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# Collective Efficacy and Intimate Partner \Violence: Community Context

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COLLECTIVE EFFICACY AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE: COMMUNITY  
CONTEXT

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## ABSTRACT

### COLLECTIVE EFFICACY AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE: COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Catherine B. Cowling  
Old Dominion University, 2011  
Director: Dr. Garland White

Intimate partner violence is a very serious issue in the United States. In spite of improvements, there is still much work to be done. Policies focusing on formal controls such as arrest, orders of protection, and prosecution have questionable potential. However, collective efficacy and the examination of community context have much to offer the field of intimate partner violence. Collective efficacy, comprised of social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control, may be more effective in reducing intimate partner violence than use of traditional formal social controls alone. These community context variables may also be of great assistance in improving the effectiveness of social support.

This research study examines intimate partner violence at the community level. Specifically, community context in terms of collective efficacy is studied. Using data from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study and the Longitudinal Evaluation of Chicago's Community Policing Program, the research uses several indicators of collective efficacy to determine if collective efficacy in conjunction with formal controls is associated with greater success in the reduction of intimate partner violence than formal controls alone. Next, the interaction between formal controls and informal social support networks is examined to determine if greater informal social support networks leads to greater effectiveness of formal controls. Finally, the interaction between social

support and collective efficacy is examined to determine if greater collective efficacy leads to greater effectiveness of social support.

It is hypothesized that collective efficacy with formal controls will be more valuable in reducing intimate partner violence than use of formal controls alone. It is also hypothesized that support networks with formal controls will be more efficacious in reducing intimate partner violence than formal controls alone. Finally, it is hypothesized that collective efficacy will increase the success of social support in reducing intimate partner violence.

The results of the research indicate that increased collective efficacy and social support are not associated with decreases in reported frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. Implications of the results are discussed concerning collective efficacy in general, and for intimate partner violence. The goal is to develop better policy.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM: FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN THE US

Intimate partner violence -- defined as “violent crimes that are committed against persons by their current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends” (Catalano et al. 2009) -- is the leading cause of injury to women in the United States. Intimate Partner Violence is one of the leading causes of injury to women in the United States. One in four women in the United States will experience intimate partner violence within their lifetime (Domestic Violence Resource Center 2009). Today, there are still a large number of crimes committed against intimate partners in the United States. In 2008, females experienced over 550,000 victimizations at the hands of an intimate partner. This translates to 4.3 victimizations per 1000 females in the United States in 2008 (Catalano et al. 2009).

Intimate partner violence is an issue that primarily effects women (American Bar Association 2009). Women are far more likely to be attacked by someone they know as opposed to a stranger. Though they account for 51% of the general population, women account for 85% of the victims of intimate partner violence. In 2001, intimate partner violence represented 20% of all violent attacks against women in the United States (American Bar Association 2009).

A variety of violent crimes are committed against women by their intimate partners. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (Catalano, et al. 2009),



35,690 women were victims of a rape or sexual assault by a intimate partner in 2007; 70,550 women were victims of aggravated assault and 406, 530 women suffered a simple assault at the hands of an intimate partner. Another 38,820 women were robbed by an intimate partner. Taken together, family violence accounts for 33 % of all violent crime (Catalano, et al. 2009).

Intimate partner violence also becomes fatal at an alarming rate and women are its most frequent victims. On average, more than three women and one man are killed by intimate partners each day in the United States (Catalano et al. 2009). Women were 70% of the victims of the 2,340 homicides of intimate partners in the United States in 2007. Further, most (64%) female victims of homicide were killed by an intimate partner. Several risk factors influence the potential of lethality from intimate partner violence. These include: offender access to a gun, offender making a prior threat with a weapon, recent separation from the offender, presence of a child in the home who is not biologically related to the offender, stalking by the offender, forced sex by the offender, abuse by the offender during pregnancy, and an unemployed offender (Rios 2006).

Though the physical and emotional costs of intimate partner violence are huge, the impact does not end there. There are financial costs associated with violent crimes committed by intimate partners (American Institute on Domestic Violence 2009). Health care costs related to intimate partner crime are more than \$5.8 billion each year. Lost productivity and earnings total more than \$1.8 billion each year. Victims of intimate partner violence lose nearly 8 million days of work and 5.6 million days of household productivity each year (American Institute on Domestic Violence 2009).

Employers are also directly affected by the repercussions of violent crimes committed by intimate partners as they frequently infiltrate the workplace (American Institute on Domestic Violence 2009). The vast majority (96%) of intimate partner violence victims experience problems at work. These problems include harassment (74% of victims) while at work as well as arriving late (56%), leaving early (20%) or missing entire days of work (54%) because of the abuse. As a result of these disruptions during the workday, victims of intimate partner violence may risk losing their employment as yet another consequence of their victimization. Finally, homicide is the leading cause of death for women in the workplace (American Institute on Domestic Violence 2009).

#### THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

In order to design interventions to reduce intimate partner violence, it is important to understand why intimate partner violence occurs. Intimate partner violence has causes at the macro, meso, and micro levels of society. Many criminological theories have been used to explain the occurrence of intimate partner violence. Among these theories are feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory (and the intergenerational transfer of violence), and deterrence theory. Feminist theory holds that intimate partner violence occurs due to a patriarchal structure of society that contains inequalities in favor of men and that men use violence to enforce their dominance. Social disorganization theory posits that intimate partner violence occurs because communities lack a cohesive social structure to enact social control to guard against and prevent crime. Social learning theory hypothesizes that children learn how to behave violently and learn that violence is acceptable in intimate relationships by witnessing violence between

their parents and being subject to violence themselves. Finally, deterrence theorists argue that intimate partner violence occurs because there is not swift, severe, and certain enforcement of laws against intimate partner violence. Each of these theories will be clarified and empirical support presented in the first half of Chapter 2.

## POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

In order to alleviate the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence, the United States criminal justice system's intimate partner violence policy has been centered on three formal controls: mandatory arrest policies, no-drop prosecution policies and protective orders. Though all of these formal controls have support within the theories mentioned above, there is somewhat conflicting evidence on the effectiveness of these policies (Spohn 2008, Peterson 2008). As a result, it is possible that more informal interventions theoretically may reduce the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence. These include collective efficacy and social support.

Collective efficacy is defined as "Social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good," (Sampson and Radenbush 2008:1). It is conceptualized for this study as being made up of three components: social cohesion (community members working together), social capital (with the ability) and informal social control (to take action to solve a community problem). This theoretical basis proposes that a great deal of variation in crime rates is based on community characteristics. "Much of the social conflict, crime, and community disorder that occupies the concerns of police officers, social workers, and teachers stems from dynamics within neighborhoods and residential communities," (White 2006:6.) Social

cohesion is measured by the ties between and among individuals and organizations in a neighborhood (Granovetter 1973). Social capital is defined by Rosenfeld, Messner, and Baumer (2001: 284) as “cooperative social relationships that facilitate the realization of collective goals – it manifests itself in mutually reinforcing relationships between interpersonal trust and civic engagement.” Silver and Miller (2004) define informal social control as action taken by private community citizens and community organizations (as opposed to actions of law enforcement or political entities) to change conditions in the neighborhood or to control crime or disorganization in the community. Each of these concepts is important to the efficacy of the community and will be used throughout the project as defined.

Social support is defined as “those interactions in which one individual or group directly provides another individual with a sense of connection, resources, and/or affirmation” (Bates and Toro 1999:139). Support networks are an important source of social capital and a useful resource for victims of intimate partner violence. The literature on formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support (to include their theoretical basis and empirical support for each) will be covered in the second half of Chapter 2.

## THE CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECT

The current study uses a quantitative approach to examine the effects of community level controls on intimate partner violence. Specifically formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support and their interactions will be examined and compared at the community level. The theoretical basis for this research is grounded in

feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory and the intergenerational transfer of violence and deterrence theory.

The data used for this project comes from “Community Crime Prevention and Intimate Violence in Chicago, 1995-1998” (Block and Skogan 2001). The data were collected initially to examine the relationship between community efficacy and the ability of a victim to escape intimate partner violence. Interview data from the Chicago Women’s Health Study (specifically from those women who had identified themselves as victims of intimate partner violence within the last year) were combined with community data from the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy Program, which measured attributes of collective efficacy in Chicago neighborhoods. The 210 participants included in this study were women from the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study who identified themselves as victims of intimate partner violence.

The study investigates three research questions. First, does collective efficacy improve the effectiveness of formal controls on the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Second, does social support improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Third, does collective efficacy improve the effectiveness of support networks on the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? Multiple regression analysis provides tests of the three models. The methodology for this project is described in Chapter 3, and the results of the analysis are reported in Chapter 4.

## IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The research questions and their exploration are of vital importance to the study of and prevention of intimate partner violence. While much research exists on the problem of intimate partner violence, clear answers about which policies are best are lacking. Investigating the influence of social support and collective efficacy offer a step in providing research-driven policy that is effective in alleviating the problem of intimate partner violence.

This research contributes to the literature on crime and communities as it adds to the understanding of the power of collective efficacy and formal controls at the community level. The potential power of the community to deter intimate partner violence has not been fully explored in the literature, especially in regards to the interaction of formal controls and collective efficacy.

The current research also adds to the literature because it specifically examines formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support at the community level. While previous studies have been done at the community level about intimate partner violence, this study goes further by examining the effects of variation in the community context in which formal controls operate. While no single policy is likely to eliminate domestic violence altogether, this research contributes to the knowledge about the community conditions in which solutions work better. In an ideal world, research should not sit on a shelf but should inform policy with the hope that better research knowledge means better policy. Ultimately, the outcome of this study is a discussion of how formal controls, support networks, and collective efficacy work together to reduce intimate partner

violence, in order to improve intimate partner violence policy and interventions. The conclusions and policy implications will be discussed in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review on intimate partner violence will begin with a discussion of theories that explain the occurrence of intimate partner violence, specifically feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning and the intergenerational transfer of violence theory, and deterrence theory. Explanations of each theory will be discussed and empirical support in terms of intimate partner violence for each theory will be provided. In addition, policy implications of each theory at the macro, meso, and micro level will be explored.

Because these theories suggest interventions at the public, parochial, and private level three specific interventions will be discussed in the second part of the literature review: formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support. Formal controls (arrest, prosecution, and orders of protection) occur at the macro or public level and will be discussed first, including theoretical and empirical support for their use. Then the concept of collective efficacy (conceptualized as the combination of social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control), which occurs at the parochial level, will be examined including theoretical and empirical support for collective efficacy. Finally, social support, which affects intimate partner violence at the micro or private level, will be defined and the theoretical and empirical support for social support will be evaluated.



## THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Several criminological theories seek to explain the occurrence of intimate partner violence. Among these are feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory, and deterrence theory. These theories provide a basis for the examination of formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support.

### *Feminist Theory*

The modern source of feminist theory arises from the women's movement of the 1960's. Feminism is primarily a social movement. Feminists problematize the historical structure of society designed for the subordination of women to men. Throughout human history, women have been given a lower status in society than men and denied equal rights. For example, women have been considered property, been denied the right to vote, to divorce, or to own property. Most societies have been patriarchal in nature. These problems can be further exacerbated for women who belong to ethnic or racial groups that also experience inequality within society. This structured inequality within society encourages and condones violence against women (Dobash and Dobash 1979).

Five aspects of feminist thought are important to understanding this theory. Gender is not a natural fact, but a cultural product related to biological sex. Gender and gender relations order social life and social institutions. Gender relations and constructs of masculinity and femininity are not symmetrical, but are based on men's superiority and dominance. Finally, systems of knowledge reflect men's views of the world; and production of knowledge is gendered. Feminist theorists argue that men and women

should be treated equally in all areas of society including social, economic, and political (Daly and Chesney Lind 1988).

Theories of gender can operate at three different levels. The macro level is referred to as gender order. At this level, the theory reflects how state institutions, such as legal and social institutions, create a society structured by gender. The meso level analysis of gender, the gender regime, refers to neighborhood and parochial levels of structure, such as churches, schools, and social groups that are gendered in their structure. The micro or private level of analysis deals with specific gender relationships and how families are structured by gender. Theories of gender can operate at all three levels and demonstrate inequalities at all levels (Daly and Chesney Lind 1988).

There are three main types of feminist theories: liberal feminism, socialist feminism, and radical feminism. Liberal feminism is interested in sex roles and equality of opportunity. Socialist feminist theory focuses on two sources of power: class and gender, and combinations and intersections of these sources of power. Socialist feminist theory examines how different women are impacted differently depending on their race and class (Danner 1989).

In radical feminist theory, patriarchy is the basis of power differentials. Radical feminists posit that violence is a tool specifically used to subjugate women. Sexual assaults, marital rapes, and intimate partner violence are most frequently committed by men against women. Further, it is argued that crimes such as intimate partner violence are perpetrated in order to exploit and control women. One source of men's power is their ability to rape. Violence against women and sexual crime such as rape is a means of

social control for the patriarchy. For radical feminists, all heterosexual activity is violent and all female heterosexuals are victims (Brownmiller 1975, McKinnon 1982).

Sex-role socialization theory (Gilgun 1991) flows out of feminist theory and begins with the premise that men and women are culturally trained and “gendered” differently. According to this theory, men are taught to behave more aggressively while women are taught to be more submissive and nurturing. Dominance is an important part of masculinity. Women can work out issues and problems by discussing them, while men are not encouraged to talk about their feelings. Therefore, men may seek to solve problems through brute force and aggression. This can play out in intimate partner violence when the male seeks to assert his dominance and masculinity.

Gender inequality is also demonstrated by how gender is discussed in the academic literature. Research in the mainstream field of criminology may ignore women or gender or may speak in general terms about biological differentials. Feminist criminology situates the study of crime and criminal justice within a complex understanding that the social world is systematically shaped by relations of sex and gender. Women should be at the center of intellectual inquiry. Therefore, it is critical to examine issues in criminology that affect women and do so with a woman’s point of view in mind. Intimate partner violence is an issue that primarily affects women, so feminist theory encourages the study of causes and prevention of this phenomenon.

### *Empirical Support for Feminist Theory*

Feminist theory as it applies to intimate partner violence has been tested with some success. Gender inequality and patriarchal beliefs are correlated with higher levels

of abuse. At the macro level, a comparison of level of egalitarianism expressed among states within the United States revealed that the states with the lowest egalitarianism exhibited the highest levels of intimate partner violence (Yllo 1983, Yllo and Straus 1984). At the community level, higher levels of male patriarchal control increases a woman's odds of intimate partner violence and unwanted pregnancy (Pallito and O'Campo 2005). Individually, a representative sample of women in the general population, it was found that husbands who have more patriarchal beliefs are more likely to beat their wives than those who did not. Patriarchal beliefs are more prevalent among men with lower incomes, and lower levels of education (Smith 1990).

