

CHAPTER 3

Gender-Related Victimization

Gender-related victimization is disproportionately concentrated on women and girls. Forms include sexual assault, intimate-partner violence, incest, genital mutilation, and trafficking for sexual exploitation. Some hate crimes are also directed at females. The concentration results because girls and women are victimized because of their gender. As Dorie Klein (1981) wrote, “in tracing the female experience through history and across cultures, one notices that women have often been injured *as women*: as child bearers, sexual objects for men, and nurturers” (p. 64). Sanctioning and abuse occur, for example, when a husband abuses his wife for not carrying out household chores in the way he thinks that women should. Gender-motivated victimizers who punish, harass, or in some other way aggress against people are motivated to enforce their own notions of gender-appropriate behavior or to express their hostility toward people who do not conform to those notions.

Because the process that leads to hate crime victimization of people who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual parallels the explanation for gender-related victimization, it is instructive to consider it along with the victimization of girls and women. Gay, lesbian, or bisexual individuals are victimized because they are not meeting other people’s expectations about how females and males should act sexually or in other ways within intimate relationships. **Sexual orientation victimization** is an attack based on a person’s sexual orientation.

Domestic violence, including sexual assault, does occur between same-sex individuals. An examination of the dynamics of same-sex relationship violence raises questions about the adequacy of theories that identify the patriarchal family structure and/or men’s domination of women as the primary cause of violence against women. The rationale that the antagonists in same-sex relationship violence mimic traditional female and male gender roles, for example one woman or man being a more masculine “husband” and the other more like a wife, is a myth (Jablow, 2000).

Thus, violence between same-sex partners does not result from efforts to copy typical marital roles. The existence of same-sex domestic violence suggests that there can be alternative explanations for the violence between gay, lesbian, and straight partners. These explanations would not center on the importance of patriarchy and men's domination over women. They might apply primarily to same-sex couples but might still hold in some cases of violence against a different-sexed partner.

Theorists and activists have named and called attention to an increasing number of different forms of gender-related and sexual orientation-related crime and harassment. They have noted the overlap in oppressive and controlling behaviors that are not addressed in criminal or civil law but that are often part and parcel of constellations of behavior that include illegal acts. For example, eroding a partner's self-image is not illegal, but a pattern of criticism and belittling is often connected to physical abuse. Theorists also have linked gender to the *fear of crime*, which, although connected to the experience of victimization, is a separate influence on people's lives.

The next section of this chapter provides information on victimization patterns related to gender and sexual orientation. Theorists struggle, more or less successfully, to explain these patterns. The section is followed by information on improvements in conceptualizing and naming types of victimization, including exposure to what is called everyday violence. Literature that denies high levels of violence against women is presented and analyzed. This chapter also explains that advance our knowledge of structural, cultural, and individual influences on victimization. The chapter ends with consideration of the effects of gender- and sexual orientation-related victimization.

Patterns of Victimization

Rates of Victimization

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data have some unique advantages for highlighting broad patterns of victimization for males and females in selected racial groups within the United States. With support from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, annually the U.S. Census Bureau surveys a large and nationally representative sample of individuals age 12 and over, and it gathers information on the experience of personal crimes of sexual assault, other types of assault, and robbery. Although it is known that the survey results are affected by underreporting of victimization, especially highly personal experiences like intimate-partner violence and sexual assault, the NCVS does allow for comparisons of the victimization experiences of nationally representative samples of females and males in different racial groups. The survey does not, however, gather information on sexual orientation, so other sources of data need to be used to document crimes directed against people who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Similarly, it does not provide good information on sexual abuse of children. It also uses the categories of race (Asian, black, Native American, white), which obscure within-race differences and do not reveal ethnic differences, with the exception of Hispanics. Specifically,

Asians include many different ethnic groups, and Native American tribes can be very different from each other. Hispanics include people who differ in race. Finally, the NCVS results may be influenced by differences in the willingness of gender and racial groups to report to the interviewers whether or not they were victimized. Despite these drawbacks, the NCVS gives an overall picture of the profound differences in the patterns of victimization of groups that differ by both gender and race, and thus clarifies the importance of considering the intersections of gender and race in explaining these patterns. It also is the best available national victimization survey that has been done over time in the United States.

The relative rates of victimization for sex and racial groups depend on whether the focus is on crimes that happen in and around the home or in public places. These differences, which highlight gender and racial differences in people's experience of victimization, are shown in Table 3.1, which includes the results of an analysis of the NCVS data for 1993 to 1999.³⁰ The rates show the number of victimizations for every 1,000 people over the age of 12 in a 12-month period for each gender and racial subgroup.

Most personal victimization incidents are assaults or robberies, and a smaller proportion consists of sexual assaults. There are very large subgroup differences in the rates of personal victimization. For personal victimizations in and around the home, Native American females report the highest rate. There are nearly 30 victimizations for every thousand Native American females over the age of 12 in a 12-month period. The rate for Native American males is nearly as high, and the rate for black females is also high, at 20 incidents a year for every thousand females. In public places, Native-American males experience the highest rate of personal victimization (76 incidents per thousand people), followed by black males (36 incidents per thousand people), and then by Native American females (35 incidents per

Table 3.1 Annual Rates of Victimization (per 1,000 people) at Home and in Public Places for Groups Differing in Sex and Race

	<i>Place Where the Victimization Occurred</i>	
	<i>In or Around the Home</i>	<i>In a Public Place</i>
Females		
Asian	4.9	12.0
White	12.6	16.6
Black	20.0	21.8
Native American	29.5	35.0
Males		
Asian	4.2	22.8
White	8.3	31.5
Black	12.2	36.2
Native American	25.2	76.2

SOURCE: Data are from the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993–1999.

thousand). The largest gender differences in victimization involve offenses committed in public places, where males have the highest rates of personal victimizations. Native American females report higher rates of victimization in public places than do women of other races (35 incidents per thousand), just as they do for incidents in and around the home, but what is striking here is that their rate of victimization in public places is higher than the rates for males who are Asian (23 incidents per thousand) and white (32 incidents per thousand), and almost the same as for black males (36 incidents per thousand). Although males in general report higher levels of victimization away from the home, black females are also more often victimized away from their homes than are people in other subgroups. The home is a comparatively dangerous place for women of color, but black and Native American women are also quite vulnerable away from home. When white and Asian females do experience victimization, even if this is relatively rare, it typically is in or around the home.

Age also is related to differences in rates of victimization. An analysis of the 1994 NCVS data showed that boys (17 and under) were three times as likely as male adults to be aggravated assault victims, close to five times as likely as male adults to be simple assault victims who had sustained an injury, and almost four times as likely as male adults to be victims of simple assault without injury (Hashima & Finkelhor, 1999, p. 807). Girls were four times as likely as adult females to be sexual assault victims, and they were three times as likely as female adults to be victims of verbal threats of assault. Data sources apart from the NCVS have revealed very high rates of abuse of youth: One in five girls in Grades 9 through 12 reported physical and/or sexual abuse, and the proportion of sexually abused high school girls (12%) was more than twice than the proportion for boys (5%) (Harris and Associates, 1997). The high rates of sexual assault for young girls and the rates of other types of crime against boys and girls have very serious implications for health and emotional well-being.

Although there is no representative sample that allows for documentation of the pattern of victimization of gay and lesbian people, research does provide some information about the prevalence of victimization against people because of their sexual orientation. One study (D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001; also see Dean, Wu, & Martin, 1992; Garofalo, Wolf, Wissow, Woods, & Goodman, 1999; Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997; Otis & Skinner, 1996; Pilkington & D'Augelli, 1995) of a diverse group of gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals aged 60 or older revealed that when the entire lifetime is considered, almost three quarters of them had experienced sexual-orientation victimization: 63% reported verbal abuse, 29% threats of violence, 16% physical attacks, 12% threats with weapons, 11% objects thrown at them, and 7% sexual assault. Also, 29% said they had been threatened with the disclosure of their sexual orientation. Men had experienced physical attacks nearly three times more often than the women. Only one third of all respondents reported no instances of sexual orientation victimization during their lives. People who were more open about their sexual orientation, and open at an earlier age, were most likely to have been victimized.

The NCVS does not provide information on sexual orientation of victims or offenders. Independent sources do suggest that within lesbian, gay, and bisexual

relationships, there is at least the same level of physical violence as in heterosexual relationships (Cruz & Firestone, 1998; Turrell, 2000).

The Nature of Victimization

Most men and boys are victimized by other males; most girls and women are victimized by males, too. This finding is shown in Table 3.2 for NCVS data for 1993 to 1999.

Regardless of the victim's race, more than 90% of incidents perpetrated on males involved a male offender. Of the victimizations of Native American females, 65% involve a male offender, and for crimes against females in all other racial groups, this percentage is above 70%. Males are very rarely victimized by females, less than 10% for every racial group.

As shown in Table 3.3, females are much more likely than males to be victimized by someone they know. Women and girls interviewed for the 1993–1999 NCVS said that in 79% of their victimizations, they knew the offender; males reported that they knew the offender in 59% of their victimizations. When victim race and sex are both considered, the subgroup differences in whether the victimization is by a

Table 3.2 Estimated Percentages of People Victimized by Males and Females for Subgroups of People 12 Years of Age and Older, 1993–1999

Offender Sex	<i>Sex and Race of Victim</i>							
	Asian Female	Asian Male	White Female	White Male	Black Female	Black Male	Native American Female	Native American Male
Male	79.2	93.0	73.2	92.3	70.8	91.3	65.0	91.0
Female	20.8	7.0	26.8	7.7	29.2	8.7	35.0	9.0

SOURCE: Data are from the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993–1999.

Table 3.3 Estimated Percentages of People Victimized by Someone Known or by a Stranger, for Subgroups of People 12 Years of Age and Older, 1993–1999

Offender Known to Victim?	<i>Sex and Race of Victim</i>							
	Asian Female	Asian Male	White Female	White Male	Black Female	Black Male	Native American Female	Native American Male
Knew/had seen	65.8	40.7	78.9	58.9	79.9	62.1	86.1	60.5
Stranger	34.2	59.3	21.1	41.1	20.1	37.9	13.9	39.5

SOURCE: Data are from the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993–1999.

stranger are very pronounced. At the low end, just 13.9% of Native American females' victimizations involved a stranger, and at the other extreme, 59.3% percent of male Asians' victimizations involved a stranger.

The concentration of nonlethal victimization of women and girls in their homes by people they know is mirrored in statistics on homicide. In 2000, in the United States, 65.2% of homicides involved a male offender and a male victim, 25.0% involved a male offender and a female victim, 7.2% involved a female offender and a male victim, and 2.6% involved a female offender and victim (Fox & Zawitz, 2003, p. 40). Between 1976 and 2000, female victims were more likely to be killed by an intimate or family member than male victims, whereas male victims were more likely to be killed by acquaintances or strangers (Fox & Zawitz, 2003, pp. 41–42). Similarly, in Canada between 1921 and 1988, the proportion of women killed by intimate partners stayed at about 50%, and women were most likely to be killed in their homes (Gartner & McCarthy, 1991, p. 309). As others have noted, “these features of femicide challenge the assumption that the home and family provide a refuge from victimization which is implicit in some perspectives on interpersonal violence” (Gartner & McCarthy, 1991, p. 309).

