

Intimate Partner Homicide: Types of Cases & Risk Factors



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Multi City Intimate Partner Femicide Study

Funded by: NIDA/NIAA, NIMH, CDC, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA1156



TYPES of DV HOMICIDE – often not accurately counted (exception – Websdale '99)

- Multiple homicides - Children killed at scene – usually with homicide-suicides – mother sometimes not killed – either lives through an attempt or somehow escapes but she is the primary target
- Other victims – woman's parents, other family, friends – “in the way”
- Male partner kills ex-intimate's new partner
- Male partner kills police officers as part of a DV incident

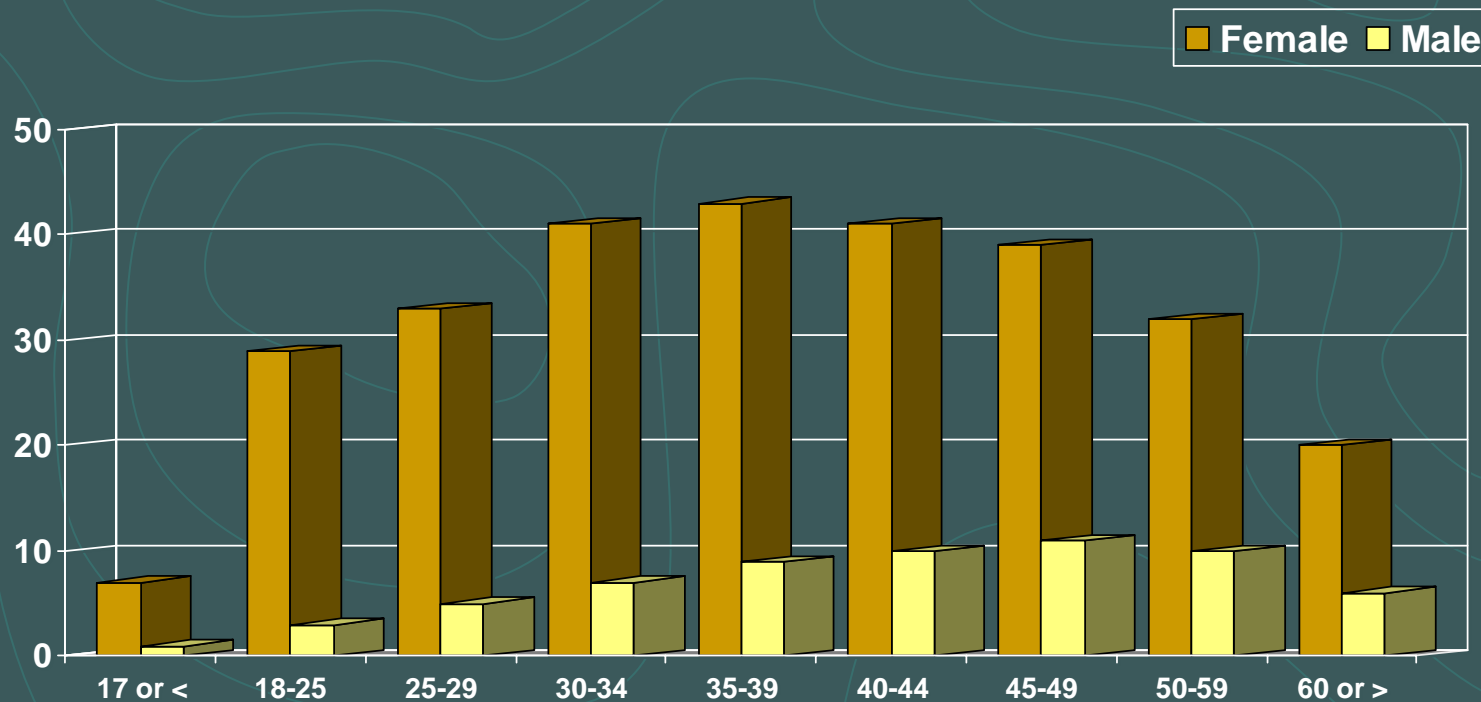
DV Related Homicides

- Female suicide subsequent to DV – known that DV increases risk of female suicide – unknown how many female suicides after DV
- Female homelessness, drug abuse deaths – after DV – known that DV increases risk for homelessness & drug abuse – known that these deaths occur – but number of deaths attributable unknown

