

Behind the 911 calls: Understanding arrest predictors for domestic violence in Kansas City,
Missouri using arrest data

by

Payton Grace Fenwick

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Dr. Lisa Melander

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Abstract

Domestic violence (DV) is a global health epidemic that has a wide-reaching negative impact on many individuals. This phenomenon is also highly complex. Police are often the first point of contact for many DV victims and offenders. This makes police response to DV an important factor to study and understand. The primary research question for this research project is the following: “what is the impact of victim, offender, and situational characteristics on police arrest decisions?” The data being utilized are Kansas City, Missouri’s (KCMO) police arrest data from July 2019 to July 2023. A logistical regression analysis was performed to analyze the relationship between the independent variables and arrest outcome. This analysis found that victim sex, type of relationship, uniform crime reporting (UCR) offense code, and arrestee weapon use were the only independent variables found to be statistically significant with the dependent variable. The project concludes that it is difficult to gain a deeper understanding of police arrest decision-making in DV cases using quantitative data alone. It is suggested that future research be conducted using quantitative arrest data alongside qualitative data. This ensures that demographic characteristics of the victim/offender and situational characteristics of the incident are included in the same study as contextual factors of police decision making that can only be adequately understood through qualitative methods.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Domestic violence (DV) has been regarded as a global health crisis (Butto, 2019; Drotning et al., 2022; Fanslow et al., 2023; Sardinha et al., 2022; Wilt & Olson, 1996). Many different definitions of DV are utilized in legal and academic settings; however, the U.S. Office on Violence Against Women (2023) defines DV as a “pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner.” DV can manifest in several different ways, but physical, sexual, psychological, or economic abuse are the most noted types of aggression (Breiding et al., 2014; Chisholm et al., 2017; Follingstad et al., 1990; Gelles, 2000; Hine et al., 2022a, 2022b; Smith et al., 2017; Stylianou, 2018). It is possible for victims to experience one form of abuse by itself; however, victims often experience multiple forms (polyvictimization) (Cho et al., 2023; Dichter et al., 2014; Dutton et al., 2005; Eshelman & Levendosky, 2012).

DV is typically regarded as a highly gendered phenomenon that largely impacts women. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) states that intimate partner violence (IPV) is one of the most prevalent forms of violence that threatens women’s health and that about 736 million women around the world have experienced either IPV or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime (WHO, 2024).

DV is highly regarded as a complex phenomenon, further complicated by police involvement. Scholars have continuously studied how demographic characteristics, situational characteristics, focal concerns, contextual factors, individual police bias, state arrest policies, and more impact arrest outcomes. This project’s goal is to understand arrest predictors for DV in Kansas City, Missouri (KCMO) using police arrest data. This data includes UCR offense code, victim’s injury, arrestee’s weapon use, relationship status, and finally, victim and arrestees’ sex,

race, ethnicity, and age. KCMO is a significant population to study because of its rising DV rates. Between 2014 and 2018, Missouri experienced a 10.3% increase in DV incidents reported to the police, and 11% of all homicides in Missouri were DV-related (Wimbley, 2024). In the United States, Missouri has the third highest rate of DV: 41.8% of women and 35.2% of men are victimized (Domestic violence by state, 2024). Conducting a sociological analysis of police arrest data could indicate the populations most vulnerable for DV in KCMO specifically. It also may give insight into how Missouri arrest policies impact individuals perpetrating and suffering from DV.

The various terms used to describe DV are important to note before moving into the literature review. Similar to the various definitions of DV, the terms researchers and law enforcement use often contrast; therefore, it must be clarified. In this research project, DV will be the primary term being used to describe violence between intimate partners. This is despite IPV being used most often in research literature to distinguish between violence between intimate partners and other forms of family violence (e.g., DV, child abuse, family violence, elder abuse) (Al'Uqdah et al., 2016; Bates, 2020; Bates & Weare, 2020; Catalano, 2012; Dim, 2021; Hogan et al., 2021; Monterrosa, 2021; Pereira et al., 2020; Scott-Storey et al., 2023; Waller et al., 2022). Researchers generally consider DV to be an outdated descriptor of IPV, however because law enforcement agencies still largely utilize this term, and because this project is working closely with a law enforcement agency, DV will be used to align with the data and the department's language. However, the language used in any articles cited will be retained as stated by the authors. It should be assumed that any future use of DV utilized by the author of this research project is referring solely to violence that occurs between intimate partners.

The following project will begin by analyzing the current state of DV research. Specifically, literature that discusses the various definitions of DV, the characteristics of DV victim and offenders, and current police responses will be explained. Next, the theoretical framework will be outlined. The method of analysis and data collection will then be explained, which is followed by a discussion of the results. As stated, the first section of importance is the literature review which begins with an explanation of the research definitions of DV.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Definitions of Domestic Violence (DV)

There is no universally recognized definition of DV in the literature, nor is there consistency among state jurisdictions. Despite these variations, definitions used in studies of DV have come to a consensus. It is generally understood in this field of study that DV is defined as a pattern of behaviors that can take the form of physical, sexual, emotional, and/or psychological violence, or threat of violence (Al'Uqdah et al., 2016; Barber, 2008; Breiding et al., 2014; Catalano, 2012; Coker et al., 2002; Dillon et al., 2013; Dim, 2021; DuMonthier et al., 2017; Follingstad & DeHart, 2000; Fong et al., 2019; Goodmark, 2022; Hegarty et al., 2005; Heyman et al., 2015; Kelly, 1999; Lewis, 2015; Pereira et al., 2020; Scott-Storey et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2017; Tennakoon et al., 2020; Wathen & MacMillan, 2013; Wilcox, 2008). The relationship between offender and victim is an essential element of DV definitions and for this project, violence that occurs between intimate partners is the primary focus. Intimate partners are most often classified as current or former spouses or dating/sexual partners (Breiding et al., 2014; Catalano, 2012; Dim, 2021; DuMonthier et al., 2017; Goodmark, 2022; Huntley et al., 2019; Orr et al., 2022; Pereira et al., 2020; Tennakoon et al., 2020).

Prevalence and Impact of Domestic Violence

Prevalence of DV

Violence between intimate partners is one of the most prevailing forms of violence in contemporary society (Fogarty et al., 2019; Katz et al., 2023; Kyriacou et al., 1999; Moss et al., 2023; Orr et al., 2022; Pereira et al., 2020; Stylianou, 2018; Wolfe & Feiring, 2000).

Contemporary research on DV finds that one in four women globally between the ages of 15 and 49 are estimated to have experienced sexual and/or physical intimate partner violence at least

once in their lifetime (Sardinha et al., 2022). Women are more likely to be victims of DV than men (Butto, 2019; Drotning et al., 2022; Fanslow et al., 2023; Sardinha et al., 2022; Wilt & Olson, 1996). DV does impact men as well, although the literature on this issue varies on their estimates (Drijber et al., 2013; Hine et al., 2022a, 2022b). The Center for Disease Control (2022) states that about 41 percent of women and 26 percent of men will experience some form of intimate partner violence during their lifetime. DV is acknowledged by the literature as an epidemic faced by many individuals, although the characteristics of the victims may vary. The impacts of DV are necessary to evaluate to gain a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

Impact of DV

The impacts faced by DV victims are immediate, long-term, and significant. Victims suffer psychologically, physically, emotionally, and sexually (Al'Uqdah et al., 2016; Avdibegovic et al., 2017; Bates, 2020; Follingstad & DeHart, 2000; Follingstad et al., 1990; Spencer et al., 2019). They also struggle to maintain employment and experience homelessness at increased rates (Chiaramonte et al., 2022; Bernas et al., 2019). The most common cause of injury to women is DV, outranking car accidents and rapes combined; therefore, understanding the physical injuries female victims suffer is vital (Kyriacou et al., 1999; Tennakoon et al., 2020). Kyriacou and colleagues (1999) found that victims of DV who were injured by a current or recent male partner were more likely to have been injured by former partners as well, specifically a former partner whom they still reside with (p. 1894). The most common forms of injury noted by Kyriacou and colleagues (1999) were contusions or abrasions, followed by lacerations, then fractures and dislocations.

Sex/Gender of Victims and Offenders

Victims

Women are more likely to be victims of DV for a variety of reasons (Avdibegovic et al., 2017; Black et al., 2011; Butto, 2019; Fagerlund, 2021; Gelles, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Feminist scholars argue that widespread gender inequality has led women to remain dependent on abusive partners in a multitude of ways (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash et al., 1992; Fanslow et al., 2023; Johnson, 1995; Pagelow, 1984; Rothenberg, 2003; Warner, 2010). For example, many women who are abused by their intimate partners are also financially dependent on their partners, especially if these women have children (Anderson et al., 2003; Golden et al., 2013; Meyer, 2012; Strube & Barbour, 1983; Stylianou, 2018).

Fear of retaliation from their abusers after they leave is a common experience many female victims are familiar with. Research shows that women who are separated from their partners, abusive or not, are at the greatest risk of retaliation from their abusers after they leave (Campbell et al., 2007; Meyer, 2012; Sabri et al., 2021; Spencer et al., 2021). Victims' fear of retaliation is further exacerbated by the historic ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system (CJS) in deterring offenders and in protecting victims from their abusers (Al-Faham et al., 2019; Goodmark, 2022). Meyers' (2012) study illustrates the litany of reasons women decide to endure their abusers' behavior. This study found that victims were aware of the various risks they faced if they left (e.g., their children's safety, financial strain, fear of fatal retaliation), therefore they remained in the relationship to avoid the risks (Meyer, 2012, p. 186).