These findings were corroborated by Finn (1989) who found a positive correlation between traditional sex role preferences and attitudes supporting the use of force among a sample of 300 college students. Several other similar studies among college students have been performed. Greenblat (1985) also used a college sample to test feminist theory. The study found that while the sample generally condemned intimate partner violence, respondents who were more traditional in sex-role orientation showed higher degrees of approval for and tolerance of intimate partner violence than did those with more feminist orientations. In a sample of 105 college men and 114 college women who were asked to evaluate four different rape scenarios, "Observers holding less traditional gender role stereotypes perceived rape scenarios overall as more serious and were less likely to blame the victim" (Simonson and Subrich 1999: 617).

The correlation between patriarchal attitudes and intimate partner violence is seen in cultures outside the United States, including Turkey and Scotland. Among 408 Turkish nursing students, those with ideology that is more patriarchal were more

accepting of and more willing to justify intimate partner violence (Haj-Yahia 2010). In a survey of Scottish adolescents, aged 11-16, boys reported being more tolerant of intimate partner violence, but girls reported a great likelihood of using violence in future relationships (Falchikov 1996).

### *Policy Implications of Feminist Theory*

Since feminist theory posits that intimate partner violence happens primarily because of gender inequalities in society at the macro, meso, or micro levels, it is critical that policies to address intimate partner violence deal with structural inequalities at all three of these levels (Yllo 1983). Policies suggested by feminist theory include stronger laws for gender equality and against intimate partner violence, and stronger enforcement of these laws at the public level. Feminist theory also supports community activism against intimate partner violence and support for victims of intimate partner violence at the parochial level. Finally, feminist theory supports policies that empower women individually in their efforts to leave abusive relationships.

Formal controls (strong arrest policies for domestic violence offenders, vigorous prosecution of intimate partner violence crimes, and the availability of orders of protection) are designed to deal with structural inequalities faced by women at the macro level. The movement to press for formal controls occurred because the failure of the criminal justice system to respond to women mirrored other social institutions.

Collective efficacy (social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control) operates at the community level to increase neighborhood monitoring of potential intimate partner violence and to create social norms disapproving of intimate partner violence. Social

support flows out of a cohesive neighborhood and on the micro level and can provide resources and emotional support for individuals dealing with intimate partner violence. The use of all of these interventions is supported by feminist theory.

### *Social Disorganization Theory*

“Since its formulation in the early twentieth century by two Chicago sociologists, Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, social disorganization has become the most important theory in criminology for explaining neighborhood crime and delinquency” (Triplett, Gainey, and Sun 2003:1). Social disorganization refers to the inability of community residents to regulate the behavior of people in their neighborhood. In socially disorganized communities, there is a lack of societal norms discouraging crime. Nor does the socially disorganized community physically exercise informal social control over its residents. This social disorganization leads to an increase in crime (Shaw and McKay 1969).

Within neighborhoods, members may be regulated at the public, parochial and private levels. Agents acting at each of these levels (police, community groups, and individuals) can all impact a community’s ability to control criminal behavior (Kornhauser 1978). Residents in socially disorganized neighborhoods lack strong social bonds with their neighbors and with the community at all levels (Sampson and Groves 1989).

Social disorganization theory suggests that a lack of neighborhood cohesiveness affects communities’ ability to mobilize resources to address general crime and violence.

This logic can also be applied to a neighborhood's ability to prevent intimate partner violence:

A neighborhood's inability to maintain order in the public sphere may be reflected or magnified behind the closed doors of the home. For example, if a neighborhood cannot effectively marshal resources against street crime, how much less intervention should be expected in the home? (Emery, Jolley, and Wu 2010: 456-458).

A lack of social organization may also lead to a deficiency of clearly accepted social norms, a condition often called anomie. In neighborhoods with high levels of social disorganization, acceptance of intimate partner violence may be higher due to a lack of community norms disapproving of intimate partner violence (Emery et al. 2010, Browning 2002). "Because of the lack of strong ties between residents in disorganized neighborhoods, residents may not be willing to become involved in domestic disputes by personally intervening, calling the police, or publically disparaging the aggressor. Violent men may therefore feel free to aggress against their female partners with impunity and with little fear of intervention or shaming from their neighbors" (Van Wyk et al. 2003).

#### *Empirical Support for Social Disorganization Theory*

Social disorganization theory has been empirically tested with some success. In one of the first tests of social disorganization theory (Sampson and Groves 1989), social disorganization was measured using local friendship networks, control of street corner gangs, and organizational involvement. Two different surveys measuring these factors were given in more than 500 British neighborhoods in 1982 and again in 1984. Communities with higher levels of social disorganization reported higher levels of

criminal offending and criminal victimizations. High social disorganization, measured by local organizations, voluntary associations, and social networks, was correlated with higher rates of homicide in a study of structural characteristics of Chicago neighborhoods (Morenoff, Sampson, and Radenbush 2001).

A replication of Sampson and Groves' (1989) research was performed using data from the 1994 British crime survey. Using models and measures similar to the original study, results were found and the results of the original study were supported. Crime and social disorganization were positively correlated (Lowenkamp, Cullen, and Pratt 2003). Social disorganization was further tested using data from thirty-six neighborhoods in seven cities in the United States (Triplett, Gainey, and Sun 2004). Social disorganization was operationalized using socioeconomic status, residential mobility, racial heterogeneity, family disruption, local social ties, unsupervised youth groups, and organizational involvement. Examining the effects of these factors on both robbery rates and assault rates, further support was found for social disorganization theory.

Social disorganization not only contributes to crime in general, but also contributes to intimate partner violence specifically. Cunradi (2007) found that the risk for mutual intimate partner violence increased in neighborhoods with higher levels of disorder. Browning (2002) found that communities with higher levels of social organization experience lower levels of intimate homicide and nonlethal intimate partner violence.



### *Policy Implications of Social Disorganization Theory*

Social disorganization theory suggests policies that are centered in the belief that communities are critical in crime prevention. Socially disorganized communities cannot access resources at the public level such as law enforcement, the court system, and other governmental agencies. Socially disorganized communities cannot act at the parochial level to deter crime and assist victims. Socially disorganized communities cannot link individuals in their communities with needed resources. Therefore, policies suggested by social disorganization would include community programs to connect victims of intimate partner violence to resources at the public level, such as law enforcement and the legal system. Social disorganization theory would also suggest policies to provide direct and practical assistance from the community to victims in the form of monitoring and guardianship. Finally, social disorganization theory suggests policies that increase the level of social support for individual victims through an organized community.

There is support for formal controls, collective efficacy and social support based on social disorganization theory. Social organization at the community level can provide important resources on its own, but can also provide a link between public level services and private individuals. Social disorganization theory suggests that social organization can augment or improve the effectiveness of public level resources and the effectiveness of social support available to victims of intimate partner violence.

### *Social Learning Theory / Intergenerational Transfer of Violence*

Social learning theory was introduced by Edwin Sutherland in 1929. Sutherland believed that people learn criminal behavior from interactions with others, much the way

that people learn non-criminal behavior. According to Sutherland, a person will become delinquent if there is an excess of definitions favorable to a violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of law. These definitions can vary in priority, intensity, frequency, and duration. Techniques as well as motives for delinquent behavior can be learned through social interaction (Sutherland and Cressey 1974).

Aker's (1998) reformulation of Sutherland's theory is called social learning theory or differential-association-reinforcement. Social learning theory focuses on four major concerns: differential association, differential reinforcement, imitation, and definitions. The important new component in Akers' theory is reinforcement, defined as the balance of anticipated and actual rewards and punishments that follow or are consequences of a behavior. The causal chain established in social learning theory is that differential associations (as defined by Sutherland) influence attitudes about law violations as well as law violating behavior. If associations with positive definitions of delinquent behavior and positive reinforcement of delinquent behavior are present, imitation is possible. If that imitation is successful, then delinquent behavior is more likely to occur. The balance of associations and definitions and the balance of reinforcement produce or inhibit illegal acts (Akers 1998). According to this theory, if the person committing intimate partner violence is reinforced or if the behavior is viewed as successful, they are likely to repeat it.

The main application of social learning theory to intimate partner violence is intergenerational transfer of violence theory. The premise of this theory is that witnessing or experiencing family violence as a child increases the chances of that child experiencing violence in their adult family and intimate relationships. The family is the

earliest place where children learn acceptable ways for people to treat one another and to relate to one another. Through modeling and imitation, children learn violent behaviors. Intergenerational transfer of violence theory posits that children who are raised in abusive homes learn that violence is an acceptable and successful way to deal with conflict in relationships (Bandura 1973, Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz 1980). Children also learn that violence is appropriate in romantic relationships (Kalmus 1984).

*Empirical Support for Social Learning Theory / Intergenerational Transfer of Violence*

The intergenerational transfer of violence theory has been empirically tested several times with results that support the theory. Gelles (1976) found support for the intergenerational transfer of violence, but these results were specific to gender.

Witnessing or experiencing violence in the family as a child increased men's aggression in their marriage and increased women's violent victimization in marriage. Pagelow (1981) found that men who observed violence between their parents were more likely to use violence against their wives later in life. However, women who observed violence between their parents were no more likely than those who did not to become victims of violence in their marriage. In contrast to these results, Straus et al. (1980) found that witnessing violence in the family of origin increased later use of violence among both men and women.

Among a national sample of 910 men and 1092 women, "men are more likely to approve of violence against women if they observed their fathers hitting their mothers" (Ulbrich and Huber 1981:623). In a national sample of more than 2000 adults, observing parents hitting each other was associated with involvement in severe marital aggression.

This finding was true for both genders. Men and women who observed parental hitting were equally more likely to be victims and aggressors of intimate partner violence (Kalmus 1984).

In a meta-analysis of thirty-nine studies performed between 1978 and 1997, Stith et al. (2000) found a weak to moderate relationship between experiencing family violence as a child and becoming involved in a violent intimate relationship as an adult among heterosexual married couples. In this study, the effects were different based on gender. Male participants who witnessed violence were more likely to become perpetrators, while females who witnessed violence were more likely to become victims. “Cultural socialization practices (concurrent with feminist theory) may interact with modeling of same-sex parent behavior, leading to differential effects for boys and girls growing up in violent homes.” (Stith et al. 2000: 648). Renner and Slack (2006) also found that childhood exposure to physical and sexual abuse as well as intimate partner violence was a significant indicator of victimization and perpetration of intimate partner violence as an adult. These results did not differ by gender.

#### *Policy Implications of Social Learning Theory / Intergenerational Transfer of Violence*

Since there is support for social learning theory and the intergenerational transfer of violence, policies to address problems presented by the theory should be examined. Some have suggested that increased formal sanctions against family violence of all types, including child abuse, could reduce the transference of violence from one generation to another. Formal sanctions can also demonstrate to children that violence is not a proper way for family members to interact with one another, and that there are serious

consequences to such behavior. At the parochial level, communities that provide social norms disapproving of intimate partner violence can provide definitions and reinforcement to children indicating that violent behavior is unacceptable and should not be imitated. At the private level, social support can give resources to individual families to learn better and more appropriate ways to deal with conflict without resorting to violence. Therefore, social learning theory and the intergenerational transfer of violence lend support to the utility of formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support.

### *Deterrence Theory*

Among the first proponents of deterrence theory was Cesare Beccaria. Beccaria (1764) believed that just punishment through the justice system was the proper means to deter criminal behavior. Beccaria believed that if laws were just, and punishments humane and applied evenly, people would naturally be deterred from crime. He railed against unjust laws and punishments. He believed that only by making the law clear and punishments swift, severe, and certain (befitting the crime, but not inhumane or torturous) that criminal behavior could be controlled.

Deterrence takes place when a potential offender decides not to pursue a particular behavior based on fear of punishment by the criminal justice system. Deterrence theory hypothesizes that by enforcing sanctions and punishment against intimate partner violence offenders, batterers can be deterred from their behavior. Specific deterrence refers to direct effects on intimate partner violence offenders who are punished. General deterrence refers to the effects on potential offenders who have not yet been punished, but desist out of a desire to avoid punishment. In order for deterrence

to be effective, the offender must be aware of the sanction, consider the sanction likely to happen, and consider the sanction to be harmful (Cho and Wilke 2010).

Stafford and Warr (1993) focus on deterrence theory and present a clear conceptualization of deterrence. Though deterrence had been divided into specific deterrence and general deterrence, the authors reconceptualize the idea of deterrence by focusing on the punishment experience. They note that all members of society have some experience with punishment. For members of the public, their experience is indirect (this corresponds to general deterrence). For those offenders who have been punished, their punishment experience is direct. Deterrence is about punishment avoidance. Stafford and Warr (1993) prefer to discuss direct or indirect experience with punishment or punishment avoidance experience.

According to deterrence theory, formal sanctions can be an important deterrent to criminal activity. Deterrence can take the form of more informal social controls as well as legal sanctions (Zimring and Hawkins 1968). Informal sanctions such as loss of friends and family and community respect can also be important deterrents. They may even be more powerful deterrents than formal sanctions (Grasmick and Bursik 1990). This finding was corroborated in another study of male victims (Carmody and Willimas, 1987, Williams and Hawkins 1992).

### *Empirical Tests of Deterrence Theory*

The effects of deterrence on criminal behavior have been empirically examined. Deterrence in three forms (moral commitment, perceived threat of legal punishment, and threat of social disapproval) was found to have a significant effect on involvement in

criminal behavior. These three factors account for 40% of the variance in criminal involvement among a random sample of 400 adults. Social disapproval and moral commitment were stronger deterrents than the threat of legal punishment (Grasmick and Green 1980). In a random sample of 360 adults, threats of shame and threats of legal sanctions both inhibited the inclination to commit tax cheating, petty theft, and drunk driving (Grasmick and Bursik 1990).

Deterrence theory has also been extensively tested in relationship to intimate partner violence. In the famous Minneapolis experiment, (Sherman and Berk 1984) police conducted a field experiment to test the deterrent effects of arrest on intimate partner violence. Those offenders who were randomly assigned to arrest were significantly less likely to recidivate within six months than were those that were not arrested, providing support for deterrence theory. In measuring comparative deterrent effects of moral disapproval of assault, attachment to significant others, and perceived risk of arrest, all three were found to have deterrent effects on intimate partner violence in a random national telephone sample of 483 adults (Williams and Hawkins 1989).

Elaborating further on the deterrent effects of informal social sanctions, Sherman et al. (1992) reexamined the data from replications of the Minneapolis experiment in Milwaukee and Omaha. Measuring only arrest and non-arrest, they found that those with a stake in conformity (measured by marriage and employment) were deterred from recidivism of intimate partner violence by arrest. However, those without a stake in conformity actually had higher rates of recidivism after arrest than those who were not arrested. This finding was corroborated by replication data in Dade County (Pate and Hamilton 1992) suggesting that a strong relationship exists between types of social

controls. “If legal sanctions applied in the absence of informal controls increase crime, they can hardly compensate for the missing stake in conformity. Both legal and informal social mechanisms are required to control domestic violence.” (Sherman et al. 1992:688).

In a meta-analysis of the deterrent effects of arrest in 4700 incidents, Maxwell, Garner, and Fagan (2002) found a significant but modest reduction in subsequent intimate partner violence attributable to arrest of the suspect. Using data from the National Crime Victimization Survey, Cho and Wilke (2010) found that victims whose partners were arrested following an incident of intimate partner violence were revictimized at lower rates than those whose partners were not arrested.