The striking differences between the nature and amount of violence against gender and sexual orientation groups is a starting place for theories about victimization and, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, theories to explain why people break the law. The differences provide reason to expend considerable effort trying to understand why women and girls are at such high levels of danger in and around their homes, why males predominate as the offenders in the United States, and why females who are Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics are exposed to levels of violence not only higher than those for other females, but in some cases higher than for racial groups of males. The importance of explaining these long-standing patterns is reinforced by their replication in other countries.

Global Dimensions of Crimes Against Girls and Women

A consideration of developing countries and gender-related victimization is difficult because of spotty availability of data and omission of some forms of crime from official statistics, but there is evidence that various forms of gender-related victimization are higher than in the United States for some countries. In Papua New Guinea, 67% of women in rural areas and 56% in cities had been hit by their husbands (del Frate, 1995, p. 2). In South Africa, there is a virtual epidemic in rape of young women and girls (Meier, 2002). During the first month of the Bosnia war, an estimated 20,000 women were raped (del Frate, 1995, p. 8). These are but a few examples that reflect the magnitude of the numbers of women affected by gender-related violence at particular times and places.

Trafficking, which is the transport of people across local or national borders for the purpose of sexually exploiting them, is a crime that predominantly victimizes girls and women. Women, girls, and sometimes boys are tricked or forced into moving to another area of their country, often from rural to urban areas, or to other countries, where they are entrapped and forced to engage in prostitution. Some



This girl, who was captured and forced to work as a prostitute in the Philippines, is freed by police, who are ready to retaliate if her captors attack.

poor families sell female children to traffickers. Estimates are that 1 million people are trafficked and sexually exploited worldwide each year (Hughes, 2000). Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, a criminal underground operated to circumvent and supplement the planned economies. After the collapse of the economic system, the context was ripe for expanded illegal opportunities, and the demand for women and the profits that could be made from them, along with limited risk compared to drug and arms trafficking, encouraged the growth of trafficking. Criminal groups have recruited and taken women and children from poor Asian countries (such as the Philippines and Thailand) and more recently from former Soviet republics such as Ukraine and Russia. Although the media have highlighted Europe, Asia, and Canada as the places where trafficked women are taken, the U.S. government has estimated that each year 50,000 women and children are trafficked to the United States, primarily from Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the republics that made up the Soviet Union (Raymond & Hughes, 2001, p. 7).

Fear and Everyday Violence

Survey results convey only a partial picture of people's actual experience of victimization, because they omit information on the context in which the victimization occurs, the feelings and thoughts of both the aggressor and target, and the aftermath of victimization. Increased understanding of the connection of gender to anticipation, fear, and terror of victimization has partly corrected the limitations of numbers in indicating victimization experiences. Efforts to name specific forms of gender-related victimization have drawn on descriptions of the context and

consequences of victimization, and in so doing have extended understanding of the range in gender-related victimization.

Fear of crime results from a personal experience with crime or knowledge of other victims (Schlesinger, Dobash, Dobash, & Weaver, 1992), but it is a separate phenomenon with its own effects. Fear influences everyday routines, such as checking around the house upon first entering, and a variety of precautionary measures, such as carrying a weapon or not walking alone at night. Anticipation of victimization because of gender, sexual orientation, race, social class, or other combined differences in identity and physical characteristics—many of which are highly obvious—can put people in a state of discomfort ranging from periodic unease to high levels of terror. Stanko (1990) used the words “everyday violence” to describe fear-promoting experiences and circumstances that influence people to automatically take possible acts of violence into account. Everyday violence results in “measures to guarantee our safety—such as staying alert on the street, resisting arguments with our intimates because their bad tempers might lead to a beating, or avoiding certain public places that make us feel uneasy” (Stanko, 1990, p. 5). Consistent with the notion of everyday violence, fear of crime is most accurately indicated by the “wide range of emotional and practical responses to crime and disorder made by individuals and communities” or, more generally, “the impact of people’s concerns about crime on everyday social life” (Pain, 2001, p. 901).

Depending on other correlates of social location—for example, poverty and race—girls and women, to varying degrees, have a sense that they need to alter their lives to manage violence that is disproportionately directed against females (Stanko, 1990). Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals also emotionally respond to and manage potential gender-related violence through routines and choices in everyday life. Fear of crime influences quality of life and reproduces social inequalities, creating and reinforcing exclusion from particular places and from some social interactions (Pain, 2001, p. 902) and restricting a person’s actions. Individuals’ beliefs that they need to adjust their lives to avoid gender-related victimization are a manifestation of their oppression.

Many people believe that girls and women are primarily at risk for sexual violence by an unknown male. This idea is communicated in persistent warnings to girls and to young women about avoiding walking in dark places, not talking to strangers, and not walking alone (Schlesinger et al., 1992, p. 167). Information about sexual violence and abuse by intimates or acquaintances or the risk of male-on-male violence is not similarly shared during social interactions. As a result of media and verbal warnings to women and girls, they are particularly fearful of sexual violence and harassment by male strangers. Also, harassment increases the fear of sexual violence (for a summary or supporting research, see Pain, 2001, p. 903). The harassment that exacerbates fear of crime is pervasive in the normal course of being in public places and/or in the workplace.

Women differing in race and ethnicity (white, African American, and Latina), age, and circumstances (for example, homeless African American teenagers in Manhattan and white upper-middle-class women in New Jersey suburbs) expressed similar worries about crime (Madriz, 1997, p. 344). They were very concerned about attacks from men in certain racial groups, especially men who were black or

Latino (Madriz, 1997, p. 345). They viewed criminals as “animalistic and savage, as monsters, and as lacking any human compassion” (Madriz, 1997, p. 345). Finally, they viewed new immigrants as potential criminals (Madriz, 1997, p. 347). The women pictured female victims as primarily white and middle class, submissive, innocent, and incapable of self-protection. Their imagery of victims sometimes incorporated descriptions of their own vulnerabilities: For example, undocumented Latinas talked about victims whom witnesses could not understand and who could not turn to the police for help. All of the groups of women focused on victimization through murder or rape, or, for a few, sexual harassment on the street. Women of color feared racial harassment (Day, 1999). The widespread imagery of victims and offenders reinforces stereotypes of men of color and of immigrants who are strangers as most dangerous, and it erroneously suggests that white women are most at risk for victimization and that rape by a stranger is the most typical type of victimization.

There is another way that race combines with gender to influence the perception and the experience, and therefore the fear, of criminal victimization. Some males believe and act on stereotypes that women of color are more available sexually or are rightfully theirs to become sexually involved with (Mama, 1989). The resulting greater harassment, confrontation, and other victimization of women of color accounts for their greater fear of rape (M. Gordon & Riger, 1989).

Sexual and other abuse by a current or former intimate partner and stalking by a nonstranger are unique forms of gender-related victimization because the perpetrator is known, is in close proximity to the victim on some regular basis, and has a history of aggression against the victim. The abstract concept “in or around the home,” which describes the location of many girls’ and women’s victimizations, takes on a new dimension. When there is repeated victimization by an intimate *in and around the home*, there is persistent anticipation and fear of a high-probability attack. Some women experience continuous anxiety and terror knowing that a person who is often in close proximity is likely to strike out. They dramatically adjust their daily activities and their life plans, deciding where to live and work or whether or not to leave an abusive, life-threatening partner, based on whether their actions are likely to provoke violence against themselves and other people. For example, some women in abusive relationships feel they are constantly “walking on eggshells,” always trying to anticipate and please the abuser to avoid any excuse or provocation for an attack.

Fear and boldness in relation to crime are not essentially male or female, homosexual or heterosexual qualities (Pain, 1997); they are influenced but not determined by gender and sexual orientation, and related experiences and social location. There are relatively bold women (lesbian, bisexual, and straight) and gay men of all racial and ethnic groups, as well as quite fearful heterosexual, majority men. Dominant culture makes fear unacceptable for males, so they report it less on surveys and take risks more often than do females (Goodey, 1997, p. 402). However, when interviews and open-ended questions instead of multiple-choice types of questions on written surveys are used to collect information on men’s fear of crime, the types and effects of fear that are revealed can be just as great for at least some men as is the norm for women (Gilchrist, Bannister, Ditton, & Farrall, 1998; Stanko

& Hobdell, 1993). Despite variability within groups, however, on average women are more fearful of victimization than are men, and they more often compromise their activities in order to feel safe.

Naming Forms of Victimization

In addition to the expanded conceptualization of victimization to include fear and a related awareness of the potential for everyday violence, theorists, activists, legislators and policy makers have called attention to an increasing number of types of victimization experience. The words that identify the forms of gender and sexual orientation related victimization have fairly recently become important foci of criminological theory. They make it possible for people to talk about victimization that was frequently hidden, ignored, unspeakable, and difficult to communicate about. New terms to describe forms of violence concentrated on women include *domestic terrorism*, *marital rape*, *date rape*, *acquaintanceship rape*, *degrees of sexual assault*, *wife abuse*, *wife battering*, *intimate-partner violence*, *emotional abuse*, *stalking*, *sexual harassment*, and *gender harassment*. Threatening situations are not limited to crimes considered in national statistics, but extend to “obscene phone calls, being followed on the street, being felt up on public transport, and sexual harassment” (Stanko, 1995, p. 50). Recognition of the pervasiveness of such affronts helps to explain why women’s fear of crime is high even in groups for which the statistically documented victimization is low relative to the statistics for men. Sexual harassment is so common that it has been referred to as **routine oppression** (Kelly, 1987, 1988). *Sexual orientation–motivated crime* and *hate crime* also are relatively new concepts. Hate crime can be motivated not only by dislike of gay and lesbian individuals but also by dislike of gender, racial, religious, or ethnic groups; it is unique from other crimes because the motive is hate of an entire group.³¹ The extent to which conceptualization and naming have directed theoretical and practical attention to gender- and sexual orientation–related victimization is evident in several government publications that summarize statistics on violence against women and hate crimes (Rennison, 2003; Snyder, 2000; Strom, 2001; Violence Against Women Grants Office, 1998) and in federal and state policies and programs to prevent and control myriad sorts of violence. Highlighting each form of violence has called attention to a widened range of victimization.

