

Victims as Offenders

The Paradox of Women's Violence in Relationships

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RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS
New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London

Langsdale Library
University of Baltimore
1420 Maryland Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21201

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Miller, Susan L.

Victims as offenders : the paradox of women's violence in relationships / Susan L. Miller.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8135-3670-5 (hardcover : alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-0-8135-3671-2 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Family violence. 2. Victims of family violence. 3. Abused women. 4. Female offenders. I. Title.

HV6626.M543 2005

362.82'92—dc22

2005002573

A British Cataloging-in-Publication record for this book is available from the British Library

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Manufactured in the United States of America

Chapter 2

The Controversy about Women's Use of Force

UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, women can be as aggressive as men (Bandura 1973; White and Kowalski 1994). There is a vast difference, however, between aggression and violence used in self-defense against an aggressor. The removal of the violent behavior from its context creates inaccuracies. Yes, some women hit. Some women use force in ongoing relationships or against former partners. There is no denying that women share some of the same base emotions with men: anger, jealousy, revenge. Women cannot be essentialized as the feminine, delicate counterpoint to men's masculine, aggressive self; this image belies reality and disempowers women by denying them access to use force legitimately under certain circumstances. However, the key questions surrounding women's use of force are contextual: What are a woman's motivations? What are the consequences of her violence? How do her understandings and use of violence differ from those of her (male) partner or former partner? And ultimately, what are the best ways to respond to her use of force, particularly if the meaning differs from men's use of force?

This chapter explores several bodies of literature along these lines. First, it examines the methodological, measurement, and conceptual issues that complicate the study of battering within interpersonal relationships. Second, it summarizes the literature on domestically violent women, drawing from studies that examine aggression, arrest, and treatment groups. In addition, the chapter considers issues unique to women with different race, class, and sexual orientation backgrounds.

The Gender Symmetry Argument

Once contextual factors are made clear, most of the empirical evidence to date demonstrates that gender symmetry in the use of interpersonal violence is a fallacy. While women do engage in using force, its use is very different from men's violence in terms of injury and motivation. There simply are not an equal number of battered wives and battered husbands. Yet this rancorous debate continues. A number of studies conducted by prominent scholars, endlessly rehashed and misinterpreted, continue to flame the fiery debate about mutual combat and are trotted out whenever one wants to suggest that women are equally or even more violent in relationships than are men. For instance, findings from two major reviews of the literature that look at seventy-nine and fifty-two studies respectively demonstrate that men and women are equally violent in relationships (Fiebert 1997; Archer 2000). These two studies received considerable media attention and challenged the focus of the battered women's movement on female victims of male violence, despite criticism about the conceptualization, operation, and interpretation of the studies' results (Whire et al. 2000).

Support for or against the mutual combat hypothesis is shaped by the type of methods used in the research as well as by the ideological positions of the researchers making the assertions; in fact, the debate gets downright acrimonious at times. The clearest way of assessing these different perspectives is to examine three types of research: the studies in the family violence perspective; the national crime victimization surveys; and the studies characterized as the feminist perspective.

FAMILY VIOLENCE PERSPECTIVE

Researchers in the family violence perspective tend to view abuse as incorporating a range of behaviors nested within a family constellation. Thus, family violence could include acts occurring between spouses, between parents and children, and between siblings. Given this wide range of possibilities, it is not surprising that many acts of violence are counted. The media sensationalizes evidence of mutual combat between husbands and wives without exploring who initiated the violence, if the violence was committed in self-defense, if injuries resulted from the violence, or if the nature of violent acts differed by gender (Osthoff 2002; Saunders 2002; S. Miller 2001).

The finding of mutual combat takes on a polemical cast in that researchers argue that the political focus should shift away from violence committed by men against women and that resources should be devoted to funding male victims and female violence prevention programs (Moffit and Caspi 1999;

Pearson 1997; Farrell 1999; Fiebert 1997, 1998). Anti-feminist men's groups ride on their coattails, arguing that there is strong evidence of husband battering by wives that gets ignored or trivialized when it comes to framing the issues or dedicating resources and funding support. They support shelters for battered men and reeducation of the criminal justice system so that prosecutors and judges become more cognizant of the violence wielded by women.

There is a powerful backlash force present in the debate that views the controversy surrounding female arrests as proof of gender bias against male victims that has been minimized or denied by the feminist advocacy movement (Burrroughs 1999; Cook 1997; Pearson 1997; see also Messner 1998 and Savran 1998 for alternative views). Some men's rights groups claim that society is reluctant to believe that women are violent toward their male partners, and that "militant" and "victim" feminists drop their support for mandatory arrest laws when they sweep up women (Blumner 1999, 1; S. Miller 2001). This antifeminist stance is strongly supported by men's rights groups, the male members of which are typically joined by their second wives (Hart 1999; S. Miller 2001). As Michael Kimmel (2002, 1354) suggests, "It is an indication of the political intentions of those who argue for gender symmetry that they never question the levels of violence against women, only that the level of violence against men is equivalent. Their solution, however, is not more funding for domestic violence research and intervention but to decrease the amount of funding that women receive, although they never challenge the levels of violence against women." Men's backlash groups share uneasy alliances with conservative and right-wing women's organizations as well as with some feminist writers such as Katie Roiphe and Naomi Wolf who reject feminist emphases on victimization because these views reinforce traditional gender views of women as passive and fragile.

Exploring men's accounts of their use of violence in relationships reveals a great deal about these men's denial of responsibility, minimization of harm, and rationalization of their abusive behavior (Dobash and Dobash 1998; Hearn 1998; Ptacek 1990). Qualitative research that analyzes men's narrative descriptions of their violence finds that violence is used to punish partners who do not fulfill unspoken physical, sexual, or emotional needs (Anderson and Umberson 2001) or to graphically demonstrate that they are "men" in charge (Hearn 1998). Anderson and Umberson (2001) contend that relationship violence itself is a vehicle through which masculine identities are constructed. Using a sample of arrested men mandated to batterer treatment programs, they focus on listening to how differently the men discuss their own violence and that of their female partners and how these descriptions are linked to men's understandings of appropriate masculine and feminine behavior. For instance, men "depicted their violence as rational, effective, and explosive

whereas women's violence was represented as hysterical, trivial, and ineffectual" (p. 363). To confirm their masculine status, the men constructed their own use of violence as more lethal and fear-generating, whereas women's violence displayed innate incompetence. The men refused to try to understand their partners' motivations and resisted any efforts to change the relationship. Moreover, Anderson and Umberson found that when the men did claim their partners were controlling, the men were unable to specify any examples of this behavior, "suggesting that these claims may be indicative of these men's fears about being controlled by a woman rather than the actual practice of their partners" (p. 368). Finally, Anderson and Umberson's research revealed various ways that men tried to deflect criticism: by claiming they were victims of gender policies within a criminal justice system that is biased toward women, and by chivalrously protecting their woman from arrest, despite their self-proclaimed innocence. The willingness of the men to erase all victimization or perpetration was telling; by constructing the idea that the justice system is biased against them, the men could excuse their own arrests and maintain the fiction of being rational, strong, and nonviolent.

