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From the Editors

Dear Colleagues,

This issue of the Southwest Journal of Criminal Justice marks the complete transition to us as co-editors, and we are excited about the direction the journal is currently taking. We have seen an increase in the number of high-quality articles being submitted to the journal, we are pleased with the high quality of reviews we are receiving, and we are very pleased with the diverse articles that are making it through the peer-review process. We believe that the current issue's four articles will bear this out.

Granberg-Rademacker, Bumgarner, and Johnson's empirical piece on School Violence is a very timely topic, coming in the wake of the VA Tech massacre. This is followed by an article by Stephen W. Verrill which remains a source of interest to our profession: the issue of college degree requirements among criminal justice agencies. The third article is an international article by Kim, Gerber, and Kim, detailing the characteristics of incarcerated women in South Korea who murdered their spouses, drawing upon both feminist and age-graded theory. Finally, we have a research note on sentencing data by Hartley, Madden, and Spohn. It is our hope that the quality and diversity of these articles, along with the two book reviews, will allow all of our readers to find something of interest in these pages.

Since taking over the journal, we have seen the number of submissions increase, and already this year we are further along in the number of articles submitted, the number of articles currently under peer review, and the number of articles falling into the "revise and resubmit" category. We hope that by early summer, the Fall issue will be taking final shape and that we may have it available mid-semester.

We presented last Fall's issue in print form in Seattle at the SWACJ business meeting, and we received high praise. As mentioned in a previous "From the Editors," we hope to move the journal to a permanent print by way of association with a journal publisher, but we have some work to do before we can make that leap. Almost all of the print journals publish four issues a year, and we may need to move in that direction in order for our affiliation with a publisher to become a reality. We may also need to demonstrate that we can maintain the journal at a high level with the increase to four issues. The next natural progression, then, may be to three issues a year. This will be a topic of consideration for the next business meeting in Corpus Christi: Which is exactly where we hope to see all of you October 4-6, 2007!

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Do School Violence Policies Matter? An Empirical Analysis of Four Approaches to Reduce School Violence

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ABSTRACT

Using data from the 2000 School Survey on Crime and Safety, this study examined the effects of school uniforms, security cameras, parental input, and school counselors on school-related deaths, sexual attacks, assaults, and weapons possessions. The results were mixed but generally showed that school uniform policies, security cameras and formal mechanisms for parental input can help in curbing certain types of school violence. Specifically, school uniform policies can help reduce the number of sexual attacks and the supply of weapons in school. The presence of security cameras can reduce instances of school-related deaths, sexual attacks, and the flow of weapons into schools. Formal mechanisms for involving parents can help decrease the number of school-related assaults. Overall, these findings suggest that school officials can take both proactive and reactive policy steps to address violence problems in their school, and that policy remedies can be narrowly tailored to attend to the specific type of violence encountered.

Key Words: school violence, school-related deaths, sexual attacks, assaults, and weapons possession, security policies

INTRODUCTION

A recent string of fatally violent encounters at schools has brought the issue of school violence back into the forefront for many education officials. Within less than a week's time between September 27, 2006 and October 2, 2006, fatal shootings occurred in Colorado, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, leaving a high school principal, a teenager, and five young children dead ("School Shooting," 2006). In March of 2005, a pupil shot and killed 5 fellow classmates, a teacher, and an unarmed security guard at the Red Lake (Minnesota) High School. A year and a half before that, on September 24, 2003, a student shot and killed two fellow classmates at Ricori High School in Cold Spring, Minnesota (Walsh, 2005). While school shootings on the whole are rare, these tragic incidents and others highlight in stark fashion the vulnerability to violence students and school staff are burdened with when pitted against the determination of a disgruntled or disturbed assailant bent on destructive, violent behavior. This stark reality leaves many school administrators wondering about the security situation at their own schools. If an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, then certainly school administrators should actively seek to enact school policies that are designed to curb school violence.

Humorist and Minnesota native Garrison Keillor once said: "Nothing you do for children is ever wasted. They seem not to notice us, hovering, averting our eyes, and they seldom offer thanks, but what we do for them is never wasted" (Toliver, 2005, p. 98). While the spirit of this statement is well-intentioned and well-taken, it is hyperbole in a public policy context. Resources are limited, and some things done for children might indeed qualify as "wasteful" in light of alternatives. The question this paper seeks to answer is whether or not school violence policies do anything to enhance the safety of students, teachers, and others.

Using a multivariate approach with univariate follow-up analyses, our findings suggest that school violence policies are individually tailored remedies that address different types of school violence and, as such, appear to help reduce particular forms of school violence. Our analysis was based on the use of four different measures of school violence as well as four different school policies that have been linked in the school violence literature as curtailing school violence.

LITERATURE

School Violence

School violence can generally be defined as threats, weapon possession, or physical conduct or intimidation perpetrated against students and staff while at school or traveling to and from school (Lintott, 2004). Literature on school violence is quite varied, and covers a wide variety of related areas. Sociological studies examine extraneous social and environmental factors in an effort to explain school violence (Fergusson, Swain-Campbell, & Horwood, 2004; Randolph, Koblinsky, & Roberts, 1996; Smith & Smith, 2006). Studies of educational psychology examine psychological factors such as peer pressure, stress, cognition, emotional development and their relation to school violence (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000). Other studies have examined the effects of school violence in the short and long-term (Lawrence & Green, 2005; Leary, Kowalski, Smith, & Phillips, 2003), as well as the different types of violence: shootings, assaults, sex-related violence, and weapon-related violence (Garbarino, Bradshaw, & Vorrasi, 2002; Henry, 2000). Still other studies have examined the administrative and political elements

of school violence (Gagnon & Leone, 2001; Kajs, 2006; Mooij, 2005; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, & Voeten, 2005).

The subject of school violence has become a major concern for educators as nearly 16% of teachers report having been threatened or attacked by a student (Kaufman, Chen, & Choy et al., 1998). Other studies and surveys find school violence to be an increasingly important issue for parents and the general public as well (The Gallup Organization, 2001; Reinke & Herman, 2002). The rise in public awareness of school violence can be at least somewhat attributable to high profile cases of school violence that receive a great deal of publicity in the media, such as the school shootings in Jonesboro, AK, Paducah, KY, at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO, and at Red Lake High School in Minnesota (Browne, 2003: 10; McCord, Widom, & Crowell, 2001; Mengelcoch, 2006 pgs. 12-13). In fact, during the six years between the academic years of 1992-1993 and 1997-1998, there was an average of 38 shooting deaths each year (Doob & Sprott, 1999). However, recent research clearly illustrates that juvenile violence has been on a downward trend during the late 1990s and early 2000s, reaching the lowest level in 18 years (Snyder, 2004). Stevick and Levinson (2003, p. 326) point out that “less than one-thousandth of a percent of homicides took place in schools between 1992 and 1994”, and during the 1990’s, the odds of being shot and killed in school were 1 in 6 million (Morrow, 2004). Overall the crime rate at school declined by roughly 50% from 1992 to 2002 (Devoe, Peter, & Kaufman, 2004) and school-associated deaths decreased by 78% from 1992-2000 (O’Donnell, 2001).

It is an axiom in criminal justice scholarship that actual crime numbers are only part of the picture; perception and fear of crime is also an important indicator (Warr, 1980). If the fear of crime climbs, even while crime rates remain stable or drop, then the quality of life in the community is diminished. In the context of schools, the “community” consists of the students, staff, parents, and visitors. Even while crime rates declined in the 1990s, the fear of crime went up—particularly in the schools (Smith and Smith, 2006). Doob and Sprott (1999) reported that 5.5% of students between the ages of 12-19 years expressed fear of being attacked or harmed at school, and 15.3% believed street gangs were active in their schools. These percentages rose to 8.6% and 28.4%, respectively, in 1995. Interestingly, there is little evidence that high-profile events of school violence, such as the Columbine or Red Lake shootings, have a significant impact on the fear of school violence across the school-aged population. Addington (2003) studied the effects of the Columbine shooting on fear of crime by analyzing National Crime Victimization Surveys from before and after the highly-publicized shooting. The study showed only a modest, anecdotal increase in the fear of crime in schools among 12-18-year-old students. Rather, more mundane but persistent and chronic experiences and observations among pupils appear to fuel the fear of criminal victimization at school.

Public perceptions of school violence have also linked school violence to factors external to the school. Laub and Lauritsen (1998, p. 127) state that “the conventional wisdom holds that school violence is a reflection of violence in the broader social context, that is, violence is imported into a school by the students, and by intruders from the neighborhoods surrounding the school.” This “conventional wisdom” has strong roots in sociological research connecting schools to the communities that schools reside in. Poverty, racial and ethnic composition, family composition, housing density, and population turnover are factors that have been found to correlate with violence (Smith & Smith, 2006). Factors outside of school, such as exposure to crime, violence, drugs, as well as family factors (parental involvement in crime, violence, drugs, and whether or not the student has only one parent) also increase the likelihood of

violent student behavior (Haynes, 1996; Kandakai, Price, Tellojohann, & Wilson, 1999; Kotlowitz, 1991). Youth with high exposure to violence have also been found to be more likely to suffer from a host of psychological and social disorders, including: depression and anxiety (Garbarino, Dubrow, Kostelny, & Pardo, 1992; Martinez & Richters, 1993; Osofsky, 1995; Pynoos, Frederick, & Nader et al., 1987; Richters & Martinez, 1993); emotional numbing (Terr, 1989); poor educational performance (Bell & Jenkins, 1993); and behavioral problems (Bell, 1991; Cicchetti & Lynch, 1993; Garbarino, 1993).

One type of violent behavior that has been well researched in the literature is bullying. Several studies have shown that the majority of teenage aggression involves bullying of peers (Boulton, 1999; Coie & Dodge, 1998; Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000; Perry, Willard, & Perry, 1990). Further, some have found that bullying, when not dealt with, is frequently a precursor to acts of school violence and delinquency (Wong, 2004). Bullying itself, however, is not always violent. Pellegrini & Bartini (2000, p. 700) point out that bigger and stronger students victimize their peers through repeated use of negative actions—among which physical violence is an option—but often times bullying is more verbal with the implicit threat of violence used as a coercive tool (see also Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Schwartz, Pettit, Dodge, & Bates, 1997). Because bullying is not always inherently violent, it will not be a primary focus in this article. While there is little doubt that some of the acts of violence (assaults) recorded in the data analyzed are instances of bullying, data limitations prevented us from teasing out just which acts of violence involved bullying as the underlying cause. (Model specification and the operationalization of school violence will be discussed in a later section.)

School Violence Policies

Compared to the wealth of scholarship examining the sociological and psychological elements of school violence, fewer studies rigorously test the effectiveness of administrative policies designed to curb violence in schools. One popular policy approach that has received some attention in the literature is “zero tolerance” (see Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004; Kajs, 2006; Noguera, 2003). The zero-tolerance approach results in the immediate suspension or expulsion of students involved in violent acts (such as brawling) or weapon possession. Zero-tolerance policies flourished in the United States in the wake of several high-profile incidents of school violence. However, the inflexibility of zero tolerance in schools has resulted in a far greater number of high-profile incidents of nearly absurd inflexibility on the part of school officials (Benekos, Merlo, Cook, & Bagely, 2002; Levick, 2000). The suspension of kindergarten children in New Jersey a few years ago for pointing fingers at each other as if they were guns highlights this point. Despite such instances, zero-tolerance policies remain politically popular and have appeal for their simplicity, but they do not appear to be effective in curbing school violence (Peterson, Larson, & Skiba, 2001).

Another popular policy choice for the schools and communities that can afford it is the implementation of a school resource officer program. Some have found that fielding school resource officers (i.e., police officers trained to work fulltime with students to proactively help them avoid and solve problems) result in increased perceptions of safety and a reduction in the fear of crime at school (Kenney & Watson, 1998; Johnson, 1999). However, more recent findings that relied on greater deference to environmental and social factors as root causes of school violence found that school resource officer programs were not as effective as was once thought in reducing school violence (Miller, Gibson, Ventura, & Schreck, 2005).

Still another policy option is the development of surveillance reports based upon statistically validated risk factors. With this approach, students engaging in risky behaviors like routine fighting, alcohol use, drug use, and smoking, would be identified and evaluated for their potential to be involved in serious school violence incidents like carrying a gun to school or using dangerous weapons in a fight (Furlong, Morrison, Austin, Huh-Kim, & Skager, 2001). A greater frequency of risk factors associated with a particular student could propel greater doses of attention and intervention for the student.

There is clearly no shortage of creative policies that could be examined through social science research. However, this study will focus on four policy approaches that are intuitively thought to be linked to decreases in school violence but have sparse amounts of social science evidence in place to support or disqualify them. These policies are: school uniforms, use of security cameras, presence of a formal process to obtain parental input, and utilization of full-time guidance counselors.

The benefits of school uniforms have received some attention from education scholars as well as legal scholars who see school uniforms as a first amendment issue. Nevertheless, the presence of school uniforms has been linked to decreased victimization (Scherer, 1991), fewer gang-related fights (Kennedy, 1995; Loesch, 1995), and helps to differentiate strangers from students on school grounds (Gursky, 1996). Despite these benefits, school uniform policies have come under scrutiny from two directions. A dissenting, longitudinal study by Brunsmma and Rockquemore (1998) found virtually no positive impact of school uniforms at all, casting doubt on whether uniform policies have any significant impact on student achievement, absenteeism, behavioral issues, or substance abuse.

The other concern for proponents of school uniforms is the constitutionality of such policies. While school uniform policies are not unconstitutional per se, schools must be careful to narrowly tailor their policies to adhere to Supreme Court rulings in *Tinker v. Des Moines School District* (1969), *Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser* (1986), and *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988). The Court has clearly indicated that school uniform policies which are vague or impinge on the right to free expression without organizational necessity are on thin constitutional ice (see also Gilbert, 1999).

Schools have also experimented with direct school security measures. The use and effectiveness of security cameras, metal detectors, random searches, and security officers is the subject of much dispute. The argument in favor of such measures is that they detect and deter potential perpetrators before they can harm others (Gagnon & Leone, 2001). Nilsson (2004) has suggested that these types of policies fail because schools rely on antiquated, out-of-date technology and that upgrading to more modern technology would greatly enhance the effectiveness of these policies. Blankenau & Leeper (2003) examined these policies and found a rise in random searches because of mounting local pressures and an inviting legal environment; this was despite school principal's perceptions that these searches were largely ineffective.

Schools have also made strides to include parents in educational and administrative decisions. This inclusion has been for practical reasons as parents are the baseline evaluators of a school's educational product. For educational and behavioral reasons, parental involvement and input can dramatically improve student performance and can help keep students from getting into trouble. The accepted wisdom of many scholars is that parental involvement improves student achievement (for a brief survey of literature supporting this assertion, see Hill, Castel-

lino, Lansford et al., 2004; Robertson & Symons, 2003; Young & Friesen, 1992). More relevant to this study is the impact that parents have on curbing deviant behavior. Marsden, Boys, Farrell et al. (2005) found a significant, negative relationship between parental involvement and student consumption of alcohol (the more parents discourage alcohol consumption, the less likely students are to drink). Several studies have examined the role of parents and parental involvement as a foremost predictor of whether or not students stay out of trouble in school (Rowe & Farrington, 1997) and out of jail later on (Painter & Levine, 2004).

The idea behind school policies that open formal channels for parental input is to lessen the participatory costs (in time and effort) that parents incur for taking an active role in their child's education and their child's school. These policies are likely to vary somewhat from school-to-school (parent-teacher conferences, parental surveys, etc.), but their net effect is the same—parents are given clear and obvious avenues to participating in their local school. When such opportunities are present, parents are more likely to participate and provide meaningful input (Christenson, 1999; Eccles & Harold, 1996; Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry, & Childs, 2004).

The decision to hire school counselors is also a policy decision that schools make. Aside from career counseling, school counselors are also involved in dealing with student behavioral issues and conflict resolution. These operational tasks squarely place school counselors on the front lines of school violence prevention. The responsibility to aid in curbing potentially violent behavior is written into the ethical standards of The American School Counselor Association (1998) and the American Counseling Association (1995).

Research shows that counselors do live up to their codes of ethics. Counselors often play a leadership role in encouraging a working link between the school and the community (Cunningham & Sandhu, 2000). It has also been shown that the presence of comprehensive school counseling programs impact school climate (Gysbers, Hughey, Start, & Lapan, 1992). Lapan, Gysbers, and Sun (1997) found that students in schools with more fully implemented school counseling programs had a more positive experience, believed that the school more adequately prepared them, that their peers behaved better in school, and experienced a sense of belonging and safety. Arguably, a comprehensive developmental school counseling program is a necessary component of any serious effort to improve school safety (Nims, 2000). Work by Crepeau-Hobson (2005) surveyed 234 school counselors in Colorado and found that schools around the state dramatically stepped-up counseling efforts after the Columbine High School shooting, with 12.7% of Colorado schools increasing the number of counselors on staff.

METHODS AND RESULTS

Data and Measures

This study utilized data from the National Center for Education Statistics' 2000 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) Public Use Dataset. This nation-wide, cross-sectional study surveyed school administrators on over 200 different administrative policy areas of school violence, school characteristics, and school violence measures (for more information about the SSOCS Public Use Dataset, see U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Our study excluded elementary schools because these are typically not the venues for serious violence. This exclusion leaves an $n=1693$.

The set of hypotheses to be tested are:

H1: *The implementation of school uniform policies will be associated with a drop in school violence.*

H2: *The presence of security cameras will be associated with a drop in school violence.*

H3: *The presence of a formal policy for obtaining parental input will be associated with a drop in school violence.*

H4: *Increased number of full-time school counselors will be associated with a drop in school violence.*

The school policy variables operationalized in Table 1 correspond to the independent variables in the stated hypotheses. Several other pertinent indicators are included in the model as independent control variables to better isolate the unique variation of the school policy variables. The student/teacher ratio is a commonly-used control measure (Borland, Howsen, & Tra-
wick, 2005; Hanushek, 2002). The local crime variable estimates the crime where the students live and is consistent with the assertions of Laub and Lauritsen (1998) linking school violence to local conditions of poverty and crime. The metro area variable distinguishes whether the school resides in an urban setting or not. The size of the school and racial makeup of the school are also measured (Nielsen & Wolf, 2001).

