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USING PROTECTIVE ORDERS TO COMBAT INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE:
ARE THEY EFFECTIVE AND DOES RACE MATTER?

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USING PROTECTIVE ORDERS TO COMBAT INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE:
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ABSTRACT

There are large numbers of women throughout the United States that continually suffer from intimate partner violence. Past research has attempted to explain differences in experiences among those who have or have not obtained temporary or permanent protective orders (PO) in the U.S. via certain well-established theories. Because the use of a protective order is the victims' primary legal remedy to begin to escape abuse, the main question that has been addressed is whether or not the use of protective orders are effective. However, early theories tended to ignore ethno-racial identity differences and only focused upon a narrow set of victims. This dissertation addresses voids in the research to incorporate ethno-racial identity of women to help explain the effectiveness of using protective orders to combat intimate partner violence as well as some of the various influential factors surrounding continued abuse.

Specifically, past research has focused on limited geographic areas or research groups and not widely addressed the disparity between ethno-racial identities. As a now well established concept within feminist research, intersectionality leads us to conclude that all women do not experience abuse or intimate partner violence similarly. Research to date has tended to neglect this potential disparity and to focus on merely the overall effectiveness of using a protective order to combat intimate partner violence.

In this dissertation, I attempt to fill these gaps in three specific ways. First, I utilize data drawn from three U.S. cities in an attempt to move beyond policies at one location. Second, I examine the impact of the race of the victims on how police interactions at the time of the violent incident impact the effectiveness of POs. Finally, I provide both a

descriptive overview of the experiences of these women with the police and with the PO, as well as an OLS regression on whether the victim felt safer after obtaining the PO. Results indicate that police largely treat victims uniformly with some slight variation among race but overall they are non-responsive in addressing cases of IPV. The most important predictor of feeling safe when using a PO is different for different races and includes things such as education, relationship status and the number of children present in the home. This study indicates the need for better police / victim interaction for victims of IPV and reveals that what makes victims feel safe when using a PO does vary by race. This study therefore shows that not all victims' experiences are uniform when using a PO to combat IPV.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A problem that many women face is the potential risk for intimate partner violence (IPV). It is estimated that approximately 1.5 million women experience some type of IPV each year in the U.S. (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). It is further estimated that 25% of all women will experience some form of IPV in their lifetime (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). One approach that has been used to combat IPV is the development of various social responses such as shelters, support groups and counseling services. Some of these services have even been utilized in conjunction with a restraining or protection order to mitigate revictimization from IPV (Nichols 2013). Another approach used to combat IPV are legal responses, such as police intervention, sanctions and legal assistance.

One specific legal tool that abused women have available to them to potentially reduce or eliminate domestic violence is the use of a civil protection order (PO). A PO is a civil, legal intervention to restrict the access of the abusive partner to the victim. Also known as a restraining order, a PO can be either temporary or permanent and serves as a legal documentation that abuse has occurred. This document is acknowledgement by the court that IPV has occurred and that the offender should not be in contact with the victim. When a temporary order is sought, the offender does not need to be present and the order may last approximately 30 days or until the court deems appropriate.

If a permanent order is sought, however, both parties must be present in court and the order is generally in place for one year. If the order is violated, then prosecution may result, including fines and/or imprisonment (Buzawa and Buzawa 1992). The purpose of the PO therefore is to reduce the likelihood of IPV during this time frame.

There are a number of studies that review whether the use of protective orders to combat IPV are effective. Many of these studies have been criticized to be somewhat limited, widely inconsistent and often based on small or non-representative samples (Klein 1996). For example, many studies center on very limited geographic or demographic areas making their results somewhat limited in their future implications. In one such study, researchers initially interviewed only 62 victims centering on the area of Memphis Tennessee which therefore offers limited findings and limited application of their results (Brookoff 1997).

One basic conflict in the conclusions of past work is whether POs are helpful. Some research has indicated that restraining orders do not work (Klein 1996), while others have found that they are effective (Logan, Walker, Shannon and Cole 2008). Some of this conflict is due to the fact that different outcomes are used to evaluate the effectiveness of a PO. Some of the existing research has focused on the amount of improvement in the quality of women's lives after the order was in place (Keilitz, Hannaford, and Efkenan 1997). Another measure of effectiveness is whether the likelihood of an arrest of the offender is increased when there is a PO (Logan, Shannon, and Walker 2006). Still other studies examine the likelihood of continued abuse or re-victimization after a PO is obtained (Isaac 1994).

In assessing these different outcomes, a wide variety of predictors have been used. These include both whether the police responded to a call, as well as the quality of the victim-police intervention (Lee, Lee and Hoover 2017). Other studies focus on whether the effectiveness of POs vary by the relationship between the victim and offender (Logan, Cole, Shannon and Walker 2007), whether a permanent or temporary order was filed (Harrell, Smith and Newmark 1993), and if additional protective measures such as counseling or limiting visitation rights to minor children were taken after the order (Keilitz 2001). The presence of children has also been considered in some research as it relates to re-victimization (Jordan 2004). Very few studies, however, include any evaluation of various demographic variables, such as urban vs. rural samples, socioeconomic status, and/or race.

In particular, although a few studies have found IPV to vary by race (Grossman and Lundy 2007, Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson and Johnson 2007, Burman, Smailes and Chantler 2004), most do not include race as a potential variable in predicting outcomes related to obtaining a PO (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005). Therefore, race has not been thoroughly explored in studies of the usefulness of a PO and remains one of the important unanswered questions in the literature to date. It is thus necessary to evaluate the impact of race in the effectiveness of having a PO in order to address potential short comings or benefits they currently provide. This dissertation will measure the use and effectiveness of current IPV policy as it relates to POs and identify potential short comings not only in practice but gaps within the research as well.

Specifically, I will examine whether the use of a PO is effective in improving the safety of victims of IPV. I will assess this by two outcomes of subjective reports from the victim about whether they feel safer, and by reports of further instances of abuse. Furthermore, this study looks at the effectiveness of the use of a PO by evaluating the various risk factors associated with being a victim of IPV. The primary focus of this study is to address two overreaching questions. My first question is whether POs are effective, leading to victims of IPV feeling safer. My second question is if race has an impact on the effectiveness of the protective order. In order to answer these broader questions, I will analyze specific police interaction with the victim and whether these actions made the victim feel safer when using a PO. I also will address whether the victim felt there was a violation of the protective order and do any of these preceding factors vary by race within a feminist legal theory perspective.

Overview of Dissertation

Chapter two of this dissertation discusses the literature surrounding the use of POs to combat IPV. This chapter reviews the history of IPV and how POs were implemented to begin to address IPV from a legal perspective (Buzawa and Buzawa 1996, Keilitz et al 1997). This chapter also addresses the various ways in which to measure the effectiveness of using a PO and which of these are potentially the most revealing (Jordan 2004, Schultz 1999, Logan et al 2008). Whether victims feel safer with a PO in place is the most widely used measure and therefore utilized in the analysis in later chapters (Logan et al 2012). Finally, this chapter addresses the different experiences women of color may have when

using a PO to combat IPV (Grossman and Lundyb2007). In order to benefit victims of IPV, a feminist jurisprudence theoretical approach is used to assess, not only the challenges women face within the legal system, but also the differences between specific ethno-racial groups in using a PO (Fineman 2005, Risman 2004, Lee, Lee and Hoover 2017).

In chapter three the data and methods that will be utilized are discussed in order to explain the specific control, independent and dependent variables that will be analyzed in this study. The specific sources of data and details of the sample population are reviewed and explained in this chapter as well. In addition, this chapter lists the various hypotheses to be tested and the way in which each set of variables will be measured. Also, this chapter explains how each variable has been coded to accommodate the current analysis. Furthermore, the various steps of analysis are reviewed and explained as to how this analysis will address the asserted hypotheses for the purposes of this study.

The results of this analysis are discussed in chapter four. Sample demographics and descriptive findings are presented in tables in order to reveal differences between the various ethno-racial groups in the sample. Furthermore, in this chapter the various police interaction variables are displayed according to the specific ethno-racial groups revealing potential differences in their individual experiences with police. This chapter also includes the T-Tests of the differences in police interaction by the victims' race. Finally, the multivariate analysis is discussed and presented in four tables displaying the four OLS regression models that were utilized to conduct this study. The first two models address all of the respondents in both waves, while the second two models address wave one and two specifically to Black and White victims individually.

Finally, chapter five presents a discussion of the major findings from this study and addresses the contributions this dissertation adds to the literature. In addition, specific policy implications are discussed and analyzed within the current findings. Also, the limitations of this study are revealed in this chapter as are the various implications for further research based on the findings.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Historically, the idea of “domestic violence” was considered personal in nature and beyond the scope of the police or court interference (Buzawa and Buzawa 1996). Eventually, in the 1960’s and 70’s social services slowly began to provide assistance to victims by way of shelters, support groups and various counseling services (Buzawa and Buzawa 1992). Although these services were an improvement to the total lack of attention to IPV, they were by no means a solution. Protective orders were initiated as a legal response to the lack of attention and help that was given to victims of IPV. The purpose of POs was to offer victims of IPV a legal remedy in order to prevent further violence, or threat of further violence, by ordering the offender to stay away from the victim while offering legal recourse if this order was in fact violated (Buzawa and Buzawa 1996). The court therefore establishes a legal record of the incident and threatens further punishment to the offender if the PO is not followed.

However, even in the 1980’s when civil protective orders began to become available to all 50 states, there were many restrictions and qualifications that were attached to successfully securing a PO in cases of IPV. For example, many states significantly restricted their availability, established a limited scope of relief they could provide, limited their enforcement and did not provide the necessary information about

how to obtain a PO to those in need (Kelitz et al 1997). Often the availability of a PO was previously restricted to only those cases with evidence of extreme violence. Many of the earlier studies concluded that the effectiveness of a PO was dependent on the specificity and comprehensiveness of the relief provided within the terms of the PO and how well and uniformly they were enforced (Keilitz et al 1997). Studies have also looked at other factors that may influence the effectiveness of a PO such as, accessibility to the courts, public and private services that may or may not be available to the victim, criminal record of the abuser, as well as other sources of victim support that may exist (Keilitz et al 1997).

In order to understand the impact of POs for victims of IPV, it is necessary to develop a better understanding of the evolution of how the criminal justice system has responded to this crime. This is particularly relevant due to the way that the backlash against feminism may have created a potential dysfunctional set of policies, changing what were supposed to be legal protections for women who were victims of domestic abuse into policies that could actually do further harm (Chesney-Lind 2006).

Legal Attention to IPV

The crime of domestic abuse is one of the more unclear definitions within the law, as it is not exactly accurate or complete (Belknap 2007:319). Using this term does not distinguish between what actually may be child abuse, sibling abuse, elder abuse or woman battering (Belknap 2007:319). An alternative term, spousal abuse, infers that both partners are as likely to be abused, when actually 95% of all abuse is against women, and

many acts occur between people who are not married, but are merely dating, cohabitating or are divorced (Belknap 2007:319). Therefore, within feminist criminology this phenomenon is referred to as Intimate Partner Violence or IPV (Belknap 2007:320). However, legal definitions and criminal justice policies related to IPV have not historically been very helpful to victims, and even changes advocated by women's rights groups have often backfired.

Historically, police departments employed nonarrest policies in response to domestic violence calls. It was not until the feminist movement of the 1970's, and findings were published from studies conducted in the 1980's, that such policies began to change. The most influential of these studies was the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment, which found that when an arrest was made in domestic violence situations, recidivism was lower (Sherman and Berk 1984). Around the same time, several successful law suits were brought against police departments for failing to make an arrest in a domestic violence situation, which then led to subsequent abuse and the severe bodily injury or death of the victim (Thurman V. City of Torrington 1984, Chesney-Lind 2006:16). Furthermore, police have been found to make fewer arrests in cases of sexual IPV than in cases of Physical intimidation or physical IPV (Durfee and Fetzer 2016). This may be attributed to the "private" versus public dichotomy that exists when police respond to calls that appear to be domestic in nature. These events and subsequent changes led to broader interpretations of domestic violence within the policing industry and the implementation of policies such as mandatory arrests and the increased use of civil protection orders (Chesney-Lind 2006:16).

One of the most dramatic policy changes during the 1980s and 1990s was the spread of mandatory arrests for IPV. While specifics vary, such policies make it a requirement that an arrest is made if the police officer has reasonable cause to believe that domestic violence took place (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003:125-6). Victim advocates celebrated such policies, as it was thought that they would shift the understanding of IPV from a personal, minor or normative experience, to a serious crime. It was expected that the threat of an arrest would deter the offender and that those who were arrested would be less likely to reoffend (Humphreys and Humphreys 1985). Unfortunately, this policy had some unintended consequences that served to further harm victims of IPV.

One outcome of this policy has been an increase in arrests of women for committing IPV against men (Frye, Haviland and Raiah 2007). Such a policy means that when there is a domestic violence call, someone is going to be arrested, and this may not be the one who was the primary offender. If the officer is unclear who the primary aggressor is, this type of a situation can lead to the dual arrest of both parties (Daly and Chesney-Lind 1988:523). Police have acknowledged that often the one arrested is whoever can get to the phone first and claim they are the victim (Chesney-Lind 2006:16). This has led to a situation where women may be afraid to call the police for fear they will be arrested themselves (Daly and Chesney-Lind 1988:523), and abusers use this fear to threaten and control their victims (Burgess-Proctor 2012). Victims are thus at the mercy of the interpretation of the officer as to what the “facts” are pertinent to the event.

One particularly problematic situation is in the context of the woman defending herself in a domestic abuse situation. If she defends herself by physically engaging with her abuser she can be arrested and thus victimized a second time because “her fighting

back now gets attention too” (Miller 2005:107). If the victim does not show visible signs of abuse it may be even harder to convince an officer that their retaliation or self-defense was warranted. Such practices have led to distorted statistics that show women are committing more violent acts within the home than ever before (Chesney-Lind 2006:16). In addition, mandatory arrest policies and fear of dual arrests have been shown to decrease the likelihood that victims may involve the police when choosing how to combat or deal with an incident of IPV (Novisky and Peralta 2015).

Protective Orders: Challenges and Benefits

Another change in the criminal justice system that grew out of increasing attention to IPV is the increase in the use of civil protection orders by victims. For example, in Massachusetts in 1993 over 50,000 temporary restraining orders were granted and this number has been increasing by approximately 10,000 each year (Klein 1994). Although, more civil protective orders have been issued, with the intention of protecting battered women, often times they are not effective in preventing further abuse, and there are challenges to having them be upheld by the courts (Klein 1996). Within the literature there are still questions as to the effectiveness of POs in assisting victims of IPV. The key problems can be grouped into the challenges in victims obtaining a PO, enforcement, and indicators of effectiveness.