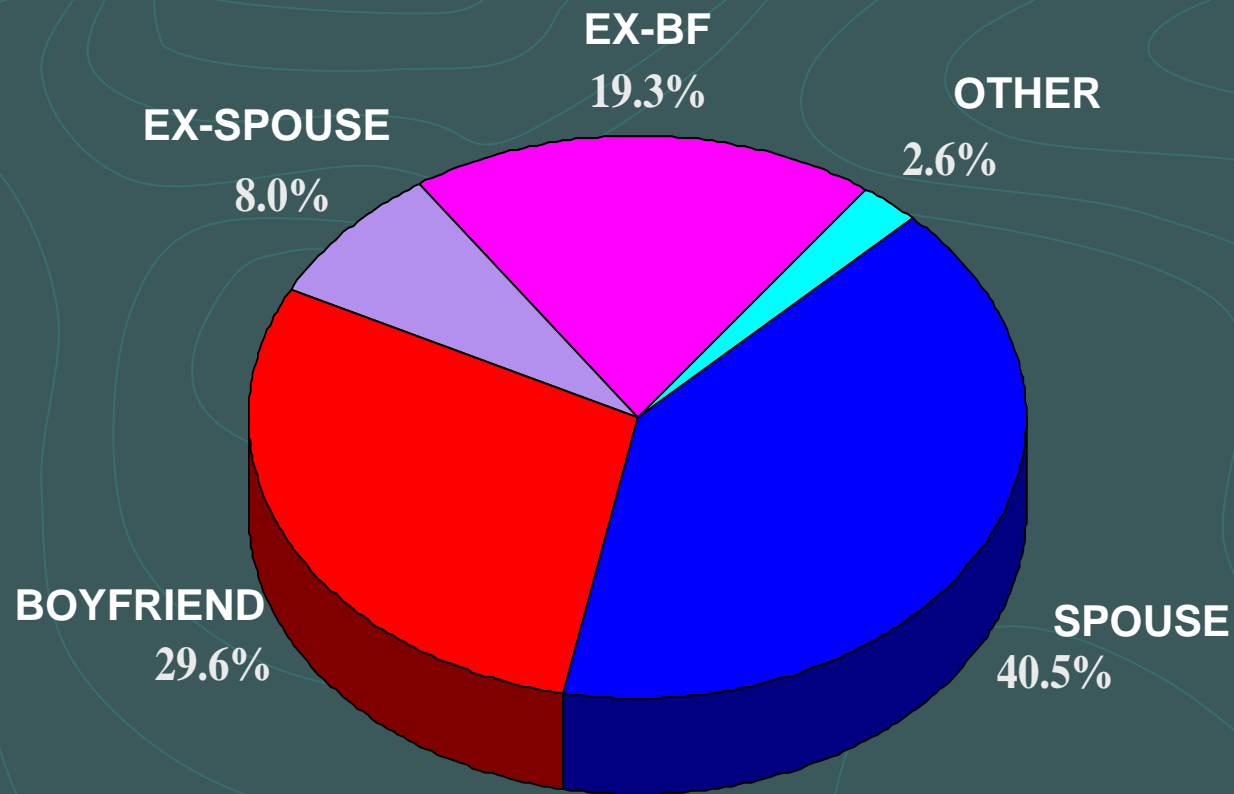
PRIOR DV - #1 RISK FACTOR FOR INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE

- 40 - 50% OF US WOMEN KILLED BY HUSBAND, BF OR EX (vs. 5-8% of men)
- 40-50% of US femicides by an intimate partner or ex. (30% according to SHR but misclassifies many – Langford, '98)
- 7th leading cause of premature death for women in US
- US – At least 2/3 of women killed – battered prior – if male killed – prior wife abuse in 75% of cases (Campbell, '92; Morocco et al, '98)
- More at risk when leaving or left (Wilson & Daly, '93; Campbell et. al. '01)
- Women far more likely to be victims of homicide-suicide (29% vs. .1% in US)

PERCENT OF U.S. MURDER VICTIMS KILLED BY INTIMATES '00 (SHR)



INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE BY PERPETRATOR IN TEN CITIES (N= 311)

