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Exploring the Difference Between Male and Female Intimate Partner Homicides

Revisiting the Concept of Situated Transactions

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This research examines the role of situational factors in differentiating between male- and female-perpetrated intimate partner homicide. Applying concepts from Luckenbill's theory of homicide as a situated transaction, an intimate partner homicide is seen as an amorphous event where the role of offender and victim emerge during the transaction. When adopting this framework, it is possible to treat the sex of the offender as a dependent variable and examine situational factors that may differentiate between male and female intimate partner homicide offenders. The data used in this analysis come from the lethal sample of the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, 1995 to 1998. These data consist of records for 85 heterosexual intimate homicide incidents that occurred in Chicago in 1995 and 1996. Logistic regression analyses indicate that the presence of a prehomicide injury and whether the offender used a knife differentiate between male and female offenders. Implications for future research are discussed.

Keywords: intimate partner homicide; situated transaction; gender and homicide

T he differences between male and female criminal involvement are well documented throughout criminological research. Men account for a disproportionate amount of the total crime in the United States. The level of disproportionality increases as crime seriousness increases. This is particularly true of homicide. Viewed as a whole, the number of known female-perpetrated homicide incidents in 2003 (1,123) is substantially lower than the number of male-perpetrated homicides (10,218) (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004).[1] It would seem to appear that homicide is almost exclusively a male phenomenon. This initial conclusion is misleading, however, as aggregating different types of "homicide syndromes" obscures

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important variation within the different types of homicide (Block & Christakos, 1995a). This is especially true of intimate homicide offending, where there is significantly less gender disparity (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004). In contrast to research pointing to small female involvement in serious criminal activity, intimate homicide clearly stands out as an exception.

The gender ratio of this type of homicide illustrates its unique nature when compared to other forms of homicide. Numerous studies have explored the causes and trends in intimate partner homicide at the macrosocial level (e.g., Block & Christakos, 1995b; Dugan, Nagin, & Rosenfeld, 1999, 2003; Frye, Hosein, Waltermaurer, Blaney, & Wilt, 2005; Gallup-Black, 2004, 2005; Gauthier & Bankston, 1997; Mercy & Saltzman, 1989; Paulsen & Brewer, 2000; Smith, Moracco, & Butts, 1998; Titterington & Harper, 2006; Wells & DeLeon-Granados, 2004; Wilson & Daly, 1992). Although these studies have contributed to the understanding of intimate partner homicide, important theoretical questions remain unaddressed. Specifically, there is a paucity of studies that examine the differences between male and female intimate homicide offending at the situational level.

To assess the differences between male and female intimate partner homicides, it is necessary to examine intimate homicide at the incident level of analysis. Luckenbill's (1977) research on homicide as a "situated transaction" enables researchers to view an intimate partner homicide as an amorphous event that unfolds during the interaction between two intimate partners. As such, the roles of offender and victim may be ill-defined at the initiation of the transaction in question. When adopting this viewpoint, it is possible to consider that the situational and relational variables may serve to guide one partner into the role of offender and the other into the role of victim. If there are distinguishing characteristics between the etiology of female-perpetrated intimate homicide and male-perpetrated homicide, there should be situational and relational factors specifically pertaining to the nature of the incident that would predict female versus male offending.

Literature Review

Intimate partner homicide refers to homicide that occurs between two individuals in an intimate relationship. This relationship obviously includes spousal relationships; however, nonmarital cohabitation or common law marriages, divorced couples, and dating relationship are often included as well (e.g., Block & Christakos, 1995a; Gauthier & Bankston, 1997). Although intimate partner homicides may appear on the surface to be similar to other types of lethal events, on closer examination, substantial differences emerge. After disaggregating homicides into "syndromes" or categories of cases that share similarity based on motivation, relationship, situation, and other variables, the uniqueness of intimate partner homicide becomes apparent (Block & Christakos, 1995a). Although most homicide tends to be a male-dominated activity, for

intimate partner homicide, the ratio of male offenders to female offenders is much closer to parity as there are approximately 6 female offenders for every 10 male offenders (Gauthier & Bankston, 1997). The differences in the gender ratio of this type of homicide suggest that there may be a distinct underlying etiology separating it from other types of homicide.