Men who are victims of DV are often abused mentally and physically by women (ex)partners (Bates & Weare, 2020; Drijber et al., 2013; Hine et al., 2022a; Hine et al., 2022b), but their abuse is most often characterized as psychological (Coker et al., 2002). Psychological abuse is typically taken less seriously than physical abuse by law enforcement officials because

of its internal manifestation, leading to less accurate prevalence rates (Fagerlund, 2021; Huntley et al., 2019). Gender norms and societal expectations of men play a significant role in the likelihood that one will report their abuse to police or even view their experience as abuse (Bates, 2020; Drijber et al., 2013; Hine et al., 2022a, 2022b; Huntley et al., 2019). Men who do report their abuse often note that they are accused of being the perpetrators or not taken seriously (Barber, 2008; Drijber et al., 2013; Fagerlund, 2021; Huntley et al., 2019).

Male victims often make excuses for their partners' abuse, similar to female victims, until they can no longer cope with the abuse (Entilli & Cipolletta, 2017; Hine et al., 2022a, 2022b). Resources designated to educate and prevent female domestic violence victimization hinder male victims' ability to recognize their own abuse. This leads to the denial and acceptance of the abuse they experience in their relationship (Barber, 2008; Bates, 2020; Hine et al., 2022a). Studies have also found that public perception of violence against men differs drastically from the perception of violence against women (Sorenson & Taylor, 2005; Spencer et al., 2019). Even considering the presence of male victims, public and police perception, type of violence, lack of "serious" injury, and male victims' lack of resources and preventative education about DV all contribute to the inconsistent reporting rates.

Offenders

DV offenders are most often men, and they inflict more severe and persistent violence than their female counterparts (Fagerlund, 2021; Follingstad et al., 1990; Fong et al., 2019; Kyriacou et al., 1999). Reoffending is a distinctive characteristic for male perpetrators making the CJS's response and punishment pivotal for victims' safety (Travers et al., 2021). Female offenders of DV exist, though the prevalence of these offenders is contested. Statistics on female DV offenders are not as readily available as statistics on male DV offenders, however, some self-

report surveys have managed to measure the prevalence of male victims. The 2015 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey stated that 33.6 percent of men reported lifetime IPV, and other studies show that females have perpetrated minor and severe violence against their male counterparts (Machado et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2017) Females self-report using higher levels of physical aggression than males and measures that focus on acts reveal females use physical aggression against their partners more frequently (Archer, 2000; Nazroo, 1995). Female offenders tend to participate in psychological and physical abuse, attacking their male partners when they cannot retaliate (e.g., from behind, while their victim was sleeping, while children are present) (Scott-Storey et al., 2023).

Exclusion of Gender Non-conforming Victims

Due to the nature of the data used for this research project, which will be discussed in Chapter 4, non-binary and transgender individuals' experiences with DV are not included in the analysis. It is important to note that this omission does not reflect the absence of non-binary or transgender victims of DV. DV victims who are gender-nonconforming exist in consistently high numbers (Brown & Herman, 2015; Grant et al., 2011; Henry et al., 2021; Peitzmeier et al., 2020; Whitton et al., 2019a; Whitton et al., 2019b; Whitton et al., 2023; Yerke & DeFeo, 2016). In fact, some studies report higher prevalence of DV for transgender individuals than cisgender people (Brown & Herman, 2015; Langenderfer-Magruder et al., 2016). The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey found that 54 percent of respondents experienced some form of IPV in their lifetime (James et al., 2016, p. 198). Brown and Herman (2015) found after conducting an analysis of existing literature that between 31.3 percent and 50 percent of transgender individuals experienced IPV during their lifetime (Brown & Herman, 2015; Yerke & Defeo, 2016).

Non-binary and/or transgender victims of DV often experience this violence because of their gender identity (Grant et al., 2011). That is, these individuals are subjected to violence by their family members as a result of their non-binary or transgender status. Studies that analyze DV against this population predominantly utilize self-report and self-administered data (Peitzmeier et al., 2020). While self-report data has its benefits, this research project does not have the ability to include non-binary or transgender victims of DV in its analysis due to the failure of police data to expand its gender categories.

Race and Ethnicity of Victims and Offenders

Victims

Race is an important factor to analyze when regarding the characteristics of victims of DV, especially when considering the intersectional nature of racial and gender experiences (Decker et al., 2019). Women of color report the highest lifetime prevalence of DV (56.6% Black women, 57.7% Native American women, 42.1% Hispanic women, 27.2% Asian or Pacific Islander women) (Beyer et al., 2015; Decker et al., 2019; Drotning et al., 2022; Holliday et al., 2020; Leemis et al., 2022; Stockman et al., 2015). The relationship between race and DV is not void of outside factors influencing the prevalence among these communities. In fact, the Report on the Intersection of Domestic Violence, Race/Ethnicity and Sex's (2020) (RIDVRES) sample of DV victims was made up primarily of Black and Hispanic women, most of them living within neighborhoods that report the highest rates of poverty (42.2%) (p. 2). These findings support the existence of the relationship between socioeconomically disadvantaged people of color and their experiences with DV (RIDVRES, 2020). Other studies have found that race/ethnicity's influence over DV rates is reduced when controlling for socioeconomic factors which is another piece of evidence that illustrates socioeconomic factors' impact on people of color's communities and

DV rates (Benson et al., 2004; Field & Caetano, 2004; RIDVRES, 2020; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Men of color also disproportionately experience DV during their lifetime (57.6% Black men, 51.1% Native American, 40.3% Hispanic men, 24.8% Asian or Pacific Islander) compared to their white counterparts (44% white men) (Leemis et al., 2022, p. 7). Accurate prevalence rates for male victims of color are even harder to estimate than white men due to low reporting rates of male victims of color's DV experiences (Monterrosa, 2021). Community distrust in the police as well as a variety of other factors all contribute to the low reporting rates of this population (Decker et al., 2019; Gase et al., 2017; Roberts, 2004).

Homophily should be discussed when addressing racial trends of DV victimization and offending. Individuals tend to associate with people they share characteristics with (gender, race, socioeconomic status, education levels, etc.) therefore, the disproportionate number of intraracial couples experiencing DV is due in part to homophily (Martin et al., 2013; Valandra et al., 2019). The Violence Policy Center (2016) states that nationally in 2014, 86 percent of intimate partner homicides were intraracial and other studies support this evidence (Valandra et al., 2019). Even though homophily can be used to explain higher DV rates among intraracial couples, other factors mentioned throughout this review should not be discounted as there is still ample documentation of these factors' impact on DV rates. Race and ethnicity are commonly studied characteristics of victims and offenders of DV; however, another demographic category necessary to examine is age.

Age of Victims and Offenders

Victims

It is consistently stated that females between 18 and 24 years of age tend to experience the highest rates of DV (Catalano, 2012; Decker et al., 2019; Katz et al., 2023; Kaufman-Parks et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2014; Stockl et al., 2014; Thompson & Tapp, 2023). Johnson and colleagues (2014) explain the oversaturation of DV victims in this age range by stating that as individuals advance from adolescence to adulthood, romantic relationships begin to last longer, most relationships progressing to cohabitation. Individuals' progression into longer and more serious relationships may contribute to higher rates of DV in young adulthood (Johnson et al., 2014; Kaufman-Parks et al., 2018; Shortt et al., 2012). College students are one population with distinct DV experiences that studies have focused on (Johnson et al., 2014; Spencer et al., 2021). Many researchers concur that college students report consistently high rates of dating violence (physical, psychological, and/or sexual) - typically ranging between 10 percent and 50 percent according to Spencer and colleagues (2021) (p. 213). Rates of DV victimization typically decline with age for females, however, this is not to say that older individuals do not experience DV (Catalano, 2012; Karakurt & Silver, 2013; Rivara et al., 2009).

Similar to females, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) states that male victims tend to first experience DV victimization (sexual, physical, and stalking) before the age of 25, most even before the age of 18 (Katz et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2017). Interestingly, male victims' experiences of emotional abuse diverge slightly from the typical 18-24 years range. Karakurt and Silver (2013) find that "younger men" experienced the highest rates of emotional abuse while "older females" experienced the least amount of emotional abuse in their study (p. 9). Conflicting findings are presented by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) as they state men aged 30-44 years were more likely to experience emotional abuse than any other age group.

Although variation of age ranges exists between types of violence and gender, victims are most consistently cited as between 18-24 when referring to DV.

Offenders

According to Johnson and colleagues (2014), females are more likely than males to perpetrate DV from the ages of 17 to 28, but by age 28, the gap in perpetration between males and females narrow significantly (p. 16). Kaufman and colleagues (2018) and Cui and colleagues (2013) report similar results regarding age's correlation with gendered perpetration. In contrast to Karakurt and Silver's (2013) finding of male emotional abuse victims, Williams and colleagues' (2008) meta-analysis found that most articles measuring emotional abuse reported high perpetration among college-aged females (40-89 percent). Other studies using samples of college students found similar results regarding college-aged females and high levels of psychological and physical aggression (Hines & Saudino, 2004).

