

4-1-2012

The Impact of Neighborhoods on Intimate Partner Violence and Victimization

Gillian M. Pichevsky

University of South Carolina, Columbia

Emily M. Wright

University of South Carolina, Columbia, emwright@unomaha.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/criminaljusticefacpub>

Part of the [Criminology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Pichevsky, Gillian M. and Wright, Emily M., "The Impact of Neighborhoods on Intimate Partner Violence and Victimization" (2012).
Criminology and Criminal Justice Faculty Publications. 38.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/criminaljusticefacpub/38>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Criminology and Criminal Justice Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

Footer Logo

Abstract

Research on intimate partner violence and victimization (IPV) is widespread across disciplines. To date, the majority of research underscores the importance of individual-level factors to explain IPV, thereby neglecting the significance of macro-level elements. Nevertheless, research suggests that the characteristics of the neighborhood where an individual lives are important for fully understanding IPV. This review focuses on the effects of neighborhoods and macro-level context on violence between intimate partners, specifically identifying empirical studies that have examined contextual predictors of IPV utilizing the major tenets of social disorganization theory. We note consistencies and differences across research results and describe study features that may influence the patterns of these findings. Finally, we provide both theoretical and methodological recommendations for future research.

Keywords: intimate partner violence; domestic violence; social disorganization theory; neighborhoods; disadvantage; collective efficacy; social ties; culture

In the past few decades, the number of research studies on intimate partner violence (IPV) has dramatically increased across disciplines. Scholars have identified various forms of IPV (e.g., common couple versus patriarchal/intimate terrorism, Johnson, 1995), examined the consequences of it, and devised treatments (e.g., Pence & Paymar, 1993) to address this issue. However, the majority of research to date highlights the use of individual-level factors, such as age, race, gender, and substance use to explain IPV, and has largely ignored the significance of macro-level elements. Those studies which have taken contextual effects into account have chiefly been based in social disorganization theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942), which stipulates that neighborhood characteristics can influence individual-level behaviors such as violence and crime. In fact, studies grounded in social disorganization theory have demonstrated that macro-level factors do impact forms of violence and victimization, as neighborhood conditions have been linked to various outcomes including personal (Hipp et al., 2009) and property crime (Xie & McDowall, 2008), as well as victimization (Lauritsen, 2001). Evidence to date suggests that this theory is also applicable to understanding IPV (Benson et al., 2003; Browning, 2002; Wright & Benson, 2010, 2011). However, it is unclear which contextual factors are most relevant to IPV, since there has been no comprehensive review of neighborhood/macro-level factors regarding their impact on this outcome. We attempt to address this limitation by examining the contextual predictors of IPV derived from the core concepts of social disorganization theory, and assessing the theoretical and empirical relationship between macro-level features and partner violence. We also provide theoretical and methodological guidance for future research.

Social disorganization theory

Social disorganization theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942) provides a foundation to examine the contextual predictors of IPV. It highlights crime in a community context and suggests that

contextual factors influence criminological outcomes such as violent crime (Hipp et al., 2009), property crime (Xie & McDowall, 2008), delinquency (Bernburg & Thorlindsson, 2007), recidivism (Kubrin & Stewart, 2006), and some forms of victimization (Lauritsen, 2001). Of central importance to social disorganization theory are structural economic indicators and neighborhood compositional factors related to low economic status and concentrated disadvantage, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential instability (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson et al., 1997; Sampson & Wilson, 1995; Shaw & McKay, 1942). The theory posits that neighborhoods¹ characterized by high levels of disadvantage, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential instability are likely to have higher crime rates because of their reduced capacity to exert formal and informal social control. Shaw and McKay (1942) hypothesized that neighborhood racial heterogeneity and economic class were highly related because ethnic minorities were more likely to live in disadvantaged neighborhoods because they were less expensive and undesirable. Subsequently, the concentration of ethnic diversity in low economic neighborhoods was thought to hamper communication between residents and inhibit the formation of social ties (Kornhauser, 1978), thus reducing the mechanisms of informal social control within the neighborhood. Residential instability was originally expected to be positively associated with crime, with the capacity of social organizations and institutions to provide social control over residents' behavior decreasing as the number of invested residents moved out of the area and the number of strangers in the area increased (Bursik & Webb, 1982; Byrne & Sampson, 1986).

Recent re-formulations (Bellair, 1997; Browning et al., 2004; Pattillo, 1998; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson et al., 1997; Sampson & Wilson, 1995; Warner & Rountree, 1997) of the

¹ Geographic areas or entities such as neighborhoods, census tracts, neighborhood blocks, and so forth, will be referred to interchangeably with "neighborhoods" throughout this review.

theory emphasize social processes between neighborhood residents that may influence the association between structural factors and crime. The most notable of these are collective efficacy, social ties, and cultural norms. Collective efficacy refers to the degree of social cohesion among neighborhood residents and their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good of the community (Sampson et al., 1997). It is hypothesized to mediate the relationship between structural disadvantage and crime, so that where residents are willing to take collective action on behalf of the greater good of their community, neighborhood crime rates will be lower, regardless of the economic conditions (e.g., high disadvantage, residential instability) of the area in which they live.

While collective efficacy refers to shared expectations among neighbors, social ties reflect personal connections among neighbors. Social ties include local friendship networks, recreational activities between neighbors, and attendance at voluntary local community functions (Bellair, 1997; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Warner & Rountree, 1997). Theoretically, social ties should mediate the relationship between structural factors and crime by increasing residents' capacity to effectively exert social control over other individuals, presumably through communication and supervision (Bellair, 1997; Bursik, 1988; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974; Kornhauser, 1978). Social ties may also help to transmit cultural values which approve or disapprove of violence between residents in a given community (Warner, 2003). Cultural norms reflect a common set of rules and values that govern a community (Sampson & Wilson, 1995). These beliefs may either increase or decrease the acceptance of crime within neighborhoods, and may thus also mediate the influence of disadvantage, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential instability on crime. Empirical evidence suggests that culture in neighborhoods can stem from social cultural isolation (Wilson, 1987), whereby residents living in extremely

disadvantaged neighborhoods have limited contact with others from mainstream society, thus weakening community-level opposition to criminality (Sampson & Wilson, 1995).

Studies examining these processes have largely focused on “street” crimes such as burglary, robbery, and stranger assaults (Bellair, 1997; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003; Mazerolle et al., 2010; Sampson et al., 1997; Warner, 2003). However, evidence since the late 1990s has demonstrated that the tenants of social disorganization may also apply to forms of interpersonal violence and victimization, most notably, IPV. Some scholars have suggested that some contextual variables may not impact partner violence because it occurs “behind closed doors” and is therefore less susceptible to the mechanisms of control that are stipulated by social disorganization theory (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999). Others, however, have suggested that the macro-level characteristics noted above might impact violence between partners, and have put forth various mechanisms linking them. For instance, it has been stipulated that higher levels of disadvantage may hinder the formation and breadth of social ties between residents (see Kornhauser, 1978; Shaw & McKay, 1942), perhaps leaving victims more vulnerable to violence from their partners (e.g., Stets, 1991). It may also intensify stress among couples (e.g., Ross & Mirowsky, 2009), which may increase the likelihood of violence erupting within the partnership (Wright & Benson, 2011). Moreover, disadvantage may lead to increasing views of cynicism (Sampson & Bartusch, 1998) of the justice system, decreasing the likelihood that women in violent relationships will seek help from police or service shelters (Plass, 1993). Similarly, it may facilitate alienation (Anderson, 1999) and foster social isolation among residents, thus inhibiting the transmission of mainstream values that disapprove of violence within relationships (see Warner, 2003; Wilson, 1987; Wright & Benson, 2011).