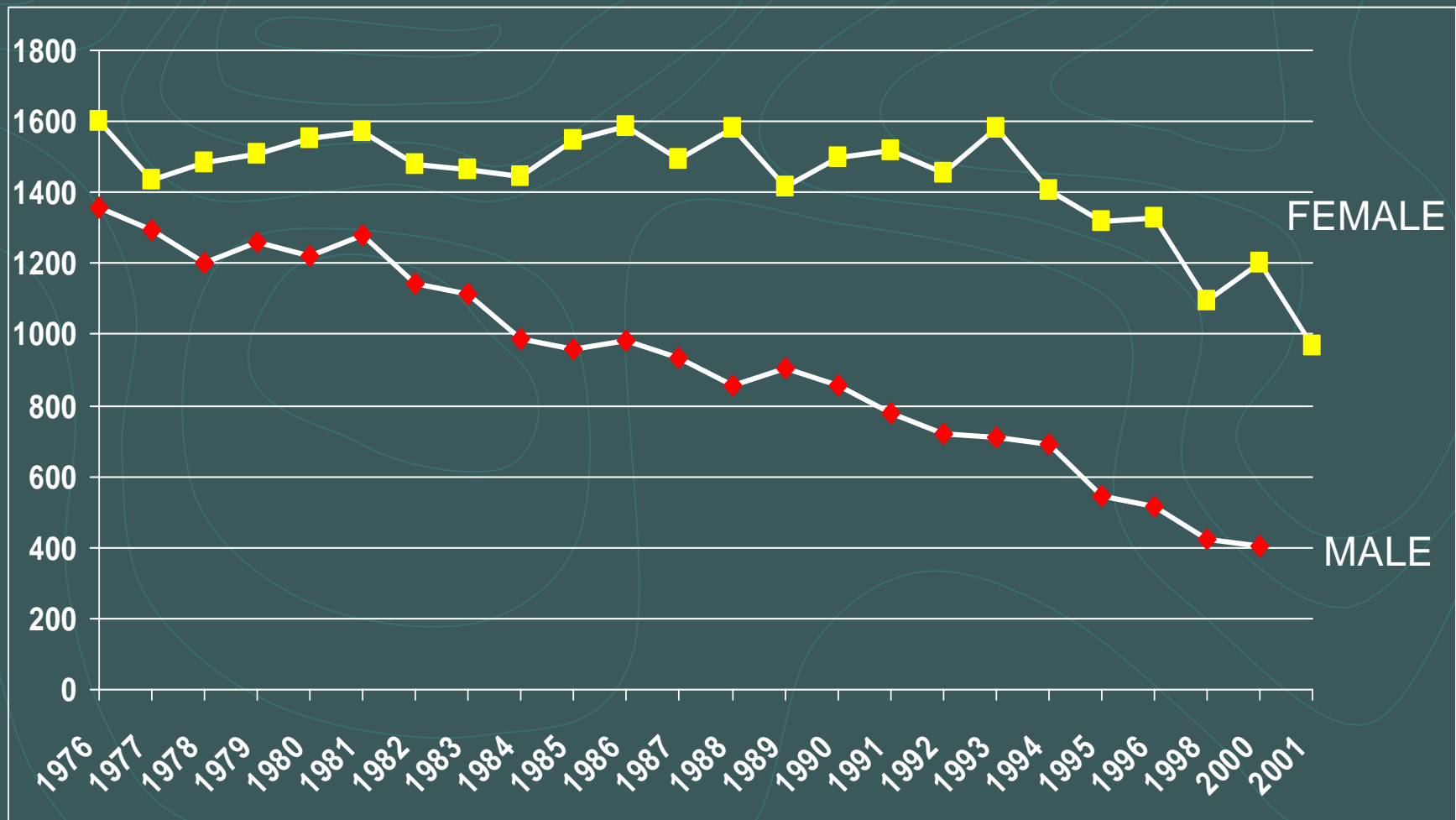


Risk Factors for IP Homicide – male victim

- Prior DV of woman – 75% of cases
- Immediate self-defense – male first to show weapon, strike blow
- Estrangement – woman trying to leave an abusive relationship

U.S. INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RATE

DECLINE 1976-2001 FBI (SHR, 1976-01)

