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Introduction

There have been sweeping changes in policy and practice on violence against intimate partners since the 1960s. New laws, policies, programs, and research funding have all shaped the extant literature on this topic as well as the contours of violence itself. As the other chapters in this collection have illustrated, violence against intimate partners is pervasive in the United States. This violence comprises emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, including lethal and sublethal attacks against current and former partners and their friends, family members, acquaintances, and bystanders. The research literature has expanded rapidly since the 1980s, and every conceivable aspect of violence has been investigated. A substantial portion of the contemporary research literature is devoted to the policies and interventions that affect intimate partner violence. This chapter will first review key policy changes that have shaped interventions in violence against intimate partners. Second, it will map major areas of research on policy and intervention in violence and abuse. Finally, it will propose directions for future research.

Interventions/Policies

The Violence against Women Act is the most visible and influential policy on violence against intimate partners in the United States. According to the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) web site:

> In 1994, the US Congress enacted the Violence against Women Act (VAWA), a comprehensive legislative package focused on violence against women. The VAWA recognized the devastating consequences that violence has on women, families, and society as a whole. It also acknowledged that violence against women requires specialized responses to address unique barriers that prevent victims from seeking assistance from the justice system. (United States Department of Justice, n.d.)

The DOJ notes that, "Since the passage of VAWA, there has been a paradigm shift in how the issue of violence against women is addressed in communities throughout the nation" (Office on Violence against Women, 2012). Indeed, the cultural status quo has shifted from dismissing or ignoring violence against women to publicly condemning violence against women and men by their intimate partners.

While the criminal and civil laws against assault, harassment, threats, and homicide have always applied to both women and men, the VAWA allocated resources based in large part on the pervasive problem of inequitable implementation of the law when the perpetrator of violence was a woman's male intimate partner. Other factors contributing to the recognition of the need for resources targeted to women included: women's higher rates of poverty, greater entrapment in abusive relationships, demonstrated unmet demand for services, higher risk of injury, and disproportionate risk of death due to violence perpetrated by an intimate (Dragiewicz & Lindgren, 2009).

The VAWA passed and was easily reauthorized with bipartisan support in each instance since 1994. However, unprecedented levels of resistance to the reauthorization of the law were part of Republican re-election campaigns in 2012. Conservative commentators have suggested that the VAWA is a "smear tactic" created to make it look like Republicans support violence against women. For example, Goodman claimed that the latest iteration of the VAWA is "a transparent, politically motivated attempt to provoke Republican opposition to the VAWA and allow the left to claim the GOP supports violence against women" (Goodman, 2012). Likewise, Republican senator Jeff Sessions said,

> I favor the Violence against Women Act and have supported it at various points over the years, but there are matters put on that bill that almost seem to invite opposition … You think that's possible? You think they might have put things in there we couldn't support that maybe then they could accuse you of not being supportive of fighting violence against women? (Sessions cited in Weisman, 2012)

The objections to the most recent VAWA reauthorization centered on the provision of services to undocumented immigrants, victims on tribal lands, and victims of violence by same-sex partners – the very groups most at risk from violence and inadequate state responses to it.

There have been additional forms of opposition to the law (Dragiewicz, 2008). Attempts to undermine the VAWA have included attaching amendments designed to raise objections to the legislation, known as "poison pills." One such amendment, proposed by Senators Kyl and Cornyn, would have allowed government collection of DNA samples from people arrested or detained by federal agents whether nor not they were eventually charged or convicted of a crime (American Civil Liberties Union, 2005). In addition, President Bush appointed anti-VAWA activists to the National Advisory Committee responsible for overseeing its implementation. Nonetheless, most politicians and commentators have been careful to assert that they abhor violence against women even as they attack the law and the provision of essential services to those most at risk. This careful positioning demonstrates the powerful yet incomplete and contested cultural change that has happened around intimate partner violence over a fairly short period of time.