Independent from the effect of disadvantage, social processes have also been theorized to impact IPV. Scholars have suggested that collective efficacy may increase the likelihood that residents will intervene on violent couples in an attempt to stop the violence (Browning, 2002; Wright, 2011; Wright & Benson, 2011). It may also increase help-seeking behaviors among victims of IPV (see Browning, 2002) or increase other forms of social control, such as gossip or ridicule, that might deter partner violence (see Wright & Benson, 2011). Neighborhood social ties have been theorized to inhibit partner violence by increasing surveillance between neighbors, thus increasing the likelihood that the violence will be recognized and become known among neighbors (Wright & Benson, 2011). As violence becomes recognized in the neighborhood, higher levels of collective efficacy might ensure that the residents then act to stop the violence. Social ties with others also provide victims avenues for help in leaving abusive relationships (e.g., help securing emotional, physical, or financial assistance) (Van Wyk et al., 2003; Wright, 2011; Wright & Benson, 2010) or they might increase the amount of social control exercised on violent couples (e.g., if friends shame the perpetrator of violent behavior, (see Van Wyk et al., 2003).

Finally, since social ties can also facilitate the diffusion of cultural norms and beliefs among residents, they may transmit attitudes which disapprove of IPV, while a lack of social ties might contribute to a withering away of mainstream values (such as disapproval of violence within relationships) among residents (Kornhauser, 1978; Warner, 2003). That is, while mainstream society generally does not condone violence in relationships, socially isolated residents in areas of concentrated disadvantage may be less exposed to individuals who hold these values and therefore may be less likely to adopt such beliefs (Wilson, 1987). Concentrated disadvantage and social isolation, then, may result in cognitive landscapes (Sampson & Wilson,

1995) which tolerate violence generally (Sampson & Bartusch, 1998) and violence against women specifically (Wright & Benson, 2010, 2011). In all of the ways outlined here, violence between partners may be influenced by the neighborhood conditions in which the couple lives; social disorganization theory provides reasonable theoretical linkages between these neighborhood mechanisms and partner violence. The purpose of this review is to “take stock” of the studies which have examined the contextual predictors of IPV utilizing concepts central to the social disorganization approach.

(Key Research Findings About Here)

Method

Only studies that evaluated the contextual effects on IPV using concepts at the core of social disorganization theory were included in this review.² To systematically identify studies, we searched the Social Science Citation Index for the terms *intimate partner violence*, *spouse abuse*, or *domestic violence* combined with the following terms or combination of terms: *social disorganization theory*, *disadvantage*, *neighborhood*, *collective efficacy*, *social ties*, *culture*, and *context*.³ Over 100 studies were found using these search terms, however, a majority of these were individual-level inquiries that focused on, for example, individual- or family-level disadvantage. Others focused on other forms of interpersonal violence, such as adolescent dating violence, child abuse, and maltreatment. After identifying studies related to the contextual effects of IPV, we examined the reference lists of these articles to generate more publications that may have eluded the terms used in our original search. Once a potential study was identified, a

² The majority of studies examining macro-level influences on IPV have been grounded in social disorganization theory – we found only two studies that were grounded in another theory, such as routine activities theory.

³ Despite these precautions, this literature review may still be limited since additional articles may have eluded the search terms used in the Social Science Citation Index.

preliminary screening of it was made on the basis of the title, abstract, analyses, and any other available information. Only studies appearing in peer-reviewed journals that evaluated the contextual predictors of adult IPV were included, as these studies uniformly provide the highest level of rigor due to the nature of the peer review process. Therefore, studies assessing only the individual-level correlates of IPV (e.g., age, race, substance use) were excluded, as were book excerpts, unpublished manuscripts, technical reports, and reports to granting agencies. Studies examining adult lethal and non-lethal forms of IPV as well as male- or female-perpetrated IPV were included in this review.⁴ Both authors were involved in interpreting the relevance of the original articles for this review, and there was a high degree of consensus for the appropriateness of the articles ultimately included here. Tables 1 and 2 provide an overview of the studies that met these criteria. We discuss the findings of our review below.

Results

Concentrated disadvantage

For our purposes, we rely on Wilson's (1987) conceptualization of concentrated disadvantage as characteristic of high-crime, inner-city neighborhoods where poor, single-parent families and jobless minorities are concentrated and from where it is difficult to economically leave. Of all the social disorganization measures, concentrated disadvantage, or a variation of disadvantage, has been the most widely used measure, with 23 studies on IPV examining some form of it (see Table 1).⁵ Concentrated disadvantage, however, has not been uniformly measured

⁴ Adolescent dating violence was not considered intimate partner violence and therefore was excluded from this review.

⁵ In many cases, the authors of the articles we have included in this review did not refer to their measures specifically as "concentrated disadvantage," "collective efficacy," "social ties," or "cultural norms." While we have classified these measures under our constructs of interest, we provide the names of the original measures as specified by the authors in italics in Tables 1 and 2.

across studies, as some utilize measurements of poverty (Caetano et al., 2010; Cunradi et al., 2000; Pearlman et al., 2003) and others use varying scales of disadvantaged conditions (e.g., social or physical disorder) to capture the construct. For example, some researchers have operationalized disadvantage as the percentage of neighborhood residents that are African American, living below the poverty line, receiving public assistance, unemployed, under the age of 18, and living under female headed households (Browning, 2002; Wright & Benson, 2010, 2011), while other researchers have excluded the percentage of youth residents and/or substituted the percentage of single parent households, allowing for a broader distinction of family disintegration (Benson et al., 2003; Fox & Benson, 2006; Lauritsen & White, 2001; Li et al., 2010). Additional measures that have been incorporated into the overall operationalization of disadvantage have included the percentage of high school drop outs (Miles-Doan, 1998; Wooldredge & Thistlethwaite, 2003; Wu, 2009), the percentage of the population ages 18 and older with no college experience (DeMaris et al., 2003), and racial heterogeneity (Van Wyk et al., 2003). Still other researchers have measured concentrated disadvantage as physical disorder (Frye et al., 2008).

