD teams to search a suspicious site; a homeowner contacted investigators after he discovered what he believed to be a burial mound in the back of his thickly wooded property. Two HRD canine teams went to the scene. Both canines were trained to indicate the presence of human remains with very active dig alerts. In independent searches, each canine pawed and sniffed ("showed an interest") around the "burial mound." However, neither canine gave its trained alert at the area or committed to the mound. The investigators examined the mound and subsequently discovered that it was nothing more than a compost heap. The investigation and search was completed within a couple of hours and the investigators and HRD teams returned to service.

## **SUMMARY**

A well-trained canine paired with a knowledgeable and competent handler remains the best hard-to-find human remains search instrument for homicide investigations. Over the past decade, a number of citizen groups and police agencies have established HRD teams. Little is known about the quality of them. And there are no national standards for these canines, handlers and HRD teams. Nonetheless, as with all search and investigation



tools, there are minimum performance and qualification criteria required of HRD canines and their handlers prior to being utilized by investigators. Investigators will be very successful in locating human remains evidence if they employ only those HRD teams that adhere to these criteria.

**RESOURCES OF THE INTER-UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM FOR POLITICAL AND  
SOCIAL RESEARCH (ICPSR)  
AND THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA (NACJD)  
Kaye Marz , National Archive of Criminal Justice Data  
and Wendell Willacy, National Archive of Criminal Justice Data**

**ABSTRACT**

Approximately 110 collections in the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) have data about various aspects of homicide. The NACJD exhibit was a table top display with handouts about the NACJD and available products, with emphasis on resources for research on homicide, such as the recently developed Homicide Data Resource Guide. We explained how to locate these resources, learn more about their contents and structure, and described how to download these data to the researcher's computer for statistical analysis. Some of these data sets are also available on the NACJD Web site for use with an on-line statistical analysis program. These data can be used to answer inquiries about homicide and to create instructional exercises.

The NACJD Homicide Data Resource Guide provides links to homicide-related data collections in three categories: 1) those focused specifically on homicide, 2) those that are about a more general topic but include homicide as one of several offense types or categories, and 3) those about capital punishment in which the offense for which sentences are given is often homicide. The resource guide also provides links to these data collections that are available on the NACJD Web site for on-line analysis. The Homicide Data Resource Guide is located at:

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/HOMICIDE/index.html>

**Contact Information**

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**THE CHICAGO PROJECT FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION:  
EVALUATING CEASEFIRE  
Tim Metzger, Chicago Project for Violence Prevention**

The Chicago Project for Violence Prevention seeks to lower the shooting and homicide rates in seven Chicago communities through a public health approach. This initiative, called CeaseFire, works with a community coalition comprised of a social service or community development agency, police, outreach workers, and clergy. Additionally, public education campaigns are conducted in each target community that focuses on violence prevention.

In an effort to evaluate this initiative, two waves of surveys, in 2000 and 2001, were conducted in five neighborhoods that received intervention, and two comparison communities matched by demographic variables and levels of community violence. Surveys were conducted via telephone with 100 adult (over 25 years old) residents in target and comparison neighborhoods. The survey data suggested that the neighborhood with the greatest amount of intervention was the neighborhood where measures of collective efficacy and violence prevention awareness increased most significantly. Concurrent with these increases in awareness was a 67% reduction in shooting in the neighborhood, as measured by Chicago Police Department data.

The intensity of the CeaseFire intervention varied from community to community. Measures were taken to track the intensity of intervention. This resulted in the creation of a matrix which weights and scores intervention intensity. This intensity was compared with shooting rates in the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention partner communities. Youth outreach is noted as a key component of the intervention as these workers are able to work with a community coalition, provide outreach, distribute public education materials, and interface with other social service agents.

Analysis shows that all four communities that have been working with youth outreach workers have experienced reductions in shootings, from 22 to 67% in the first year, and from 14 to 67% since implementation. Shooting decreases in three of the four CeaseFire zones were larger than those seen in neighboring beats or in comparison communities. In addition, the shooting decreases in all four beats were larger than the change in the city as a whole. These decreases were significantly larger than the neighboring, comparison, and the city in the CeaseFire zone with the most intervention.

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**SIXTH ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE  
VIOLENT INJURY REPORTING SYSTEM (VIRS)  
Carrie Nie, Medical College of Wisconsin, Firearm Injury Center**

Located within the Firearm Injury Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin, the Violent Injury Reporting System of Wisconsin (VIRS) is a model violent fatality surveillance system. For the past decade, the VIRS has collected and connected information for informing prevention and intervention efforts, underscoring the value of linked data in understanding violent injury patterns. As one of the oldest and most comprehensive data systems in the country, the VIRS helped lay the groundwork for a national system currently under development at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**Goal:**

To collect and connect comprehensive, objective information to characterize and understand the scope and nature of violence-related morbidity and mortality.