Most of the family violence studies that claim evidence for gender symmetry rely on the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) empirical measure of domestic violence. In fact, fifty-five of the seventy-nine studies in Fiebert's review (1997) and seventy-six of the eighty-two in Archer's review (2000) relied on this measure. (Other studies in Fiebert's review offered no data or concentrated their study on dating violence patterns of young couples not married or cohabiting.) Hence, it is appropriate to examine the CTS-related measurement issues more fully here. The suggestion of "mutually violent couples" originates from the findings of three nationally representative surveys of households of married or cohabitating heterosexual couples that ask respondents about family violence in the context of conflict resolution techniques (Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz 1980; Gelles and Straus 1988; Gelles 2000). These are important studies for the light they shine on what was going on "behind closed doors" (as one of their book titles suggest), despite the limitations of the data (discussed subsequently).

Murray Straus and his colleagues developed the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) and the revised version, the CTS2 (Straus et al. 1996) to explore family violence. Its opening paragraph, read to respondents, captures the socially palatable way of making individuals feel comfortable telling strangers about their private lives:

No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with the other person, or just have spats of

fights because they're in a bad mood or tired or for some other reason. They also use many different ways of trying to settle their differences. I'm going to read some things that you and your (spouse/partner) might do when you have an argument (Straus 1990, 33).

The CTS2 contains thirty-nine questions about violent and nonviolent behaviors, each perpetrated and experienced, with finer distinctions made about minor and serious violence than the original CTS and an effort to include items that attempt to measure the consequences of violent events (Iovanni 2006). Despite the measurement improvements associated with the CTS2, the scale continues to be criticized for counting violent events without providing information on the meaning and motivation of the event; i.e., it does not distinguish aggressive or instigating violence from self-defensive or retaliatory violence (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 1998).

Relying on quantitative survey responses that use large random national or community samples is problematic on a number of levels. First, without distinguishing between the contexts, the results provide the false impression that intimate violence is committed by women at an equal or higher rate than by men (Dobash et al. 1992; White et al. 2000). These results are reported in work by Straus and his colleagues using the 1975 and 1985 National Family Survey as well as in findings reported in the National Youth Survey data reports (Morse 1995); both surveys rely on the CTS to measure domestic violence. For example, a man's "punch" may result in much greater injury than a woman's, yet both are rated as "severe violence" using the CTS. A specific illustration of this measurement difficulty is provided by Anderson and Umberson (2001), whose research found that 61 percent of the sample in which respondents reported "mutual" violence actually show something very different:

We started pushing each other. And the thing is that I threw her on the floor. I told her that I'm going to leave. She took my car keys, and I wanted my car keys so I went and grabbed her arm, pulled it, and took the car keys away from her. She—she comes back and tried to kick me in the back. So I just pushed her back and threw her on the floor again. (pp. 362–363)

Thus, without specifying contextual factors, merely counting violent acts would lead one to a false assumption of gender symmetry.

Second, when respondents are asked to simply check a box to indicate if they ever "hit or tried to hit," "shoved," "pushed," or "grabbed" their partner, checking this designates that person as a perpetrator, regardless of the motivating

circumstances (such as self-defense) or whether it happened only once.¹ Thus, many researchers argue that this way of gathering data "erroneously portray[s] the gender similarities by exaggerating women's use of IPV [intimate partner violence]" (Melton and Belknap 2003, 335). Counting acts without attributing motivation is insufficient; it does not distinguish between how violence is used instrumentally, to control or achieve subordination, or used expressively with an absence of attempts to dominate or terrorize one's partner.

Third, self-report data suggest that a reliability issue is present in large national quantitative studies in that men underreport their use of violence (Campbell 1995; Dobash et al. 1998; Motse 1995) while women underreport their own victimization (Melton and Belknap 2003). When women are asked questions over the phone, as is the typical method employed with the national studies, women minimize or underreport their victimization experiences due to fear of reprisal, shame, or embarrassment, thinking the abuse is too minor to list, and not understanding that abuse is a crime (Melton and Belknap 2003). In addition, abusers might be present when the victim participates in the survey, which could affect the victim's disclosure, or victims might not trust interviewers who pose such personal questions (Smith 1994).

Fourth, as Kimmel (2002) suggests, it is important to examine what is excluded in the CTS measures, namely injury and sexual assault. While the measures of mild violence in the CTS find fewer gender differences in the use of violence, greater gender differences are found as violence (and injury) grow more serious. Women are six times more likely to need medical care for their injuries (Kaufman Kantor and Straus 1987) and more than ten times as many women report that their partners beat them up (Tjaden and Thoennes 1998). Four percent of murdered men are killed by their current or former intimate partners compared to about one-third of murdered women. (Bachman and Saltzman 1995). Yet the consequences of intimate violence are often not revealed in the CTS measures. In addition, battered women also face a wide array of health problems that are not directly related to physical injury (and thus not included in the CTS measures). These include clinical depression, sexually transmitted infection, gastrointestinal disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and frequent urinary tract and vaginal infections (White et al. 2000). White and her colleagues (2000) are especially critical of psychologists, such as Archer (2000), who endorse the "mutually" or equally violent position because it minimizes female victims' more serious injuries and "deflate[s] the momentum of efforts to change the structural conditions that support violence against women" (p. 693). In terms of sexual assault, the National Violence Against Women Survey reveals that 7.7 percent of female respondents were raped by

their intimate partners (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000c), yet the category of "sexual coercion" is not included in the original CTS, the basis for a huge number of studies that examine gender symmetry.