Regardless of the measurement of disadvantage, the majority of research in this area has found a positive relationship between disadvantage and partner violence (Benson et al., 2003; Benson et al., 2004; Cunradi et al., 2000; DeMaris et al., 2003; Diem & Pizarro, 2010; Fox & Benson, 2006; Lauritsen & White, 2001; Miles-Doan, 1998; O'Campo et al., 1995; Pearlman et al., 2003; Van Wyk et al., 2003; Wooldredge & Thistlethwaite, 2003; Wright & Benson, 2010, 2011; Wu, 2009), suggesting that the more disadvantaged a neighborhood is, the greater likelihood that IPV occurs within it. Miles-Doan's (1998) seminal research was one of the first aggregate-level studies to examine IPV in neighborhood context. Utilizing data from Duval

County, Florida and the 1990 United States Census to explore the effect of neighborhood contextual factors on the incidence of IPV within an area, she reported that IPV was six times higher in areas characterized by disadvantaged conditions, net of other structural factors, than neighborhoods not plagued by these conditions. The impact of disadvantage on IPV has held across various types of samples, including African American males (Cunradi et al., 2000), African American and Caucasian females (Cunradi et al., 2000), individuals living in urban areas (Browning, 2002; O'Campo et al., 1995; Wright & Benson, 2010, 2011) and among national samples of the general population (Benson et al., 2003; Benson et al., 2004; DeMaris et al., 2003; Fox & Benson, 2006; Lauritsen & White, 2001; Van Wyk et al., 2003).

The association between disadvantage and violence between partners is so robust that there appears to be a general consensus to, at the minimum, control for concentrated disadvantage when examining IPV. In fact, many studies found that structural disadvantage continued to maintain a direct relationship with partner violence regardless of the other macro- or micro-level variables also examined. For example, Wright and Benson (2010) reported that concentrated disadvantage was significantly predictive of IPV despite considering neighborhood social ties and cultural norms simultaneously. Benson and colleagues (2003) also found that neighborhood disadvantage continued to impact rates of IPV among women even after individual-level predictors such as prior violence, substance use, and other relevant demographic characteristics were included.

While there appears to be a consistent positive relationship between indicators of concentrated disadvantage and partner violence, there may be a few caveats to this relationship. First, the effect of concentrated disadvantage may depend in part on the type of IPV examined, specifically non-lethal or lethal partner violence. In six studies of intimate partner homicide

(Browning, 2002; DeJong et al., 2011; Diem & Pizarro, 2010; Frye et al., 2008; Frye & Wilt, 2001; Wu, 2009), three reported that disadvantage remained a significant factor in predicting lethal IPV after controlling for other structural and individual-level variables (Diem & Pizarro, 2010; Frye & Wilt, 2001; Wu, 2009). Wu (2009) examined various structural factors (e.g., percentage of divorced adults, median household income) and reported that even when controlling for other aggregate level factors, disadvantage (referred to as social deprivation) significantly predicted non-Asian homicide. Diem and Pizarro (2010) only controlled for one other structural factor, social disorganization (an index comprised of three macro-level variables), yet found that economic deprivation was significantly and positively associated with the rate of intimate partner homicide. Frye and Wilt (2001) noted a significant effect of one of their measures of disadvantage (socioeconomic status index), but not the other (social disorganization index). Their operationalization of the social disorganization index, however, also included the percentage of housing units that were vacant – a measure that may tap into the construct of residential instability – and so it is plausible that measurement might be guiding the null finding. Nevertheless, the remaining three studies (Browning, 2002; DeJong et al., 2011; Frye et al., 2008) also reported non-significant associations between disadvantage and lethal IPV.

Second, the effect of concentrated disadvantage on IPV may be contingent upon the other individual- and neighborhood-level variables included in statistical models. For example, Browning (2002) found that higher neighborhood disadvantage was associated with an increased likelihood of lethal IPV, but once collective efficacy was included into the same model, the relationship between concentrated disadvantage and lethal IPV was rendered insignificant. That collective efficacy effectively mediated the relationship between disadvantage and IPV is

theoretically expected and further supports the notion that a social disorganization theoretical framework applies to IPV. Conversely, Wright and Benson (2011) reported that despite the other individual- and macro-level variables included in statistical analyses, concentrated disadvantage exerted a strong and significant effect on IPV. These differences may be a function of the *type* of IPV under investigation. Browning's (2002) findings reflect the relationship between disadvantage and *lethal* IPV, while Wright and Benson (2011) focused on *non-lethal* IPV. Nevertheless, this further illustrates that the influence of concentrated disadvantage may be conditional upon the type of IPV and the other individual- and macro-level variables controlled for in the study.

(Table 1 About Here)

Ethnic heterogeneity

Referring to a neighborhood's racial and ethnic composition, ethnic heterogeneity has commonly been denoted as the concentration of immigrants in a neighborhood, given evidence that much racial homogeneity exists in areas of concentrated disadvantage (Browning et al., 2004; Gibson et al., 2010; Maimon & Browning, 2010; Morenoff et al., 2001). Immigrant concentration has also been included, largely as a control variable, in studies of IPV. Our review of the literature found seven articles that included measures immigrant concentration (see Table 1). Like other measures of social disorganization theory, there have been varying degrees of measurements and proxies to address the concept. Some IPV researchers have followed traditional measures of immigrant concentration and have operationalized it as the percentage of Latino residents and the percentage of foreign born residents in an area (Browning, 2002;

Lauritsen & White, 2001; Wright & Benson, 2010), while others have used indicators of linguistic isolation (Pearlman et al., 2003).

Despite the various measures, research has largely suggested that immigrant concentration is a non-significant predictor for both lethal (Browning, 2002; Frye et al., 2008; Frye & Wilt, 2001) and non-lethal (Browning, 2002; Lauritsen & White, 2001) IPV. Recent studies, however, have found evidence that immigrant concentration may be related to lower neighborhood levels of partner violence. For instance, Wright and Benson (2010) attempted to disentangle the interrelationships between concentrated immigration, social ties, and cultural norms on IPV. They reported that concentrated immigration had a protective effect on violence between partners - a finding contrary to the traditional expectations of social disorganization theory, yet supportive of more recent research surrounding immigrant concentration and ordinary street crime (Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Lee et al., 2001; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Martinez et al., 2004; Sampson et al., 2005). Similarly, Pearlman and colleagues (2003) reported that Hispanics living in the most linguistically isolated areas were at a decreased risk for IPV. Diem and Pizarro (2010) reported that social disorganization (measured by the percentage of homeowners, the percentage of citizens not born in the US, and population density) was negatively associated with intimate partner homicide, so that when social disorganization increased, rates of intimate partner homicide decreased. Findings from these three studies support the recent notion that the unique social ties and cultural norms brought with immigrants when they settle in American neighborhoods may serve as protective factors against violence between intimate partners.