TABLE 1
INDEPENDENT VARIABLE SPECIFICATIONS

Variable	Specification
School Policy Variables	
Uniforms	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not students required to wear uniforms (1 = Uniforms).
Cameras	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not security camera(s) monitor the school (1 = Cameras used).
Parents	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not a formal process to obtain parental input exists (1 = Formal process exists).
Counselors	Number of paid full-time counselors.
Control Variables	
Student/Teacher Ratio	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the student/teacher ratio is greater than 16:1 (1 = High student/teacher ratio).
Local Crime	Crime where students live as estimated by respondent. (1 = "High crime").
Metro Area	Urbanicity based on 1998-1999 Common Core Data (1 = "City" or "Urban Fringe").
Medium Size	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the total number of students is between 500-999 (1 = Medium size).

Large Size	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the total number of students is over 1000 (1 = Large size).
Race	Dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the total number of non-white students is over 50% (1 = High non-white student population).

School violence is a multidimensional concept (Henry, 2000). To reflect this reality, four different aspects of school violence which have been covered in the literature (see the School Violence section) will be explored: school-related deaths, instances of sexual violence, physical assaults, and weapons possessions. The specification of these variables is detailed in Table 2. School-related deaths includes the number of homicides and suicides of students, teachers, and staff at a given school. The sexual attacks variable measures sexual violence (sexual assault, sexual batteries, and rape) while the assault variable measures non-sexual physical assaults and attacks (fighting, beatings, and assaults). Weapons in school increase the likelihood that violent incidents will be more injurious and more lethal. The weapons variable measures the total number of possessions of prohibited weapons (guns, knives, bats, etc.).

TABLE 2 SCHOOL VIOLENCE VARIABLE SPECIFICATIONS	
Variable	Specification
Deaths	Total number of school-related deaths (homicides and suicides) of students, teachers and staff during the 1999-2000 school year.
Sexual Attacks	Total number of sexual assaults, sexual batteries, and rapes during the 1999-2000 school year.
Assaults	Total number of physical assaults (non-sexual) during the 1999-2000 school year.
Weapons	Total number of possessions of prohibited weapons (guns, knives, bats, etc).

Descriptives

Table 3 breaks down the four different violence measures by policy action (see the School Violence Policies section), with each violence measure split to better partition violence into higher and lower instances of that particular type of violence. The percentages in parentheses reflect the percentage of each policy action by violence partition. In almost every instance (except formal parental input and assaults), higher violence and the implementation of security policy goes hand-in-hand.

Although the results in Table 3 do not support any of the four stated hypotheses, it is quite possible that school security policies are a reactionary response to school violence (see Crepeau-Hobson, 2005). School administrators and school boards may implement security-related policies out of desperation after one or more violent events occur. This is further supported by the growing number of private companies filling the niche market of school security by

offering products and services to address on-going or past school violence problems (Nilsson, 2004). Though not entirely unthinkable, it is reasonable to suppose that school officials are not likely to spend scarce time and resources on security-related policies if the school has a non-violent reputation.

TABLE 3
VIOLENCE MEASURES BY POLICY ACTION

Violence Variable	Uniforms		Security Cameras		Formal Parental Input		# Counselors (Average)
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Deaths = 0	114 (7.1%)	1493 (92.9%)	508 (31.5%)	1105 (68.5%)	976 (60.7%)	632 (39.3%)	2.9
Deaths > 0	7 (9.3%)	68 (90.7%)	36 (48%)	39 (52%)	50 (67.6%)	24 (32.4%)	4.3
Sexual Attacks = 0	107 (6.9%)	1454 (93.1%)	490 (31.3%)	1077 (68.7%)	936 (60%)	625 (40%)	2.8
Sexual Attacks > 0	14 (11.3%)	110 (88.7%)	54 (44.6%)	67 (55.4%)	90 (74.4%)	31 (25.6%)	4.5
Assaults < 5	31 (4.9%)	592 (95.1%)	148 (23.3%)	486 (76.7%)	368 (58.2%)	264 (41.8%)	2.1
Assaults = {5 to 20}	53 (8%)	610 (92%)	257 (38.7%)	407 (61.3%)	405 (62.3%)	256 (38.7%)	3.2
Assaults > 20	28 (7.4%)	351 (92.6%)	112 (29.6%)	267 (70.4%)	190 (50.3%)		3.9
Weapons = 0	35 (5.6%)	585 (94.4%)	179 (28.7%)	444 (71.3%)	345 (55.6%)	276 (44.4%)	2.3
Weapons > 0	85 (8%)	975 (92%)	365 (34.3%)	698 (65.7%)	669 (63.2%)	390 (36.8%)	3.4
Totals	121 (7.2%)	1564 (92.8%)	544 (32.8%)	1144 (67.8%)	1026 (61%)	656 (39%)	3

If such school security policies are reactionary in nature, then partitioning the data in a way to include only those schools with the most acute violence problems should provide a better baseline for comparison. High levels of school violence are often chronic ailments that schools grapple with over long periods of time (Cornell, 2001). Because widespread problems of school violence are not likely to happen overnight, comparing the impact of security policies in particularly violent schools would prove informative because this is the situation (high instances of school violence) where such policies would be given the most serious consideration.

TABLE 4 VIOLENCE MEASURE DESCRIPTIVES			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	# Observations
Overall Results			
Deaths	0.055	0.279	1693
Sexual Attacks	0.179	2.338	1693
Assaults	15.751	25.59	1682
Weapons	2.066	3.113	1691
Results when Assaults > 20			
Deaths	0.094 (+171%)	0.409	392
Sexual Attacks	0.508 (+284%)	4.799	392
Assaults	48.829 (+310%)	37.053	381
Weapons	3.657 (+177%)	4.155	391

While each of the school violence measures captures a different dimension of the overall concept, assaults are a common thread that can be used to categorize schools as particularly violent or non-violent, since other forms of violence often start with assaults (Leary, Kowalski, Smith, Phillips, 2003). Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of school violence measures for all schools and for violent schools—schools that had more than 20 assaults. In this dataset, violent schools have 171% more school-related deaths, 284% more sexual attacks, 310% more assaults and 177% more incidents of weapon possession.

Multivariate Analysis

Utilizing Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA), it is possible to jointly test the impact of each security policy on all violence measures simultaneously, while controlling for the effects of the independent control variables (Stevens, 1996). The overall MANCOVA model is expressed as a simple multivariate linear model: $Y = X B + E$, where $Y = \{Deaths, Sexual Attacks, Assaults, Weapons\}$ and $X = \{Uniforms, Cameras, Parents, Counselors, Student/Teacher Ratio, Local Crime, Metro Area, Medium Size School, Large School, Race\}$.

TABLE 5
MANCOVA RESULTS FOR ALL SCHOOLS AND VIOLENT SCHOOLS

	Wilk's Λ	
	All Schools	Violent Schools
Overall Model	0.776**	0.761**
School Policies		
Uniforms	0.999	0.98
Cameras	0.995	0.984
Parents	0.995*	0.977*
Counselors	0.986**	0.987
Control Variables		
Student/Teacher Ratio	0.996	0.993
Local Crime	0.967**	0.97**
Metro Area	0.999	0.996
Medium Size	0.984**	0.983
Large Size	0.978**	0.987
Race	0.987**	0.977*
* $p < 0.1$. ** $p < 0.05$.		

Table 5 reports the MANCOVA results for all schools and for violent schools. Only two of the security policy measures are significant for all schools, and only one is significant for violent schools. Formal procedures for obtaining parental input have a statistically significant impact at the $\alpha = 0.1$ level on the overall concept of school violence, regardless of whether the unit of analysis is all schools ($\Lambda_{\text{all}} = 0.995$) or violent schools ($\Lambda_{\text{violent}} = 0.977$). The only other security policy variable that has a statistically significant overall impact on the concept of school violence is the number of full-time counselors ($\Lambda_{\text{all}} = 0.986$), but this impact only holds when the unit of analysis is all schools. Other explanatory variables that registered statistical significance across the overall concept of school violence are levels of crime where the student's live ($\Lambda_{\text{all}} = 0.967$; $\Lambda_{\text{violent}} = 0.97$), whether the school is medium-size ($\Lambda_{\text{all}} = 0.984$) or large ($\Lambda_{\text{all}} = 0.978$), and whether the school has a high percentage of non-white students ($\Lambda_{\text{all}} = 0.987$; $\Lambda_{\text{violent}} = 0.977$).

Univariate Analyses

Multiple regression analysis is an appropriate follow-up method for significant MANCOVA results (Stevens, 1996), and allows for a more detailed look at how each explanatory variable influences the four measures of school violence. The results of this analysis are detailed in Table 6. The data seem to convincingly reject all four of the stated hypotheses. The Wilk's Λ (in Table 5), suggest that school uniform policies and the presence of security cameras did not significantly impact school violence on the whole. These results are largely confirmed by the regression coefficients in Table 6. The presence of a school uniform policy was only significant in one instance (assaults in violent schools) and it was positive—indicating that school uniforms increased the average number of assaults by about 14 in the most violent schools.

TABLE 6
MULTIPLE REGRESSION RESULTS FOR ALL SCHOOLS AND VIOLENT SCHOOLS

	Deaths		Sexual Attacks		Assaults		Weapons	
	All Schools	Violent Schools	All Schools	Violent Schools	All Schools	Violent Schools	All Schools	Violent Schools
School Policies								
Uniforms	0.002 (0.029)	0.106 (0.081)	0.068 (0.254)	0.071 (0.977)	2.803 (2.497)	14.251** (7.057)	-0.049 (0.306)	0.911 (0.766)
Cameras	0.029* (0.016)	0.066 (0.047)	-0.136 (0.134)	-0.594 (0.565)	0.948 (1.326)	3.617 (4.135)	-0.229 (0.162)	-0.527 (0.443)
Parents	-0.007 (0.015)	-0.022 (0.048)	0.097 (0.128)	0.469 (0.576)	-0.953 (1.262)	-4.39 (4.192)	0.382** (0.155)	1.062** (0.452)
Counselors	0.007* (0.004)	0.008 (0.01)	0.073** (0.036)	0.138 (0.126)	0.784** (0.351)	-0.056 (0.913)	0.167** (0.043)	0.171* (0.099)
Control Variables								
Student/Teacher Ratio	-0.008 (0.016)	-0.033 (0.046)	0.226* (0.141)	0.537 (0.559)	0.045 (1.387)	-0.372 (4.083)	0.317* (0.17)	0.468 (0.438)
Local Crime	0.008 (0.017)	-0.034 (0.048)	0.347** (0.145)	1.008* (0.579)	8.474** (1.427)	8.169** (4.248)	0.837** (0.175)	0.991** (0.454)
Metro Area	-0.005 (0.017)	0.021 (0.058)	0.021 (0.146)	-0.055 (0.692)	1.063 (1.433)	-0.322 (5.057)	0.192 (0.176)	0.628 (0.543)
Medium Size	0.008* (0.019)	0.02 (0.083)	-0.116 (0.166)	-0.084 (1.002)	7.886** (1.637)	15.205** (7.268)	0.301 (0.201)	-0.854 (0.786)
Large Size	0.047 (0.027)	0.112 (0.097)	-0.043 (0.234)	0.165 (1.163)	9.991** (2.296)	15.413* (8.409)	1.222** (0.282)	0.238 (0.913)
Race	0.059** (0.02)	0.105** (0.052)	-0.188 (0.173)	-0.654 (0.628)	5.373** (1.703)	6.76 (4.592)	0.314 (0.208)	0.359 (0.493)
Constant	0.001 (0.017)	-0.0377 (0.084)	-0.15 (0.146)	-0.61 (1.008)	2.272 (1.436)	28.002** (7.297)	0.333* (0.176)	1.363* (0.791)
R2	0.029	0.061	0.014	0.025	0.118	0.067	0.134	0.13
N	1561	360	1561	360	1153	352	1560	360

* p < 0.1. ** p < 0.05. Standard Errors in Parentheses.

The presence of security cameras only had a weak positive impact (+0.029) on the number of school-related deaths when all schools were examined.

The MANCOVA results in Table 5 do indicate that the presence of a policy for parental input and the number of paid full-time counselors do have a significant impact on the overall concept of school violence. In Table 6, the parental impact variable is only significant with regard to weapons possessions (all schools and violent schools), and registers a surprising positive coefficient—indicating that greater parental involvement leads to more weapons incidents. The school counselors variable is equally puzzling, with positive coefficients across all dependent variables (deaths, sexual attacks, assaults, and weapons) when the unit of analysis was all schools, as well as a positive coefficient for weapons when only violent schools were examined.

The results in Table 6 cast serious doubt on all of the stated hypotheses. In fact, all of the significant coefficients for the school policy variables were positive—which runs counter to what one would expect to find if the hypotheses were true. However, such conclusions must be examined cautiously. An examination of the Leamer bounds for the school policy variables, as shown in Table 7 suggest that these findings are less reliable than they seem.

Leamer (1983) and Leamer & Leonard (1983) suggested the utility of Leamer bounds as a simple form of sensitivity analysis designed to expose the fragility of regression coefficients. Quite simply, Leamer bounds are the minimum and maximum values of a variable coefficient taken across all regression model specifications run by an analyst. When the minimum and maximum values of the regression coefficients are on opposite sides of zero, the coefficient can be considered too fragile to be trustworthy (Gill, 1999). Smith & Granberg-Rademacker (2003) demonstrated that sensitivity analysis using Leamer bounds is also valid and useful when assessing the sensitivity of coefficients across several dependent variables (keeping in mind the expected signs of the coefficients). Indeed, coefficient fragility is precisely the situation observed in Table 7, with 50% (8 out of 16) of the school policy coefficients failing to pass sensitivity analysis muster. These results cast doubt on the stability of these coefficients and the ability to speak generally about the impact of individual school policies on school violence as a whole.

TABLE 7 LEAMER BOUNDS FOR SCHOOL POLICY VARIABLES BY VIOLENCE MEASURES				
School Policy Variable	Deaths Min : Max	Sexual Attacks Min : Max	Assaults Min : Max	Weapons Min : Max
Uniforms	0.002 : 0.366	-4.563 : 0.109*	2.803 : 30.574	-0.556 : 0.911*
Cameras	-0.286 : 0.038*	-6.533 : -0.044	0.948 : 9.3	-2.165 : 0.254*
Parents	-0.195 : 0.007*	0.097 : 7.238	-10.204 : 1.487*	0.382 : 1.062
Counselors	0.007 : 0.055	0.073 : 0.456	-0.161 : 1.925*	-0.264 : 0.355*
* Leamer Bound crosses zero-threshold				

Another second follow-up approach is to consecutively fit simple linear functions: $y = b_0 + b_1x = e$ where y is a school violence measure and x is a school policy measure. This can be done several times, each time purposely segmenting the data to consist only of more and more vio-

lent schools. Overlaying these graphs would then illustrate how the coefficient slope “moves” as only more and more violent schools are considered. Because of the relatively small number of schools that are at the most violent extremes, only one explanatory variable is considered at a time—to avoid running into a degrees of freedom problem. The segmentation for each school violence variable and the corresponding linear fit is specified in the legends included in Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4. To be consistent with the stated hypotheses, the relationship between the school policy variables and the violence measures must be negative (downward slope). Positive relationships (upward slopes) show just the opposite, and no relationship would be indicated with a relatively flat line.

Figure 1 contains four graphs, each graphing school uniforms against the four measures of school violence (deaths, sexual attacks, assaults, and weapons). Note that the school uniform variable is a dichotomous variable (1 = uniforms policy, 0 = no policy). This is reflected in the scale for the uniforms variable, which ranges from 0 to 1. The estimated probability of school uniforms given the value of the school violence variable: $P(x = 1 | y)$. Figure 1 shows quite clearly that the relationship between school uniforms and deaths is positive, and that positive relationship actually strengthens as the data is segmented to only include schools with more deaths. The same trend can be shown with assaults—the positive relationship becomes more pronounced as only the schools with the most assaults are left in the data segment. These results confirm the corresponding positive coefficients reported in Table 6. However, a different trend emerges with sexual attacks. When all schools are considered, the relationship is slightly positive, but as the data is segmented into schools that have more sexual attacks, the relationship clearly changes and becomes negative—schools that do not have uniform policies are much more likely to have higher numbers of sexual attacks. This finding is clearly consistent with H1, and shows that the utility of school uniforms is probably limited to curbing sexual attacks and may have some limited impact on weapons possessions as well.

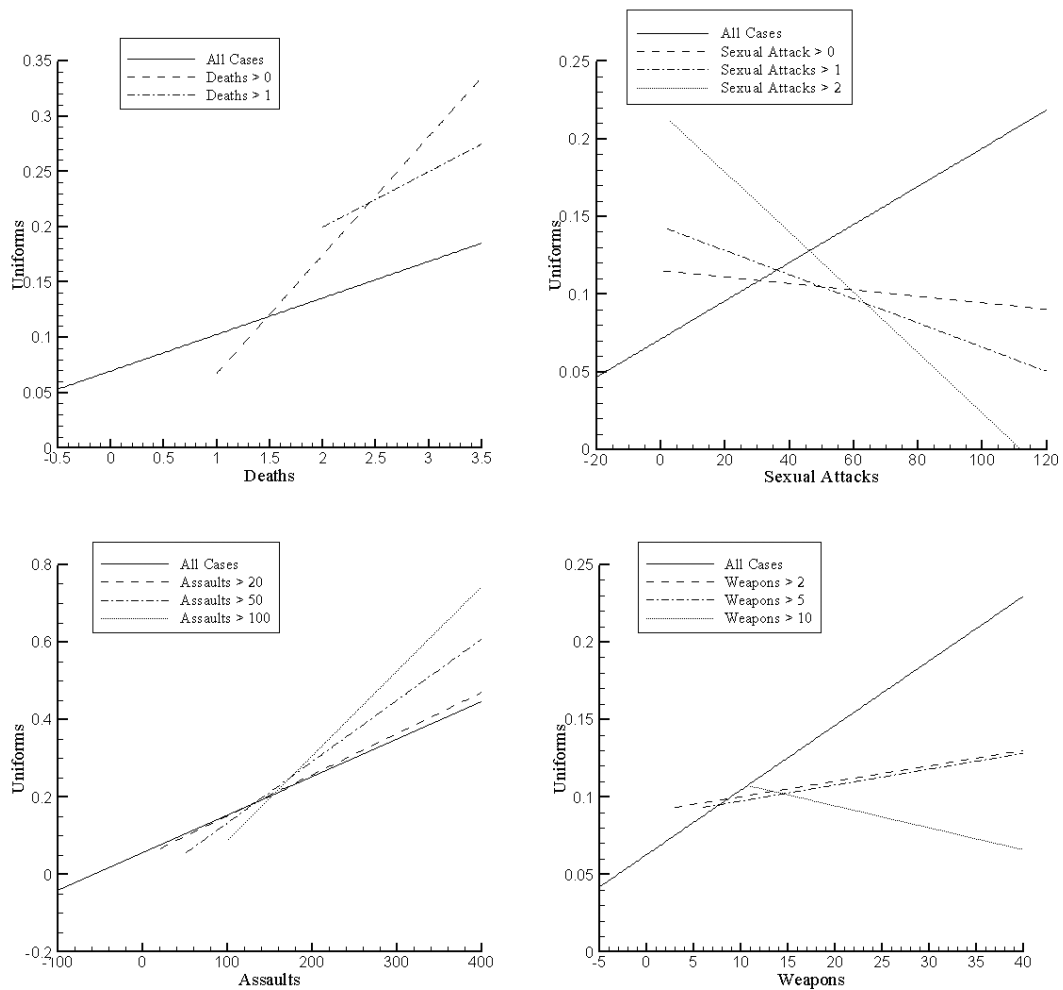


FIGURE 1. IMPACT OF UNIFORMS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE.