The VAWA was originally passed as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 "in recognition of the severity of the crimes associated with gender-motivated violence" (United States Department of Justice, 2009). Subsequent reauthorizations have been attached to other crime-focused bills such as the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act 2000 and the Violence against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act 2005. Although most VAWA funds are geared toward improving criminal justice responses to violence, it serves more than just a criminal justice function. The VAWA "provides funds for states and local governments, tribal nations, and territories to develop prevention and intervention programs to combat violence against women" and has also funded an extensive national research agenda through collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services, via the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Justice, via the National Institute of Justice (Parmley, 2004, p. 1417). Training has also been a major part of VAWA-funded activity (Office on Violence against Women, 2010).

In fact, the VAWA is the vehicle for the majority of funding for violence related services in the United States. The Office on Violence against Women, which is responsible for administering programs under the VAWA, "has awarded over $4.7 billion in grants

and cooperative agreements" since 1995 (Office on Violence against Women, 2012). While much of this amount has gone to criminal justice related projects including training for police officers and promoting formal collaboration between police, courts, and advocacy groups, it has also funded direct services which are very heavily utilized.

There are approximately 1945 domestic violence programs across the United States (Lyon, Lane, & Menard, 2008, p. 3; National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2011). The National Network to End Domestic Violence conducted a one day snapshot of services from September 15, 2011. 1726 out of 1944 programs (89%) participated. The 1726 programs served 67 399 victims on that day, with 36 332 receiving shelter and 31 007 accessing nonresidential services. In addition, 22 508 calls were logged to domestic violence hotlines, and 26 339 individuals participated in prevention and education training. An additional 10 581 requests for service could not be met by the service providers, including 6714 requests for shelter (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2011).

Research on domestic violence services has investigated patterns of utilization (Hirschel, 2008); survivors' perceptions of services (Lyon, Lane, & Menard, 2008); and their effectiveness (Chanley, Chanley, & Campbell, 2001; Farmer & Tiefenthaler, 2003; Reckdenwald & Parker, 2012; Tiefenthaler, Farmer, & Sambira, 2005). Research has also documented continuing unmet demand for shelter, legal support, and other resources as well as barriers to accessing services (Donnelly, Cook, & Wilson, 1999; Logan et al., 2005; Zweig, Schlichter, & Burt, 2002). While many of the survivors of violence who seek services utilize assistance from a variety of formal and informal sources, many of those affected by abuse do not access formal services (Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas, & Engel, 2005; Shannon, Logan, Cole, & Medley, 2006).

Research on Policies and Interventions

Scholars have investigated many aspects of intimate partner violence policies and their
outcomes. For example, criminologists have compared recidivism rates under different policy regimes (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1996; Felson, Ackerman, & Gallagher, 2005; Dugan, 2003); the dynamics of arrest, charging, and sentencing for intimate partner violence (Hirschel, 2008; Hirschel et al., 2007); the effectiveness of batterer intervention programs and their alternatives (Gondolf, 2011, 2012); factors affecting policy adoption (Gee, 1983; Murphy, 1997); survivors' opinions about and experiences with justice systems (Coulter et al., 1999; Fleury-Steiner et al. 2006; Postmus et al., 2009; Hare, 2010; Rhodes et al., 2011); perpetrators' experiences with justice systems (Buchbinder & Eisikovits, 2004; Hearn, 1998; Schmidt & Barnett, 2011; Schrock & Padavic, 2007; Silvergleid & Mankowski, 2006; Wu et al., 2011); the implementation of domestic violence related laws across justice systems (Gondolf et al., 1994; Lemon, 1999; Ptacek, 1999); and the unintended outcomes of changes in policy and practice (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2004; Chesney-Lind, 2006; Richie, 2012).