Residential stability

Residential stability refers to the degree to which individuals in the community live in the same residences over a consecutive period of time. Although originally postulated to be negatively associated with crime, scholars have recently suggested that residential stability is characteristic of concentrated disadvantage and social cultural isolation in many contemporary urban areas, and thus may not necessarily provide protection from crime (Warner & Pierce, 1993; Wilson, 1987). Within the 11 studies of partner violence that included measures of residential stability (see Table 1), it has been uniformly measured as the percentage of residents living in their current households for five years or more (or five years or less when referring to residential instability or mobility) (Benson et al., 2003; Browning, 2002; DeJong et al., 2011; Li et al., 2010; Miles-Doan, 1998; Wooldredge & Thistlethwaite, 2003; Wright & Benson, 2010; Wu, 2009) and the percentage or ratio of houses occupied by owners as opposed to renters (Browning, 2002; Diem & Pizarro, 2010; Miles-Doan, 1998; O'Campo et al., 1995; Wright & Benson, 2010).

Despite its relatively consistent measurement, results are mixed regarding the effect of residential stability on IPV. Some scholars found that indicators of residential stability were positively associated with IPV (Li et al., 2010; Wright & Benson, 2010), while others found null effects (Browning, 2002; DeJong et al., 2011; Lauritsen & White, 2001; Miles-Doan, 1998; O'Campo et al., 1995), and yet others reported a negative association with IPV (Diem & Pizarro, 2010). Still, some researchers reported that the effect of residential stability may be contingent on the inclusion of other factors in statistical models (Benson et al., 2003). In a study of the effects of neighborhood economic conditions and individual economic distress on IPV, Benson and his colleagues (2003) found that while residential instability did not reduce the odds of IPV independently, once other structural (i.e., concentrated disadvantage) and individual-level

conditions (i.e., male drinking problem, female social support, male education, age, and race) were controlled, residential turnover became significantly negatively associated with IPV. Benson and colleagues' (2003) findings have been supported by other scholars (Li et al., 2010; Wright & Benson, 2010), yet these recent findings are counter-intuitive to the original postulations put forth by social disorganization theory. It is plausible that the differential measurements of residential stability may be producing the mixed results. Nevertheless, at best, the mixed findings suggest that residential stability may be a fruitful area of examination, both as a control variable and primary predictor, for future studies of partner violence.

Collective efficacy

Recall that collective efficacy refers to the degree of social cohesion among neighborhood residents and their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good of the community (Sampson et al., 1997). It has most often been examined as a measure including a five-item informal social control scale and a five-item social cohesion and trust scale (Sampson et al., 1997) for studies examining general criminal offending and victimization (Morenoff et al., 2001; Sampson et al., 1997). It has been used in only five studies of IPV with slight modification (see Table 2). Some studies of partner violence have used only one of these aspects – either informal social control or perceived social cohesion (Caetano et al., 2010; Frye et al., 2008). Conversely, Browning (2002) and Wright and Benson (2011) utilized collective efficacy in its original form. Wu's (2009) measure was named “collective efficacy” but included percent foreign born residents, percent linguistic isolation, and percent renters in community area. These items have often been utilized in measures of immigrant concentration and residential instability,

so it is plausible that this variable tapped into other structural constructs and not necessarily collective efficacy.

Despite the measurement of collective efficacy, study findings have generally supported the significant inhibitory effect of this neighborhood characteristic on IPV (Browning, 2002; Caetano et al., 2010; Wright & Benson, 2011; Wu, 2009). Browning (2002) reported that collective efficacy significantly reduced the likelihood of both non-lethal and lethal forms of IPV. Wu (2009) also reported the protective effect of collective efficacy on intimate partner homicide; however, it significantly predicted Asian intimate homicide, but not non-Asian intimate homicide. Wu (2009) explained that Asians as a group are more dependent on the protective capacity of a community than their non-Asian counterparts. The null findings for non-Asians may be due to the operationalization of collective efficacy and should be taken with caution. Caetano and colleagues (2010) reported that social cohesion, but not social control, significantly reduced male-perpetrated IPV. They also attempted to examine whether these constructs mediated the relationship between poverty and IPV. They found that while social cohesion as a measure of neighbor relations was important independently, neither it nor social control mediated the relationship between structural characteristics and crime. Their findings were supported by Wright and Benson (2011) who also found that while collective efficacy was important, it became insignificant once disadvantage was included in statistical models. They found, contrary to Browning (2002), that collective efficacy did not mediate the effect of disadvantage on neighborhood IPV rates in Chicago (Wright & Benson, 2011).

Unlike the scholars noted above, Frye et al. (2008) found no relationship between IPV and social cohesion. The null finding is partially expected given that some scholars (e.g., Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999) have speculated that because violence between partners occurs

out of sight and is largely thought to be a private matter, neighborhood social processes such as collective efficacy should not influence this variant of violence. Nevertheless, because other studies reported the protective effect of collective efficacy, or variations of collective efficacy, on IPV, studies that report different findings should be compared in order to better understand their results. For example, both Browning (2002) and Wright and Benson (2011) examined non-lethal forms of IPV, using similar operationalizations of collective efficacy. While both studies reported that collective efficacy reduced the likelihood of IPV, Wright and Benson (2011) noted that collective efficacy became insignificant once concentrated disadvantage was accounted for in statistical models. Conversely, Browning (2002) reported that collective efficacy was independently a stronger predictor of IPV than disadvantage. These two studies differed in their measurement of IPV, sample size, and modeling techniques – all factors that may have produced differing results. These conflicting findings have led Wright and Benson to note that “the precise impact of collective efficacy on IPV remains an open question” (2011, p. 793). Therefore, although there appears to be preliminary evidence supporting the buffering effect of higher levels of collective efficacy on neighborhood IPV, more research is needed to understand the interrelationship between collective efficacy and disadvantage on partner violence.

(Table 2 About Here)

Social ties

Social ties between neighbors, which largely reflect residents’ local friendship networks and attendance at recreational and community activities, was originally hypothesized to increase the likelihood and effectiveness of neighborhood social control, thus lowering the likelihood of neighborhood crime (Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974). Social ties can be measured at both the

individual- and neighborhood-levels, but most studies of IPV have measured social ties and social support as individual-level phenomena (e.g., Benson et al., 2003; Lanier & Maume, 2009; Raghavan et al., 2006; Van Wyk et al., 2003). Table 2 provides information about the five studies of IPV that include measures of social ties and social support. At the individual-level, general support has been found for the influence of social ties on the likelihood and incidence of IPV (Lanier & Maume, 2009; Raghavan et al., 2006; Van Wyk et al., 2003).

The *type* of social ties between residents, however, may differentially affect criminological outcomes. In an ethnographic study of a primarily African American neighborhood in Chicago, Pattillo (1998) reported that efforts for social control could be undermined when social ties exist between law abiding residents and non-law abiding residents. While Pattillo's study was not specific to IPV, a similar finding was reported in an IPV study using a measure of individual-level social ties. Raghavan et al.(2006) examined whether having friends who had been in violent relationships was related to a woman's risk of being a victim of IPV. Raghavan and colleagues (2006) found that a woman's likelihood of experiencing IPV was positively related to the number of her female friends who had been in physically abusive relationships themselves. Perhaps these women sought out other distressed individuals for social support because of their similar circumstances, or perhaps violence in a woman's network existed before violence within her relationship began. Regardless, the results suggest that, as with crime in general (Browning et al., 2004; Pattillo, 1998), simply having many social ties and support providers does not necessarily equate to increased social control.