Characteristics of Law Enforcement Intervention

Mandatory Arrest and Officer Discretion Policies

Police are often the first point of contact for many DV victims and offenders which makes understanding law enforcement policies that standardize the procedure of responding to DV calls essential to this research project (Gezinski. 2022; Hamby et al., 2016; Nessel et al., 2020; Saxton et al., 2022). One aspect of police response to DV calls is the usage of arrest policies and how various policies differentially impact victims' experience, reporting rates, and the likelihood of re-offending (Buzawa & Austin, 1993; Gezinski, 2022; Goodmark, 2022; Hoppe et al., 2020; Pate & Hamilton, 1992; Phillips & Sobo, 2010).

Mandatory arrest policies require law enforcement officers responding to a DV call to arrest any individual at the scene, regardless of whether charges are pressed (Durfee & Fetzer,

2014; Gezinski, 2022; Phillips & Sobol, 2010). The purpose of these policies is to deter future DV offending, limit police officers' use of discretion when responding to DV calls, and to standardize procedure (Barata & Senn, 2003; Buzawa & Austin, 1993; Phillips & Sobol, 2010; Sherman & Berk, 1984). Victims are also given the space/time to seek resources and protection when officers are mandated to arrest their abuser (Nesset et al., 2020). These policies were implemented after one study found that mandatory arrest policies deterred DV reoffending (Sherman & Berk, 1984) however, attempts to replicate the results were largely unsuccessful. Specifically, Hoppe and colleagues' (2020) found that police departments that implemented mandatory arrest policies between 1980-1990 saw no significant decrease in an offender's likelihood of repeating their offense after their arrest (p. 7). Despite the mixed results, many police departments continue to utilize mandatory arrest policies across the country-(Dunford et al., 1990; Gezinski, 2022; Hirschel & Hutchison, 1992; Pate & Hamilton, 1992; Phillips & Sobol, 2010).

Mandatory arrest policies have also been found to disproportionately impact women and decrease a victim's likelihood of calling the police (Durfee, 2012; Gezinski, 2022; Hirschel et al., 2017; Novisky & Peralta, 2015). Many studies indicate that officers responding to DV calls within mandatory arrest jurisdictions will often arrest both partners to avoid determining a primary aggressor, resulting in an increase of arrest for female victims (Dawson & Hotton, 2014; Gezinski, 2022; Hirschel, 2007; Hirschel et al., 2017). Durfee (2012) found that females were more likely than males to be arrested alone and/or co-arrested in mandatory arrest states. Consequences of victims' arrest include a disparity in access to legal assistance, loss of child custody, increased rates of distrust in police, and a loss of faith in criminal justice protection from DV (Gezinski, 2022). The consequences of victims' arrest also contribute to a decreased

likelihood that individuals will report their DV experiences and/or seek intervention services (Bosick et al., 2012; Gezinski, 2022).

Many police departments allow officers to use their own discretion to determine if further action should be taken when they respond to DV calls (arrest, mediation, etc.). Studies have found that police officers' likelihood of determining a beneficial next step is impacted by legal and extralegal factors, such as gender of alleged offender and victim, relationship status of victim and offender, criminal record of offender/victim, and general lack of knowledge about DV (Dawson & Hotton, 2014; Hirschel et al., 2017; Myhill & Johnson, 2016; Saxton et al., 2022). While discretionary laws regarding DV arrests have their benefits, individual bias and personal beliefs tend to color police's response to DV calls (Dawson & Hotton, 2014; Durfee & Petzer, 2014; Gezinski, 2022; Myhill & Johnson, 2016; Saxton et al., 2022). Discretionary policies may decrease victim's likelihood of being arrested, but they also allow officers' personal attitudes and beliefs to infiltrate their response to DV calls (Gezinski, 2022; Gover et al., 2011).

The Current Study

Understanding Missouri's arrest policies is necessary to include in this section because it impacts the police response and records this project analyzes. Missouri does not have a mandatory arrest law which allows officers to use their own discretion when responding to DV calls. If no arrest is made at the scene, officers are required to write a detailed report directly following the incident. Missouri has other contingencies instituted in their laws to protect victims. For example, if more than one call is made pertaining to the same couple within twelve hours, officers are legally required to arrest the alleged abuser.

This literature review has described the prevalence and characteristics of DV. Discussing the theoretical framework is the next essential step in this research project. The feminist

perspective will be discussed in-depth, from its concepts, theories, and applications for DV research.

Chapter 3 - Theory

Feminist Perspectives

Before examining how feminist perspectives are used to explain DV, the core concepts will be generally discussed. Many feminist theories focus on the causes of gender inequality and discrimination and gendered violence. Patriarchy is a foundational concept of many feminist theories and is also a relevant concept for DV-specific feminist theories and research as well. Patriarchy is defined as a system of social relations that strengthens the gender hierarchy of society by simultaneously institutionally oppressing women (A. G. Johnson, 2005; Lerner, 1989; Sultana, 2010). To put a complex concept simply, the patriarchal system society reinforces male dominance and the subordination of women in all areas and ways (Bhasin, 2011; Hunnicutt, 2009; Lerner, 1990; Sultana, 2010; Walby, 1990).

Intersectional feminism has impacted the general feminist framework and DV research, therefore, describing this perspective is essential for this section. Intersectionality is a concept that is described by the overlapping identities that are “reinforced by marginalization” (Al-Faham et al., 2019, p. 249; Crenshaw, 1989). Primarily utilized to emphasize the oppression and violence experienced by Black women, intersectionality looks to expand the ideas of the first two waves of feminism which largely concerned white, cisgender, middle-class women (Al-Faham et al., 2019; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Intersectional feminists assert that the issues women of color face interact in complex, multiplicative, and multilayered ways and should be viewed as such so the issues women of color face can be properly understood and addressed (Wing, 1990). For example, the issues that women of color face stem from their identities as both women and as people of color, and according to intersectional feminists, these issues are not properly addressed

by mainstream feminism due to the complex nature of women of color's experiences (Al-Faham et al., 2019; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Wing, 1990).

Feminist activists have historically played a foundational role in the battered women's movement in the 1970s and has since had profound impacts on DV research and the CJS's response to DV. The feminist perspective largely attributes the disproportionate victimization rates of women to ubiquitous gender inequality (Dobash et al., 1992; Fanslow et al., 2023; Johnson, 1995; Rothenberg, 2003; Warner, 2010). They argue that widespread male violence against intimate partners stem from a patriarchal system that encourages male domination of women through physical, sexual, economic, and psychological abuse and control (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; McPhail et al., 2007). As a result, increased economic power and overall freedom of women in contemporary society threatens traditional masculinity and male dominance, increasing the risk of violence by their intimate partners as a strategy to reassert control and dominance (Hornung et al., 1981; Kaukinen et al., 2013; Riger & Krieglstein, 2000).

The work of feminist activists has inspired the CJS's response to DV to become increasingly punitive (Harper et al., 2021; Houston, 2014). Many states have employed mandatory/preferred arrest policies and harsher sentencing laws for DV offenses (Fagan, 1989; Gezinski, 2022; Hoppe et al., 2020; Leisenring, 2008; Phillips & Sobol, 2010). These altered CJS responses to DV have been critiqued by feminists in various ways. Mandatory arrest policies often result in the arrest of both victim and offender, resulting in further alienation of the female victim from the system that is alleged to offer protection (Durfee, 2021; Henning et al., 2006; Hirschel et al., 2007; Phillips & Sobol, 2010). Scholars also argue that mandatory arrest policies effectively confiscate a woman's decisional autonomy regarding the punishment of their abusers. However, one of the most consequential criticisms of the increased CJS's response to DV is that

these reformed responses do nothing to address the underlying inequality between men and women, therefore have no discernable impact on the prevalence of IPV (Goodmark, 2009; Harper et al., 2021).

Feminist Application to the Current Study

Sex/Gender

The use of this theoretical framework is beneficial to this research project because of how it highlights gender/racial power dynamics. This allows for a deeper understanding of the complexity of DV victimization, offending and the CJS. In the past, women were widely regarded as the common victims of DV, but many scholars have begun to study the gender symmetry of different forms of DV victimization. For example, many studies have found that males make up a larger portion of the victim pool than females in psychological abuse (Carney & Barner, 2012; Coker et al., 2002). Even physical victimization has been found to have more gender symmetrical prevalence rates than once believed (Black et al., 2011; Hamel, 2007; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). Although there have been differing results among studies that use different types of data, researchers must not be ignorant to the gender symmetry in DV victimization. Feminist theorists argue that there are sociological and methodological explanations for the increase in female offenders.

It has been theorized that bidirectional and unidirectional DV may be the root of the gender symmetrical findings. Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues (2012) found that in relationships with physical assault present, 57.9% is bidirectional violence while 42% is unidirectional. Further, in relationships with unidirectional DV, 13.8% is perpetrated by males and 28.3% is perpetrated by females (Langhinrichsen et al., 2012). This is dissimilar to previous beliefs that males make up the majority of DV offenders. Hamel (2007) also asserts that in

bidirectional cases, females initiate the violence about 50% of the time. Victim precipitation is one concept that has been developed to try to explain why females make up a large proportion of those who initiate bidirectional violence. Muftic and colleagues (2007) define victim precipitation as “behavior by the victim that initiates the behavior of the victimizer” (p. 329). Criticized for victim-blaming, instead, this concept allows researchers to consider situational and contextual factors that played into the often-complex DV incident details (Fattah, 1991). Victim precipitation also may explain the presence of female DV offenders: Stuart and colleagues (2006) explain that about 39% of female DV offenders in their study reported that their partner’s actions provoked the violence, while a similar percentage reported that they were acting in self-defense.