In similar fashion, Figure 2 graphs the linear relationship between the presence or absence of security cameras on school grounds and the four measures of school violence. The coding and interpretation of Figure 2 is similar to Figure 1 (1 = cameras present, 0 = cameras absent). The data was also segmented in similar fashion to illustrate how the relationship changes as schools with fewer instances of violence are selected out of the data segment.

The relationship between cameras and school-related deaths changes very dramatically as the data segment includes only those schools with deaths. The relationship with all schools is positive, with schools with cameras more likely to have more deaths. However, the nature of this relationship changes to become strongly negative when those schools with no deaths are selected out of the data segment. A similar relationship exists between cameras and weapons—with cameras much less likely to be found in schools where there are a high number of weapons. It also appears that cameras are negatively related to sexual attacks, regardless of

the number of instances of sexual attacks at the school. These negative relationships support H2, and show that the presence of security cameras may be helpful in reducing school-related deaths, sexual attacks, and instances of weapons on school grounds. The notable exception is the positive relationships between cameras and assaults regardless of how violent the data segment. This suggests that cameras are not an effective means for curbing assaults.

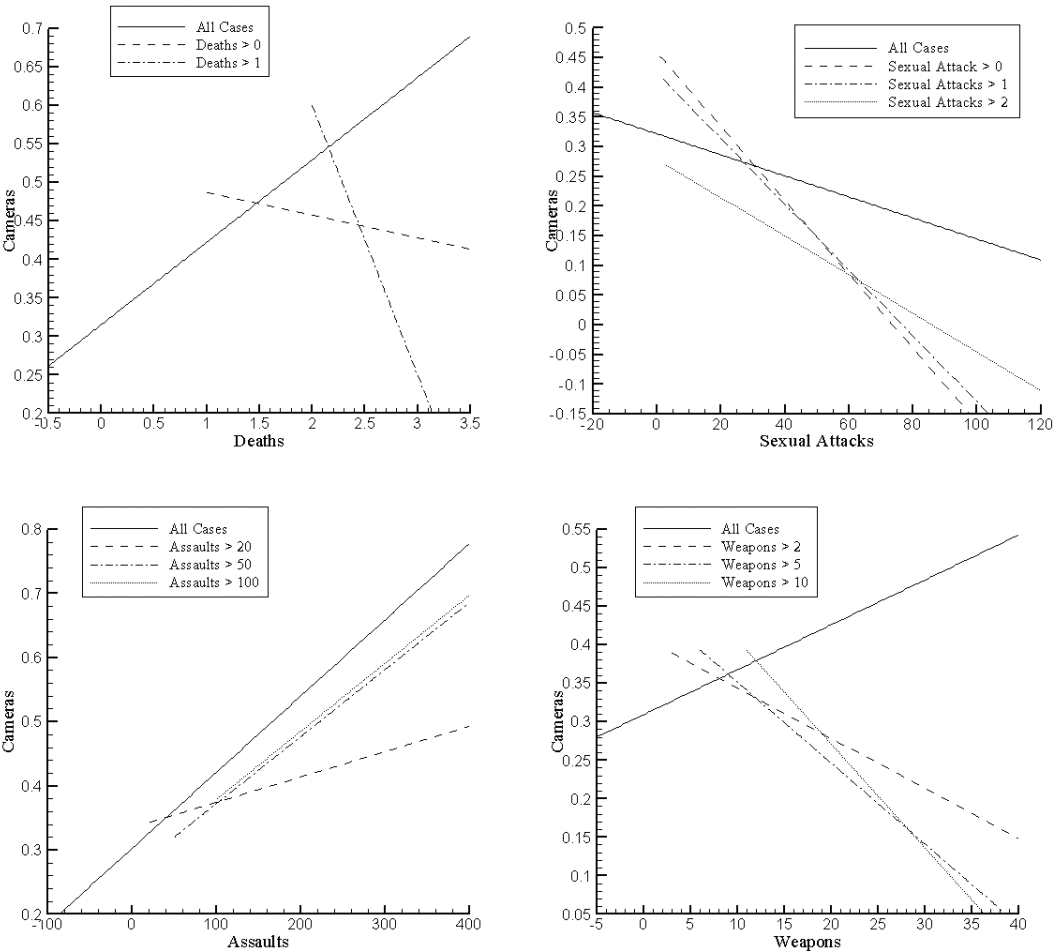


FIGURE 2. IMPACT OF CAMERAS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE.

Figure 3 illustrates the relationships between the four school violence measures and the presence or absence of formal parental input mechanisms. The relationship between school-related deaths and parental input is largely unclear. When all schools were analyzed, there was a slight positive relationship between these two variables, but that relationship changed markedly negative when schools with no deaths were filtered out of the data segment. When only schools with more than one death were considered, the relationship disappeared. H3 is clearly not supported when considering the impact of parental input on sexual attacks or weapons possessions—both registered positive relationships across all data segments.

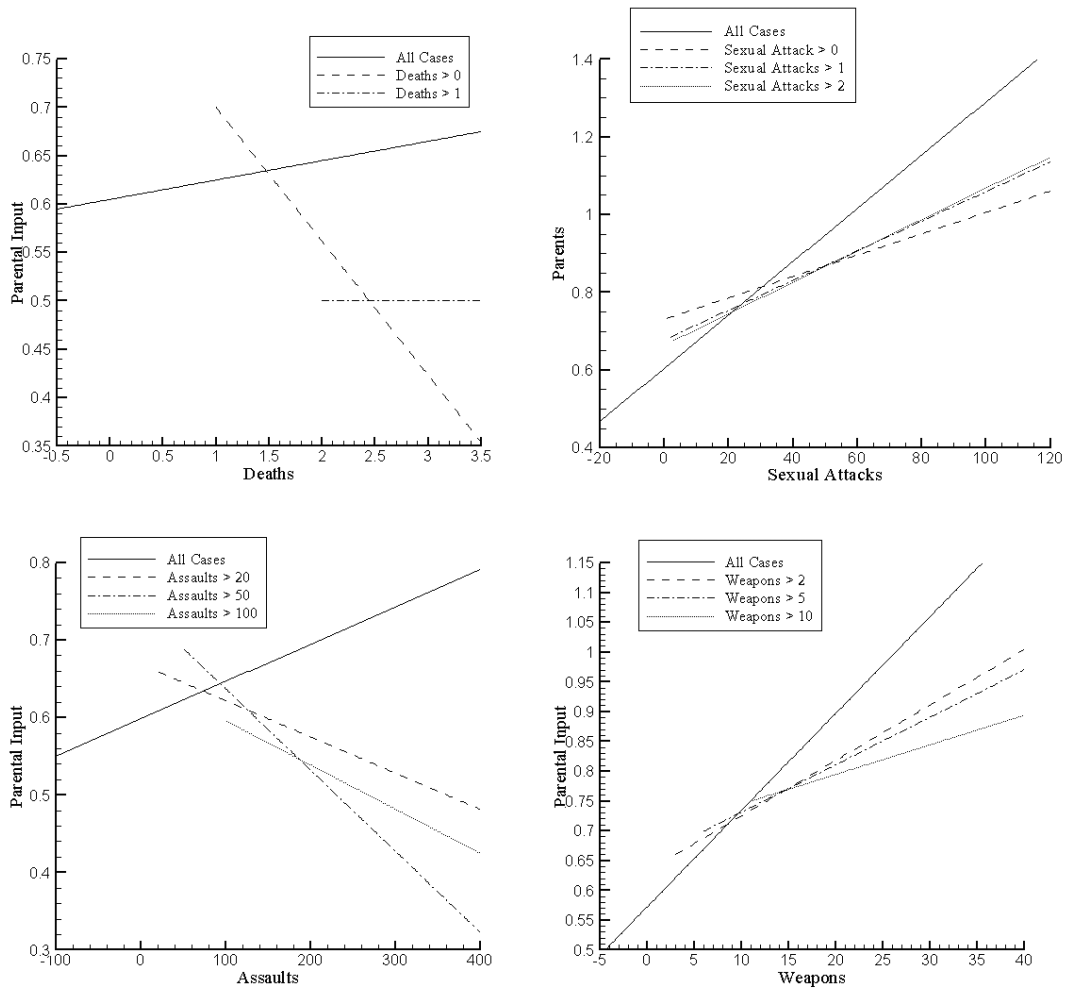


FIGURE 3. IMPACT OF PARENTAL INPUT ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE.

H3 is supported when considering the impact of parental input on curbing assaults. The relationship is positive when all schools are considered, but when the data is segmented to include only those schools with a high number of assaults, the relationship switches directions and becomes negative—indicating that formal mechanisms for parental input does play a role in lowering the number of assaults in the most violent schools. This finding should hardly be surprising—schools that open formal mediums of communication with parents are in a better position to handle student violence both at school and at home (Fletcher, Steinberg, & Williams-Wheeler, 2004; Hill, Castellino, Lansford, Nowlin, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 2004).

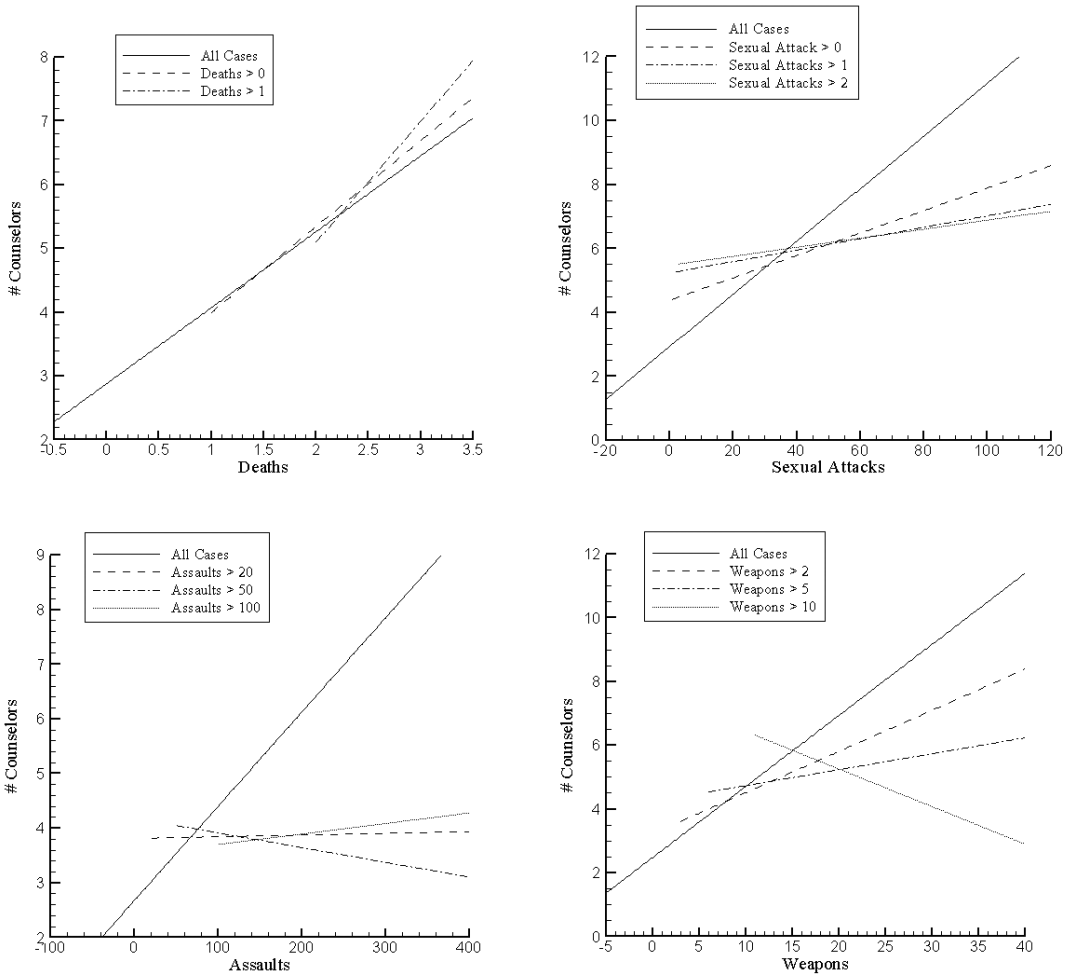


FIGURE 4. IMPACT OF NUMBER OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE.

The school policy variable that shows the least promise for curtailing school violence is the number of full-time paid counselors. H4 is certainly not supported when considering the impact of the number of counselors on deaths or sexual attacks (both have positive relationships regardless of data segmentation). The relationship between counselors and assaults is unclear as well. A strong positive relationship is registered when all schools are analyzed, but when the data is segmented, the relationship stays positive (assaults > 100), vanishes (assaults > 20), and becomes negative (assaults > 50). The only area where school counselors may make a significant impact is when weapon possession is at very high levels (weapons > 10). Other than this, it appears that the number of school counselors has little impact on diminishing school violence.

DISCUSSION

Limitation of the Study

The School Survey on Crime and Safety Public Use Dataset contains cross-sectional data for only one year, and the use of cross-sectional data for analysis can raise questions about useful inference. Such concerns are usually well-placed, but cross-sectional studies can be justified and the inference problem mitigated under conditions which are met in this analysis. O'Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner (2003) describe three conditions under which cross-sectional designs may be justified: 1) many variables are present; 2) there are a large group of subjects (schools in this case) to select from; and 3) the subjects (schools) are widely dispersed geographically. These are typically the conditions met when collecting survey data—which the School Survey on Crime and Safety Public Use Dataset is. Indeed, all of the three criteria discussed by O'Sullivan et al. are satisfied for the purposes of this analysis. Furthermore, using cross-sectional data for explanatory data analysis can be done (and has been done) provided that the analysis is carefully done and the researchers take steps to explore the data from as many angles as possible using a variety of available methods (for further discussions and a sampling of studies utilizing cross-sectional data analysis, see Archibald & Gillingham, 1980, pgs. 622-628; McCullough, Rachal, & Sandage et al. 1998, pgs. 1586-1603; Newman 2003; O'Sullivan, et al., 2003; Weisberg, Krosnick, & Bowen, 1996).

In response to this limitation with the data (cross-sectional limitation), the authors of this article have made efforts to examine the data using several different methodological approaches (multivariate and univariate) and under a variety of modeling conditions in an effort to mitigate any inference concerns. A possible direction for future research could be to re-analyze the impact of school policies on school violence with longitudinal data and compare the results against the findings of this study.

Implications and Conclusion

This analysis began with the assumption that school violence is a multi-dimensional concept, and this concept was operationalized into four different dimensions that were subsequently measured by examining the number of school-related deaths, sexual attacks, assaults, and instances of weapons possession on school grounds. To answer the research question, four common school policies that school violence literature links to school violence were chosen and examined: existence of a school uniforms policy, whether or not the school utilizes security cameras, the existence or absence of formal mechanisms for getting parental input, and the number of full-time paid counselors.

Several different methods were used to examine the data, in an attempt to gauge the unique impact of each school policy on the different measures of school violence. Multivariate MANCOVA results suggest that parents and counselors have an overall impact on the total concept of school violence. However, MANCOVA results reveal little about the nature of the relationships themselves. As suggested by Stevens (1996), multivariate regression analysis was conducted to better discern the true nature of the relationship. Contrary to much established literature, school violence policies that registered as statistically significant did not support the stated hypotheses. The reason for this finding may be methodological in nature—dichotomous variables by virtue of their nature do not have a high degree of variation. If there are several

dichotomous variables in the same regression analysis, the amount of unique variation may be inadvertently overlapped by other dichotomous explanatory variables. This statistical artifact may still occur, although the model is not mis-specified, no significant multicollinearity exists, and no degrees of freedom problem exists either.

To further probe into the possibility, a sensitivity analysis was conducted by constructing Leamer bounds of the school policy coefficients in each model. Eight out of 16 school policy coefficients had Leamer bounds that crossed the threshold of zero. With 50% of the coefficients failing the sensitivity analysis, it is reasonable to conclude that the true direction of the regression coefficients may be in doubt.

To better address this problem, simple linear relationships were discerned between the various school violence and school policy measures. This was deliberately done to address the dichotomous variable problem identified in the sensitivity analysis. The data was consecutively segmented to include more violent schools in the analysis. Overlapping these graphically allows one to see how the linear relationship “moves” as only those schools with more severe violence problems are analyzed. The results of this analysis provided significant support for the stated hypotheses in some areas. School uniforms may help to curb sexual attacks and the supply of weapons on school grounds. The presence of security cameras may help to curb school-related deaths, sexual attacks, and the flow of weapons into schools. And the existence of formal mechanisms for parental input may help to curb the number of school-related assaults as well. Overall, these findings suggest that school officials can take both proactive and reactive policy steps to address violence problems in their school. The choice of policy makes a difference, and can be narrowly tailored to attend to the specific type of violence encountered.

Garrison Keillor was right; nothing we do for our children is wasted. School violence is a widespread and complex problem, but the results of this analysis show that school officials are able to adopt and implement policies which can make schools safer. The results also suggest that new ideas, supported by additional research, are warranted to guide fledgling or even yet-to-be-conceived policy approaches in the effort to secure the safety of students, teachers, and staff at school.