While the majority of studies have utilized an individualistic approach to explore social ties, Wright and Benson (2010) employed neighborhood-level measures of social ties and social support in their examination of IPV. Utilizing aggregate measures of social ties with friends and

social ties with family on neighborhood prevalence rates of partner violence, they reported that social ties appeared to be protective of IPV, but their effects were conditional on the *type* of social tie examined. Wright and Benson (2010) reported that friendship ties served as a protective factor against high prevalence rates of IPV in neighborhoods, yet family ties had no significant influence. Further, friendship ties mediated the relationship between immigrant concentration and IPV, providing additional evidence for the application of social disorganization theory to partner violence, as well as the importance of including aggregate-level social ties in studies of IPV. It is conceivable that more friendship ties increase the likelihood of IPV being discovered and thus increase the odds of criminal justice or treatment responses being administered (Wright & Benson, 2010). Conversely, it is plausible that family members may be more likely to keep the discovery of IPV secret, so as not to cause undue shame or embarrassment to the family (Wright & Benson, 2010). Because social ties have rarely been examined in the aggregate to predict IPV, it is premature to say for certain why the measure of family ties was not significantly related to IPV. Nonetheless, social ties appear to be an important construct to consider when examining neighborhood influences on violence between partners.

Cultural norms

Cultural norms refer to the common set of rules and values that govern a community (Sampson & Wilson, 1995). Culture and cultural norms have received far less attention in tests of social disorganization theory compared to other major tenets of the theory (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). **Research on partner violence under the framework of social disorganization has also followed this trend, with only three studies exploring the effects of culture and cultural norms on**

IPV (see Table 2). Within studies of IPV, cultural norms have been measured consistently, mostly centering on whether or not violence in the family is acceptable or considered a private issue (Browning, 2002; Koenig et al., 2006; Wright & Benson, 2010). The few studies which have examined culture and IPV have produced similar findings: neighborhood cultural norms that are accepting of violence are related to an increased likelihood of IPV within those neighborhoods (Browning, 2002; Koenig et al., 2006; Wright & Benson, 2010). This trend, however, may only be applicable for non-lethal forms of violence. Browning (2002) examined both lethal and non-lethal forms of violence against women in intimate situations and reported that attitudes about family violence were only significant and positively associated with non-lethal violence, suggesting that cultural norms may not influence the most severe types of violence. While preliminary evidence thus far points toward the importance of cultural norms and values for more fully understanding the neighborhood influence on partner violence, additional research is needed to adequately address the topic.

Discussion

Researchers have begun to examine the influence of macro-level factors on partner violence, with many grounding their examinations in social disorganization theory. The patterns of results regarding neighborhood influences on IPV are at least partially consistent with the expectations of social disorganization theory. In its original form, social disorganization theory posited that concentrated disadvantage, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential instability would be positively associated with neighborhood crime (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson et al., 1997; Sampson & Wilson, 1995; Shaw & McKay, 1942). Recent reformulations of the theory have suggested that social intervening mechanisms, such as collective efficacy (e.g., Sampson et al.,

1997), social ties (e.g., Bellair, 1997), and cultural norms (e.g., Sampson & Wilson, 1995; Wilson, 1987) also exert independent effects on criminological outcomes.

Results from the studies identified here suggest a general consensus that neighborhood factors do influence violence that occurs between partners. Consistent with theoretical expectations, neighborhood disadvantage has directly and independently been associated with increased violence between partners (Benson et al., 2003; Benson et al., 2004; Cunradi et al., 2000; DeMaris et al., 2003; Diem & Pizarro, 2010; Fox & Benson, 2006; Lauritsen & White, 2001; Miles-Doan, 1998; O'Campo et al., 1995; Pearlman et al., 2003; Van Wyk et al., 2003; Wooldredge & Thistlethwaite, 2003; Wright & Benson, 2010, 2011; Wu, 2009). The results of the other structural features (e.g., immigrant concentration and residential instability) are less convincing. There is some (albeit limited) evidence that immigrant concentration influences IPV (Pearlman et al., 2003; Wright & Benson, 2010), although the effect is counter to original theoretical expectations, but consistent with recent macro-level research on forms of “street” crime (Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Lee et al., 2001; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Martinez et al., 2004; Sampson et al., 2005). Further, the evidence regarding residential stability and IPV is mixed and it has yet to be examined as a main predictor (not simply as a control variable) of partner violence.

Although there have been few studies examining the impact of the social intervening mechanisms identified in social disorganization theory and partner violence, those which have included them generally demonstrate results consistent with theoretical expectations. For instance, the majority of studies examining collective efficacy have reported its protective nature against violence between partners, regardless of the various methodologies which have been used. Next, despite the fact that Wright and Benson (2010) have been the only scholars to

examine social ties at the neighborhood level, their findings suggest that certain types of social ties are significant predictors of IPV. In line with recent theoretical developments (e.g., Browning et al., 2004; Pattillo, 1998) regarding street crime, the effect of social ties may depend on the *type* of relational tie or quality of social tie. Finally, while only three studies (Browning, 2002; Koenig et al., 2006; Wright & Benson, 2010) have examined cultural norms with respect to IPV, they have consistently reported that cultural and social norms which promote the privacy of family matters, such as fighting, are significant predictors of non-lethal IPV. Only one study (Browning, 2002) has examined the relationship between cultural norms and lethal IPV and reported a null effect, prematurely suggesting that the influence of cultural norms may be conditional on the type of IPV examined. Nonetheless, while the results in this area suggest that social processes related to collective efficacy, social ties, and culture are instrumental to understand contextual influences on partner violence, more research in this area is needed in order to yield more consistent findings.

Recommendations for methodology

There are several theoretical and methodological aspects that future research should consider. For instance, the majority of the aforementioned studies sampled individuals in populated and dense urban cities (e.g. Chicago). Far fewer rural and sub-urban areas have been included in studies of IPV (e.g., Lanier & Maume, 2009). Perhaps this is because neighborhood research has historically been interested in factors such as concentrated disadvantage and ethnic composition, which are more likely found in cities. Still, poverty, disadvantage, ethnic diversity, and other macro-level indicators of interest exist in rural and sub-urban areas. In fact, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, in 2002, 14.2 percent of the rural population was

considered poor, compared to 11.6 percent of the metro population (Economic Research Service, 2004). Future research should consider whether the contextual factors which impact IPV are the same in these contexts versus urban areas.

Second, the majority of contextual research on IPV to date has also been cross-sectional, which necessarily limits the examination of causal relationships. The neighborhood factors discussed here, particularly the social intervening processes of collective efficacy, social ties, and culture, are considered dynamic and can change over time. Ignoring the dynamic nature of these factors may lead to erroneous conclusions regarding the influence of neighborhoods on partner violence. As such, future research should attempt to employ longitudinal data when it is suitable or possible.