It has also been speculated by feminist scholars that methodological issues have caused higher frequencies of female offenders being recorded. Melton & Belknap (2003) explain that studies that report gender symmetry often combine minor acts of violence with more severe ones. Simplifying DV incidents to only the frequency of violence excludes any nuances that DV cases are known to be characterized by. The type, severity, and reasoning for using violence is often different between men and women (Dasgupta, 2002). Male offenders often perpetrate more persistently and cause more severe injuries than female offenders (Fagerlund, 2021; Follingstad et al., 1990; Fong et al., 2019; Kyriacou et al., 1999) and as this section will illustrate further, recidivism is also much more common for male offenders (Gerstenberger & Williams, 2013; Renauer & Henning, 2005; Travers et al., 2021).

The gender symmetry argument is important to recognize in this section because the feminist perspective is responsible for much of the rebuttal to the assumption that females are offending at similar rates as male offenders. They argue that many of the studies that find

support for the idea that men and women perpetrate DV at similar rates fail to acknowledge the complex nature of DV. From a criminal justice perspective, feminist scholars argue that more studies need to be conducted using contextual and situational variables to measure the complexities of individual DV incidents (Hamel, 2020; Muftic et al., 2007).

Race

After discussing how gender dynamics of DV is important to the feminist perspective, an analysis of race in relation to the feminist perspective and DV is necessary. As mentioned, intersectionality is a key pillar of feminist theory. It is also important to consider when analyzing DV prevalence rates. Women of color are at the highest risk for experiencing DV (Beyer et al., 2015; Breidling et al., 2014; Decker et al., 2019; Drotning et al., 2022; Holliday et al., 2020; Leemis et al., 2022; Stockman et al., 2015), and Black women specifically experience increased amounts of police surveillance and wrongful arrest (Duhaney, 2022; Maynard, 2017; West, 2007). It is also common for all female victims, but especially Black women, to believe that police involvement in DV does nothing to fix their vulnerable circumstances (Dejong et al., 2008; Goodmark, 2009; Harper et al., 2021). This decreases the likelihood of DV reporting in this group of individuals.

Black women who do report their abuse feel as though they are not taken seriously and are even treated as criminals themselves. Duhaney's (2022) qualitative study focuses on contextual factors from the perspective of the victims. This study reports that the majority of their sample of Black women felt they were treated differently based on their race, especially if the officer and/or their partner was white. This study also found that Black women were more likely to participate in defensive violence but were less likely than their male counterparts to be considered a victim. Duhaney (2022) theorizes this outcome is due to racial biases held by the

responding officers (Duhaney, 2022; Larance & Miller, 2017). Feminist scholars call for enhanced police training of DV and aggressive anti-Black racism training. This would equip responding officers with the knowledge and skills needed to handle DV incidents as well as teach them to check their own biases (Duhaney, 2022; Finn et al., 2004; Ruff, 2012).

The feminist perspective continues to prove to be a useful guiding theory for this project because it has produced extensive research on women's experiences with DV. Feminist scholars have continued to examine police responses to DV and how victims are treated based on their race and gender. Because this research project tests arrest outcomes based on demographic characteristics, the next essential portion of dissecting the theoretical framework is analyzing how the feminist perspective explains arrest data.

Theoretical Application

DV studies are briefly described because understanding how the feminist perspective's core tenets manifest in empirical data will inform this project's results. Gerstenberger and Williams (2013) analyzed dual and single arrest family violence cases in a mandatory arrest state for 18 months. The results of this study found that women impacted by a dual arrest had lower recidivism rates than males who were arrested in both single and dual arrest circumstances (Gerstenberger & Williams, 2013). Further, men in this study were persistently re-offending during the follow-up period. The results of this study are notable because it supports the feminist belief that males are the more persistent and serious DV offenders. It also illustrates that females are most likely participating in retaliatory/defensive violence but are being arrested because of the failure of the arresting officers to identify a primary aggressor (Gerstenberger & Williams, 2013).

Renauer and Henning (2005) is another study that aims to explain the increase in female arrests. This study found that females are more likely to be arrested for DV offenses alongside their partners, which can be either a sign of mutual aggression, or poor police training in identifying a primary aggressor (p. 113). Females are also more likely to be frequently listed in police reports as victim, while men have higher rates of suspect recidivism rates (Renauer & Henning, 2005). Renauer and Henning's (2005) study demonstrates that males are more likely to recidivate as a suspect than females which supports the gender asymmetry argument championed by feminist theorists. Women arrested for DV offenses are typically participating in bidirectional or defensive violence, and therefore have lower suspect recidivism rates and are the recurring victims in police data (Gerstenberger & Williams, 2013; Renauer & Henning, 2005).

Both Gerstenberger and Williams (2013) and Renauer and Henning (2005) put forth evidence that supports feminist theories on why female offending rates have increased. Further, both of these projects note that primary aggressor laws are important to consider when analyzing dual arrests and bidirectional violence. Primary aggressor laws pertain to this project specifically because of Missouri state law. Hirschel and colleagues (2021) name Missouri among eight other states that use vague language in their laws that mandate officers to arrest a primary aggressor to prevent a dual arrest. Phrases such as "shall attempt" or "shall make reasonable efforts" are used when instructing officers to identify and arrest a primary aggressor as opposed to requiring a primary aggressor arrest (p. 1366). Primary aggressor laws with flimsy language are speculated to enable officers to use more discretion when making DV arrests. This in turn results in higher victim arrest rates because of the increased use of dual arrest strategies (Bridgett, 2020; Finn et al., 2004; Hirschel, 2021).

Feminists have been critical of DV arrest policies. Because this project relies on police arrest data to understand arrest outcomes based on demographic and situational characteristics, detailing DV arrest policies through a feminist lens is critical. The appearance of women in DV arrest records can often be explained by the arrest policy, officer's failure to identify a primary aggressor resulting in a dual arrest, or an officer's personal biases in states with discretionary arrest policies (Bridgett, 2020; Duhaney, 2022; Finn et al., 2004; Franklin et al., 2022; Gerstenberger & Williams, 2013; Hirschel, 2021; Muftic et al., 2007; Renauer & Henning, 2005). Feminist explanations were necessary to dissect for this project because they will help interpret the results of the analysis. This perspective also helps inform what future studies should be conducted to gain more useful results from this data.

This section offered a brief analysis of relevant themes of the feminist perspective and applied them to characteristics that are being studied in this project. Empirical evidence that supported the use of the feminist perspective in explaining DV were also explored. It is now necessary to examine the methods this project is relying on. A thorough account of the data, data cleaning process, measures, and analytic strategy follows this section.

Chapter 4 - Methods

Data

KCMO police department arrest data from July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2023, was used for this project. This time frame was selected to accommodate the police department's updated data collection system. This research project is the first analytic look at KCMO's arrest data that was collected using the new collection system as the new system's start date was July 1, 2019. The data was given to researchers in five separate files titled "arrestees", "offenders," "offense," "property-drugs," and "victims." The offense and property-drugs files were excluded from the analysis because they provided no data relevant to arrest predictors or to DV specifically. The offender file included information on individuals considered by KCMO police to be offenders, whether they were arrested or not, and duplicated the information on arrestees, which was the focus of this project. As such, only the "victim" and "arrestee" data files were used for analyses.

Research Question and Hypotheses

This project's objective is to examine whether variables recorded in arrest data have a significant impact on the arrest outcome, therefore, the research question is: what is the impact of victim, offender, and situational characteristics on police arrest decisions? Based on the research question and the information provided in this project, the hypotheses are as follows.

H₁: Cases that have a victim presenting with any injuries are more likely to result in the offender being arrested on site than cases where the victim presents with no injury.

H₂: Offenders who used any weapons during their assault are more likely to be arrested without a warrant (on-view arrest) than offenders who used no weapon.

H₃: Cases with a female victim and male perpetrator are more likely to result in an arrest of the perpetrator than cases with a male victim and female perpetrator.

The variables used to test the research question and hypotheses span across victim/arrestee demographics and situational characteristics that are all recorded in police arrest data.

Population

The population in this data file is made up of two categories: individuals arrested by KCMO police department from July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2023 and the victims corresponding to each crime/arrestee. The arrestee file contained 43,031 individuals while the victims file originally contained information on 211,189 victims. The number of cases in each file is different because there are many cases in this data that list multiple victims and/or arrestees under one case number. There are also cases in the victim file that do not have a person listed as a victim but instead have a business or religious institution listed. These files do not solely include victims/arrestees of DV-related offenses, therefore, the process of cleaning the data was begun by narrowing the files to only include DV-related cases. Cases with multiple victims and/or arrestees were also addressed during the data cleaning process.

Data Cleaning

The first step to cleaning this data was to retain cases that meet this project's definition of DV. Before combining the two files, the variable "relationship between victim and offender" in the victims file was used to create a filter. This project retained only the following victim-offender relationships: boyfriend/girlfriend, common law spouse, spouse, ex-relationship, and ex-spouse (n=20,275) due to their relevance to DV. A total of 190,914 cases were omitted.

The next issue was the presence of cases with multiple victims and/or arrestees. The cases with multiple victims need to be deleted from the data files because this project's definition of DV does not align with cases that have multiple victims/arrestees. These cases are identified

by the case numbers (CRN). After omitting these cases, the victim datafile was reduced to 16,945 cases while the arrestees file with no duplicates contains 36,892 cases.