Research on Arrest Policies

Arrest policies have perhaps been the subject of the most research attention. While some accounts incorrectly attribute mandatory arrest policies to the VAWA (SAVE, n.d.), police practices around violence against intimate partners began to change almost two decades earlier in response to lawsuits such as Scott v. Hart (1976) and Bruno v. Codd (1977). In these cases, police were sued for failing to extend equal protection of the law to women who were assaulted by their male intimate partners

due to the widespread police practice of "arrest avoidance" in domestic violence cases (Gee, 1983). These early cases resulted in settlements with localized implications for changes in policing practice. Later cases such as Thurman v. the City of Torrington et al. (1984) and Sorichetti v. City of New York (1985) established case law holding police accountable for enforcing the law even when the victim was a woman whose attacker was her male intimate partner. However, the United States Supreme Court Decision Castle Rock v. Gonzales (2005) potentially undermines established case law requiring police to enforce the law in domestic violence cases. Reversing the Colorado Supreme Court ruling, the majority opinion declared that Colorado's mandatory enforcement provision did not necessarily mean enforcement was mandatory (Fenton, 2010). Criminal and civil laws are determined at the state level, and not all states have imposed limits on officer discretion via preferred or mandatory arrest polices (Hirschel et al., 2007). As of 2008, 22 states and the District of Columbia had mandatory arrest policies, six had preferred arrest policies, and 22 had discretionary arrest policies that outline the circumstances under which warrantless arrest can occur (Hirschel, 2008). To date, there is no consensus among scholars, antiviolence advocates, survivors, or lawyers about the ideal policy.

Research comparing the effectiveness of different arrest policies is contradictory and inconclusive. Some studies have found that "arrested suspects manifested significantly less subsequent violence than those who were ordered to leave" (Maxwell, Garner, & Fagan, 2001; Sherman & Berk, 1984, p. 261). Others claim that "a mandatory arrest law intended to deter abuse actually increases intimate partner homicides" (Iyengar, 2007, p. 18). Other studies have found arrest to deter recidivism for perpetrators with a high "stake in conformity" and those in neighborhoods with more stable populations (Wooldredge & Thistlethwaite, 2002). Still others have found that findings about whether arrest policies increase or decrease intimate partner homicide depend on how the policies are categorized (Zeoli, Norris, & Brenner, 2011). Ultimately, many of these studies have been focused so narrowly on arrest policies that they failed to consider factors such as how laws are implemented, if prosecution took place, what other penalties and resources for support exist and so on. As a result, their results provide little practical guidance for policy (for a discussion of these issues see Buzawa and Buzawa, 1996).

It is important to note that "mandatory arrest" is a something of a misnomer. Police continue to exercise significant discretion in all jurisdictions, and arrest is dependent upon probable cause in every jurisdiction. Officers also decide whether to investigate the crime or to just arrest both parties and "leave it for the judge to sort out." Despite the preponderance of preferred and mandatory arrest policies, officers do not make arrests in the majority of domestic violence calls even where arrest is mandated in that jurisdiction.

For example, in an analysis of National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data on situationally ambiguous cases where police had identified both parties as a victim and perpetrator, Durfee found that "even in cases where officers have determined that both partners have committed acts of IPV, officers only make an arrest 54% of the time; in 46% of these cases no arrest is made, despite the fact that mandatory arrest policies require arrest when acts of IPV have been committed" (Durfee, 2012, p. 79). Likewise, in an analysis of National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data Dugan found that "Mandatory arrest laws do not necessarily lead to more arrest. Laws will only continue to prevent violence if they are known to be enforced" (2003, p. 305). Even when an arrest occurs, perpetrators are much more likely to be diverted to batterer programs than to be incarcerated. Although

dropping out of such programs ostensibly attracts criminal justice sanctions when attendance is court ordered, there has been remarkably little research on what happens when participants fail to meet required conditions. There is no evidence that dropouts are consistently penalized.

Batterer Program Evaluation

Since many jurisdictions use batterer intervention programs as part of coordinated community and criminal justice responses to violence, there have also been efforts to study the outcomes of these programs (Parmley, 2004). Like the studies on the effectiveness of arrest polices, findings from studies on the effectiveness of batterer programs are equivocal. As with other interventions into violence, the answer to the question "does it work?" depends on who you ask, what outcome you are measuring, which program you are talking about, whether the criminal justice system follows up on mandated participation, and what other resources are available to survivors (Gondolf, 2012).