A substantial portion of the research on intimate partner homicide has attempted to disentangle the macrosocial influences on its rate and distribution. Some of the studies have been conducted to describe and explain the trends in intimate partner homicide (Block & Christakos, 1995b; Dugan et al., 1999; Gallup-Black, 2004, 2005; Riedel & Best, 1998; Rosenfeld, 1997; Wells & DeLeon-Granados, 2004). These studies have revealed that the rate of intimate partner homicide has been decreasing in recent years. Furthermore, it appears that the rate of marital intimate partner homicide is decreasing, whereas the rate of nonmarital intimate partner homicide is increasing (Dugan et al., 1999; Rosenfeld, 1997).

Other studies have taken a cross-national approach to understanding intimate partner homicide (Gartner, 1990; Gartner, Baker, & Pampel, 1990; Gartner & McCarthy, 1991; Wilson & Daly, 1992). These studies generally reveal that international trends in intimate partner homicide are influenced by a number of macrosocial variables, including income inequality and economic deprivation (Gartner, 1990), female labor force participation and the liberation of women from the household (Gartner, 1990; Gartner et al., 1990), and rates of marriage and cohabitation (Wilson & Daly, 1992). Although these studies have greatly contributed to the understanding of the macrosocial influences on intimate partner homicide, they do not address the situational characteristics of these incidents.

Wolfgang's (1958) classic study of homicide in Philadelphia was one of the first empirical examinations of homicide at the event level. In this study, Wolfgang introduced the concept of victim precipitation. According to Wolfgang, victim precipitation refers to situations where the victim is "the first to commence the interplay of resort to physical violence" (p. 252). Because females disproportionately kill partners that chronically abuse them, the concept of victim precipitation has been used extensively in research on female homicide offending (Goetting, 1987). In regard to intimate partner homicide, Wolfgang (1958, p. 213) found that although the ratio of husband-to-wife killings was nearly even, these relationships accounted for 41% of all women homicide victims. Furthermore, when a married female committed homicide, overwhelmingly the victim was the husband. Wolfgang (1958, p. 260) also discovered that significantly more husbands are homicide victims than wives in a homicide that involved victim precipitation.

Many subsequent studies have replicated Wolfgang's (1958) findings. Mann (1998) found that in a sample of female homicide offenders, almost half of them killed someone in a domestic encounter. In 83.7% of these encounters, there was an element of victim precipitation (Mann, 1998). Examining homicide in Dayton, Ohio, from 1974 to 1979, Campbell (1992) reported that 79.3% of the intimate partner

homicides committed by females involved victim precipitation. Similarly, in Detroit from 1982 to 1983, Goetting (1995) found that victim precipitation occurred 56% of the time where females were homicide offenders. Rosenfeld (1997) found in a study of intimate partner homicides that 52% percent of the female-perpetrated incidents involved victim precipitation. Clearly, this consistent pattern of findings supports Wolfgang's assertion that female intimate homicide is largely victim precipitated (however, see Block & Christakos, 1995b).

The role of victim participation can be linked to the literature pertaining to domestic violence. M. D. Johnson (1995) offers a useful typology in understanding violence against women. Integrating both the family violence and feminist perspectives, M. D. Johnson conjectures that there are two different types of domestic violence: common couple and patriarchal terrorism. According to M. D. Johnson, common-couple violence is the most common form of domestic violence and rarely escalates into life-threatening violence. On the other hand, patriarchal terrorism is a more systematic form of domestic violence initiated to control and subordinate women. Theoretically, patriarchal terrorism is expected to increase in duration and frequency during the course of a relationship.

The role of patriarchal terrorism can be linked to homicide through the empirical finding that a large proportion of female homicide offenders were victims of domestic violence (Goetting, 1987). Ogle, Maier-Katkin, and Bernard (1995) provide a unique theoretical link between patriarchal terrorism and female homicide offending. The theory presented by Ogle et al. (1995) includes elements from several prominent criminological theories (e.g., general strain, overcontrolled personality, and chronic arousal theories). Specifically, because of the constant presentation of negative stimuli in the form of physical and psychological abuse, women in a patriarchal terroristic relationship develop high levels of physiological arousal. Ogle et al. argue that females are not socialized to develop "regulatory rules" in dealing with the appropriate release of anger to reduce arousal and that any release of anger is likely to be substantially constrained by the abuser. Therefore, these women are at an increased likelihood of releasing anger from arousal in a single uncontrolled violent episode. The obvious target of this episode is typically the abuser.

The key difference, therefore, between male- and female-perpetrated intimate homicide incidents then may be traced to the proposition that female offenses involve an explosive release of aggression toward a chronically abusive intimate partner. If this is the case, then specific characteristics of the incident relating to chronic domestic abuse coupled with a "triggering episode" should differentially predict male versus female intimate homicide.