Further, studies which include both individual- (e.g., age, race) and neighborhood-level correlates (e.g., neighborhood disadvantage) must acknowledge potential autocorrelation between individuals clustered within neighborhoods. That is, individuals in one neighborhood are likely to be more similar to each other than they are to individuals in another neighborhood, and this clustering effect can influence results if not addressed. Multi-level analyses have been utilized to combat the problems of clustering and potential autocorrelation so as to account for both individual and neighborhood influences on IPV separately (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Few studies containing neighborhood measures, however, have actually utilized multi-level analytic strategies such as hierarchical linear modeling (Raudenbush et al., 2004), and many studies use pooled regression techniques instead. Until somewhat recently, such techniques were acceptable, but HLM and other multi-level techniques are now considered the most appropriate approaches for multi-level inquiries. As such, future research utilizing multi-level data would be

well served to employ multi-level analytic techniques to avoid confounding the relationship between individual and neighborhood influences on partner violence.

Next, the primary variables of interest included in studies have been somewhat limited or at times inconsistently measured. For example, some researchers have measured collective efficacy as the combination of social cohesion and informal social control (Browning, 2002; Wright & Benson, 2011), while others have used the scales independently (Caetano et al., 2010; Frye et al., 2008). Future research should consistently operationalize measures for better comparisons and more accurate tests of social disorganization theory. It might also benefit scholars to explore the utility of the neighborhood from the perspective of neighborhood residents; that is, the aspects of the neighborhood that residents perceive to influence partner violence (Burke et al., 2006; O'Campo et al., 2005). Research to date has only focused on the perceptions of female residents, and would benefit from tapping into the perspectives of males in the communities in order to better understand IPV. It may be important to understand from residents' own perspective how and why neighborhoods influence their behavior, as well as their perceptions of the alternatives to violence they have at their disposal. Such an approach may better inform future research in this area, beyond what is generalizable from quantitative analyses.

Research should also expand upon various aspects of IPV. While perpetration of IPV has most often been examined, there are varying degrees of severity of IPV perpetration, as well as different forms of IPV perpetration. For instance, severe IPV is often categorized by actions including hitting, beating up, threatening, choking, and using a knife or gun against an intimate partner (see, e.g., Browning, 2002; Straus & Gelles, 1986, 1987; Wright & Benson, 2011). The rationale for examining severe IPV compared to less severe forms (e.g., pushed, shoved) centers

on the higher likelihood of injury sustained to the victim. The severity of violence inflicted has often been tied to certain typologies of IPV. Scholars have identified two major typologies of IPV: common couple violence (see, e.g., Feld & Straus, 1989; Stets & Straus, 1989; Straus et al., 2006) and patriarchal/intimate terrorism (Johnson, 1995, 2006). Common couple violence generally refers to gender-neutral violence perpetration and is illustrated by relatively minor degrees of violence that occur when conflict “gets out of hand.” Conversely, patriarchal/intimate terrorism generally refers to gendered violence in which males use tactics such as severe violence, economic subordination, and threats to control their intimate partners (for a comparison, see Johnson, 1995; Johnson, 2006). Research should examine the differences that both individual- and neighborhood-level factors have on these distinct forms of IPV. For instance, mutual partner violence and female-perpetrated violence (see Cunradi et al., 2000) may be grounded under a common couple violence framework, yet may be influenced by different factors. Differences in these two typologies have not been extensively examined within the neighborhood context.

In addition, future research may consider examining neighborhood influences on outcomes such as IPV re-abuse, poly-victimization, attitudes toward IPV, reporting IPV to criminal justice agencies, and formal and informal responses to partner violence. While some researchers have begun to address these issues (e.g., Cattaneo & Goodman, 2005; Frye, 2007; Gracia & Herrero, 2007), they are far fewer in comparison to studies of the likelihood and incidence rates of IPV. Similarly, qualitative work by O’Campo et al. (2005) and Burke et al. (2006) has suggested that it might be fruitful to examine the relationship between neighborhood characteristics and other outcomes, including the cessation of IPV. Expansion upon their findings may have significant implications for the development of successful interventions. Studies

should also examine different types of interpersonal victimization under the framework of social disorganization. Some researchers have begun to examine other forms of interpersonal violence, such as dating violence (e.g., Foshee et al., 2008; Jain et al., 2010; Spriggs et al., 2009) and child maltreatment (see Freisthler, 2004) within neighborhoods, but the number of studies in these areas is extremely limited.

Finally, future research should consider meta-analytic approaches to contribute to the extant literature on this topic. Our study has laid the groundwork for such analyses by providing a comprehensive overview of the literature surrounding IPV and its relationship to the contextual characteristics of an area, as well as by identifying the differences in measurement and methodology across studies. Meta-analytic approaches can provide a strong contribution to the literature by statistically summarizing the studies and examining differences in effect sizes across studies that could be in part due to the measurement or methodological inconsistencies we have described in this review.

(Practice/Policy/Research About Here)

Conclusion and Implications

Compared to research conducted on individual predictors of IPV, studies examining neighborhood effects are limited. Nevertheless, existing research suggests that the neighborhood in which an individual lives is important for understanding IPV. It appears that neighborhoods characterized by disadvantage, poverty, disorder, or norms approving of IPV have consistently been found to be at higher “risk” for partner violence, while those characterized by collective efficacy are more protected from such violence. As such, services for IPV prevention,

intervention, and response should be strategically placed in the high risk areas. For instance, domestic violence shelters, “safe zones,” access to counselors, safety officers, and safe places for children of violent families should be located in such areas. Police officers who patrol these areas and respond frequently to calls in such neighborhoods would benefit from extra training on how to appropriately respond to partner violence. These officers should be well acquainted with the service providers for domestic violence near disadvantaged areas so they can refer victims and offenders to the appropriate services (Wright & Benson, 2011).

Regarding collective efficacy, practices which seek to build relationships and cohesion between neighbors may help reduce violence. Community programs that engage residents in neighborhood planning and decision-making and attempt to increase residents’ feelings of belonging to or ownership of the community may build cohesion among residents and increase the community’s capacity and involvement of residents (see Mazerolle et al., 2010). In this regard, practices which encourage occasional interaction between residents may also help to develop social ties within neighborhoods.

Overall, the extant literature suggests that the influence of neighborhoods is not limited to ordinary street crime and should be considered when examining violence that occurs “behind closed doors.” This review provides evidence that the study of IPV cannot be considered solely a function of individual characteristics; rather, the prevalence and likelihood of IPV is influenced both at the individual- and neighborhood-levels. While there is a significant gap in the literature, there is promising evidence that researchers are beginning to address these issues and future research should continue to utilize neighborhood factors in order to comprehensively understand partner violence.