**Objectives:**

- Provide linked information on violent injuries and fatalities useful for monitoring and comparing the trends and characteristics of violent death.
- Provide data for the development and evaluation of programs and policies intended to reduce violent injury.
- Provide data to those who need to be informed: health and mental health professionals, policy makers, educators, community-based organizations, media representatives and the public.

**Public Health Approach to Violent Injury Reduction:**

The VIRS employs the public health approach to guide data collection efforts. This approach has been used successfully to reduce the incidence of public health problems, such as infectious disease and car crash injuries.

The public health approach begins by exploring and understanding three key aspects of a health problem – the characteristics of the victim, the environment, and the method of injury. The approach proceeds from the identification and analysis of risk factors to the development of strategies and policies for intervention. Upon implementation of programs and strategies to address the problem, a rigorous evaluation is conducted.

The VIRS data are collected from a variety of sources, covering each of the three components of the public health model:

## **Sources of Data**

### **Victim (host):**

Data are primarily from 72 Wisconsin county coroners and medical examiners (C/ME) and the State Vital Records Office. C/MEs provide demographic information on the victim, including toxicological and anatomic findings, and information about the circumstances of the event. Vital Records provides access to information reported on Wisconsin death certificates.

### **Environment:**

Nearly 200 local law enforcement agencies, the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance's Uniform Crime Reporting program (UCR), the Wisconsin Department of Justice's Criminal Information Bureau (CIB), and the Consolidated Court Automation Program (CCAP) all provide access to data. Law enforcement reports contain information that more fully characterize each fatal event in the context of social and physical circumstances. Demographic data on suspects, as well as weapon information and standard UCR data are collected on cleared cases. The CIB and CCAP provide additional data on victim and suspect arrests and convictions.

### **Weapon (agent/vehicle):**

Information on weapon type (e.g., knife, poison, personal instrument such as fists) is collected for all cases of violent death. Additional information is gathered to characterize the firearms associated with fatal outcomes. Law enforcement agencies contribute information on all cases of violent deaths. With the assistance of the Wisconsin Department of Justice, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) provides information on a gun's first retail sale, including first purchaser, and time and point of first purchase. These data expand the reporting system's capabilities by delineating firearm ownership, and the amount of time between gun purchase and the fatal event. In addition, the two Wisconsin Crime Laboratories (located in Madison and Milwaukee) are consulted on all firearm homicide cases for more specific information on manufacturer, model, caliber, barrel length, magazine capacity, importer, and safety features. Information is also obtained on casings and bullets submitted to the crime lab in connection with each firearm fatality.

## **The Future of the VIRS**

In 2003, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) received funding from the CDC to coordinate the collection of violent injury data in Wisconsin. DHFS is working with the VIRS in this effort and has created the Wisconsin Violent Death Reporting System (WVDRS). The VIRS is specifically working to provide DHFS with comprehensive, timely data from local law enforcement, coroner's and medical examiners, Uniform Crime Reports, and crime labs for all violent deaths occurring in 2004 and beyond.

In addition to the collaboration with the DHFS, the VIRS continues to provide academic leadership in the development of comprehensive, objective, accurate information and analysis of violent injury deaths. The VIRS benefits from additional data linkages to criminal history and firearm trace data sources, further establishing a leadership role in linked data.

## **Putting the Data to Work**

Accurate, timely and comprehensive information helps public health officials, public safety, medical professionals, community groups and policy makers to:

- o Improve the efficient and accurate sharing of violence-related information.
- o Inform the development and implementation of targeted violence prevention initiatives.
- o Evaluate the effectiveness of violence prevention efforts.
- o Identify successful prevention efforts that can guide resource allocation, legislative initiatives and community-level policies.

## **Contact Information**

For additional information about the Violent Injury Reporting System, contact the Firearm Injury Center at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

telephone: 414-456-7676

or Email: [fic@mcw.edu](mailto:fic@mcw.edu).

Click here <http://www.mcw.edu/fic/doc/virsar04.pdf> to access the annual statistical report that was presented at the 2004 Homicide Research Working Group meeting.





## THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS REPORTS ON CHILD HOMICIDES

Valerie Pottie Bunge, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics  
Statistics Canada

The Canadian Center for Justice Statistics develops and implements statistical surveys and special studies to collect data on all aspects of the criminal justice system in Canada.