Challenges in Obtaining a PO

Civil protective orders are an important legal remedy for victims of IPV, yet studies show that approximately only 17.1% of physical assault victims and 16.4% of rape victims actually obtain one (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Of those who do obtain a PO it is usually only after experiencing sustained and serious exposure to violence (Jordan 2004). While there is not a great deal of research on the subject, a few studies have examined the risk factors that may increase the difficulty of obtaining a PO. The existing research suggests that women feel safer once they have obtained the orders but there are many reasons why women do not access this tool in an attempt to secure protection from their abuser (Candela 2016).

One of the predictors of obtaining a PO is the victims' financial dependency on the abuser (Muscat and Iwamoto 1993). The more financially dependent a victim is on their abuser, the less likely they are to seek a PO. In addition, many severely abused women experience post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, which can cloud the victims' judgment or produce confusion or problems with memory (McGregor and Hopkins 1991). This demeanor often results in being dismissed by many court personnel and therefore failing to be issued a PO (McGregor and Hopkins 1991). A further problem in obtaining a PO is that this process must be pursued by the victim. Many victims are reluctant to discuss embarrassing or personal matters in front of court personnel (Fiedler, Brair and Pierce 1984). In addition to the lengthy procedural requirements of obtaining a PO, many victims fear retaliation from their abuser, disbelief from criminal justice personnel and indifference even once a PO is obtained (Ptacek 1999). Another challenge

faced by victims can be the difference between obtaining a temporary or permanent PO and the problems associated with each (Parker, Gielen, Castillo and Webster 2015).

In spite of these challenges in obtaining a PO, most research has shown that the use of civil protective orders are less costly and easier for women to obtain than a criminal conviction against the offender. This is because the standard of proof for a PO is “preponderance of the evidence” rather than the more stringent “beyond a reasonable doubt” requirement for a victim who is trying to obtain a divorce or prove past criminal violence (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003). Regardless, one of the biggest challenges in obtaining a PO is that the issuance is at the discretion of the judge. Even in cases where a PO has been granted, the enforcement of the PO can then become problematic (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003). Similar obstacles shown in the research may include confusion with the process of obtaining a PO, frustration with the lack of speed of the process and serious conflict in the victim’s mind as to whether the abuser should actually go to jail (Bennett, Goodman and Dutton 1999).

Enforcement of the PO

Violation of a PO is a criminal offense and this gives the police the ability to intervene and make an arrest in order to stop the abuse (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003). In addition, the court can prosecute the abuser for violation of the PO. Once a PO is granted, legally the offender can no longer have any contact with the victim. However, in reality, these orders are frequently violated and in about 60% of all POs obtained, the victim will experience repeated abuse (Grau, Fagan and Wexler 1985). When a violation does occur,

the offender can face legal consequences, including arrest (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003). Research suggests that enforcement can be an essential element to the efficacy of protective orders and the continued safety of these women with the reduction in persistent domestic abuse (Logan et al. 2006). Therefore, it is important to examine past research on the enforcement of POs related to IPV.

It is interesting to note that even though a violation of a PO may occur, it does not automatically lead to an arrest (Kane 1999). In one earlier study, even where a PO was obtained by the victim and the order was violated, police made arrests in only 20% of the cases (Holmes and Bibel 1988). More recent findings state that protective order violations only led to arrest in about 50% of the cases (Logan et al. 2006). In other words, overall less than 50% of all violations of a PO lead to arrest (Holmes and Bibel 1988, Logan et al 2006). In addition, other research shows that even where a PO was obtained by the victim, and officers did feel inclined to make an arrest, often times the officer was not necessarily aware if a PO even existed (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003).

What becomes apparent is that in order for a PO to be a useful tool in combating IPV, police knowledge and enforcement is necessary. For this to happen police need to have obtained copies of the PO or have a reliable source to access this information. This falls on the court clerks to inform the police that such an order has been obtained. In many jurisdictions computer systems may exist to allow police to access this information but often the systems are not compatible between multiple jurisdictions (Buzawa and Buzawa 2003). Police also have to be careful that they do not exceed the terms of the order or that the order is current.

However, overall, the literature indicates that a significant percentage of orders are violated and that violations of orders unfortunately do not necessarily result in arrests (Logan et al 2006).

Arrest rates have been found to be crucial for victims' safety in the initial incident of violence leading to the PO. In fact, a consistent finding among researchers is that arrest rates are related to subsequent violence and recidivism rates among offenders of IPV (Maxwell, Garner, & Fagan, 2001). Arrests are therefore considered important in the enforcement of a PO, but how important is up for debate. One study suggests that if an arrest was made at the time of the violent incident, then the likelihood of continued violence decreased (Jordan 2004). Others have reported that the mere presence of a protective order does not appear to affect arrest rates or the likelihood of prosecution of domestic offenders (Kane 1999). In other words, even where the abuser is in fact arrested it is debated whether the arrest alone is effective in decreasing violence. In addition, it is believed within feminist criminology, that if the state does not take a strong stance against intimate partner abuse they are in fact condoning it (Daly and Chesney-Lind 1988:524).

Furthermore, even when an arrest is made of the male abuser, it is not necessarily only the arrest but the subsequent follow through with specific punishment that is needed to combat intimate partner violence (Klein 1996). As mentioned above, arrest rates and police presence or intervention seem to be important factors when evaluating the effectiveness of using a PO or other tools to combat IPV (Durfee and Fetzer 2016). However, there is also evidence to suggest that the criminal justice system may not be consistently following sentencing guidelines for violations of protective orders (Diviney,

Parekh, and Olson 2008). This research suggests that the criminal justice system may not be protecting victims who have obtained protective orders (Diviney et al 2008).

Ultimately, the inadequate enforcement of protective orders can make them less effective.

Objective Measures of Effectiveness of POs: Recidivism / Violations

There are many potential ways to determine if POs are effective. These include both objective measures of arrests after a PO is obtained and potential reoffending, to subjective perspectives of the victim. The most commonly used measure for assessing the effectiveness of a PO is recidivism of the offender after a PO has been obtained. Multiple studies do show that obtaining a PO from the court results in a reduction in violence experienced by the victim (Jordan 2004). Some research even indicated that a woman who merely sought a protective order, regardless of whether it was granted, experienced lower levels of continued physical abuse (McFarlane et al 2004).

However, it is interesting to note that even in studies indicating success with obtaining a PO, they were still violated 20% to 40% of the time (Jordan 2004:1426). Existing research has started to identify specific factors that are closely associated with increased rates of order violations and repeated IPV. For example, factors such as the length of the relationship, the presence of children, living arrangements, the persistence and severity of the patterns of violence and police response at the initial incident, have been shown to be associated with the risk and amount of order violations (Jordan 2004: 1426).

One factor that can be associated with a potential reduction in continued abuse after obtaining a PO is the nature of the relationship. This includes both the duration of the relationship and the presence of children. Several studies suggest that the relationship investment of a couple involved in a domestic abusive relationship can play a significant role in the abuse (Schultz 1999). Specifically, a couple who has been involved for a minimum of 5 years experienced less violence after obtaining a protective order than those together for less than 5 years (Schultz 1999). Research has indicated an 85% decrease in repeat violence with couples together for 5 years or more and up to a 66% decrease with the couples together less than 5 years (Carlson, Harris, and Holden 1999). In other words, the longer the relationship the bigger the impact it has on potential repeat violence. The presence of children in the relationship also was associated with continued or potential relief from abuse. Women with children were less likely to have relief from continued violence after obtaining a protective order than those without children (Carlson et al. 1999). Some research has illustrated a 51% decrease in continued abuse after a protective order where children were present as opposed to a 73% decline where children were not involved (Carlson et al. 1999).

Another risk factor for re-abuse is the prior history of IPV. This factor has been looked at in both the duration and the severity of abuse occurring in the relationship prior to filing for a protective order, as well as a history of stalking. It was discovered that the duration of the prior abuse had little effect on the severity of abuse, while the severity of the prior abuse lead to more severe or violent abuse after obtaining the protective order (Harrell, Smith and, Newmark 1993). In addition, a history of stalking was found to have a major role in protective order violation (Logan et al. 2008). The findings suggest that

history of stalking is a significant aggravating factor for ongoing and continued abuse regardless of relationship status and receipt of a temporary or permanent protective order (Logan et al. 2008).

It is interesting to note that according to one study, absent a protective order; simply leaving the abuser was the most significant way to ameliorate the occurrence of future violence (Kaci 1994: 204). Leaving the abuser was found to be the next most effective action taken by victims to stop IPV second to obtaining a PO (Kaci 1994: 204). However, the act of leaving the abuser is found to be the most volatile and dangerous period for repeat abuse (Jordan 2004). The physical abuse continued for a minority of the victims and no single factor was found to correlate with the escalations of abuse after a PO had been secured (Kaci 1994: 204). Some other programs that helped reduce continued violence were things like domestic violence counseling, family help, filing for divorce, as well as having the defendant arrested, most of which is consistent with prior research and findings (Kaci 1994).

When comparing women in rural areas with women in urban areas in regard to the effectiveness of an obtained protective order, specific violations were noted to have occurred (Grossman, Hinkley, Kawalski and Margrave 2005). In a study by Logan, Shannon and Walker (2005), it was discovered that as a whole, 29% of women reported that their abusive partner had violated the protective order. Moreover, 26% of the women participants indicated that verbal abuse continued after obtaining a protective order (Logan, Shannon and Walker 2005). However, more urban women than rural women indicated continued verbal abuse. In addition, stalking occurred in 16% of the cases and in 1% of the cases women were sexually assaulted (Logan et al. 2005). All of these

violations occurred even after a protective order was obtained in hopes of protection and discontinuing the abuse, so clearly there is room for improvement. An average of 1.41 continued violations occurred amongst the urban women as opposed to an average of 4.19 times amongst the rural women (Logan et al. 2005). This may be due to the fact that non-service rates, instances where the police did not show up or their services were not available, were much higher in rural areas (Logan et al. 2005).

An additional factor that influences the likelihood of re-abuse is socioeconomic status. This may be true for several reasons. First, women many times stay with abusive partners or return to abusive relationships because of financial need (Carlson et al. 1999). Also, research indicates that males with less financial resources are more likely than males with higher income to use marital violence (Carlson 1999). Lastly, men with lower socioeconomic status are less easily influenced by legal sanctions (Carlson 1999). Therefore, employed men are seen as having a greater stake in conformity, indicating they have more to lose with the possibility of arrest than those men who were unemployed (Carlson 1999). In addition, a study by Logan and colleagues (2008) found several variables were associated with the likelihood of the victim continuing the relationship with the abuser after the protective order was obtained. Higher annual income, being married to the abusive partner, and feeling a greater relationship satisfaction all increased the likelihood of continuing this relationship (Logan et al. 2008).

The literature suggests that certain variables are associated with increased effectiveness of a protection order in reducing continued domestic abuse. Unfortunately, many of the studies have arrived at different conclusions based on the same set of

variables. Some studies found that women protected by permanent protective orders have suffered less repeat abuse than those without protective orders (Holt et al. 2002; Logan and Walker 2010), while others find much less consistency in the ability of POs to prevent additional IPV.

In addition to the possible help provided to the victims who obtain POs, there are also studies that have actually focused on a cost benefit analysis of using POs to address IPV to the larger society (Logan, Walker and Hoyt 2012). Research findings concluded that not only do POs save taxpayers money but they improve the quality of life of the victim in making them feel safer (Logan et al 2012). These feelings of safety and subjective improvements in life are an alternative means of assessing the effectiveness of POs.

Feeling Safe / subjective effectiveness of POs

One way to measure if protective orders are effective other than recidivism is the life improvements that are felt by abused women after obtaining a protective order. The research indicates that in certain circumstances POs can be an effective tool to make women feel safer (Logan and Walker 2010; Wright and Johnson 2012). Studies suggest that many women reported that they experienced life improvements, including feeling safer, and feeling that they were more in control of their lives after obtaining the protective order (Keilitz et al 1997). The majority of the women reporting these positive perceptions of the effectiveness of the protective order also believed the police would respond rapidly if there was a violation of the order (Logan et al. 2006). Overall, the

majority of the research suggests that most women feel their lives are improved, they are safer and they feel more empowered after obtaining a protective order in response to IPV (Logan et al 2006, Ptacek 1999). In addition, the victims felt that by obtaining the PO they were able to send a message to the abuser that the abuse was wrong (Ptacek 1999). Limited research however further complicates the attempt to evaluate victim satisfaction with the PO process. Existing studies have found that victims may experience a sense of security or satisfaction with obtaining a PO but they also experience frustration with the PO process (Jordan 2004).

Race and IPV

As previously discussed, there is much conflicting research on IPV and variations on measuring the effectiveness of obtaining a PO. As is often the case with research on violence against women or other such issues, the research tends to lump all women into one category of victims and can often ignore the individual experiences that in fact vary by race and/or ethnicity. More recently, some research has begun to focus on how women of color experience IPV and more importantly, how they interact with the courts and police. Several specific areas of research examine these issues.

The first group of studies focuses on the experience of certain marginalized groups within the U.S. and the role of race or culture within IPV (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005). Research has shown that Black women experience more IPV than any other group, and due to the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender and class, may avoid seeking help (Anyikwa 2015). More specifically, the identity of being Black and a woman leads

to struggles involving sexism and racism and therefore often many of these women feel the need to stay with their abuser (Anyikwa 2015). What is interesting to note is that not only does the majority of the research explore experiences of white women as victims of IPV, but even where there are comparisons with other ethnic groups they are often combined as non-whites, representing all minorities in general, which even further distorts the findings (Grossman and Lundy 2007). In addition, much of that research does not address the specific experiences these women face (Grossman and Lundy 2007). One valuable outcome of the limited research that is available is that experiences with IPV do appear to vary by race, ethnicity and religion, as well as, between the various subcultures within a particular race or ethnicity (Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson and Johnson 2007).

Other research has even attempted to address how marginalized groups experience certain cultural barriers to the delivery of domestic violence services (Burman et al 2004). This leads us to believe that if they involve the police at all their experience will be different than that of white women, based on these intersections of subordination. In fact, some research has even explored neighborhood or situational factors that affect interaction with police who respond to calls from victims of IPV (Lee et al 2017). Some studies report that women of color may be more likely to call the police than white women (Hutchinson, Hirschel, & Pesackis, 1992). Other studies reported that Black women were less likely to call the police because of potential social stigma and subjecting their partner to a potentially harsher punishment for those offenders who were non-white (Rasche 1995).