Denial of Victimization

A small but persistently produced literature (e.g., D. G. Dutton, 1994; McNeely & Robinson-Simpson, 1987; Pearson, 1997; Steinmetz & Lucca, 1988; Straus, 1993) has insisted that women are *not* overrepresented as victims in any forms of aggression. This literature has challenged the validity of women’s perceptions of their own lives and experiences, and by so doing it contradicts a major tenet of feminist theory: the need for theory and research to reveal and communicate women’s realities. The NCVS finding that nearly one fourth of violent crimes against women but just

3% of violent crimes against men were perpetrated by an intimate partner (Rennison & Welchans, 2000, p. 1), though certainly an underestimate due to underreporting, is the basis for women's great concern with victimization by their partners. The overall lower rate of some groups of women's criminal victimization compared to rates for males does not diminish the prevalence of intimate-partner violence in women's lives.

There are problems of validity when researchers use self-reported instances of behavior, such as hitting or throwing objects, or counts of homicide from official records as the evidence that women and men equally victimize each other (R. P. Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Loseke, 1991). Specific acts of violence are disconnected and therefore decontextualized from any pattern of escalating violence, verbal intimidation, fear or terror, period and place. Acts are also divorced from resulting injuries, emotional distress, and what can be extreme measures that potential victims go to in efforts to prevent abuse. Dobash and her coauthors (R. P. Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, et al., 1992, p. 81) pointed out a number of differences in homicides that are committed by women and men. Men often kill their wives after a long sequence of violent acts, but this is rare for women to do. When a parent kills both the spouse and children, the perpetrator is most often the male head of household. When women kill a spouse, it is usually in self-defense, but this is not the case when men kill their wives. These patterns and differences are obscured when hits and killings are abstracted from the broader context. The data that ignore context and injury have been used to support the invalid conclusion that women and men are equally violent toward each other.

Explaining Victimization

Gender Organization

Klein (1981) broke a silence about the importance of social structure and culture in supporting patterns of violence against women and girls. She conceptualized gender organization, including divisions of labor and of resources, and other hierarchies of power, as being interconnected with economic arrangements. Gender organization explains why females are the "usual objects of child molestation, spouse abuse, rape, pornography, and sexual harassment" (Klein, 1981, p. 65). These sorts of physical force are a part of a larger system of gender organization characterized by male domination over women. In Klein's framework, an adolescent's pressure on his date to have intercourse, depictions of rape in pornography, and actual rape inside and outside marriage are elements in "the total systemic gender domination" (Klein, 1981, p. 77). Since she advanced this idea in 1981, theory and supporting research on specific aspects of social structure and on variation in culture have enriched the gender-organization explanation of violence against women and girls.

Consistent with Klein's (1981) theory, a study of 90 societies around the world demonstrated that the level of violence against women is connected to gender organization (Levinson, 1989). Women experienced less violence in societies where

husband and wife shared decision making, wives controlled some of the family resources, there was not a premarital sex double standard, marriage was monogamous, and there was immediate social response to domestic violence. Economic and educational resources, along with culture, the two topics that are discussed next, have an important influence on domestic and other forms of intimate-partner violence.

Economic and Educational Resources

In the United States, poverty increasingly has been concentrated on women and children (Pearce, 1989). Census data for 1999 reveal that overall, 11.8% of people were living in poverty, but for women-headed households with no husband present, the poverty rate was 27.8% (Lott & Bullock, 2001). Additionally, 17% of the nation's children were poor by federal standards, even though most of them (77.6%) were in families with at least one working person. Compared with rates in 16 other developed countries, the child poverty rate in the United States was the highest (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1999). Also, compared to both developed and transitional economies, the gender gap in poverty was highest in the United States, and the United States had the highest poverty rate for female-headed households (Pressman, 2002).³² The poverty rate for women cannot be explained by their age or level of education. It can, however, be ameliorated by income transfer programs. In countries that, unlike the United States, have aggressive fiscal policies that transfer income to poor families, there are dramatically reduced poverty rates for female-headed households and for females in general. In the United States, for both children and adults, poverty rates are highest for nonwhite minorities. Thus, for themselves and their children, women's poverty restricts the rewards of participation in the legitimate economy and exposes family members to negative conditions of poverty. In the United States, the disadvantaged social location of women is high for Hispanics, who can be of any race, and for African Americans, and it is extremely high for Native Americans (Proctor & Dalaker, 2003).

As in the United States, in many developing and disrupted economies, girls and women are at a particular economic disadvantage. A study of 10 developing countries documented that poverty measures are higher for female-headed households and for females than for males with similar household types (Quisumbing, Haddad, & Peña, 2001). This inequity has profound implications for women's criminal victimization. People without money and the related access to housing, good neighborhoods, and reliable and safe transportation find it difficult if not impossible to live in safe environments (Baily, 1999). In the United States, racial discrimination in housing and in employment intensifies the residential segregation of black and Native American people. There is a multiplier effect for women of color, who are concentrated in environments where everyone is more likely to be victimized, but who are also the targets of female-directed, gender-motivated, and racially motivated offenses.

Comparative study of different countries has revealed a complicated connection of women's economic and other status markers to violence against them. Women

typically are less likely than men to be murdered, but the difference between female and male rates of homicide varies considerably not only between countries but depending on the historical moment (Kruttschnitt, 1995). Women experience increased risk of homicide when they have nontraditional social roles, specifically when they marry at a later age, they divorce men at a higher rate, they are single parents, and they work outside the home.³³ However, the risk of increased violence for women in nontraditional roles is substantially counteracted and even reversed if they have economic, educational, and other resources (Gartner, Baker, & Pampel, 1990). In other words, women who take on nontraditional roles are more vulnerable to homicide *unless* they are well educated and well-off economically. If they are educated and economically well-off, they are less at risk for being murdered.

Cross-cultural and ethnographic studies explain how women's resources reduce their exposure to domestic violence (Kruttschnitt, 1995). Women who work and are well educated establish support networks in school or the workplace, and they can establish economic networks. The connections to other people, which are intermediate influences on victimization, serve as resources and result in less abuse and increased capacity to leave abusive relationships (Baumgartner, 1993; Levinson, 1989). Alternatively, wife beating is most frequent where husbands dominate all aspects of family life, including restricting women's access to divorce (Levinson, 1989). Women who attempt to escape traditional domestic and economic roles (but have not yet completed the transition) are at greatest risk of being beaten and killed by their spouses.

The effect of gender inequality on rape is similar to its effect on domestic violence. For 109 U.S. cities with populations over 50,000, from 1970 through 1990, increases in women's equality were associated with short-term increases in rape (Whaley, 2001). It is possible that men were resistant to women's greater status, and they responded with efforts to reestablish their dominance or in anger, which in some cases was expressed through rape. This explanation is called the **backlash hypothesis**. An alternative explanation is that when women become more equal to men, they are at greater risk for certain types of victimization because they are more often away from home. For the 109 cities, in the long run women's greater equality was related to lower levels of rape. It is possible that women and others influenced the investment of resources to prevent rape, or that over time men adjusted to women's greater status.

The relationship of sexual harassment to gender equality in the workplace is similar to the relationship of rape and abuse to inequality. When women begin to work in previously all-male settings, men degrade them and feel they are not qualified but were hired because of their gender (Beaton, Tougas, & Joly, 1997). Eventually, these negative views subside when "occupational segregation decreases, stereotypes about gender weaken, policies are written to solve new problems (e.g., sexual harassment, pay equity), [and] women gain decision-making power in relationships (Beaton et al., 1996, pp. 533–534). The challenge and change to existing gender ideologies and arrangements appears to promote a variety of insults and injuries directed toward women, but greater equality eventually ameliorates the negative results.

The connection of women's limited power and influence to their victimization has been documented in the United States. In states where women are less equal to

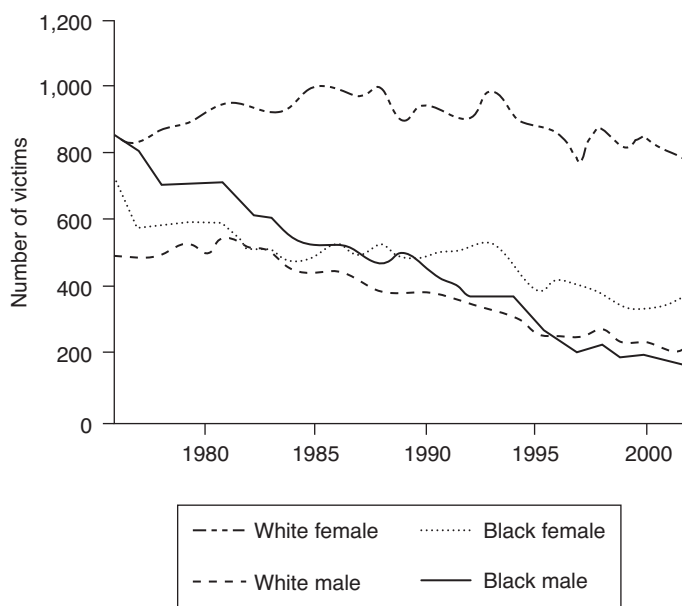


Figure 3.1 Homicides of intimates by gender and race of victim, 1976–2002

From <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/intimates.htm#intgender>. US Government website.

men in education, employment, occupation, and political participation and influence, rates of wife abuse (Yllo, 1983; Yllo & Straus, 1984) and rape (Baron & Straus, 1987) are higher. Perhaps women without power cannot influence legislation and the enforcement of legislation by agents in the criminal justice system in a way that affords some protection. Alternatively, women without resources may be unable to stay away from, leave, or influence potentially dangerous situations.

In the United States, the passage of the federal 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) resulted in increased resources to prevent and respond to violence against women. These resources included legislation that increased the power of the state to intervene, particularly in intimate-partner violence; programs to assist and empower victims; and policies and training programs to improve the implementation of laws intended to protect females. There is clear documentation of decreased violence against women after 1994. Specifically, women's rates of intimate-partner violence were lower in 1998 (9.8 per 1,000 women) than in 1993 (7.5 per 1,000) (Rennison & Welchans, 2000, p. 1). For males, the rates went from 1.6 to 1.5 per 1,000 men. For some demographic groups, there also has been a decline in homicide of intimates between 1976 and 2000 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002; Rennison & Welchans, 2000). The group that has not experienced the decrease is white females. In comparison with white males and black females and males, white females have the highest intimate-partner homicide rate. However, rates of homicide by an intimate have dropped considerably for white males and for black females and males.