References

- Anderson, E. (1999). *Code of the street: Decency, violence, and the moral life of the inner city*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Bellair, P.E. (1997). Social interaction and community crime: Examining the importance of neighbor networks. *Criminology*, 35(4), 677-704.
- Benson, M.L., Fox, G.L., DeMaris, A.A., & Van Wyk, J. (2003). Neighborhood disadvantage, individual economic distress and violence against women in intimate relationships. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 19, 207-235.
- Benson, M.L., Wooldredge, J., Thistlethwaite, A.B., & Fox, G.L. (2004). The correlation between race and domestic violence is confounded with community context. *Social Problems*, 51(3), 326-342.
- Bernburg, J.G., & Thorlindsson, T. (2007). Community structure and adolescent delinquency in Iceland: A contextual analysis. *Criminology*, 45(2), 415-444.
- Browning, C.R. (2002). The span of collective efficacy: Extending social disorganization theory to partner violence. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 64(4), 833-850.
- Browning, C.R., Feinberg, S.L., & Dietz, R.D. (2004). The paradox of social organization: Networks, collective efficacy, and violent crime in urban neighborhoods. *Social Forces*, 83(2), 503-534.
- Burke, J.G., O'Campo, P., & Peak, G.L. (2006). Neighborhood influences and intimate partner violence: Does geographic setting matter? *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 83(2), 182-194.
- Bursik, R.J. (1988). Social disorganization and theories of crime and delinquency: Problems and prospects. *Criminology*, 26(4), 519-551.
- Bursik, R.J., & Grasmick, H.G. (1993). *Neighborhoods and Crime*. Lanham: Lexington.
- Bursik, R.J., & Webb, J. (1982). Community change and patterns of delinquency. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 88(1), 24-42.
- Byrne, J.M., & Sampson, R.J. (Eds.). (1986). *The social ecology of crime*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Caetano, R., Ramisetty-Mikler, S., & Harris, T.R. (2010). Neighborhood characteristics as predictors of male to female and female to male partner violence *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(11), 1986-2009.
- Cattaneo, L.B., & Goodman, L.A. (2005). Risk factors for reabuse in intimate partner violence: A cross-disciplinary critical review. *Trauma Violence & Abuse*, 6(2), 141-175.
- Cunradi, C.B., Caetano, R., Clark, C., & Schafer, J. (2000). Neighborhood poverty as a predictor of intimate partner violence among White, Black, and Hispanic couples in the United States: A multilevel analysis. *AEP*, 10(5), 297-308.
- DeJong, C., Pizarro, J.M., & McGarrell, E.F. (2011). Can situational and structural factors differentiate between intimate partner and "other" homicide? *Journal of Family Violence*, 26(5), 365-376.
- DeMaris, A.A., Benson, M.L., Fox, G.L., Hill, T., & Van Wyk, J. (2003). Distal and proximal factors in domestic violence: A test of an integrated model. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 65(3), 652-667.
- Desmond, S.A., & Kubrin, C.E. (2009). The power of place: Immigrant communities and adolescent violence. *Sociological Quarterly*, 50(4), 581-607.

- Diem, C., & Pizarro, J.M. (2010). Social structure and family homicides. *Journal of Family Violence, 25*, 521-532.
- Economic Research Service. (2004). *Rural poverty at a glance*. Washington DC: United States Department of Agriculture.
- Feld, S.L., & Straus, M.A. (1989). Escalation and desistance of wife assault in marriage. *Criminology, 27*(1), 141-161.
- Foshee, V.A., Karriker-Jaffe, K.J., Reyes, H.L.M., Ennett, S.T., Suchindran, C., Bauman, K.E., et al. (2008). What accounts for demographic differences in trajectories of adolescent dating violence? An examination of intrapersonal and contextual mediators. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 42*, 596-604.
- Fox, G.L., & Benson, M.L. (2006). Household and neighborhood contexts of intimate partner violence. *Public Health Reports, 121*, 419-427.
- Freisthler, B. (2004). A spatial analysis of social disorganization, alcohol access, and rates of child maltreatment in neighborhoods. *Children and Youth Services Review, 26*, 803-819.
- Frye, V. (2007). The informal social control of intimate partner violence against women: Exploring personal attitudes and perceived neighborhood social cohesion. *Journal of Community Psychology, 35*(8), 1001-1018.
- Frye, V., Galea, S., Tracy, M., Bucchiarelli, A., Putnam, S., & Wilt, S. (2008). The role of neighborhood environment and risk of intimate partner femicide in a large urban area. *American Journal of Public Health, 98*(8), 1473-1479.
- Frye, V., & Wilt, S. (2001). Femicide and social disorganization. *Violence Against Women, 7*(3), 335-351.
- Gibson, C.L., Sullivan, C.J., Jones, S., & Piquero, A.R. (2010). "Does it take a village?" Assessing neighborhood influences on children's self control. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 47*(1), 31-62.
- Gracia, E., & Herrero, J. (2007). Perceived neighborhood social disorder and attitudes toward reporting domestic violence against women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 22*(6), 737-752.
- Hipp, J.R., Tita, G.E., & Boggess, L.N. (2009). Intergroup and intragroup violence: Is violent crime an expression of group conflict or social disorganization? *Criminology, 47*(2), 521-564.
- Jain, S., Buka, S.L., Subramanian, S.V., & Molnar, B.E. (2010). Neighborhood predictors of dating violence victimization and perpetration in young adulthood: A multilevel study. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(9), 1737-1744.
- Johnson, M.P. (1995). Patriarchal terrorism and common couple violence: Two forms of violence against women. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 57*(2), 283-294.
- Johnson, M.P. (2006). Conflict and control: Gender symmetry and asymmetry in domestic violence. *Violence Against Women, 12*(11), 1003-1018.
- Kasarda, J.D., & Janowitz, M. (1974). Community attachment in mass society. *American Sociological Review, 39*, 328-339.
- Koenig, M.A., Stephenson, R., Ahmed, S., Jejeebhoy, S.J., & Campbell, J. (2006). Individual and contextual determinants of domestic violence in North India. *American Journal of Public Health, 96*(1), 132-138.
- Kornhauser, R.R. (1978). *Social Sources of Delinquency: An Appraisal of Analytic Models*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Kubrin, C.E., & Stewart, E.A. (2006). Predicting who reoffends: The neglected role of neighborhood context in recidivism studies. *Criminology*, 44(1), 165-197.
- Kubrin, C.E., & Weitzer, R. (2003). Retaliatory homicide: Concentrated disadvantage and neighborhood culture. *Social Problems*, 50(2), 157-180.
- Lanier, C., & Maume, M.O. (2009). Intimate partner violence and social isolation across the rural/urban divide. *Violence Against Women*, 15(11), 1311-1330.
- Lauritsen, J.L. (2001). The social ecology of violent victimization: Individual and contextual effects in the NCVS. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 17(1), 3-32.
- Lauritsen, J.L., & White, N.A. (2001). Putting violence in its place: The influence of race, ethnicity, gender, and place on the risk for violence. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 1(1), 37-59.
- Lee, M.T., Martinez, R.J., & Rosenfeld, R. (2001). Does immigration increase homicide? Negative evidence from three border cities. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 42(4), 559-580.
- Li, Q., Kirby, R.S., Sigler, R.T., Hwang, S.-S., LaGory, M.E., & Goldenberg, R.L. (2010). A multilevel analysis of individual, household, and neighborhood correlates of intimate partner violence among low-income pregnant women in Jefferson County, Alabama. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(3), 531-539.
- Maimon, D., & Browning, C.R. (2010). Unstructured socializing, collective efficacy, and violent behavior among urban youth. *Criminology*, 48(2), 443-474.
- Martinez, R.J., & Lee, M.T. (2000). Comparing the context of immigrant homicides in Miami: Haitians, Jamaicans, and Mariels. *International Migration Review*, 34(3), 794-812.
- Martinez, R.J., Lee, M.T., & Nielsen, A.L. (2004). Segmented assimilation, local context and determinants of drug violence in Miami and San Diego: Does ethnicity and immigration matter? *International Migration Review*, 38(1), 131-157.
- Mazerolle, L., Wickes, R., & McBroom, J. (2010). Community variations in violence: The role of social ties and collective efficacy in comparative context. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 47(1), 3-30.
- Miles-Doan, R. (1998). Violence between spouses and intimates: Does neighborhood context matter? *Social Forces*, 77(2), 623-645.
- Morenoff, J.D., Sampson, R.J., & Raudenbush, S.W. (2001). Neighborhood inequality, collective efficacy, and the spatial dynamics of urban violence. *Criminology*, 39(3), 517-559.
- O'Campo, P., Burke, J., Peak, G.L., McDonnell, K.A., & Gielen, A.C. (2005). Uncovering neighbourhood influences on intimate partner violence using concept mapping. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 59(7), 603-608.
- O'Campo, P., Gielen, A.C., Faden, R.R., Xue, X., Kass, N., & Wang, M.-C. (1995). Violence by male partners against women during the childbearing year: A contextual analysis. *American Journal of Public Health*, 85(8), 1092-1097.
- Pattillo, M.E. (1998). Sweet mothers and gangbangers: Managing crime in a Black middle-class neighborhood. *Social Forces*, 76(3), 747-774.
- Pearlman, D.N., Zierler, S., Gjelsvik, A., & Verhoek-Oftedahl, W. (2003). Neighborhood environment, racial position, and risk of police-reported domestic violence: A contextual analysis. *Public Health Reports*, 118.
- Pence, E., & Paymar, M. (1993). *Education groups for men who batter: The Duluth Model*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Plass, P.S. (1993). African American Family Homicide: Patterns in Partner, Parent, and Child Victimization, 1985-1987. *Journal of Black Studies*, 23(4), 515-538.