The most prevalent model is "batterer intervention based on cognitive-behavioral counseling, reinforcement from the criminal justice system, and coordination of additional community services" (Gondolf, 2007, p. 644). A recent review of the larger quantitative studies reported "Research over the previous 20 years concerning the effectiveness of batterer intervention programs suggests that batterer intervention programs result in a small average reduction in intimate partner violence" (Eckhardt et al., 2006, p. 370). However, the authors also noted that "To date, there are no interventions for partner violence perpetrators that approach the standard of ' empirically valid,' and it is debatable whether any intervention can be labeled 'empirically supported'" (emphasis in original, p. 373). Accordingly, scholars working in this area have insisted that batterer intervention programs need to be considered in the wider community context of response or nonresponse to violence (Bennett & Williams, 2001; Gondolf, 2012). The most consistent lesson that can be drawn from any of these studies is that no single intervention can be accurately understood beyond the context in which it occurs. Locations vary in terms of time from court date to program intake, staff supervision, facilitator qualifications and styles, police response to domestic violence, local media coverage, and the availability of community social services (Gondolf, 1999, p. 46).

Research on Unintended Consequences

Scholars and advocates have critiqued many aspects of criminal justice system responses to violence, noting that the well documented and interconnected problems with racism, homophobia, class discrimination, and sexism in the deployment of state power not only fail to protect everyone subjected to intimate partner abuse, but ultimately contribute to conditions that can make marginalized women more vulnerable to violence and abuse (INCITE!, 2003, 2009; Richie, 2012). Many scholars have argued that the emphasis on criminal justice system responses to violence against women has diverted attention away from the campaigns for broad-based social and structural change that characterized early responses to violence against women (Bumiller, 2008; Coker, 2004; Goodmark, 2011; Richie, 2012).

Substantial scholarly attention has been directed toward studying the unintended consequences of policy changes around intimate partner violence such as following through with prosecution against the victim's wishes, disproportionate increases in the arrests of women, increases in dual arrests, and the assignment of victims of violence to batterer groups, all of which disproportionately affect women with

marginalized racial, gender, class, and sexual identities (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2004; Buzawa & Buzawa, 1996; Chesney-Lind, 2002; Durfee, 2012; Miller, 2001; Osthoff, 2002; Richie, 2012; Zorza, 1994). Significantly, heightened criminal justice attention to domestic violence has coincided with the deployment of punitive proincarceration policies which Richie (2012) terms the "prison nation." They are also interlinked with retrenchment polices that have cut essential social programs such as income support, health care, education, and social services – the very resources that have been shown to be essential to survivors trying to extricate themselves from abusive relationships (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2004; Richie, 2012).

Complicating these vital critiques is the fact that police are frequently called upon as a resource by victims of intimate partner violence (Gordon, 1996). In fact, "Domestic-violence-related police calls have been found to constitute the single largest category of calls received by police" (Klein, 2009, p. 1). Despite greater risk of mistreatment by police, black women and men are significantly more likely to call police for help with intimate partner violence than white women or men (Rennison & Welchans, 2000). In addition, several of the key legal challenges seeking to force police response to domestic violence have been brought by women of color and their families For example, in Estate of Macias v. Ihde (2000) "the Appellees denied Maria Teresa Macias's right to equal protection by providing her with inferior police protection on account of her status as a woman, a Latina, and a victim of domestic violence." This case is clearly an example of a legal effort to force police to respond to domestic violence to remedy a failure based upon what legal scholars term "intersectionality" (Crenshaw, 1991). Since so many abused women want a response from the police and the courts when they need protection, and since domestic violence calls make up a significant portion of police and criminal justice work, it is essential that program and policy efforts work to ensure access to equal protection of the law even as they address the structural inequalities that produce violence and entrap its targets.