#### *Policy Implications of Deterrence Theory*

Deterrence theory suggests that criminal sanctions (formal controls) act as deterrents and can play a role in increasing the negative consequences associated with criminal behavior. Therefore, it can be theorized that the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence may be reduced by the use of formal sanctions or controls. Deterrence can be formal or informal, taking place at the public, parochial, or private level. Therefore, policy interventions at each of these levels are important. At the public level, stronger penalties for intimate partner violence and strict enforcement of these sanctions are mandated by deterrence theory because they have been shown in many instances to reduce recidivism. At the parochial level, informal social condemnation of intimate partner violence and community guardianship against intimate partner violence can provide a powerful deterrent effect. At the private level, the utility of formal



sanctions, collective efficacy, and social support are all theoretically supported by deterrence theory.

## POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

### *Formal Controls*

Formal controls are generally represented by one of three actions: mandatory arrest policies, mandatory prosecution or filing policies, and orders of protection.

Mandatory arrest policies require law enforcement officers responding to an intimate partner violence call to arrest at least one of the parties (Sherman and Berk 1984).

Mandatory prosecution requires prosecution of all filed cases (a “no-drop” policy).

Mandatory filing policies require charges to be filed in all reported cases of domestic violence (Peterson and Dixon 2002). Orders of protection provide a temporary civil

order from a court, directing the offender to refrain from further abuse (Logan et al.

2006). The victim can request a temporary ex parte order from the court, and a hearing is held, usually within ten days to make the order permanent.

### *Theoretical Importance of Formal Controls*

There are two primary theories that suggest that the use of formal controls will affect intimate partner violence; feminist theory and deterrence theory. Feminist theory holds that by taking a strong stance against intimate partner violence and strictly enforcing laws against intimate partner violence, societal condemnation can be expressed and attitudes about intimate partner violence can be altered. “The major theoretical

framework supporting the arrest of batterers in response to IPV is deterrence theory.” (Cho and Wilke 2010: 284). Deterrence theory suggests that as the risk of criminal sanctions increases and the punishments for violators escalate, potential offenders will be deterred from attacking their intimate partners (Smithey and Straus 2002).

*The Empirical Evidence of Effects of Formal Controls on Intimate Partner Violence  
Mandatory Arrests*

Recent research in intimate partner violence has focused on three areas of formal social control: arrest policies, prosecution policies, and restraining orders. There do appear to be some positive outcomes of intimate partner violence legislation in general. Dugan (2003, p.283) concludes, “Most laws do reduce the chances of family or intimate partner violence” through deterrence. Sampson (1986:302) concludes, “Official sanctions appear to have a significant deterrent effect on criminal offending.”

One of the most widely studied issues in intimate partner violence policy is mandatory arrest policies. Mandatory arrest policies require law enforcement officers responding to an intimate partner violence call to arrest at least one of the parties. The Minneapolis experiment studied the effects of mandatory arrest policies by comparing recidivism rates among intimate partner violence offenders based on three different law enforcement interventions (Sherman and Berk 1984). In order to test whether arrest reduced recidivism of an intimate partner violence offender, officers randomly intervened with a cooling off period, giving a referral, or arresting the alleged offender. Those offenders who were arrested recidivated far less than offenders in the other two groups

did. With the success of the Minneapolis experiment, many jurisdictions have pursued mandatory arrest policies (Maxwell et al. 2002).

Beginning in 1986, the Spousal Assault Replication Project, funded by the NIJ, attempted to replicate the Minneapolis experiment exactly in Charlotte, North Carolina, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Dade County, Florida, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Omaha, Nebraska. Researchers used a series of common measures about suspects, victims, and outcomes. In reviewing all of the data from the SARP, Schmidt and Sherman (1996) found mixed results. Specifically, compulsory arrest policies reduced violence in some cities, but increased violence in other cities. Arrest policies reduced intimate partner violence among offenders who were employed, but increased it among unemployed offenders. When offenders were arrested, short-term reductions in intimate partner violence were followed by long-term increases in intimate partner violence among those arrested. The authors did not attempt to theoretically explain these differences.

In reviewing the SARP replication project, Maxwell et al. (2002) argue that there is evidence to suggest that arrest can be more effective in reducing subsequent offenses than all non-arrest options, especially for repeat or chronic offenders. Results from all six SARP replication cities were analyzed in two ways. Aggression by the offender was measured using both physical violence and violence against property. Intervention options by the police were divided into two options: arrest or no arrest. Arrests reduced the prevalence of new victimization by 25 % and the prevalence of recidivism by 4 %, compared to those who were not arrested.

Other studies have concluded that arrests do not reduce future violent incidents. The replication of the Minnesota experiment in Charlotte found no reduction in future

violence among the group arrested (Herschel and Hutchison 1996). Although pro-arrest policies and other formal controls are popular, the data do not always support their effectiveness (Gelles 1996). Arrest strategies are needed, but they work better with some other strategy in place to complement them. For example, when arrests are used along with informal controls like community intervention projects, intimate partner violence is reduced more effectively (Gelles 1996).

In addition to questions about their effectiveness, mandatory arrest policies are controversial on other grounds. Chesney-Lind (2002) argues that mandatory arrests may hurt minorities, because they are over-policed. Police tend to patrol these areas more frequently, and mandatory arrests policies may have a disparate impact. In addition, women may be arrested in cases of mutual arrest or in cases of minor assaults. This results in unnecessary arrests of women from a policy that is meant to help women. The number of women being arrested has risen, in large part due to domestic assaults (Chesney-Lind 2002, Hovmand et al. 2009). Pro-arrest policies do send the message that domestic violence is a serious issue. In addition, mandatory arrest policies may also work to protect victims from intimidation since the victim does not control the arrest decision. However, a mandatory arrest policy is problematic because it may adversely affect women and minorities when they suffer arrests at higher rates than other groups.

Humphries (2002) and Young (1998) also express concern over mandatory arrest policies. They argue that women who are victims of domestic violence need to be empowered and to find their own voice. Leaving control over arrest policies in the hands of the criminal justice system does not empower women or allow them a voice in determining whether their abuser is arrested. Mandatory arrest policies may need to give

way to policies that allow victims to control whether or not the abuser is arrested. This is empowering for the victim and gives them a sense of control. However, it is important to note that when victims control the decision to arrest, they may be intimidated by the abuser into refusing the arrest option.

Conversely, Stark (1996) believes that mandatory arrest policies are necessary to correct inequality and stratification issues within the criminal justice system. Mandatory arrest policies reflect an important redistribution of criminal justice resources on behalf of women to create more equality in the justice system. These policies may also be necessary to protect women from themselves. “The entrapment associated with battering justifies a proactive response from the state in anticipation of future assault and coercive control- hence, a pro-arrest policy” (Stark 1996:143).

Further, Han (2003:180) asserts that “while not always empowering, mandatory arrest policies aren’t necessarily disempowering because they respond to only an immediate threat of violence, where probable cause is observed first hand by police. Furthermore, mandatory arrest policies increase the likelihood that survivors will be able to make informed decisions later on.” Mandatory arrest is a useful tool, but is not a cure-all for intimate partner violence (Rizer 2005). Arrest policies should be modified to account for their negative impacts.

While arrest can be a good tool, Han (2003) advocates a middle ground approach of presumptive arrest because it provides flexibility and balance. Presumptive arrest policies assume that an arrest will take place following a domestic violence call, but the policy allows the law enforcement officer to forgo an arrest if there are extenuating circumstances. In many instances, this would include a victim request that the offender

not be arrested. This approach is theoretically based in the victim empowerment model, which makes the client the decision maker. In addition, social programs and community involvement should be encouraged as a means to reduce intimate partner violence.

Community support gives the victim access to community resources and social programs, as well as to provide shaming for the offender (Rizer 2005). For example, social groups that are intolerant of intimate partner violence can encourage perpetrators to change their behavior. Perpetrators can be ostracized and isolated until they conform with social expectations.

Flexibility in intimate partner violence policy may be crucial in meeting victims needs. A one-size-fits-all mandatory approach loses the woman-centered context of the anti-intimate partner violence movement. Focusing on the needs of victims and providing them with advocacy and broader social support may be more successful for keeping victims safe (Goodman and Epstein 2005).

#### *No-Drop Prosecution Policies*

Another crucial policy issue is mandatory prosecution and mandatory filing of domestic violence cases. No-drop policies do cause a dramatic increase in intimate partner violence convictions (Davis, Smith, and Davies 2001). These policies are meant to deter domestic assaults, and a decrease in recidivism is the ultimate proof of their success. Mandatory filing together with mandatory prosecution leads to a longer period of court oversight, while non-mandatory filing together with mandatory prosecution leads to a greater percentage of convictions (Peterson and Dixon 2002). Convictions can

reduce recidivism in cases of intimate partner violence, at least modestly (Ventura and Davis 2005).

Aggressive prosecution and no-drop prosecution policies have some advantages. Wills (1997) argues that no-drop policies are necessary for three reasons. First, intimate partner violence does not just affect victims; it is a public safety issue. Intimate partner violence impacts children, neighbors, extended family, workplaces and hospitals. Government has a duty to protect these members of society from harm. Second, in many instances of intimate partner violence, the victim may decline to press charges out of fear or out of a wish to placate their abuser. In these cases, the state should be able to prosecute on behalf of society to prevent the harms mentioned above. Finally, no-drop policies should be in force because prosecutors must protect victims of intimate partner violence and their children.

No-drop policies may increase domestic violence convictions, but there are drawbacks (Corsilles 1994). Prosecutors' discretion is removed, meaning that individual justice is gone, and prosecutors have no case-by-case discretion to judge the reasonableness of a case. Further, victim danger from retaliation may be increased. Further, because the victim has no say in how the system manages the case, she is disempowered. To overcome this inflexibility, Han (2003) suggests that mandatory no drop policies should be modified to "non-coercive" no drop policies. In this arrangement, the victim fully controls her degree of participation in the prosecution, but the prosecutor controls the ultimate question of whether or not to prosecute the case.

This may require victimless prosecutions. Ries (2005) advocates for victimless prosecution of intimate partner violence cases to most effectively eradicate intimate

partner violence. This method allows the victim to choose her level of participation, while the state can still convict and punish offenders when appropriate. Others argue that the choice to prosecute intimate partner cases should always be left to the victims, as it is in many other types of cases. The victim and not the state should be empowered to make the decision to prosecute. For the state to decide whether to prosecute is patriarchic:

No one makes the choice for a woman to call the police on her abusive partner and no one but the woman should choose whether her partner is prosecuted. Every situation must be viewed as unique, and every woman's decision must be respected. A blanket approach to domestic violence will not cover all women and women are not the same nor living similar situations. The lives of women vary with, inter alia, age, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. (Dayton 2002:281)

As such, Dayton argues that formal sanctions such as no-drop policies are not a panacea for victims of intimate partner violence.

### *Orders of Protection*

In addition to arrest and prosecution, orders of protection are another formal means used by the criminal justice system to prevent intimate partner violence. Similar to mandatory arrest policies and no-drop prosecution policies, research is conflicting as to the efficacy of orders of protection. Carlson, Harris, and Holden (1999) found a significant decline in the probability of abuse following an order of protection. 68% of victims requesting a protective order reported physical violence before the order of protection was issued, while only 23% reported physical violence after the order was issued. Low income women and African American women were more likely to report re-abuse.

Holt (2002) determined that permanent, but not temporary protection orders were associated with an 80% reduction in police reported violence in the twelve months after



filing the order, when compared with the twelve months before filing the order.

McFarlane et al. (2004) reported that women who qualify for and apply for a two-year order of protection, whether or not they are granted the order, reported significantly lower levels of violence over the next eighteen months. This included reductions in threats, assaults, stalking, and worksite harassment.

These results are supported by findings that following contact with a justice agency and an application for a protective order, violence among a group of immigrant women studied was lower than before the application. McFarlane et al. (2003:248) concluded that “clearly, contact with the justice system and application for a protective order is a powerful deterrent to further abuse and can be deemed highly effective in terms of subsequent intimate partner violence against immigrant women.” It is encouraging to find that orders of protection also help immigrant victims, as they do citizens.

Rios (2006) recommends the use of lifetime orders of protection. Unlike regular “permanent” orders of protection, which generally only last a year, lifetime orders are good for the entire life of the victim. These orders can provide a proactive intervention to prevent intimate partner violence, which can serve as a strong message that intimate partner violence will not be tolerated, and reduce the number of times a victim of intimate partner violence has to go to court.

There are some disadvantages and limitations to the use of protective orders, however (Topliffe 1992). There may be filing fees associated with obtaining a protective order. Protective orders are not always effectively enforced. In addition, victims may also be put off by the complexities of the criminal justice system.

Moreover, Spooner (2009) discovered very little difference in recidivism of intimate partner violence between Barbados and St. Kitts, in spite of the fact that women on Barbados have access to orders of protection, while women on St. Kitts do not. Women on Barbados have access to orders of protection, which are similar in most ways to orders of protection available in the United States and the United Kingdom. The two islands are otherwise quite similar. Rates of intimate partner violence in both countries are historically high. Rates of intimate partner violence did not fall significantly on Barbados after orders of protection became available in 1992. Rates of intimate partner violence on both islands remained high, and similar to each other. Spooner concludes that community and informal social control make the difference. “Legal sanctions should not be the sole strategy used to address domestic abuse. Given the role that social connectedness or ‘stakes in conformity’ plays in reducing the hazard of repeat abuse, communities must be encouraged to denounce the practice of domestic abuse” (Spooner 2009:386).

Logan et al. (2006) echo the support for community action in addition to the use of orders of protection. Protective orders are promising, but policy support and procedure are often inadequate. There have been some gains for victims, but increased enforcement of orders of protection is needed. Communities can help. “Communities should explore ways to capitalize on the opportunity to empower women with information, support, and resources when they reach out for help by petitioning for protection orders” (Logan et al. 2006:200).

In spite of their qualified success, protective orders can be misused or abused. One member of a couple in a contentious divorce may abuse orders of protection. One

spouse may allege abuse by the other, and an alleged threat may be enough to get an order of protection. The order may be used to evict the alleged offender from the home and may be used to gain a tactical advantage in a divorce settlement (Baskerville 2002).

Significantly, there are unforeseen consequences to obtaining an order of protection (Tarr 2003). Victims may lose custody of their children in a custody battle with the state or other relatives upon a showing of intimate partner violence in the home. Victims may feel a loss of autonomy or free agency if constrained by a protective order. They may experience discrimination in employment and may incur changes in their insurance liability and eligibility. Finally, they may experience a change in immigration status or a loss of government benefits.

In summary, mandatory arrest policies, no drop policies, and protective orders all have some success, but have not reduced intimate partner violence consistently. Some evidence concerning criminal justice interventions shows positive benefits while other evidence is mixed or inconclusive (Peterson 2008, Spohn 2008). “The new policies and practices have not been effective at ‘specific deterrence,’ that is deterring IPV offenders from committing new IPV offenses. Accumulating evidence shows that only a few criminal justice interventions have even a weak deterrent effect, and many have no effect” (Peterson 2008:537).