- Raghavan, C., Mennerich, A., Sexton, E., & James, S.E. (2006). Community violence and its direct, indirect, and mediating effects on intimate partner violence *Violence Against Women*, 12(12), 1132-1149.
- Raudenbush, S.W., & Bryk, A.S. (2002). *Hierarchical Linear Models: Applications and Data Analysis Methods* (2 ed. Vol. 1). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Raudenbush, S.W., Bryk, A.S., Cheong, Y.F., Congdon, R., & du Toit, M. (2004). *HLM 6: Hierarchical Linear and Nonlinear Modeling*. Lincolnwood, IL: Scientific Software International, Inc.
- Ross, C.E., & Mirowsky, J. (2009). Neighborhood disorder, subjective alienation, and distress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 50(1), 49-64.
- Sampson, R.J., & Bartusch, D.J. (1998). Legal cynicism and (subcultural?) tolerance of deviance: The neighborhood context of racial differences. *Law & Society Review*, 32(4), 777-804.
- Sampson, R.J., & Groves, W.B. (1989). Community structure and crime: Testing social-disorganization theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 774-802.
- Sampson, R.J., Morenoff, J.D., & Raudenbush, S.W. (2005). Social anatomy of racial and ethnic disparities in violence. *American Journal of Public Health*, 95, 224-232.
- Sampson, R.J., & Raudenbush, S.W. (1999). Systematic social observation of public spaces: A new look at disorder in urban neighborhoods. *American Journal of Sociology*, 105(3), 603-651.
- Sampson, R.J., Raudenbush, S.W., & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science*, 277(5328), 918-924.
- Sampson, R.J., & Wilson, W.J. (1995). Toward a theory of race, crime, and urban inequality. In J. Hagan & R. D. Peterson (Eds.), *Crime and Inequality* (pp. 37-54). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Shaw, C.R., & McKay, H.D. (1942). *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas: A study of rates of delinquency in relation to differential characteristics of local communities in American cities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Spriggs, A.L., Halpern, C.T., Herring, A.H., & Schoenbach, V.J. (2009). Family and school socioeconomic disadvantage: Interactive influences on adolescent dating violence victimization. *Social Science & Medicine*, 68, 1956-1965.
- Stets, J.E. (1991). Cohabiting and marital aggression: The role of social isolation. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 53(3), 669-680.
- Stets, J.E., & Straus, M.A. (1989). The marriage license as a hitting license: A comparison of assaults in dating, cohabiting, and married couples. *Journal of Family Violence*, 4(2), 161-180.
- Straus, M.A., & Gelles, R.J. (1986). Societal change and change in family violence from 1975 to 1985 as revealed by two national studies. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 48(3), 465-479.
- Straus, M.A., & Gelles, R.J. (1987). The costs of family violence. *Public Health Reports*, 102(6), 638-641.
- Straus, M.A., Gelles, R.J., & Steinmetz, S.K. (2006). *Behind closed doors: Violence in the American family*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Van Wyk, J., Benson, M.L., Fox, G.L., & DeMaris, A. (2003). Detangling individual-, partner-, and community-level correlates of partner violence. *Crime & Delinquency*, 49(3), 412-438.

- Warner, B.D. (2003). The role of attenuated culture in social disorganization theory. *Criminology*, 41(1), 73-97.
- Warner, B.D., & Pierce, G.L. (1993). Reexamining social disorganization theory using calls to the police as a measure of crime. *Criminology*, 31(4), 493-517.
- Warner, B.D., & Rountree, P.W. (1997). Local social ties in a community and crime model: Questioning the systemic nature of informal social control. *Social Problems*, 44(4), 520-536.
- Wilson, W.J. (1987). *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wooldredge, J., & Thistlethwaite, A. (2003). Neighborhood structure and race-specific rates of intimate assault. *Criminology*, 41(2), 393-422.
- Wright, E.M. (2011). *Neighborhoods and intimate partner violence*. El Paso: LFB Scholarly Publishing
- Wright, E.M., & Benson, M.L. (2010). Immigration and intimate partner violence: Exploring the immigrant paradox. *Social Problems*, 57(3), 480-503.
- Wright, E.M., & Benson, M.L. (2011). Clarifying the effects of neighborhood disadvantage and collective efficacy on violence "behind closed doors" *Justice Quarterly*, 28(5), 775-798.
- Wu, B. (2009). Intimate homicide between Asians and Non-Asians: The impact of community context. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(7), 1148-1164.
- Xie, M., & McDowall, D. (2008). The effects of residential turnover on household victimization. *Criminology*, 46(3), 539-575.