Changes in rates of intimate-partner violence may be due to growing intolerance for violence, various changes in the status of women vis-à-vis men, or other factors. In large U.S. cities, policies and programs that reduced women's exposure to their abusive partners were related to decreases in intimate-partner killings (Dugan, Rosenfeld, & Nagin, 2003). Increased welfare benefits were connected to lower rates of intimate-partner killings of African American men. This finding is consistent with knowledge that poverty is concentrated among African American women, who would not be able to leave abusive partners without welfare assistance. Aggressive arrest policies were connected to fewer deaths of unmarried intimates. Other policies that are related to lower homicide rates for at least some groups are availability of legal advocacy, mandatory arrest laws, and laws that allow arrest without a warrant. However, in cities where prosecutors were most willing to prosecute for violation of protection orders, some groups of women were more at risk for homicide; it may be that without adequate protection, increased prosecution places women at extreme danger of men's retaliation. Many of the programs and policies that are related to intimate partner homicide rates resulted from the VAWA. There are competing explanations of falling levels of intimate-partner violence. However, it is impossible to rule out, as an explanation for lower levels of intimate-partner violence, the possibility that the VAWA promoted gender rearrangements, giving more resources and influence to women and their advocates, and that this resulted in changes.

Internationally, females' economic marginalization in developing nations or nations with disrupted economies (for example, the nations that made up the former Soviet bloc) creates a context in which traffickers can recruit women and children. Although gender-related poverty is an element that makes trafficking possible, it is an influence only when it is coupled with two other things: motivated traffickers, usually operating in organized criminal groups, and countries or cities that are large sex industry centers where prostitution is tolerated or is legal. Although many areas of the world are poor and chaotic, it is only when traffickers are active that women and children are coerced or tricked into the sex industry (Hughes, 2001, p. 10). An example of a Ukrainian woman shows how lack of opportunity and criminal elements come together:

Irina, aged 18, responded to an advertisement in a Kyiv, Ukraine, newspaper for a training course in Berlin, Germany, in 1996. With a fake passport, she traveled to Berlin, where she was told that the school had closed. She was sent on to Brussels, Belgium, for a job. When she arrived, she was told she needed to repay a debt of US \$10,000 and would have to earn the money in prostitution. Her passport was confiscated, and she was threatened, beaten, and raped. When she didn't earn enough money for the first pimp, she was sold to another pimp who operated in Brussels' red light district. When she escaped with police assistance, she was arrested because she had no legal documentation. A medical exam verified the abuse she had suffered, such as cigarette burns all over her body. (Hughes, 2001, pp. 10–11)

The recruiters (sometimes women allowed to escape their work as prostitutes), the pimps, and the traffickers, plus the international inequalities in chances for survival and a good future, are the essential influences on the movement of large numbers of women to settings where they are subjected to abuse and forced to prostitute themselves.

Toleration of prostitution in selected countries and the demand for it, coupled with women's depressed economic conditions, work together to maintain continuous recruitment of women. For example, in India moneylenders or their agents will visit areas that are affected by desperate poverty (Davidson, 1998). They promise jobs to girls and young women, and in some cases they make cash advances to the recruits' parents, and the young women must work until the debt is repaid. Moneylenders may own brothels, where they place the girls and women to work. In other cases, they may supply the women and girls to brothelkeepers for a fee, and then require them to work until the fee is paid off. The income for prostitution includes profit for the brothel owner, and just a small proportion is used to reduce the debt.

Once involved in prostitution, women are forced, in various ways, to continue. Asian-Indian women have reported to researchers that despite desires to stop, they continued prostitution because of illiteracy, beatings, starvation, rape by family members, and sexual exploitation in alternative jobs that paid less than prostitution, and that therefore created the reality that prostitution provided a higher rate of pay for sexual acts that they would have been forced into regardless of not working as a prostitute (Chattopadhyay, Bandyopadhyay, & Dutttagupta, 1994).

Along with the economic marginalization of girls and women, race, class, and age increase the chances of exploitation through prostitution. In many national and international contexts, women's legitimate economic options are more or less constrained depending on their demographic characteristics. At the same time, stereotypes about which people are sexually attractive and desirable affect which groups are recruited. Preferences for sex with young girls and boys or with members of racial or other groups stereotyped as "exotic," "sexually desirable," or "passive" creates the "market" that entices some women and children to engage in prostitution and that encourages others to pressure or force them to do so.

The international scope of women's economic marginalization leads to their dislocation across the world, along with the resulting promotion of their involvement in the sex industry that crosses international boundaries. As a result of their greater economic disadvantage or because they are more expendable to their families and state policy makers, in some Asian countries, more women than men leave their countries looking for work, much of which is in low-paying and low-skilled jobs (Skolnik & Bootinand, 1999). They can then send money back home, creating an additional benefit for their country of origin. For instance, Indonesia's 5-year plans for both 1990 and 1994 included reducing unemployment by sending 500,000 women overseas (Skolnik & Bootinand, 1999). Along with the lure of opportunity to survive and even thrive by leaving one's homeland, for some women there is the push of governmental policy or families to leave home, both so they can send money to relatives and so they can seek their fortunes elsewhere.

Gender Inequality and Damage to Daughters

Around the world, a number of different practices result in physical and emotional harms to girls. In several countries, girl children are viewed as a drain on family resources, and having one or more sons and few or no daughters is valued. Thus, in China and India, girls are abandoned in public places or may be neglected as infants and therefore die; women in South Korea often abort a fetus that is known to be female (Das Gupta et al. 2003). Also, in several countries, including the United States, incest perpetrated by a father or stepfather against a daughter is relatively common, and in some groups, female genital mutilation is routine. All these practices reflect the lesser value of female children and the related dominance of males within the social group.

A pattern that cuts across the practices of elimination of female fetuses, abandonment of baby girls, incest, and female genital mutilation is that they are most common in families and cultural groups that “subscribe to highly stereotyped understandings of what it means to be a man and a woman” (Candib, 1999, p. 196):

For instance, [incest] offenders think that the role of the woman in a family is to take care of the family, cook, clean, look after the children, be a sexual partner, help with money in a crisis, be loyal, keep the family together, stand by her man, be understanding, and maintain her physical attractiveness. . . . Men and women—and even therapists as well at times—subscribe to a belief in the man’s “right” to get his sexual needs met within his family. . . . In fact, it is a common distortion among incestuously abusive fathers to believe “If my wife doesn’t have sex with me, it’s justifiable to have sex with my daughter” and “It’s better to have sex with my daughter than have an extramarital affair.” (Candib, 1999, pp. 196–197)

Fathers and potential husbands are viewed as having the right and the responsibility to rigidly control women’s sexuality and girls’ sexual desires through female genital mutilation, and girls are devalued because when there is gender inequality, they are likely to be economic burdens.

Limitation on the Birth of Females

Because most countries have banned or criminalized abortion and neglect for the purposes of having or keeping a male infant instead of a female, there are very limited statistics on the extent of these practices. Usually, an unbalanced sex ratio of boys to girls is used to indicate selective abortion of girls or neglect that results in their death. An unexpectedly low ratio of girls to boys is referred to as the problem of **missing girls**. Female-selective abortion is primarily but not exclusively practiced in China, Taiwan, South Korea, Pakistan, and India; it also is not uncommon for Asian immigrant populations, including those in the United States and Canada (B. D. Miller, 2001).

Abortion, life-threatening neglect, and abandonment to ensure that a daughter is not added to the family is related to cultural beliefs and to gender inequality. The influence of both culture and inequality is illustrated by findings from a survey in a very poor area of China (Li & Lavelly, 2003). Women had a higher ratio of living male to female children than would be expected if there were no preferences for sons. Those with Confucian beliefs that only a son could perform important ceremonial duties for parents after the parents' death or carry on the family name, and those who anticipated ridicule from others because they had no sons, preferred sons. Also, women who were uneducated, had little or no financial resources of their own, and who expected their sons to care for them in old age preferred sons. In reality, in part because of their advantaged position in society, sons were more able than were daughters to economically support aging parents and carry out manual tasks, such as bringing water from long distances. Across countries, the greater the gender inequality, the greater the preference that people have for sons to be born into and survive in the family (Mason, 1987). Put another way, countries with the greatest number of missing girls are those having the most patriarchal gender arrangements, according to which males control property, have the only inheritance rights, and have better employment options (B. D. Miller, 2001). In the study of rural China, female infants whose mothers preferred sons were twice as likely to die than others. Complementary cultural beliefs about sons support sex-related abortion in countries with resources to detect sex during pregnancy and for people who can pay for detection and abortions (F. Arnold, Kishor, & Roy, 2002; B. D. Miller, 2001), as well as neglect or abandonment of newborn girls in countries with less advanced economies and technologies.

Female Genital Mutilation

Girls who are born and who survive can be reminded of their inferior status through the practice of **female genital mutilation** (FGM). Specific beliefs and norms that promote the practice of FGM vary between countries, but in general the notion that women must be submissive to their husbands provides the rationale for continuing the practice. Women in regions of Africa where the practice is common believe that without the procedure, girls will "be wanton and will not remain a virgin before marriage or faithful afterward," and that FGM will protect them because they will not "seek sexual relations for pleasure, so their bodies belong totally to the men who marry them" (Candib, 1999, p. 190). Women support their male family members' requirement of FGM both out of concerns that their daughters will be married, which in some places is the only way that a female can survive economically or socially, and also to avoid their own ostracism by being shamed, thrown out of the house, or divorced (Horowitz & Jackson, 1997).

Incest

In all societies, there is general recognition that incest, another way that daughters are damaged, is wrong and shameful. The high rates of incest in many different

countries provide evidence that it cannot be explained by atypical, individual-level pathologies. There is considerable pornography, increasingly available through the Internet, that presents men having sex with girls, and though such information will not cause a man to become involved in incest, it provides material that he can draw on in his rationalizations about the acceptability of what he is doing and to demonstrate and justify the abuse to the child and to himself (Silbert & Pines, 1993; Trepper & Barrett, 1989). Also, men's beliefs that they have a right to control and supervise their daughters or to punish their wives by attacking the children sexually support their sexual abuse of their children (Candib, 1999, p. 196). The system of beliefs and relationships that characterize patriarchy include traditional definitions of daughters or stepdaughters as sexual property (Finkelhor 1982), acceptance of inequality in male/female relationships, and veneration of youth (Bell, 1984). Consistent with available pornography and patriarchal ideals, incest perpetrators tend to view children as sexually attractive and motivated, and they endorse attitudes that support male privilege (Karl, Gizzarelli, & Scott, 1994).

Beliefs That Support Gender-Related Victimization

The idea that beliefs support gender-related victimization is important at different levels of explanation. Sometimes beliefs are associated with a culture that is shared by ethnic or national groups in an area where people live or originated. Culture includes not only beliefs, but also the values that members of a group share, the norms that they follow, and the objects and creations that they possess. Although culture is an important influence on behavior, it is not static or fully deterministic. In some situations, people alter beliefs, values, and norms. Alteration can occur when individuals are exposed to multiple cultures, or when adaptations are useful in managing within constraints imposed by economic hardships or other realities of day-to-day life. As examples of the malleability of culture, subgroups of European Americans incorporate into their thinking and traditions symbols and beliefs of Native Americans, there are so-called Western influences throughout the world, and there are examples of pan-culturalism, a melding of selected elements of many different systems of beliefs and traditions. People who move between different countries often adapt their cultural beliefs or incorporate elements of cultures to which they are newly exposed. However, even though there is some seeping of one culture into another, cultural distinctions relevant to gender-related victimization remain both between and within different countries. Also, the processes of cultural change can influence victimization.