It is possible to test this idea by applying Luckenbill's (1977) observation of homicide as a situated transaction. Specifically, Luckenbill identified a homicide event as an exchange between a victim and an offender within a context that resulted in the demise of the victim. According to Luckenbill, the roles of victim and offender are not predetermined at the outset of the exchange but are determined through a sequence of events

that occurs during the interaction. When examining a male–female intimate partner homicide incident, it is possible to treat the sex of the homicide offender as a dependent variable, as the roles of offender and victim are amorphous and crystallize during the transaction. Specific characteristics of the event, therefore, can serve to predict whether the male or the female emerges as the offender at the conclusion of the incident.

Jurik and Winn (1990) tested this idea by examining 158 court records of homicide in Maricopa County, Arizona, from 1979 to 1984. They used a logistic regression model to predict the gender of the offender based on a number of demographic and situational characteristics. These analyses revealed that the demographic variables did not significantly predict whether the offender was female. Many of the situational variables were statistically significant, including whether the victim was a romantic partner, whether there was a history of physical conflict, whether the incident occurred in the residence, and whether the victim was the first aggressor during the incident (victim precipitation). These findings indicate that these situational variables allow the disentanglement of male versus female homicide involvement.

There are some limitations of the Jurik and Winn (1990) study that deserve mention. A first limitation is their choice of homicide data. Jurik and Winn only examine court cases which can lead to biases in sample selection. Even with homicide, there is the possibility that offenders will not be prosecuted (see Goetting, 1995) and will therefore not be detected in court records. Another limitation of this study is that Jurik and Winn examine all homicide incidents rather than examining only intimate partner homicides. As Wolfgang (1958) and others have demonstrated, it is more likely that male victims and offenders have been involved in non-intimate homicides than in intimate homicides. Additionally, as Felson and Messner (1998) indicate, female-perpetrated homicide tends to involve an element of victim precipitation regardless of whether it occurred in an intimate relationship. These findings suggest that the differences in victim precipitation in homicide would be greater when examining all homicide syndromes as opposed to only examining intimate partner homicides. A final limitation is the lack of other relevant situational variables in the logistic model. Although Jurik and Winn do include some situational variables in their models, there are other situational variables that may also be important predictors of the gender of the offender.

The current study seeks to build on and improve the methodology used by Jurik and Winn (1990) when examining the situational characteristics differentiating male- versus female-perpetrated intimate partner homicide. This study uses data collected from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, including police reports on intimate partner homicides that occurred in the city between 1995 and 1996 (see Block, 2000). By examining only incidents of heterosexual intimate partner homicide, a clearer picture of the gender differences in this crime should emerge. Similar to Jurik and Winn, a number of situational variables will be included in a logistic regression model predicting the offender's gender.

Based on the logic outlined in the previous section of the article, the following hypotheses will be examined. If it is the case that women frequently kill in response

to a triggering episode of domestic violence, it can be expected that a female offender would be more likely to have recent history of prehomicide injury because of the abuse.[2] This leads to our first hypothesis: Females are more likely to be the offender if the offender had a record of prehomicide injury.

Use of mind-altering substances is commonly associated with homicide (Sharps & Campbell, 2001). When comparing male and female offenders, it is expected that drug and alcohol use may differentially affect the likelihood of engaging in intimate partner homicide. First, alcohol and drug use is often associated with a higher likelihood of an individual male engaging in incidences of domestic violence, including those with fatal outcomes. Second, if female homicide is retaliatory in nature, it can be expected that drug and alcohol use may correlate less with female intimate partner homicide offenders compared to their male counterparts. This leads to our second hypothesis: Males are more likely to be the offender if the offender used alcohol or drugs prior to the incident.

The connection between homicide and suicide among intimate partners has received considerable attention in recent years (D. Cohen, Llorente, & Eisdorfer, 1998; Frye et al., 2005; Lund & Smorodinsky, 2001; Starzomski & Nussbaum, 2000). More specifically, based on previous literature (see Browne, 1987, for examples), if female homicide is due to issues involving a controlling male (M. D. Johnson, 1995; Ogle et al., 1995), then females should be less likely to attempt or commit suicide after the incident. The logic is that females should be more likely to respond in a manner that reflects recent liberation from the abuser. Other studies found that males have higher risk of posthomicide suicide than females (Block & Christakos, 1995b; Stack, 1997). This observation leads to our third hypothesis: Males are more likely to be the offender if the offender attempted or committed suicide after the incident.