Another excluded category identified by Kimmel (2002) is violence perpetrated by ex-partners and ex-spouses. The national crime victimization statistics that show that the intimate violence perpetrated against women by their former partners or spouses is eight times higher than rates for married women (Bachman and Saltzman 1995; see also Greenfeld et al. 1998). Some scholars feel that excluding former spouses and partners grossly underestimates the extent of interpersonal violence, perhaps by as much as one-third (Ferrante et al. 1996; Kimmel 2002). Failing to include the full extent of injuries, sexual assaults, and violence committed by former intimates casts serious doubt on the veracity of what the CTS measures.

Another way to challenge the gender symmetry perspective is to examine why female victims are disproportionately represented at battered women's shelters and hospital emergency rooms (Kimmel 2002). Advocates of the family conflict perspective believe that the absence of male victims demonstrates the humiliation or shame men would feel in admitting to police or hospital personnel that they had been beaten by their wives. However, existing data suggest otherwise: "Men who are assaulted by intimates are actually more likely to call the police, more likely to press charges, and less likely to drop them" (Ferrante et al. 1996, cited in Kimmel 2002, 1345). Calling the police to report women's violence may indicate a greater likelihood of men's vindictiveness than real victimization. "If men underestimate their own violence and overestimate their victimization while women overestimate their own violence and underestimate their victimization, this would have enormous consequences in a survey that asks only one partner to recall accurately how much they and their spouses used various conflict-resolution tactics" (Kimmel 2002, 1346).

Finally, the CTS fails to address the importance of fear and its role in understanding battering dynamics. Women may fear death or serious injury if their male partners, who are on average larger and stronger, are violent, whereas men may not experience fear until much more serious violence occurs, usually with weapons, and even when this occurs, men's fear is only temporary. As found in research by Hamberger and Guse (2002) and others (Barnett and LaViolette 1993; Barnett, Lee, and Thelan 1997; Hamberger and Lohr 1989; Jacobson et al. 1994), inducing fear is "the primary mechanism through which violent partners achieve control" (Hamberger and Guse 2002, 1301). It is a given that victims who fear injury or death will acquiesce to their partner's demands.

A directive from the American Association of the Advancement of Science (Lerch 1999) admonishes researchers who present findings in ways that

are too easily misunderstood and misapplied and might engender incorrect policy assumptions:

First, scientists must be sensitive to the implications of their work for the larger society and take steps to educate their non-scientist readers about the relationships of their work to the broader community. . . . [Members should] communicate the findings of controversial research in a way that anticipates its impact on policy, or more generally on the lives of people. (p. 3)

Given the interpretation problems inherent with the context-free nature of the CTS, it would behoove family violence researchers to rethink their "mutual combat" hypothesis.

NATIONAL VICTIMIZATION SURVEYS

National victimization surveys measure the extent of crime victimization using nationally representative samples. Two of the well-respected ones are the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAW) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Compared to the family violence studies, these studies conducted or sponsored by U.S. federal agencies reveal dramatic differences in rates of intimate violence, lending strong support that the gender distribution is asymmetrical.

The NCVS, conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics, is a nationally representative survey of forty-five thousand representative households comprising ninety thousand people. All members of the sample households age twelve and over are interviewed every six months for three years, and both in-person interviews (the first and fifth interviews) and telephone interviews are conducted (Iovanni 2006). The survey asks respondents about many types of criminal victimization, including violent intimate victimization. A revised version of the NCVS asks respondents directly about rape and violence in the context of intimate and other relationships rather than depending on respondents themselves revealing the context as in earlier studies (Bachman and Taylor 1994). As might be expected, improved question formats and wording resulted in higher estimates of domestic violence and sexual assault than in the earlier national crime surveys (Bachman and Saltzman 1995). The data showed that women reported six times as many incidents of violence as men did (Bachman and Saltzman 1995). While the results of the NCVS are certainly revealing with respect to female victimization, researchers are well aware that the context of criminal victimization could result in lower response rates for questions about intimate violence experiences, which respondents are reluctant to view as crimes (Iovanni 2006).

In an effort to address this reporting problem, The National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAW) was conducted in the context of personal safety. The survey relied on data from sixteen thousand households (eight thousand men and eight thousand women), and was sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Tjaden and Thoennes 1998, 2000a, 2000b). The NVAW revealed that men used physical assault at three times the rate at which women used physical assault (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000b). Findings also included higher rates of domestic violence (IPV) for both rape and physical assault than the rates reported by the NCVS survey. Part of the reason is that the NVAW survey was framed within the context of personal safety and conflict resolution, thus sensitizing respondents to IPV questions; in addition, the NVAW uses a wider range of behaviors that meet the definition of rape in most states, and its questions and cues are also worded so that there is a higher probability of eliciting responses about intimate assault (Bachman 2000).

These national victimization studies fill in the gaps identified in the family violence studies because they include a wider range of assaults, such as sexual assaults and violence committed by former intimate partners. While they tend to find lower rates of battering than other studies, this is due to underreporting by respondents who may not perceive or report events as crimes, or due to the inclusion of household respondents over the age of twelve, which includes a younger age group less likely to have high rates of domestic assaults. Lower rates could also reflect respondents' fears of retaliation, since all family members are interviewed (DeKeseredy 2000; Gelles 2000).

With a more complete understanding of what studies measure and what they leave out, the persistence of gender asymmetry remains. We can acknowledge that women use violence without confusing the issue by a pretense that women's violence is as injurious or frequent as men's violence. As demonstrated by the national victimization surveys that correct for some of the measurement issues that plague the family violence studies, the notion of gender symmetry is simply not borne out by the data.

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Feminist studies strongly dispute the conclusions reached by family violence scholars. Similar to the findings highlighted in national victimization surveys, feminist studies contend the contrary: interpersonal violence is a profoundly gendered phenomenon, and overwhelmingly women are targets of men's use of force. Rather than relying on national samples, these studies are most likely to be drawn from battered women's shelter samples, clinical samples, hospital

samples, and police reports. Overall, the research findings indicate that men commit battering against their current or former female partners much more often than being victims of battering (Dobash et al. 1992; Johnson 1995; McLeod 1984; Saunders 1986). These findings of gender asymmetry are consistent with those reported by national crime survey data (i.e., victimization data that uses national probability sampling—see Dobash et al. 1992; Rennison and Welchans 2000; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).