Beliefs also can be shared, taught, and reinforced at the intermediate level of influence within smaller groups. Family and peer groups are important sources of beliefs that are consistent with sexual assault, with intimate-partner violence, and, as already discussed, with incest, preference for sons, and female genital mutilation. Beliefs consistent with rape and with sexual assault derive from both broad, though not necessarily uniform, cultural influences and from interactions with other people in peer networks.

Beliefs Consistent With Rape

In seeking an explanation of men's violence against women, it is helpful to recognize that the acts identified as violence are variants of men's power over women that many people do not consider to be unusual or unacceptable. Acceptance of men's pressuring and trying to force women into sexual activity are characteristic of many subgroups in and outside the United States. Of more than 3,000 women surveyed on 32 U.S. college campuses, 44% reported verbal pressure to have sex, and 12% reported that men had given them alcohol or drugs in order to have sex with them (Koss, 1989). In a study of 400 teenaged mothers, the most common explanation for having sexual intercourse was "inability to successfully resist pressure from the males" (Furstenberg, 1976, p. 150). U.S. college women (but not college men) who reported that they were pressured to have sexual intercourse also reported that they were greatly upset by the experience (S. J. Walker, 2001). The pressure toward intercourse and the constraints on resisting have been documented in many different countries (Wood, Maforah, & Jewkes, 1998), where popular imagery conveys that males should engage in sexual pursuit of women and that females should acquiesce to demonstrate their love.

Scholars have linked beliefs and norms that are common to at least some groups in the United States to rape. These beliefs are referred to as a **rape culture**. The term *culture* is used in a narrow sense to refer to specific beliefs. Rapists (and batterers) do sometimes express shame and remorse, but oftentimes they feel they are entitled to dominate women, and they try to justify their abusiveness and talk about their intentions to establish control (Lea, Auburn, & Kibblewhite, 1999; Ptacek, 1988). Also, men with a high proclivity to rape believe victims are responsible for the incident, have attitudes and beliefs about women and sex that support rape, and are insensitive to the negative effects of rape on the victim (Drieschner & Lange, 1999). Because they link sex with power, they do not feel sexual until after they have overpowered another person (Drieschner & Lange, 1999). Of course, not all individuals in the United States buy into the set of beliefs and behaviors that are consistent with a rape culture, but within the United States there are people who share and promote these beliefs.

Beliefs consistent with rape cannot be seen as individual abnormalities because they are often the result of peer interactions. In settings where women and men share the assumption that men are initiators of sex and women are either passive partners or active resisters, women seeking a long-term relationship are at risk for a brief *hookup*, an instance in which men use women as sex objects. In these environments, men often discourage each other from having long-term heterosexual relationships because such relationships threaten the solidarity among the men (Boswell & Spade, 1996). Males with peers who condone or encourage sexual aggression are more likely than others to pressure or force females to have sex (Kanin, 1985; Koss, Leonard, Beezley, & Oros, 1985; Krahe, 1998). Within a national or regional context, even if there is not uniform support for rape, it is possible to find support from selected peers and information sources.

National and smaller groups vary in their support of rape. Research on tribal groups in South Asia has illustrated how gender norms and related arrangements

within different cultures vary (Sanday, 1986). In one group, males did not define their identities as opposite to those of women, and their separation from their mothers did not involve talk or behaviors that demeaned or established dominance over women. Even though boys matured to be independent men, they maintained bonds with their mothers and siblings throughout adulthood. The norms and values reflected by these practices resulted in little or no sexual abuse and aggression against women. In contrast to the culture that did not support sexual attack of females, in societies with limited resources—for instance, inadequate food and other types of severe deprivation—men and boys felt no control of their fate. Rape commonly was used to control women, display an image of masculinity, and induct younger men into masculine roles. The interactions of both women and men reflected and reproduced ideologies that supported rape (Box, 1983; Holmstrom & Burgess, 1983; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Makepeace, 1981).

Beliefs Consistent With Intimate-Partner Violence

As with sexual assault, a strong predictor of which men will become abusive in courtship relationships is whether they have friends who explicitly and verbally tell them to abuse women under certain conditions, for example when women challenge men's authority or reject their sexual advances (DeKeseredy, 1988; DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993). Men who are prone to abuse women form strong bonds of friendship with and spend a considerable time with other males who agree that there are circumstances in which abuse is acceptable. Their beliefs support domination and control of female partners—for example, the belief that a man has the right to decide whether or not his partner should work outside the home and the belief that he has the right to have sex with his partner regardless of whether she wants to (M. D. Smith, 1990).

When women are asked what their abusive husbands were trying to get them to do or say at the time of the abuse, their answers reflect the recurring theme of the men's belief in their right to dominate and control women. Three women answered the question, "What was he trying to get you to do or say?"

Just what is said should be done, because he said so, and right away.

That I should be an obedient, submissive person.

He doesn't want me to be me. He wants to be the head of the home. No 50–50, no 75–25.

Two women answered the question, "What makes him act this [abusive] way?"

He says I yell too much and I am not a good wife and mother.

I feel he is trying to fulfill a fantasy and that the person he is going out to drink with, also a friend, this person is a womanizer. . . . I have never drank or run around, and maybe in his mind, the drinking and sexual acts are attractive and he wants me to be as he sees other women in bars.³⁴

The last woman quoted was forced by her husband to engage in sexual acts that she considered perverted. Often, men who abuse their wives are seeking tight control over them and are trying to enforce their ideas about how a good wife and mother should act. When men think that their partners are challenging culturally supported patterns of male dominance, violence is one way that they reinforce their domination (Gartner, Baker, et al., 1990).

For some immigrants, violence in families is influenced not only by norms and values reinforced in the United States, but also by the culture in the country of origin. Traditionally, people in South Asian countries have believed that men are entitled to control or discipline their wives (Dasgupta, 1998). This belief is a matter of dispute and social activism in South Asia. However, one way that immigrants and their offspring react to being in a foreign context is to hold rigidly to old traditions as a way of coping with the stress of a foreign language, lack of family and friends, and biases they may experience (Mazumdar, 1998).

To illustrate, in U.S. families of Mexican origin, changes in gender role expectations and performance, often an outgrowth of economic hardship, are a factor contributing to wife abuse (Morash, Bui, & Santiago, 2000). Women's dissatisfaction with men's performance of their gender roles and disagreements between men and women about appropriate gender roles led to violent episodes. One woman described why and how she changed:

I'm working and not here at his beck and call. At first I was. Because of the economy, you cannot make it. Even though we don't live in [a wealthy community] . . . after two years of marriage and not having the things I wanted. He does not want me barefoot and pregnant, and eating beans and rice is not a life. Because times have changed, and people changed. He found living in America is not like living in Mexico. (Morash, Bui, & Santiago, 2000, p. 77)

Economic realities led to the wife's working outside the home, which changed family dynamics. Her husband reacted to changes with anger and abuse in an effort to reassert his dominance and control.

There is a similar pattern for Vietnamese immigrant families. Wife abuse is connected to arguments centered on disagreements about how traditional family life should be, whether women should work outside the home, who should do work around the house, changing norms and values, and education and discipline of children.³⁵ Violence against wives is related to disagreement and struggle over gender roles, what women should do, and what men could do.

The Dynamics of Same-Sex Relationship Violence

There is very limited research on the dynamics of violence between lesbians, bisexual individuals, or gay men. There is some evidence that women often experience same-sex abuse in the context of their first lesbian relationship (Ristock, 2003). In their first relationship, the abuser may be integrated into a friendship group, but victims often are unknown to the friends of the abuser, and they may

have no status or support from lesbian friends. Victims' isolation, desire for a lesbian experience, and in some relationships their younger age may create vulnerability. The abusive partner, in contrast, may feel some immunity from criticism.

Also in lesbian abusive relationships, the direction of abuse from one person to the other often varies over the course of the relationship (Ristock, 2003). The abuse is not firmly connected to gender ideologies or to patriarchal family structure, so it is more variable. In some cases, the victim strikes back, and then establishes a pattern of abusing her partner. The issues do not typically involve women's performance in the roles of wife or mother, but rather center on such things as suspected attractions to men and related concerns that the victim is "not lesbian enough" (Giorgio, 2002). Some violence occurs around the complex issue of whether women are sexually involved with other lesbians or just are friends with them. Similar to the pattern with heterosexual relationship violence, abuse in lesbian relationships is signified not only by conflicts but also by control and coercion that are enforced by threats and violence.

Gender Identity

Masculinities and **femininities**, ideas about what it is to be male or female, are part of a person's identity and are shared and actualized through human interactions. **Accomplishing gender**—that is, acting feminine or masculine—involves behaving in a way that is consistent with one's gender identity. **Gender identity**, which is a person's sense of self as feminine or masculine, is connected to the forms and amounts of people's illegal behavior, and thus is relevant to understanding the undeniable patterns of men's violence against women and girls. It also is relevant to understanding violence against people who are gay or lesbian.

Although people do have the capacity to make choices about who they will be and how they will therefore act, the possibilities for accomplishing gender are limited by experience, knowledge, social location, and other conditions of life (Laidler & Hunt, 2001, p. 657). Because of both constraints and the agency people do have, there are many different forms of femininity and masculinity. **Hegemonic masculinity** is "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 1995, p. 77). As part of a therapy session, one man who had battered his wife gave the following explanation of his hegemonic form of masculinity:

What it means to be a man? Well, to me, [it] always meant to be in control over everything, not to be scared of nothing and never show your feelings or what we would call weak side because if we did we think it's a chump move or something so I always wanted to be in control and never let anyone control me and never showed my feelings. (Baird, 2000, p. 23)

Besides hegemonic masculinity, there are alternative, subordinate masculinities. **Subordinate masculinity** is related to subordinate statuses of race, class, and sexual

orientation. **Oppositional masculinity** involves explicit resistance and challenges to hegemonic forms. For girls and women, **emphasized femininity** reflects stereotypical female qualities, such as passivity, dependence, and fragility, and is considered as complementary to the aggressive domination embodied in interactions that reflect hegemonic masculinity. The literature has not, unfortunately, explored alternative forms of femininity as thoroughly as it has considered alternative forms of masculinity.