Following logic similar to the hypotheses listed above, if female intimate homicide indeed occurs in a retaliatory fashion, it would be expected that the bulk of female intimate homicide occurs in the home (see Mann, 1998; Riedel & Best, 1998; Wolfgang, 1958). There are several possibilities as to why this would be so. This may simply be due to the fact that the majority of domestic violence incidents occur in the home. Furthermore, it is possible that weapons are more readily accessible to females when in the home. Finally, it is possible that the home allows females to retaliate when a male victim is drunk, ill, asleep, or otherwise unsuspecting of an attack (Jurik & Winn, 1990; Ogle et al., 1995; Ward, Jackson, & Ward, 1969; Wolfgang, 1958). Therefore, our fourth hypothesis is as follows: Females are more likely to be the offender if the incident occurred at home. Similarly, researchers have suggested that female offenders are expected to offend more often late at night in comparison to male offenders (see Riedel & Best, 1998). It may be reasonable to test our fifth hypothesis: Females are more likely to be the offender if the incident occurred late at night.

Researchers have conjectured that guns are "equalizers," as they allow people to seriously injure an attacker with superior physical ability (Kleck, 1991). They are also able to attack at a distance and make nongun counterattacks more difficult

(Kleck, 1991). In a prior abuse situation, there is a pattern of males using superior physical force to batter their spouse. Therefore, it is expected that in defense, females would turn to firearms to equalize this power imbalance (Silver & Kates, 1979). In contrast, prior empirical evidence has suggested that females are less likely than men to use "sheer bodily force" against their victims (Jurik & Winn, 1990, p. 230) and more likely to use knives in intimate homicides than males (e.g., Block & Christakos, 1995b; Riedel & Best, 1998; Wolfgang, 1958; however, see Mann, 1998). This may point to the easy availability of knives for defense in situations involving abuse within the home. In line with these arguments, we test our last hypothesis: Females are more likely to be the offender in intimate homicides when knives or guns are used instead of other means.

Method

Data

The data used in this analysis come from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, 1995 to 1998 (ICPSR # 3002). This study was designed to assess women's issues resulting from domestic violence (Block, 2000). Specifically, in this study, the "lethal sample" of intimate homicide incidents was examined. A total of 87 intimate homicide incidents that occurred in Chicago during the years of 1995 and 1996 were included in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study (Block, 2000). Same-sex intimate homicides were excluded from the analysis because of the small sample size ($n = 2$). The final sample consists of 85 cases of heterosexual intimate homicides that occurred in Chicago between 1995 and 1996.

Variables

The dependent variable used in this analysis is the offender's gender. The logic is that if male and female intimate homicides are different, then specific factors about the incident should differentially predict whether or not a male or a female committed the homicide. This is a dichotomous variable coded as $0 =$ male and $1 =$ female. In this analysis, there were 57 male homicide offenders and 28 female homicide offenders. The impact of several independent variables will be examined. "The extent of prehomicidal injury" is a dichotomous variable relating to whether or not the offender was injured by the victim within the past year prior to the homicide incident. This variable was coded $0 =$ no and $1 =$ yes. "Drug or alcohol use" relates to whether or not the offender was under the influence of drugs or alcohol during the incident. This is a dichotomous variable coded $0 =$ no and $1 =$ yes. "Offender attempted suicide" refers to whether the offender attempted or committed suicide after the incident. This is a dichotomous variable coded $0 =$ no and $1 =$ yes.

"Occurred at home" is also a dichotomous variable, referring to whether the homicide occurred in the victim's home. This variable was coded as 0 = no and 1 = yes. "Occurred late at night" collapses the time of the event into 0 = between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m. and 1 = between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. Finally, the type of weapon was converted into three dummy variables (0 = no, 1 = yes), "offender used gun," "offender used knife," and "offender used other weapon." "Offender used other weapon" was the excluded category in this analysis.

Results

Descriptive statistics for all variables in this analysis are presented in Table 1. Comparing male and female offenders, statistically significant differences are found for two variables: prehomicide injury ($\chi^2 = 26.37$) and offender used knife ($\chi^2 = 17.38$). Females were much more likely to have experienced prehomicide injury (53.6%) than males (3.5%). Females were also more likely to use a knife (78.6%) than were males (28.1%). Unfortunately, for offenders who attempted suicide and for events that occurred at home, chi-square results are not interpretable because one or more cells had expected values less than 5.