Along these same lines, research also suggests that lower socio-economic and minority groups of women, who fear their partner will lose his source of income if arrested or

convicted, are also less likely to involve the police in incidences of IPV (Iovanni and Miller 2001).

A final area of research is how the practice and policy implications associated with domestic violence are viewed across racial or ethnic lines (Grossman and Lundy 2007). Along the same lines of investigating IPV victim's experiences with the police as an indicator of satisfaction, we can also explore the effects of race on this experience. It has even been suggested that gender, race and ethnicity seem to have an influence in the offender receiving charge reductions for IPV (Romain and Freiburger 2016). In addition, some research found that there is more likely to be an arrest of the offender where the offender and victim are Black compared to when the offender and victim are White (Bachman and Coker 1995). Several other studies have acknowledged the burden that is on Black women when deciding to involve the police in an incident of IPV because of the discrimination against Black men and women (Sen 1999). They fear that police will arrest the male batterer and/or themselves and this will lead to incarceration which will ultimately add to the stigmatization of Black men as violent (Sen 1999). In addition, their past experiences with the criminal justice system may result in less confidence that the law will even be enforced (Sen 1999).

The existing research has shed much needed light on the issue of using a PO to combat IPV but it fails to address several important questions. For example, do protective orders actually improve the lives of women through feelings of safety or a distinct measureable decrease in victimization or re-abuse? Also, do those outcomes vary by the race of the victim? Finally, how can we understand these relationships within the larger theoretical and sociological context? This dissertation will examine these questions

through the use of feminist legal theory.

Theoretical Perspective

Feminist legal theory has often been referred to as Feminist Jurisprudence as it is grounded in the idea that the development of the legal system is a large contributing factor to the historical subordination of women (Fineman 2005). Fineman (2005) discusses this theory and its relationship to women's structured position in regards to IPV. She argues that the law has been attacked for not taking into consideration the specific experiences and the gendered nature of women's lives. She further notes that under the law historically women were deemed to occupy an inferior position and over the years many areas of the law have been attacked for not addressing these concerns. Although strides have been made with regard to laws against public violence against women, such as rape and sexual harassment in the workplace, she further argues that "domestic" violence, marital rape and many types of IPV have not been subjected to the same legal attention. One of the large disconnects she points out is the idea of what is "private" versus public where the law is more likely to see women as an obvious victim. She further explains that the concept of private versus public carries with it great social implications as to what is protected by enforced adherence to regulations and sanctions. This is where IPV leaves women at the mercy of various legal definitions, responses and authority.

Feminist jurisprudence theory, like feminist social theory more generally, is considered a conflict theory in that it looks at gender as it relates to power within the

social structure of society. Furthermore, this theory explores the concept of gender inequality in society but also considers the implications of race and class. This attention to the ways gender, race and class work together is referred to as intersectionality. Considering gender as social structure allows for the ways gender exists in individuals, interaction and institutions (Risman 2004). This perspective is an integrative and expanded approach to understanding gender in that it views gender as a socially constructed system of stratification, not just one of interaction (Risman 2004:430). In this way, gender as social structure is embedded in our institutional existence, much like the economy and politics (Risman 2004). In the case of feminist jurisprudence, the relevant institution is the legal system.

Intersectionality is another well accepted sociological perspective that views gender as experienced through various existing and intersecting axis of oppression, such as race and class (Collins 2000). This theory asserts that much of what is “known” about women is based on the perspective of white, middle class women, and this knowledge does not account for the experiences that women of color or other socially disadvantaged groups of women may have experienced (Collins 1998:97). Borrowing from stand point theory (Harding 1991), intersectionality reveals that the experiences of white or middle-class women are in fact quite different than those of Black women or poor women (Collins 1998:203). According to Patricia Hill Collins (1998:205), intersectionality “references the ability of social phenomena such as race, class and gender to mutually construct one another.” This perspective therefore, allows sociologists to more completely understand the differences among women operating within various complex dimensions and social settings. In other words, these various systems of subordination

and dominance intersect and exist simultaneously. Intersectionality, therefore, is the idea that we can no longer assume the plight and experiences of all women are the same and so we begin to connect other variables of inequality to more fully understand the variances within gender (Dill, McLaughlin and Nieves 2007). Intersectionality strives to look at multiple sources of oppression on specific groups of women to add to a deeper understanding of gender inequality across different axes such as culture, race, class, age, and sexuality.

Looking at IPV from an intersectional perspective expands the existing knowledge we have about IPV and addresses social problems while representing various marginalized groups (Mann and Grimes 2001). What becomes important here is that although we are focusing on the existing structural inequalities that constrain the lives of battered women, we recognize that this structure effects marginalized groups in different ways (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005). In other words, the differential access to power and resources will ultimately create different experiences for different groups of women (Anderson and Collins 2001). Therefore, with this type of analysis we reveal the structures of domination and control that exploit battered women from diverse backgrounds and hopefully provide a basis for social change for these marginalized groups (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005).

One aspect of feminist legal theory that potentially offers great insight in studying IPV is nonsubordination or dominance theory (Bartlett, Rhode and Grossman 2013). Nonsubordination theory asserts the perspective that society and/or men utilize the differences in sex to perpetuate the existing power balance in society (Bartlett et al 2013). This theory specifically focuses on violence against women in general but includes the

control of women's sexual behavior; such as pornography, sexual harassment and overall sexuality as well (Bartlett et al 2013). Some researchers feel this type of theoretical perspective is best suited for IPV because violence against women is more about structured central inequalities for women than merely a difference in gender (MacKinnon 1987). In addition, some researchers feel this theory offers a basis to understand IPV and why it occurs, especially because it most often involves female victims (Rennison, Callie and Welchans 2000).

One reason why this theoretical perspective is seen as being well suited for studying IPV is that often the abuse is in the form of recurring patterns that are a result of subordination and control rather than mere anger or outbursts (Bartlett et al 2013). In addition, abuse is often in the form of emotional abuse or financial control and not merely physical in nature (Bartlett et al 2013). Often the abuse is calculated or manipulative and can involve the children in order to control the victim from being able to leave, for example (Mahoney 1991). Another compelling reason this theory is useful in studying IPV is the overwhelming frequency in which IPV occurs. In other words, because of the extreme number of IPV victims in the U.S., most of them being women, some researchers feel this is not merely a case of an intimate partner unable to control their anger but more about subordination and control of the victim (Mahoney 1991). These same researchers all assert that other aspects of feminist legal theory do not offer complete explanations for IPV in general, or the frequency at which it occurs in the U.S. (Bartlett et al 2013).

In other words, a feminist theory including the aspect of subordination would enhance the ability to study institutionalized practices and gender relationships that many other

feminist theories do not necessarily consider.

In utilizing this type of a theoretical framework to analyze a social issue involving primarily women, we are able to apply a feminist perspective and an integrative feminist framework within IPV (McPhail, Busch, Kulkarni and Rice 2007). The law specifically is guilty of utilizing a uniform voice of “gender essentialism” in that all women’s experiences are as one (Harris 1990:585). This notion under the law therefore attempts to lump all women’s experience into one essential experience independent and irrespective of race, class and gender (Harris 1990). In doing this, all of the voices that strive to be heard are combined into one inaccurate depiction of reality for all women (McPhail et al 2007). For these reasons, a feminist legal theory is well suited to investigate the experiences of those who are not always represented within the literature concerning IPV.

What becomes useful in utilizing this particular framework in studying POs in combating IPV, is the existence of POs within a legal environment which often serves to further subordinate women and more specifically, women of color. Although, strides have been made to make POs available to women in order to reduce IPV, many of the realities of how POs are and are not used are not necessarily recognized or addressed among a predominantly patriarchal institution.

Hypotheses

The proposed dissertation will test a number of hypotheses related to victims' interactions with police and whether these influence the effectiveness of POs. This study asserts three overarching hypotheses that will be tested and discussed:

Hypothesis 1- Victims of IPV who experience good interaction with the police will also experience positive results in utilizing a PO to combat IPV.

This hypothesis will include all police interaction variables as they effect all ethno-racial groups and positive results will be measured by victims "Feeling Safer." Past research has indicated that victims of IPV feel better or safer when they think police will respond quickly and when their experiences with the police are positive. This outcome should therefore be uniform across ethno-racial groups.

Hypothesis 2- The way that police interact with victims of IPV will vary by race and be less positive for victims of color.

This hypothesis will discover if there are differences in police interaction for all policing variables among different ethno-racial groups and the difference will be less positive for victims of color specifically. In light of past research on ethno-racial differences in experiences with police, there is expected to be ethno-racial differences in the outcome of the interaction between police and victims of IPV.

Hypothesis 3- The impact of the differences in police interaction by race will affect the experience of using a PO to combat IPV and be less positive for Black victims.

This hypothesis will translate the effect of the less positive experiences with

police for different ethno-racial groups as to “Feeling safer” and ultimately be less positive for Black victims.

CHAPTER III

DATA AND METHODS

Introduction

This study will examine women's experiences with POs to determine if this tool within the criminal justice system serves as an effective way to empower women and reduce IPV or further subordinate them in a historically male dominated institution under the law. Specifically, I will compare White, Black and Hispanic women's experiences of interactions with police, rates of arrest, whether they felt safer or felt there were continued instances of IPV after obtaining a PO. This study therefore gives insight into the effectiveness of the use of POs and adds to the literature how the experiences between White, Black and Hispanic women vary in dealing with the police and IPV.

Data Sources and Sample

The data for this study are drawn from the National Institute of Justice "Benefits and limitations of Civil Protection Orders for Victims of Domestic Violence in Wilmington, Delaware, Denver, Colorado, and the District Of Columbia, 1994-1995" (Keilitz et al 2000). The study was an attempt to determine the effectiveness of the civil protection orders. Included in the instruments were assessments of any improvement in the quality of the women's lives after the order was in place, and the extent of problems created by the protection orders (Keilitz et al 2000).

The study sample was comprised of victims of intimate partner violence from three cities; Denver Colorado, the D.C. area and Wilmington Delaware. In each of the three sites, women who filed petitions for protection orders were recruited in person for the study. To be included in these data the victims had to have obtained either a permanent or temporary PO. Across the three project sites, 554 women agreed to participate in the study and staff were able to complete an initial interview with 285 of the women who were recruited (Keilitz et al 2000). Approximately 60 percent of these women participated in follow-up interviews.

There were four methods of data collection at each of the sites. First, initial telephone interviews were conducted with 285 women petitioners for protection orders across the three sites approximately one month after they received either temporary or permanent protection orders (Keilitz et al 2000). Second, follow-up interviews were conducted with 177 of the same group of petitioners' about six months later. Third, additional data were collected from the civil case records of petitioners who participated in the study and, fourth, from the criminal history records of the men named in the protection orders. The drop in participation between wave one and wave two resulted due to the inability to contact the participant, lack of response at the follow-up or lack of interest by the participant to proceed with the second interview (Keilitz et al 2000).

Respondents answered questions on a self-report survey that included topics such as their experiences with police at the time of their original incident of violence, feelings of safety before and after they obtained the PO and if the PO had been violated. While this study may be somewhat dated there is important detailed information about the police and general experiences of women in obtaining a PO, especially allowing for

ethno-racial differences, that is unique. It is also important to note, that the Violence Against Women Act was enacted in 1994 and required all states to have protective orders and procedures in place for victims of spousal abuse. Therefore, all three of these jurisdictions would have had to have POs in place by the date of the first wave of data collection. This is therefore data from a period where there was a great deal of attention being paid to the issues of spouse/partner abuse.

For these reasons, this particular data set is the most useful and relevant to conduct this study. Since these data were collected from three specific locations, it is not necessarily representative of the full population of victims of intimate partner violence. However, there is a range of different age groups, racial or ethnic groups, varying income levels as well as different levels of education.

Measurement of Variables

Control variables:

The control variables included in the analyses are based on the existing literature on the use of protective orders to combat IPV. The first three are the respondents' age, the total number of children the woman has, and the victims' monthly income at the time of the data collection in each wave. These three variables were continuous, and the distribution and key statistics are provided in the results. Also included as control variables were "highest level of education" and "current relationship".

“Highest level of education” attained was recoded to reflect five categories representing increasing educational achievement. Anything below completing high school was recoded as one, “less than high school”. High school graduates were recoded as two, and those who indicated they had “some college” or “other tech/school” were recoded as three. College graduates were recoded as four and those with any education post college were combined into the final level of education.

The respondents reported their “current relationship” with the offender in each of the two waves. For wave one this item was recoded into dummy variables in order to represent their relationship status. Specifically, four dummy variables were created representing “married,” “separated,” “divorced” and “never been married.” For purposes of the regression analysis “married” was used as the left out category. In the second wave, this variable was coded differently due to additional options being listed. Therefore a second series of dummy variables for wave two was created representing each of the new categories of relationship status. The new options were “Divorced,” “Separated” which included those who reported either that there was or was not a pending divorce, “Reconciled,” “No change” and “Other.” Having both sets of variables for the two waves allows me to analyze how the relationship status has been effected by obtaining the PO and various other factors over time.

Independent Variables:

Race was originally coded into four dummy variables (White, Black, Hispanic and Other) so as to isolate each race individually for the initial descriptive analysis. Due to the low numbers of Hispanic or other races in the sample, it was necessary to limit the

sample to Whites and Blacks for the regression analysis. I considered race as an independent variable, rather than as a control, because this was a key focus in my analysis.

The key independent variables are related to the interactions between the respondents and police at the time of the incident that led to the PO being obtained. The variables “police came to the scene”, “police interviewed witnesses”, “police made an arrest”, “police told the victim about a PO”, and “police told victim how to get a PO” were all originally dichotomous responses so were coded as yes=1, no = 0. A final question that focused on the period prior to the PO was whether the respondent felt the police were helpful. Originally this variable was coded on a three point scale, from “not helpful” to “very helpful” with an intermediate category of “somewhat helpful”. Based on exploratory analysis, it was clear that most respondents indicated police were “very” or “somewhat” helpful so this variable was recoded so that the response of “very helpful” and “somewhat helpful” was coded as 1, with all other responses as zero.