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Criminal Justice Education and Vocationally-Oriented Students: An Examination of Agency College Degree Requirements*

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ABSTRACT

This research extends the vocational versus academic criminal justice baccalaureate curricula debate. The present study empirically examined the heretofore assumption of vocationally-oriented students and related degree programs that criminal justice employers favor a technically-oriented rather than liberal arts baccalaureate degree. The study examined data from a sample of one state's criminal justice agencies (N = 462), exploring two main questions: Do agencies commonly require a baccalaureate degree for entry-level employment? If so, does the agency specify the degree discipline? Although descriptive and not inferential, and limited in its generalizability, the study revealed that less than 1% of sampled criminal justice agencies require their entry-level sworn employees to hold a baccalaureate degree, and none of them require that such degree be in criminal justice. This study's preliminary results run counter to previous assumptions in the literature. This research suggests that the presumption that a vocationally-oriented criminal justice baccalaureate degree aids vocationally-oriented students in the pursuit of employment needs further examination.

Key Words: police, law enforcement, university degree, training

INTRODUCTION

Dantzker (2005) recently presented survey results of a purposive sample of criminal justice students across ten universities (N = 663). Roughly 88% of the respondents indicated that they were majoring in criminal justice because they are interested in obtaining criminal justice employment upon graduation. Dantzker noted that the results suggest that the sampled students believe that a criminal justice degree will aid them in their employment pursuit.

Typically, students receiving a 4-year college degree in criminal justice do so from a program that, consciously or unconsciously, focuses either on preparing students to work in the field as a police or corrections officer, or one that focuses on preparing students to think critically within the context of criminal justice. Although not always acknowledged by name, or even called the same name, this bifurcation of criminal justice baccalaureate degree programs is commonplace (for a review of the development of criminal justice education in the United

States, see Morn, 1995). No social scientific model is perfect, but the two views of criminal justice education do serve as an umbrella for programs with characteristics that tend to arise from different understandings of the goal of a college education generally. This paper relies heavily on the bifurcation of programs as a useful description. To aid understanding, and for the sake of consistency, this paper refers to programs that emphasize getting an entry-level job in law enforcement or corrections as the vocational model, and it refers to programs that instead emphasize liberal education as the theoretical model.

Dantzker's (2005) preliminary view is that criminal justice programs probably do not adequately prepare vocationally-oriented students. Career-minded students comprise the majority of students majoring in criminal justice, but criminal justice programs probably fail to meet such student goals. Dantzker posits that current criminal justice programs probably miss the mark because the theoretical program model is used more prevalently than the vocational model.

The present research stems from Dantzker's (2005) call for empirical examination of this question: Do criminal justice baccalaureate programs adequately prepare students for criminal justice employment? Dantzker's notion that criminal justice programs tend to be more theoretically than vocationally oriented is an empirical question that has not been sufficiently studied. This paper adopts Dantzker's view that baccalaureate programs do not meet the goals of vocationally-oriented students; however, there may be another explanation than that which hinges on programmatic focus.

Dantzker's (2005) research is consistent with a line of inquiry that suggests that students select criminal justice as a major for vocational rather than academic reasons (Kelley, 2004; Tontodonato, 2006). It is probably premature, though, to infer a causal connection with programmatic focus and failed student employment objectives. Although it may be true that the theoretical model is more popular in criminal justice programs than the vocational model, and the baccalaureate criminal justice degree may not aid vocationally-oriented students in their pursuit of employment, the two need not be causally related. Rather than ask if criminal justice programs adequately assist students seeking criminal justice employment, the present research explores the notion of whether the criminal justice student's expectation that a criminal justice baccalaureate degree prepares them for criminal justice employment is reasonable. Said differently, what do criminal justice employers expect education-wise from their entry-level applicants?

Scholars tend to agree that the baccalaureate approach to criminal justice education is bifurcated between vocational and theoretical orientations (see Dantzker, 2005; Deflem, 2002a, 2002b; Flanagan, 2000; Hale, 1998; Hemmens, 2002a, 2002b; Kelley, 2004; Marenin & Worral, 1998; Russell, 1998; Schafer & Castellano, 2005; Sullivan, 1994). There is a divide between programs that emphasize employment preparation and professionalism versus those that focus on a liberal education—an effective split between training and education. There is little agreement, however, on which approach is most appropriate, and literature on the subject is sparse. As noted by Dantzker (2005), research as to why students select criminal justice as a major is also limited.

Suppose that one accepts Dantzker's (2005) supposition that criminal justice programs emphasizing theory are more prevalent than those emphasizing vocational aspirations. One might also accept as persuasive Dantzker's research that criminal justice students major in criminal justice because they want it to aid their employment pursuits. By what mechanism does the

theoretically-oriented baccalaureate degree negatively affect criminal justice employment pursuits? If the vocational program is more appropriate for vocationally-oriented students than the theoretical paradigm, how so? Why? The criminal justice baccalaureate degree programmatic orientation and the criminal justice student are only two parts of the employment pursuit equation. Another important factor is the criminal justice employer. Do criminal justice employers expect entry-level applicants to have a criminal justice degree?

Nationally, less than 1% of police departments require a 4-year college degree (Hickman & Reaves, 2006). An inferred argument is that law enforcement employers do not see the baccalaureate degree as necessary or even desirable. The debate on this issue is long-standing (e.g., Baro & Burlingame, 1999; Roberg & Bonn, 2004). An unasked question, however, is what do the employers who require the degree expect from the degree itself? Does programmatic focus matter, for example? Do employers have a view on the vocational versus theoretical curricula orientation debate? More broadly, does it even matter that the degree be in criminal justice? Might not any discipline be equally acceptable? There is no persuasive literature addressing these questions.

The present study is an exploration of one aspect of the vocational versus academic criminal justice curriculum issue. The study has many limitations, but it serves as an initial attempt at filling the glaring gap in the literature regarding the utility of the criminal justice baccalaureate degree for vocationally-minded students. This research descriptively examines the heretofore assumption of vocationally-oriented students and related degree programs that criminal justice employers favor a technically oriented (vocational) rather than liberal arts (theoretical) baccalaureate degree by asking two main questions: Do agencies commonly require a baccalaureate degree for entry-level employment? If so, does the agency specify the type of degree?

METHODS

The present research examines criminal justice employer educational expectations for prospective entry-level employees by analyzing data pertaining to the population of entry-level sworn officers (both law enforcement and corrections) in the State of Florida for the year 2004 (N = 501). The data come from the state-legislatively-mandated Criminal Justice Agency Profile, an annual compilation of data from all Florida law enforcement agencies (FDLE, 2004). The breakdown of agencies is all police departments, state law enforcement agencies, school and port law enforcement agencies, sheriff's offices (law enforcement, correctional, and concurrent), state corrections, county corrections, and private corrections.

Among the data collected (FDLE, 2004), agencies were asked to report whether they required entry-level employees to hold a high school diploma or GED (the state-mandated minimum requirement), some college education, an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree, or a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. The response rate for these questions was 92%. To further understand expectations, I contacted by email each agency that indicated that they required a baccalaureate degree and asked if the requirement specified a discipline. The response rate for the email request was 100%.

RESULTS

Table 1 reports the number of sworn officers in Florida by agency type for 2004. Roughly 54% of the state sworn officers serve in a law enforcement-only capacity, roughly 39% serve in a corrections-only capacity, and the remainder (less than 7%) serve in a dual law enforcement-corrections role.

TABLE 1 FLORIDA 2004 FULL TIME SWORN OFFICERS BY AGENCY (N=501) TYPE	
Criminal Justice Agency	n
Police Departments	16,669
State Agencies: Law Enforcement	4,072
Schools & Ports	1,077
Sherriff's Offices: Law Enforcement	17,945
Sherriff's Offices: Corrections	7,600
Sherriff's Offices: Concurrent	4,641
Department of Corrections	16,764
Private Corrections	1,046
County Corrections	3,524
Total	73,338

Table 2 reports the frequency distribution of entry-level educational requirements. Less than 1% of all agencies require a baccalaureate degree for entry-level sworn officer employment, and none of the correctional agencies require any form of college education. Of the four law enforcement agencies that require their entry-level employees to hold a baccalaureate degree, none specify the discipline.

TABLE 2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCY FLORIDA 2004 ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (N = 461)		
Entry-Level Education Requirement	n	Cumulative %
Police	261	
HS/GED	225	86.2%
Some College required	13	92.0%
AA/AS Required	21	99.2%
BA/BS Required	2	100.0%
Sherriff's Office Law Enforcement	62	
HS/GED	59	95.2%
Some College required	0	95.2%
AA/AS Required	2	98.4%
BA/BS Required	1	100.0%
State Law Enforcement	34	
HS/GED	28	82.4%
Some College required	0	82.4%
AA/AS Required	5	97.1%
BA/BS Required	1	100.0%
Schools and Ports Law Enforcement	28	
HS/GED	25	89.3%
Some College required	0	89.3%
AA/AS Required	3	100.0%
BA/BS Required	0	100.0%
Total Law Enforcement	385	
HS/GED	337	87.5%
Some College required	13	90.9%
AA/AS Required	31	99.0%
BA/BS Required	4	100.0%
Total Correctional	76	
HS/GED	76	100.0%
Some College required	0	100.0%
AA/AS Required	0	100.0%
BA/BS Required	0	100.0%
Total law Enforcement and Correctional	461	
HS/GED	413	89.6%
Some College required	13	92.4%
AA/AS Required	31	99.1%
BA/BS Required	4	100.0%

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The literature suggests that students select criminal justice as a major to aid employment pursuits. Criminal justice baccalaureate programs tend to be bifurcated between vocational and theoretical orientations. The present research explored the question of whether the employment objectives of students matter in light of the educational expectations of criminal justice employers. The preliminary findings of this research suggest that they do not.

The assumption drawn from the body of literature is that the vocational model aids students in obtaining entry-level employment as a police officer or a corrections officer, whereas the theoretical model does not. That is, however, an empirical question. Although not sophisticated methodologically, the present research disputes that assumption.

In the present study, roughly 1% of the employer respondents required entry-level sworn officer employees to hold a baccalaureate degree. This is consistent with the national picture. Previous research, however, has not addressed whether employers that require a baccalaureate degree specify the discipline. None of the employers did so in the present study. In fact, few criminal justice employers even require their entry-level employees to hold a 4-year college degree. The debate of a vocational versus theoretical orientation as the foundation for a criminal justice degree appears to be irrelevant in the obtaining of entry-level employment in Florida policing or corrections. Neither model comes into play.

The present research has important limitations. First, it is a descriptive study that cannot speak to causality; rather it merely examines the assumption of vocationally-oriented students that a criminal justice degree aids employment objectives. The methodology is less than desirable. Social science has advanced to such a degree that regression models are preferred over weaker approaches. The descriptive approach employed in this research does, however, adequately address the posed questions. The conclusions derived from this research do not overreach the study's methodology, and rather than wait for more suitable data to become available, the present study initiates an important dialogue regarding a scientific question that previous literature has been content at accepting as an untestable assumption.

Second, the data may not generalize beyond Florida. Although the percent of criminal justice employers that require a baccalaureate degree is similar to the national picture (1%), there may be other factors that make Florida agencies different from law enforcement agencies generally. This study might be more useful if it could have compared Florida with agencies from other regions in the United States, or if it could have looked at a nationally representative sample. At this time, however, suitable data is not readily available, and its retrieval is labor intensive.

Third, the present research does not disaggregate police agencies from correctional agencies, instead looking at a "criminal justice" picture. This approach may be inappropriate. None of the correctional agencies used in the present research required that their entry-level employees hold baccalaureate degrees, however, so the aggregation is more one of convenience in discussion than literal.

Fourth, the present research addressed minimum employment standards, not employment preferences. There may be important differences in what an agency requires compared to what they actually use to evaluate prospective employees. Law enforcement agencies, for example,

might not require that an entry-level candidate's baccalaureate degree be in criminal justice, but they might prefer such.

Future research in the area of baccalaureate degrees and entry-level law enforcement employment should try to better ferret out the reasons why agencies that require a baccalaureate degree do so. In addition to knowing whether agencies that require a college degree for entry-level sworn officers specify the discipline, it might be helpful to index their views directly on the vocational versus academic curriculum debate. Such research should be representative of law enforcement agencies generally.

The present assumption in the literature is that vocationally-oriented criminal justice baccalaureate programs prepare students for criminal justice practitioner employment whereas theoretically-oriented programs do not. The present study finds no support for that notion. What purpose, then, does the criminal justice baccalaureate degree serve? Does its value hinge on its vocational versus theoretical orientation, or is some other factor in play? Might either orientation be equally suitable? Is it possible that the theoretical orientation is preferred by criminal justice employers over the vocational orientation? These questions require further inquiry.

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Characteristics of Incarcerated Women in South Korea Who Killed Their Spouses: A Feminist and Age-Graded Theory of Informal Social Control Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines the roles of domestic abuse and prior criminal involvement in women's spousal homicide in South Korea utilizing Sampson and Laub's age-graded theory of informal social control and relevant feminist literature on women who kill their spouses/partners. Using a sample of female prison inmates, this study found that certain factors differentiated between females who killed their partners and other female offenders: notably, they had been subjected to psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, and they were more likely to be married, but less likely to have been involved in prior delinquent activities.

Key Words: female prisoners, spousal homicide, VAW, South Korean prisons

INTRODUCTION

Correctional data from South Korea indicate that women represent only a small part of the prison population, as women constituted only 5.3 percent of the entire Korean prison population in 2006 (International Centre for Prison Studies, 2006). The 2,431 women incarcerated served their sentences in one prison for women, one institution for juveniles, 10 detention centre houses, 4 detention centre branches, and 1 correctional institution for vocational training.

Due to this relatively small number of female prison inmates, these incarcerated women have not been a matter of much popular or scholarly concern and interest in South Korea.

However, Kim, Park, and Lee (2004) investigated the status of female prisoners incarcerated in Cheong-Ju Women's Correctional Institution, South Korea's only prison for women among 44 prisons nationwide (U.S. Department of State, 2004). Their finding that of 531 women who were incarcerated in 2004, 133 women were incarcerated for spousal homicide drew the attention of both the public and policy makers, because this finding contradicted gender-role socialization in Korea of women as docile (Adinkrah, 1999). In part, this national attention was caused by the fact that the consequences of female-perpetrated homicide against husbands are much more devastating compared to other forms of homicide because children lose both parents at the same time (Peterson, 1999).

Scholars have argued on the need for cross-cultural research on violence (Cooney, 1997; Peterson, 1999). However, of the extant studies on spouse slayings committed by women published in English, very few studies focus on incidents that have occurred in non-western societies. Adinkrah (1999), in a study in Fiji, found that the patterns of spousal homicide by women and the characteristics of the women using lethal violence in intimate or marital relationships in non-western societies have many significant differences from those in Western societies. Previous studies in western societies (Browne, 1987; Chimbos, 1978; Leonard, 2002; Totman, 1978; Felson and Messner, 1998) have mainly focused on "abused" women who kill their intimate partners. By doing so, these studies exclude the possibility that for some or many of the women who used lethal violence against their male partners, abuse by the victims may not be the primary reason for their crime. The current study is unique in that it focuses on South Korean female offenders who killed their partners, regardless of their abuse experiences.

Sampson and Laub (1993, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Eggleston, Laub, and Sampson, 2004) found that social bonds formed in adulthood in both delinquent and non-delinquent males deterred criminal behavior, although criminal propensity may vary over the life course. Moreover, non-delinquent males who have weak attachments to their wives show an onset of crime in adulthood. Spousal abuse was the key characteristic of this weak marital relationship. Although Sampson and Laub based their studies on male subjects, their findings may prove to be applicable to an all female group who killed their partners after the majority had abusive relationships but no prior criminal histories. The current study advances Sampson and Laub's (1993) perspective by adding the feminist notion that women commit partner homicide in order to protect themselves (Ogle, Maier-Katkin, & Bernard, 1995; O'Keefe, 1997; Walker, 1989). A comparison group of women incarcerated for other offenses is examined in order to explore the similarities and differences in the characteristics and abuse experiences of the two groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminist Perspective: Violence against Women and Self-Defense

Globally, violence against women is a pervasive social problem of extraordinary proportion (Heise, 1994; United Nations, 1989; Leonard, 2002; Yoshihama, 2002). Numerous studies from a wide variety of countries demonstrate that violence against women is present in every country (UNICEF, 2000). For example, according to Heise (1994), 35 studies from 24 countries reveal that from one-fourth to more than one-half of women are abused either physically or psychologically.

Such abuse and violence against women might be much more serious in traditional societies where modernization is relatively slow compared to western societies, and the traditional patriarchal family structure strongly supports the authority of men over women (Choe et al., 2004; Tsuya & Bumpass, 2004; Tsuya & Choe, 1991). Feminists see patriarchy as the source of the structural social control of women by men and unequal gender power relations (Kurz, 1993; Leonard, 2002).

Leonard (2002) posits that a feminist framework can best explain women who are involved in partner homicide. Studies in the United States have been guided by a feminist epistemology that “supports the voices of women and seeks to give greater visibility to women’s experiences” (Leonard, 2002, p. 47). According to Bergen (1993, p. 200), “feminists explore how ‘personal’ problems are the result of structured gender inequality.” Feminist frameworks focusing on how battered women become involved in partner homicide largely rely on the immediate characteristics of abusive relationships to explain the killings. Feminists view the killing of an abusive partner as a woman’s last attempt to protect herself or her children from further physical and mental harm (Ogle, Mier-Katkin, & Bernard, 1995; O’Keefe, 1997; Walker, 1989).

Research indicates that women who kill their abusers frequently do so in self-defense following years of severe abuse (Browne, 1987; Ewing, 1987; O’Keefe, 1997; Walker, 1984). In Leonard’s study (2002), the results show that battered women killed their abusers because they found no legal way to stop life-threatening violence. The research finding that battered women less often have a history of criminal or violent behavior supports these assertions (Browne, 1987; O’Keefe, 1997). Compared to 40% of other female inmates, fewer than 20% of the battered women who killed their partners in Leonard’s study (2002) had a previous arrest history. Likewise, O’Keefe’s study (1997) reveals that of the battered women who killed their partners, 80% had no previous criminal record.