The Homicide Survey has been collecting detailed information on all homicide incidents, victims and accused since 1974. Police departments across the country complete a survey questionnaire following each homicide incident. In accordance with Canadian law, the Homicide Survey classifies criminal homicide as first-degree murder, second-degree murder, manslaughter or infanticide. Deaths caused by criminal negligence, suicide, or accidents or those that have been defined as justifiable homicides are not included. Every year, a Juristat is released, *Homicide in Canada*, which highlights the findings from the Homicide Survey.

There are many areas of research which can be explored using the Homicide Survey. This year, the focus of the HRWG poster was on children — defined as those under 12 years of age. Highlights from the poster included the following:

- The overall rate of homicides involving children declined in Canada between 1976 and 2002, this was the case for both boys and girls;
- The vast majority of homicides involving children were solved throughout the 1976-2002 time period;
- Children were most likely to be killed by parents as opposed to other family members, acquaintances or strangers;
- As children age they are less likely to be killed by a parent;
- Parents were most likely to kill their children out of frustration, anger and despair;
- Children were most likely to be killed by physical force versus being shot or stabbed;
- Children under one are at highest risk of homicide.

Savoie, Josée (2003). *Homicide in Canada – 2002. Juristat*. Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE Vol. 23, no. 8. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Pottie Bunge, Valerie (2001). *National trends in intimate partner homicides, 1974-2000. Juristat*. Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE. Vol.22 no. 5. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Wallace, Marnie (2003). *Crime statistics in Canada, 2002. Juristat*. Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE Vol.23, no 5. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

*Family Violence in Canada: Statistical profile 2003*. Catalogue 85-224-XIE. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.



# **AN EXAMINATION OF INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDES IN HOUSTON, TEXAS: 1985-1994 & 1996-1999**

**Victoria B. Titterington, University of Central Florida  
and Laura Harper, Sam Houston State University**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines intimate partner homicide that took place in Houston, Texas during the years 1985-1994 and 1996-1999, to detect trends in their incidence as well as in the Spousal Sex Ratio of Killing (SROK).

Our analysis indicates the following:

1. As has been true nationally, the number of intimate partner homicide incidents in Houston has decreased from the mid-1980s to the late-1990s.
2. However, due to the decline in overall homicides during the latter period, the proportion of homicides that were between intimates actually increased.
3. Another finding of note between the 1985-94 and the 1996-99 period is that the Spousal Sex Ratio of Killing decreased dramatically in the latter period.
4. However, the SROK for common-law and cohabiting couples was significantly higher than for couples in registered marriages.
5. Compared to 1985-1994, the percentage of women committing all types of homicides increased during the 1996-1999 time period, while the percentage of women who killed their spouses decreased by almost half.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

- 1) Though not directly measured in this study, our findings regarding the significant reduction in women killing spouses supports those hypotheses that speculate that the increase in the number of:
  - domestic violence shelters and programs,
  - mandatory arrest policies, and
  - victimless prosecutionare giving women the ability to escape rather than kill in abusive situations.
- 2) The higher levels of lethal violence in non-married couples calls for continued, more detailed analysis.



**JRSA's INCIDENT-BASED REPORTING RESOURCE CENTER**  
**Lisa Walbolt Wagner**

JRSA's Incident-Based Reporting Resource Center is supported by the Bureau of Justice Statistics to provide comprehensive information on accessing and using incident-based reporting data for the analysis of crime and reporting of justice statistics. The goal of the Center is to facilitate the use of state incident-based reporting (IBR) systems and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) by crime analysts, researchers, and other justice professionals. The Center seeks to put practical analytical information and tools into the hands of analysts who want to work with incident-based data, and to provide a forum where analysts can exchange information and ideas about using IBR data. Please visit the site and provide feedback on what information you'd like the Center to provide in order to assist you in using incident-based data.

**Contact Information**

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**APPENDIX A  
PROGRAM OF THE 2004 HRWG WORKSHOP, ANN ARBOR, MI**

**HOMICIDE RESEARCH WORKING GROUP  
*Annual Summer Workshop***

***Conference Theme:  
"Linking Data to Practice in  
Homicide/ Violence Prevention"***

**Annual Summer Workshop**

**Ann Arbor, Michigan  
June 3-6, 2004**

**Thursday June 3**

**5:00-7:00 p.m. Registration** (first floor of the Michigan Union, adjacent to the Michigan Union courtyard)

**5:30 p.m. Reception** (hot & cold hors d'oeuvres and beverages in the courtyard; Alternately this will be held in an adjacent room if weather is inclement.)