In looking at the original incident of violence and whether the abusive partner was arrested it became clear that not every offender was still present when police arrived, thus making it impossible to make an immediate arrest. To represent a more accurate depiction of official police action, it was necessary to create a variable of “arrest or warrant” that combined the item for whether an arrest was made at the scene, with a separate item asking if a warrant for arrest was filed. This process allowed me to capture both situations where police arrested the abusive partner, or where the abusive partner was not present but the victim filed for an arrest warrant. This measure was coded as 1 if either of these actions were taken, with all other responses being coded as zero.

Prior to any additional analysis, a Pearson correlation analysis and factor analyses were performed to check whether these items should be considered separately or as one or more scales. In the correlation, for two variables there was a high level of correlation. The variables “police told victim about a PO” and “police told victim how to get a PO” were correlated at .859 ($p < .01$). So, these the two variables were combined to create one item of (Told/Get PO), coded as 1 if the respondent indicated yes to either or both of these questions, and zero if they said no to both questions.

A necessary condition for nearly all the police/victim interaction variables was for the police to actually be called to the scene. In the original data, all the relevant policing variables were coded as missing in cases where the police were not called. This created a very high number of missing cases in the final analyses. In order to recapture a more accurate understanding of the situation, these variables were recoded to allow for the “missing” cases which were due to the police never being called. In other words, the variables “police came to scene”, “police interviewed witnesses”, “arrest or warrant”, “police told about and how to get a PO”, “police were helpful” were all recoded as yes=1 and all else as 0. This will reflect a clearer picture regarding those who actually dealt with the police and their perspective and assessment.

After looking at the individual interactions with police in the descriptive and bivariate analyses, all the policing variables were combined. In other words, in order to make the regression analysis cleaner, because the majority of the policing variables were highly correlated, and based on a factor analysis were tapping the same underlying construct, all the recoded policing variables (police came to scene, police made arrest or sought warrant, police interviewed witnesses, police tell victim about PO or how to get

one, and how helpful (very) were police) were combined to create an additive police variable “positive interaction” to represent positive interactions with the police. The range of this variable was 0 to 6 and had a mean of 2.523.

In addition to the interactions with police that occurred at the particular incident prior to the PO, several variables in the survey relate to the respondents’ experiences after the PO was obtained. The first of these focused on the respondents’ attitudes toward police. Respondents indicated whether “police looked to as a source of support” in the time period after obtaining the PO (yes=1, no=0). Three measures were also included that indicate if there were continuing problems with the abuser after the PO was obtained. These were, “If the victim felt the PO was violated”, “If the victim experienced repeated physical abuse,” and “If the victim experienced repeated psychological abuse”. In each of these variables, the responses were dichotomous, with yes = 1, no = 0 and all other responses as missing.

Dependent Variables:

This study attempts to assess the effectiveness of having a PO. Based on the literature there were a variety of possible measures in these data to measure effectiveness. For example, initially, indicators of “Improved Life” and “Feel Safer” were most consistently used in the literature. However, only one of those variables proved to be a viable choice for a dependent variable based on these data. It became apparent that “life improved” and “feel better” were highly correlated and offered very little variation as the majority of the sample answered yes to both questions. In contrast, the measure of “Feel Safer” did vary across the sample.

Therefore, ultimately the dependent variable as the measure of effectiveness was limited to “Feel Safer” in the final analyses.

The clearest indications from the self-report data were items asking “If the victim felt safer after obtaining a PO” (feel safer), “Did the victim’s life improve” (life improved), and “Did the victim feel better about themselves” (feel better). The measure of “feel safer” was originally coded as 1=much safer than before, 2=safely than before, 3=about the same, 4=less safe than before. This scale was in response to a survey question that asked “Did the protection order make you feel safer from physical harm than before you had the order”. To assist in analyzing the results “feel safer” was recoded in a reverse scale so a higher number would reflect a higher degree of safety. The “life improved” and “feel better” items were both initially dichotomous and highly correlated at .969 ($p < .01$). Thus, to avoid potential multicollinearity, the two variables were combined as one item (improved life) coded as 1 if the respondent indicated yes to either or both of these questions, and zero if they said no to both questions. “Improved Life” and “Feel Safer” were thereafter to be used as the main Dependent variables as they represent the potential outcomes of the effectiveness of using a PO to combat intimate partner violence and are well supported in the literature as a measure of this effectiveness. However, as explained above, since “Improved Life” was not a viable option ultimately “Feel Safer” was used as the primary dependent variable in assessing the effectiveness of using a PO to combat IPV.

Analysis

This project is broken into three steps. As a first step, I examine descriptive and bivariate relationships between victims' interactions with police, race, and victims' perceptions of the value of the PO. The second step is to conduct OLS regressions on my dependent variable for both wave one and wave two to assess the impact of the controls and key independent variables on these outcomes. The final step splits the sample by race for wave one only and conducts similar OLS regressions to assess whether the effects of the controls and independent variables on the effectiveness of the PO outcomes vary by race.

First, frequencies were run on the sample population in the two different waves allowing for a discussion of the change that occurred between the waves with regard to things such as income, relationship status and how these may have varied by race. For the purpose of reporting comparable categories between waves with regard to respondents' relationship status, the wave two categories were coded to reflect the wave one categories in table 1 only. Therefore, "divorced", "separated pending divorce", "separated not pending divorce", "reconciled", "no change" and "other" were calculated to reflect the categories in wave one namely, "married", "separated", "divorced" and "never been married". For example, if one were divorced in wave one and indicated "no change" in wave two they would be coded as "divorced" in wave two. Furthermore, if one were married in wave one but reported "divorced" in wave two they would also be coded as "divorced" in wave two. Secondly, crosstabs were run between the policing variables and race accounting for all races and including everyone in the original sample. At this point,

it was important to observe if any of these relationships seemed significant and worth including in my final analysis.

Next, bivariate correlations were run for each wave separately, including all independent police interaction variables, all control variables and the dependent variables relative to wave one and then wave two respectively. When running the wave two correlations, the independent variable “change in income” was added in addition to the original income variable from wave one and the current relationship variable from wave two was used in place of the wave one measure. Because the numbers were so small, the Hispanic category was eliminated from further analysis so as to focus on the larger numbers that are represented here namely, Whites and Blacks. T-tests were also run on the independent police interaction variables to look at police interactions by race in order to assess any differences in respondents’ experiences.

Furthermore, in light of the existing literature, using the overall variable of “Feel Safer” in assessing the effectiveness of obtaining a PO seemed to be the most revealing variable in representing a desired outcome. This particular dependent variable was then used to run a series of regressions to assess the effectiveness of using a PO as to whether it made victims feel safer and if results varied by race or waves within this data set.

Therefore, two regression analyses were run for wave one and for wave two on “Feel Safer” with both Black and White respondents included. The first model included the demographic control variables such as age, race, monthly income, education, relationship and number of children. The second model then added the policing and other variables such as police as a source of support, the measure of positive interaction with police, repeat physical abuse, repeat psychological abuse and violate CPO. After these

initial analyses, a series of regressions were conducted separately for White and Black respondents, for wave one only. This was done only for wave one because there was no significant correlation with race and the dependent variable for the second wave. Therefore, that sample was not split by race. The wave two sample was also representative of a smaller number of respondents and may be the reason for the lack of a significant correlation. Ultimately, the results of the regression models were reported for both waves and by race for wave one so as to view the contrasts between waves, races and the specific variables at the two distinct times utilized in this study. The regression analysis results reveals where several differences exist among respondents.

Within these results, in reporting the p value or level of significance, I chose to report up to a .1 level of significance. Many researchers have now chosen to include this level of significance when the sample size is particularly small. Furthermore, more researchers are starting to challenge a traditional reporting of a .05 threshold established by Fisher (1956) based on various sample characteristics such as sample size and leaving the choice of the particular level to the researcher. Many such challenges have reported that a threshold of a .05 level of significance is antiquated and arbitrary, often ignoring significant results, especially where the sample size is smaller (Bross, 1971, Dahiru 2008, Thomas 2002, Thompson, 1987).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Sample Demographics

As indicated in table 1, the average age of the respondents is 32 in wave one and 33 in wave two, both with a minimum age of 16 and a maximum age of 77. What is important to note here is that, even though the sample decreased from 285 participants in wave 1 to 177 participants in wave two, the age distribution was almost identical. The distribution of location is similar across cities, with Denver and Delaware both having 90 respondents in wave one and 56 and 58 respondents in wave two, respectively. The District of Columbia had a few more respondents, with 105 in wave one and 63 in wave two. Overall, the distribution of the three cities is quite similar.

The distribution of race among the participants is not representative of the general population but over-represents minorities. Specifically, Blacks (N=145) are the majority of the sample (nearly 51% of the wave one participants) represented here, followed by whites (N=96, 34%), Hispanics (N=38, 13%) and other (N=6, 2%). The wave two participants were fairly consistently distributed across these racial groups, with Blacks making up 48% of wave two, Whites 36%, Hispanics 14% and other 2%. This consistency allows for a reasonable comparison on the key variables of interest between waves with regard to ethno-racial groups where, even though the overall numbers have decreased, the distribution between these groups is very similar.

When looking at the highest level of education achieved, it is of particular interest

to realize that almost twenty percent of the original sample population did not even graduate from high school. Furthermore, only 8.4 % of the participants graduated from college and only 4.2% had any post graduate work. This is indicative of a low overall level of education among participants which may very well translate into a difficulty to maneuver the legal system and effect the ability to understand the nature of obtaining a PO. In looking at wave 2 education levels, the percentages have increased slightly, as some college or technical school increased from 26.7% to 32.2 %, college graduates increased from 8.4% to 9 % and post grad participants went from 4.2% to 6.2 %. However, even with these slight increases in education levels in wave 2, it is apparent that the overall level of education for participants is quite low with 16.4% having less than a high school level of education and 40.1% with only a high school education. Regardless of the wave, these numbers represent the potential inability to fully understand how to obtain a PO, what the differences or ramifications are of obtaining a temporary versus a permanent PO, and what their overall rights may be with regard to this process.

With regard to participants' monthly income, the maximum is approximately \$6200 in both waves with the average of \$1160.81 in wave 1 and \$1165.61 in wave two. Of those participating in wave two, most of their incomes remained the same (N=117, 66.1%) with only N=19 (10.7%) decreasing and N=39 (22%) increasing over the six month period between interviews. The decrease could be due to the disruption in shared income with the abusing spouse but the overall number of participants experiencing a decrease is small. It is positive that the majority of participants' monthly income stayed the same or increased after the six months between interviews indicating that getting a

PO does not have a negative impact on income.

The total number of children had by participants indicated in table 1 shows that the majority of participants had either 1, 2 or 3 children. Only 18.6% had no children, 4.6% had 4 children and 4.2% had 5 or more children in wave one. The percentages are quite similar in wave two. The number of children is important as past work has found that the number of children influences potential violence in the home. This will also allow us to compare the influence of children in the home among participants and between waves as they are quite similarly distributed.

Finally, the participants' current relationship is also indicated in Table 1 reflecting the changes that may have occurred in the relationship due to the incident of violence and obtaining a PO. There are some differences between waves that are important to note. In wave two the percent of those married has gone down from 23.9 % in wave one to 11.9 % after the six month period between interviews. Also, the percent of those who are divorced doubled in wave two going from 9.1% in wave one to 18.6% in wave two. However, it is unclear based merely on these numbers whether these changes occurred because of a move on the part of the victim participant to change their abusive situation or that the participants in wave two merely represent a different relationship distribution among the sample population.

Table 1 Demographics of Sample Population by Waves

	Wave 1			Wave 2	
<u>Age</u>					
Mean	32.01			33.1	
Min	16			16	
Max	77			77	
<u>Location</u>					
Delaware	90			56	
Denver	90			58	
District of Columbia	105			63	
<u>Income /Month</u>					
	\$-W1	\$-W2		N	%
Mean	1160.81	1165.61	Increase	39	22
Min	0	0	Same	117	66.1
Max	6200	6201	Decrease	19	10.7
<u>Race</u>					
	N	%		N	%
White	96	33.7		63	35.6
Black	145	50.9		85	48
Hispanic	38	13.3		25	14.1
Other	6	2.1		4	2.3
<u>Education</u>					
< H.S.	56	19.7		29	16.4
H.S. Grad.	117	41.1		71	40.1
Some College / training	76	26.7		50	32.2
College Grad.	24	8.4		16	9.0
Post Grad.	12	4.2		11	6.2
<u>Total # of Children</u>					
0	53	18.6		31	17.5
1	70	24.6		44	24.9
2	77	27.0		49	27.7
3	58	20.4		35	19.8
4	13	4.6		9	5.1
5 or more	12	4.2		8	4.5
<u>Current Relationship</u>					
Married	68	23.9		21	11.9
Separated	61	21.4		39	22.0
Divorced	26	9.1		33	18.6
Never Married	130	45.6		80	45.2

Race and Police Interactions

As a first step in establishing the importance of police / victim interactions, I examine a number of variables and how interactions may vary by race. I first look at the actions of the police with regard to the initial incident of violence. Specifically, I compare the respondents' reports regarding whether victims felt the police were a source of knowledge, help or support and whether an arrest was made or a warrant was sought for an arrest. Several interesting findings emerged. First, in Table 2 the police came to the scene more often for Black victims (69%) than for White victims (54.2%) or Hispanic victims (44.7%). However, all three were similar and not highly out of line with the other ethno-racial groups. Overall, this is a good indication that police are responding to the calls on a non-discriminatory basis which is better than may be believed based on past research (Burman et al 2004). However, the data reveal that even though the responses may be non-discriminatory, police are only showing up for about half the White and Hispanic victims' calls.

The second key finding from this analysis is that the police made arrests or sought warrants in very few cases, with 39.6% for White victims, 42.8% for Black victims and 42.1% for Hispanic victims. What is not apparent here is whether this action with regard to making an arrest or seeking a warrant is at the request of the victim or from the discretion of the police officer. Also, the police seem to be inconsistent in their practice of interviewing witnesses. For example, police interviewed witnesses for White victims (36.5%) more often than for Black victims (26.3%) and Hispanic victims (22.8%). This too is troublesome if it is based on the officer's discretion or selective diligence in

pursuing a specific case where the victim is of color. It is not clear what the reason is for differential treatment based on this analysis. What is also important to observe within this analysis, is an overall lack in follow through with IPV calls in general, regardless whether there is a disparity between ethno-racial groups. With regard to several items in Table 2 and as mentioned above, there seems to be an overall failure on the part of police in providing services in response to IPV calls. This is also the case in providing victims with information about a PO or how to get one. Only 45.8 % of White victims, 55.9% of Black victims and 36.8 % of Hispanic victims were even told about a PO or how to get one. As this is the primary tool victims of IPV have to protect themselves or take legal action against IPV within the criminal justice system, it does not bode well for police services in assisting victims of IPV with obtaining a PO. In addition, only about one third of the victims overall found the police very helpful at the initial incident of violence with White (35.4%), Black (34.5%) and Hispanic victims indicating a similar degree of satisfaction with the help they received from the police. In addition, very few victims viewed the police as a source of support at all with White victims (7.3%) and Black victims (10.3%) finding them far more supportive than Hispanic victims (2.6%) overall. Based on the responses of this sample, it is clear that in many cases the victims do not feel supported or helped by the police.