To assess the simultaneous impact, a logistic regression was conducted using all independent variables on the offender's gender.[3] Logistic regression was necessary as the dependent variable was dichotomous and therefore violated assumptions of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. The model converged after five iterations with a model chi-square of 43.769 ($p < .05$) and explained approximately 40.6% (Lemeshow's pseudo R^2; see Menard, 1995) of the variance in the dependent variable. The results of the logistic regression are presented in Table 2.

Two variables had a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable. Both prehomicide injury and offender used knife substantially increased the likelihood that the offender was female. No other variables were statistically significant. We report semistandardized coefficients (Roncek, 1996) in addition to odds ratios in the table.[4] Based on semistandardized coefficients, we found that use of knife ($\beta_R = 11.466$) predicts gender of the offender 1.394 times better than prehomicide injury ($\beta_R = 8.227$).

Discussion and Conclusions

This research sought to examine whether female intimate homicide is similar to male intimate homicide or a completely different phenomenon. By conceptualizing intimate partner as a "situated transaction" (Luckenbill, 1977), it was possible to treat the roles of victim and offender as amorphous as they emerged during the course of the interaction. For a male–female intimate partner dyad, this implies that

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Variables Used in the Analysis ($N = 85$)

Variable	M	SD^a	% Male	% Female	χ^2
Offender's gender	.33	.47	—	—	—
Prehomicide injury	.20	.40	3.5	53.6	26.37*
Drug/alcohol use	.28	.45	29.8	25.0	0.04
Offender attempt suicide	.15	.36	21.1	3.6	—[b]
Occurred at home	.84	.37	80.7	89.3	—[b]
Occurred at night	.48	.50	45.6	53.6	0.21
Offender use gun	.33	.47	40.4	17.9	3.34
Offender use knife	.45	.50	28.1	78.6	17.38*

a. All independent variables are dichotomous. $SD = \sqrt{[p\,(1-p)]}$.
b. Chi-square not computed because the variable had expected values less than 5.
*$p < .05$.

Table 2
Logistic Regression of Independent Variables on Gender of the Offender

Variable	B	SE	Wald	β_R	e^b
Prehomicide injury	2.918	0.910	10.282*	8.227	18.504
Drug/alcohol use	–0.636	0.744	0.730	–0.188	0.529
Offender attempt suicide	–1.502	1.130	1.766	–0.349	0.223
Occurred at home	0.733	0.910	0.547	0.390	2.081
Occurred at night	0.062	0.647	0.009	0.024	1.064
Offender use gun	2.014	1.296	2.414	3.247	7.493
Offender use knife	3.181	1.220	6.794*	11.466	24.071
Constant	–3.989	1.568	6.471*	—	0.019
Model $\chi^2 = 43.769$*					
Pseudo $R^2 = .406$					

*$p < .05$.

situational characteristics of the event may be helpful in determining which partner acquired the role of offender during the transaction. A series of hypotheses regarding these situational variables was tested in a logistic regression framework.

The results lend clear support to two major hypotheses presented earlier that both injury (in the past year) prior to the homicide incident and use of knife as the weapon of choice differentiate female intimate partner offenders from their male counterparts. Both of these findings are supportive of the theoretical notion that female intimate homicides are linked to defensive reactions resulting from prior abuse. Although not statistically significant, it is worth noting that the impact of "drug/alcohol use,"

"offender attempted suicide," "incident occurred at home," "late at night," and "offender used a gun" are all in the expected directions as hypothesized.

The findings of our study provide important theoretical insights to stimulate new lines of research in the future. We find utility in further applying the notion of "patriarchal terrorism" (M. D. Johnson, 1995; Ogle et al., 1995) in exploring the relationship between intimate homicide offending and domestic abuse. Particularly, if female intimate homicide is seen as an explosive release of aggression toward a chronically abusive intimate partner, the impact of both immediate (as the true triggering event preceding a particular homicide) and persistent (as the accumulated history of abuse) domestic violence should be studied. Relatedly, future research should carefully assess the impact of domestic violence intervention on the future risk of intimate homicide (victimization and offending) at the individual level. Research conducted at the city level has already found that, controlling for other influences, types of domestic violence prevention resources are linked to lower levels of intimate partner homicide (Dugan et al., 2003).