How can this wide discrepancy between the family violence perspective and the feminist perspective be explained? First, the methodological problems described earlier that are associated with the CTS/CTS2 are resolved by discerning the contextual factors related to the use of force within ongoing or former relationships. Qualitative instruments designed to elicit rich, detailed answers from respondents reveal a great deal about the different motives, meanings, and consequences that violence poses for men and women. Even the revised CTS2 does not effectively measure contextual factors, leading family violence researchers to mischaracterize and misrepresent the role of gender in violent relationships.

In contrast to the view expressed by the family violence perspective, feminist research reveals that when women do use force, their use is most likely in self-defense, in order to escape, or in an attempt to fight back (S. Miller 2001; S. Miller and Meloy 2005; Barnett, Lee, and Thelan 1997; Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Hamberger et al. 1997; Hamberger and Potente 1994; Saunders 1986, 1988; Browne 1987; Dasgupta 1999; Dobash and Dobash 1992; Hamberger 1997; Sommer 1994; Vivian and Langhinrichsen-Rohling 1996) or to escape an imminent attack on their children (Dasgupta 1999). A number of other studies revealed other motivations for women's use of force, such as retaliation, punishment for past hurt, expression of anger, stress, or frustration, or to gain emotional attention (Bachman and Carmody 1994; Dasgupta 1999; Faith 1993; Hamberger and Potente 1994; Hamberger et al. 1997). These reasons may not qualify as legitimate uses of violence in self-defense. However, the motivation for use of violence is gendered: men tend to use force to control and exercise power over their partners. Obviously, this goal results in women's higher levels of fear and intimidation. Women, on the other hand, tend to use force to express emotion, to escape violence, or to defend themselves or their children. Women are more likely to be injured and, in fact, hold a greater fear of physical injury (Morse 1995). The consequences for female victims are far more injurious and life threatening overall than for male victims (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). Women are more likely to be killed (Fox and Zawitz 2000). Even when violence is used by women, it does not mean

that women have control over their partners or inspire fear (Dasgupta 1999). As Worchester contends (2002, 1403): "It is crucial to keep asking who is afraid and who is not safe. . . . We know women can be effective at using emotional control, but whether it takes on the same level of threat to safety and whether the other person lives in constant fear may be a major difference between male and female use of emotional control." Dasgupta's research (1999, 2002) found that women were more motivated to achieve short-lived control over their immediate situation, while men's desire was to establish widespread authority for lengthy periods of time. Thus, women's violence rarely produces fear while men's violence often does (S. Miller 2001).

Michael Johnson's work distinguishes between four distinct patterns of domestic violence, patterns that address the degree of control that motivates the use of violence (Johnson 1995; Johnson 2000; Johnson and Ferraro 2000). *Common couple violence* encompasses relationships in which both partners use violence in a specific situation and the violence is of relatively low frequency, unconnected to control and unlikely to escalate or involve serious injury. The *intimate terrorism pattern* is one in which violence is one tactic used in a general pattern of control and is more frequent, less likely to be mutual, and more likely to escalate and result in serious injury (also called patriarchal terrorism in Johnson 1995). *Violent resistance* is used primarily by women and is not motivated by control. In relationships characterized as *mutual violent control*, both partners are violent and vying for control; this is considered to describe a very rare pattern. Research demonstrates that women rarely are the batterers in relationships (in Johnson's terminology, *intimate terrorists*) even if they—and many do—engage in hitting their partners (Dasgupta 2002; Hamberger and Guse 2002; Johnson and Ferraro 2000; Kimmel 2002; Stark and Flitcraft 1988).

Johnson's critique (1995) of the CTS-generated findings focuses on the distinction between two types of couple violence. Common couple violence is not controlling, but rather "consists of occasional outbursts of violence from either partner in response to everyday stimulus" (Johnson 1995, 285). Johnson notes that common couple violence is "less a product of patriarchy and more a product of a culture that tolerates violence" and "it rarely escalates into serious, sometimes even life-threatening, forms of violence" (p. 285). Johnson contrasts this with intimate or patriarchal terrorism, a form of terroristic control of women by male partners. He argues that this form of violence is a "product of patriarchal traditions of men's right to control 'their' women," and is more serious, occurs over a longer period of time, and is more likely to include economic subordination, threats, and isolation in addition to the systematic use of violence (p. 284). Johnson concludes that national probability- or community-based samples measure common couple violence,

or expressive violence, while shelter, hospital, police, or clinical studies measure patriarchal terrorism violence. Moreover, he believes that these different kinds of samples measure almost non-overlapping phenomena (p. 286), which sheds light on the discrepancy between large-scale survey results, such as the Strauss and colleagues' National Family Violence Surveys, and the results from research conducted with people encountered by public agencies.

Thus, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that gender symmetry does not exist once researchers look beyond quantitative survey responses and tap into motivations and consequences of violence by gender. Male-perpetrated violence against women is more prevalent, serious, and consequently needs most of the available resources to combat it. Despite the empirical proof, however, the debate continues to rage. The unacknowledged result of this renacious debate is a shift of focus away from social structural factors and toward pinpointing individual pathologies. Regardless of the source, it is clear that the trend toward the increased reluctance in arresting women for domestic violence offenses coincides with the seemingly unresolved question of gender symmetry. Findings from studies that examine the type of violence used by women who have been arrested for domestic violence, and often sent to batterer treatment programs, will be illuminating.

Women's Use of Force

No coherent literature on women's use of force is available to guide effective treatment and policies. Of what little there is, Lynn Dowd's work (2001) offers a summary of the state of the discipline's knowledge about partner violence perpetrated by females. Although feminist theories of domestic violence typically focus on heterosexual couples and exclude lesbians (Renzetti 1999), a number of studies have been conducted with lesbians, with findings that indicate that the prevalence of violence equals or exceeds that of heterosexual couples (Walner-Haugrud, Gratch, and Magruder 1997; Margolies and Leeder 1995; Renzetti 1992). However, making generalizations about lesbians' use of force is fraught with problems, given that the samples are typically small and collected from clinical settings or lesbian bars or events, and over-sample white and middle-class women. The studies also suffer from the use of unclear definitions of what constitutes abuse and methodological issues related to sampling: the samples are nonrandom due to the invisibility of lesbians as a whole and that lesbians have to explicitly identify themselves and disclose their sexual orientation to be included in a study (Perilla et al. 2003; see also Burke and Follingstad 1999; Turrell 2000; Giorgio 2002).