Even when criminal justice responses such as arrest, prosecution, and restraining orders may be effective, many victims of intimate partner violence may elect not to participate in the system. Several barriers to victim participation in the criminal justice system can explain this lack of participation. These barriers include fear of retaliation,

increased risk of recidivism, victim-blaming attitudes within the system, systemic resistance to prosecution of intimate partner violence, and economic barriers (Hart 1996).

Since some victims are unwilling to use the system and given the limited and qualified success of criminal justice intervention responses, reducing intimate partner violence may require examining non-criminal justice interventions in combination with formal controls. The non-criminal justice system interventions may include collective efficacy, which requires social cohesion, social capital, and use of informal social controls at the community level.

### *Collective Efficacy*

Park and Burgess (1924) and Shaw and McKay (1969) stimulated the interest in the influence of community level characteristics on variation in crime rates. This body of research has concluded that crime is largely a function of neighborhood social and organizational characteristics rather than of individuals characteristics (Sampson, Radenbush, and Earles 1998, Bursick and Grasmick 1993, and White 2006). “The ecological framework offers a distinctive alternative to the individual level focus of mainstream criminology...social systems exhibit structural properties that can be examined apart from the personal characteristics of their members” (Sampson 1986:301). Specifically, neighborhood crime rates reflect differences in neighborhood abilities to regulate and control the behavior of their residents based on formal and informal social networks (Bursick and Grasmick 1993).

Community level differences in crime remain significant even when controlling for individual level demographic variables (Sampson and Radenbush 1997, Bursick and

Grasmick 1993). Therefore, “understanding the relationship between community factors and crime is essential to the overall understanding of the mechanisms that produce crime in the United States” (White 2006:7).

### *Collective Efficacy Defined*

Collective efficacy is defined as “Social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good.” (Sampson and Radenbush 2007:918). Collective efficacy is the willingness and ability of community members to take action to solve a community problem. It is made up of three components well researched in the literature: social cohesion (working together), social capital (with the ability) and informal social control (to take action to solve a problem). Collective efficacy and the literature surrounding it will be discussed first, followed by each of the three components of collective efficacy in turn, social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control.

According to Sampson (1997), networks of friendships and involvement in community organizations create solidarity or cohesion among community members. This social cohesion creates the possibility of community intervention to monitor and regulate crime, referred to as informal social control. Therefore, “communities that can effectively mobilize to regulate local crime can be understood to have high levels of collective efficacy with respect to the social control of crime.” (Browning 2002: 834).

Differences in crime rates between neighborhoods are correlated with the collective efficacy of the neighborhood. “In neighborhoods scoring high on collective efficacy, crime rates were 40 % below those in lower scoring neighborhoods,”

(Sampson, Radenbush, and Earles 1998:19). In addition, concentrated disadvantage and residential instability can be mediated by collective efficacy (Sampson and Radenbush 2007).

### *Social Cohesion*

Social cohesion is defined as follows:

The kernel of the concept is that a cohesive society 'hangs together'; all the component parts somehow fit in and contribute to society's collective project and well-being; and conflict between societal goals and groups, and disruptive behaviors, are largely absent or minimal. We can explore the concept further by breaking it down into a number of elements, each of which we shall briefly discuss. The constituent dimensions of social cohesion here are: common values and a civic culture; social order and social control; social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities; social networks and social capital; and territorial belonging and identity. (Kearns and Forrest 2001:996).

Social cohesion can be helpful in aspects of social control and social order (Forrest and Kearns 2001). Social cohesion can be measured by the ties between and among individuals and organizations in a neighborhood. Granovetter (1973) makes an argument that examining social cohesion through social ties can help to understand the interrelationship between the micro and macro level by examining processes of interpersonal networks. Social ties also increase the likelihood of using direct informal social controls (direct intervention) (Warner 2007, Burchfield 2008).

Weak ties are just as important as strong ties in measuring social cohesion and social capital. Weak ties assist in creating network resources for social capital, while strong ties create cohesion. The strength of social ties should be measured using a combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie. Strong ties indicate a

close relationship, whereas weak ties indicate a loose connection or acquaintance. Strong ties are important because they create close personal ties, but those are limited to a small number. However, weak ties are important because they allow someone to bridge the gap between smaller groups on a micro level and the larger community on the macro level (Granovetter 1973).

Thus, people with a large number of weak ties can use social capital to access resources outside their immediate circle. These resources can then come back to benefit the smaller group (Granovetter 1973). For example, weak ties may exist between people who are acquaintances ; while a strong tie is a friend or family member. Each strong tie and weak tie provides access to certain resources. The more friends our friends have, the more resources we have to call upon.

### *Social Capital*

Social capital is best described as community clout. It is the ability to make changes and get things done within a community – specifically to solve community problems through social networks. It is potentially a very powerful tool to affect crime and specifically intimate partner assault. While there are varying definitions of the concept, social capital is defined by Rosenfeld, Messner, and Baumer (2008:284) as “cooperative social relationships that facilitate the realization of collective goals – it manifests itself in mutually reinforcing between interpersonal trust and civic engagement.” Social capital (the ability to take action) along with a willingness to take action creates collective efficacy.

The concept of social capital is embodied in the relations among persons – specifically relationships that enable individuals to cooperate with others to realize goals. In addition to civil engagement and social trust, social capital may contain elements of “features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Rosenfeld, Messner, Baumer 2008:285).

Social capital can be broken down into several domains to help flesh out its meanings and possibilities. Those domains are empowerment, participation, associational activity and common purpose, supporting networks and reciprocity, collective norms and values, trust, and safety and belonging. Social capital is not important for its own sake, but is important only when it is put to use. It is a potential force for accomplishing desired, collective goals (Forrest and Kearns 2001).

Communities that are more socially cohesive and function as cooperative social units (as opposed to geographic or political designations) have greater social capital. Greater social capital leads to a greater ability to lower crime rates in high crime neighborhoods. Chaskin (1998) states that informal networks of association within neighborhoods are important and central to developing neighborhood programs and initiatives. DeCoster (2006) hypothesized that social capital is of key importance in determination or prediction of crime levels in a particular neighborhood. Depleted social capital is linked with higher violent crime and homicide (Rosenfeld, Messner, and Baumer 2008).



### *Informal Social Controls*

Informal social control is action taken by private community citizens and community organizations (as opposed to actions of law enforcement or political entities) to change conditions in the neighborhood or to control crime or disorganization in the community (Silver and Miller 2004). Renauer (2007:63) defines informal social control as “a collective perception that neighbors are willing to engage in specific social control actions aimed at preventing crime and delinquency, like the willingness of neighbors to intervene and stop children they catch spray painting graffiti.”

Informal social control is important for achieving low rates of neighborhood crime and deviance. “Informal social control was an important aspect of coping with crime and incivility, as well as a means of trying to prevent it, in both the deprived and affluent neighborhoods” (Atkinson and Flint 2004:345). Informal social control can be important for enabling citizens in high crime neighborhoods to control crime (Foster, 1995). Moreover, it has been found that informal social control is important for achieving low rates of neighborhood crime and deviance, and may be a key factor mediating the association between neighborhood structural characteristics (such as poverty, mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity) and crime. (Silver and Miller 2004, Triplett et al. 2003).

In Hunter’s (1985) model, social control is concerned with the capacity for self-regulation by social groups, and its institutional analysis stresses both normative and structural components. The normative component includes the standards and values for assessing appropriate and deviant behavior, while the structural component includes the patterned distribution of resources within a social group that may be utilized to sanction

the behaviors of its members. Social control in Hunter's model is the ability of a community to enforce social behavioral standards. Social control can be exerted at three levels: private, (family level) parochial (community level), and public (city-wide). There is also a great deal of interaction at the intersection of these levels. Hunter favors non-public social control measures, instead of relying on state regulation.

Hunter (1985) suggests that the answer is not for the state to engage in direct social control, but for the state to support increasingly stronger parochial orders that will engage in informal social control activities in conjunction with the state and the private order. This solution is, in fact, emerging in many urban areas throughout the nation. The ultimate success of a variety of local crime control programs appears to depend upon whether or not they are embedded in ongoing community organizations.

Roehl (1998) describes the advantages of programs that focus on civil remedies as informal social controls for problems of community disorder. Like Hunter (1985), Roehl believes in the power of the people within a community to affect change. Preventing and resolving neighborhood crime and disorder problems are (not just) the responsibilities of law enforcement professionals and other government authorities (but also) citizens, acting individually and collectively. These citizens are not experts, they are everyday people, working to improve the public safety and quality of life of the neighborhoods in which they work and live (Roehl 1998).

In fact, it may be the very lack of success of formal social controls in disorganized areas that leads to higher crime. "In the deprived areas, the use of a wide range of forms of control may be seen as a proportionate response to the greater problems of crime and anti-social behavior in such localities" (Atkinson and Flint 2004: 346).

Unfortunately, informal social control does not always correlate with lower crime rates. Studies present mixed results concerning the effects of informal social control on community crime rates. One study found that social ties do not translate into increased informal social control in all situations. The effects of informal social control on crime are only true in some neighborhoods and only for some crimes. The study found that local social ties decrease assault rates, but not burglary rates. Assault rates were affected by social ties in white neighborhoods, but not in minority neighborhoods (Warner and Roundtree 1997).

Atkinson and Flint (2004) found that residents in highly disorganized neighborhoods still have and use informal social controls. In fact, there may be more use of informal social controls in disadvantaged neighborhoods than in affluent neighborhoods. However, use of informal social controls does not necessarily translate into increased crime control. Residents in high crime areas are more likely to intervene in social disorder, but are no more likely to intervene in local crime problems.

In addition, it has been noted in the literature that in certain contexts, informal social control and informal social ties may increase rather than decrease criminal activity. Social control is transactional, and social ties may undermine rather than support social control of crime in violent contexts (Wilkenson 2007).

Moreover, the relationship between informal social controls and formal controls is a complex one. Informal and formal social controls can compliment and encourage one another. Specifically, arrest rates in neighborhoods are positively associated with increased use of informal social controls. However, increases in arrest are negatively associated with participation in voluntary organizations and attachment to communities

(Lynch, et al. 2002). There are also findings that indicate a conflict between informal social controls and formal controls. Formal control in the form of community policing may discourage use of informal social control in neighborhoods, especially in disadvantaged communities (Renauer 2007).

### *Theoretical Support for Collective Efficacy's Effects on Intimate Partner Violence*

Collective efficacy will theoretically impact the prevalence of intimate partner violence in two ways. First, communities with high levels of collective efficacy can better monitor and regulate potential occurrences of violence. The community can provide support, protection, and resources for potential victims. In addition, a community with a high degree of collective efficacy can broadcast shared social norms and values that intimate partner violence is not acceptable. Members of the community can stigmatize the behavior, and put social pressure on the offender to stop. This is only possible however, where there is in fact a shared belief that intimate partner violence is not a private matter (Browning 2002).

### *Empirical Evidence on Collective Efficacy and Intimate Partner Violence*

Prior literature has established an important link between communities and intimate partner violence. Examining the relationship between neighborhood factors and intimate partner violence is critical (Raghavan et al. 2006). Cunradi (2007) examined the effects of neighborhood disorder on intimate partner violence. Neighborhood disorder was measured by a survey that asked participants to rate crime, drug selling, street fights, empty buildings, and graffiti in the neighborhood. The risk for mutual domestic violence

was correlated conditions of high neighborhood disorder. Specifically, neighborhood disorder increased the risk for intimate partner violence in men. However, lower levels neighborhood disorder did mediate the increased risk of intimate partner violence caused by female drinking.

It is important to note however, that community context can negatively impact intimate partner violence. Living in a neighborhood with high levels of disorder and substance abuse may increase exposure to and risk of violence in general. This will, in turn, increase exposure to intimate partner violence. Increased intimate partner violence exposure within a support network is also associated with an increased risk for intimate partner violence. When a potential abuser has friends or members of their support group who are violent with their intimate partner, that person is more likely to be violent with their intimate partner (Raghavan et al. 2006).

Moreover, approval and acceptance of family violence varies not only among individuals, but also among communities. Using survey data gathered in Norfolk, Virginia, Button found that, “those residing in neighborhoods with high levels of crime approve of intimate partner violence significantly more than those living in communities with low levels of crime,” (Button 2008:138).

While negative community factors can increase the risk of intimate partner violence, positive community factors can decrease the risk of intimate partner violence. Social capital is one important resource that can serve as a protective factor for intimate partner violence. Mothers in North and South Carolina participated in a survey concerning social capital and parenting behaviors. A social capital scale was constructed from questions about neighborhood characteristics, willingness to take action, number of

adults in the household, and participation in religious services. A one-point increase in the four-point personal social capital index was associated with a 30 % reduction in neglectful parenting, psychologically harsh parenting, and intimate partner violence (Zolotor and Runyan 2006).

Similarly, collective efficacy can be a protective factor against intimate partner violence (Browning 2002). Using data from the Chicago Human Development project, Browning found that collective efficacy (measured in terms of neighborhood cohesion and informal social control) was associated with lower rates of both intimate homicide and nonlethal intimate partner violence. The effects of collective efficacy were more pronounced in neighborhoods with a lower tolerance of intimate partner violence. Greater collective efficacy was also associated with an increased likelihood that a victim of intimate partner violence would report the violence to those in a position to help them, such as law enforcement or domestic violence advocates.

Informal social controls in the form of social condemnation are also important in their effects on intimate partner violence. Assaultive and non-assaultive men do not differ in their perception of the certainty or severity of arrest, indicating that arrest may not be a strong deterrent. However, non-assaultive men perceive a greater likelihood of severe social condemnation than assaultive men, indicating that social condemnation may be an effective deterrent (Carmody and Williams 1987).

### *Social Support*

In addition to formal controls and collective efficacy, social support can also have an impact on intimate partner violence. Social support flows out of a community with

collective efficacy. Social support can provide resources at the individual level for victims of intimate partner violence.

Social support is a concept that contains several types of resources available to victims. It can be defined as “those interactions in which one individual or group directly provides another individual with a sense of connection, resources, and/or affirmation” (Bates and Toro 1999:139). Support can be tangible (availability of material resources such as money), advice or appraisal support (availability of suggestions, or feedback), self-esteem support (availability of positive reinforcement), emotional support (availability of feeling accepted, loved and needed), and belongingness support (availability of companionship) (Bates and Toro 1999). Social support is normally discussed as either actually received assistance or perceived availability of help (Lee, Pomeroy and Bowman 2007). Support networks can be informal groups that meet, or more formal organizations that provide different types of assistance to victims. Examples of social support for victims of intimate partner violence include shelters, support groups, hotlines, and advocacy groups.

#### *Theoretical Explanation and Support for Social Support*

Social support is theorized to impact intimate partner violence in one of two ways. First, social support can alleviate the isolation often felt by victims by providing needed contacts, and provide important resources for the victim (Van Wyke et. al 2003).