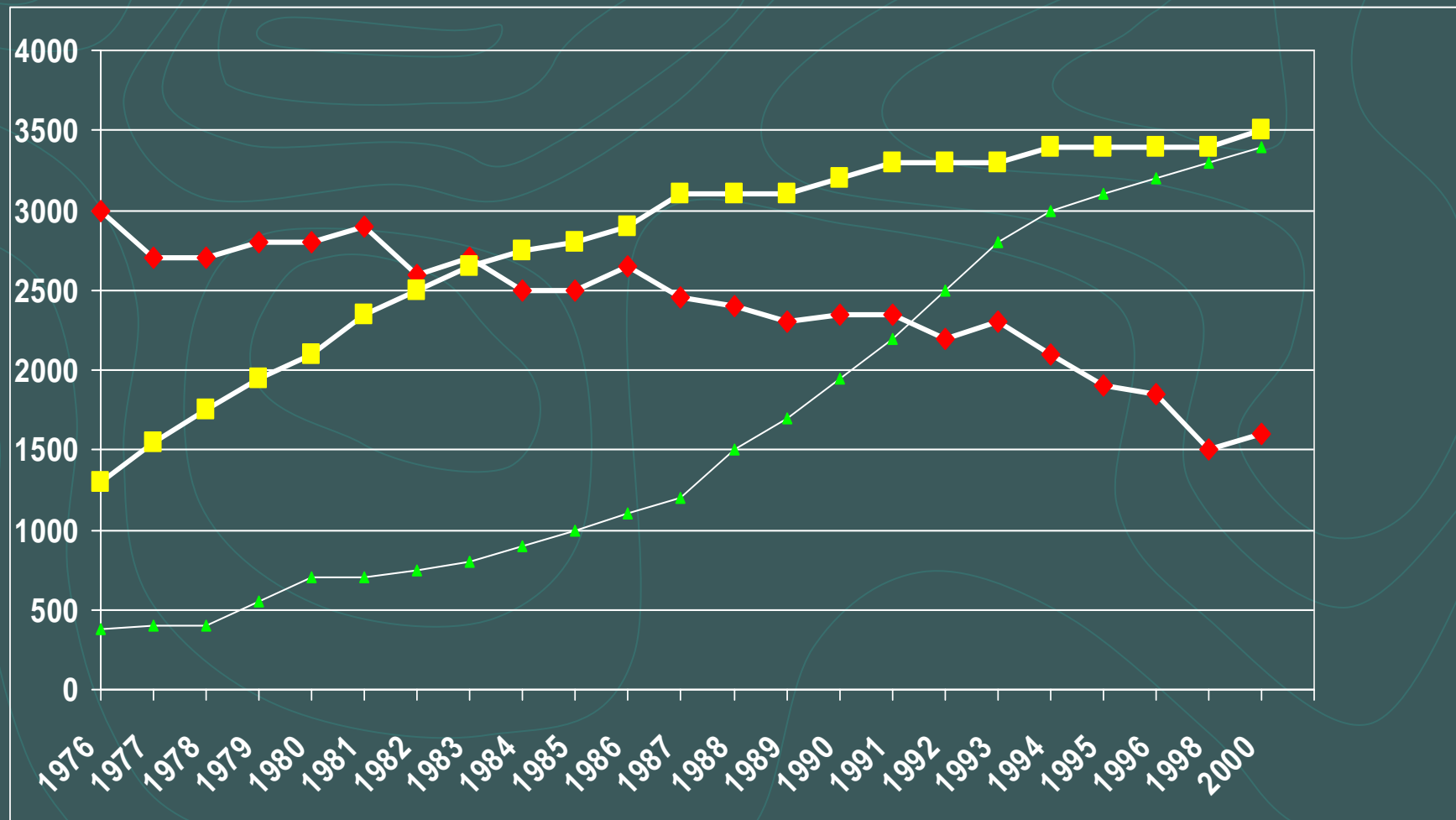


Decline in Intimate Partner Homicide and Femicide

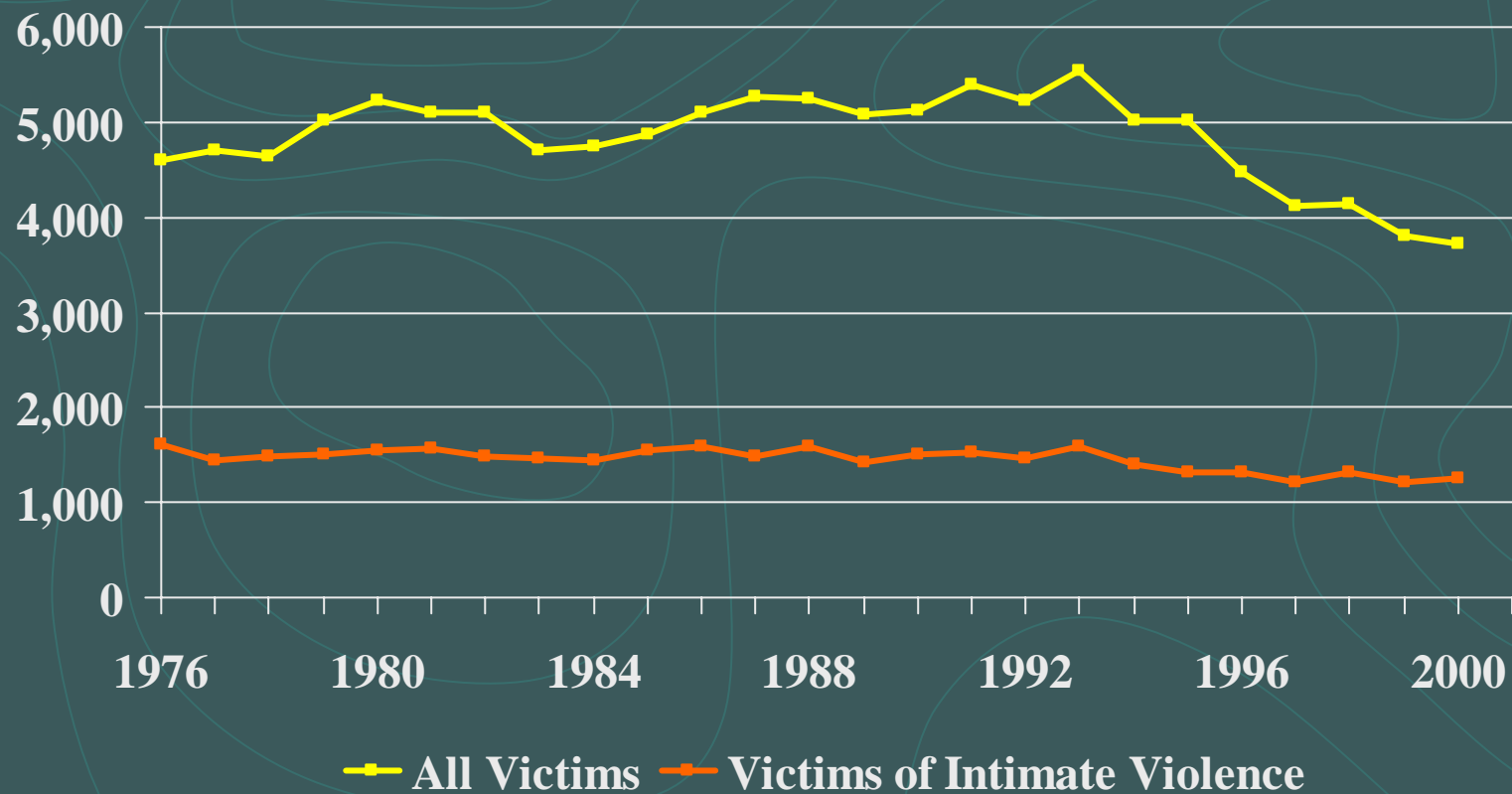
- Decline in male victimization in states where improved DV laws and services - resource availability (Browne & Williams '89; '98)
- Exposure reduction - increased female earnings, lower marriage rate, higher divorce rate (Dugan, Nagin & Rosenfeld '97)
- Gun availability decline (Wilt '97; Block '95; Kellerman '93, '97- gun increases risk X3)

U.S. INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RATES & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES 1976-9