Shifts in the global economy and related patterns of immigration affect the connection of social structure to some men's accomplishment of their gender identity through violence. There are many specific examples of this connection. The restructuring of the global economy has limited economic opportunity for entry-level working-class men in the United States, and conditions of poverty pushed Puerto Rican immigration to New York City. There, Puerto Rican boys grew up with fathers who asserted their power through violence against their spouses and partners, and who sometimes found themselves working for Puerto Rican women, who were more readily absorbed than men into the workforce (Bourgois, 1996). In this situation, some men in East Harlem, New York, in the late 1980s to the early 1990s actively viewed masculine dignity as the capacity to engage in interpersonal violence, sexual domination and economic parasitism (Bourgois, 1996). Similarly, for some British men who grew up marginalized by poverty, powerful masculine identity on the street involved drug use, drug dealing, and other crimes (Collison, 1996). Men with limited access to economic resources have limited possibilities for how they can act in accord with their images of masculinity. For many groups, in many places, the gendered division of labor, with men oriented to activities outside the home and women oriented to activities in the home, is central to development and management of gender identity (Connell, 1995). Unemployed and underemployed males may have particularly serious limitations on how they can actualize being the type of men they want to be. Many find nonviolent solutions, for example by developing a rebuttal culture in service industry workplaces (Newman, 1999). Others may define masculinity as domination of and violence against women.

Gender Identity and Violence Against Intimate Partners

Supporting the connection of men's inability to succeed in the workplace and their violence against women whom they date or marry, a particularly strong predictor of men's abuse of a partner is poverty (Moffitt & Caspi, 1999). Poor school performance, perhaps because of its connection to workplace success and other life achievements, also is a strong predictor of men's violence against women.

In the family, problems living up to masculine ideals may be especially acute for men whose partners are themselves working. In a 1993 survey of 8,461 Canadian women who had male partners, the women were at greater risk for abuse, particularly systematic, serious abuse, if they were employed and their partners were unemployed. Employed women with unemployed partners also were more likely to experience coercive patriarchal control; that is, they had jealous husbands who did not want them to talk to other men, their partners tried to limit their contact with

family and friends, the partners insisted on knowing who the women were with and where they were at all times, and/or the partners prevented the women from knowing about or having access to family income (Macmillan & Gartner, 1999, p. 956).

Working Canadian women with employed husbands experienced less coercive control and less abuse than did other women. Unemployed men with employed female partners may feel that their dominance is threatened, and in an effort to maintain dominance in the relationship, exert controls that include physical abuse.

P. H. Collins (1990) also explained how a combination of the value placed on hegemonic masculinity and economic inequalities can increase violence against women. She theorized that black men have accepted “externally defined notions of both Black and white masculinity . . . , and that these notions break with Afrocentrism and support battering” (p. 185). Something that is quite common—a violent reaction to suspicions of unfaithfulness—is an outgrowth of the image of black women as promiscuous whores. Such ideas and images are part of a larger context of domination of black women. They are echoed when black men internalize and act on “controlling images of the sex/gender hierarchy” that condone the rape of black women (P. H. Collins, 1990, p. 179).

The connection of ideas about masculinity with extreme economic disadvantage also can be used to explain violence against Native American women. Consistent with NCVS findings, small-sample studies of women from several specific tribes have documented high rates of their victimization by spouses (Hamby, 2000, p. 652). Because histories and current circumstances are not uniform, tribes differ in gender organization, culture, and economic marginalization. Yet, there are some commonalities that explain why on average there would be high rates of victimization of Native American women. Many tribes were separated from their land, and thus from their cultural traditions and economic resources. In the early part of the 20th century, large numbers of Native American children spent their school years in off-reservation boarding schools, which were plagued by physical and sexual child abuse. This history disrupted existing cultural practices that, for some tribes, historically had kept rates of violence low. With the loss of cultural traditions, the door was open for external negative influences.

Illustrating how a prevalent cultural orientation in the United States can stimulate wife abuse in minority racial and ethnic groups, one Navajo woman said: “A lot of women are having trouble with their husbands. The only model the men have is the *macho* white man. They try to copy him and Navajo women object” (Zion & Zion, 1996, p. 97).

Historical events and resulting realities have stimulated some men’s development of identities consistent with the macho stereotype. Native American men have fared worse than women in their loss of traditional roles, and this structural disadvantage has led to alcohol abuse (Duran, Duran, Woodis, & Woodis, 1998; Hamby, 2000, p. 661) and to definitions of manhood that are divorced from Native American traditions. Further encouraging versions of masculinity that contradict egalitarian ideologies, in some places, U.S. government interventions into Native American life dismantled systems of public decision making in which women had a considerable say, and historical Western values were spread by providing girls with less education than boys (LaFramboise, Choney, James, & Running Wolf, 1995). The reduction

of Native Americans' land and their resulting constriction of their ability to be self-sufficient, along with the forced education of children off the reservation, rarely led to the intended assimilation of youth into white society (Zion & Zion, 1996, p. 104). Instead, the youth returned to reservations where they felt alienated from the culture and lacked connection to their elders. After passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978,³⁶ children were returned to families that had no experience with child rearing. New parents who had grown up in off-reservation boarding schools and placements suddenly were faced with the challenges of raising their own children with no models. Many "unparented parents" had been raised in neglectful or abusive settings (Poupart, 2002, p. 152, also see Metcalf, 1976). The complex and multiple historical and economic influences on Native Americans suggest that it would be very misleading to attribute high rates of violence among Native Americans solely to some versions of masculinities or femininities. Violence is in part a product of the destruction of indigenous cultural values, which did not support men's complete dominance over women. It is also in part a product of the appropriation of selected values and practices of mainstream U.S. culture, and in part a result of economic disadvantage. Although the structural and cultural influences of violence remain, however, so-called macho identity can be viewed both as a reaction to these larger forces and as an influence on maintaining gender inequalities and related violence.

The links between economic dislocations of men and their use of violence against women to maintain patriarchal constructions of masculinity is not limited to any one part of the world. In sub-Saharan African nations, for many reasons, men have experienced extreme economic marginalization, and these extremes explain striking instances of violence against women. For example:

in the former South African Bantustan Qwaqua, [there was] a collective assault against working women by unemployed men. In the 1980s, women were attacked on the streets, stoned, and openly assaulted. The women targeted for the attack had recently joined the paid labor force as factory workers. The men who took part in this public beating rationalized the act saying that too many jobs were going to women. (Bank, 1994, p. 89)

Bank (1994) interpreted this incident as a struggle over whether women should control household income and whether men or women should perform household labor. Women's new roles and employment activities directly contradicted men's views of themselves as dominating heads of households.

Motivation for murder, the most extreme form of violence against an intimate partner, is directly connected to an exaggerated version of hegemonic masculinity, a version that embodies total ownership or control of a woman. Domestic homicides in Florida illustrate the point:

[T]he 102 Florida men [who killed an intimate partner] used violence against women for a long time before killing them. They did this either to establish control or to reassert control that they felt was ebbing away. (Websdale, 1999, p. 207)



Men who kill an intimate partner typically are trying to establish or reassert control that they feel is slipping away. In contrast, women typically kill a partner when they feel trapped and that they or their loved ones are in danger.

In contrast to the men, women who killed an intimate partner were fully trapped in their situation, and their actions suggested desperation, self-defense, and defense of children or other relatives.

Gender Identity and Sexual Assault

Men who accept gender definitions believe that masculinity is characterized by dominance over women, extreme difference from and hostility toward females, and sexual aggression toward women. This constellation of beliefs has been described as **hypermasculinity** (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984). Men who are hypermasculine think that violence is manly and exciting and that callousness toward women is acceptable. A similar set of beliefs—that masculinity is signified by being dominating and in control, especially of women, and characterized by insecurity and distrust of women—is referred to as *hostile masculinity* (Malamuth, Scokloski, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991). The concepts of hypermasculinity and hostile masculinity are parts of psychological theories to provide individual-level explanations of behavior. The concept of hegemonic masculinity was developed in sociological theory that links identity to social structure, but that also explains individual behavior. However, hypermasculinity and hostile masculinity can be viewed as consistent with forms of hegemonic masculinity. A number of influences seem to contribute to men's development of hyper- or hostile masculinity. These include negative relationships

with fathers (Malamuth, Scokloski, et al., 1991) and sexual language that is common in all-male peer groups and that objectifies women (Murnen, 2000). Numerous studies have shown a moderate connection between men's gender identity as hypermasculine or hostile masculine and their sexual aggression toward women (Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzny, 2002).

As noted earlier in this chapter, when women become more equal to men in a society, they experience higher rates of rape (Whaley, 2001). A microlevel explanation for this pattern is that some men's masculine identity is threatened by women's gains in equality, because their view of themselves as men requires that they be dominant. If they have no other way to exert their dominance, because of their own social location or personal limitations, they may use rape to reassert their positive sense of selves as men (Messerschmidt, 1986; Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997; Scully & Marolla, 1985).

Gender Identity and Victimization Based on Sexual Orientation

People who harass and attack others because they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual are "predominantly ordinary young men" (Comstock, 1991, p. 2).

Gay-bashing provides young men in particular with a very useful resource for doing gender, especially for accomplishing hegemonic masculinity. . . . Gay-bashing . . . allows perpetrators to reaffirm their own masculinity, their own aggressive heterosexuality, in opposition to this nonconformist threat. (Perry, 2001, pp. 107–108)

The motivation to assert an aggressive, heterosexual masculinity through attacks on people who are gay or lesbian is found not only in individuals, but also in groups. In order to attain and defend hegemonic masculinity, some individuals carry out hate crimes and form far-right groups that insist on a limited conceptualization of masculinity (Bufkin, 1996). The ideology and the actions of groups that engage in hate crimes are enabling resources that people draw on in an effort to assert and confirm hegemonic masculinity, which they feel that subordinated groups challenge through their lifestyles. Psychological measures of hypermasculinity are predictive of U.S. college students' antigay behavior (Whitley, 2001). One man in a nonstudent sample explained why a group that engaged in gay-bashing selected the blue baseball bat as a symbol:

We chose the blue baseball bat because it's the color of the boy. The man is one gender. He is not female. There is no confusion. Blue is the color of men, and that's the color that men use to defeat the anti-male, which is the queer. (M. Collins, 1992, p. 193)

In a similar pattern, in the workplace, men sexually harass other men who do not fit the harassers' gender-role stereotype of heterosexual hypermasculinity (Stockdale, Visio, & Batra, 1999). Also, in a sample of college students, those who valued hypermasculinity were most likely to report their own physical violence or

name-calling directed at people who they thought were gay or lesbian (Franklin, 1997). Perpetrators of sexual orientation–motivated bias crimes feel that people who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual are threatening and challenging to hegemonic masculinity, and that victimization can maintain the balance of power that favors their own ideas about what it is to be a man.