Despite feminist domestic violence theories' erasure of lesbian or same-gender² violence, it is critical to include this research in the discussion here because the roots and impact of same-gender violence is similar to heterosexual partner violence.³ Domestic violence, whether heterosexual or homosexual, demonstrates unequal power held by partners. As Elliott (1996) contends, "The routine and intentional use of intimidation tactics in relationships is not a gender issue but a power one" (cited in Perilla et al. 2003, 20). Further, as "sexism creates an opportunity for heterosexual men to batter women, homophobia creates an opportunity for people in same-gender relationships to batter their partners" (Perilla et al. 2003, 20). Issues related to self-acknowledgment of being gay and the related disclosure risks with family, employment, and other social situations make it more difficult for victims to seek help. In addition, the source of power in same-gender relationships differs from that found in heterosexual relationships: "Whereas in heterosexual relationships gender is overwhelmingly the defining factor, power in same-gender couples may be a function of one or more variables interacting with one another, such as education, class, work status, ethnicity, earning potential, immigration status, and age" (Perilla et al. 2003, 20).

Looking at same-gender intimate violence assists in dismantling the "mutual battering" debate in that assessment and counseling tools deliberately look beyond gender to address other victim and perpetrator distinctions. As Nancy Worcester (2002) states, "Unlike those working on heterosexual domestic violence, people working on lesbian intimate violence have always had to look at how any behavior can be used as power and control, how any behavior can be used as a survival tactic, and the fact that victims may well identify as abusers" (p. 1401). Contextualizing intimate violence—whether heterosexual or same-gender—makes paramount the inclusion of a host of factors, both personal and societal, that help us understand the use, motivation, and consequence of violence.

More general research conducted on domestic violence makes clear that battered women are often survivors of childhood abuse and adult sexual victimization as well as the current abuse that led to their arrest. Using work by Walker (1984), Russell (1986), and Chu and Dill (1990), Dowd (2001) argues that women who experience sexual victimization in childhood have a much greater risk of re-victimization as an adult. Trauma is cumulative, and repeated exposure to victimization could increase levels of anxiety, depression, dissociation, and sexual problems. Moreover, Dowd (2001) explicates that there is a link between traumatized women and post-traumatic stress disorder, which manifests in "hypervigilance and intense physiological reactivity when exposed to internal or external cues associated with traumatic events" (p. 85). This

link does not excuse women's behavior, but helps to explain why women may use violence against an abusive partner when unprovoked in that immediate situation.

Dowd suggests that the link can exert a grave effect on women's ability to self-regulate their emotions, such as anger and aggression, which is exacerbated under circumstances that elicit memories of past abuse (p. 85):

Van der Kolk (1996) notes that significant changes occur in stress hormone secretion, leading to a condition of chronic hyperarousal for some trauma survivors. This may result in a compensatory emotional shutdown, causing emotions to lose their function of alerting the woman to the need for adaptive action to manage internal or external events. She may then disregard the information, freeze, or overreact (Litz and Keane 1989).

Other researchers have looked at the links between various measures of trauma, anger, and distortion of reality based on studies with combat veterans, female survivors of incest, and substance abuse (Dowd 2001). Preliminary findings suggest that for many battered women, the use of force is indicative of coping or survival strategies; those women who have longstanding and extensive trauma histories may be more vulnerable to anger arousal. Less research has been conducted on how drugs or alcohol affects female aggression; in fact, most alcohol-related research in general has been conducted in laboratory settings with student samples. However, since there is evidence that childhood victimization may be related to subsequent substance abuse in women, this may be a fruitful avenue of inquiry given the strong relationship between battered women and prior victimizations (Najavits, Weiss, and Liese 1996; B. Miller, Downs, and Testa 1993).

Women Arrested for Domestic Violence

Who are the women most likely to commit intimate violence that warrants police attention? To date, only a small number of studies have addressed this issue. Overall, the findings of these studies suggest that unlike men, women tend not to have histories of arrests for domestic violence offenses (Busch and Rosenberg 2004; Martin 1997). Police scholars are well aware that police arrest decisions reflect a range of factors beyond the actual behavior of citizens and the parameters of law (Black 1980). Smith (1987) found that a history of previous calls to the police result in participants being twice as likely to be arrested. Citizen demeanor affects arrest decisions, with the likelihood increasing if one is disrespectful to police (Worden and Pollitz 1984), or if there is

noticeable drug or alcohol use (Smith 1987), or if the victim's preference is for the perpetrator to be arrested (Buzawa and Buzawa 1993; Gottfredson and Gottfredson 1988). Women who deviate from traditional gender norms of femininity or passivity are also at greater risk of arrest for domestic violence (Visher 1983); for instance, young, black, rude women are more at risk of arrest than older, white, calm women who are deferential to police authority (Visher 1983).

In relation to the debate about dual arrests, the questions are: What determines arrest? Joint violence where both individuals are aggressors? Self-defensive action? Inadequate police training? Strict adherence to following mandatory arrest laws? A number of studies have begun to look at these questions. Martin's findings (1997) from a Connecticut study suggest that for the women arrested, the police were unaware of the women's arrest background. But she speculates that once a prior arrest record exists, police may be predisposed to arrest both the man and the woman since the violence was already flagged. Thus, arrest could happen even if one of the parties was not the primary perpetrator. It may also be the case that arrest samples reflect people who use more frequent and severe forms of violence so they are already well known to the police.

Martin's (1997) groundbreaking work on dual arrests deserves a little more attention. Three months after the state of Connecticut instituted mandatory arrest (with no primary aggressor protocol and no state policy about a defense against arrest for self-defensive action), she culled all family violence cases for six months, which resulted in a stratified sample of 448 cases in which 134 were dual arrests, or 30 percent. She matched these cases with court, police, and prosecutor files to gain a fuller understanding. In terms of prior victimization in a domestic violence incident, only 2 percent of the male suspects in dual arrests had been victimized previously, while 40 percent of the female suspects in dual arrests were. Unfortunately, this information was available after the fact; there was no way for police to obtain records at the time of arrest. Martin also found that white couples were more likely to be arrested in dual arrests, speculating that the police identify more with white male defendants and try to neutralize the effects of arrest by performing dual arrests. Most of the police knew that dual arrests result in *nolle prosequi* (no prosecution) in the courts, so perhaps they were not worried about arrest consequences. Moreover, Martin contends that "the arrest of white, unmarried and employed women may also be an attempt to punish some women for fighting back, for acting contrary to expected female norms" (p. 153).