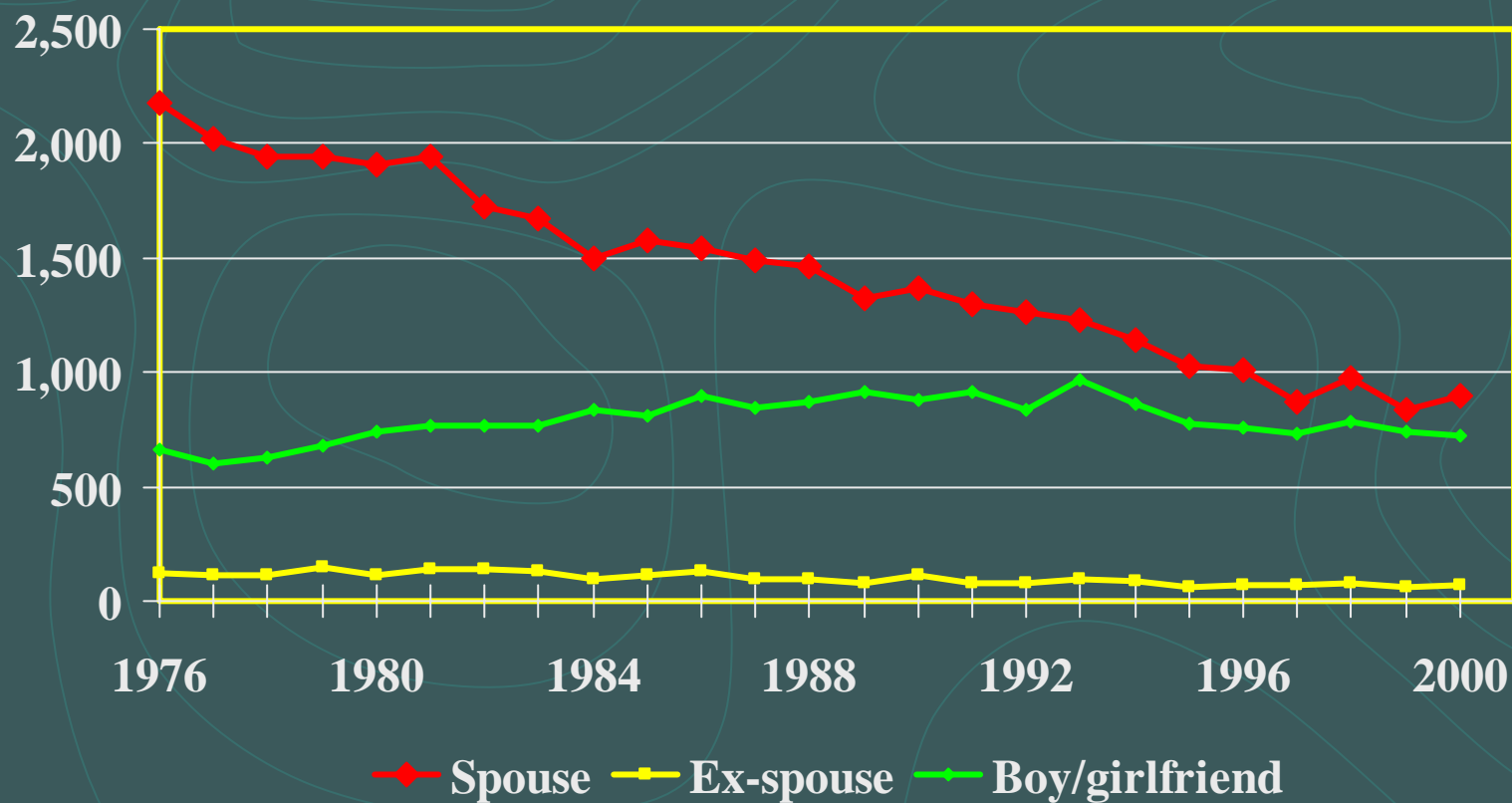
(Resources per 50 million - Dugan, Nagin & Rosenfeld '03)