The number of cases is still mismatched between files because some case numbers have information on a victim but not an arrestee and vice versa due to the nature of the crime recorded. Therefore, the researchers were tasked with combining these files and only retaining cases that have information on the victim and the arrestee. To do so, the variables in the arrestees' file were added to the victims' file. The first step was to create a "viccount" and a "arresteecount" variable in the respective files that counted the number of victims and arrestees assigned to each CRN in each file. At this point, cases with duplicates were already deleted, thus all cases in both files were given a 1 in the variables. The main function of these variables is utilized when the two files are merged.

The files were merged by selecting the "add variables" option in SPSS and the CRNs in each file were used as the key value. The "add variables" option was selected because each file has different data in different variables, and the CRNs are the key value because this is the only variable that has matching data in both files. In other words, the new combined file will have information on the victims and arrestees under the same CRN. The merged file now has 16,945 victims and 36,892 arrestees, however, most of these cases only have data on a victim or an arrestee. Because this project depends on having data for cases with one victim and one offender, the researchers' next task was to omit cases that do not have data across the victim and the arrestee specific variables.

Cases from the arrestee file that do not have corresponding victim information by CRN display as "sysmis" in all the variables originally in the victim file. This is also true for cases from the victim file that do not have corresponding arrestee data per CRN. The "sysmis" in both

the “viccount” and the “arrestee count” variables were then recoded as 99s. The 99s from these count variables were recoded as 1s in a new variable, “nomatch”. After this was conducted and it was ensured that the frequencies matched, the “select if” function was used to delete the 1s in the “nomatch” variable. In other words, only the cases with information on one victim and one arrestee were retained in this new dataset. To summarize the first portion of data cleaning, the population was narrowed to a sample that only includes cases with relevant relationship categories to DV. The data was then cleaned to ensure only cases with a single victim and a single arrestee were included in the dataset. The new combined dataset contains 6,378 cases.

There are a couple important final data cleaning aspects to note before discussing how any new measures were coded. The first pertains to the victim sex variable. The arrest data has victim’s sex coded as male, female, and unknown sex but only one case falls into the unknown victim sex category after the file was narrowed to the current sample. This anomaly does not provide this project with any useful information because of the relatively insignificant frequency; therefore, the decision was made to omit this one case from the dataset. This brings our dataset down to 6,377 cases. Similarly, both victim and perpetrator ethnicity variables contained cases with unknown ethnicities. In the narrowed sample, there were 748 victims with unknown ethnicity and 572 perpetrators with unknown ethnicity. The researchers attribute these relatively insignificant amounts to data entry issues. Because of the low frequency, the decision was made to also omit these cases from the dataset because no reasonable assumptions can be made by analyzing these cases. A total of 1,777 were deleted. The dataset’s sample equals 4,600 after deleted cases with unknown victim sex and unknown ethnicity of victim and arrestees. Finally, the victim age variable contains two missing values and five cases with the age of zero entered. DV does not allow for a victim of the age of zero to be eligible, thus the missing values and

cases with victims of the age of zero were deleted as well. The final dataset sample contains 4,593 cases.

Independent Variables

Victims' and arrestees' sex, age, race, and ethnicity make up the demographic portion of the independent variable (see Table 1). Situational characteristics are the second portion of the independent variables. These situational characteristics are the UCR offense code attached to each case, victim's injury presented on the scene, relationship status between victim and arrestee's weapon use (see Table 2). These tables display the frequencies of the original variables before creating the measures necessary for analysis.

Table 1 Victim and offender demographics

Demographics	Victims (n= 4,593)	Offenders (n= 4,593)
	% (n)	% (n)
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	20.2% (929)	80.0% (3,674)
Female	79.8% (3,664)	20.0% (919)
<i>Race</i>		
American Indian	.1% (6)	.1% (4)
Asian	.8% (36)	.6% (29)
Black	53.8% (2,473)	61.9% (2,845)
Pacific Islander	.0% (1)	.0% (1)
White	45.2% (2,077)	37.3% (1,714)
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Hispanic	11.3% (518)	10.8% (496)
Non-Hispanic	88.7% (4,075)	89.2% (4,097)

Table 2 Situational characteristics

Variables	% (n)
<i>Victim-Offender Relationship</i>	

Boyfriend/Girlfriend	62.2% (2,858)
Common law spouse	.4% (18)
Spouse	16.0% (736)
Ex-relationship	19.4% (892)
Ex-spouse	1.9% (89)
<i>Weapon</i>	
Unarmed	92.7% (4,257)
Firearm	.2% (7)
Automatic firearm	0% (2)
Handgun	2.4% (109)
Automatic handgun	.3% (13)
Rifle	.1% (5)
Automatic rifle	0% (1)
Shotgun	0% (2)
Other automatic firearm	.1% (4)
Other firearm	.1% (3)
Lethal cutting instrument	2.3% (104)
Club/blackjack/brass knuckles	.6% (27)
Multiple weapons (no guns)	.1% (5)
Unknown weapon	1.2% (54)
<i>Victim injury</i>	
No injury	24.6% (1,129)
Apparent broken bones	.3% (12)
Possible internal injury	.5% (24)
Severe lacerations	1.2% (54)
Apparent minor injury	57.5% (2,640)
Other major injury	.6% (29)
Loss of teeth	.1% (3)
Unconsciousness	.3% (15)
Two injuries	1.0% (48)
Three injuries	.2% (7)

Four injuries	.1% (3)
Five injuries	0% (1)
Unknown injury	13.7% (628)
<i>UCR offense code</i>	
Murder/homicide	.3% (15)
Kidnapping	.2% (7)
Forcible rape	.3% (14)
Forcible sodomy	.2% (8)
Robbery	.8% (37)
Aggravated assault	19.1% (878)
Simple assault	64.0% (2,941)
Intimidation	2.7% (122)
Burglary/breaking and entering	.6% (29)
Theft from building	.2% (8)
Theft from vehicle	.1% (4)
Theft of motor vehicle parts/accessories	0% (2)
All other larceny	.3% (12)
Motor vehicle theft	.1% (4)
Stolen property offense	0% (1)
Destruction/damage/vandalism or property	6.9% (317)
Statutory rape	0% (1)
Disorderly conduct	.1% (5)
Family offense (nonviolent)	.3% (16)
Trespassing	.5% (23)
All other offenses	3.2% (149)

After observing the descriptives, measures were created for analysis. The following section explains how each of these new variables were grouped and coded for analysis.

Victim and Offender Sex

As mentioned, the single unknown victim sex case in the narrowed sample was deleted, leaving this project with only female and male victims in the sample. The victim sex variable created for analysis was named “vicfemaledum” and it was coded such that 1=female victims and 0=male victims. Arrestees’ sex was coded a similar way, the only difference being that there were no cases recorded with unknown perpetrator sex in the sample. The new arrestee’s sex variable was titled “femaleperpdum” and were coded such that 1=female arrestees and 0=male arrestees.

Victim and Offender Age

Age is the only continuous measure in this project. The range of the victim’s age=69 years, the mean=34.86 years, and the standard deviation=11.373. The arrestee’s age range=73 years, the mean=35.51 years, and the standard deviation=11.294.

Victim and Offender Race

The race variable for victims was recoded into a dichotomous variable. The same was done for the race variable for arrestees. The measure for white victims (vicwhitedum) was coded such that 1=white victims and 0=non-white victims (i.e., American Indian, Asian, Black, Pacific Islander). The same coding was executed for the perpetrator’s race variable (perpwhitedum).

Victim and Offender Ethnicity

The ethnicity of victims was recoded dichotomously. “Vichispanicdum” was coded so that 1=Hispanic victims and 0=non-Hispanic victims. Arrestee ethnicity was coded to create the same measures as victim ethnicity under the variable name “perphispanicdum”. The next section describes how the situational characteristics were grouped and coded for analysis beginning with the UCR offense code variable.

UCR Offense Code

The original files had UCR codes for victims separate from offenders. The combined file has 23 separate UCR codes. The researchers coded these codes so violent and nonviolent UCR offense codes are grouped together. The "violentUCRdum" variable is coded so that 1=murder/homicide, kidnapping, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation, and statutory rape and 0=burglary/breaking and entering, theft from building, theft from vehicle, theft of vehicle parts/accessories, all other larceny, vehicle theft, stolen property offense, destruction/damage/vandalism of property, disorderly conduct, family offense (nonviolent), trespassing, and all other offenses.

Victim Injury

The victim's injury variable was recoded to group victims with an injury together and group uninjured victims together. "Injuredvicdum" was coded so that 1=apparent broken bones, possible internal injuries, severe lacerations, apparent minor injury, other major injury, loss of teeth, unconsciousness, two injuries, three injuries, four injuries, five injuries, and unknown injury and 0=no injury.

Victim and Offender Relationship

The relationship between victim and offender variable was dichotomously grouped so that current relationships are together and ex-relationships are together. The variable created was "currentrelatdum" and it was coded so that 1=boy/girlfriend, common-law spouse, and spouse and 0= ex-relationship and ex-spouse. It is important to note that the original dataset did not have any relationships coded as "same-sex" even though the codebook provided by the KCMO police department shows a "same-sex" relationship option for officers to select.