However, it should be noted that not all women who commit partner homicide are abused, although studies report that the vast majority have been battered (Chimbos, 1978; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Totman, 1978; Wolfgang, 1967). The majority of the studies that concluded that women who killed their spouses were socially different from other female offenders included only abused women. For example, Grant and Curry (1993) interviewed only those who were “abused” among women serving time for killing their husbands, instead of women in general. Likewise, Leonard (2002) compared battered women who killed male partners with the general population of female inmates. These studies exclude the possibility that not all women who killed their male partners had an experience of severe long-term domestic violence and thus, for some or many of them, abuse by the victims may not be the reason for their crime. For instance, Choi’s (1996) identified infatuation, jealousy, resentment, disagreement, and quarrel as motivations for women who killed intimates in South Korea.

Domestic violence is not an issue only for women who kill their husbands. Rather, this is the issue many women in general have been facing (U.S. Department of State, 2004). In spite of the prevalence of women’s experiences of abuse by their male partners, the majority of these women do not react with lethal violence (Adinkrah, 1999; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Daly, Wilson, & Weghorst, 1982; Shackelford, 2000, 2001; Wilson & Daly, 1996).

Kruttschnitt and Carbone-Lopez (2006, p. 326) criticized the notion that “although victimization may be an important component of a woman’s pathway to crime, many feminists essentialize it and, in so doing, give primacy to this experience.” At the same time, victimization ex-

perience is rarely used to account for men's criminality. Daly (1998, pp. 149-50) explained that "a seamless web of victimization and criminalization tends to produce accounts which focus on victimization and leave little agency, responsibility or meaning to women's lawbreaking." To better understand women who kill their partners, information about the victim-offender relationship, including abuse, as well as the characteristics of female murderers themselves should be explored.

Life-course Perspective: Attachment to Spouse and Late Onset of Crime

Criminological theories have typically focused on either the person or the environment (Nagin & Paternoster, 1994). Theories focusing on the person emphasize continuity, that is, those enduring characteristic traits that lead one to engage in crime throughout life. For instance, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) argued that individual differences in present-day orientation are established early in life and are stable over time. Therefore, the underlying propensity of individuals to be more or less crime-prone does not vary substantially over the life course (Cernkovich & Giordano, 2001; Horney, Osgood, & Marshall, 1995). In contrast, situational theories predict that an individual's environment and circumstances have an impact on criminal involvement throughout life (Nagin & Paternoster, 1994). In recent years, efforts to integrate the theories of enduring individual differences (continuity) and environments (change) have been proposed (Horney et al., 1995; Nagin & Paternoster, 1994; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Moffitt, 1993, 1997).

Prior to Sampson and Laub's (1991, 1993, 2003) pioneering work, criminologists paid little attention to adult crime and change in criminal offending (Horney et al., 1995; Laub, Nagin, & Sampson, 1998). It is well known that "on average, rates of offending rise rather rapidly during early adolescence, reach a peak in the late teenage years, and then begin a gradual but steady decline thereafter" (Nagin, Farrington, & Moffitt, 1995, p. 112). However, although this is the typical pattern, this trajectory cannot explain all kinds of crime. Moreover, some researchers (Caspi & Moffitt, 1992; Cernkovich & Giordano, 2001; Loeber, 1982; Moffitt, 1993, 1997; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Thornberry, 1997) assert that the continuity of antisocial behavior throughout life is characteristic of only a small group of serious chronic offenders.

Nagin and Land (1993) identified four distinctive offending trajectories in a sample of 403 British males: the never-convicted, the adolescence-limited, the low-level chronics, and the high-level chronics. Likewise, Moffitt (1993, 1997) differentiated between the adolescent-limited offenders who "age out" in their late teen years, and the life-course-persistent offenders who continue to engage in antisocial behavior throughout life (Cernkovich & Giordano, 2001).

Sampson and Laub (1990, 1993) suggested that regardless of delinquent or antisocial behavior during childhood and adolescence, institutions of informal social control, such as family and work, influence criminal behavior in adulthood. That is, variations in adult crime cannot be explained by childhood behavior alone. Using Glueck and Glueck's (1950) comprehensive longitudinal data set, they concluded that "childhood pathways to crime and deviance can be significantly modified over the life course by adult bonds" (Sampson & Laub, 1990, p. 611).

Sampson and Laub (1990) found that job instability and weak attachments to one's spouse are directly related to adult crime and deviance, even after controlling for childhood delinquency and crime in young adulthood. Results showed that even individuals whose youth delin-

quency was severe desisted from criminal behavior as adults to the extent that they had stable jobs and strong spousal attachments. The data documented that marital bonding has a significant impact on one's decision to discontinue involvement in antisocial activities (Cernkovich & Giordano, 2001).

In addition, Sampson and Laub (1993, 2003) asserted that "the factors that lead to the initiation of crime in adulthood among the nondelinquent group are of considerable interest to criminological theory, as are the factors associated with desistance among those in the delinquent group" (1993, p. 30). In their study, more than 100 of 500 individuals of the original non-delinquent group initiated criminal behavior as adults. This suggests that it is important to analyze the factors accounting for the late onset of crime and deviance. Within a sample of formerly non-delinquent youths, informal social controls exerted by job stability and marital attachment are significantly and substantially related to adult antisocial behavior. In particular, those in discordant marital relationships at ages 17-25 were three times more likely to later engage in criminal or deviant acts.

The current study is aimed at determining if Sampson and Laub's findings can be generalized to women offenders in South Korea. There are some obvious cultural, historical, and political differences between the U.S. and South Korea, most notably the relative heterogeneity of the former and homogeneity of the latter. At first glance, it would therefore appear that such an endeavor is doomed to failure. However, if we find any support in spite of these differences, we will be that much more confident that the findings are indeed substantively meaningful.

DATA AND METHODS

This study is based on information collected for a larger project focusing on the status of South Korean female prison inmates. Although researchers prefer a longitudinal data set for a life-course analysis of offending, such data are currently not available in South Korea. We use this cross-sectional data set, fully realizing that it is a weakness that needs to be addressed in future research projects.

After first obtaining approval from the institutional review board at the senior author's academic institution, participants were recruited from Cheng-Ju Women's Correctional Institution, the only women's prison in South Korea. Local researchers intended to distribute the questionnaires to all 133 women who served prison sentences in 2004 for killing their partners/spouses. An unspecified number of inmates were unavailable as they were either at work or in the hospital during the administration of the questionnaire. After respondents were assured that their participation was voluntary, 97 agreed to participate. Three questionnaires were eventually eliminated because they had problems with too much missing data. In addition, researchers were able to obtain the cooperation of 157 women convicted of other offenses. The selection process of members in the comparison group was similar to the women who had killed. Women who were at work or in the hospital were excluded by the prison administration, and the remaining women were given the opportunity to refuse to participate. Local researchers were able to compare demographic characteristics of respondents to non-respondents in both groups. They found no statistically significant differences between respondents and non-respondents.

Although the samples are not random samples, we are confident that they are representative of the respective populations.

The comparison group consisted of women who were convicted of murder against people other than spouses/partners, robbery, theft, violence, fraud, and possession of drugs. Although it would be preferable to have a comparison group of only women convicted of violent offenses, the researchers had limited input in the selection of comparison group members.

As shown in Table 1, participants ranged in age from 20 to 74, with a mean of 44 years. Over half (57%) did not graduate from high school, 29.5% were high school graduates, and 13.5% reported at least some college. Regarding marital status prior to arrest, 69.4% were legally married or remarried, and 12.0%, respectively, were either divorced or had been living with their common law partners, while only 6.6% were single. Additionally, 68.5% were employed, and almost half (51.8%) reported their economic status as middle class, followed by upper class (26.7%), and 21.5% indicated a lower class status.

TABLE 1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE FEMALE INMATES (N = 251)	
Variable	%
Age (mean = 44 years)	
20-29	7.6
30-39	27.3
40-49	38.2
50-59	19.9
60-69	6.4
70-74	0.8
Education	
Some high school or less	57.0
High school graduate	29.5
Some college or more	13.5
Marital Status (prior to arrest)	
Married or remarried	69.4
Divorced	12.0
Common law	12.0
Single	6.6
Pre-arrest Employment	
Employed	68.5
Unemployed	31.5
Pre-arrest Economic Status	
Middle class	51.8
Upper class	26.7
Lower class	21.5
Conviction Offense	
Other	62.5
Partner Homicide	37.5

The present study, based on Sampson and Laub's model (1993), utilized nine variables. Job stability was measured by pre-conviction employment status. Similar to Sampson and Laub, economic status (measured by self-reported social class: lower, middle, and upper), age, and education were included due to their theoretical importance (Sampson and Laub, 1990; Wright et al., 2001).

Among the adult social bonds that Sampson and Laub measured, job stability, commitment, and attachment to spouse, this study focused in particular on attachment to spouse. In measuring attachment to spouse, Sampson and Laub (1993) used a composite measure derived from interview data describing the marital status, the general conjugal relationship between spouses, and the subjects' attitudes toward marital responsibility. Sampson and Laub's analysis of qualitative data revealed that key characteristics of weak marital attachment are domestic violence and disputes. The same measure, women's experience of abuse by their partners/spouses, was measured in this study to capture the quality or strength of women's relationships with their partners.

There are several forms of abuse women experience by their partners/spouses including sexual, verbal, psychological and physical. However, most studies on women who kill their partners/spouses focused only on physical abuse (Leonard, 2002; O'Keefe, 1997). Conversely, "a battered woman is a woman who is repeatedly subjected to any forceful physical or psychological behavior by a man in order to coerce her to do something he wants her to do without any concern for her rights" (Leonard, 2002, p. 6). That is, the abuse can be either psychological, physical, or both, and men may use both to control and dominate women.

We were unable to find a commonly accepted measure of domestic violence in South Korea. Thus, we asked two Korean psychologists with counseling experience with abused women to develop such a measure. Using their field experience, along with their knowledge of the relevant theoretical literature, they developed 16 items to measure specific forms of abuse women in Korea experience. These items were rated on a scale from 1 = "not at all" to 3 = "to a great extent." Cronbach's alpha for the sample was 0.95 indicating a very high reliability of the scale.

TABLE 2
FACTOR LOADINGS IN ABUSE ITEMS

MY PARTNER	Factor I Psychological Abuse	Factor II Physical & Sexual Abuse
Demeaned me	.856	
Treated me like an imbecile	.847	
Offended or humiliated me in public	.810	
Offended or humiliated me in the presence of our child	.772	
Ignored my feelings	.710	
Was bad-tempered and rude toward me	.655	
Got extremely angry when I disagreed with his opinion	.630	
Ordered me around	.621	
Screamed and yelled at me	.618	
Ordered unquestioning obedience to his sudden caprices	.590	
Beat me black and blue all over my body		.791
Yelled and beat me when he was drunk		.786
Broke things and threw them at me when we disagreed with each other		.781
Left the house after fighting with me		.616
Acted like he would like to kill me if I suggested him to stop drinking when he was intoxicated		.595
Commanded me to have sex when I did not want		.499
NOTE: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax Rotation.		

One of the important goals of the current study was to investigate the relative impacts of various types of abuse women who kill their partners experience. In order to assist in clarifying the number of underlying dimensions in the items, an exploratory principle factor analysis was conducted (Sawyer et al., 2006). A principal components analysis of the items yielded a two-factor solution according to the scree plot, an eigenvalue greater than 1.0, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) of .95, together accounting for a substantial 67.0 % of the total variance among the variables (Haslam & Levy, 2006; Sawyer et al., 2006). Item loadings for the varimax-rotated factors are presented in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, Factor I measured psychological abuse (e.g., “my partner demeaned me;” “my partner treated me like an imbecile”) and Factor II measured physical and sexual abuse (e.g., “my partner beat me black and blue all over my body;” “my partner yelled and beat me when he was drunk”). For each subject, a score for each factor was computed, and all subsequent analyses were conducted using these factor scores.

Subjects reported involvement in a variety of status, property, and violent offenses before age 18. Prior delinquency was measured using the Delinquency Inventory for Girls by the Korean Women’s Development Institute (1999), which contains 24 items addressing behaviors

such as drinking, lying about age, wandering about in the red-light district late at night, sleeping somewhere other than home without permission from parents, and gang fighting. Responses to each of the 24 items were coded 0 = No and 1 = Yes and assigned a seriousness score derived from the National Survey of Crime Severity (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1992, 2001; Wolfgang, Figlio, Tracy, & Singer, 1985), ranging from 0.25 for lying about age to 11.74 for gang fighting. The delinquency score equals the mean sum of each item's "yes" or "no" response and its seriousness weight.

Finally, a section of the questionnaire was designed to assess socio-demographic and background variables. Variables examined include age, education, employment status, marital status, economic status, number of children, and prior arrest history.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

T-tests and chi-square statistics were used to examine socio-demographic differences between women who killed their partners and those incarcerated for other offenses. Although no between-group differences were found for age, employment, economic status, and education, significant differences were found for other variables. As shown in Table 3, in comparison to women convicted of other offenses, more women who killed their partners had been in a marital relationship, had children, and were much less likely to have been arrested previously.

These findings differ on some key demographic variables from Leonard's study (2002) in which women convicted of using lethal violence against their abusive partners were compared to the broader population of California women prisoners. In her study, battered women prisoners were more educated and older than other female inmates in California. In both the current study and Leonard's study, women who caused the death of their partners were much more likely to have been married. Although this fact may sound tautological, it is not, because some of the women who killed their partners were not legally married. This issue becomes even more important in the subsequent analysis. Another similarity between Leonard and this study is that nearly equal proportions of both groups reported being employed prior to their arrest. However, in the current study, only 6.4% of women who killed their partners had a history of arrest compared to 42% of women in the comparison group.

TABLE 3
GROUP COMPARISON OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND BACKGROUND VARIABLES

Variables	Partner Homicide (n = 94)	Other Offenses (n = 157)	t-test or x²	p
Age	45.13	43.23	t = -1.585	P = .114
Economic Status	2.82	2.92	t = .891	P = .374
Education	5.41	5.22	t =-.654	P = .514
Employment				
Yes	70	102	x² = 2.460	P = .125
No	24	55		
Marital Status				
Married	86	118	x² = 10.303	P = .001
Non-married	8	39		
Have Children				
Yes	91	138	x² = 5.838	P = .019
No	3	19		
Prior Arrest				
Yes	6	66	x² = 36.539	P = .000
No	88	91		

A forward stepwise logistic regression was then performed to more thoroughly investigate the significant predictors distinguishing women who kill their intimate partners/spouses (= 1) from those convicted of other offenses (= 0). A stepwise procedure was chosen for identifying the order of entry for the predictors (Minor, Wells, Soderstrom, Bingham, & Williamson, 1999). All variables in Table 3 and two types of abuse were submitted to the stepwise logistic regression analysis as potential predictors (Minor et al., 1999).

As Table 4 shows, “psychological abuse” generated the highest score and the highest partial correlation indicating that this variable had the greatest discriminating power between the two groups. The variables “physical and sexual abuse,” “marital status,” and “delinquency,” were selected for entry at steps 2, 3, and 4, respectively. The remaining variables—education, economic status, employment, age, and having children—were not significant and excluded from the final model.

The overall measure of how well the model fits is given by -2 times the log of the likelihood value (-2LL). A well-fitting model has a small value for -2LL (Hair et al., 1998). A chi-square test for the change in the -2LL value from the base model is comparable to the overall F test in multiple regression. In the four-variable model in the present study, this reduction in -2LL is statistically significant at the .000 level (Model $\chi^2 = 6.640$). The Hosmer and Lemeshow measure of overall fit in the final four-variable model also indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the observed and predicted classifications. These two measures, in combination, provide support for acceptance of the four-variable model as a significant logistic regression model. The overall hit ratios were 72.9%, indicating that this model correctly classified 72.9% of the subjects.

Using the Wald statistic, the estimated coefficients for the four independent variables and the constant were also evaluated for statistical significance. The coefficients of the four variables in the final model were statistically significant at the .001, .01, and .05 levels, respectively. Thus, the four-variable model including “psychological abuse,” “physical and sexual abuse,” “marital status” and “delinquency,” demonstrates a good model fit and statistical significance.

Table 4 shows that “psychological abuse,” “physical and sexual abuse,” and “marital status” were positively correlated, and “delinquency” was negatively correlated with the dependent variable. These correlations imply that women who killed their partners/spouses experienced more “psychological” and “physical and sexual” abuse, and were more likely to have been married, but participated in less delinquency during adolescence than women incarcerated for other offenses.

Marital status as an independent variable merits some discussion here. Although it is true that it appears that women who were convicted of killing their partners/spouses would by definition be married, the reality is that some were not (although they were in “marriage-like” relationships). Conversely, the vast majority of offenders convicted of other offenses were also married. Being married was therefore neither a required status for being included in the partner homicide group, nor did it obviously exclude women from being in the other group. The fact that being married increased the chances of women offenders to end up in the homicide partner group approximately four-fold (odds-ratio: 3.748) is therefore at least somewhat meaningful.

TABLE 4. STEPWISE LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL COMPARING CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTNER HOMICIDE GROUP AND OTHER OFFENSE GROUP					
Predictors (in order of entry)	B	Wald	Sig.	Odds Ratio	95% C. I.
Psychological Abuse	.777	20.781	.000	2.174	1.557~3.036
Physical & Sexual Abuse	.577	14.325	.000	1.781	1.321~2.402
Marital Status	1.321	8.927	.003	3.748	1.575~8.919
Delinquency	-.078	4.754	.029	.925	0.863~0.992
Model $\chi^2 = 6.640$ ($p < .01$), Nagelkerke $R^2 = .283$, Hosmer and Lemeshow $\chi^2 = 11.317$					
NOTE: Variables not in the final equation are education, economic status, employment status, age, and having children. (N = 251)					

The results provide tentative support for both feminists who emphasize the exclusive impact of abusive relationships on women’s propensity to commit partner homicide and Sampson and Laub’s theory focusing on stability and change of antisocial behavior over the life course. Consistent with research implying a continuity of antisocial behavior over the life course, adolescent delinquency is related to women’s involvement in other offenses (Caspi & Moffitt, 1992; Cernkovich & Giordano, 2001; Loeber, 1982; Moffitt, 1993, 1997; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Simons, Johnson, Conger, & Elder, 1998), whereas abuse is characteristic of women who had little or no delinquent behavior history yet engaged in partner homicide. In this study, psychological abuse was a more powerful predictor of homicide against partners/spouses than physical and sexual abuse. Thus, it implies that psychological abuse is more damaging to women than physical abuse, while physical trauma also directly

relates to women's involvement in spouse/partner homicide (Foster, Veale, & Fogel, 1989; Leonard, 2002).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the feminist literature of women who kill their partners and Sampson and Laub's (1993) age-graded theory of informal social control, the present study examined the relationship between partner homicides committed by women in South Korea and the abuse they may have endured. In order to increase the understanding of factors associated with partner homicide by women and to provide a comprehensive examination of their characteristics, women incarcerated in South Korea for other offenses were used as a comparison group. The results revealed that Korean women who commit partner homicide were less likely to have been involved in adolescent delinquency than their counterparts convicted of other offenses. This conclusion supports the feminist view and corroborates findings by Sampson and Laub (1993). That is, the use of lethal force among women who kill their spouses/partners is in response to the severe marital/partner abuse, and the "ontogenic" model's emphasis on stability of antisocial behavior appears insufficient to explain partner homicide by women in the adult life course (O'Keefe, 1997; Sampson & Laub, 1990).