Martin's findings highlight concerns about the appropriateness of dual arrests. If the female "offenders" were really battered women who rely on the police

for help because the police are often their only resources, arresting a woman who acted in self-defense may reinforce her isolation, helplessness, and self-blame (Martin 1997). Dual arrests could deter women from calling the police to intervene in future incidents. In fact, Pagelow (1981) found that a lack of help from police resulted in the violent relationship lasting longer, while Brown (1984) found that the more helpful the police, the more it facilitated higher levels of self-worth in victims.

A series of studies conducted by Hamberger and his colleagues have addressed the motivations of women's use of force using samples of arrested women mandated to domestic violence counseling programs. With a sample of 51 women, Hamberger (1991a) found that 56 percent of the arrested women used violence in self-defense or retaliation. If the women indicated they used violence to control their partner, their narratives revealed that they did so in a preemptive manner in order to protect themselves from an imminent attack.

Hamberger, Lohr, and Bongce (1994) looked at the reasons given by 75 women and 219 men court-ordered for evaluations prior to beginning domestic violence counseling. They used the CTS to measure the level of violence in the relationships, but added this question: "What is the function, purpose, or payoff of your violence?" (p. 41). They found that women's reasons revolved around defensive action, escape from his restraint, and retaliation for prior physical violence or psychological battering when there was a history of such abuse. Men, on the other hand, used violence to assert dominance, to control women's verbal or physical behavior, to vent anger, or to demand attention. No men reported use of violence for reasons of self-defense, escape, or retaliation for past physical violence. These findings are consistent with other studies.

Saunders (1986) interviewed women in battered women's shelters and found that although 83 percent of them reported the use of at least minor violence sometime in the duration of their relationship, 78 percent used minor violence in self-defense and 71 percent used severe violence in self-defense.

Cascardi, Vivian, and Meyer (1991) interviewed thirty-six married couples (each partner seen separately) who experienced violence in their relationships and found that 58 percent of women who used violence did so in self-defense while only 5 percent of the men used self-defensive action; more than half the men used violence to control their partner. Barnett and Thelen (1992) report the same findings: male batterers used violence to control or punish their partners while the majority of women used violence in self-defense.

In Wisconsin, Hamberger and Potente (1994) found that most women arrested for domestic violence and court-mandated for treatment were battered

women who used self-defensive or retaliatory violence against abusive males. The treatment intervention for the women focused on issues of victimization and oppression. From a sample of sixty-seven women, only three of the women were initiators or primary perpetrators. Several years later, Hamberger (1997) sought to further understand contextual factors that might contribute to women's violence. He found that 49 percent of the fifty-two women in his sample had been in a previous battering relationship, and over half had been exposed to violence between their parents as a child. About a third of the women revealed that they had a history of sexual abuse. In these women's experiences, males were clearly the initiators and primary users of violence in the relationships, but the women did report initiating violence some of the time. The women provided reasons such as: self-defense and protection; expression of tension or feelings; to get the other to shut up or stop nagging; to retaliate for a previous assault or to get a partner to talk. The context is missing for these women's stories of aggression, so it is unclear when some responses that seem controlling on their surface might be a function of self-preservation. As an interesting observation, in this Wisconsin study women "offenders" were placed in the same programs as women victims.

In another Wisconsin study, Hamberger and Guse (2002) explored the similarities and differences across three clinical samples: men and women court-ordered to a batterer intervention program, and women residing in a shelter. The most striking finding was the vast difference observed in the pattern of violence: men controlled the overall dynamics of the relationships, exhibiting more dominant behavior, while women tended to be reactive victims, not primary abusers or batterers who exerted fear and control over their partners. So, although women may become active participants when violence unfolds, they do not control their partners or the situation. Hamberger and Guse's findings are similar to other studies that show battered women are fearful but not passive (Holtzworth-Munroe, Smutzler, and Bates 1997) in that women respond with active resistance by fighting back or defending themselves (Johnson and Ferraro 2000; Saunders 1986).

Shamita Das Dasgupta (1999), a leading scholar on this issue, brilliantly articulates five gender differences in tactics and effects of violence in intimate relationships. With regard to the first tactic of hattering, *intimidation*, men use multiple ways to cause fear, including glances, action, and gestures, with or without accompanying them by the threat or actual use of physical and sexual violence. Women, on the other hand, rarely cause fear in men "by sheer acts of looking, gesturing, or behaving in a particular way. This may be due to the fact that very few women can consistently hack up nonphysical threatening conduct with the potential of severe physical violence" (p. 203).

Men can use *isolation*, the second tactic, to curtail women's contact with friends, family, and neighbors, and to prevent partners from working, going to school, or joining organizations. While a woman might wish to limit her partner's contact with people outside the relationship, she rarely can gain total control over his actions.

The third tactic, *economic control*, is easily exercised by men who often are the primary wage earners and financial decision makers; even women with incomes do not wield as much weight in financial autonomy or decision making, particularly when their incomes are meager or viewed as supplementary.

Men use their *personal power*, the fourth tactic, as a way to claim authority over all family or household decisions, and view this as their personal prerogative because they are male. Women tend to acquiesce more to men's authority and are less able to reproach his authoritarianism due to female socialization experiences that emphasize passivity.

Finally, in regards to the last tactic of *sexual abuse*, men are able to engage in marital rape and sexual assault as "weapons of terror," while women could "withhold sexual access and favors to manipulate their partners, [but] this denial hardly has the same impact as a violent sexual assault" (p. 203). These gender-differentiated tactics demonstrate the limited ability women have to control or intimidate their male partners without resorting to the use of force.