Future Directions in Research

There are many areas where more research is needed to assess policies and interventions as well as improving them. Three key issues for future research to address are: intimate partner homicide, evidence based research, and the contexts of violence

Preventing Intimate Partner Homicide

At the most fundamental level, antiviolence efforts are geared toward homicide prevention. Academic research on homicide, the most serious manifestation of violence against intimates, has lagged behind the development of many other areas of inquiry. Rapid changes in intimate partner homicide rates beg further investigation in part because of their potential to inform prevention efforts around sublethal violence. Most national research on intimate partner homicide is drawn from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR). Like all data sources, SHR has limitations. The fact that SHR data are drawn from cases identified by the police, the voluntary nature of reporting, missing data – especially about the relationship between the perpetrator and victim, and poor ability to analyze multiple killings are all significant limitations which are important to accurately understanding the dynamics of homicide (Puzone et al., 2000). Nonetheless, the SHR is currently the only nationwide database that systematically collects information including the relationship between victims and offenders of homicide (Biroscak et al., 2006; Langford, Isaac, & Kabat, 1998; Puzone et al., 2000).

The most recent report from the United States Bureau of Justice Statistics analyzed

SHR data on homicides occurring between 1980–2008 (Cooper & Smith, 2011). Homicide victims were killed by an intimate in 16.3% of all cases where the relationship to the offender was known. Women were six times more likely to be killed by an intimate than men, with 41.5% of female murder victims and 7.1% of male murder victims killed by an intimate. 63.7% of all intimate partner homicides were of women, and 36.3% were of men. 70.3% of perpetrators of intimate partner homicide were men and 29.7% were women. Intimate partner homicides of men decreased by 53% between 1980 and 2008. As of 2008, 45% of female homicide victims were killed by an intimate. In the same year, 5% of male homicide victims were killed by an intimate. While homicides rates are stratified by race, age, and income, the proportion of all homicides perpetrated by intimates is similar for black and white men and for black and white women (Cooper & Smith, 2011, pp. 10, 18).

Since homicide is easier to detect and count than sublethal intimate partner violence, it can provide clues about the distribution of violence that can be difficult to discern from reports of sublethal violence. In addition, lethal violence helps provide a context for the relative risks of violence by an intimate compared to that by other categories of perpetrator. In the absence of a truly comprehensive national data collection effort on domestic violence related homicide, state level efforts have sought alternative routes to collecting high-quality information from multiple sources. While Cooper and Smith asserted that "Homicide counts suffer from a minimal level of underreporting" (Cooper & Smith, 2011, p. 34), state level investigations have uncovered significant omissions.

Langford, Isaac and Kabat (1998) produced one of the earliest studies that supplemented SHR data with data from other sources in order to produce a more accurate account of intimate partner violence related homicides. Langford et al. constructed a database on Massachusetts homicides between 1991 and 1995 from sources including: "news articles, SHR reports, lists assembled by district attorney's offices, and reports from domestic violence advocacy agencies" (p. 358). They found that the SHR identified only 71% of intimate partner homicides and 26.7% of deaths of others related to domestic violence (p. 353). Langford and colleagues identified 175 incidents and 194 victims. 149 of these, or 76.8%, were intimate partner victims. Women comprised 86.6% of the partner victims in the sample. The 45 nonpartner victims made up almost a quarter of the sample (23.2%). Significantly, Langford et al. found that in 73.3% of incidents in which other victims were killed, the targeted partner did not die (p. 360). Such collateral killings where the partner did not die are very likely to be undercounted as domestic violence related deaths in official data.