One of the more interesting findings in Table 2 is the disparity between the different ethno-racial groups with regard to viewing the PO as violated. White victims (40.6%) felt that the PO had been violated almost twice as much as Black victims (23.4%) or Hispanic victims (21.1%) did.

Without more detailed information we do not know what the reason may be for this finding, but it is clear that White victims viewed the PO as violated far more often than the other ethno-racial groups did.

Table 2 Positive Police Interactions at Time of Original Incident: By Race at Wave 1

	White		Black		Hispanic	
<u>Police Action</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Police Came to Scene	52	54.2	100	69	17	44.7
Police Made Arrest Or Warrant Sought	38	39.6	62	42.8	16	42.1
Police Interviewed Witnesses	35	36.5	33	22.8	10	26.3
Police tell about PO Or How to get one	44	45.8	81	55.9	14	36.8
How helpful were Police (Very)	34	35.4	50	34.5	12	31.6
Police Viewed as a Source Of Support	7	7.3	15	10.3	1	2.6
Victim felt PO was violated	39	40.6	34	23.4	8	21.1

The above analysis is simply descriptive, to start to build a picture of how police interact with victims of IPV within different ethno-racial groups. To further investigate whether the victims' interactions with police vary statistically by race, correlations were

run between the three dummy variables for race and the different policing items (Table 3). In addition, I included the dependent variable for feeling safe for each wave. This analysis shows, most notably, that nothing is significantly correlated with wave two for the key variable of interest. This is likely because of the drop in sample size between waves. However, in wave one “feeling safe” is correlated with “feeling safe” in wave two. Additionally, “race” and “feeling safe” are correlated in wave one. Even though there is not a lot of findings in general, in order to examine these results, it is more informative to look at the differences between ethno-racial groups. For example, for Black victims, police were more likely to “come to the scene” and more likely to “tell the respondent about a PO and how to obtain one”. Black victims also report lower levels of “feeling safe” while Hispanic victims report higher levels of “feeling safe”. For Hispanic victims, the only significant correlation is “police came to the scene”. The only policing variable that was significantly correlated for White victims is “If police interviewed witnesses” where the police were more likely to conduct interviews for White Victims.

Based on the fact that nothing is significantly correlated for wave two, I would expect to find very little significant results if I would have run wave two by race. Also, it may be that additional predictors are needed in future work. Therefore, I will run the regression analysis on wave two only for the combined sample and therefore not split the groups by ethno-racial groups in wave two. In wave one however, since race was significantly correlated, I will split the sample by ethno-racial groups for the regression analysis and compute both the combined sample and both Black and White respondents separately.

Table 3: Correlation analysis between policing, feeling safe, and race.

	SafetyW1	SafetyW2	White	Black	Hispanic
SafetyW2	.440***				
White	.047	.006			
Black	-.173**	-.055	-.725***		
Hispanic	.151**	.032	-.280***	-.399***	
PositivePolice	-.024	-.133	-.037	.106	-.082
Scene	-.086	-.159	-.085	.186**	-.122*
Interview	.021	-.030	.139*	-.113 ⁺	-.012
Helpful	-.009	-.064	-.062	-.107	-.052
ArrestWarrant	.049	-.040	-.031	.021	.003
TellPO	-.058	-.120	-.052	.130*	-.099

+ p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

As a final bivariate comparison, t-tests were conducted comparing the mean level of Black and White victims' responses (Table 4). Because the number of Hispanic victims and other ethno-racial participants were so low, especially in the second wave, they were dropped from this analysis. Any results would have been tainted or potentially skewed because of the low numbers within the sample population among these groups.

As Table 4 indicates, there are no statistically significant differences between White and Black participants for the majority of variables. In comparing the full sample of respondents, who participated in wave one only, and those respondents who participated in both waves, there are some distinct differences. Among wave two respondents specifically, none of the policing variables exhibited a discernable level of significant difference between the two racial groups. This may be a positive indication that police are at least somewhat consistent with their treatment of cases of IPV among White and Black victims alike. The one significant mean difference is with the variable "police interviewed witnesses" with Black victims (.71, p<.001) less likely to report this compared to White victims (1.23).

Table 4 T-Tests of Difference in Police Interaction by Race

Variable	Wave1		Wave 2	
	White	Black	White	Black
	\bar{x} Std. Dev.	\bar{x} Std. Dev.	\bar{x} Std. Dev.	\bar{x} Std. Dev.
Police came to Scene	.96 (.64)	1.03 (.54)	.95 (.58)	1.05 (.57)
Police made Arrest or Warrant Sought	.40 (.49)	.43 (.50)	.36 (.48)	.39 (.49)
Police Interviewed Witnesses	1.23 (1.06)	.71 (1.02) ***	1.14 (1.00)	.78 (1.02)
Police tell about PO Or How to get one	1.24 (.93)	1.52 (.92)	1.26 (.93)	1.45 (.96)
How Helpful were Police (very)	1.76 (.85)	1.89 (.83)	1.81 (.85)	1.80 (.85)
Police Viewed as a Source of Support	.10 (.30)	.14 (.35)	.15 (.36)	.19 (.40)

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

In tables 2 and 4 there is a consistent finding among this particular sample that police are treating victims somewhat similarly regardless of their race. However, overall victims are clearly not supported by police. What is concerning within this analysis is that these are victims that actually obtained a PO and are more likely to have called the police. In this case, these victims would have most likely had more interaction with police services and support compared to victims that are not represented in the sample, meaning those who did not obtain a PO. In other words, those victims who did not obtain

a PO, and who are therefore not in this study, would be even less likely to have positive interactions if any with police services or support. Overall, the findings here indicate that police are making very few arrests compared to the number of cases of IPV and are not viewed as a source of support or help regardless of the ethnicity of the victim.

Regression Analysis

As the final stage of my analysis, I conducted a series of OLS regressions to assess the impact of police practices and the women's experiences with the PO on the outcome of whether victims felt safer after obtaining a PO. The first series of regressions include both White and Black women to determine whether race is a significant predictor of my dependent variable. As race was significant in wave one, the final analyses are split by race for this wave only to assess whether the effects of the independent variables operate similarly for both Black and White victims or if there are unique predictors by race. In reporting these findings, a ($p < .10$) level was used in addition to the ($p < .05$) and ($p < .01$) levels of significance because of the small sample size.

Table 5 presents the standardized results of the first analysis which tests the impact of the independent variables on feeling safer for all 277 respondents who participated in wave one only. While not a particularly strong model, the R-square value for model two (.168) is approximately double than for model one (.089), indicating the policing and repeat abuse variables do significantly improve our ability to predict whether or not the victim feels safer after getting a PO. In wave one, age ($p < .05$) was significant and race ($p < .10$) marginally significant in predicting "feel safer" among

respondents in the first model which only controls for demographic variables. In model two only race ($p<.05$) and the respondent indicating they felt the PO was violated ($p<.05$) were significant once the policing and repeat abuse variables were added. In other words, age ceased to be significant in the second model of wave one while race became even more significant when the policing and repeat abuse variables were added. Therefore, in model two, being white increased “feeling safer” by .409. In addition, “feeling safer” was more influenced by race than even having the PO violated. This seems to indicate that race is a factor to consider with regard to respondents’ experiences with the police and ultimately if the victims “feel safer”. Nothing else was significant in wave one in either model.

Table 5 OLS Regression on Feel Safer: Wave 1 White and Black Respondents

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>b</i>	SE		<i>b</i>	SE	
White	.320	.166	+	.409	.166	*
Age	.018	.009	*	.014	.009	
Education	-.132	.080		-.099	.080	
# Children	.072	.054		.090	.054	
Monthly Income	.000	.000		.000	.000	
Separated	-.105	.218		-.081	.216	
Divorced	-.087	.309		-.019	.306	
Never Married	-.043	.196		-.025	.193	
Positive Interaction				.000	.044	
Police Support				.376	.256	
Physical Abuse				-.206	.424	
Pysch. Abuse				-.498	.300	
Violate CPO				-.374	.178	*
R-square	.089			.168		

+ $p<.10$, * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$

In wave two (table 6), the number of respondents went down from 244 to 177 as it includes only those respondents who completed a second survey at wave two. However, as discussed previously, the general make-up of the overall group was quite similar to the full sample from the first wave as far as age, income, education, race and number of children were concerned. As is the case in table 5, the full model significantly improved the model fit, with the R-square for model one being .177 and model two .297. This improvement for both waves helps to substantiate the importance of policing and additional abuse variables in predicting the outcome “feel safer.”

For wave two, the woman’s education, number of children and whether they reconciled with their abusive partner are all significant at a .10 level while being separated is significant at a .05 level in model one. This is quite different from wave one model one where only age and race were significant. It is important to keep in mind that wave one respondents were interviewed only one month after the initial incident of violence leading to the PO while wave two respondents were interviewed six months after the original interview. In other words, different variables are significant in the same model but in different waves or points in time. This may be because of a change in the make-up of the sample to some degree or may be because after another six months has passed respondents may feel very differently about their safety. This may not be only because of a simple matter of the passage of time but also because of additional experiences that may occurred in the intervening time either with the process of using a PO to combat IPV or with further encounters with their abuser.

Table 6 OLS Regression on Feel Safer: Wave 2 White and Black Respondents

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>b</i>	SE		<i>b</i>	SE	
White	-.014	.213		.012	.210	
Age	.005	.010		.004	.010	
Education	-.176	.099	+	-.206	.097	*
# Children	-.126	.071	+	-.105	.069	
Monthly Income	.000	.000		.000	.000	
Change in Income	-.074	.185		-.115	.182	
Divorced	.265	.263		.089	.266	
Separated	.674	.255	*	.594	.250	*
Reconciled	.540	.320	+	.629	.316	+
Positive Interaction				-.073	.053	
Police Support				.288	.377	
Physical Abuse				-.389	.348	
Pysch. Abuse				-.560	.277	*
Violate CPO				-.042	.215	
R-square	.177			.297		

+ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

One interesting finding is that two different measures of relationships are significant. In comparison to being divorced, being separated from their abuser in wave two contributes to making a respondent “feel safer”. However, being reconciled with the abuser also significantly improved feelings of safety as compared to being divorced, indicating respondents achieved a sense of security by reuniting with the abusive partner. The number of children and the respondents’ education, although only significant at a .10 level, were negatively related to predicting that the respondents “feel safer”. This too is interesting as it suggests that the more educated you are the less safe you may feel and the more children you have the less safe you may feel. Many of these variables remain significant with the addition of the policing interaction variables, and whether or not the victim experienced repeated abuse in model two. For example, although the number of

children are no longer significant, education is significant at a .05 level and still in a negative direction. Also, separated and reconciled are both still significant in the second model and at the same levels of significance as in model one.

One additional variable that becomes significant in model two is psychological abuse. Experiencing psychological abuse after getting the PO makes the respondent less likely to “feel safe”. This is consistent with much of the literature, that psychological abuse can often be more of a factor than even physical abuse in feeling abused, scared and safe for many victims. In other words, it is often what acts are imagined or threatened that scare victims more than merely being hit or attacked physically. Furthermore, contrary to original expectations, experiencing physical abuse was not significant in predicting feeling safer.

The last analyses split the sample by race in wave one only to allow for a comparison of what predicts feelings of safety for White and Black victims. Table 7 presents only the full model for the first wave. In table 7, the results for White and then Black victims are displayed side by side for an easier comparison between ethno-racial groups. These findings demonstrate that there are several predictors that vary by race. The R-square values on both of the full models for wave one for White (.310) and Black (.259) respondents are very close and represent that approximately 26% to 31% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained with this model. This is higher than the r-squares in the models in tables 5 and 6 which combined the sample, indicating that the effects of the predictors do vary in important ways by race and that understanding the impact of POs is improved when we examine these groups separately.

In the split models for wave one, there is only one variable that is significant for White respondents yet several that are significant for Black respondents. For White respondents, education (-.288, $p < .05$ level) is the only variable that is significant and it is in a negative direction, meaning that as education increases, feelings of safety decrease. For Black respondents, each additional child increases feelings of safety (.127, $p < .05$). In addition, among Black respondents as police support increases so does the victims reporting feeling safer (.556, $p < .10$). Psychological abuse and if the PO was violated both had a negative impact on whether Black respondent's may "feel safer". In other words, when respondents reported experiencing psychological abuse (-.960, $p < .05$) and that they believed there was a violation of the PO (-.611, $p < .05$) the reports of "feeling safer" decreased.

Table 7 OLS Regression on Feel Safer: Wave 1, Full Model by Race

Variable	White			Black			<u>Z</u> <u>score</u>
	<i>b</i>	SE		<i>b</i>	SE		
Age	.018	.014		.011	.012		.38
Education	-.288	.136	*	.147	.116		<u>2.43*</u>
# Children	.035	.127		.127	.063	*	.649
Monthly Income	.000	.000		.000	.000		<u>.000</u>
Separated	.147	.323		-.123	.289		.623
Divorced	.226	.397		-.742	.616		<u>1.32</u>
Never Married	.225	.378		-.176	.239		<u>.897</u>
Positive Interaction	.042	.066		-.087	.060		<u>1.45</u>
Police Support	.126	.645		.556	.305	+	.603
Physical Abuse	-1.13	.989		.545	.502		<u>1.51</u>
Pysch. Abuse	.181	.511		-.960	.418	*	1.73
Violate CPO	-.443	.290		-.611	.248	*	.440
R-square	.310			.259			

+ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

In order to determine if the coefficients are statistically different by race, I calculated a z-score for each pairing. Education was determined to have a z-score of 2.43 ($p < .05$), thus the effects of education on feeling safe do vary between Black and White respondents in wave one. This is the only variable that was found to be statistically different between Black and White respondents. This test is based on the formula presented by Paternoster, et al. (1998) and is expressed as the following:

$$\frac{bb_1 - bb_2}{\sqrt{SS_1^2 + SS_2^2}}$$

One finding in the regression analysis, namely, the direction of the relationship between police responses and feelings of safety for Black victims, was unexpected. Therefore, I ran some additional analysis to try to determine why these results may have occurred. Specifically, additional frequencies and cross-tabulations were assessed to see what may be the reason for this result. What I discovered is that the type of police responses that I assumed would be a positive or helpful event for victims in combating IPV may not be considered positive for all victims. The police interaction items (police came to scene, police interview witnesses, police made an arrest or sought warrant, police told about PO and how to get one and if police were helpful) all were correlated in the preliminary analysis and I presumed they were indicating a more positive experience. I therefore combined them into one measure for the regressions. However, based on the regression findings I considered whether some of these interactions may not actually be viewed as positive. While, “if police were helpful” was clearly positive, the other four

variables may vary in interpretation. For example, some women may find it to be intrusive if police come to the home or interview witnesses, or others may not want an arrest to be made. Therefore, I ran a series of cross-tabulations between the item of “police were helpful” with the other four items in the measure of positive interaction. Table 8 presents the percentage of respondents who indicated that police were not helpful by those who responded yes to each of the other items (i.e. police did come scene, interviewed witnesses, told the victim about POs or arrested the offender or issued a warrant).