In Dasgupta's study (1999) of thirty-two women court-ordered to treatment programs in four cities, she found that the most consistent reasons women gave for their actions was to protect themselves. Yet, during her interviews with the women, she uncovered ten other reasons that women gave to explain their use of violence against their partners: to halt further abuse; to retaliate; to save their self-worth and stand up for themselves; to get some attention from indifferent partners; to gain a semblance of control over a situation that was about to erupt in violence; to force him to take responsibilities for household chores or childcare; to facilitate respect in a situation when a partner was paying attention to another woman; to exact revenge for his mistreatment of her; to retaliate when he had assaulted their children, family members, or pets; to stand up for themselves since they were taught not to be vulnerable (Dasgupta 1999, 206–208). Most of the reasons go beyond simple self-defense claims and instead suggest a constellation of expressive responses to the insidious, damaging consequences of male violence. Women want to end the immediate violent situation; batterers use violence to terrorize and control women in an on-going fashion. None of the women in Dasgupta's sample felt that their violent behavior inspired fear in their partners or controlled their partners' behaviors, a finding consistent with prior studies (Barnett, Lee, and Thelan 1997; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Neidig, and

Thorn 1995; Morse 1995; Russell et al. 1989). If we go back to the original definition of battering that I provided in chapter 1, that it encompasses a systematic pattern of intimidation and control that creates fear and victim subjugation, then women's use of violence is qualitatively different the violence used by men.

In another interesting study, Melton and Belknap (2003) examine gender asymmetry in battering using both quantitative and qualitative data collected through pretrial services, police-completed forms, and prosecutor information in a sample of 2,670 misdemeanor domestic violence cases (p. 337). They found that 86 percent of the arrests involved male offenders, supporting research that shows that men are more likely to be perpetrators (R. P. Dobash et al. 1992; Johnson 1995; McLeod 1984; Saunders 1986). In addition, Melton and Belknap found that the men were more likely to have past domestic violence arrest records, while the women were more likely to be arrested in dual arrest cases than arrested as the sole offender. This finding lends support to self-defense explanations of women's use of force (Barnett, Lee, and Thelan 1997; Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Hamberger et al. 1997; Hamberger and Potente, 1994; Saunders 1986). Men were also more likely to make threats to victims and prevent their partner from calling 911.

Another finding from the same study revealed that the women were more likely to hit male victims with an object, strike with a vehicle, or bite. While this could be misinterpreted to suggest that women use just as serious forms of aggression as men, the authors believe that the finding lends support to the idea that men use their bodies to exact violence while women need objects to equalize force. "Thus, it may be that female defendants may be using other weapons, such as available household items, as a means of 'leveling the playing field' once abuse has been perpetrated against them" (p. 344). Indeed, women were more likely to cause scratches while men were more likely to cause bruises.

In particular, Melton and Belknap found that in the qualitative description of cases from the police narratives, gender differences were more emphatic in narratives than in the quantitative data. The qualitative data revealed that men used more detailed and hostile threats than women, and men were more likely to threaten their partners with violence if they cooperated with police or courts. If one were to only examine the quantitative data, this kind of intimidation would not be discovered. Moreover, the police narratives captured a string of abusive actions by men, while only documenting one or two acts by women. Female victims also reported greater fear, a finding consistent with past research (Barnett, Lee, and Thelan 1997; Cantos, Neidig, and O'Leary 1994; Morse 1995).

In sum, Melton and Belknap contend that "the differences between the quantitative police data and the qualitative data are important, whereas male and female actions may appear similar when simply checking boxes for hit, slapped, punched, and so forth, looking more closely, those actions may be qualitatively different for men and women" (p. 343). Thus, their findings aptly demonstrate the problems encountered by relying extensively on officially collected checklists that are solely quantitative. Qualitative data augments the checklist accounts of violence, finding significant gender differences in both the context and also the amount of violence. Their findings lend support to the feminist perspective on gender asymmetry in battering.

Using a sample of forty-five men and forty-five women arrested for domestic violence and mandated to a treatment program as a condition of probation in northern California, Busch and Rosenberg (2004) further examined gender similarities and differences in current and prior use of force, as well as substance use and injury levels. They used criminal justice records, which provided third-party views of the severity and degree of injury, as well as whether the violent acts were isolated incidents or part of a long pattern of abuse. While this jurisdiction is pro-arrest, it discourages but does permit dual arrests, and all offenders in the sample were arrested as primary perpetrators. As part of their sentence, the men and women were required to be on probation for three years, a sentence that included meeting weekly with their probation officers, doing community service, paying a fine, and attending a yearlong domestic violence intervention program. The participants were similar demographically across age, marital status, education and employment measures (although women earned less than men). Men were more likely to have a prior history of battering; more than half the men and about a third of the women had a domestic violence arrest history. Men used a greater number of severely violent tactics, but 90 percent of the sample overall used severe violence. Interestingly, there were no differences in levels of extreme to severe injury. Busch and Rosenberg account for this by the fact that women used a weapon or object, but men were able to use just their bodies alone to inflict serious injury.

When police arrived on the scene, 24 percent of the women, compared to 7 percent of the men, reported or showed evidence of abuse by their partner. Prior records also revealed gender differences: men were more likely to have committed at least one prior nonviolent crime and they were much younger than women when they did commit their first crime. However, men and women shared a range of problems in addition to battering (p. 54). Both men and women had experience with prior violent episodes outside of the home. Twenty percent of the men and 13 percent of the women had committed at

least one violent crime; women's prior crimes were related to street fights, prostitution, and substance abuse. Many of the men and women appeared to be under the influence of an illegal substance when arrested (67 percent of women, 78 percent of men).

While the women were overall less likely than the men to have a history of domestic violence offenses, almost a third of the women had been arrested previously for a prior assault (p. 54). Similarly, in Marrin's research (1997) on dual arrests, she found that primary perpetrators were more likely to have past domestic violence arrests than mutually aggressive parties (40 percent of men, 19 percent of women). Likewise, Busch and Rosenberg believe primary perpetrators might use more frequent and severe violence than mutually violent partners, which may attract police attention or precondition police to attribute responsibility as a primary perpetrator if a prior arrest exists. Since the women reported and displayed more signs of being abused by their partners, it may be that the women were acting in response to their partner's violence and thus were not necessarily "pure" perpetrators. Moreover, Busch and Rosenberg found that:

Whereas men generally committed several acts of severe violence against their partners, women tended to use severe violence once, such as throwing a glass. In this study, men's violence was more consistent with the portrait of the male batterer who uses violence to dominate and terrorize his partner, whereas women generally fit the picture of a self-defending victim, someone who uses violence in the context of anger and conflict, or a combination of the two. Taken together, our findings are consistent with other research findings (e.g., Swan and Snow 2002) that although some domestically violent women are primary aggressors, most are victims who are defending themselves or partners in mutually combative relationships. (p. 55)

Other research reveals that there are significant differences in the context and quality of violence used by women and men. As Lyon (1999, 257) contends, looking at "who hit" only reveals one aspect of the incident, and in order to fully understand the complexity of the whole context, the "why and the how" need to be studied. Even Straus, the champion of the CTS (1993, 78), admits that men "typically hit or threaten to hit to force some specific behavior on pain of injury," while "a woman may typically slap a partner or pound on his chest as an expression of outrage or in frustration because of his having turned a deaf ear to repeated attempts to discuss some critical event" (see also Mullender 1996).