An effective means of controlling women and assaulting them with less fear of detection is to socially isolate them. Women with abusive partners often report that their contact with family and friends has been cut off or severely curtailed., and that they had no one to turn to for help with the abuse. Conversely, women who have reported receiving help from family and friends have rated it as being

very helpful in their ability to leave their assailants. (Sullivan and Bybee 1999:43-44).

Second, social support can act as a protective factor against the negative psychological effects of intimate partner violence. Social support is hypothesized to be a coping mechanism that can protect victims from harmful effects of stressful events (Lin, Thompson, and Kraslow 2009). The stress buffering effect of social support is strongest when “support is measured as a perception that one’s network is ready to provide aid and assistance if needed” (Wethington and Kessler 1986:78). Social support can provide a feeling of empowerment to the victim. Social support from family and friends can indicate that a victim is valued and be a source of positive self-esteem (Jewkes 2002). Through social support and networking, women build trust that enables them to develop social capital (Larance and Porter 2004). That social capital in turn yields resources that the victim may access.

Social support has support in feminist theory because it supplies a sense of empowerment and solidarity for women in their struggle to gain equality. In addition, social support can provide a deterrent to criminal behavior in general, and by implication, to intimate partner violence as well. Thus, deterrence theory is supportive of social support as an intervention. Therefore, we would expect that a measure of social support would be correlated with decreased levels of intimate partner violence.

#### *Empirical Support for the Efficacy of Social Support on Intimate Partner Violence*

Victims of intimate partner violence often lack social capital and the relationships necessary to build social capital (Larance and Porter 2004). One form of social capital that is a true resource for victims is a social support network. Larance and Porter (2004)



compiled observations from women support groups they ran. The results were not quantified, but they observed that support groups for victims could provide a sense of community for victims and assist with building social capital. Specifically, support groups can build trust and networks that indicate social capital. Social capital and support can be especially important in providing needed resources for a victim of intimate partner violence who wishes to leave the relationship.

A social support network can also reduce the negative impact of intimate partner violence (Constantino et al 2005). Among women in a domestic violence shelter, women who received a social support intervention while in the shelter had improvement in psychological distress symptoms and improvement in their perceived availability of social support. Women receiving the intervention also needed less health care than those women who did not receive the intervention (Constantino et al 2005). This finding is corroborated by Coker et al. (2003) who found that among 191 women experiencing intimate partner violence, higher levels of social support were associated with reductions in both mental and physical health consequences of intimate partner violence.

There are other positive effects of social support for victims of intimate partner violence. Social support networks can provide material support and a heightened awareness of danger (Ferraro and Johnson 1983). Social support reduces perceptions of self-blame among victims of intimate partner violence (Barnett et al. 1996).

Moreover, a support network can reduce recidivism of intimate partner violence (Bender et al. 2003). In a sample of low-income African-American women, social support was found to mediate intimate partner violence revictimization (Bender et al. 2003). Similarly, Alcorn (1984) found that among a group of women leaving a shelter,

helping networks assisted these victims of intimate partner violence in preventing future abuse.

Social support can also be a factor in a victim's ability to leave an abusive relationship (Zlotnick 2006). In a study that compared social support among victims and non-victims, victims with higher levels of social support were found to have higher rates of leaving their abusive relationship at a follow up interview (Zlotnick 2006).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Several research questions present themselves based on the above discussion of theories and interventions. Based on the theoretical literature on feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory, and deterrence theory, intimate partner violence has causes at the macro, or public, level, the meso, or parochial level and the micro, or private, level. Based on the review of the literature on formal controls, there is support for these interventions at the macro level. Based on the literature on collective efficacy, there is support for the utility of collective efficacy, which operates at the meso level. Social support, which acts primarily at the micro level, also has support in literature.

It is hypothesized that collective efficacy may be the most important of these links, providing a bridge between the formal controls and social support. A high level of collective efficacy may allow formal controls to be more effective in reducing intimate partner violence by providing community guardianship and social norms condemning intimate partner violence. Moreover, a high level of collective efficacy can improve the

effectiveness of social support by providing community level networks and resources for victims of intimate partner violence and by providing a means of accessing formal controls and the public level.

The research questions to be investigated in the study include the following: First, does collective efficacy improve the success of formal controls in reducing frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Second, does social support improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Third, does collective efficacy improve the usefulness of support networks in reducing the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? Three models will be created to answer each of these questions.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based in several theoretical premises, which are supported by the literature and theoretical foundations in feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory, and deterrence theory. The model presented is an interactive model that will suggest interventions at the macro, meso, and micro levels of analysis. The dependent variable is intimate partner violence (operationalized as frequency and severity of intimate partner violence). The independent variables for the study are formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support. The control variables are ethnicity, age, income, and relationship with the offender.

Formal controls (arrest, prosecution, and orders of protection) can precipitate a reduction in intimate partner violence at the macro or public level. Community context, specifically collective efficacy (containing the components of social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control), has been shown to have an effect on crime in general and intimate partner violence specifically at the meso or parochial level (Raghavan et al. 2006, Cunradi 2007, Button 2008, Zoltor and Runyan 2006, Browning 2002, Carmody and Williams 1987). Social support can also assist victims of intimate partner violence and prevent intimate partner violence at the micro or private level.

Based on the literature, there is good reason to believe that it is the combination of these variables and their effects at all three levels of analysis that will yield the greatest reductions in intimate partner violence. Can collective efficacy improve the effectiveness of formal controls in reducing intimate partner violence? This can be measured by creating an interaction variable (collective efficacy x formal controls). Further, can

collective efficacy improve the utility of social support in reducing intimate partner violence? This will be operationalized by creating an interaction variable (collective efficacy x social support). Finally, can social support aid the effectiveness of formal controls? A third interaction variable will be computed (formal controls x social support). This study will proceed based on these premises.

This quantitative study will statistically examine survey data regarding community characteristics and intimate partner violence. The results will be delivered in the form of statistical interpretations. This methodology section will begin with a discussion of the “Behind Closed Doors” study, from which I took the data used for this project. This will be followed by a discussion of the operationalization and coding of the dependent variable (intimate partner violence), and the operationalization and coding of the independent variables (formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support. Then the operationalization and coding of the control variables (ethnicity, age, income, and relationship with the offender) will be discussed. Finally creation of each of the three multivariate models will be described.

#### BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: THE DATA

The data set used for this project is taken from the key research study on collective efficacy and community capacity: “Behind Closed Doors” by Block and Skogan (2001). The research, funded by the National Institute of Justice, was conducted by Carolyn Rebecca Block of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, and Wesley Skogan of Northwestern University. The data set, “Community Crime Prevention and Intimate Violence in Chicago, 1995-1998,” was found on the ICPSR

website. The study was designed to ascertain “whether the context of the neighborhood in which an abused woman lives makes a difference in her ability to extricate herself from the violent situation” (Block and Skogan 2001:2). Longitudinal data from the Chicago Women’s Health Study (specifically those who had identified themselves as victims of intimate partner violence within the last year) were linked with each of the participant’s community level survey data from the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy Program using geocoding (matching each woman to her community by zipcode). The 210 participants were women identified in the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study (CWHRS) as experiencing intimate partner violence, having a Chicago address and having at least one follow up interview.

Two data sets were merged and used for the “Behind Closed Doors” study. The first was data gathered from two extensive interviews with 210 abused women from the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study between 1995 and 1998 (CWHRS). The second interview (follow up) took place an average of 410 days after the initial interview. The second set of data were community survey data from Chicago neighborhoods gathered for the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy Evaluation(CAPS) between 1993 and 2000 along with census and police data (Block and Skogan 2001).

The two data sets were merged by locating each CWHRS participant’s physical address using geocoding. The data for each woman were then linked to the community level data from her community gathered by CAPS. The data were organized into communities based on police beats, which the authors felt was a useful measure of a community (Block and Skogan 2001).

Block and Skogan (2001) measured what they termed collective efficacy and community capacity using data from the CAPS surveys. They identified three separate but related dimensions of collective efficacy and community capacity: informal social control, organizational involvement, and downtown connections.

Informal social controls were defined as being present when “individuals are a neighborhood resource for solving problems” (Block and Skogan 2001:24). Informal social controls were measured using three CAPS survey questions: Is it likely that their neighbors would intervene to stop teens from harassing an elderly person? Is it likely that neighbors would intervene to break up a fight outside your home? Is it likely that neighbors would intervene to stop children from writing graffiti on a building (Block and Skogan 2001).

Organizational involvement was defined as “the degree to which neighborhood organizations are a resource for solving problems” (Block and Skogan 2001:27). Organizational involvement was measured using four CAPS survey questions: Are you member of a neighborhood watch or citizen patrol? Are you a member of the PTA or local school council? Are you a member of a church or synagogue? Are you a member of a block club or community organization?

Downtown connections were defined as “the degree to which one can call on city-wide resources” (Block and Skogan 2001: 29). Downtown connections were measured using official voter turnout records and a CAPS survey question that asked how likely neighborhood residents would be to organize to keep the local police station open if it were scheduled to be closed.

Participants were initially interviewed, and then a follow-up interview was performed between six and nine months later. The outcome measure for the study was the reduction of violence at the second interview. The outcome was measured using three variables: the cessation of violence, the number of violence free days, and the severity of violence upon recurrence. Each of these was measured by an interview question posed to the 210 participants in their follow up interview (Block and Skogan 2001).

Block and Skogan (2001:40) controlled for several “measures of the woman’s situation” in order to determine what effect the community context had on intimate partner violence above and beyond other factors in the woman’s situation. The situational variables were: intimate partner violence in the last year, the abuser’s controlling behavior, harassment, or stalking in the past year, the woman’s informal support network, her material resources, her physical and mental health, pregnancy and childbirth during the study period, children, her household situation, her relationship with the abuser, the characteristics of the abuser (age, education, occupation, alcohol and drug use), and the victim’s personal characteristics (age, race, and marital status).

The findings were the same for each of the three outcome measures. As for the cessation of violence, “after the situational variables (described above) are accounted for, none of the Community Context variables is significant” (Block and Skogan 2001: 90). The same is true for number of violence free days and for the severity of violence on follow-up (Block and Skogan 2001). The authors concluded that, “abused women living in organized neighborhoods where collective efficacy is high and abused women living in other neighborhoods are equally likely to escape further violence and seek various kinds of help, other things being equal” (Block and Skogan 2001:2).



The current study differs from the work done by Block and Skogan (2001) in at least two ways. Most importantly, this study focuses on the *interaction* between formal controls, collective efficacy and social support. Does collective efficacy improve the effectiveness of formal controls on intimate partner violence? Based on the available literature, collective efficacy should be associated with improved effectiveness of formal controls, and reductions in intimate partner violence.

Another difference with the current study is the conceptualization of collective efficacy. This project views collective efficacy as being constructed from three elements: social cohesion (networking and working together), social capital (the resources to get something done), and informal social control (willingness to work together to solve community problems such as crime and intimate partner violence).

## OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

### *The Dependent Variable of Change in Intimate Partner Violence*

The outcome measures examined in this study are those also used by Block and Skogan (2001): change in intimate partner violence. Change in intimate partner violence from time one to time two was operationalized using two dependent variables: change in frequency of violence on follow up and change in severity of violence on follow up.

The participants in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study were interviewed twice. The time lapse between the two interviews was an average of 410 days. In the second interview, participants were asked whether there was intimate partner violence in the period between the two interviews. No abuse was coded as "0", and yes was coded as

“1” (ABUSE23). Then participants were asked the number of incidents that occurred in the follow up period (TOT23). In order to get a standard measure of annual incidents before and after the initial interview, the number of incidents on follow up was divided by the mean number of days since the initial interview, in order to get a daily rate of incidents. Then this was multiplied by 365 to get the annual rate of incidents of follow up. This rate was placed in a regression as the dependent variable, with the number of incidents in the year before the initial interview (TOTINC) as the independent variable. The residual was saved, and this is the change score, representing the change in frequency in intimate partner violence from time one to time two (freqchange). The residuals represent the frequency of intimate partner violence at time two that is not explained by the frequency of intimate partner violence at time one.

Severity of intimate partner violence was also measured in terms of change from time one to time two. In the second interview, participants were also asked to describe the most severe incident during the follow up period. This is the same scale that was used to measure severity of violence at time one. Incidents were coded as follows (SEVERE23):

- 2- No incident on follow up
- 1- Forced sex only - no injury, weapon, or threat
- 0- Threat to hit with a fist or anything that might hurt respondent
- 1- Slapping or pushing- no lasting pain
- 2- Punching, kicking, bruises, cuts and/or continuing pain
- 3- Beating up or choking- severe contusion, burns, broken bones
- 4- Threatened weapon use, head injury, lost consciousness, internal or permanent injury
- 5- Weapon use, wounds; attempted murder.

The change score for severity from time one to time two was computed by placing severity of violence on follow up in a regression as the dependent variable with severity

of violence at the initial interview (severechange). The residual was saved as the change score. The residuals represent the level of severity in the second time period that is not explained by the level of severity measured at time one.

## OPERATIONALIZATION OF FORMAL CONTROLS

Formal controls are important for several reasons. By creating and enforcing strong laws against intimate partner violence, some of the gendered inequality that exists in the legal system can be eliminated and a strong societal stance against intimate partner violence can be taken. Strong legal sanctions can also help communities to guard against intimate partner violence and express community norms that intimate partner violence is wrong. Formal controls can also provide negative definitions of intimate partner violence and negative consequences to the behavior, which can prevent social learning and intergenerational transfer of the behavior. Finally, formal controls can be a strong deterrent to intimate partner violence. Overall, formal controls have been found to reduce intimate partner violence in empirical tests.

Formal controls are operationalized using three dimensions of formal controls available to victims through the criminal justice system: arrest, prosecution, and orders of protection. These three formal controls represent the major responses by the criminal justice system explored in the literature review.

Arrest is operationalized through a question asked of participants in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study. Participants were asked at their initial interview whether they "contacted police after an incident in the past year." Responses were coded 1 for yes and 0 for no (M28POLRrc). This is the closest measure to arrest available in the data set

and so is used as a measure of formal control. Arrest for intimate partner violence is discretionary and was discretionary under Illinois law (725 ILCS 5/112A-30).

Prosecution of intimate partner violence was operationalized using the survey responses from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study. Participants were asked at their initial interview if they had to "go to court in the last year on a related matter."

Responses were coded 1 for yes and 0 for no (M37COURTrc). Going to court might typically involve criminal prosecution of a case against the defendant and is the closest measure to prosecution available in the data set.

Orders of protection are directly represented in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study. Participants were asked at their initial interview whether they obtained an order of protection and responses were coded: 1 for yes; 0 for no (M37COURTrc).

A final variable operationalizing the total use of formal controls among participants was computed by creating a new variable adding M28POLRrc + M38ORDERrc + M37COURTrc. Because the computed variable formal controls will be entered into an interaction equation, before the regression is run, formal controls will be centered by subtracting the mean of formal controls from formal controls (formalcontrolscen). The Chronbach's alpha for this scaled variable is .59.