**7:00 p.m. Opening Panel Presentation** (Michigan Union Courtyard)

***Session Chair:*** *Kaye Marz National Archive of Criminal Justice Data*

Linking Data to Practice in Homicide/Violence Prevention: The View from the Field.

*Detroit: David Martin, Wayne State University College of Urban, Labor and Metropolitan Affairs*

*Australia: Jenny Mouzos National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology*

*Chicago: Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority*

**Roundtable Discussion**

*Moderated by Kaye Marz, National Archive of Criminal Justice Data*

***Recorder:*** *James Noonan, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Analysis Research and Development Unit*

**Friday June 4**

**8:30 a.m. Announcements, Introductions**



**Friday, June 4 (continued)**

**9:00 a.m. Panel Presentation – Lethal and Non-Lethal Robbery**

*Session Chair: Candice Batton Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha*

A Preliminary Report on Subgroup-Specific Homicide and Robbery Offender Rates for 1980, 1990, and 2000

*Wendy C. Regoeczi, Cleveland State University*

*Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts Amherst*

Modeling the Travel Patterns of Chicago Robbery Victims and Offenders

*Richard Block, Loyola University of Chicago*

*Recorder: Kim Vogt, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse*

**10:00 a.m. Break**

**10:15 a.m. Poster-Demo-Literature Display Session**

*Session Chair: Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority*

**Literature Display/ Computer Demo: National Database of GLBT Homicide: 1970 - 2003**

*Dallas S. Drake, Joe Shulka and Joseph Riemann, Center for Homicide Research*

**Literature Display: NIJ Resources and Research on Lethal and Non-Lethal Violence**

*Kara Emory, National Institute of Justice (not attending)*

**Poster: Latino Homicide Victimization: The Influence of Ethnic Residential Segregation**

*Mark Foxall, University of Nebraska Omaha*

**Literature Display: Resources of the ICPSR and NACJD**

*Kaye Marz and Wendell Willacy, National Archive of Criminal Justice Data*

**Poster, Literature Display: A Strategic Effort to Reduce Homicides in Chicago**

*Tim Metzger, The Chicago Project for Violence Prevention*

**Literature Display: Firearm Injury Center Annual Data Report**

*Carrie Nie, Firearm Injury Center, Medical College of Wisconsin (not attending)*

**Literature Display: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Reports on Lethal and Non-Lethal Violence**

*Valerie Pottie Bunge, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics*

**Poster: Changes in Intimate Partner Homicide in Houston, Texas: 1985-94 and 1996-99**

*Victoria B. Titterington, University of Central Florida and Laura Harper, Sam Houston State University (not attending)*

**Literature Display: JRSA's Incident-Based Reporting Resource Center**

*Lisa Walbolt Wagner, Justice Research and Statistics Association (not attending)*

**11:45 Noon Lunch** Anderson Room

**1:00 p.m. Panel Session – Femicide I**

**Session Chair:** *Jenny Mouzos National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology*

Strangulation as a Risk Factor for Intimate Partner Femicide

*Nancy Glass, Oregon Health & Science University*

*Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing*

*Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority*

*Jane Koziol-McLain, Auckland University of Technology (not attending)*

*Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research (not attending)*

*Ginger Hanson, Oregon Health & Science University (not attending)*

Extent and Perpetrators of Prostitution-Related Homicide

*Devon D. Brewer, Interdisciplinary Scientific Research*

*Jonathan A. Dudek, Private Practice (not attending)*

*John J. Potterat, independent consultant (not attending)*

*Stephen Q. Muth, independent consultant (not attending)*

*Donald E. Woodhouse, Lock Haven University (not attending)*

Do Gender, Race, and/or Class Affect the Variance in Femicide Rates in Large U.S. Cities?