Unlike in the United States, where attorneys sometimes use the "battered women's syndrome" in criminal trials (Gagne, 1998; Leonard, 2002; Walker, 1992), the idea of this form of self-protection is not allowed as a defense in Korea. In spite of the common etiology of domestic violence and spousal homicide, the personal character of a female defendant accused of partner homicide is stressed during her trial.

Because "psychological abuse" and "physical and sexual abuse" were analyzed separately, it is possible to conclude that psychological abuse is more significantly and substantially related to partner homicide than physical and sexual abuse. As the majority of studies on partner homicide have focused on physically abused women, the relationship between physical abuse and homicide has thus been exclusively emphasized. In contrast, psychological abuse has been deemphasized in criminology. At the same time, although increased public awareness of the prevalence and nature of domestic violence has resulted in some criminal justice interventions, there appears to be no legal way to stop the invisible psychological abuse that occurs in South Korea. The results of this study suggest that the Korean criminal justice system should become aware of psychological as well as physical abuse and prepare resources, especially for psychologically abused women, in order to protect and prevent them from committing partner homicide.

Future studies should examine a community sample of abused women in order to increase the understanding of factors associated with greater risk of homicide in abusive relationships (O'Keefe, 1997). In addition, the perception of gender among those women who committed partner homicide should be included in a future study. Adler (2002) suggested that between 1875 and 1920, the increase in the number of women who killed their abusive husbands was related to the gender role changes in turn-of-the-century Chicago. Also, according to Adler, the increase in women who worked outside the home was directly related to less restrictive gender roles and an increase in husband homicide by wives. Interestingly, however, Dugan et al. (1999) argued that in situations in which numerous American women enter the labor force and their economic dependence on husbands is reduced, a growing number choose divorce as

a nonviolent mechanism for leaving an abusive relationship. In other words, an increase in the female labor force resulted in the decline of husband homicides in America from 1976 to 1992, rather than in an increase in the rate as Adler (2002) suggested.

In the present study, 74.5% of the South Korean women who killed their spouses/partners were employed prior to arrest compared to 65% of female inmates in the comparison group; the corresponding figure for women in the South Korean general population was 50.1% in 2005 (Korea National Statistical Office, 2006). Although women in South Korea have experienced a discernable improvement in their status and job opportunities, strong patriarchal attitudes and gender inequalities still continue (Lawson, 2002). Thus, an investigation into the perception of gender roles and patriarchal attitudes of women who kill their spouses/partners would add to the literature on the relationship between the incidence of partner homicide by women, and the social change of gender roles in contemporary society.

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Concerning Conceptualization and Operationalization: Sentencing Data and the Focal Concerns Perspective— A Research Note

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ABSTRACT

Although several theoretical perspectives have been used to study judicial discretion in the sentencing process, the focal concerns perspective has been one of the dominant theoretical frameworks used in the sentencing literature. The original work on focal concerns in sentencing revolved around the treatment of female defendants; this perspective has been expanded to include explanations of racial and ethnic disparity as well. This paper examines prior sentencing studies, primarily from Pennsylvania data, that have tested the focal concerns theory in relation to race and ethnicity. This research further explores the focal concerns perspective with data provided by the U.S. Sentencing Commission in an effort to test the focal concerns perspective utilizing both a more inclusive and a more parsimonious analytic model.

Key Words: sentencing, courts, judges, focal concerns theory

INTRODUCTION

Although several theoretical perspectives guide studies of judicial discretion in the sentencing process (e.g., racial threat [Crawford et al., 1998]; the liberation hypothesis [Spohn and Cederblom, 1991]), the focal concerns perspective, as first utilized by Steffensmeier et al. (1993), has become the dominant theoretical framework used to explain disparities in judges' sentencing decisions. Initially used to account for sexual disparities in sentences, the focal con-

cerns theory has recently been used to explain sentencing disparities based on race, ethnicity, and age.

The focal concerns theory states that judges' sentencing decisions reflect three primary concerns: (1) their assessment of the blameworthiness or culpability of the offender; (2) their desire to protect the community by incapacitating dangerous offenders or deterring potential offenders; and (3) their concerns about the practical consequences, or social costs, of sentencing decisions. Because judges rarely have enough information to accurately determine an offenders culpability or dangerousness, they develop a "perceptual shorthand" (Hawkins, 1981, 280; Steffensmeier, 1998, 767) based on stereotypes and attributions that are themselves linked to offender characteristics such as race, sex, and age. Thus, "race, age, and sex will interact to influence sentencing because of images or attributions relating these statuses to membership in social groups thought to be dangerous and crime prone" (Steffensmeier et al., 1998, 768). Rather than explicitly testing the focal concerns theory, past studies have interpreted the results of their analyses using the focal concerns theory. More to the point, they use the focal concerns perspective to explain sentencing disparities based on race, ethnicity, sex, and age.

The purpose of this study is to use data on sentences imposed under the federal sentencing guidelines to operationalize and provide a more comprehensive test of the focal concerns theory of sentencing. We begin by identifying the variables in the federal sentencing database that can be used to measure the three focal concerns and the concept of perceptual shorthand. We use factor analysis to test our theoretical model and to identify relationships among the independent variables. We then use these underlying concepts—or "factors"—to model the imprisonment decision and the length of the prison sentence. Our overall goals are to provide a fuller conceptualization of the focal concerns constructs and to conduct a more rigorous test of one of the most influential theories to emerge on differences in sentencing outcomes.

THE FOCAL CONCERNS LEGACY

While the focal concerns perspective was first used by Miller (1994) in his work on lower class delinquency, the idea of subcultural focal concerns was introduced into the sentencing literature in the 1980's. Steffensmeier (1980) used the concept to explain the fact that female offenders were sentenced more leniently than male offenders. He argued that sex disparity in sentencing could be attributed to five factors: Practicality, chivalry, naiveté, perceived permanence of behavior, and perception of dangerousness. Practicality referred to judges' "assumptions that most women defendants have young children and sending a mother to prison would be too disruptive of family life" (1980, 349). Practicality reflects the social position of the defendant; for instance, variables that Steffensmeier et al. (1993) would use to measure practicality would include if the defendant has a child, if the defendant was pregnant, emotional/physical problems, and the availability of jail space. Chivalry—"the generally protective and benevolent attitudes toward women"—and naiveté—"the view that women are less capable than men of committing criminal acts"—were linked by Steffensmeier (1980, 350) as stereotypes and expectations that were deeply ingrained in society. The perceived permanence of the behavior was another factor leading to the disparity in sentences experienced by males and females. Steffensmeier (1980, 352) argued that the research illustrated that judges believed that females were more conducive to reform than males. Finally, Steffensmeier (1980, 352) noted that the perception of danger

and the fear of male offenders was another factor involved with the more lenient treatment of female offenders.

Research conducted in Pennsylvania by Kramer and Steffensmeier (1993) led to a reformulation of Steffensmeier's (1980) theoretical model of focal concerns. This analysis led to the introduction of a new concept: Blameworthiness. The concept of blameworthiness would actually collapse the perceived permanence of behavior and perceived dangerousness concepts into one concept. Blameworthiness involves aspects of the defendant and the offense, and is thus measured by variables such as prior criminal history, seriousness of the offense, and type of offense. Females are thought to engage in less serious crimes, and these variables would theoretically explain away the variance in sentencing decisions for males and females. This conceptual jump, based on empirical evidence, in the focal concerns theory from Steffensmeier's proposal in 1980 would come to form the basis of the focal concerns perspective that is used in current sentencing research.

In 1998, Steffensmeier and his colleagues reformulated what is today known as the "focal concerns" theory of sentencing. Based on prior research and their own work, Steffensmeier et al. (1998, 766) posited three focal concerns which influence judicial sentencing decisions: Blameworthiness, protection of the community, and practical constraints and consequences.

Blameworthiness is seen as the degree of the offender's culpability or the degree of injury caused. Thus, variables used to measure the blameworthiness of an offender would include measures like the seriousness of the offense and the offender's criminal history. The protection of the community is "conceptually distinct" from blameworthiness; this focal concern keys upon the need to incapacitate and/or deter offenders. This concept involves the judge's ability to predict the future dangerousness of the offender; as such variables used to measure the protection of the community include criminal history, use of weapons in the offense, education, employment, and family history. Practical constraints and consequences (in actuality a concept for measures of system efficiency) include organizational concerns; this includes the relationship among courtroom actors, case flow, and an awareness of state and federal correctional resources (overcrowding). Steffensmeier et al. (1998) did not suggest any variables for the measurement of practical constraints and consequences. These focal concerns were argued to have complex interplay in the minds of judges when sentencing offenders.

The focal concerns listed by Steffensmeier and his colleagues do not, however, explain why factors such as sex, race, ethnicity, and age show statistical significance in predicting judicial decisions. Albonetti (1991, 248) argued that structural organization theory posits that to be a "fully rational decision, [it] must be made with knowledge of all possible alternatives." Decision makers, especially judges, rarely have complete information available for their usage. With this lack of information, decisions can be based on past experience, stereotypes, and prejudice (Albonetti, 1991). Steffensmeier et al. (1998) incorporated Albonetti's ideas in their model. Since judges do not always have enough information about a particular case, a so-called perceptual shorthand is developed by judges when they are faced with uncertainty about the offender. This perceptual shorthand is hypothesized to allow for the inclusion of such extra legal factors as sex, race, ethnicity, and age; this opens the door for disparity in sentences and the potential for discrimination.

Focal Concerns Theory and Sentencing Research

The majority of empirical studies reflecting on the focal concerns theory in sentencing have used data from the State of Pennsylvania. These studies include both secondary data on sentencing outcomes and qualitative data from interviews with judges and other courtroom actors. Kramer and Steffensmeier (1993) first used these data to study the links between judicial focal concerns and sentencing practices in relation to sex.

While Kramer and Steffensmeier found that both the decision to imprison and the length of the prison sentence were determined primarily by the seriousness of the offense and the defendant's criminal history, they also found that there was indeed disparity regarding sex in the sentencing of offenders in Pennsylvania. Race had no direct impact on the number of months received by defendants, but African Americans were more likely than whites to be sentenced to prison. Reasons suggested by qualitative interviews ranged from whether or not white offenders had a non-violent prior record or a less extensive overall criminal record, the use of a weapon not included in the final charge, employment status of the offender, the rehabilitativeness of the offender, and the presence of a plea agreement. Interview information that was related to the differential treatment of males and females by the courts in Pennsylvania was conspicuously missing from the Pennsylvania data; however, in terms of sex, Kramer and Steffensmeier concluded support for the focal concerns theory.

In the first study of the focal concerns theory utilized today, Steffensmeier et al. (1998) explored the effects of offense type, offense severity, prior record, multiple convictions, type of trial, size of court, race, sex, and age on the decision to imprison and the duration of the prison sentence. This examination also included both additive and interactive models to fully examine the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables. Although offense seriousness and criminal history were again found to be the strongest predictors of sentence outcomes, Steffensmeier and colleagues also found that race, sex, and age had direct effects. Young and old offenders of both races and sexes were treated more leniently than offenders aged 18 to 20. Race had both direct and indirect effects; young, black males received harsher treatment than other offenders. Females, on the whole, were treated more leniently by the courts. This held across both age and race.

Steffensmeier et al. (1998) noted that although the direct effects of race, age, and sex were statistically significant, they were relatively modest. When race, age, and sex were examined interactively, the magnitude of effects was greater. These findings and qualitative results from interviews indicated support for the focal concerns hypothesis. Primarily, Steffensmeier et al. (1998, 789) argue that "the interconnected effects culminate in the disproportionately severe sentencing of young black males." This study led to further analyses of the focal concerns theory with an emphasis on interactive effects rather than the traditional methods testing only direct effects.

Other researchers found similar results. For instance, Spohn and Holleran's (2000) examination of sentencing in relation to ethnicity in Chicago, Kansas City, and Miami presented several findings in relation to the perceptual shorthand concept. First, sex had the most significant direct effect on sentencing decisions followed by age and then race. Second, age effects were found to be intertwined with the sex, race, and ethnicity of the defendant; young, black males received the most harsh sentences overall. In addition to the differential treatment of young, black males in all three jurisdictions, in Chicago, young Hispanic males and middle-aged,

black males were singled out for harsher sentencing outcomes. In Miami, younger and older, Hispanic males received harsher sentences, and in Kansas City, young, white offenders also had higher odds of incarceration. Based on these findings, Spohn and Holleran concluded that due to organizational constraints (limited time and limited information), judges may resort to stereotypes of deviance and dangerousness.

Steffensmeier and Demuth's (2000) attempt to use federal sentencing data to explore the focal concerns theory also focused on Hispanic offenders. Similar to Spohn and Holleran's findings, Steffensmeier and Demuth (2000) found "considerable consistency" in the sentencing of federal criminal defendants. However, ethnicity had a small to moderate effect on the imprisonment decision and the number of months received. As well, greater leniency was afforded to white defendants in general. This is illustrated best by the fact that Hispanics received less of a sentence discount than other offender types, and Hispanic drug offenders were sentenced more harshly than other types of offenders. In 2001, Steffensmeier and Demuth found results consistent with their previous study in Pennsylvania.

Kramer and Ulmer's (2002) study on downward departures in Pennsylvania utilized several theoretical perspectives, including ideas contained in the focal concerns theory. Based on their prior research (1996), Kramer and Ulmer hypothesized that if offense seriousness and prior record were related to local court actors' definitions of blameworthiness and dangerousness, departures should decrease with increasing levels of offense seriousness and criminal history.

While Kramer and Ulmer found support for their first hypothesis, it was somewhat more complex than what they had first envisioned. The interaction effects of prior history and offense seriousness decreased the odds of receiving a downward departure. Kramer and Ulmer also concluded that violent, male offenders and young, Hispanic male offenders were less likely than other offenders to receive downward departures. Kramer and Ulmer (2002) argued that perceived dangerousness/community protection was a key consideration in giving downward departures. Also, blameworthiness was sometimes mediated by the victim-offender relationship, and practical constraints and consequences (in the guise of the defendant's plea/trial decision) was important in receiving downward departures.

Although the majority of the research conducted to date has provided at least partial support for the focal concerns theory, this research has had some theoretical and methodological shortcomings. First, because the focal concerns theory lacks serious theoretical development by criminologists, there is not an explicit thesis or an established set of propositions that support this theoretical framework. Instead, researchers who study sentencing using focal concerns follow a set of established concepts which only offer suggestions as to the variables which can measure particular concepts. The derived thesis of this perspective is that:

There are certain pieces of offender information that the courtroom workgroup uses to sentence offenders. These items of information, in relation to community and political considerations, create "focal concerns" for members of the courtroom workgroup in sentencing offenders; further, these focal concerns have complex interplay when being considered. Because all available information is not necessarily available when sentencing is being decided, courtroom actors may utilize a perceptual shorthand in sentencing an offender. Perceptual shorthand variables can range from the seriousness of the offense and criminal history to race, ethnicity, and sex. This perceptual shorthand is the explanation for disparity and discrimination in sentencing decisions.

Although testable hypotheses have been developed by a number of the focal concerns researchers, this theoretical framework is still in need of further elaboration.

Second, the concepts of the focal concerns perspective are still relatively unexplored. The concepts that comprise the theory contain interrelated variables. For instance, criminal history can be used as an indicator of both the blameworthiness and community safety concepts. Moreover, the focal concern theorists leave a conceptual void by not explaining how the various concepts work together; they merely state that there is a “complex interplay” between these focal concerns. This is especially problematic given the fact that concepts share variables. Thus, there is no guide for where variables should be used within a given concept and how much variance a concept explains is accounted for by each variable. For instance, if a criminal history variable can be used as an indicator for both blameworthiness and community safety, then what is the real relationship between these two concepts? If a variable is used as an indicator for two concepts, then there is an implication that these two concepts are related, which means that different variables within each concept can potentially change the effect of the variable in question. This is a subject that has been neglected by focal concerns theorists.

Third, the majority of research testing the focal concerns theory uses secondary data from the Pennsylvania Sentencing Commission which limits the generalizeability of results. More importantly these studies include very few variables in their analytic models. Above, it was indicated that some of the concepts outlined under the focal concerns perspective could be measured by the same concept. However, there are other operationalization problems. First, the focus of past research has been on the perceptual shorthand concept. While it is acknowledged that this concept is adequately operationalized, this concept is the overwhelming object in prior research, and thus the other focal concerns concepts are measured by very few variables. Between the focus on the perceptual shorthand variables and the limited nature of secondary data in Pennsylvania, focal concerns concepts have not been fully operationalized.

The second operationalization issue for focal concerns researchers is that the concept of practical constraints and consequences has been a relatively untapped feature of this theoretical perspective. If it is measured at all, the primary variable has been whether or not the defendant pled guilty. Other than this variable, only two other variables, the court’s number of cases and size of the court, have been included in some analyses. With this concept being relatively unmeasured, this leaves an empirical hole in the focal concerns perspective as to the effect of this concept on focal concerns findings.

This study addresses these limitations and provides a more definitive test of the focal concerns perspective. First, this study uses federal sentencing guidelines data in an effort to examine an analytic model that is more inclusive of other variables that can affect sentencing outcomes. Second, using this data, the research team attempted a fuller conceptualization and operationalization of the concepts and variables associated with the focal concerns perspective based on the available data from the Federal Sentencing Commission. With added data elements, it is hypothesized that some of the effects of extralegal variables will diminish or disappear.