#### OPERATIONALIZING COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

Collective efficacy emerges as an important factor in a discussion of reducing intimate partner violence since a community with a great deal of collective efficacy can garner city level resources for its residents. Collective efficacy can provide neighborhood level guardianship against intimate partner violence and establish neighborhood norms

that intimate partner violence is wrong. Neighborhood members and neighborhood organizations can also provide negative definitions of intimate partner violence and negative social consequences to the behavior, which can discourage imitation and intergenerational transfer of the behavior. Thus, collective efficacy can be a strong weapon against intimate partner violence.

In order to operationalize collective efficacy, several variables contained within the data set are used to indicate one of three dimensions of collective efficacy: social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control. These will then be collected together in one variable – collective efficacy – as collective efficacy has been empirically correlated with reductions in intimate partner violence.

The variables used to operationalize collective efficacy measure cohesion of neighborhood residents, their ability to take action and their willingness to take action to affect change in the community. The use of these measures of collective efficacy is supported by the literature on collective efficacy (Sampson, Radenbush, and Earles 1998), as well as the conceptualization of collective efficacy developed for this project.

### *Social Cohesion*

Social cohesion is operationalized using four CAPS survey questions regarding organizational involvement. Block and Skogan (2002: 27) note that “organizational involvement is an indicator of the degree to which neighborhood organizations are a resource for solving problems.” As such, organizational involvement indicates cohesiveness on the part of community members. This variable is based on four CAPS survey questions in which respondents are asked if they are involved in: a neighborhood

watch, PTA, church, community organizations. Each of these is coded 1 for yes and 0 for no. Block and Skogan's combination of these responses into one scale of organizational involvement (ORGINVOL) is used for this research.

### *Social Capital*

Social capital represents a neighborhood's clout since "neighborhoods with clout can mobilize outside resources to help their area" (Block and Skogan 2002:29). Social capital is operationalized using two variables: voter turnout and willingness to protest if the local police station were closing. The measure of voter turnout was the number of voters in the police beat in the 1995 general mayoral election, as a proportion of the population aged 18 or over, and is coded as a simple percentage (TURNOUT).

Willingness to intervene if the local police station were being closed was measured by CAPS Survey respondents' answers to the following question: "Suppose that because of budget cuts the police station closest to your home was going to be closed down by the city. How likely is it that neighborhood residents would organize to try to keep the police station open?" Responses were coded: 4:very likely, 3:likely, 2:unlikely, 1:very unlikely (STATION).

### *Informal Social Control*

"Informal social control is an indicator of the degree to which individuals in the neighborhood are willing to stick up for each other and solve problems"(Block and Skogan, 2002: 25). An informal social control scale is composed from data from the answers to three CAPS survey questions:

1. If some children were painting graffiti on a local building, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it?
2. If there was a fight in front of your house and someone was being beaten and threatened, how likely is it that your neighbors would break it up?
3. If a teenager were harassing an elderly person, how likely is it that your neighbors would tell them to stop it?

Responses for each question were: 4:very likely, 3:likely, 2:unlikely, 1:very unlikely. The data from all three questions were then combined into an informal social control scale and recoded by Block and Skogan with the following values assigned:

1. 1.92-2.74
2. 2.75-2.99
3. 3.00 – 3.24
4. 3.25-3.69 (INFSCONT).

Block and Skogan (2001) note that this summary variable is very similar to Sampson, Radenbush, and Earls' (1998) definition of collective efficacy. Thus, it seems appropriate to include it as a measure informal social control.

Based on the measures for the separate components of collective efficacy (social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control) described above, collective efficacy is measured by creating a new variable (COLLEFF) combining: TURNOUT + ORGINVOL +STATION +INFSCONT. Because there are several different variables here, each of the components of collective efficacy will be standardized (centered) before being combined into the variable. This will give each of the variables the same metric so that one does not exert more weight in the index than the others. The will also minimize concerns about skewness and kurtosis for each. The Chronbach's Alpha for the collective efficacy scale is .66.

## OPERATIONALIZING SOCIAL SUPPORT

Social support can influence the occurrence of intimate partner violence in several ways. Social support, through networks, can connect victims of intimate partner violence with governmental resources to legally fight intimate partner violence and prosecute their abusers, thereby helping to reduce intimate partner violence. Moreover, social support can be the tie that links victims of intimate partner violence to neighborhood resources and organizations that can assist them, thereby using and improving the collective efficacy of the neighborhood. By empowering women and giving them emotional support, social support can decrease the negative effects of structured gender inequality and the isolation associated with intimate partner violence. Through all the means mentioned above, social support can also act as a deterrent to intimate partner violence. The utility of social support is supported by feminist theory, social disorganization theory, and deterrence theory.

Support networks contain three main components: acceptance and support, tangible help in emergencies, and access to and knowledge of resources. Support networks represent the availability of resources but do not measure the level of use of these resources. The Social Support Network scale to be used in this project used was developed for the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study. Twelve survey questions regarding the three components were consolidated into one variable by Block and Skogan (2001). These questions are as follows:

Someone I'm close to makes me feel confident in myself.  
 There is someone I can talk to openly about anything.  
 There is someone I can talk to about problems in my relationship.  
 Someone I care about stands by me through good times and bad times.  
 Someone I know supports my decisions no matter what they are  
 I have someone to stay with in an emergency.



Someone will help me if I am in danger.  
 I have someone who will be there for me in times of trouble.  
 I have someone to borrow money from in an emergency.  
 It is difficult for me to ask for help because people don't always speak my language.  
 I would know where to tell a friend to get help if they were harmed or beaten.  
 I hesitate to tell anyone about my problems because I am worried that the authorities like DCFS or Immigration may find out. (TOTSUPRT)

Responses were coded 1 for yes, and 0 for no. Therefore, social support is measured on a scale from one to twelve. Because social support will be placed in an interaction equation, it will be centered before being entered; this will be accomplished by subtracting the mean of social support from social support (socialsupportcen). The Chronbach's Alpha for the social support scale is .89, thus the scale seems to be a satisfactory measure of social support.

#### CONTROL VARIABLES: OPERATIONALIZATION AND RATIONALE

Control variables are designed to make sure that other factors that may affect the dependant variable do not affect the outcome of the equation. Ethnicity, age, personal income of the victim, relationship to the offender, and neighborhood assault rates comprise the control variables used in this study. The following section describes the rationale for their inclusion and how they are operationalized.

##### *Ethnicity*

Intimate partner violence is correlated with ethnicity and race as minorities experience domestic violence at a higher rate than their white counterparts (Rennison and Planty 2003), regardless of income level. "Across all levels of neighborhood poverty the risk of police reported domestic violence was higher for Hispanic and black women than

for white women” (Pearlman, et al. 2003:44). Because minorities tend to be more politically and economically disadvantaged, women who are members of an ethnic minority may also lack the ability to seek help (Erez 2002). Further, domestic violence is a pervasive problem within many immigrant cultures in the United States as the immigrant status of these women may interfere with their access to resources to escape their abuse (Barak, 2007, Massey 2007).

Ethnicity was measured using two survey questions in the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study. The first question asks whether the respondent is African American or not. Responses were coded 1 for yes and 2 for no (BLACK). The second asks whether the respondent is Latina or not. Responses were coded 1 for yes and 2 for no (LATINA). Since both of these ethnicity variables were coded to the negative, I recoded each of them 1 for yes and 0 for no. The new variables were labeled Latinarc and Blackrc.

### *Age*

Age is correlated with intimate partner violence. Young women experience violence at higher rates than do older women. Women from ages 16-24 are most at risk as they are nearly three times more vulnerable to intimate partner violence, regardless of the woman’s marital status (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2008). This study uses data from a CWHRS survey question that records the respondent’s age at the initial interview (AGE).

### *Personal Income*

Economic status is significantly correlated with intimate partner violence. “Poverty and associated stress are key contributors to intimate partner violence. Although violence occurs in all socioeconomic groups, it is more frequent and severe in lower groups,” (Jewkes 2002:1424). Families with lower income report intimate partner violence at higher levels than do those with higher income levels. Rates of abusive violence to women with annual incomes below \$10,000 are more than 3.5 times those found in households with incomes over \$40,000 (Straus and Gelles 1990). Neighborhood poverty level is also a predictor of higher rates of intimate partner violence (Cunradi, et al. 2007). Fox and Benson (2006:419) found that “couples with IPV are more likely to present a vulnerable economic risk profile and to live in neighborhoods of high disadvantage.” Poor women who are battered also face a host of additional problems leaving the relationship and supporting themselves and their children (Massey 2007).

Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study respondents were asked how much personal income they had which they controlled. Responses were coded as follows:

- 0- None
- 1- Under \$5000
- 2- \$5000-\$9999
- 3- \$10,000-\$19,999
- 4- \$20,000-29,999
- 5- \$30,000-\$39,999
- 6- \$40,000 or more (PINCOM).

### *Relationship with Offender*

Women who are separated from their partner are at greater risk of intimate partner violence than those still married or never married (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2008).

“Among victims of violence committed by an intimate, the victimization rate of women separated from their husbands was about 3 times higher than that of divorced women and about 25 times that of married women” (Bachman and Saltzman 1995:1).

Relationship with the offender was measured in the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study with a question that asked the participants what their relationship with the offender was. Participants answered as follows :

1. Current husband
2. Ex- or former husband
3. Current common law husband
4. Ex- or former common law husband
5. Current boyfriend or fiancé
6. Ex- or former boyfriend or fiancé
7. Current same sex partner
8. Former same-sex partner
9. Current other (friend, lover, child’s father)
10. Former other (friend, lover)
11. Child’s father (ex- intimate partner) (REALNAME)

Responses were recoded 1 for married or 0 for not married, either legally or by common law, to their abuser.

## REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF 3 MODELS

This study uses multiple regression analysis of three models to ascertain the effects of collective efficacy, formal controls, social support in decreasing the frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. The regression analyses ran for each model allows assessment of the absolute and relative contributions of several independent variables on a dependent variable. The process takes into account that the independent variables are correlated. It allows examination of the overall fit of the model and a determination of which variables contribute to each model and with how much strength.

In other words, a regression analysis allows measurement of the unique contribution of each independent variable in explaining the dependent variable and the identification of variables that have statistically significant effects on the dependent variable. For each model, the overall fit of the model ( $r^2$ ) determines the overall variance explained in each measure of intimate partner violence at time two; that is, the amount of variance in frequency or severity of intimate partner violence explained by the model.

### *Research Question 1*

The first research question investigated was: Does collective efficacy improve the success of formal controls in reducing frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Specifically, it is hypothesized that a higher level of collective efficacy in a neighborhood will improve the effectiveness of formal controls on reducing frequency and severity of intimate partner violence.

The first model examined the interaction between formal controls and collective efficacy in their effect on intimate partner violence. A regression was run in which the change in the frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two (freqchange) is the dependent variable.

First, the control variables of ethnicity, age, personal income, and relationship with the offender were entered. Collective efficacy and formal controls were entered as independent variables. Finally, the interaction variable (formal controls multiplied by collective efficacy- interact1) was entered into the regression equation in order to measure the effect of the interaction between formal controls and collective efficacy on the change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two. Then the

same regression was performed with change in severity of intimate partner violence as the dependent variable (severechange) in order to measure the effect the interaction between formal controls and collective efficacy has on the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two.

Figure 1: Model 1A  
Formal Controls  
(Independent variable)

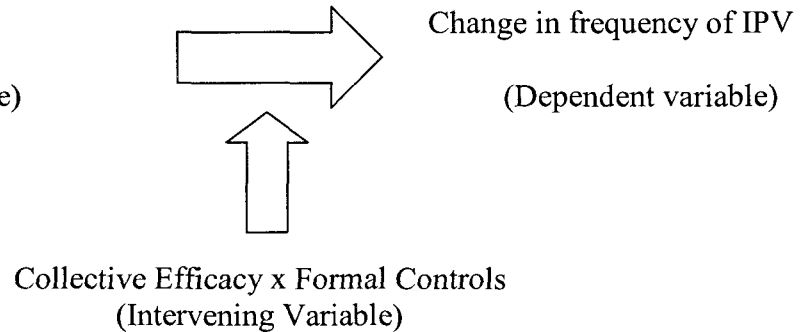
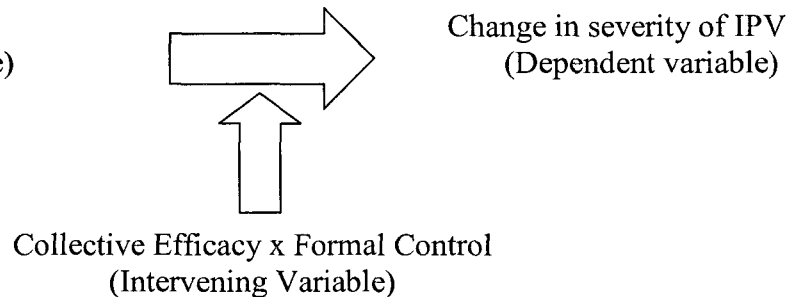


Figure 2: Model 1B  
Formal Controls  
(Independent variable)



### *Research Question 2*

The second research question is: Does social support improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Specifically, it was hypothesized that a higher level of social support will improve the efficacy of formal controls on reducing frequency and severity of intimate partner violence.

The second model examined the interaction between formal controls and social support in their effect on intimate partner violence. Regression estimates the change in

the frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two (freqchange). The control variables of ethnicity, age, relationship with the offender, and personal income were entered as control variables. Next, social support and formal controls were entered as independent variables. Finally, the interaction variable (formal controls multiplied by support network - interact 2) was entered into the regression equation to measure what, if any, effect the interaction between formal controls and social support has on these measures of intimate partner violence at time two. Then the same regression was run using change in severity of intimate partner violence as the dependent variable (severechange) to measure what effect, if any, the interaction between formal controls and support networks has on the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two.

Figure 3: Model 2A

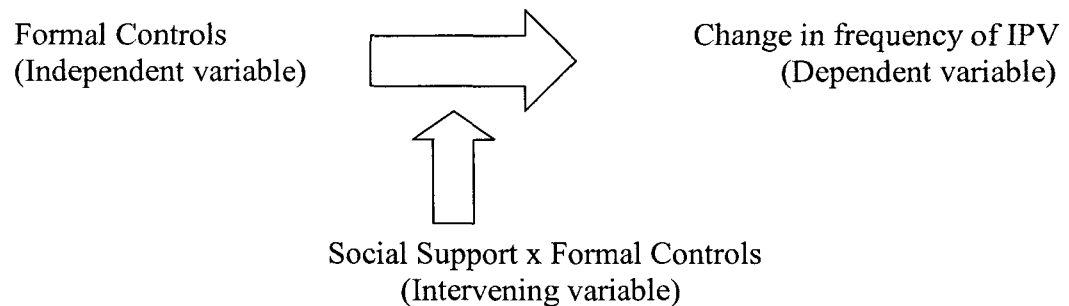
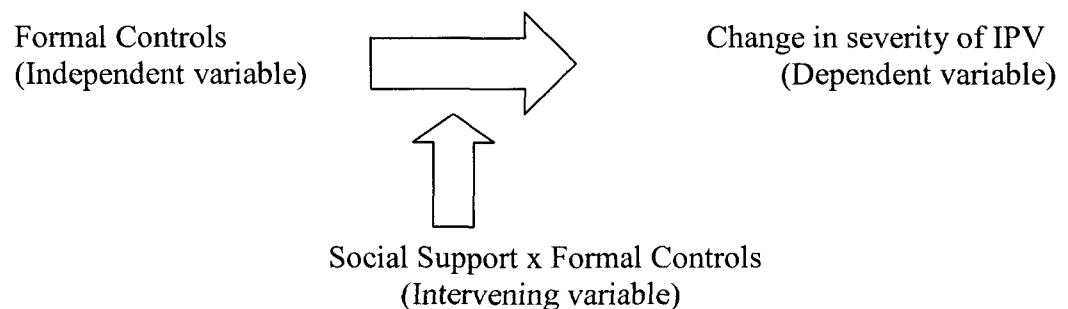


Figure 4: Model 2B



The hypothesis is that informal social support will improve the effectiveness of formal controls in reducing the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence.