*Jo-Ann Della-Giustina, City University of New York Graduate Center*

**Recorder:** *Vickie Titterington, University of Central Florida*

**2:30 p. m. Break**

**2:45 p.m. Business Meeting**

**Friday, June 4 (continued)**

**3:45 p.m. Panel Session – Crime Theory**

**Session Chair:** *Chris Dunn, College of Health and Human Sciences, Bowling Green State University*

Can Criminal Histories be Used to Predict and Prevent Homicide?  
*James Noonan, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Analysis Research and Development Unit*

Crime-scene Message Construction: Exploring Offender Use of Symbolic  
*Dallas S. Drake, Center for Homicide Research*

**Recorder:** *Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida*

**Saturday June 5**

**8:30 a.m. Announcements**

**8:45 a.m. Panel Session – Linking Data to Practice**

**Session Chair:** *Esther Jenkins, Chicago State University & Community Mental Health Council, Inc.*

Merging Research and Practice: An Examination of Contract Killings in Australia

*Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology*

*John Venditto, South Australia Police (not attending)*

“It Sounded Like a Good Idea”: Linking Questionable Data to Practical

*Patrick D. Walsh, Loyola University – New Orleans*

*David R. Kent, Loyola University – New Orleans*

*William Thornton, Loyola University – New Orleans*

Perceptions and Procedure: A Quantitative Analysis of Gay Homicide Case Solvability for the City of Minneapolis (1989-1999)

*Joseph A. Riemann, Center for Homicide Research*

Using NIBRS Data to Study Homicides Cleared by Arrest

*Lynn A. Addington, American University*

**Recorder:** *Joe Shulka, Center for Homicide Research*

**10:45 a.m. Break**

**Saturday, June 5 (continued)**

**11:00 a.m. Roundtables (Keunzel Room)**

**Session Chair:** *Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts Amherst*

*Linking data to practice – Intimate-partner homicide research and prevention*  
*Moderated by Nancy Glass, Oregon Health and Science University*  
*Recorder: Esther Jenkins, Chicago State University & Community*  
*Mental Health Council, Inc.*

*Linking data to practice - Issues in data and measurement*  
*Moderated by Tom Petee, Auburn University*  
*Recorder: Kim Vogt, University of Wisconsin at La Crosse*

*Linking data to practice - NIBRS*  
*Moderated by Roland Chilton*  
*Recorder: Wendy C. Regoeczi, Cleveland State University*

*Linking data to practice – Terrorism & Weapons*  
*Moderated by John Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation*  
*Recorder: Dallas Drake, Center for Homicide Research*

**12:30 Lunch**

**2:00 p.m. Business Meeting**

**2:45 p.m. Break**

**3:00 p.m. Panel Session – Historical Homicide**

**Session Chair:** *Richard Block, Loyola University, Chicago*

*Police Homicides: An Exploration of Historical Periods that Correspond*  
*Steve Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska*  
*Candice Batton, Department of Criminal Justice, University of*  
*Nebraska-Omaha*

*Modern U.S. Healthcare Serial Killings*  
*David R. Kent, Loyola University – New Orleans*  
*Patrick D. Walsh, Loyola University – New Orleans*

*The Atlanta Ripper: Fact or Fiction*  
*Vance McLaughlin, University of North Carolina – Pembroke*

**Recorder:** *Kim Davies, Augusta State University*

**Saturday, June 5 (continued)**

**4:30 p.m. Poster-Demo-Literature Display Session (as above)**

**4:30 p.m. -- Tour of ICPSR lab**

*Kaye Marz and Wendell Willacy, National Archive of Criminal Justice Data*

**Sunday June 6**

**9:00 a.m. Panel Session – Lethality**

**Session Chair:** *Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority*

Lethal and Non-lethal Violence Rates: To What Extent Are Trends Related Over Time?

*Candice Batton, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska-Omaha*

*John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation*

The Gun and the Knife: Weapon Instrumentality and Homicide Revisited

*Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida*

*Lin-Huff-Corzine, University of Central Florida*

*John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation*

*Janice E. Clifford Wittekind, Auburn University*

*Greg S. Weaver, Auburn University*

*Thomas A. Petee, Auburn University*

**Recorder:** *Steve Wilson, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska*

**10:00 a.m. Panel Session – Femicide II**

**Session Chair:** *Nancy Glass, Oregon Health and Science University*

Risk of Death or Serious Injury for Abused African American Women

*Esther J. Jenkins, Chicago State University Chicago State University & Community Mental Health Council, Inc.*

*Carolyn Rebecca Block, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority*

*Jacquelyn Campbell, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing*

Women's Experiences of Male Lethal and Non-lethal Violence in Australia

*Jenny Mouzos, National Homicide Monitoring Program, Australian Institute of Criminology*

**Recorder:** *Dallas S. Drake, Center for Homicide Research*

**11:00 a.m. Special Demo – K-9 and Cadaver Dogs**  
(*fountain area near Regent's Square*)

Human Evidentiary Remains Detection: The K9 as a Homicide Investigatory  
*Mark Marsolais, Northern Kentucky University*



**APPENDIX B  
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ICPSR, ANN ARBOR, MI**

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