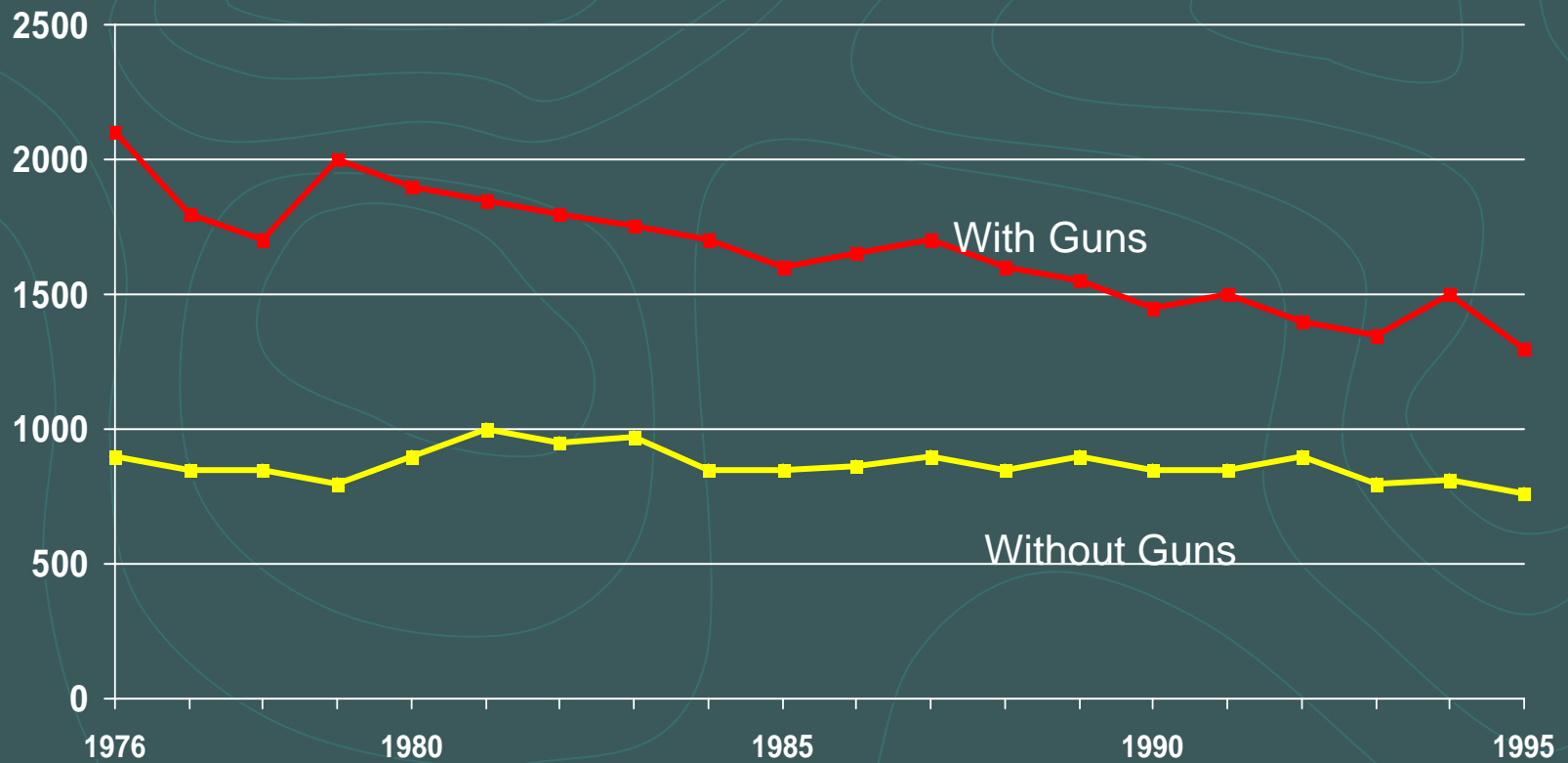
Number of Female Homicide Victims



Intimate Partner Homicides, by Offender Relationship



INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE: WEAPON USE in U. S. '76-'95 (SHR)





Femicide Risk Study

Purpose: Identify and establish risk factors for IP femicide – (over and above domestic violence)

Significance: Determine strategies to prevent IP femicide – especially amongst battered women – Approximately half of victims (54% of actual femicides; 45% of attempted) did not accurately perceive their risk – that perpetrator was capable of killing her &/or would kill her

RISK FACTORS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE: RESEARCH TEAM

(Funded by: NIDA/NIAA, NIMH, CDC, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA1156)

- R. Block, PhD (ICJA)
- D. Campbell, PhD, RN (FSU)
- J. McFarlane, DrPH, RN (TWU)
- C. Sachs MD, MPH (UCLA)
- P. Sharps, PhD, RN (GWU)
- Y. Ulrich, PhD, RN (UW)
- S. Wilt, PhD (NYC DOH)
- F. Gary, PhD, RN (UFI)
- M.A. Curry PhD, RN (OHSU)
- N. Glass, PhD, RN (OHSU)
- J. Koziol-McLain, PhD, RN (JHU)
- J. Schollenberger MPH (JHU)
- A. Kellerman, MD, MPH (Emory)
- X. Xu, MSN (JHU)
- Kathryn Chouaf, MSN (JHU)