RESEARCH METHODS

Data

The purpose of this research is to operationalize and test a more fully derived model of the focal concerns perspective. To do this, the researcher obtained federal sentencing guideline data collected by the Federal Sentencing Commission. These databases provide information on defendant processing and include legally relevant variables such as criminal history and seriousness of the offense as well as extra legal variables such as race, age, and sex. A data set from 2000 is used because at the time this study was being conceptualized it was the most current data available from the federal sentencing commission. More importantly, federal sentencing data has much more data available than the Pennsylvania data does, which will allow for a fuller conceptualization, operationalization, and thus, a more complete test of the focal concerns perspective. The total number of cases evaluated for this study is 59,846.

Dependent Variables

There are two primary analytic models that are examined in this research; thus there are two dependent variables that this study will focus on. The first analysis models the decision to imprison the defendant. This dependent variable is binary and is coded 1 if the defendant received a prison sentence and 0 if the defendant did not receive a prison sentence. The second dependent variable is the length of the prison term, in months. This is a continuous, interval level variable. It is hypothesized that with this more complete conceptualization of the theoretical model, the effect of the perceptual shorthand variables (race, sex, ethnicity, and age) will either decrease or dissipate.

Descriptive statistics for the dependent variables (Decision to imprison and Number of Months) are provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE DEPENDENT VARIABLES			
Dependent Variable	Coding	Percent	Mean
Decision to Imprison	No (0)	15.80%	
N=59,846	Yes (1)	84.20%	
Number of Months			73.15
N=49,387			

Table 1 illustrates that of all sentences handed out in the federal courts in 2000, roughly 84% of the defendants received a prison sentence. Further, the average length of time that an offender was sentenced to serve was just over 73 months.

Independent Variables

The independent variables included in the analysis are variables that have been used in previous studies of sentences imposed under the federal sentencing guidelines. We depart from

prior research, however, in that we identify—*a priori*—the variables that measure the key elements of each of the three broad concepts that make up the focal concerns perspective. An explanation of the variables that operationalize the three main concepts of the focal concerns perspective follows.

The Blameworthiness and Culpability of the Offender

The first focal concern is the blameworthiness and culpability of the offender. As Steffensmeier et al. (1998, 766) note, “This focal concern is ordinarily associated with the ‘just deserts’ or retributive philosophy of punishment.” Retributivists contend that the amount of punishment imposed on the offender should be proportionate to the seriousness of the crime; the punishment, in other words, should fit the crime. The amount of punishment should also reflect the offender’s culpability, which is defined as the degree to which the offender may be blamed or held responsible for the consequences (or risk of consequences) of the act (von Hirsh, 1976).

We use three variables to measure the offender’s blameworthiness and culpability: the offense seriousness score, the number of counts of conviction, and the offender’s criminal history. The offense seriousness score and the number of conviction counts obviously reflect the seriousness of the crime. Although the offender’s criminal history score could be used to measure either blameworthiness/culpability or protection of the community, we suggest that it “fits” better here. Von Hirsh (1976, 85), for example, argues that “repetition alters the degree of culpability that may be ascribed to the offender,” noting that the repeat offender “may be regarded as more culpable, since he persisted despite being ensured through prior punishment.”

Protection of the Community

The second focal concern, protection of the community, reflects a utilitarian philosophy of punishment. Whereas the retributivist contends that punishment is justified because of the offender’s guilt and blameworthiness, the utilitarian argues that the purpose of punishment is crime prevention. According to this view, the appropriate amount of punishment is the amount necessary to prevent future crime by the offender and by other members of society. As Steffensmeier and his colleagues (1998, 767) point out, however, judges “confront the goal of protecting the public and preventing recidivism in the context of high uncertainty about offender’s future behavior.” As a result of this uncertainty, judges’ predictions of the offender’s future dangerousness and likelihood of recidivism are based on such things as the type of offense (violent versus property or drug), whether the offender used a weapon during the crime, the length of the offender’s criminal history, and other offender characteristics (employment history, community ties, drug dependency) that are linked to recidivism.

We use the following variables to identify this focal concern: whether the offender was convicted of a violent crime (Non-violent = 1; Violent = 0) or a drug offense (Drug offense = 1; Other offense = 0), whether the crime for which the offender was convicted involved a mandatory minimum sentence for the use of a weapon or for a drug offense (Minimum = 1; No minimum = 0), whether the career criminal or the armed career criminal provisions were applied (Applied = 1; Not applied = 0), the offender’s citizenship status (citizen = 1; Non-citizen = 0), and the offender’s marital status (Married = 1; Single = 0). We include citizenship and marital status in this focal concern because both of these variables reflect the offender’s community ties and social bonds, which judges may consider in calculating odds of recidivism.

Practical Constraints and Consequences

The third focal concern reflects judges' consideration of the practical constraints on, and consequences of, their sentencing decisions. Practical constraints and considerations is hereafter referred to as system efficiency. Steffensmeier et al. (1998) contend that judges, as members of the courtroom workgroup, are concerned about maintaining positive relationships with prosecutors and defense attorneys and ensuring the efficient flow of cases through the system. They also are influenced by such things as "the offender's 'ability to do time,' health condition, special needs, the costs to be borne by the correctional system, and the disruption of ties to children and other family members" (Steffensmeier et al., 1998, 767).

We use five variables to tap this construct: type of disposition (guilty plea = 1; trial = 0), whether the offender's offense severity score was reduced for acceptance of responsibility (Acceptance of responsibility applied = 1; Not applied = 0), whether the offender received a downward departure from the presumptive sentence (Departure = 1; No departure = 0), the offender's pretrial status (In custody = 1; Not in custody = 0), and the offender's number of dependents. The key system efficiency variable is the type of disposition; offenders who plead guilty save the court time and expense of a trial and, as a consequence, receive a more lenient sentence. Related to type of disposition is the offender's acceptance of responsibility for the crime; although pleading guilty is not a prerequisite for receiving a reduction in offense severity score for acceptance of responsibility, judges rarely award the reduction if the offender insists on a trial. We suggest that whether the offender received a downward departure reflects judges' concerns about system resources, such as prison space, as well as their beliefs about the appropriateness of a long prison sentence for a particular offender. Pretrial status has been found to be an indicator associated with harsher sentences. We argue that this variable is appropriate under this concept because an offender who is in jail is taking up system resources. The offender's number of dependents is included to measure judges' concerns about the "practical costs" (Steffensmeier, 1980) of incarcerating offenders—especially female offenders—with children. If a parent is sent to prison, the child (or children) could well drain additional resources from the system by being sent to juvenile facilities or to child protective agencies that take care of children who have nowhere else to go.

Perceptual Shorthand

The focal concerns perspective contends that judges base their sentencing decisions in part on assessments of the offenders' dangerousness, culpability, and likelihood of recidivism. Because judges rarely have enough information to accurately determine this, they develop a perceptual shorthand (Hawkins, 1981, 280; Steffensmeier et al., 1998, 767) based on stereotypes and attributions that are themselves linked to offender characteristics such as race, sex, and age. Thus, "race, age, and sex will interact to influence sentencing because of images or attributions relating these statuses to membership in social groups thought to be dangerous and crime prone" (Steffensmeier et al., 1998, 768).

Consistent with this, we use four variables to measure judges' perceptual shorthand: the offender's race (white = 1; black = 0), ethnicity (Hispanic = 1; Non-Hispanic = 0), sex (Female = 1; Male = 0), and age. Age is a continuous variable. Table 2 presents the theoretical model of this research and the variables that are used to measure the different focal concerns' concepts. Coding of these variables is also presented.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL

Concepts	Variables	Coding	Percent-age	Mean
Blameworthiness	Criminal History			2.31
	Offense Seriousness			18.51
	Number of Counts			1.47
Community Safety	Violent Offenses	Violent Offenses (0)	5.0%	
		Non-Violent Offenses (1)	95.0%	
	Drug Offenses	Other Offenses (0)	59.0%	
		Drug Offenses (1)	41.0%	
	Gun Minimum	Not Applied (0)	97.6%	
		Applied (1)	2.4%	
	Drug Minimum	Not Applied (0)	74.7%	
		Applied (1)	25.3%	
	Armed Career Criminal	Not Applied (0)	99.6%	
		Applied (1)	0.4%	
	Career Criminal	Not Applied (0)	97.4%	
		Applied (1)	2.6%	
	Citizen	Non-Citizen (0)	27.3%	
		Citizen (1)	72.7%	
	Marital Status	Single (0)	66.5%	
		Married (1)	33.5%	
System Efficiency	Disposition	Trial (0)	95.5%	
		Plea (1)	4.5%	
	Accept Responsibility	Not Applied (0)	9.7%	
		Applied (1)	90.3%	
	Departure	No Departure (0)	64.7%	
		Departure (1)	35.3%	
	Number of Dependents			1.60
	Pretrial Status	Not in Custody (0)	37.2%	
		In Custody (1)	62.8%	
Perceptual Shorthand	Sex	Male (0)	85.7%	
		Female (1)	14.3%	
	Ethnicity	Non-Hispanic (0)	59.0%	
		Hispanic (1)	41.0%	
	Race	Non-White (0)	30.7%	
		White (1)	69.3%	
	Age			34.15
N=59,846				

The data in Table 2 illustrate characteristics of all defendants who were sentenced in 2000. The majority of offenders were U.S. Citizens, white, male, single, detained prior to trial, and convicted of non-violent offenses. The population of offenders was split on the variable of ethnicity; 40 percent of the population was Hispanic. As well, 40 percent of the offenders were convicted of drug offenses. A majority of offenders accepted responsibility and decided to plea bargain rather than go to trial.

Analytic Model

While the focal concerns theory suggests that our analytic model is correctly formulated, the research team decided to test this statistically. While structural equation modeling (SEM) seems to be the appropriate test of this theory, sentencing data does not necessarily conform to such an analysis. With the majority of the variables being dichotomous in nature, some of these independent variables are slightly kurtose. Kurtosis is a major problem for structural equation models, and this data thus violates one of the key assumptions of SEM. Namely that variables are continuously and normally distributed (Bollen, 1989; Kline, 1998).

To further examine if these concepts and variables were statistically linked in the way the theoretical model suggests, a factor analysis was utilized. While factor analysis is not as powerful as SEM, factor analysis can still statistically examine the relationship between independent variables. If relationships are found between variables, these variables can be collapsed into factors and used in either logistic or OLS regression analyses relative to the dependent variable in question.

This research tests the focal concerns conceptual model using two different analytic models. First, the focal concerns model listed above is tested on the judicial decision to imprison an offender. Logistic regression is employed to test the effects of the focal concerns model on the decision to imprison a defendant. Second, the focal concerns model is tested against the length of the prison sentence, or how many months of imprisonment the offender was sentenced to. In line with current research on sentencing, an OLS regression technique is used to test the effects of the focal concerns model with the number of months a defendant received. The offenders who did not receive a prison sentence are omitted from this analysis.

FINDINGS

The findings of the initial factor analysis on the theoretical model of the focal concerns perspective are reported in Table 3.

TABLE 3.
PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS FACTOR ANALYSIS OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
Offense Seriousness	0.765						
Drug Offenses	0.863						
Drug Minimum	0.895						
Citizen		-0.798					
Pretrial Status		0.605					
Ethnicity		0.836					
Number of Counts			-0.481				
Disposition			0.857				
Accept Responsibility			0.836				
Criminal History				0.825			
Armed Career Criminal				0.333			
Career Criminal				0.660			
Sex				-0.314			
Marital Status					0.778		
Number of Dependents					0.781		
Violent Offenses						0.750	
Gun Minimum						-0.743	
Departure							0.646
Race							0.531
Age							0.473
Rotation Method: Varimax							

This factor analysis indicates several findings. First, while the variables collapsed into factors that make sense, these factors are not the same as predicted by the focal concerns theory.

Offense seriousness factored together with drug offenses and the application of a drug minimum. These variables were originally thought to apply to two different concepts (blameworthiness and culpability, and protection of the community), however, statistically they factored together into what is referred to as nature of the offense, which places it under the blameworthiness concept. Ethnicity and pretrial status factored together with citizenship to form a shorthand variable that is consistent with the focal concerns perspective. The acceptance of responsibility, number of counts of conviction, and disposition factored together into the second variable used to measure the concept of blameworthiness, that of offender responsibility. Criminal history, armed career criminal, career criminal, and sex loaded together to form the first measure of community safety, perceived dangerousness. Sex was the only real surprise to this factor, as it was expected to be comparable with other perceptual shorthand variables. Marital status and number of dependents factored together to form the first, albeit weak, measure of system efficiency, potential system strain. Violent offenses and the application of a gun minimum loaded together into the second measure of community protection, perceived dangerousness. Finally,

race and age factored together with departure status to form the second perceptual shorthand variable; this is consistent with Spohn and Holleran's (2000) finding indicating a link between race and age for offenders in the sentencing of offenders.

While the majority of the associations indicated in the factor analysis made logical sense, the focal concerns perspective did not predict all of these relationships. Since there is a conceptual void in the focal concerns literature and the relationships indicated by the factor analysis made sense, it was decided by the research team to incorporate the factored model into the primary analysis of this study instead of the model presented in Table 2. Findings for the hypothesized model using the non-factored independent variables are found in Appendix A.

Dispositional Decision

The first analytic model discussed here pertains to the judicial decision to imprison defendants. Table 4 presents the logistic regression for the judicial decision to imprison utilizing the newly factored concepts.

The results illustrated in Table 4 provide interesting insights into the nature of sentencing. The dangerousness of the offense (violent offense, or receipt of a gun minimum) and system efficiency (race, age and departure) had minor effects on the defendants odds of going to prison. The limited measure of potential system strain showed minor effects. However, even with this analytic model, we believe a full test of system efficiency is still not completed.

The nature of offense factor, which combined the seriousness of the offense and whether or not drugs were involved in the crime, put an offender almost five and a half times more likely to receive a prison sentence. The perceived dangerousness of the offender (criminal history, armed career and career criminal status, and sex) made an offender almost five times more likely to receive a prison sentence. Under the perceptual shorthand I factor, defendants who were U.S. Citizens, in custody, and Hispanic were almost twice as likely to receive a prison sentence. Finally, the offender responsibility factor (accept responsibility, number of counts, and disposition) had negligible effects on receipt of a prison sentence. The perceptual shorthand II factor indicates that whites, older offenders, and those who received departures are less likely to go to prison, although effects were small.

This section has indicated the findings of the analysis on the judicial decision to imprison a defendant. The proposed factors indicate some large effects. The next section will explore the links between the criminal sentencing factors and the length of the prison sentence imposed.

TABLE 4.
LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON THE DECISION TO IMPRISON WITH FACTORS

Concepts	Variable	b	SE	Wald	Exp(B)
Nature of Offense	Offense Seriousness	1.687*	0.030	3211.373	5.405
	Drug Offenses (1=Drug)				
	Drug Minimum (1=Applied)				
Perceptual Shorthand I	Citizen (1=Citizen)	1.015*	0.023	1977.381	2.759
	Ethnicity (1=Hispanic)				
	Pretrial Status (1=In Custody)				
Offender Responsibility	Accept Responsibility (1=Applied)	-0.854*	0.040	458.716	0.426
	Number of Counts				
	Disposition (1=Plea)				
Perceived Dangerousness	Criminal History	1.559*	0.035	1937.198	4.752
	Armed Career Criminal (1=Applied)				
	Career Criminal (1=Applied)				
	Sex (1=Female)				
Potential System Strain	Marital Status (1=Married)	-0.048*	0.017	7.927	0.954
	Number of Dependents				
Dangerousness	Violent Offenses (1=Non-Violent)	-0.557*	0.029	365.578	0.573
	Gun Minimum (1=Applied)				
Perceptual Shorthand II	Race (1=White)	-0.451*	0.017	667.052	0.637
	Age				
	Departure (1=Departure)				
	Constant	3.537*	0.036	9421.174	34.377
-2 Log Likelihood	22866.371				
χ^2	16515.033*				
Nagelkerke R ²	0.520				
*P<.0001					

Duration

This section explores the length of the prison sentence received by offenders. Table 5 presents the analysis of the OLS regression on the number of months received by offenders.

TABLE 5.
OLS REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON NUMBER OF MONTHS IN PRISON WITH FACTORS

CONCEPTS	VARIABLE	B	SE	BETA
Nature of Offense	Offense Seriousness	33.767*	0.609	0.255
	Drug Offenses (1=Drug)			
	Drug Minimum (1=Applied)			
Perceptual Shorthand I	Citizen (1=Citizen)	2.097*	0.614	0.016
	Ethnicity (1=Hispanic)			
	Pretrial Status (1=In Custody)			
Offender Responsibility	Accept Responsibility (1=Applied)	-26.855*	0.57	-0.214
	Number of Counts			
	Disposition (1=Plea)			
Perceived Dangerousness	Criminal History	26.002*	0.585	0.203
	Armed Career Criminal (1=Applied)			
	Career Criminal (1=Applied)			
	Sex (1=Female)			
Potential System Strain	Marital Status (1=Married)	0.006	0.604	0.000
	Number of Dependents			
Dangerousness	Violent Offenses (1=Non-Violent)	-23.193*	0.571	-0.185
	Gun Minimum (1=Applied)			
Perceptual Shorthand II	Race (1=White)	-6.036*	0.613	-0.045
	Age			
	Departure (1=Departure)			
R-Square	0.166*			
F	1156.409			
*P<.0001				

As with the model for the decision to imprison, Table 5 illustrates substantial effects of the factors. The potential system strain concept (marital status and number of dependents) was not statistically significant in this model, again indicating that the system efficiency concept of the focal concerns perspective has not been adequately tested.

Many of the factors showed highly significant effects on the length of sentence. The nature of offense factor indicated that offenders with higher offense seriousness scores, who were convicted of drug offenses, or received a drug mandatory minimum received almost 34 months more in prison than other types of offenders. Offenders who were perceived to be more dangerous, had a longer criminal history, had an armed career, or career criminal status applied, or were male, received 26 months more in prison length. On the other hand, defendants who accepted responsibility for the offense, had fewer number of counts, and chose to plead guilty (offender responsibility factor) received on average almost 27 months less in prison than other defendants.

The two perceptual shorthand variables had relatively lower effects than the primary focal concern concepts. The first perceptual shorthand variable consisting of citizenship, ethnicity, and pretrial status indicated that Hispanic, non-citizens who were detained prior to the trial received on average only a modest two months more in prison. The second perceptual shorthand variable indicated that older, whites, who received departures on average received six months less in prison.