Table 8: Respondents indicating police were not helpful by specific interaction

	White	Black
Came to scene	23%	28%
Interviewed witnesses	20%	21%
Arrest / Warrant	29%	32%
Tell PO	14%	16%

What is evident from this analysis is that not everyone felt that these acts taken by the police were actually helpful. For example, of respondents who said the police did issue a warrant or made an arrest, 32% of Black respondents and 29% of White respondents also indicated that police were not helpful. Similarly, fewer Black victims indicated that having police come to the scene was helpful than White victims. This analysis indicates that even when the police did what may be expected of them in responding to a case of IPV, these acts do not necessarily make all respondents happy, and therefore may not actually make them feel safer.

Overall, it is clear that there are ethno-racial differences in the predictors of feeling safe. For Black respondents, psychological abuse and their interactions with police predict feelings of safety across both waves. In comparison, for White respondents, none of these experiences matter, but simply their education and, marginally in wave two, whether they reconciled with their partner. One unexpected finding is that it is the psychological and not the physical abuse that is primarily significant in creating more concerns with safety. Finally, in looking at the R-square for both full models in wave two, the model for Whites has a value of .393 and the model for Blacks has a value of .565 both of which are high. This indicates a high degree of explanation of the relationship between these variables and the variable “feel safer” with regard to both White and Black respondents in wave two.

Summary of Results

Specific hypotheses were made regarding the expectation of results prior to running the analysis. The results of these data supported several of the original hypotheses while others were only partially supported, or not supported at all. This section summarizes the findings as they relate to specific hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that victims of IPV who experience good interaction with the police will also experience positive results in utilizing a PO to combat IPV. In other words, victims will report feeling safer when they have a positive interaction with police. This was probably the most surprising of the results. This particular hypothesis was not supported. However, feelings of safety did increase when the victim felt the police were

helpful and was marginally significant (.556, $p < .10$) in the full model for Black respondents in wave one (Table 7). Police support was not significant in any of the other models.

In order to investigate the potential implications of race on these events, certain hypotheses were made about the effects of race as well. Hypothesis 2 predicted that the way that police interact with victims of IPV will vary by race and be less positive for Black victims. This was somewhat supported as was Hypothesis 3 that predicted that the impact of the difference in police interaction by race will affect the experience of using a PO to combat IPV and be less positive for Black victims. Although Hispanics were removed for the hypotheses concerning race in the regression models, as the numbers were too small to produce meaningful results, they were not excluded from the differences in the policing analysis. Therefore, in wave one, Hispanic respondents found police were far less helpful than Black or White respondents (Table 2). Surprisingly, Black victims found the police to be more of a source of support than White victims did which does not support that part of the original hypothesis. However, expecting that Black and Hispanic victims will feel that the police were less helpful than White victims was slightly supported (Table 2) but with very little distinction as only approximately 30% of all three groups (although Whites slightly more) found police to be helpful at the original incident of violence. In addition, Hispanic victims did report that police responded to the scene less often than White victims but this was not found to be true for Black respondents (Table 2). It was also expected that Black and Hispanic victims will report police chose to make an arrest less often than White victims. This was not supported either as White victims reported less arrests than both Black and Hispanic

victims at the original incident of violence. Furthermore, it was expected that Black and Hispanic victims would report that police informed them about obtaining a PO less often than White victims. This was found to be true for Hispanics but not for Black victims.

What was found to be of interest in the descriptive analysis (Table 2), was that police interviewed witnesses less often for Black and Hispanic victims than for White victims at the original incident of violence leading to obtaining the PO. In addition, White victims found the PO to have been violated almost twice as much as Black or Hispanic victims. In spite of these apparent differences in comparisons of frequencies between the three groups, there were very few statistical differences. In looking at the T-tests comparing white and Black victims only, (Table 4) police interviewing witnesses was the only significant difference ($p < .001$), with Black victims being less likely to report this.

The bivariate analysis indicated that there may not be as many ethno-racial differences as originally expected. This was also the case with the regression analysis, with very few of the predictors being significantly related to feeling safer and with very few ethno-racial differences as well. However, in attempting to add to this area of study, it is also important to discover what is not significant in predicting increased feelings of safety for victims of IPV.

One specific variable that was consistently significant, and is important to focus on, is the impact of education in predicting feeling safer for White respondents. There is evidence of a low level of education among participants overall. However, the findings here show that even when respondents are educated, it does not help, and in fact it may make victims feel less safe, at least for White respondents. What is concerning here as

well is the low education levels among the sample population may very well translate into a difficulty to maneuver the legal system and understand the nature of obtaining a PO. These data may further represent the potential inability to fully understand how to obtain a PO, what the differences or ramifications are of obtaining a temporary versus a permanent PO, and what their overall rights may be with regard to this process.

The majority of participants' monthly income stayed the same or increased after the six months between interviews. This seems to be indicative that getting a PO does not have a negative impact on income. Another interesting finding is that the specific relationship status has an impact on if the victim may "feel safer". However, specifically one of these results is if the victim has reconciled with their abuser which is most concerning. It seems that if the victim reconciled with their abuser this increased their feeling of safety in some cases. It is most troublesome to see victims of IPV choosing to return to an unsafe and unhealthy relationship because they feel safer when they do. It is a false sense of safety or short lived sense of security at best (Mahoney 1991).

When we look at the police action to make an arrest or seek a warrant among these results we see that only about a third of the time police are following through in this way. What is not apparent here is whether this action with regard to making an arrest or seeking a warrant is at the request of the victim or from the discretion of the police officer. Regardless, there is a definite lack of follow through on the part of police. If arrests are made at the officers' discretion this is concerning as it indicates a potential bias or discriminatory practice among officers when investigating or dealing with a case of IPV where the victim is Black as opposed to White. This is somewhat consistent with the literature where it is believed that victims of color receive less policing services than

White victims (Burman et al 2004). What is clear from this analysis is that police are making very few arrests compared to the number of cases of IPV and are not viewed as a source of support or help regardless of the ethnicity of the victim.

Also, the police seem to be inconsistent in their practice of interviewing witnesses. This too is troublesome if it is based on the officer's discretion or selective diligence in pursuing a specific case where the victim is Black. What is important overall within this analysis, is whether there is a disparity between ethno-racial groups with regard to their treatment by police or an overall lack in follow through with cases of IPV in general. As this is the primary tool victims of IPV have to protect themselves or take legal action against IPV within the criminal justice system, this finding is concerning. Only about one third of the victims overall found the police very helpful at the initial incident of violence. It is troublesome that police are not educating or assisting victims with the knowledge concerning POs as most people do not know what remedies are available to them unless they are properly informed. This is potentially indicative of a problem if victims cannot feel supported by those they call for assistance when they find themselves a victim of IPV.

In addition, it is interesting that Whites felt that the PO had been violated almost twice as much as Blacks or Hispanics did. This is particularly important as it may be because of some differences in culture or community as to how these groups view violence or what is considered acceptable domestic behavior not constituting a criminal act or motivating them to call the police (Anyikwa 2015). Believing that nothing will or can be done to improve the situation may discourage a call to the police for help because of the belief that help is not truly available (Burman et al 2004). The idea that

experiencing psychological abuse leaves victims feeling less safe is another consistent finding here for victims of IPV. This is also consistent with the literature that many victims feel psychological abuse is far worse than the physical abuse they may experience (Logan et al 2006).

Also, additional children and police support were significant in predicting feelings of safety for Black respondents in the final models. This is consistent with the literature as well that having more children may reduce the amount of violence in the home. Also, it makes sense that feeling supported by the police would increase one's feelings of safety. However, the most surprising result in these findings is the negative relationship positive police interaction would have with feeling safer for Black victims specifically. Of all of the results this negative relationship between positive police interaction and feelings of safety was not expected.

Overall, this study offered some very interesting findings and conclusions that may be made about victims of IPV. It is especially useful to look at the different concerns impacting victims' feelings of safety among ethno-racial groups. Although some of the findings were consistent among all groups, many were different for White and Black respondents specifically. This helps to add to the belief that women's experiences with IPV are not the same and may be impacted by different social institutions surrounding the criminal justice system in using POs to combat IPV.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This dissertation explored the effectiveness of using a PO to combat IPV within the U.S. Criminal Justice System. In addition, I examined the impact of race and ethno-racial differences on police interaction within this framework. In this dissertation, I proposed that the effectiveness of using a PO to combat IPV would increase upon experiencing positive interaction with police at the initial incident of violence leading to obtaining the PO. I also proposed that race would have an effect on the use of POs in that the disparate treatment of women of color by the police and broader criminal justice system would translate into different experiences. Those different experiences would then ultimately impact the effectiveness of ethno-racial minorities in using POs to combat IPV in the U.S.

Most research of this nature explores women's experiences with using a PO to combat IPV as one uniform group of victims. Understanding the effects of ethno-racial differences in combating IPV was furthered in this dissertation. Specifically, looking at the differences with regard to police interaction was a focus of this study. Through the use of data that addressed some of these potential differences, this analysis provided new insight for victims.

The current research provides evidence that police interactions do influence women's experiences differently, but that the variables of importance for predicting feeling safe depend on individual women's experiences and not necessarily on race.

In this chapter I will first discuss the major results of this dissertation and whether they supported the overarching expected conclusions. I subsequently detail the contributions that my study has for the literature on the use of POs to combat IPV in the U.S. I then discuss the limitations and weaknesses of this study. I also will propose potential policy implications for the findings in my study. Finally, I suggest what future research may be explored based on the findings of this dissertation.

Major Results

This dissertation did not completely support all of the hypotheses originally proposed, but did offer evidence of disparate treatment by police and differences between ethno-racial groups among victims experiences with IPV in using a PO. I offer possible reasons for these results and describe some of the key findings. Furthermore, I discuss whether POs actually do lead victims of IPV to feel safer, as this was the primary predictor of victims' effective use of a PO to combat IPV. Finally, I explore potential reasons for why this was or was not supported within this analysis.

Education and Income

Among this sample, monthly incomes were found to be somewhat low overall but what was a hopeful finding from this analysis was that the majority of victims' incomes either increased or stayed the same between interviews. This indicates that those who seek a PO as a means to combat IPV do not suffer for it financially. This is crucial as one reason that women stay in abusive relationships is financial dependency on their abuser (Jordan 2004). Knowing that getting a PO does not make their financial situation worse, and for some women their situation actually improves, could help women make the decision to seek a PO.

Another potential problem for victims of IPV revealed by this analysis is the overall lack of education in this group, as only about 10% of victims graduated from college and about 20% of victims did not even graduate high school. When it comes to using POs in combating IPV this item is of some specific concern as it indicates the potential inability to understand the nature of a PO and even how to get one (Jordan 2004). Even among those who obtained a PO, it is a potential problem that the lack of education can translate into misinterpretations of what protections are actually provided and what rights the victims have to invoke certain legal procedures, let alone maneuver the courts. Furthermore, education was found to be significant especially for White victims. The more education victims reported, the less they reported feeling safer.

As discussed above, education was significant for both Black and White victims in the combined sample, when predicting increased feelings of safety, but in a negative direction. This seems to imply that the more educated the victim is the less likely they are

to feel safer with using a PO to combat IPV. This is quite important when evaluating the use of this tool. In other words, the more educated victims in the sample had reduced feelings of safety within this analysis. It may be that better understanding the process and rights associated with using POs within the U.S. criminal justice system makes victims realize their limits in protecting them against their abuser. However, as mentioned previously, the overall levels of education among this sample are low. Education in general is a potential pitfall for victims when resorting to legal intervention for their protection as our system has become more complicated and less user friendly on all fronts. The lack of education can translate into an inability to participate in the process of obtaining legal assistance for victims of IPV which is therefore a major concern. Moreover, the fact that many victims of IPV have an overall low level of education is a concern that needs to be acknowledged by front line responders such as police.

Relationship and Children

Having more children was found to decrease feeling safer for some victims. Therefore, as the number of children increase, victims reporting feeling safer decreased. The relationship regarding the number of children to feeling safer may be related to the duty of protection the victim may feel she needs to provide for, not only herself, but also for her children against her abuser. Often abuse is connected to leverage of threatening the children in order to get influence over the victim and to put her in a position of subordination (Felson and Ackerman 2001). Putting a victim in fear for her children's life is often much worse than merely threatening her own. This may also tie into the use of psychological abuse to control or abuse the victim, especially as it is related to using a PO.

The relationship status variables within this analysis revealed that both separated and reconciled predict women's safety. It is a positive result that being separated produced increased feelings of safety in victims of IPV but it is not necessarily good that being reconciled did as well. Based on the sample demographics, many of these particular victims' relationships did not change much between waves or in other words over the six months following obtaining a PO. It seems what is a common result with victims of IPV is that they are afraid to leave their abuser for a variety of reasons and even if they do separate temporarily, they reconcile after the abuser convinces them he is sorry and has changed. This is very typical with the cycle of violence that occurs in many such relationships, and after the big blow-up, the courting begins again as part of the honeymoon phase (Belknap 2007).