The Michigan Intimate Partner Homicide Surveillance System (MIPHSS) also uses a multisource database to identify domestic violence related homicides. The MIPHSS combines information from "death certificates, newspaper articles, law enforcement reports, and medical examiners' records" to identify domestic homicide cases (Biroscak et al., 2006, p. 393). By triangulating data from multiple sources, MIPHSS identified homicides of intimate partners as well as what they termed "intimate partnership related deaths" or collateral killings like suicides and killings of others such as a children or new partners. This approach resulted in a more comprehensive account of intimate partner homicide in Michigan. For example, while police records identified 120 intimate partner homicides between 1999 and 2001, the MIPHSS identified 66 additional partner homicides for a total of 186. The MIPHSS methodology identified 128 additional intimate partner related homicides (Biroscak et al., 2006, p. 395). The large magnitude of collateral killings related to domestic violence challenges conventional understandings of both intimate partner violence and homicide.

In addition to formalized public health surveillance programs that have demonstrated the utility of drawing upon multiple existing data sources, many states have established domestic violence fatality review initiatives. Domestic violence fatality reviews use multiple sources of information to analyze the characteristics of domestic violence homicides in order to recommend changes to the ways that systems respond to domestic violence in order to prevent further deaths. Several states produce excellent reports based on this data, and the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative (NDVFRI) provides a central repository for these reports (NDVFRI, n.d.) Like other multisource efforts at improving our understanding of intimate partner violence, domestic homicide reviews have made valuable contributions to our understanding of the problem. For example, the Washington State Coalition against Domestic Violence has produced a series of excellent reports that investigate not only partner homicides but also domestic violence related suicides and collateral killings (Fawcett, Starr, & Patel, 2008; Starr & Fawcett, 2006). These findings have highlighted the significant and understudied connection between suicide and violence against intimate partner violence for both victims and perpetrators.

interdisciplinary models have the potential to significantly add to our understanding of the dynamics and outcomes of intimate partner violence. Given the accessibility of the sources used in these studies, future work on intimate partner violence should account for the collateral killings that comprise considerable harm due to intimate partner violence. The National Violent Death Reporting System also has the potential to add to this knowledge, especially if it is funded at a national level. Projects from pilot states are already changing our understanding of violent deaths, illuminating a toll of intimate partner violence much heavier than was previously understood (Bennett et al., 2006; Logan et al., 2008).

Significantly, the best work on homicide has been conducted by interdisciplinary teams of antiviolence advocates, scholars, and statisticians from criminology and public health whose combined knowledge of the dynamics of violence has informed the research methodology. These studies explicitly integrate the goal of changing community conditions and responses to violence to decrease the harm. These praxis oriented, collaborative efforts bring attention to the significant limitations of narrow methodological approaches. This brings us to the downside of increasing calls for "Evidence Based Practice" (EBP).

Rethinking Evidence Based Practice

As Goldenberg observed, "The appeal to the authority of evidence that characterizes evidence-based practices does not increase objectivity but rather obscures the subjective elements that inescapably enter all forms of human inquiry" (Goldenberg, 2006, p. 2621). As in medicine, calls for EBP in the social sciences function "through the positivistic elimination of culture, contexts, and the subjects of knowledge production from consideration, a move that permits the use of evidence as a political instrument where power interests can be obscured by seemingly neutral technical resolve" (Goldenberg, 2006, p. 2622). The elevation of a very narrow array of positivist research methods derived from the physical sciences as the only acceptable form of inquiry is especially inappropriate in studying complex human behaviors such as violence. Indeed, scholars do not agree on the terminology to use (violence, conflict, aggression, abuse, battering?), much less the definitions for those forms of abuse or how to quantify them. Although calls for EBP invoke a "return to Science," reviewing the literature provides clues about the sort of nostalgia at play.

The claim that evidence can take the politics out of discussions about how to address forms of violence that are profoundly shaped by gender, class, and racial hierarchies is at best hopelessly naive. Likewise, the notion that certain types of positivist research can or should settle scholarly differences about the best way to study complex human behavior is poorly considered. Epistemological practices are inherently political. Perhaps it needs to be stated that even the best evidence cannot discern whether it is better to prioritize arrest over services, when to prioritize individual therapy or broad based social programs, what scholars should study and how, or if battered women's shelters are effective and who gets to decide. These are political decisions in every sense of the word.