Arrestee Weapon Use

The “armedperpdum” variable was coded so that 1=firearm, automatic firearm, handgun, automatic handgun, rifle, automatic rifle, shotgun, other firearm, other automatic firearm, multiple firearms, unknown weapon and 0=unarmed.

Dependent Variable

Arrest Outcome

Table 3 Dependent Variable Descriptives

	%	n=
Type of Arrest		
On-view arrest (warrantless)	27.8	1,278
Summoned/cited	27.9	1,280
In-custody (warranted)	44.3	2,035

The arrest outcome is the dependent variable for this project and it is measured by the “type of arrest” variable. The type of arrests is recorded by police across three different categories: on view arrest, summoned/cited, or in-custody. On-view arrests describe when an officer arrests an individual on site with no warrant, cases noted as summons/cited represent cases where no individual was taken into custody, but they received a summons to court or a citation. In-custody arrests are recorded when an arrest occurs based off an arrest warrant. These arrest outcomes were recoded into a dichotomous variable (arrestedoffdum) where 1=cases that ended in arrest (on-view arrest and in-custody) and 0=cases that did not end in arrest (i.e., the summoned/cited cases). Table 3 displays the frequency of each arrest outcome originally recorded by the KCMO police.

Chapter 5 - Results

As stated, the objective of this research project is to determine if victim and/or arrestee demographics and other situational characteristics impact arrest outcomes in domestic violence cases using KCMO arrest data. This next section reports and analyzes the descriptive statistics of the created measures. This includes a discussion of the bivariate relationships between the various independent variables and the dependent variable. After the descriptive statistics are discussed, there will then be an in-depth exploration of the logistical regression results.

Descriptive Statistics

After cleaning the data and creating measures out of the given original variables, the dataset contains 4,593 cases and has ten independent variables and one dependent variable. The table below displays the frequency of the created independent variable and the dichotomized dependent variable.

Table 4 Descriptives of Measures

Measures	% (N)
<i>Victims' Demographics</i>	
Female	79.8% (3,664)
White	45.2% (2,077)
Hispanic	11.3% (518)
<i>Arrestees' Demographics</i>	
Female	20.0% (919)
White	37.3% (1,714)
Hispanic	10.8% (496)
<i>Situational Variables</i>	
Current Relationship	78.6% (3,612)
Armed	7.3% (336)
Injured	75.4% (3,464)
Violent code	87.6% (4,023)
<i>Age</i>	
Victim	Mean: 34.86 years Range: 69 years Standard Deviation: 11.373
Arrestee	Mean: 35.51 years Range: 73 years Standard Deviation: 11.294
Dependent Variable	
<i>Arrest Outcome</i>	
Offender arrested on-site	72.1% (3,313)

The descriptive statistics of these variables give the study an initial understanding of what each measure consists of and must be dissected before analyzing the bivariate relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Starting with the demographic independent variables, a large percentage of victims were female (79.8%, n=3,664) while male

victims make up about 20.2% (n=929) of the sample. The sex of arrestees closely mirrored the sex of victims. Because there were no same-sex relationships included in the pre-cleaned and combined dataset, it would be expected that the perpetrator sex frequency matches exactly with victim's sex. However, 20.0% (n=919) of arrestees are female and 80.0% (n=3,674) arrestees are male.

Victim's race is almost evenly split between non-white and white victims (54.8%, n=2,516 and 45.2%, n=2,077 respectively). Arrestees' race measures are very similar with a slightly greater difference between non-white and white arrestees. Non-white arrestees comprised 62.7% (n=2,879) of the sample while 37.3% (n=1,714) of arrestees are white. Most victims were reported as being non-Hispanic (88.7%, n=4,075) while the rest of the sample consists of 11.3% (n=518) Hispanic victims. Arrestees' ethnicity is comparable to the victim's ethnicity. A large portion of the arrestees fall into the non-Hispanic category (89.2%, n=4,097) while Hispanic arrestees make up only 10.8% (n=496) of the sample.

The age of victims ranges from a minimum of 12 years to a maximum of 81 years (range=69). The average age of victims was 34.86 years with the standard deviation equaling 11.373. Arrestees' age has a minimum of 13 years and a maximum of 86 years (range=73), the average age of arrestees is 35.51 years, and this variable has a standard deviation of 11.294.

Moving onto the situational independent variables, the UCR offense code was broken up into violent and non-violent codes. Violent offense codes largely outnumber the nonviolent codes (87.6%, n=4,023 v. 12.4%, n=570). Victim injury is the next situational variable with 3,464 (75.4%) injured victims and 1,129 (24.6%) uninjured victims. The relationship variable measures current relationships versus ex-relationships. A majority of cases were coded as current relationships (78.6%, n=3,612) and 21.4% (n=981) of cases had ex-relationships. The final

situational variable is the arrestee weapon-use. Only 7.3% (n=336) of the arrestees were reported as armed while 92.7% (n=4,257) arrestees were unarmed.

The final descriptive statistics that need to be examined are those of the dependent variable, arrest outcome. The majority of cases resulted in an arrest (72.1%, n=3,313) while the summoned/cited arrestees make up 27.9% (n=1,280) of the sample. The next section will discuss the crosstabulations of the independent variables on the arrest outcome dependent variable.

Bivariate Relationships

Table 5 Cross-Tabulations of Arrest Outcomes and the Demographic and Situational Variables

Variable	Arrest Outcome			
	Summoned/ Cited	Arrested	Asymptotic Significance	χ^2
<i>Gender of Victim</i>				
Male	15.6% (200)	22.0% (729)	<.001	23.286
Female	84.4% (1,080)	78.0% (2,584)		
<i>Gender of Arrestee</i>				
Male	84.0% (1,075)	78.4% (2,599)	<.001	17.678
Female	16.0% (205)	21.6% (714)		
<i>Race of Victim</i>				
Non-White	58.2% (745)	53.5% (1,771)	.004	8.399
White	41.8% (535)	46.5% (1,542)		
<i>Race of Arrestee</i>				
Non-White	65.6% (840)	61.5% (2,039)	.010	6.569
White	34.4% (440)	38.5% (1,274)		
<i>Ethnicity of Victim</i>				
Non-Hispanic	90.2% (1,155)	88.1% (2,920)	.044	4.057
Hispanic	9.8% (125)	11.9% (393)		

Ethnicity of Arrestee

Non-Hispanic	90.3% (1,156)	88.8% (2,941)	.131	2.276
Hispanic	9.7% (124)	11.2% (372)		

Type of Relationship

Ex Relationship	29.2% (374)	18.3% (607)	<.001	65.272
Current Relationship	70.8% (906)	81.7% (2,706)		

Victim Injury

Un-Injured	25.0% (320)	24.4% (809)	.682	.168
Injured	75.0% (960)	75.6% (2,504)		

UCR Code

Non-Violent	18.1% (232)	10.2% (338)	<.001	53.316
Violent	81.9% (1,048)	89.8% (2,975)		

Arrestee Weapon-Use

Un-Armed	94.8% (1,214)	91.9% (3,043)	<.001	12.202
Armed	5.2% (66)	8.1% (270)		

Crosstabulation Analysis

To analyze the individual bivariate relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, crosstabulations were performed. This strategy was utilized because the dependent variable and all but two of the independent variables were dichotomous. Table 5 illustrates these relationships, and the following section will discuss the statistically significant bivariate relationships in more detail.

The relationship between the gender of the victim and offender being arrested was found to be statistically significant, $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 23.286, p<.001$. The gender of the victims falls mainly in the female category, and the majority of cases with a female victim result in an arrest of the offender associated. There were more arrested than summoned/cited cases for both male and female cases. Males make up the larger portion of the gender of the arrestees' variable and there were more cases that resulted in arrest. The bivariate relationship between the gender of

arrestees and the arrest of the arrestee is statistically significant, $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 17.678$, $p < .001$.

Race is the next section of the bivariate relationships that were found to be statistically significant. Beginning with the race of victims, the crosstabulation table shows that there are slightly more non-white victims than white victims. Most of the offenders of non-white victims are associated with an arrest versus a summons/citation. There are also more offenders arrested rather than summoned/cited that have white victims. Overall, there are more arrests for offenders with white and non-white victims than there are summoned/cited offenders for both categories of victims. This relationship between victim's race and offenders' arrest outcome was found to be statistically significant, $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 8.399$, $p = .004$. The race of arrestees follows a similar trend. There are more arrests for both white and non-white arrestees and there are more non-white individuals in both the summoned/cited and the arrested column. This relationship was also found to be statistically significant, $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 6.569$, $p = .010$.

The relationship between the ethnicity of victims and the arrest outcome of their offender was found to be statistically significant, $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 4.057$, $p = .044$ while the ethnicity of arrestees and their arrest outcomes were not found to be statistically significant. There are more non-Hispanic victims in both arrest outcomes and there are more arrests recorded than cases that resulted in a summons or a citation. To conclude the demographic section of the bivariate relationship analysis, the independent variables that were found to have a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable include the gender of the victims and arrestees, the race of the victims and arrestees and the ethnicity of victims. Next, bivariate relationships between arrest outcome and the situational variables will be explained.

The first situational independent variable is the relationship status between victim and offender and its effect on the offender's arrest outcome. The crosstabulation shows that within this variable, there are more cases for both the ex and the current categories that resulted in an arrest versus a summons/citation. This relationship was found to be statistically significant $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 65.272, p < .001$. The UCR code recorded is the next situational variable and its relationship with the offender's arrest outcome was found to be statistically significant $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 53.316, p < .001$. There are slightly more arrests than summons/citation cases in the non-violent row while the violent row has a large difference between summons/cited and arrests, the latter having more cases than the former.