In 1979, Lenore Walker developed a theory of abuse or violence associated with intimate partner violence among women victims. Although the theory is labeled as battered women's syndrome, it is associated with a general pattern of violence that may typically occur between intimate partners over time (Walker 2017). Walker found that often violent relationships tend to follow a specific cycle that may take days, weeks and even months. Each relationship may experience different stages or durations, but Walker recognized that a pattern emerged with three distinct phases (2017). The first phase or cycle is called the "tension building phase" where typical issues in a relationship will produce strain and/or verbal abuse (Walker 2017). These generally involve issues such as children, money or everyday household disagreements. Next is the "acute battering episode" that occurs when tensions peak and physical violence is triggered. The event that triggers this phase can be unpredictable and can depend on the abuser's emotional state.

Last is the “honeymoon phase” where the abuser is provoked to display remorse, affection and kindness toward the victim (Walker 2017). Often in this phase, the abuser attempts to convince the victim that the physical abuse will not happen again and there is no reason for further concern. This last phase of the cycle generally strengthens the bond between the couple and can explain why many victims do not leave an abusive relationship. This cycle may continue over and over again throughout a relationship. Moreover, even though the abuse may be bad at times, victims generally reinvest themselves in the relationship through the honeymoon phase and choose not to leave. Although this reconciliation is followed by less violence at first, as the cycles begin again, more severe violence has been found to occur each time the cycle repeats itself (Walker 2017).

This cycle is somewhat typical of abusive relationships and the research associated with battered women syndrome helps explain the findings related to relationships and feeling safe relevant to this study as well. Women may choose to leave their abusive partner yet change their minds multiple times over the course of a relationship. However, once they finally choose to leave permanently the results are positive and serve to empower them to completely remove themselves from the abusive partner. This is exemplified in the victims’ choice to file for a PO and utilize other social services to maintain their continued safety and independence.

As might be expected, several victims’ relationships changed between waves in this study. For example, the percentage of victims that were married decreased by at least half and those that were divorced doubled between waves. This indicates again that women are being empowered in some way, either by having the PO or by having taken some step to stop the abuse. By terminating the abusive relationship through divorce,

victims took action and have attempted to free themselves and improve their situation. This is a positive change in attempting to empower women to continue to combat IPV and reduce the victimization they have suffered. The two findings related to income and relationship status offer support to the Feminist Jurisprudence framework where stable monthly income and separating from their abuser will further empower women victims to be less subordinate and improve their situation.

Experiences after PO

One of the more interesting findings in this study was the difference in ethno-racial groups as to whether they felt the PO was violated. Almost twice as many White victims felt the PO had been violated than Black or Hispanic victims did. This seems to indicate that there is a difference in their definition of what IPV may include, and what constitutes a violation of a PO. In other words, what White victims view as a violation of the PO was far more inclusive than what Black or Hispanic victims' believed. This could be the case because for White victims there were actually more violations of the PO and these victims understood their rights better. Another explanation could be because of cultural differences as to what is routine relationship activity or accepted behavior within the home or relationship (Bachman and Coker 1995). It also could be the difference in what the victims perceive as actual IPV or view as serious enough in which to involve the police (Iovanni and Miller 2001). In other words, some things may be deemed minor or even considered private by the victim and not to the level of involving the legal system. Also, there may be an element of embarrassment to their family or community to involve the

authorities or make this a public matter (Rasche 1995). Regardless of the reason, it is clear White victims felt the PO had been violated twice as often as the other ethno-racial groups in this sample. Furthermore, it is expected and consistent with past research, that less violations of a PO would increase the victims' feelings of safety and that the less psychological abuse the victims experience the more they would report feeling safer.

Police Interactions

As the law and social conditions change over time, we can hope that police are more sensitive to IPV and better trained so that the actions that are taken by police are directed at protecting victims. In addition, as the law and policies are improved, we can also hope that victims' interactions with police will be more positive resulting in these victims of IPV feeling they can count on police to be a source of help and support. Ultimately, the improvement in the law and police procedures will hopefully translate into victims feeling safer as they choose to call on the criminal justice system to assist them in combating IPV. Unfortunately, for these data and this group of victims that was not the case.

An important finding of this study was the overall lack of services provided by police with regard to certain actions. For example, police only made an arrest or sought a warrant in about 40% of the cases. This result is in spite of mandatory arrest policies (Kane 2000). However, it is important to realize that in many cases the offender is not necessarily present when police arrive. In addition, police interviewed witnesses in only about 30% of cases and were found to be helpful by only about 30% of victims

overall. It is even more discouraging that very few victims found the police a source of support at all. This indicates a lack of follow through on the part of police in effectively protecting these victims or investigating their abuse. This speaks poorly for current policies and practices among police officers and indicates the need for better training and improved policies with regard to addressing IPV.

I found little support for the idea that victims will feel safer when they have an overall positive experience with the police. As mentioned previously, Black victims actually were shown to have a negative relationship between positive police interaction and feeling safer. There are several reasons this may be the case. First, most of the variables related to the initial contact between the victim and police were combined to create an additive police variable “positive interaction”. This may have diluted the apparent effects of the individual policing variables in the final models. This is indicated to some degree in the analysis comparing support items and the rest of the policing variables.

This finding also may indicate involving the police may make these particular victims feel less safe. For example, many victims fear retaliation and that they may anger their abuser when they choose to resort to legal means for relief (Jordan 2004). This assumption is consistent with past research that shows women often experience threats of or actual retaliatory abuse when they turn to the courts for assistance (Ford and Regoli 1998). However, in this study Black respondents having a negative relationship between positive police interaction and feeling safer was the only relationship that was significant. Although I hypothesized that feelings of safety would increase when victims felt the police were helpful, this was not significant at typical levels for any model.

Ethno-Racial Disparity and Police Interaction

The fact that there was a distinction between different ethno-racial groups lends at least some support for my overarching idea that victims of IPV, their interactions with police and feelings of safety, will vary by race. For example, “police interviewed witnesses” was found to be significant and revealed that Black victims had witnesses interviewed far less often than White victims. It is apparent that there is disparate treatment between the groups of victims and could indicate some discrimination on the part of police as to the effort or follow through put forth in the different incidences of IPV. Moreover, interviewing witnesses may provide validity to the victims’ statement or choice to involve the police and give them the confidence they need to follow through with legal sanctions. This may be especially true with obtaining a permanent PO or significant punishment for a conviction where evidence of substantial or continued abuse is needed (Bennett et al 1999). Also, this difference in treatment could indicate a request on the part of the victim not to pursue an arrest or the lack of cooperation of potential witnesses of different ethno-racial groups. Regardless, this analysis is supportive of the idea that police offer less services or are less helpful to Black victims than to White victims of IPV.

As stated earlier, education and reconciled relationship status were found to be significant for White victims in predicting increased feelings of safety. It is interesting that completely different variables were significant for Black victims. Specifically, an increase in the number of children and feeling the police were supportive increased feelings of safety while psychological abuse and if the PO was violated decreased feelings of safety. This indicates that for Black victims anyway, as positive police interaction increases,

feelings of safety decrease. This is in direct contrast of my original hypothesis that positive police interaction will produce increased feeling of safety for Black victims.

As discussed above this was the most unexpected of the findings and based on additional analysis there may be a reason for this result. What may have been considered a positive or helpful event for the majority of victims in combating IPV, may not be considered positive for all victims. For example, when police show up or interview witnesses, victims may be in fear of being arrested themselves, losing their children, in fear of retaliatory abuse or in fear of arrest of their partner for which they will now lose income. Moreover, victims may be embarrassed by the attention in the community or feel from past experience police do not help the situation or the system does not work to their benefit. As helpful as police may attempt to be, their involvement escalates the event and puts it into a public venue which for some victims continues to subordinate them and put them in fear. Even though these results were not expected, they offer a different perspective from past research and practice. Specifically, police involvement and formal interaction, although necessary to utilize legal tools to assist victims of IPV, carries with it certain potential ramifications that may not necessarily be positive for all victims.

In contrast, police support was found to be significant specifically for Black victims. This support could be at the original incident of victimization, as well as, during the process of obtaining the PO. Regardless, increasing police support was shown to have offered victims increased feelings of safety. This is supportive of my original idea that positive interaction with police would increase victims' confidence in the system and therefore feelings of safety when using a PO to combat IPV. Also, this relationship would suggest that continued positive relationships with police would make victims more likely

to involve the police in further incidences of violence or abuse. However, for Black victims, positive police interaction was not a strong predictor of making victims feel safer and in fact was potentially decreasing feelings of safety.

These particular results are interesting to consider in light of past research and feminist jurisprudence. On one hand the research has attempted to enable victims of IPV to attain the services and legal response needed to combat IPV effectively. However, as feminist jurisprudence points out these tools exist in a patriarchal institution that does not necessarily benefit women and even less women of color. It is the law or legal policy that determines what is positive and seen as helpful to women victims of IPV. However, as seen here, not all of these services are necessarily seen by all victims as positive. Once again, the needs of the individual women victims and specifically women of color, are being lumped into one group in order to determine what responses are needed to help victims of IPV. It is worth noting that not all victims may agree on what responses are needed or wanted in order to assist them.

Contributions

This dissertation has contributed to the research literature on using a PO to combat IPV and its effectiveness for victims in several ways—both methodologically and theoretically. Methodologically, the first contribution is the inclusion of how the victims felt about their interactions with police, and the steps taken by the police at the time of the IPV incident. As IPV is an issue in the schools, communities and discussed in the media on a regular basis, it continues to be an ongoing social concern. Because calling the police,

obtaining a PO and involving the criminal justice system to obtain a conviction have been established as the available tools to empower women to report and escape this type of abuse, it must be enforced and encouraged. The initial contact with the victim, actions taken by police and obstacles to obtaining a PO are of vital importance when attempting to combat IPV. For it is at this stage of the process that we determine what may potentially happen in the future. Without a positive experience with police or the courts, there is little hope that the victim will involve the system or feel empowered to escape her abuser. Therefore, as most research does not ask about victims' feelings or specific viewpoints, the fact that this study does allows more insight into why a PO is or is not effective as a tool to combat IPV especially among women of color.

The second major methodological departure from past research is the division of the data and analysis by ethno-racial groups. Race becomes an additional factor when we see that most of the previous research is based on women as one uniform singular group. This ignores the reality that women's experiences may vary widely. Just as women of color have life experiences that can differ greatly from those of white women, so do different ethno-racial victims of IPV.

Therefore, a contribution of this study to understanding IPV and the role of POs in helping women, is that it provides an intersectional perspective. Most past research did not consciously evaluate or consider different ethno-racial groups and how their experiences may vary in using a PO within the U.S. Criminal Justice System. This study allows us to expand what we think we know about victims of IPV as it is experienced differently by women of color and other marginalized groups. Therefore, the intersectional perspective helps us to better understand the differences among women victims experiencing IPV and

the various complex dimensions of institutional subordination and dominance that exist. This is especially true where we see the difference in what is important to victims in making them feel safer. For example, what is found to be significant for Black victims is not necessarily what is found to be significant for White victims among this sample with regard to feeling safer after obtaining a PO.

Theoretically, the application of the concept of intersectionality is necessary in recognizing that victims' experiences with IPV are not the same for all. Not only is differential treatment important in understanding IPV, but it is evidenced in the news, media and among society that race plays a part in police interaction (Burman et al 2004). Recently, a wave of police shootings of Black victims has spurred the "black lives matter" campaign which has brought attention to the suspected mistreatment of minorities by police in the U.S. The racial tension that exists with police is evident and is just as relevant to those victims of IPV when requesting policing services and assistance. These types of events and mistreatment by police can lead many minorities to have a general mistrust of the police making them unwilling to involve the police and expose themselves to potential mistreatment. As evidenced in this study, in looking at what police choose to do at the scene of IPV for various victims, we can make comparisons and provide an analysis of whether these actions are consistent and effective. This type of analysis is important so we can examine whether different ethno-racial groups are receiving different treatment and whether police interactions have a lasting impact and ultimately make all victims of IPV feel safer.

Another contribution of this study is the type of sample utilized in these analyses. Many past studies focus on victims that have entered shelters or provide information while engaging in clinical counseling programs for example (Campbell, Webster, Koziol-McLain, Block, Campbell and Curry 2003). This is somewhat common or convenient as this can provide the researcher with many case studies at once with access to additional relevant information (Campbell et al 2003). However, use of these samples limits our understanding of victims of IPV in that the clinical samples are not necessarily representative of a cross section of the general population who experience IPV and may not include victims that have experience with obtaining a PO. This is especially important because most women never go to a shelter or enter counseling or get help in a clinical setting. In addition, many of these women have already made the choice to leave the abusive relationship or utilize other social services and support (Campbell et al 2003). In contrast, this study utilizes data that was obtained from a more varied population of victims of IPV who had already obtained a PO. Therefore, this sample is not just focused on women in shelters or in clinical settings and is more representative of those victims who have experience with obtaining and utilizing a PO to combat IPV.

In addition to these contributions, I have expanded prior research by using a feminist jurisprudence theoretical perspective. In order to help victims of IPV, the criminal justice system needs to be a source of support that protects and empowers victims. One such method is to enable women to easily and uniformly obtain POs and to have any violations punished. However, the system consistently fails women. Therefore, it is important to increase our understanding about how women's positions in society have been socially constructed and gender inequality is thoroughly embedded in our institutions. Looking at gender as a social structure and how it operates within the institution of the legal

system, we can see that often women victims of IPV are in subordinate positions of power and control. This is because many of our legal precepts have been defined and manipulated by a patriarchal society.

It is well documented that the institution of policing is comprised of predominantly male officers (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008). In addition, the majority of these male officers are white (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008). Although, the policing industry is becoming more diverse than in the past, with the addition of more female and minority officers, it is far from an equally diverse group of people. Furthermore, because of the long history of a white, male police force, many of the policies and actual practices reflect that typically male culture. For example, there is a high rate of police involvement in IPV within their own marriages (Erwin, Gershon, Tiburzi and Lin 2005). Also, many male officers may not take IPV seriously, as historically IPV was considered a private family matter beyond the concerns of law enforcement (Saunders and Size 1986).

What becomes important when considering this information, is that the system of policing is structured to reflect these various values and concerns which serve to disadvantage women, and especially women of color. These types of victims are often not represented or understood when seeking assistance from law enforcement (Homant and Kennedy 1985). Furthermore, often what the police do at the scene of IPV or for the victim is not enough and does not help women overcome this type of abuse (Leisenring 2012). Moreover, as the system of policing is reflective of a typically male culture, the attitudes and beliefs among officers are often reflective of this as well and may be partially to blame for the overall inadequate police response to IPV.