The findings presented here in terms of the factor analysis, the decision to imprison using the factors, and the number of months received by defendants using the factors, indicate some significant findings overall for the focal concerns perspective.

DISCUSSION

Research on sentencing decisions has become one of the key areas of focus for criminologists interested in the discretionary powers of criminal justice system actors. This emphasis of research on disparity in the sentencing phase of the criminal justice system for different groups of offenders brings with it the ubiquitous question “Why?” The focal concerns theory attempts to address such disparities in sentencing practices by examining the differential treatment of offenders based on sex, race, ethnicity, and age.

The current research suggests that the focal concerns theory is not a theory at all. It has no set of testable propositions; most hypotheses that have been derived from this work have been extended over time. The primary concepts of this perspective are also underdeveloped. Different concepts can actually contain the same variables. Because of this, and the fact that focal concerns theorists do not allude to how these concepts fit together, except in a “complex interaction,” aspiring focal concerns empiricists are left to their own devices in testing extended analytic models. At this point, the “focal concerns theory” is no such thing; it is merely a perspective. Criticism aside, the focal concerns perspective does appear to be a very logical and effective way in which to test sentencing outcomes. The current research again presents analyses that support this perspective; however, this research attempted to further the connections between the different concepts that form the basis of this theoretical framework.

Since the majority of focal concerns research has utilized very few variables to tap the effects of complex concepts, this research has attempted to overcome some of the methodological problems inherent in the misspecification of analytic models; specifically this research proposed a more inclusive model to examine the focal concerns perspective. This research has also attempted to ascertain the nature of the association between the different variables that are used to analyze concepts. Using a factor analysis, the research here suggests a way in which variables should be tested and under which concepts these variables should go together. Blame-worthiness should be measured with variables like: offense seriousness, if the offense included violence or drugs, whether the offender accepted responsibility, the overall number of counts, and whether the offender chose to plea or go to trial. Community safety should be measured by variables such as: criminal history, armed career or career criminal statuses, and sex. The effects of sex seemed to be mediated by these types of variables, which again provided support for the perceptual shorthand concept of the focal concerns perspective; this will be discussed further in relation to the other perceptual shorthand variables.

While system efficiency was measured only with marital status and number of dependents, this concept is still an understudied area of this research. Not only were the effects of the pro-

posed variables here minimal, but the fact that the disposition variable (one of the only three measures utilized to measure system efficiency in the past) factored together with blameworthiness variables suggests that it is not a good measure of court flow; hence, the concept of system efficiency still needs to be further tested and refined before any overall conclusions about the focal concerns perspective can be formulated.

The perceptual shorthand concept was measured by variables such as citizenship, ethnicity, pretrial status, race, age, and departure. The findings here indicate that this may not be a true perceptual shorthand as it has been envisioned in the past, since it did not factor together with other variables that could lead a judge to believe that one race or ethnicity is more likely to engage in criminal activity, or have a more extensive prior criminal history. Rather race, ethnicity, and citizenship exist outside of all of the other concepts, which could be viewed as support for direct discrimination. The current research found that Hispanic offenders receive more harsh sentences (two times as likely to go to prison and received two more months in prison), and that White defendants were less likely to go to prison and were shown to receive more lenient sentences than African Americans. Thus, this research finds little support for the idea of a perceptual shorthand, but rather finds the variables under this concept linked together external to other factors.

Sex, while not a measure of the perceptual shorthand, was shown to be supportive of the idea of the perceptual shorthand. This is because it factored together with criminal history and the application of either an armed career or career criminal status. In the case of sex, females could easily be stereotyped as having less extensive criminal histories and thus less likely to receive career criminal statuses. Hence, sex actually works internally to one of the key concepts of the focal concerns perspective and is thus more consistent with this theoretical framework. This is no surprise, though, as the focal concerns perspective actually emerged to explain different sentencing outcomes for males and females.

While factor analysis was used in this research, and the factors that were created were then utilized in the analytic models of this study, analyses were performed on the model as originally formulated by the authors as well. The results for these analyses are presented in Appendix A. These results show striking similarities to the factored models. Thus, future research does not necessarily have to use factor analysis procedures to gain a better understanding of the focal concerns perspective; however, the effects and interactions of variables may be better illustrated by factor analyses.

In conclusion, this research has attempted to further the conceptualization of the focal concerns perspective. While support was found for the focal concerns perspective on the whole, the findings presented here, illustrate the need for further research on this topic. Specifically, the concept of system efficiency needs a great deal more testing, as it has been consistently under-evaluated in this and prior studies. Until more comprehensive research can be conducted on this element of the focal concerns perspective, theorists will still not be able to fully explain the effects of perceptual shorthand variables like race and ethnicity on sentencing outcomes. To further the research on the focal concerns perspective, researchers in the future will need to focus more on this concept.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE A. LOGIT REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON THE DECISION TO IMPRISON FOR THE ORIGINAL MODEL					
Concepts	Variable	b	SE	Wald	Exp(B)
Blameworthiness	Criminal History	0.673*	0.022	911.439	1.961
	Offense Seriousness	0.332*	0.006	3516.808	1.394
	Number of Counts	0.016	0.011	2.038	1.016
Community Safety	Violent Offenses (1=Non-Violent Offenses)	0.050	0.121	0.173	1.052
	Drug Offenses (Drug Offenses)	0.203*	0.055	13.443	1.225
	Gun Minimum (1=Applied)	1.952*	0.567	11.853	7.039
	Drug Minimum (1=Applied)	-0.538*	0.101	28.297	0.584
	Armed Career Criminal (1=Applied)	-2.424	3.642	0.443	0.089
	Career Criminal (1=Applied)	-2.578*	0.453	32.381	0.076
	Citizen (1=Citizen)	-1.319*	0.082	261.761	0.267
System Efficiency	Marital Status (1=Married)	0.004	0.043	0.009	1.004
	Disposition (Plea=1)	-0.103	0.169	0.376	0.902
	Departure (Departure=1)	-1.827*	0.046	1547.33	0.161
	Accept Responsibility (Applied=1)	-0.591*	0.109	29.688	0.554
	Pretrial Status (1-In Custody)	1.900*	0.055	1175.457	6.688
	Number of Dependents	-0.006	0.013	0.199	0.994
	Sex (1=Female)	-0.261*	0.043	37.521	0.770
Perceptual Shorthand	Ethnicity (1=Hispanic)	0.316*	0.053	34.917	1.371
	Race (1=White)	0.021	0.045	0.214	1.021
	Age	-0.012*	0.002	50.771	0.988
	Constant	-1.910*	0.231	68.621	0.148
-2 Log Likelihood	18,400.92				
χ^2	20,980.48				
Nagelkerke R ²	0.633				
*P<.000					

TABLE B.
OLS REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON NUMBER OF MONTHS IN PRISON FOR
THE ORIGINAL MODEL

Concepts	Variable	b	SE	Beta
Blameworthiness	Criminal History	-3.542*	1.655	-0.012
	Offense Seriousness	7.118*	0.467	0.092
	Number of Counts	2.669*	0.262	0.049
Community Safety	Violent Offenses (1=Non-Violent Offenses)	-23.560*	2.904	-0.041
	Drug Offenses (Drug Offenses)	2.307	1.816	0.009
	Gun Minimum (1=Applied)	122.513*	3.884	0.152
	Drug Minimum (1=Applied)	52.456*	1.830	0.185
	Armed Career Criminal (1=Applied)	101.729*	8.758	0.054
	Career Criminal (1=Applied)	67.850*	3.844	0.090
	Citizen (1=Citizen)	-2.779	1.814	-0.009
	Marital Status (1=Married)	-1.927	1.447	-0.007
	Disposition (Plea=1)	-61.185*	3.562	-0.104
System Efficiency	Departure (Departure=1)	-7.737*	1.299	-0.028
	Accept Responsibility (Applied=1)	-32.037*	2.592	-0.075
	Pretrial Status (1-In Custody)	14.693*	1.568	0.050
	Number of Dependents	0.891*	0.380	0.012
	Sex (1=Female)	-2.652	1.989	-0.006
Perceptual Shorthand	Ethnicity (1=Hispanic)	-0.311	1.773	-0.001
	Race (1=White)	-12.944*	1.606	-0.046
	Age	0.124	0.065	0.010
R-Square	0.154*			
F	370.219			
*P<.000				

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Richard D. Hartley is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Texas A&M International University. He is the co-author of *Criminal Courts: Structure, Process, and Issues*. His research interests include disparities in sentencing practices, especially at the Federal level, prosecutorial and judicial discretion, and sentencing for narcotics violations.

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Cassia Spohn is a Professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University, where she is also Director of Graduate Programs for the department. She is the author of *How Do Judges Decide? The Search for Fairness and Justice in Punishment*. She also is the co-author of two books: *The Color of Justice: Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America* and *Rape Law Reform: A Grassroots Movement and Its Impact*. She has published extensively on prosecutors' charging decisions in sexual assault cases, the effect of race/ethnicity and sex on sentencing decisions, sentencing of drug offenders, and the deterrent effect of imprisonment. Her current research focuses on charging and sentencing decisions in three U.S. District Courts.



BOOK REVIEW: EDITOR'S RECOMMENDATION

Withrow, B. L. (2006). *Racial Profiling: From Rhetoric to Reason*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

By Napoleon C. Reyes, Sam Houston State University

The use of race in profiling by the police has sparked heated debates in both the academic and law enforcement communities. Critics argue that race should not be used as an indicator of suspiciousness and that its use only leads to racial and ethnic disparities throughout the criminal justice system (Harris, 2002). Proponents counter that it is an effective way to use limited resources on likely law breakers and that it is “not based on prejudice but on probabilities” (Cohen, Lennon & Wasserman, 2000, p. 12). In the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack of the World Trade Center in New York, the issue has only become more convoluted; in addition to complaints of being stopped by the police on account of being Black or Brown (i.e., driving while Black or driving while Brown), we now hear of individuals being targeted by law enforcers in airports by reason of their being Arab or Muslim (i.e., flying while Arab or Muslim). In *Racial Profiling: From Rhetoric to Reason*, Brian L. Withrow attempts to untangle the issue by presenting a dispassionate look into the racial profiling controversy. With his comprehensive and objective, almost clinical, examination of what is known thus far on the subject, he succeeds in elevating the debate to a cerebral level that befits any legitimate scientific inquiry.

Withrow tells us that since the mid-1990s, there have been about 400 racial profiling studies that have been conducted throughout the United States. Yet, much of what has been said has been largely influenced by individuals and groups advancing particular political or social agendas. The conclusions, he notes, are exaggerated and overreaching and do little to improve our understanding of the problem (p. xii). Thus, in the first three chapters of the book, he painstakingly describes the nature of the beast by using empirical evidence culled from prior research. Chapter One (“An Emergence”) traces the genesis of the controversy and identifies six seemingly unrelated events that precipitated it: the increased vigilance in protecting minority rights, the development of offender profiling as a law enforcement tool, the police use of traffic stops in crime prevention, the increased media attention to allegations of racial profiling, a U.S. Supreme Court decision validating the use of pretextual stops, and the New Jersey scandal showing that minorities were being targeted for enforcement by the state police.

Chapter Two (“What We Know and Don’t Know”) reports the results of a representative sample of racial profiling studies that have been done since the mid-1990s. It discusses the methodological techniques used by racial profiling researchers and the salient research questions that have emerged from their studies. Withrow juxtaposes the findings in 24 studies and compares their conclusions on the following questions: Are minorities stopped more frequently? Are there differences in the reasons for stops? Are minorities searched more frequently? Are stops involving minorities more punitive? Are minorities detained longer during stops? Are incidents involving physical resistance and confrontation more frequent? Do officer characteristics matter?

In Chapter Three (“Critical Methodological Issues”), the critical methodological concerns in the study of racial profiling are explained. The chapter describes the problem of defining the term “racial profiling” and designing an appropriate data collection strategy, and discusses how benchmarks are developed and how to measure who gets stopped.

These first three chapters are very helpful to those who conduct research in racial profiling. Withrow does a good job of assembling a representative sample of racial profiling studies conducted in every region of the country, by every type of department, and within every enforcement context. He provides tables for easy comparison of these studies and gives the advantages and disadvantages of using the same approach used by these researchers. To the novice researcher, this portion of the book (including Chapter Six) serves as an excellent manual in studying racial profiling, with detailed “how-to” and “how-not-to” advice.

To those who are interested in understanding the theoretical aspect of the discourse, Chapter Four (“Explaining the Diversity”) offers an array of possible theoretical explanations for why minorities are overrepresented among those who are stopped by the police. Theory is indispensable in furthering our understanding of the problem, but as Withrow observes, the intensity of media attention to racial profiling “has not been matched by an acceptable level of conceptualization of the issues, a sophistication of analytical techniques, or the development of explanatory theory” (p. 112). This chapter addresses that concern.

Chapter Five (“The Political and Legal Response”) illustrates the political and legal ramifications of the racial profiling controversy. It highlights the complexity of the problem and how our governmental institutions have responded to it.

The last three chapters of the book are more prospective. Chapter Six (“Conducting Racial Profiling Studies [Best Practices]”) maps out the important steps for successfully conducting racial profiling research; Chapter Seven (“Solutions”) discusses how police departments and other governmental agencies can deal with the problem; and Chapter Eight (“What’s Next?”) predicts the future direction and trends of the racial profiling controversy. This is the “so-what?” portion of the book and is intended to cater to the needs not only of researchers but also practitioners.

Perhaps because it touches on the fundamental value of fairness and equality, the racial profiling controversy tends to draw an emotional response from the American public. When the popular media and interest groups jump into the fray by highlighting specific instances of abuses committed by the police against racial or ethnic minorities, rationality is likely to be set aside and the issues blurred by passion. This is why it is important to conduct a studious, fact-based inquiry on the subject. In this respect, Withrow is commendable for insisting on a dispassionate discussion of the issues involved in racial profiling. He makes it very clear that his book is not about determining which side is right. Unlike some of the earlier researchers, he deliberately limited the use of anecdotal stories from victims of racial profiling (which, to some extent, also makes it less engaging, if not drab) and approached the issues without any assumption on the nature of American policing and police officers.

This book is, without doubt, an invaluable contribution to the criminal justice discipline. It is highly recommended for academics and graduate students who are interested in the interplay of race and policing. Policy makers and police administrators will also find it enlightening and useful. Be warned, however, that it is not an easy read and would probably overwhelm the typical undergraduate student.



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BOOK REVIEW

Hubner, J. (2005). *Last Chance in Texas: The Redemption of Criminal Youth*. New York: Random House

By Edward J. Schauer, Prairie View A&M University

Last Chance in Texas, written by investigative journalist, John Hubner, is a “must read” volume for students of the juvenile justice system. Having learned of the aggressive treatment program for capital offenders in the Texas Youth Commission (TYC), and its amazingly successful “resocialization” of young offenders, the author devoted several months to an in-depth study of the Capital Offenders Program at the Giddings State School.

Living during the study period in the area of Giddings, Texas, Hubner became acculturated to the flow of life in and around that farming town. While dining in the local cafes and while purchasing goods in the local stores, he met and spoke with many of the citizens of Lee County, of which Giddings is the county seat.

In his research, Hubner observed the process of treatment of three sets of nine students, each group called a Capital Offenders Group (COG), through a one-way mirror. It would be a difficult task at best for anyone to maintain scientific objectivity in observation, interpretation, and recording when faced with the horrors of their childhoods, the horrendous acts which brought many of the students to Giddings, and the theatrical re-performances (This treatment is usually called “psychodrama” or “applied theatre.”) of those childhood experiences and the offences committed. Hubner excels at this task to the degree that this reader could visualize the anguish and drama experienced in the COG treatment by the students, the professional staff, and by the author himself.

Outside the COG meetings, the author kept in constant interaction with the psychologists and counselors who were leading the treatment sessions. Hubner was in this way able to clarify the what, why, and how questions which the reader might ask concerning student backgrounds, relationships, and treatment.

In the book’s introduction, the author: gives a thorough background of the purposes for the existence of the Giddings State School, which is often called “the flagship of TYC”; states that the Capital Offenders Program leads the world in its success with reforming youthful offenders; and posits the hypothesis that extreme abuse or neglect suffered in childhood leads toward the violent victimization of others by those so abused or neglected. Hubner states his amazement that Texas, which is known for its harsh criminal justice system, would at the same time be the world’s leader in reforming youthful capital offenders. Through the next few chapters, the theme is developed that a severely abused or neglected boy finds his strength in the victimization of others.

John Hubner devotes one-half of the book’s pages to “Part One: The Boys.” In this section, he first describes how the treatment staff are able to identify those students who are psychopaths, unaffected by treatment. The key here is that boys who begin to develop remorse in the COG are those who are deemed treatable. When it becomes clear that a youth is psychopathic,

the staff recommends that he be sent directly to an adult prison—usually the Clemens Unit (near the town of Brazoria) of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Institutional Unit.

On the other hand, when a youth successfully completes COG and responds well to counseling—that is, he works on his understanding of the past and builds upon his new understanding of emotional health and conventional behavior—the staff may recommend that he be released on parole. Most young men who have been released on parole from the Capital Offenders Program do not re-offend, do not recidivate; it is upon this factor that the uniqueness of the Giddings' program is drawing nation-wide, and even international interest.

Work with the girls in the Capital Offenders Group is more difficult to understand from its coverage in this volume. This may be due to the fact that girls in the State School are different than the boys. First of all, there are five boys housed at the Giddings State School for every female student; second, antisocial behavior for boys is cognitive, whereas for girls it tends to have a strong emotional element; and third, abuse suffered by the boys tends to have a definite beginning and an abrupt ending, while the girls have endured ongoing abuse from an early age up and to their institutionalizations. It is understandable therefore, that the resocialization of girls demands a more complex intervention and treatment than that required for boys.

The author reports on the success stories, as well as a few failures, in the epilogue. That most of the youth, female as well as male, were successful, gives the reader hope.

Last Chance in Texas is an excellent report of the Capital Offenders Program at the Giddings State School. The author, John Hubner, has displayed uncanny observational skills and insight in his study and has produced in this book a valuable tool for understanding both the needs of youthful capital offenders and a treatment modality which works. This work should be recommended to all who desire to understand the possibility of reforming errant juveniles, the probability of success, and the costs of intervention.