The final situational variable that had a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable was the arrestee's weapon use, $\chi^2 (1, n=4,593) = 12.202, p < .001$. Most of these unarmed offenders fall into the arrest column (91.9%, $n=3,043$). There were also more arrested offenders that were armed than summoned/cited offenders that were armed. Notably, the relationship between a victim's injury and arrest outcome was the only bivariate relationship in the situational independent variables that was not found to be statistically significant.

Logistical Regression Analysis

Now that the crosstabulation table and the bivariate relationships have been explained, the logistical regression analysis will be analyzed. Logistical regression analysis tests the relationships between a dichotomous dependent variable (i.e. arrest outcomes) and each independent variable all while controlling for the other independent variables in the model. The type of variables in this project lend itself best to this kind of analysis, that is the dependent variable is dichotomous, and all but two independent variables are dichotomous as well. This analysis strategy is also best suited for this project's objective of determining whether the

independent variables are predictors for the dependent variable. These results can be found in Table 6.

Due to the number of independent variables of interest in this project, different blocks were utilized in the analysis to examine the impact of the demographic variables prior to including the situational context variables.

Block One

Victim and arrestees' sex, race, ethnicity, and age are the independent variables included in the first block. These demographic variables effect on the dependent variable, arrest outcome, are being tested through a logistical regression. The overall model was found to be statistically significant $\chi^2 (8, n=4,593) = 52.679, p=.000$. Further, the -2 Log likelihood value = 5,382.74. The only variable in this first block that had a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable was victim sex. These results indicate that offenders of female victims have 29.9% lower odds of being arrested than the offenders of male victims in this sample (OR=0.701).

Block Two

The second model contains the situational independent variables: relationship status, UCR offense codes, victim injury, and arrestee weapon use. The model as a whole was found to be statistically significant $\chi^2 (12, n=4,593) = 152.825, p= .000$. The -2 Log likelihood value equals 5,282.60. The statistically significant predictive variables in this model are the type of relationship ($p=.000$), UCR offense code ($p=.000$), and arrestee weapon-use ($p=.001$). Accordingly, cases with current relationships between victim and perpetrator have 64.6% higher odds of resulting in the arrest of the perpetrator as opposed to cases with ex-relationships (OR=1.646). Cases with violent UCR codes were found to have 67.1% higher odds of resulting in the arrest of the perpetrator than cases with non-violent UCR codes (OR=1.671). Finally,

armed perpetrators have 58.4% higher odds of being arrested than unarmed perpetrators (OR=1.584).

There is a difference of 100.14 between model one's -2 Log likelihood value and model two. Because model two has the smaller value, this difference indicates that model two's additional independent variables improve the model's ability to explain arrest outcomes. This difference, however, is relatively insignificant.

Table 6 Logistical Regression Results: Block One

Demographic IV	B	SE	Wald	<i>p</i>	Exp(B)
<i>Sex</i>					
Female Victims	-.355	.161	4.855	.028	.701
Female Arrestees	.096	.160	.360	.548	1.101
<i>Race</i>					
White Victims	.153	.096	2.540	.111	1.165
White Arrestees	-.004	.101	.002	.968	.996
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
Hispanic Victims	.163	.139	1.375	.241	1.177
Hispanic Arrestees	.042	.142	.087	.768	1.043
<i>Age</i>					
Victim	.003	.005	.517	.472	1.003
Arrestee	.010	.005	4.771	.029	1.010

Table 7 Logistical Regression Results: Block Two

Demographic IV	B	SE	Wald	<i>p</i>	Exp(B)
<i>Sex</i>					
Female Victims	-.352	.162	4.751	.029	.703
Female Arrestees	.105	.161	.431	.511	1.111

Race

White Victims	.142	.097	2.129	.145	1.152
White Arrestees	-.031	.102	.090	.764	.970

Ethnicity

Hispanic Victims	.157	.140	1.243	.265	1.169
Hispanic Arrestees	.034	.144	.057	.811	1.035

Age

Victim	.006	.005	1.471	.225	1.006
Arrestee	.008	.005	3.239	.072	1.008

Situational IV

Current Relationship Status	.498	.080	38.659	.000	1.646
Violent UCR Codes	.513	.099	27.089	.000	1.671
Injury Victims	.068	.078	.758	.384	1.070
Armed Arrestee	.460	.144	10.272	.001	1.584

Chapter 6 - Discussion

This research project is the first analytic look at KCMO's arrest data. Specifically, its focus is on how police arrest decisions during DV incidents are impacted by the demographic characteristics of the victims/offenders and the situational characteristics of incidents. Beginning this section will be a brief discussion of the demographics of the sample as well as the situational characteristics utilized in this project. This is followed by an examination of the results that correlate to the hypotheses and an analysis of how these results fit among current DV research. The last portion of the discussion section focuses on the limitations of this project and recommendations for future studies.

Demographic Characteristics Results

Most of the sample's demographics support past DV research. Most of the victims were female (79.8%, n=3,664) while 80.0% (n=3,674) of arrestees were male. This is unsurprising as women are most often reported as victims in studies that utilize agency data and male offenders are most often the perpetrators of DV (Bates & Weare, 2020; Bates et al., 2019; Butto, 2019; Dobash et al., 1992; Drijber et al., 2013; Fagerlund, 2021). The frequency of non-white victims slightly outweighs the frequency of white victims (54.8%, n=2,516 and 45.2%, n=2,077 respectively). These results support the broader literature as well. Women of color are most often reported as victims of DV (Beyer et al., 2015; Decker et al., 2019; Drotning et al., 2022; Holliday et al., 2020; Leemis et al., 2022; Stockman et al., 2015). The frequencies of the race variables of victim and arrestee mirror each other. There are 2,879 (62.7%) non-white arrestees and 1,714 (37.3%) white arrestees. It is inferred that the similar frequencies between the race of victims and the race of arrestees is due to homophily (Martin et al., 2013; Valandra et al., 2019).

The one demographic characteristic that did not support past DV research was age. Previous research states that females between the ages of 18 and 24 years report the highest rates of DV while males tend to first experience DV before 25 years old (Catalano, 2012; Decker et al., 2019; Katz et al., 2023; Kaufman-Parks et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2017; Stockl et al., 2014; Thompson & Tapp, 2023). The average age of victims in this sample is about 35 years. This could be due to the demographic make up of KCMO. There is also empirical evidence that demonstrates different forms of abuse occur at different ages (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022; Karakurt & Silver, 2013; Rennison, 2001). If the sample has higher rates of a type of abuse that is associated with older age groups, this could be the cause of the higher average age of victim and offender. The situational characteristics of the sample will now be discussed and situated with current DV research.

Situational Characteristics Results

The sample has 3,612 (78.6%) current relationships and 981 (21.4%) ex-relationships recorded. Relationship status in abusive relationships is unsurprisingly a complicated dimension of this phenomena. Although DV undeniably occurs within current relationships, many studies have concluded that individuals, especially women, are at a greater risk for injury and/or death when they leave their abusive relationship (Campbell et al., 2007; Meyer, 2012; Sabri et al., 2021; Spencer et al., 2021). This explains why ex-relationships still make up a significant portion of this sample.

Injured victims (75.4%, n=3,464) largely outnumber the uninjured victims (24.6%, n=1,129). These results support empirical evidence that indicate that DV cases that result in injury are more likely to result in a police presence (Ackerman & Love, 2014; Bachman & Coker, 1995; McLaughry et al., 2013; Rakovec-Felser, 2014). The next situational variable to

discuss is UCR offense codes. There are far more cases coded as having a violent UCR code (87.6%, n=4,023) than the non-violent UCR codes (12.4%, n=570). The difference in frequencies is notable, especially because there are 12 non-violent codes and only 9 violent codes. There is not much research specifically on UCR offense codes and their impact on DV arrest rates, but violent UCR offense codes result in injury more than non-violent offense codes. As has been stated, victim injury in DV cases have higher police reporting rates (Bachman & Coker, 1995; Karlsson et al., 2018; McLaughry et al., 2013; Rakovec-Felser, 2014). In summary, violent UCR offense codes result in more victim injury which ultimately results in the higher likelihood of having the DV incident be reported to the police.

The final situational variable reports that 336 (7.3%) arrestees are armed, and 4,257 (92.7%) arrestees are unarmed in this sample. This is in accordance with other DV studies. Similar to victim injury and UCR offense codes, DV cases that involve a weapon brought more attention of the police than cases without a weapon (Ackerman & Love, 2014; Akers & Karlsson et al., 2018; Kaukinen, 2009). This could be due to the threat of the weapon or due to any victim injury presented on the scene (Kyriacou et al., 1999; Tennakoon et al., 2020).

Hypotheses Results

The first hypothesis theorized that offenders with a victim that presented an injury were more likely to be arrested than offenders whose victim had no injury. This hypothesis is not supported by the logistical regression results because the arrest outcome's relationship with victim injury was not found to be statistically significant ($p=.384$). This is an interesting finding because the number of injured victims (75.4%, n=3,464) vastly outweighed the number of uninjured victims (24.6%, n=3,464). The reason there was no relationship between injured victims and arrest outcomes is most likely because of how the injury measure was created.