Immigration Through Marriage: The Confluence of Structural Inequality, Culture, and Beliefs About Gender

Women's global economic disadvantages and the limited opportunities that women have for attaining a good quality of life in many countries influence them and their families to actively seek opportunities for their marriage to a person in another country (Banerjee, 1996). Men in countries that include the United States, Canada, and the Western European nations sponsor new wives as immigrants for many reasons. Some men who have immigrated want to marry a person with an ethnic and cultural background similar to their own. Some, including those who are and who are not themselves immigrants, seek out marriageable women from other countries because they hope that the women will fit stereotypes involving subservience and passivity, or that they will fulfill traditional roles as mother and wife more adequately than other available partners (Kojima, 2001). Numerous internet advertisements promise compliant women, for example this one:

Asian Dating and Romance! Asian women and Thai ladies make the best wives, girlfriends, brides or mates. They are beautiful, exotic and wonderful thanks to their Asian culture. Thai women are especially great for a wife, girlfriend, bride or mate. They are beautiful and sexy while retaining a degree of modesty. Asian women and Thai ladies have skin as smooth and soft as silk, silky soft black hair, exotic Asian eyes, and personalities that are soft and sweet. They are respectful and supportive of their mates. (www.asiansweetheart.net/Ladies/2201001_Nong/nong.htm, retrieved November 15, 2004)

Finally, men seek wives from other countries because they feel that, because of their own deficits in appearance or other attributes, they cannot successfully compete for desirable marriage partners.

Women who immigrate through marriage to a man whom they do not know or barely know are called **mail-order brides**. Mail-order brides are distinct from women whose marriages are arranged, a common practice in many countries. Traditional arranged marriages involve family members or trusted matchmakers who introduce potential marriage partners and their families to each other. Traditional practices of arranged marriage can protect women from abuse by providing family involvement and oversight of the relationship. However, sometimes the distinction between mail-order brides and arranged marriages is blurred, for instance when a matchmaker or acquaintance arranges a union between people with little

knowledge of them or their families. Many women arrive as new brides in countries such as the United States, either as mail-order brides or in some cases through more traditional arranged marriages, with no friends or family, limited language ability, and no resources of their own. They usually are sponsored with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service by their new mates, and therefore feel dependent on them for the opportunity to remain in their new country.

Women's economic (and often educational) disadvantage and men's expectations that women will live up to stereotypes about traditional wives, be passive and subservient because they are from a particular cultures, or will willingly engage in particular sexual activities can place women at great risk for abuse. A case analysis of South Asian immigrant women revealed that men were able to control abused women in large part because immigration law gave them the power to determine whether a wife whom a husband sponsored could remain in the United States, and therefore whether she would be separated from her children (Dasgupta, 1998).³⁷ Men even purposely failed to file the appropriate paperwork with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, leaving their wives "undocumented" and therefore at great risk for deportation if the abusive husband revealed her status to authorities. In many countries, marriage defines one's social status and worth as a person, divorce is unacceptable, the highest value is placed on keeping a family intact, there is emphasis on women's tolerance of and compassion toward the husband (even if he is abusive), and there is an acceptance that an unhappy marriage is a deserved fate. Cultural ideologies from countries of origin result in women feeling pressures to marry and, if the man turns out to be abusive, to stay in the relationship.

Victimized Offenders

Substantial numbers of women and men are simultaneously victims and perpetrators of crime. Although all children and youth do not respond in the same way, the experience and witnessing of violence teaches some that attacking and hurting other people is a reasonable route to self-protection or to get one's way. Alternative influences can counteract and mitigate the connection, but for some people victimization leads to their own future violence (Widom, 1996).

The popular image that people who do violence are irrational monsters (Madriz, 1997) may extend to violent offenders, suggesting no hope for change in the offender and justifying a primarily punitive response. But a person's dual status as victim and offender raises difficult questions about justice. Some teenagers "partly as a result of their abuse, may well present themselves as uncooperative and unattractive, and as perpetrators as well as victims, reflecting and perpetuating the social and emotional handicaps that come with abuse, and hence deflecting and derailing the very help they need" (Simpson, 2001, p. 67). If parents and social and educational institutions fail to provide models for alternatives to violence, and if they do not protect youth from victimization or even are the victimizer, is it just to ignore an aggressor's own victimization in the rush toward punishment?

There are numerous examples in many countries of the ways in which people are at the same time victims and offenders. Ninety-two percent of the girls who were interviewed for a 1998 survey of youth in the California juvenile justice system reported a prior history of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, often on multiple occasions (Acoca, 1998, p. 565). A 1995 study of women in California, Florida, and Connecticut state prisons also revealed that 92% of the women had histories of abuse (Acoca & Austin, 1996). The dual status of victim and offender is repeated throughout the world.

There is a strong connection between childhood abuse and prostitution. Across different nations, a high proportion of women and girls involved in prostitution have been victimized as children (Farley, Baral, et al., 1998, p. 408). In the United States, boys and men involved in prostitution have backgrounds that are not dissimilar to those of females who sell sex for money or trade it for drugs. Many left home before age 16 and had been physically or sexually abused, the majority lacked a high school education, and many used multiple drugs (Morse, Simon, & Burchfiel, 1999, p. 87). In Nigeria, half of 150 Nigerian teenaged prostitutes had been sexually abused as children (Adedoyin & Adegoke, 1995). In the United States, girls and women involved in prostitution also reported high rates of various types of prior abuse during childhood. In one study, 90% of women in prostitution said they had been battered as children, 74% reported sexual abuse by family members, and 50% reported sexual abuse by nonfamily (Giobbe, 1991; Giobbe, Harrigan, Ryan, & Gamache, 1990).

In the United States, economic, community, and family characteristics both explain the childhood abuses and running away that put girls at risk for involvement in prostitution and leave them with few opportunities to escape the violence in other ways. Professionals who have worked with abused girls and women in clinical settings have described them as severely traumatized and having self-destructive thoughts and behaviors, contempt for themselves, feelings of shame and worthlessness, substance abuse and eating disorders, and sexual aversions and compulsions (Herman, 1992). People who suffer in these ways can have lifestyles and coping strategies that place them at risk for further sexual and physical trauma (Browne & Finkelhor, 1976; Terr, 1991).

In addition to prior sexual abuse, many people who engage in prostitution are victims of exploitation by illegal business operations and customers of these businesses. Preferences for sex with young girls and boys or with members of racial or other groups stereotyped as "exotic," "sexually desirable," or "passive" create the markets that entice some people to engage in prostitution and give organized criminal groups and individuals incentive to pressure or force them to do so. Conditions hospitable to **sex tourism**, which is travel for the purpose of purchasing sex, include pronounced economic disparities between countries, extreme poverty within countries, and demand by both indigenous and visiting people, most often men, who have means to pay for sex. In Sri Lanka, in a common pattern of trafficking in children and women, local pimps trick or force primarily boys, but also some girls from rural areas, to go to tourist destinations, and the traffickers keep them in rented houses that are frequented by European pedophiles (Ratnapala, 1999, p. 216).

In the Dominican Republic, which is extremely poor, both girls and boys engage in prostitution beginning at ages 11 or 12, and in the 1980s, more than half of their clients were tourists (Moya & Garcia, 1999). Fears about HIV have resulted in less tourist demand and increased violence as children took more risks to earn money from fewer clients. In India and Bangladesh, where there are large numbers of boys who trade sex for money, sex work is a survival strategy for people who are homeless, hungry, poor, and powerless (Kahn, 1999, p. 195). They sell their bodies in exchange for money, food, shelter, or clothing. Whether the providers of sex are adult women, girls, or boys, they are disadvantaged by either age, poverty, or gender. Ironically, many customers consider them sexually desirable because of the demographic characteristics that place them at a disadvantage.

Prostitutes in countries with very different cultures and contexts (South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, the United States, Zambia) report extremely high rates of brutal victimization in their histories and while they work as prostitutes (Farley, Baral, et al., 1998). In a sample of 475 people from these five countries, predominantly girls and women but including males, since entering prostitution, 73% had been physically assaulted, 62% reported having been raped, and at the time of the interview, 67% met criteria for a diagnosis of **posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**. (PTSD is a constellation of difficulties: rethinking the experience of the trauma, avoiding stimuli that are similar to the trauma and a general numbing of responsiveness, and anxiety.) Similar victimization of prostitutes has been documented in areas as different as Norway (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992), Glasgow in the United Kingdom (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996), and Canada (Baldwin, 1992). In San Jose, Costa Rica, boys who submit to homosexual relationships are treated violently and cruelly (Schifter & Aggleton, 1999). One 34-year-old woman who had been involved in prostitution in Toronto for 10 years described the level of day-to-day violence:

There have been fights with knives over crack, over 20 pieces in a crack house. I was almost raped because I did not want to give this guy a blowjob after he gave me a toke . . . I had my jaw broken (by my boyfriend) when I was partying with this girl. [Why?] Because I smoked without him. (Erickson, Butters, McGillicuddy, & Hallgren, 2000, p. 777).

Some of the violence is mutual, fueled by drugs, self-defense, and women's own aggressive inclinations (Erickson et al., 2000). More often, women are the sole victims in the incident. One crack-addicted woman who was involved in prostitution explained why prostitutes are often beaten up:

[C]ause we open our mouths and we say stupid shit and they don't take, dope men don't take no disrespect from nobody. . . . And you say something they don't like, they'll smack you in the mouth in a heartbeat. Because they, they feel like they can get away with it. You know because we're gonna come back on them and we're gonna forgive 'em. Because after they hit us, they're like, "oh baby I'm sorry" and everything like that, you know "I just had a bad day." And you know, and they give you dope because they know it's gonna get you more

hooked, you know to come back and you're gonna spend more money with them and they're gonna keep abusin' you, and they know they can get away with it. (J. Miller, 1995, pp. 443–444)

Pimps or other people who attempt to control and profit from prostitution victimize those who exchange sex for money; and people involved in prostitution are vulnerable to the abuses of men who seek to purchase access to their bodies.

Often, it is an oversimplification to label a person as a victim or an offender. The misleading quality of one or the other label is exemplified by women trafficked into the United States and other countries. Interviews revealed some common scenarios:

Organized businesses and crime networks, such as escort services, bars, brothels, clubs, “biker gangs” and the mafia, were instrumental in recruiting the international (60%) and U.S. women (40%). U.S. servicemen have also been involved in recruiting Asian women, especially from Korea, Vietnam and Japan into the sex industry in the United States. Often the servicemen marry prostituted women around military bases abroad, bring them to the United States and pressure them into prostitution. A large number of foreign military wives become victims of domestic violence, displaced or homeless, and end up in prostitution around U.S. military bases. (Raymond & Hughes, 2001, p. 9).

Domestic violence in some situations has resulted in foreign women's leaving their husbands and continuing or beginning prostitution to support themselves. Women are also threatened and battered by pimps, some of whom are husbands, if they do not engage in prostitution (Raymond & Hughes, 2001, p. 10).