One way in which the system is a functioning patriarchy is by treating victims of IPV as incapable of making their own decisions. While arrest and punishment of the abuser are seen as vital to addressing IPV, having the police take control over these decisions without considering the wishes of the victim often leaves the women in positions of fear for many reasons (Jordan 2004). As stated previously, fear of retaliation, fear of loss of income and fear of what happens to their children often accompany the decision to involve the police (Jordan 2004).

Not only does the current research attempt to include the experiences of women of color but also the realities that women experience in using a PO to combat IPV. In other words, the creation of legal precepts to address IPV and establish women's rights to relief are born from those same legal establishments of institutional patriarchy. In addition, what is mandated by law on paper is not the realities of practice for all women victims. For example, based on prior research, as well as this study, often times there is no warrant issued or no arrest takes place after an incident of IPV. Even though mandatory arrest policies and practices are in place around the country, the reality of practice is not necessarily the same for everyone. The use of a PO to combat IPV is not effective if those rights are not enforced in practice and enforced for all. Therefore, my dissertation reveals that the ideals and enforcement of women's rights against IPV are not realized until we include the experiences of all women and provide adequate services and legal tools for women's empowerment.

Limitations

Though this study has made important contributions to this area of research, it is not without limitations. First, even though I have been able to include more evidence of individual experiences than past research, issues of missing data are still present. Some of my independent policing variables had issues with missing data as some respondents did not call the police, did not want an arrest made or had very little interaction with police for various reasons. Therefore, some of the data was missing from certain respondents. Because of the lack of data from some respondents an additive “positive interaction” variable was created in the final model analysis to compensate for missing data and the lack of variability within these specific policing variables.

Second, as mentioned above, these data are somewhat dated. However, as previously explained, because the law required that POs be available by this point in time and many states had mandatory arrests policies in place, it still is a useful and rich source of information especially with regard to individual victim’s experiences. Specifically, because very few studies investigate the individual differences among victim’s experiences with POs and IPV, the overall information represented in the data set is still extremely useful and relevant today.

Third, the sample size limits the ability to conduct complex analyses, especially with regard to Hispanics or other races. Therefore, since it is not representative nationwide it would be more advantageous if the sample were larger. The original wave was comprised of 245 respondents and the second wave had only 177 respondents. This led to the removal of the Hispanic category in the final regression models when testing

for ethno-racial differences which was therefore limited to Black and White victims for this reason.

Also, based on the literature there were several potential choices for a dependent variable in measuring the effectiveness of using a PO. Ultimately, most the options either had too much missing data, or there was very little variation in responses due to lack of response categories in the survey. Therefore, it was not possible to analyze all the ways there could be an improvement or worsening of the victims' lives after obtaining a PO with these data. Therefore, I was limited to examining one outcome, feeling safer. While this is an important measure of success of a PO, additional work should be done that incorporates a wider variety of potentially negative and positive life outcomes.

Finally, while this data does move beyond clinical samples, this is not a nationally representative sample and therefore cannot be generalized to the population of women who experience IPV. However, based on the make-up of the sample population and the general criteria used to screen respondents, it seems they are somewhat representative of many typical cities and victims within the U.S. In addition, there is a good and varied representation of individual victims' experiences with using POs to combat IPV among these data. Also, there is a great degree of variation among respondents and a diverse set of demographics represented here. Therefore, it does provide a step in the right direction for understanding the experiences of women who obtain POs.

Policy Implications

There are many policy implications of my research. The findings indicated that police are part of the necessary social support that is needed to make using POs an effective tool in addressing IPV. The police as first responders can intervene early in the process and specifically attempt to be a source of information and support, especially on behalf of disadvantaged groups of women victims in the U.S.. Various policing tools are available to police to help improve the use of POs and the level of support to victims. For example, police can better educate victims on the use of POs including how to obtain one and what they mean for the victim. At the very least, officers should be trained on what services or organizations can be suggested as a source of additional support, assistance and education.

In addition, the courts need to shoulder more responsibility in processing cases of IPV. For example, just as we have a guardian ad litem system for assisting minors as they are dealing with the court system, so should we assist battered women. There could be a similar system in place that walks each case through the protective options that are available to them and explain how to fill out the paper work for each. As education is possibly one barrier to using the courts for many, helping IPV victims to understand their rights would be an important improvement. Even if police properly inform victims of their rights or options, it is the courts that can add a second barrier to obtaining relief from abuse. Obtaining an attorney costs money that many of these victims do not have, especially as they are attempting to separate or divorce and divide assets. Financial burdens are often one of the main reason many women cannot leave their abuser and offering free or low cost legal assistance in maneuvering the court system would go a long way to help this problem. The courts need to recognize that merely

prosecuting the cases that come before them is not enough to help this ongoing problem for victims of IPV.

Furthermore, the problem of how we fix the relationship between the public and the police becomes one of established institutional norms. When addressing IPV and police response it becomes clear that we need to establish what is considered “good” response by law enforcement. This is only possible if we can ascertain what is actually needed by the victims of IPV. To offer up a solution that does not address these needs is useless and can further damage an already tentative situation. Moreover, it goes beyond law enforcement and the system itself in that the system often has victims vulnerable to dual arrests, losing their children and losing their jobs all because they are a victim of IPV.

As part of the feminist jurisprudence framework, the idea of existing institutional norms that surrounds gender is implicit within the criminal justice system (Risman 2004). Because existing institutional policies are pervasive and built into the system as part of the established structure, they are also relevant in addressing IPV. Most of the existing laws and procedures to address IPV have been established by men and are often formed by those that have little if any knowledge or experience with IPV. Therefore, it is unlikely these policies will be adequate or specifically address what these victims will benefit from and truly need to move forward or improve their lives. Researchers and practitioners alike need to think about transforming existing institutional norms within the criminal justice system and expand the potential solutions to this issue beyond mere institutional control.

Some suggestions of how to address this problem may be to have special units respond to incidents of IPV where those officers are familiar with the trauma and dynamics surrounding this type of experienced abuse. In addition, these officers would work closely with local social

services and be able to put the victims in touch with advocates and those more clinically skilled to address this issue for resolve. In addition, only addressing IPV from a law enforcement perspective ignores the big picture. In other words, an arrest or incarceration is not a simple solution for the problem. The response needs to be more in line with what the victim truly needs to move forward. Often punishment within the courts is merely a band aid and does not attempt to heal what has been destroyed.

Another possible solution to addressing IPV is to develop a type of private response system where law enforcement is not even involved at this stage. One of the major problems women face in choosing to call the police is the potential backlash of legal precepts all because she is a victim. Establishing another avenue for a first responder that is more highly skilled and trained in dealing with victims of IPV could relieve police of their time and concern at least initially. The choice whether to involve the system could be made after consulting with someone from a private response system offering sound educated advice. Victims of IPV would benefit highly from an advocate of this type that would know what their rights are and help them to make potentially life changing decisions. In addition, because children are often involved in the family dynamics surrounding IPV, a trained professional could serve to help keep the family intact and address any emotional concerns of the children as well.

From a theoretical standpoint, similar types of solutions would help to alleviate potential fears of the victim by knowing the responder is truly there to help them get them what they need instead of imposing institutional control. A solution of this sort would help break down the institutional domain that takes control from the victim and offer her empowerment as a victim of IPV. The true solution is beyond mere responses by law enforcement and the criminal justice system, as they are part of the patriarchal system that controls women's choices

in dealing with IPV. To break through the institutional establishment that exists in the U.S. today there must be a transformation of the overall framework of how we choose to deal with IPV.

Moreover, women's experiences do vary between ethno-racial groups but of greater importance are the other potential sources of support that were indicated in this study. Specifically, family composition, living arrangements, psychological abuse and education levels will influence each victim's experience in combating IPV. Police or support services need to be aware of the significance of these differences. Interviewing witnesses, follow through on arrests and protecting victims against continued psychological abuse will help victims feel safer. In other words, policy should focus on improved training and more effort in creating confidence for victims in those who are sworn to serve and protect. In addition, specific legislation is needed that declares and protects women's rights with regard to continued abuse by mandating improved follow through and prosecution for abusers and for those who violate POs. Potentially, the criminal justice system should be held accountable for better protection and enforcement of those rights for victims. However, this alone is not enough as policy-makers are at one end of the spectrum while police practice is at the other and can often be quite different in terms of priorities.

Social responsibility falls on all of us when it comes to victimization and by reaching out to our representatives, judges and fellow citizens heightened awareness can be inspired to be on the rise. The problem is, as always, this is not enough. Consistent or more effective sanctions are needed, as well as, more effective methods of giving victims support and confidence in the system that was created to assist them. If a victim has confidence in her movement to involve the police or criminal justice system, it will be a

useful tool for continued support and follow through. However, where victims are not seeing effective policing or positive results in their choices of involving law enforcement in their victimization, they will discontinue to bring it to the attention of the police. This is where nationwide victimization goes unnoticed or ignored because the victim is made a victim once again by the system. Serious problems can arise with this head in the sand approach as we are not effectively dealing with the nationwide issue of IPV and we are not protecting those who should be able to look to the system for answers and functional tools to alleviate their suffering.

Future Research

In future research it would be useful to expand upon the findings of this dissertation in a number of important directions. First, it would be useful to further analyze in more depth why the level of support from police may be thought to be low according to victims. In other words, what is it specifically that has made them come to this negative conclusion? In order to address this question, it is likely that a qualitative analysis would be required, or at least more in depth questions that focus on why victims did not necessarily find the police helpful. For example, is their dissatisfaction because of a specific aspect of treatment by police, the official actions the police chose to take or is it more about the system or process itself? These questions could give great insight into the research that has been provided in the current study.

In addition, it is important to recognize the differences experienced by individual victims of IPV and further investigate the experiences of ethno-racial victims in relation to

individual police practices, as well as, treatment in the criminal justice system. For example, why do Black and Hispanic women victims of IPV feel their PO was violated less often than White women did? It has been speculated why this may be so in my above discussion but empirical evidence is needed to suggest future changes in policy and practice to assist these specific groups of victims. A potential source of information would be to view records for cases of PO violations and interview the individual victims. Qualitative research in this area may also help to further discover at what point these victims felt the PO was violated and why or why not did they take action. Also, it would be of interest to seek specific cultural support information or specifically what helps them to feel empowered and safe.

Furthermore, it would be of great importance to explore the levels of education that exist among all victims of IPV. Specifically, if enhancing victims' education with regard to the use of POs might help them with protection and prevention with IPV. Moreover, education in this way can potentially become a tool for empowerment and help victims be aware of their rights as an impetus for change. As supported by the findings here, all victims in this sample had very low levels of education overall. It would be useful to explore if this is a direct result of these women's specific relationship parameters providing them with a limited amount of opportunity for personal growth. In other words, is the lack of education specifically a result of control exerted by their abuser or something else? This can be of great value in increasing victims' income potential when deciding to separate and provide empowerment to all victims of IPV especially as it relates to maneuvering the criminal justice system and the effective use of POs to combat IPV.

Future research should also explore the differences between policy and the realities of practice. Thus, what are the differences between cities that merely have laws involving

the protection of women's rights against IPV "on the books" and those that make the effort to effectively and actively enforce those rights? For example, which cities tend to effectively enforce women's rights against IPV and with what methods? In other words, how do policing support services vary around the nation and what can we do to bring them into conformity. For example, does a cities' political environment or budget constraints influence this enforcement? Therefore, helping to address if the lack of police support is because of the lack of belief in the rights of these victims or more about the lack of officers and training to provide what services are actually needed. Some areas to explore would be if specific training would provide officers adequate information about how to deal with IPV and those victims, if there is a source of informative or instructional materials that may be handed to all victims to enhance their knowledge on the subject and set up a system to track successful programs to share practices among departments.

Finally, future research should also explore how these practices and political processes affect women differently within different cities. The research here was not conclusive on how ethno-racial differences are experienced within police practice with regard to IPV. However, it did indicate that differences do exist whether it be because of race, education, home and relationship variables or other social characteristics. To incorporate women in this way to future research is imperative as we recognize that individual women's experiences, vary by SES, age, race and ethnicity (including language, religion and rural vs. urban environments). This sort of future research could explore whether, for example, cultural tolerance or expectations of family violence are different and affect women differently when addressing victims of IPV. It may be that middle and upper-class women have different opportunities for relief as opposed to economically

marginalized victims of IPV. Also, education may provide more benefits to victims with using POs to combat IPV from an increased understanding as to what is required to obtain one or the protection they may provide. Maybe such a finding would support the argument that certain policies surrounding IPV tend to benefit different victims in different ways and implementation of these findings may specifically help women of color to be distinguished as to what support or services would better assist them in using POs to combat their experiences of IPV. In addition, one helpful way to achieve this analysis in discovering whether protective orders are truly effective would be to sample victims of IPV that did obtain a PO and those that did not. In other words, a comparison of experiences for those who did and those who did not obtain a PO would establish a cause and effect relationship whereby conclusions could be made between the two groups.

Conclusion

This dissertation looked at what impact police interaction with victims have on the use of POs to combat IPV. This study asked two important questions with regard to this potential relationship. First, was positive police interaction associated with increased feelings of safety in using a PO to combat IPV among this sample? My findings lead to the conclusion that there is some support for this relationship. Second, what impact does police interaction have specifically on women of color's experience with using a PO to combat IPV? My findings lead to the conclusion that there are some differences in victims' experiences with IPV based on certain characteristics of the victim. Although, not all women of color experienced negative outcomes, there were distinct differences between ethno-racial groups

in this sample. It is important to remember that not everyone will experience IPV in the same way and therefore much of the research to date will not benefit all female victims when looked at as one uniform group. This study contributes to the research literature on women's experiences in dealing with IPV through a better understanding of the differences they contend with and perceive.

Moreover, this study's analysis of specific interaction with police according to different ethno-racial groups allows for the inclusion of more individual experiences, offering a more representative understanding of women's struggles with IPV. As with most research on IPV and potential ethno-racial differences, this dissertation leads to specific policy implications. I have argued that the implications of intersectionality and its impact on individual experiences with IPV have suggested that we deconstruct what we know about women's victimization and begin to investigate a more effective approach to combating IPV.

In order to improve or change women's lives, the criminal justice system and specifically the police, need to be made aware of their short comings as they are the first responders to many of these victims. Since there are some differences in police interaction among different women victims, those experiences should be considered in future policy changes such as increasing police support, investigative efforts and arrest rates of offenders. In addition, the overall follow through with victims' assistance groups and adequate prosecution practices should be encouraged if we are to continue to advocate the use of POs as the primary legal tool victims have to combat IPV.

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