Twelve different injuries were lumped into one category (included cases with several injuries reported on the same victim) while the uninjured measure had only one original injury code included (“no injury”). If the project chose to separate the injuries using a more nuanced strategy, there may have been a better chance to see a statistically significant relationship between victim injury and arrest outcome.

H₂ found support in the logistical regression results. Armed offenders have 58.4% higher odds of being arrested than unarmed offenders (OR=1.584, $p=.001$). This finding is supported by other studies’ findings. Offender weapon-use has generally been found to increase the likelihood of arrest (Dichter et al., 2011; Eigenberg et al., 1996; Robinson & Chandek, 2000). This is due to the threat of the weapon itself to the victims, reporting officers, and bystanders (Eigenberg et al., 1996; Kyriacou et al., 1999; Tennakoon et al., 2020; Ward-Lasher et al., 2018).

The final hypothesis predicted that cases with a female victim and a male offender were more likely to end in an arrest than cases with a male victim and female offender. The logistical regression results for arrestees’ sex were not found to be statistically significant ($p=.511$), however, victim’s sex was statistically significant ($p=.029$) in the model. Despite the results being significant, the regression results on victim sex did not support H₃ which theorized that cases with female victims were more likely to result in an arrest of the offender. The results stated that offenders with female victims actually had 29.9% lower odds of being arrested.

Although the hypothesis was not supported by this finding, it is not an uncommon one in the broader literature. One of the likely reasons why male offenders are less likely to be arrested in cases with a female victim can be attributed to the discretionary arrest policies in Missouri. Discretionary arrest policies are linked to a decrease in standardization of DV arrests. This in turn leads to varying results in arrest outcomes over all demographic characteristics (Dawson &

Hotton, 2014; Durfee & Petzer, 2014; Gezinski, 2022; Gover et al., 2011; Myhill & Johnson, 2016; Saxton et al., 2022). The feminist perspective also posits that greater police discretion leads to more gender biases within police decision making. Langhinrichsen and colleagues (2012), in their review of 50 scholarly sources that studied unidirectional and bidirectional DV, found that about 57.9% of DV is bidirectional while 28.3% of unidirectional DV cases have female perpetrators (p. 208). Responding officers without adequate DV training/education may not take bidirectional DV cases seriously which could be contributing to the lower likelihood of arrests in cases with female victims in this dataset. They also may be allowing personal perceptions of DV and/or gender impact their response strategies. Without proper DV education and arrest standardization, officers may not understand that females tend to participate in defensive violence (Duhaney, 2022; Gerstenberger & Williams, 2013; Larance & Miller, 2017). The discussion on the multivariate analysis results have now been concluded and the limitations of this research project will now be explored.

Limitations

The first limitation confronts DV research as a whole: underreporting. Underreporting is a problem for DV in general, but male victims specifically have been found to vastly underreport their experiences of DV. Therefore, characteristics of DV incidents involving male victims are hard to study and understand (Drijber et al. 2013; Durfee; 2012; Gezinski, 2022; Hirschel et al., 2017; Huntley et al., 2019; Novisky & Peralta, 2015).

The potential mis-coding of same-sex relationships by responding officers is the next limitation. The frequency of the arrestee's sex variable does not match up exactly with the frequency of the victim's sex variable. In other words, because there were no same-sex relationships recorded in the original dataset (despite there being a same-sex relationship option

for officers to select when they are reporting their arrest information), it was expected that the victim sex variable would simply be an inverse of the arrestee sex variable. Instead, the frequencies are different by 10 cases. The non-existence of these cases in the dataset is not because of lower rates of DV within same-sex relationships. In fact, the rates of DV victimization within same-sex relationships has been found to be similar and/or higher than the rates of victimizations experienced by individuals in a heterosexual relationship (Badenes-Ribera et al., 2016; Finneran et al., 2012; Finneran & Stephenson, 2013; Graham et al., 2019; Kar et al., 2022; Messinger, 2011; Rolle et al., 2019). Considering the findings that demonstrate the prevalence of DV in same-sex relationships, it is inferred that the discrepancy in the frequencies of the victim/arrestee's sex variables is due to a reporting error on the officers' part. This error in reporting can most likely be chalked up to the officers' unfamiliarity with the new reporting system's relationship options. In summary, KCMO police officers' error in reporting same-sex relationships led to the research limitation that inhibited more detailed data to be culled from the type of relationship variable.

Another major limitation of this research project is the missing information on socioeconomic status from this dataset. Socioeconomic status is a significant predictor for DV (Ahmadabadi et al., 2017; Goodman et al., 2009; Reyat et al., 2024; Wilson, 2019). Many studies have found that females who make a higher income than their intimate partners have increased DV victimization rates (Ahmadabadi et al., 2017). Other evidence illustrates that in low-income households, DV victimization rates are higher for both intimate partners (Ahmadabadi et al., 2017; Goodman et al., 2009). Not only is socioeconomic status a significant factor to consider alone, but it also has an impact on other variables such as race.

It is widely accepted that socioeconomic factors largely contribute to the increased levels of DV in communities of color (Benson et al., 2004; Field & Caetano, 2004; RIDVRES, 2020; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). This research project's sample contains slightly more non-white victims than white victims (54.8%, n=2,516 and 45.2%, n=2,077 respectively). These frequencies align with the broader DV literature. Unfortunately, a deeper analysis of why non-white victims in this sample experience higher rates of DV cannot be conducted because the data does not contain any variables that measure the socioeconomic status of victims/offenders. The absence of this variable may account for why the multivariate models largely do not explain arrest outcomes in this dataset.

A large category of limitations for this research project is the absence of variables that would provide a deeper contextual layer to the data. Because DV is such a complicated phenomenon, the context of the situations that police are called to is important for an explanatory analysis of arrest outcomes. The missing contextual variables may explain why the multivariate analysis did not explain much variance in arrest decisions in this sample.

Responding officer characteristics is one factor that may have led to a deeper analysis of arrest decisions. Some studies have found that police officers' sex impacts their general police philosophy and individual DV perceptions. In turn, this leads to a difference in arrest decisions between officers based on their sex (Cormier & Woodworth, 2008; Lockwood & Prohaska, 2015). Although many past studies of officer's sex's impact on DV arrest decisions have been qualitative, this project's analysis may have gained more explanatory power if the dataset included a variable on responding officer's sex or other demographic variables.

Discretionary arrest policy states, like Missouri, inhibit standardization of DV arrests. This makes measuring bidirectional DV using arrest data more difficult. The scope of this project

included only unidirectional cases. Even if bidirectional cases were allowed in the sample, the data does not have any necessary variables that would help the researchers to understand these cases better. For example, there is no variable that measures if the violence was one-sided, no variable that indicates whether a dual arrest was made, and no variable that measures the amount of DV calls that have been made by the victim/offender in the past. If the dataset included these variables, involving bi-directional cases in the sample would have been beneficial to the analysis. Taking these limitations into consideration, future research ideas will next be explored.

Recommendations for Future Research

The limitations that this project experienced may have hindered its results, but they gave insight into how future studies could be structured. By filling the gaps experienced by this project, other studies may be able to measure and statistically analyze the contextual factors that are associated with DV incidents that result in an arrest. Future research may benefit from including qualitative data that aims to answer internal decision making of responding officers when they are determining a primary aggressor or a dual arrest/no arrest decision. Using qualitative interview data parallel to the quantitative arrest data may help account for the nuances of DV like the presence of bidirectional violence while quantitatively analyzing police arrest outcomes with demographic and situational characteristics.

Despite the limitations, this research project was beneficial because it was the first analysis of KCMO's arrest data using their new data collection system. The KCMO police department may find it necessary to slightly alter how responding officers record arrest data so adequate data analysis may be performed on their arrest data. This project noted that several beneficial variables were not available in the data, therefore, the KCMO police department may find it necessary to add other indicators to strengthen the information found within police

reports. The limitations detailed in this section have led to reasonable suggestions for future research that would strengthen and extend this project's goals. The next section will briefly summarize the research project and draw it to a conclusion.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

Police's response to DV calls are rife with multi-faceted responses, beliefs, and outcomes. This area of research contains varying conclusions that have been drawn from the results of studies that have attempted to measure police response to DV. This project's goal was to understand how victim and offender demographic characteristics as well as situational characteristics have impacted KCMO police department's arrest outcomes. This project can conclude that utilizing arrest data alone may not be sufficient for explaining arrest outcomes in DV cases.

The research hypotheses found little support. Victim sex was found to be statistically significant, although not in the way the hypotheses predicted. Offenders with female victims were less likely to be arrested in this dataset. The other statistically significant results all involve situational variables. Cases coded as having a current relationship between victim and offender were more likely to result in an arrest of the offender and cases with violence UCR offender codes attached also were more likely to result in the arrest of the offender. Finally, offenders who were armed at the scene were more likely to be arrested than those unarmed.

Victim sex and arrest outcome was the only result that was slightly surprising. It is not uncommon for a study to find that offenders with female victims are less likely to be arrested. This is mostly because the relationship between sex of offender/victim, DV, and police is difficult to boil down to one result. Overall, these results are significant to the vast field of DV research because it asserts that multiple types of data should be utilized when attempting to measure arrest outcomes based on demographic and situational characteristics. It is near impossible to understand police arrest decisions from quantitative data alone. Research should continue to be produced on DV not only because of the high prevalence rates but also because of

the complicated interaction between gender dynamics and police intervention with an already complicated DV phenomenon.

Chapter 8 - References

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