Not only do victims of gender-related offenses become involved in the justice system as offenders, but offenders also are at risk for gender-related victimization while they are incarcerated. For juveniles, there is evidence that girls in California institutions view it as routine to be strip-searched and to have their private parts visually examined in an open space with male staff casually observing (Acoca, 1998, p. 579). The tremendous increases over the last two decades in the number of women and men who are in U.S. jails and prisons means that more people experience the vulnerabilities that come with being institutionalized, often in places that are overcrowded and not adequately staffed. Drug addiction and the very limited resources of many incarcerated people create an environment where sex in return for drugs or other favors is not uncommon. The power imbalance between prisoners and correctional staff increases the potential for staff to sexually exploit offenders (Morash & Schram, 2002). Twenty-one percent of incarcerated men in seven Midwestern prison facilities reported on an anonymous survey that they had experienced at least one episode of pressured or forced sex while in prison (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000). Depending on the facility, in the same Midwestern region, between 7% and 27% of incarcerated women reported sexual abuse or rape while they were incarcerated. Although there are exceptions, the typical pattern is for women offenders to be victimized by male correctional staff, whereas other inmates more often victimize male prisoners.

The placement of people into categories of victim *or* offender is misleading. It obscures the possibility that the structural and cultural supports for victimization also can result in the victim's illegal behavior. It also denies that victimization can have effects on people that result in illegal behavior. In practice, many correctional programs do address the harm done to offenders through prior or current victimization. Some, however, do not—or, more damaging, some correctional facilities are the settings for continued victimization of offenders.

Effects of Gender- and Sexual Orientation–Related Victimization

Gender-related and sexual orientation–related victimization can be particularly traumatic because potential victims are at risk by virtue of gender, which for women and girls is readily apparent, and because it can be motivated by misogyny, dislike of gay and lesbian individuals, and other forms of hate directed at the very identity of a person. For women and girls, because victimization is so often within the family or circle of acquaintances, there is the additional disquietude introduced by violation of trust and the potential for continued contact with the victimizer.

Research has demonstrated severe and complex effects of gender-related victimization. In addition to physical injury and in some cases disability, battering can result in depression, anxiety, and PTSD. A report sponsored by the World Bank concluded that throughout the world, wife abuse is a serious threat to health and quality of life, results in injury or death, and has negative spillover effects on children, the workplace, and the broader community:

The most endemic form of violence against women is wife abuse . . . 35 studies from a wide variety of countries . . . show that in many countries one-quarter to more than half of women report having been physically abused by a present or former partner. An even larger percentage have been subjected to ongoing emotional and psychological abuse, a form of violence that many battered women consider worse than physical abuse. (Heise, Pitanguy, & Germain, 1994, p. 5)

Domestic violence has particularly pronounced effects on disability and death among women of reproductive age in both the industrial and developing world (Heise et al., 1994, p. 17). For the individual women, the result can be both injury and permanent disability and disfigurement, as well as psychological effects that include “fear, anxiety, fatigue, and post-traumatic stress disorder” (Heise et al., 1994, p. 18).

Some victims of incest and other forms of child sexual abuse, wife battering, and stalking are traumatized over a lengthy period. Compared to women who are infrequently stalked, those who are relentlessly stalked over a period of time not only are at greater risk for physical, sexual, and emotional abuse but also suffered more depression and PTSD (Mechanic, Uhlmansiek, Weaver, & Resick, 2000). Repeated

victimization can produce long-term changes in how survivors regulate their emotions, self-perceptions, and relationships with other people, and the meanings they attach to actions and events (Herman, 1992). One woman who was traumatized during her involvement in prostitution described her feelings:

It's a process. The first year was like a big party, but eventually progressed downward to the emptiest void of hopelessness. I ended up desensitized, completely deadened, not able to have good feelings because I was on "void" all the time. (Farley et al., 1998, p. 409)

The term **complex posttraumatic syndrome** refers to these sorts of long-term changes.

Compared to other crime victims, gay and lesbian survivors of hate crimes are more depressed, angry, anxious, and stressed; they also have more crime-related fears and more often describe personal setbacks that resulted from attacks (Herek, Gillis, & Cogan, 1999). Victimized gay and lesbian youths from both rural and urban areas reported high rates of suicide attempts (Waldo, Hesson-McInnis, & D'Augelli, 1998). Many victims of sexual orientation-motivated hate crimes are afraid to report their victimization, and some turn their feelings inward and feel shame or guilt about their identities (D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001; Waldo et al., 1998).

A survey of prisoners who were sexually abused by other incarcerated people (typically incarcerated males abusing other males) or by correctional staff (typically male staff abusing incarcerated females) in Nebraska revealed that emotional harm is a likely outcome (Struckman-Johnson, Struckman-Johnson, Rucker, Bumby, & Donaldson, 1996, pp. 67–68). This harm includes rape trauma syndrome and a resulting loss of self-esteem and decreased ability to trust others. At the very least, correctional settings where there is sexual abuse would reinforce the negative results of prior experiences with being exploited and would undermine programming designed to empower people who are incarcerated to take control of their lives.

The economic effects of gender-related victimization could be profound. Many people who are battered in intimate relationships, stalked, raped, and exploited by people who benefit financially from their prostitution are economically marginalized by their victimization. If they are physically or psychologically traumatized, they may be unable to work in legitimate settings. Aging prostitutes who work in groups controlled by "the man" are marginalized even within their world "of last resort":

Traded as chattel, often stripped entirely of property in the process of exchanging "men," and finally disowned when competition from other more naïve, more attractive, and more obedient women becomes too strong, street women find themselves doubly jeopardized by capitalistic-patriarchal structures that are pervasive in "straight" society and profound upon the street. (Romenesco & Miller, 1989, p. 109)

Whether or not individuals simultaneously hold the statuses of victim and offender, the economic impact of gender-related victimization can result in

immediate loss of financial resources and long-term declines in quality of life if it is necessary to live in less desirable neighborhoods.

Despite the strong and sometimes long-lasting effects of gender-related victimization, many individuals who are affected and their advocates prefer to talk about themselves as *survivors*. The term *survivors* denotes that even if there are long-term effects, people who have lived through their victimization are capable of independence and self-direction. They are not so overcome by their experiences that they cannot or should not exercise agency in the various facets of their lives.

Conclusion

For women and girls, the experience of violent victimization often involves attack by an intimate partner, relative, or acquaintance, and it is likely to occur in or around the home. The reality of victimization in one's home and the widespread (though misleading) fear of victimization by a stereotypical black or Latino male stranger make everyday violence a part of many females' day-to-day lives. An international perspective reveals that the victimization of females extends beyond personal attack to trafficking in women and children, abortion of female fetuses, abandonment of girl infants, and female genital mutilation. In some cases, women who have been victimized through trafficking are labeled as offenders, and women and girls who have committed crimes have past and current experience with gender-related victimization (DeKeseredy, Alvi, Schwartz, & Perry, 1999; Jargowsky, 1997; Krivo, Peterson, Rizzo, & Reynolds, 1998; Wilson, 1996). All of these practices signify that females have low value, and that they are subject to male domination, control, and violence.

One advance that has been made in understanding gender-related victimization is the documentation of how gender inequality and the concentration of poverty on women, particularly women who are black, Hispanic, and/or Native American, has exposed them to victimization. This is a major step away from early theory, which focused on the psychology of the victim, sometimes the psychology of the offender, and the family system as the source of violence against girls and women. Worldwide, women's poverty places them at risk for being lured or forced or enticed into situations where they are trafficked within and outside their countries for sexual exploitation. In regions or countries where women are most disadvantaged because of their gender, they are most at risk for sexual assault and for domestic violence. They also turn to prostitution as a way to make money, and thus are exposed to victimization by pimps or customers. When gender inequality decreases, women may experience a backlash of violence by males who resist the change. However, over time, decreased gender inequality typically translates into decreased violence against women.

Although women's and girls' disadvantage places them at risk, it is important to recognize that violence against women is not directed only at those who are poor, but that there are beliefs and norms that can be found in many social classes or groups to support men's violence. Some male peer groups, families, and media messages convey that men's dominance over women is acceptable and preferable to more

equitable arrangements. In some cases, men who are economically marginalized use violence against women because they see no alternative ways to assert power, which they feel is essential to express their masculinity. However, men who are well-to-do also may choose to assert their dominance over women through violence.

A result of globalization is that images and beliefs that support gender-related victimization are readily available to people in widely diversified settings. Another aspect of globalization is the movement of large groups of people from their countries of origin. While international mobility opens up opportunities for many individuals and provides human resources to support legitimate economies, it also results in trafficking, a criminal activity that primarily affects women and children. Also, women who immigrate to the United States or to other countries through marriage sometimes find themselves with very limited resources and are subject to wife abuse or turn to prostitution to escape abusive relationships. Husbands may use abuse to enforce traditional gender role expectations that their wives no longer agree with due to influences in the new country. Globalization has several negative results connected to gender and crime.

This chapter has emphasized the structural and cultural explanations, and compatible intermediate- and individual-level explanations that focus on beliefs about masculinity, because those theories are empirically supported and they explain the quite-well-documented concentrations of particular forms of victimization among girls and women, and gay and lesbian people. Gender arrangements, gender inequality, changes in gender inequality, and culture and its adaptations explain persistent patterns of violence. Complementary theory along with supporting evidence shows how certain individuals accomplish their gender-identity through violence against girls, women, and people who are gay or lesbian.

Key Terms

Accomplishing gender	Hypermasculinity
Backlash hypothesis	Mail-order brides
Complex posttraumatic syndrome	Masculinities
Culture	Missing girls
Emphasized femininity	Oppositional masculinity
Everyday violence	Posttraumatic stress disorder
Female genital mutilation	Rape culture
Femininities	Routine oppression
Gender identity	Sex tourism
Gender-related victimization	Sexual orientation victimization
Hegemonic masculinity	Subordinate masculinity
Hostile masculinity	Trafficking

Review and Discussion

1. Examine the tables presented at the beginning of this chapter (Tables 3.1–3.3) and list gender and race differences in victimization. What theoretical explanations explain these patterns? Which patterns are not well explained?
2. What is the connection of women's poverty, both in the United States and in other countries, to their vulnerability to particular forms of victimization?
3. Given that culture changes and is adapted, how can it be used as a concept that explains gender-related victimization?
4. Compare and contrast macro and micro levels of explanation for gender-related victimization. Are they consistent with each other?
5. How are different levels of influence on gender-related victimization connected to each other? Specifically, how is culture related to economic opportunity? How is gender identity related to economic opportunity?

Web Sites to Explore

The U.S. federal government supports the Office on Violence Against Women in the U.S. Department of Justice. Its Web site includes information on current activities, interventions to stop violence against women, and research results and promising practices related to domestic violence, stalking, batterer intervention, child custody and protection, sexual assault, and welfare reform. www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/

In December, 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and it invited governments, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to organize activities designated to raise public awareness of the problem on that day. Women's activists have marked November 25 as a day against violence since 1981. This Web site describes activities to address violence against women around the world. www.un.org/depts/dhl/violence/