Using data collected from both partners from a sample of 199 military couples mandated for domestic violence treatment, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Neidig, and Thorn (1995) found that although both husbands and

wives used violence in 83 percent of the cases, the husband's violence was more severe, the husbands were less likely to be injured, and the husbands were far less likely to report any fear of their wives (see also Jacobson et al. 1994, 44).

In a study mentioned earlier in the chapter, Hamberger, Lohr, and Bonge (1994) examined the motivations for violence with 75 women and 219 men who were arrested and court-referred to domestic violence counseling programs. They asked respondents, "What was the function, purpose or payoff of your violence?" Women's answers revealed that they used violence as self-defense, as protection from or retaliation for prior physical violence and psychological battering, or to escape violence. In other words, when women used violence against their partners, it was almost always in response to the batterers' violence. Men, on the other hand, used violence as a means of control and domination over their female partners. It is important to note that sometimes, women may be the first to use violence as a tactical strategy to avoid getting hit (Bowker 1983; Feld and Straus 1989) or in response to perceived threats of physical or sexual violence (Browne 1987; Hamner and Saunders 1984).

One effort to address the situation typical of battered women who use violence was a national study of Canadian dating violence in which DeKeseredy et al. (1997) modified the CTS to include questions about the use of self-defense and protection, fighting back when the respondent is not the first to use violence by using preemptive violence before the partner actually attacked or threatened to attack. Their findings indicate most women use violence in self-defense or in fighting back; consistent with other studies discussed above, their data offer no support for the gender symmetry thesis (DeKeseredy et al. 1997).

Recent research also suggests that there may be racial or cultural differences in how women respond to their violent partners. For instance, African-American women may more often use violence (such as threats, slaps, hitting, and throwing objects at partner) against their intimate male partners in response to experiencing severe physical and sexual aggression (such as choking or attempted rape) and psychological abuse (West and Rose 2000). In a study comparing white and black women, black women were more likely to fight back when physically assaulted (Moss et al. 1997; see also Clark et al. 1994). Black women may be more likely to fight back due to a "long history of physical abuse and oppression, both within their homes and in the larger society, [so] they had to be prepared to defend themselves" (West and Rose 2000, 488). However, black women often minimize their victimization due to their investment in perceiving themselves as capable of self-defense (Ammons 1995; Harrison and Esqueda 1999). It may also be possible that people who live in

disadvantaged neighborhoods and experience the stress of poverty and racism may use violence as a survival strategy in self-protective measures. This may also indicate that African-American women have an overall greater risk of victimization due to more limited options and resources inherent in their marginalized socioeconomic status. Overall, the studies that examine racial differences are similar to the earlier studies reported in that they demonstrate that women's use of violence is typically reactive or protective, while men's use of violence is consistent with power-control patterns of abuse.

The evidence of racial differences notwithstanding, some commentators remain unpersuaded and maintain a gender-neutral stance, arguing that all violence and assault, regardless of the context in which the violence occurs, constitutes criminal behavior independent of an assailant's gender. They further argue that policies that fail to hold women accountable for violence they perpetrate should not be endorsed (Lyon 1999, citing Straus 1993). However, as Lyon asserts, the danger that men face occurs when women "resort to violence when they are left (or believe they are left) with no alternative ways of escaping from the damage that male violence does to them." Clearly, this is not the same danger faced by women.

The research literature reviewed here leaves little ambiguity with respect to the following factors. First, women's use of violence is most often related to their partners' violence. Women resort to violence mostly for self-defensive reasons, in order to escape an attack against themselves or their children, or in response to men's previous abuse. Second, measurement choices confound the issue, with family violence researchers measuring "common couple" violence which is not gendered and unconnected to power and control dynamics. When context is taken into account, violence is significantly gendered, with men more likely to use violence as one tactic in a general pattern of control that causes greater fear and injury for women. Third, women are much more likely to be injured in violent relationships. And finally, the contours of violence vary by differences across race, social class, and sexual orientation.

Discussion

In a fascinating study of political magazines and men's magazines, Berns (2001) reveals that discussions of woman battering contained within are reframed to be portrayed as "human violence." Gender is removed from the framing and discussion of the problem, which obfuscates the role of gender and power in battering (p. 265). This erasure makes it easy to ignore the structural factors that foster battering. Concomitantly, after "de-gendering" violence, the magazines' themes focus instead on women's culpability, resulting in

blame that is gendered. For instance, Berns (2001) contends that the ways that blame is gendered include: "(1) highlighting women who are abusers, (2) holding female victims responsible for their role in their own victimization, (3) critiquing the social tolerance for women's violence but not for men's violence, and (4) blaming battered-women advocates" (p. 269). This strategy is reminiscent of that used by advocates of the family violence perspective to argue that men and women are equally violent.

It is clear from the studies and methodologies reviewed in this chapter that statistics can be manipulated in order to serve different agendas. Perhaps the most accurate approach to discerning whether or not the gender-symmetry argument holds water is to accept the nonpartisan findings of the national victimization surveys. They provide a middle-of-the road approach to resolving the debate, not being fully without context as is the family violence perspective, or directly attributing battering to patriarchal systems of power and control, as endorsed by the feminist perspective. The findings reported from the national victimization surveys provide strong support for the position that the gender distribution of violence is asymmetrical, with men responsible for a much greater share of domestic violence offenses.

What this literature review also underscores is the importance of conducting research that triangulates the data collection so that multiple perspectives can be evaluated. The studies reviewed in the latter part of this chapter that focused on women who have been arrested on domestic violence charges are important in telling the story. But the studies are limited by their coverage of select parts of the full process. By analyzing results from a police ride-along study, in-depth interviews with criminal justice professionals and social service providers who work directly with arrested women, and observing the female offender's program developed to treat arrested women, the present study will be better able to address questions about women's violence and appropriate policy responses to the soaring numbers of arrests and the development of treatment programs nationwide. The following chapter introduces the research project and pays particular attention to the research site and methods of data collection and the philosophy of the female offender's treatment program.