Our research also fills a void in studying intimate homicide from a situational perspective. Informed by Luckenbill's (1977) approach of treating homicide as a situated transaction, we include several situational factors in our statistical model. These factors cover multiple dimensions of situational factors—location, time of day, drug/alcohol use, weapons, and prior injury—that are theoretically relevant to intimate homicide. By simultaneously controlling for the impact from each variable, we are able to identify variables that best differentiate female from male intimate homicide offenders. To our knowledge, no prior study has included all of the situational factors we used in the same framework.[5]

Several limitations of this study need to be noted. First, sample size is a major limitation to this study. This limitation may affect the study in two ways. Maximum likelihood estimation procedures typically require more cases for adequate confidence in the results (200 is a typical estimate; see Menard, 1995). It is possible that the small sample size has resulted in maximum likelihood estimates that are unstable. One way to correct for this possibility is to use bootstrapping procedures to assess the stability of these estimates (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993). It is also possible that the small sample size has made it difficult or impossible to detect medium to small size effects that would be present in a study of this kind (J. Cohen, 1992; J. Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Future research could benefit by examining these hypotheses with increased sample sizes.

Another limitation to this study is that offender and victim characteristics are absent from this study. Prior research has found that offender's criminal history (Block & Christakos, 1995b; Felson & Messner, 1998), relationship type (H. Johnson & Hotton, 2003), race (Block & Christakos, 1995b; Frye et al., 2005; Gauthier & Bankston, 1997; Riedel & Best, 1998; Rodriguez & Henderson, 1995), employment (Gartner & McCarthy, 1991; I. M. Johnson, 1996), and age (Breitman, Shackelford, & Block, 2004; Gartner & McCarthy, 1991; Rodriguez & Henderson,

1995) are important characteristics that are associated with female homicide (although, see Jurik & Winn, 1990). These variables were omitted because of either the low sample size or the lack of available information to assess these variables. Furthermore, because of limited sample size, it was not possible to examine interaction effects, as many of these factors may converge (e.g., time of day and weapon) in predicting male- versus female-perpetrated homicide. Future research is needed to elaborate on the mechanisms in which offender characteristics and situational variables operate.

Finally, it is important to note that these results are based on homicide incidents only. If, as Block and Christakos (1995a) argue, intimate homicides should be examined with other "sister offenses," in this case intimate assaults, then intimate homicides may give a misleading picture of the complexity of female-perpetrated homicide incidents. Future research would benefit from exploring this possibility and comparing males and females in both fatal and nonfatal intimate assaults.

Notes

1. In 2003, 29.3% of cases had missing information on the sex of the offender (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004). Even assuming that all of these offenders are female (which is very unlikely), there still are not enough cases to overcome the substantial differences observed between male and female homicide.

2. An abused woman in the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, 1995 to 1998, meets all of the following criteria: (a) at least 18 years old; (b) answered positively to any of the three screening questions: Has your intimate partner hit, slapped, kicked, or otherwise physically hurt or threatened you? Has your intimate partner ever forced you to engage in sexual activities that made you uncomfortable? Are you afraid of your intimate partner?; (c) the abuse took place within the past year; and (d) the abuser was an intimate partner. Prehomicide injury does not necessarily assume immediacy preceding a particular homicide incident. It applies to all the injuries resulting from intimate conflicts that occurred in the past year.

3. It could be argued that discriminant analysis is a more appropriate analysis tool to use in this situation. Discriminant analysis, however, requires strict assumptions regarding the normality of the independent variables, whereas logistic regression requires no such assumptions (Pohar, Blas, & Turk, 2004). Researchers using simulations have found few differences between logistic regression and discriminant analysis when the normality assumptions of the latter are not violated (Pohar et al., 2004). Seeing that the advantages of discriminant analysis are minimal even in an optimal setting, logistic regression was selected as the method of choice.

4. There are four major reasons for doing so: (a) Odds ratios are often mistakenly interpreted as the "times more likely" that an event will occur (see Roncek, 1991, 1993), (b) there are an infinite number of probability combinations that can produce any given odds ratio, (c) interpreting standardized coefficients is analogous to what is done in OLS (ordinary least squares) regression (Roncek, 1996), and (d) Roncek's coefficient produces the same relative ranking as other standardized coefficients (e.g. Menard, 1995) while being more computationally efficient.

5. One of the reviewers rightly pointed out that the situated transaction framework applied in our study seems to be less applicable to male-perpetrated intimate partner homicides where there is often evidence of premeditation. We agree that the issue of premeditation is a relevant one and should be considered in future research of this kind. Unfortunately, lack of these data in our current study precludes us from making more specific conclusions in response to this concern.

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