*Research Question 3*

The third research question: Does collective efficacy improve the usefulness of support networks in reducing the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? Specifically, it was hypothesized that stronger social support will improve the effectiveness of collective efficacy on reducing intimate partner violence.

The third model examined the interaction between formal controls and social support in their impact on reducing frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. To measure this, a regression was estimated in which the change in the frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two serves as the dependent variable (freqchange). First, the control variables of ethnicity, age, relationship with the offender, and personal income were entered into the regression. Next, social support and formal controls were entered as independent variables. Finally, the interaction variable (formal controls multiplied by support network -- interact3) was entered into the regression equation to measure what, if any, effect the interaction between formal controls and social support has on the change in these measures of intimate partner violence from time one to time two.

The same regression was then estimated using change in severity of intimate partner violence as the dependent variable (severechange) in order to measure what effect, if any, the interaction between support networks and collective efficacy has on the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two.



Figure 5: Model 3A

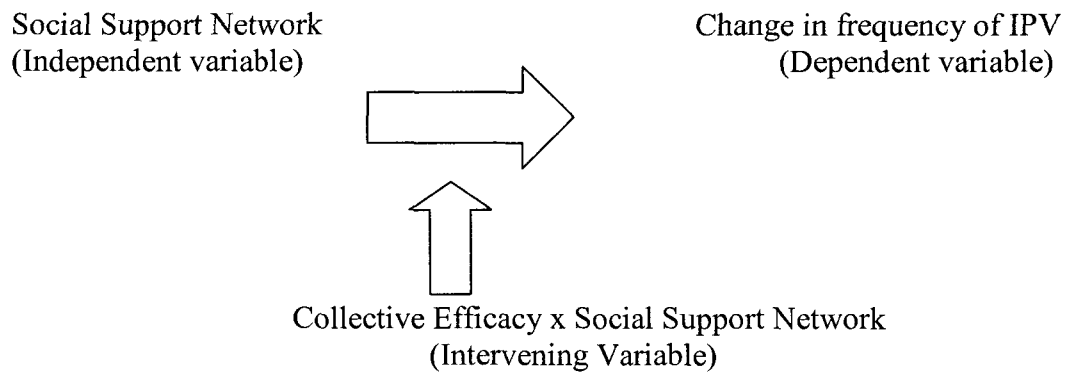
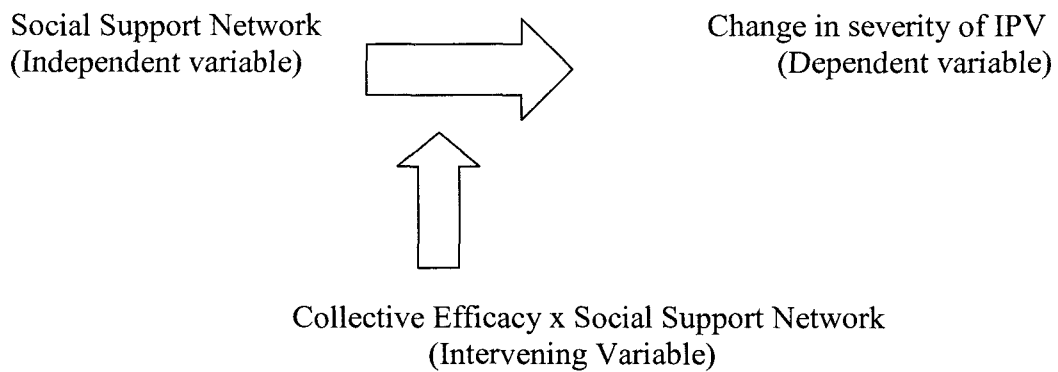


Figure 6: Model 3B



## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### INTRODUCTION

According to the literature, intimate partner violence has causes at the macro, meso, and micro levels. Therefore, theory suggests interventions to reduce the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence at all three levels. Further, feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory, and deterrence theory indicate that interventions at each of these levels may work best in combination with interventions from each of the other levels to reduce frequency and severity of intimate partner violence. In order to test these theoretical assumptions, three different models have been created and tested.

The first model measures the interaction of formal controls and collective efficacy and their impact on the reduction in frequency and severity of intimate partner violence. The second model examines the interaction between collective efficacy and social support and their ability to impact frequency and severity of intimate partner violence. The third model explores the interaction between social support and formal controls.

The first part of this chapter provides a description of the data. A discussion of the bivariate correlations between the major study variables then follows. Finally, results of the multivariate analysis for each of the three models are reported.

#### DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of all data for the 219 participants. All participants in the study had experienced intimate partner violence in the year before the

initial interview, so occurrence of intimate partner violence at time 1 was 100%. The average number of incidents in the year before the initial interview was 11. At the follow up interview, 57% of the respondents reported an incident of violence during the follow up period, which was an average of 410 days. Among those who did experience violence, the severity of that abuse dropped slightly from the first interview to the second (a mean severity score of 2.54 out of 5 at the first interview and a mean score of 2.44 at the second interview.)

Among participants, the use of formal controls (operationalized by the use of arrest, prosecution and orders of protection) was high (a mean score of 5.4 out of 6.0). In contrast, the employment of measures of collective efficacy (operationalized as social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control) were contradictory. While voter turnout in the communities represented by the sample was low (28%), the willingness of citizens in participants' neighborhoods to intervene if the police station (the measure of social capital) was closing was high (a mean score of 3.2 out of 4). The communities represented by women in the sample reported moderate levels (3.02 out of 4) of informal social control in terms of their neighbor's willingness to respond to intervene in problems such as graffiti, fighting and harassment. Involvement in neighborhood organizations, the measure of social cohesion, was very low ( a mean of .836 out of 4). The combination of these four indicators creates the new variable of collective efficacy. Most of the participants also scored moderate high in social support, operationalized as access to and knowledge of resources, tangible help in emergencies, and acceptance and support. The mean score for social support was of 8.4 out of 12 as measured by the social support scale.

A majority of participants in the study were African American (64.8%). 27% of participants were Latina and 6.8% of respondents self reported as other ethnicities. The women in the sample were between ages 18 and 62, with the average age being just under 30 years old. Study participants had an average income of \$7,500 annually that they controlled. Less than one-third of women in the sample were married to their abusers.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Severity (Initial Interview)	210	1	5	2.54	1.28
Frequency (Initial Interview)	210	1	172	11.01	23.68
Follow up Abuse	210	0	1	.57	.49
Severity on Follow up	210	-2	5	.54	2.41
Frequency on Follow up	209	0	112	5.31	12.68
Formal Controls	210	.00	3.00	.55	.80
Voter Turnout	210	5.95	74.28	28.09	11.16
Intervene if Station Closing	210	1.80	3.77	3.23	.26
Organizational Involvement	210	.00	1.82	.83	.34
Informal Social Control	210	1.92	3.69	3.02	.27
Social Support	210	0	12	8.40	3.24
Latina	210	.00	1.00	.27	.44
Black	210	.00	1.00	.64	.47
Age	210	18	62	29.70	8.70
Income	208	0	6	1.56	1.19
Relationship with offender	210	.00	1.00	.29	.45

## BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

Table 2 presents the results of bivariate analysis. First, the correlations between the dependent variable of intimate partner violence and the dependent variables of formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support will be reported. Then the relationships

among the independent variables will be reported. Finally, the relationships between the control variables and the dependent and independent variables will be explained.

Among the independent variables, one variable was found to have a significant correlation with a change in frequency of intimate partner violence. Collective efficacy was correlated with a significant but small increase in frequency of intimate partner violence (.144), though participants with greater collective efficacy did not experience a significant change in intimate partner violence. Women in the study who used formal controls did not see a significant change in either frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. Participants with higher social support had moderate but significant reductions in severity of intimate partner violence (-.175), though social support was not significantly correlated with change in frequency of intimate partner violence. Most interestingly, social support was moderately but significantly correlated with collective efficacy (.169) on the bivariate level of analysis.

Two of the control variables were correlated with change in frequency of intimate partner violence in the study data. Latina participants experienced a small increase in frequency of intimate partner violence, (.145). Being married was also correlated with a decrease in frequency of intimate partner violence among this sample (-.160).

Several of the control variables were correlated with the independent variables of formal controls, collective efficacy, and social support. Latinas were significantly but slightly less likely to use formal controls than non-Latinas (-.161), while African American women were significantly but slightly more likely than other women in the sample to report using formal controls (.148).

Latina participants reported significant and moderately lower levels of collective efficacy than their non-Latina counterparts (-.392), while African American participants reported significantly and moderately higher levels of collective efficacy than their non-African American counterparts (.336). An increase in age was associated with a significant and slight reduction in reported collective efficacy (-.218). Moreover, being married to the abusers was correlated with a significant increase in reported collective efficacy (.161).

Latina women in the study reported significantly lower levels of social support than other women in the study (-.329). African-American women reported significantly higher levels of social support than non African-American women did (.315). Married women in the group reported significantly lower levels of social support than non-married women (.259).

Several of the study's control variables (ethnicity, age, income and relationship with the offenders) were correlated with each other in the bivariate analysis. Latina women were significantly less likely to be married to their abuser than non-Latina women in the sample (-.529), while African American women were more likely to be married to their abuser (.452). Finally, an increase in age was correlated with an increase in income among participants.

Table 2 Bivariate Correlations

	Change in Frequency of IPV	Change in Severity of IPV	Formal Controls	Collective Efficacy	Social Support	Latina	Black	Age	Income	Relationship
Change in Frequency of IPV	1.00	.361	-.077	.144	-.114	.145	.114	.008	-.107	-.160*
Change in Severity of IPV	.361**	1.00	.076	.029	-.175*	-.017	.054	.054	-.052	.029
Formal Controls	-.077	.076	1.00	-.001	.087	-.161*	.148*	-.005	.009	.046
Collective Efficacy	.144*	.029	-.001	1.00	.169*	-.392**	.336**	.218**	-.049	.161*
Social Support	-.114	-.175*	.087	.169*	1.00	-.329**	.315**	-.119	-.022	.259**
Latina	.145*	-.017	-.161*	-.392**	-.329**	1.00	-.837**	-.024	-.086	-.529**
African-American	-.114	.054	.148*	.336**	.315**	-.837**	1.00	-.009	-.030	-.452**
Age	.008	.054	-.005	-.218**	-.119	-.024	-.009	1.00	.171	-.098
Income	-.107	-.052	.009	-.049	.022	-.086	-.030	.171*	1.00	.087
Relationship	-.160*	.029	.046	.161*	.259**	-.529**	.452**	.098	.087	1.00

\*\*Correlation is significant at the .01 level \*Correlation is significant at the .05 level

## MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

### *Model 1*

The first research question to be investigated was: Does collective efficacy improve the success of formal controls in reducing frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Linear regression was employed to test the combined and comparative effects of formal controls, collective efficacy, ethnicity (Latina and African-American compared to others), age, income, and relationship with the offender on change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two, and get an overall fit for the model.

Table 3 presents the results of regression analysis of Model 1A (formal controls, collective efficacy, the interaction of collective efficacy and formal control, being Latina, being African-American, age income, and relationship with the offender). The model explains 8% of the change in frequency in intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $r^2 = .08$ ). The measures of change in this and successive tables are the unstandardized regression coefficients ( $b$ 's). These variables indicate the level of change in intimate partner violence for a given unit change in independent variables.

One of the variables in model 1A was significant in predicting change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $b = .08$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Collective efficacy was significant in predicting a change in frequency in intimate partner violence. A unit increase in the victim's collective efficacy yielded a .08 point increase in frequency of intimate partner violence ( $b = .08$ ). Most notably, there was no interaction between formal controls and collective efficacy, indicating that collective



efficacy did not improve the effectiveness of formal controls in reducing the frequency of intimate partner violence. A chart of this regression appears below in Table 3.

Table 3 Model 1A Regression  
Effects of Formal Controls and Collective Efficacy on Frequency of IPV

Model 1A	Control Variables (b)	Standard Error	Independent variables (b)	Standard Error	Interaction (b)	Standard Error
Latina	.166	.303	.406	.309	.432	.311
Black	-.011	.267	-.005	.262	.001	.262
Age	.008	.008	.010	.009	.008	.009
Income	-.078	.060	-.070	.059	-.071	.059
Relationship	-.049	.037	-.039	.037	-.038	.037
Formal Controls	-----	-----	-.043	.087	-.048	.087
Collective Efficacy	-----	-----	.083**	.026	.087**	.027
Formal Controls x Collective Efficacy	-----	-----	-----	-----	-.017	.023

\*Indicates significance at .01 \*\*Indicates significance at .01  
R square for this model is .08

Model 1B (formal controls, collective efficacy, the interaction of formal controls and collective efficacy, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, and relationship with the offender) explains 3% of the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two (r square = .03).

None of the variables in model 1B was significant in predicting the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $p < .05$ ). Most importantly, collective efficacy had no significant interaction with formal controls. This indicates that collective efficacy did not improve the effectiveness of formal controls in

reducing the severity of intimate partner violence. A chart of this regression appears below in Table 4.

Table 4 Model 1B Regression  
Effects of Formal Controls and Collective Efficacy on Severity of IPV

Model 1B	Control Variables (b)	Standard Error	Independent variables (b)	Standard Error	Interaction (b)	Standard Error
Latina	.216	.306	.297	.319	.246	.320
Black	.250	.271	.243	.272	.232	.271
Age	.008	.008	.010	.009	.008	.009
Income	-.047	.061	-.045	.061	-.043	.061
Relationship	.017	.037	.022	.038	.021	.038
Formal Controls	-----	-----	.099	.090	.110	.090
Collective Efficacy	-----	-----	.017	.027	.008	.028
Formal Controls x Collective efficacy	-----	-----	-----	-----	.033	.024

\*Indicates significance at .05 \*\*Indicates significance at .01  
R square for this model is .03

### *Model 2*

The second research question to be answered is: Does social support improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? In order to view the combined and comparative effects of formal controls, social support, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, and relationship with the offender on change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two, and to get an overall fit for the model, linear regression was used.