Future research on policies and interventions for intimate partner violence needs to take up many of the issues explored elsewhere in this volume. While there is now a large body of research on men's violence against female intimate partners, there is more to be done to integrate this research with the other research on violence and abuse. Future research should: build upon survivors' needs; take the context of violence seriously; include multiple forms of victimization (especially homicide, strangulation, sexual assault, and emotional abuse); include attention to batterers; consider how violence against intimate partners relates to other types of human violence, and address both immediate survival needs and cultural and structural change. Practices that are comprehensively evidence based would extend beyond studies of correlation to consider the multiple data sources and methodologies that can contribute to our understanding of violence and abuse.

Contextualizing Intimate Partner Violence

To date, most of the research on policy and interventions around intimate partner violence is somewhat narrowly centered on policy and program evaluation. However, the shared conclusion of all of these studies is that no one policy or practice is adequate to address violence against intimate partners. It is the interaction across levels of the social ecology which shapes the effectiveness of individual interventions. Furthermore, it is the relationship between individual beliefs, actions, and responses to them that shape violence and abuse in the first place.

Those subjected to abuse by intimate partners have been extremely generous in telling researchers about the structural, legal, social, and cultural factors that entrap them in abusive situations. Housing, income, child care, health care, safety, and access to community support are the key factors that shape individual responses to violence (Fleury-Steiner et al., 2006; Goodkind et al., 2003; Goodkind, Sullivan, & Bybee, 2004; Moe, 2007). Fatality reviews point to the same factors as essential for reducing harm (Fawcett, 2010; Fawcett, Starr, & Patel, 2008; Starr & Fawcett, 2006). It is in the face of these multiple contexts that individuals navigate violence. Unfortunately for policymakers and advocates, none of these is amenable to a single quick fix that can solve intimate partner violence (Humphries, 2002). As Chesney-Lind argued,

> If "abuse" is de-contextualized, if the motive of the violence cannot be considered, and if the meaning of the "violent" behavior is irrelevant, then we will arrest more girls and women. Further, if we more heavily police communities of color, and implement the mandatory arrest policy strictly, the law enforcement approach to domestic violence gendered and racialized consequences that are very serious. Clearly, child abuse and wife battery are very serious and complex social problems, but simplistic solutions (particularly ones that fail to address age, gender, and race inequality) bring with them very heavy collateral costs (Chesney-Lind, 2002, p. 86).

These comments point to the need to address violence beyond criminal justice systems.

There is a role for social science in informing interventions, but the relationship between research and policy is complicated. As Moore put it,

> social science methods, when well deployed, can offer bits of information that are important to policymakers. As a matter of principle, however (to say nothing of practice), social science findings can never fully dictate the right answer to an important policy question
>
> … And it is not just because the relevant sciences are not yet mature. It is because important normative questions remain entirely beyond the reach of science, and because any important policy choice involves important positive issues that science has not yet, or could not easily ever reach. (2002, pp. 41–42)

In other words, social science research, no matter how well designed, cannot answer what are essentially political questions about social norms, resource allocation, and power. As Hearn and McKie suggest, "A key task in policy analysis and development is not to even out policy effects on men and women but to probe processes sustaining gendered inequities and hierarchical relations among diverse women and men" (Hearn & McKie, 2010, p. 151).

Future research must take context into account. The multiple, interlinked structural hierarchies which shape individual experience along lines of gender, race, class, and culture are an essential part of understanding violence in order to prevent or intervene in it effectively. Intimate partner violence is a significant portion of all crime, but it cannot be understood if we only look at the individual criminal incidents or the demographic, attitudinal, or behavioral characteristics of individual offenders or victims. Future research in intimate partner violence should contextualize the violence within the broader landscape of personal experience, interpersonal interactions, community context, and culture. Research based on the perspectives and needs of those affected by intimate partner abuse provides a key starting point for understanding violence.

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