Model 2A (formal controls, social support, the interaction of formal controls and informal social support, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, and relationship with the offender) explains 4% of the change in frequency in intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $r^2 = .04$ ).

In model 2A, none of the variables were significant in predicting the change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $p < .05$ ). Neither formal controls nor social support had a significant effect on the change in frequency in intimate partner violence. Moreover, the interaction between formal controls and social support had no effect on intimate partner violence, indicating that social support did not aid formal controls in reducing the frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two. See Table 5 below.

Table 5 Model 2A Regression  
Effects of Formal Controls and Social Support on Frequency of IPV

Model 2A	Control Variables (b)	Standard Error	Independent variables (b)	Standard Error	Interaction (b)	Standard Error
Latina	.166	.303	.126	.306	.126	.306
Black	-.011	.267	.010	.269	.011	.269
Age	.001	.008	.000	.008	.000	.008
Income	-.078	.060	-.077	.060	-.076	.061
Relationship	-.049	.037	-.047	.038	-.046	.038
Formal Controls	-----	-----	-.064	.088	-.067	.090
Social Support	-----	-----	-.019	.023	-.019	.023
Formal Controls x Social Support	-----	-----	-----	-----	.005	.030

\*Indicates significance at .05 \*\*Indicates significance at .01  
R square for this model is .04

Model 2B (formal controls, social support, the interaction between formal controls and informal support, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, and relationship with the offender explains 7% of the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $r^2 = .07$ ).

In model 2B, only one of the variables, social support was significant in predicting the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $b = -.06, p < .01$ ). A unit increase in social support was associated with a .06 point decrease in severity of intimate partner violence. Significantly, neither formal controls did not have a significant effect on the change in severity in intimate partner violence. Further, there was no interaction between formal controls and social support, indicating that social support did not aid formal controls in reducing the severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two. The regression chart appears in Table 6 below.

Table 6 Model 2B Regression  
Effects of Formal Controls and Social Support on Severity of IPV

Model 2B	Control Variables (b)	Standard Error	Independent variables (b)	Standard Error	Interaction (b)	Standard Error
Latina	.216	.306	.167	.303	.165	.303
Black	.250	.271	.297	.267	.301	.268
Age	.008	.008	.005	.008	.005	.008
Income	-.047	.061	-.043	.060	-.038	.061
Relationship	.017	.037	.029	.037	.032	.038
Formal Controls	-----	-----	.104	.088	.096	.089
Social Support	-----	-----	-.065**	.023	-.064**	.023
Interaction	-----	-----	-----	-----	-.017	.030

\*Indicates significance at .05 \*\*Indicates significance at .01  
R square for this model is .07

*Model 3*

The third research question to be answered was: Does collective efficacy improve the usefulness of support networks in reducing the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? In order to view the combined and comparative effects of formal controls, social support, being Latina, being African-American, age, income and relationship with the offender on change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two, and to get an overall fit for the model, linear regression was used.

Model 3A (collective efficacy, social support, the interaction of social support and collective efficacy, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, relationship with the offender) explains 9 % of the change in frequency in intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $r^2 = .09$ ).

In model 3A, one of the variables, collective efficacy, was significant in predicting the change in frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two ( $b = .08$ ,  $p < .05$ ). A unit increase in collective efficacy yielded a .08 point increase in frequency of intimate partner violence ( $b = .08$ ). In addition, the interaction between social support and formal controls was not significant, indicating that social support did not improve the utility of collective efficacy in reducing the frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two. The chart for this regression is presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7 Model3A Regression  
Effects of Collective Efficacy and Social Support on Frequency of IPV

Model 3A	Control Variables (b)	Standard Error	Independent variables (b)	Standard Error	Interaction (b)	Standard Error
Latina	.166	.303	.399	.307	.405	.309
Black	-.011	.267	.010	.262	.009	.263
Age	.001	.008	.007	.008	.007	.008
Income	-.078	.060	-.068	.059	-.069	.059
Relationship	-.049	.037	-.034	.037	-.035	.037
Social Support	-----	-----	-.022	.022	-.023	.023
Collective Efficacy	-----	-----	.084**	.026	.086**	.026
Social Support x Collective Efficacy	-----	-----	-----	-----	-.002	.008

\*Indicates significance at .05 \*\*Indicates significance at .01  
R square for this model is .09

In order to view the combined and comparative effects of collective efficacy, social support, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, and relationship with the offender on change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two, and to get an overall fit for the model, linear regression was used.

Model 3B (collective efficacy, social support, the interaction of social support and collective efficacy, being Latina, being African-American, age, income, and relationship with the offender) explains 5% of the change in severity in intimate partner violence from time one to time two (r square = .05).

In model 3B, social support was significant in predicting the change in severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two (b= -.06, p< .01). A unit increase in social support was associated with a .06 point decrease in severity of intimate partner

violence. More importantly, the interaction between social support and collective efficacy was not significant, indicating that social support did not improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two.

The regression chart is presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8 Model3B Regression  
Effects of Social Support and Collective Efficacy on Severity of IPV

Model 3B	Control Variables (b)	Standard Error	Independent variables (b)	Standard Error	Interaction (b)	Standard Error
Latina	.216	.306	.188	.313	.181	.315
Black	.250	.271	.306	.268	.307	.269
Age	.008	.008	.007	.008	.007	.008
Income	-.047	.061	-.041	.060	-.040	.060
Relationship	.017	.037	.029	.037	.029	.037
Social Support	-----	-----	-.064**	.023	-.063**	.023
Collective Efficacy	-----	-----	.016	.026	.015	.027
Interaction	-----	-----	-----	-----	.002	.008

\*Indicates significance at .05 \*\*Indicates significance at .01

R square for this model is .05

## CHAPTER 5

### INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND CONCLUSIONS

Intimate partner violence is a serious problem for the criminal justice system, with great physical and financial costs, particularly for women. The frequency and severity of intimate partner violence are influenced by many factors. These factors have their theoretical explanations in feminist theory, social disorganization theory, social learning theory, and deterrence theories. These theories suggest causes of intimate partner violence at the macro, meso and micro levels. Interventions that flow from the theoretical literature include formal controls (characterized by arrest, prosecution, and orders of protection), collective efficacy (comprised of social cohesion, social capital and informal social control) and social support (comprised of acceptance and support, tangible help in emergencies, and access to and knowledge of resources). These theoretical underpinnings and literature surrounding the interventions surrounding the indicated interventions were elucidated in Chapter 2.

Three research questions were formulated based on the literature: Does collective efficacy improve the success of formal controls in reducing frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Does social support improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? Does collective efficacy improve the usefulness of support networks in reducing the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? Variables were operationalized and regression models to test these models were described in Chapter 3. The results of the regression analyses were reported in Chapter 4. The following sections will interpret those results. Finally, limitations and suggestions for future research and policy will be discussed.



## INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The first model tests the question: Does collective efficacy improve the effectiveness of formal controls on the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? Based on the lack of an interaction effect between formal controls and collective efficacy in either model 1A or 1B, the answer for this data set is no. However, collective efficacy was actually found to predict a slight increase in frequency in intimate partner violence. This finding is certainly unexpected and is contrary to what is suggested by the literature.

This finding could be explained by increased reporting. In areas with greater collective efficacy, more victims of intimate partner violence may be willing to report that they are victims of intimate partner violence, since they have greater access to community support and greater social support. Browning (2002:833) found that “collective efficacy increases the likelihood that women will disclose conflict in their relationships to various potential sources of support.” This is a good thing because more frequent reporting may mean that abuse that was formerly hidden is now exposed, so victims can access resources, whether they are formal controls, community resources, or social support. This finding was supported by the positive bivariate correlation between collective efficacy and social support in this data.

This finding may also be explained through the power of collective efficacy to convey social norms that are either tolerant or intolerant of intimate partner violence. It is possible for a community to have high levels of social cohesion, social capital, and informal social control and have norms that would tolerate intimate partner violence. “Collective efficacy exerts a more powerful regulatory effect on nonlethal violence in

neighborhoods where tolerance of intimate partner violence is low,” (Browning 2002: 833). If neighborhood norms do not condemn intimate partner violence due to a macho or patriarchal culture, high collective efficacy may not translate into lower frequency of intimate partner violence.

Furthermore, all participants in this study were victims of intimate partner violence within one year of their initial interview. If the study contained victims and nonvictims, there may have been a higher range of collective efficacy and perhaps a significant difference in collective efficacy for victims versus nonvictims. Thus, an examination of communities may determine that collective efficacy does act to reduce the incidence of IPV. Neighborhoods with higher collective efficacy may be more likely to prevent IPV from occurring.

The second research question explored was: Does social support improve the utility of formal controls in reducing the frequency and/ or severity of intimate partner violence? There were no interaction effects in model 2A or 2B, so the hypothesis that social support would improve the utility of formal controls was not supported. However, individually, social support predicted a reduction in severity (though not frequency) of intimate partner violence. These findings are important because they once again support the literature (Maxwell 2002, Bender et al. 2003) and indicate that there is hope for reducing intimate partner violence through social support (acceptance and support, tangible help in emergencies, and access to and knowledge of resources). Once again, social support may be associated with increased reporting of intimate partner violence, which may explain why there is not a reduction in frequency of intimate partner violence.

The final research question was: Does collective efficacy improve the usefulness of support networks in reducing the frequency and/or severity of intimate partner violence? In the third model, collective efficacy did not interact with social support to predict a change in frequency or severity of intimate partner violence from time one to time two. However, as in the other models, collective efficacy did predict a small increase frequency of intimate partner violence and social support was associated with a decrease in severity of intimate partner violence. As in the other models, the increase frequency of intimate partner violence associated with collective efficacy is likely due to increased comfort with reporting intimate partner violence.

## LIMITATIONS

There are at least two limitations to this study. The first limitation is geographic. The participants in the study were limited to residents of Chicago. Although 128 of Chicago's 278 police beats are represented in the data set, Chicago is the only city represented. This calls into question whether or not these results can be generalized to the larger population. The conclusions from this data set could be strengthened by replicating the study in other locations in other areas of the country as well as in communities in cities of various sizes.

The second limitation of the study is there are no participants in the study who did not report intimate partner violence at their initial interview. Thus, this study could only compare severity and frequency of intimate partner violence from time one to time two. The study could not compare collective efficacy scores for victims versus non-victims of intimate partner violence. The conclusions from this study could be strengthened by a

study that compared collective efficacy scores for victims versus non-victims of intimate partner violence.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research in the area on community impact on intimate partner violence is needed and warranted. Based on the well-established ability of community context to impact crime rates, the connection between intimate partner violence and communities is a potential source of important information. Specifically, similar research to this study, combining data on collective efficacy and intimate partner violence should be replicated in a number of different communities to determine if the findings in Chicago can be generalized to the larger population. Further, research should also be performed concerning the ability of collective efficacy to improve the utility of formal traditional controls. Studies that include victims of intimate partner violence as well as non-victims are needed so that the relative strength of collective efficacy of victims and non-victims can be compared are also needed. Studies with an experimental design in which community based programs designed to reduce intimate partner violence were introduced could also be helpful. This could be especially helpful in studying communities with large Latina and minority populations.

Perhaps most importantly, more study is needed on the effects of community level norms concerning intimate partner violence and the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence. If a community has high collective efficacy, but the norms of that community do not condemn intimate partner violence, then the collective efficacy of that neighborhood could not be expected to reduce frequency or severity of intimate partner

violence. Studies of community norms accepting or unaccepting of intimate partner violence are important to discover the strength of this link.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Criminal justice policies aimed at the reduction of intimate partner violence should certainly not abandon the traditional policies of arrest and prosecution of offenders and orders of protection. These are crucial tools needed to assist victims of domestic violence. This study shows that formal controls are useful in reducing severity of intimate partner violence.

However, formal controls have not been completely successful in reducing intimate partner violence, and should be augmented by policies that focus on community programs. Community programs should be implemented that use networks and resources present in the community to assist victims of intimate partner violence. Based on the findings of this study, one important aspect of community programs is not just to increase collective efficacy, but to encourage community norms that are intolerant of intimate partner violence. Education about social condemnation of intimate partner violence as well as education about community resources to assist victims of intimate partner violence is critical. Changing social attitudes and norms about intimate partner violence could also be supported by advertising campaigns targeting potential offenders condemning the behavior, similar to anti-drug campaigns.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this data set, collective efficacy was not correlated with a reduction in frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. In fact, collective efficacy was associated with a slight increase in frequency (but not severity) of intimate partner violence. Moreover, collective efficacy did not improve the ability of formal controls to reduce the frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. Formal controls were not associated with a reduction in frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. Social support was associated with a reduction in severity (though not frequency) of intimate partner violence. However, formal controls did not improve the ability of social support to reduce frequency or severity of intimate partner violence. Finally, collective efficacy did not affect the ability of social support to reduce frequency or severity of intimate partner violence.

Although collective efficacy did not reduce the frequency or severity of intimate partner violence this data set, the literature gives us a great deal of hope for communities to impact intimate partner violence. Collective efficacy and its components have been linked to reductions in intimate partner violence in other studies discussed in the literature review. An increase in social capital is associated with a reduction in intimate partner violence and child abuse (Zoltor and Runyan 2006). At least one study reports that greater collective efficacy leads to lower intimate partner violence and greater reporting of intimate partner violence (Browning 2002). Moreover, the fear of social condemnation is very powerful and may reduce intimate partner violence (Carmody and Williams 1987).

The literature also suggests that collective efficacy can be used to augment traditional formal controls. Arrest policies may work better with other informal social controls in place (Gelles 1996). Community action can augment the effectiveness of orders of protection (Logan et al 2006, Spooner 2009). The future in this area may be a cooperation between community groups and the criminal justice system, which will likely result in the greatest reductions in intimate partner violence.

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate, Old Dominion University, Criminology and Criminal Justice.  
 J.D. Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law. Campbell University, May 1999.  
 M.E. Campbell University, May 1996. Concentration in Social Science.  
 B.S. Campbell University, May 1993. Major in Social Science/History.

CURRENT POSITION

Interim Director of Criminal Justice, Criminal Justice Instructor, Campbell University.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Criminal Justice Professor, Campbell University.  
 Domestic Violence Attorney, Cumberland County Legal Aid.  
 Moore County Child Support Attorney.  
 Law Clerk, East Central Community Legal Services.  
 Sixth Grade Teacher, Dunn Middle School.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Violence Against Women, Domestic Violence and Restraining Orders, Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure, Online Education

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences	Southern Criminal Justice Association
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PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

Member of the Bar, U.S. District Court for the Middle District of NC, March 23, 2000.  
 Member of the North Carolina State Bar, September 24, 1999. Bar number 26620.  
 North Carolina Teaching Certification (levels A and G) in grades 6-9 and grades 9-12.

PUBLICATIONS

Work in progress: "Rape in the Democratic Republic of Congo: State Crime and Crimes Against Humanity."

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Oxford Round Table – Conference on Criminal Law, Oxford University, March 25-31, 2006: Discussion Panel Leader.  
 "Collective Efficacy and Intimate Partner Violence". National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Conference. Anaheim, CA, August 2, 2010.