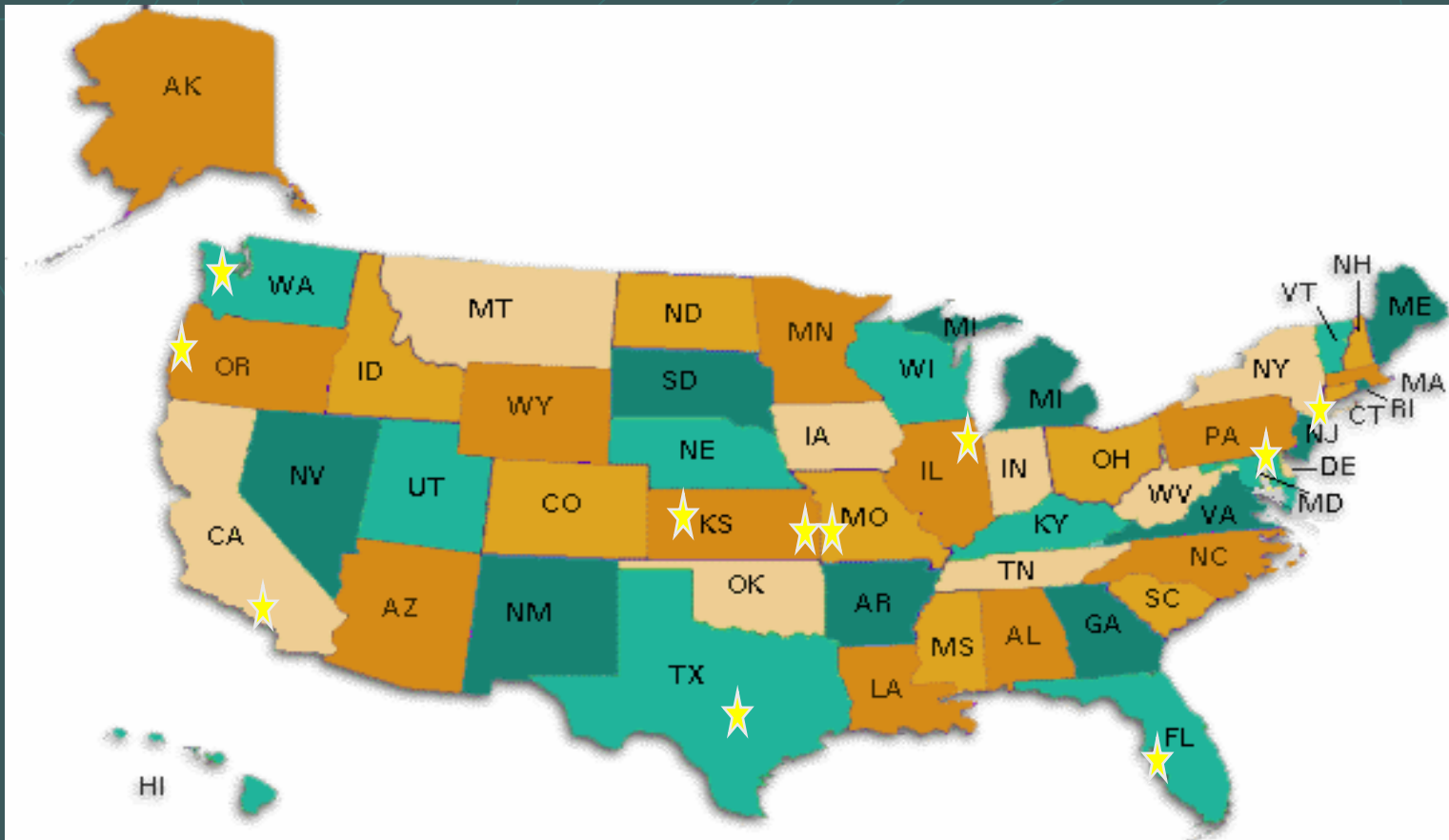
RISK FACTORS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE: CITIES AND CO-INVESTIGATORS

(Funded by: NIDA/NIAA, NIMH, CDC, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA1156)

- Baltimore
- Chicago
- Houston
- Kansas City, KA&MO
- Los Angeles
- New York
- Portland, OR
- Seattle, WA
- Tampa/St. Pete
- P. Sharps (GWU)
- B. Block (ICJA)
- J. McFarlane (TWU)
- Y. Ulrich (UW)
- C. Sachs (UCLA)
- S. Wilt (NYDOH)
- M. A. Curry (OHSU)
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Case Control Design

Data Source

■ **CASES** - women who are killed by their intimate partners

Police Homicide Files
Proxy informants

■ **CONTROLS** - women who are physically abused by their intimate partners

Women themselves

■ (second set of nonabused controls – for later analysis)

Addition of Attempted Femicides

Data Source

■ *CASES* - women who are killed by their intimate partners

Police Homicide files
Proxy informants

■ *CONTROLS* - women who are physically abused by their intimate partners

Women themselves

■ *CASES* - women who are ALMOST killed by their intimate partners

Women themselves –
to address issue of
validity of proxy
information

Definition: Attempted Femicide

- GSW or SW to the head, neck or torso.
- Strangulation or near drowning with loss of consciousness.
- Severe injuries inflicted that easily could have led to death.
- GSW or SW to other body part with unambiguous intent to kill.
- If none of above, unambiguous intent to kill.

Recruitment of Attempted Femicides

- From police assault files – difficult to impossible in many jurisdictions
- From shelters, trauma hospital data bases, DA offices – attempted to contact consecutive cases wherever located – many victims move
- Failure to locate rates high – but refusals low (less than 10%)
- Telephone interviews – subsample of 30 in depth
- Safety protocols carefully followed

In Depth Interviews (N = 30) (Nicolaidis et. al. 2003, J of General Internal Medicine)

- Interviews conducted on phone or anywhere woman wished
- Baltimore, Houston, Kansas City, Portland, Tampa, & Wichita – approximately 15% from each city
- Age 17-34 – 40% African American, 40% Anglo, 20% Hispanic; across income categories
- 10 (67%) had history of escalating physical &/or sexual assault; 5 (17%) with minor violence and controlling behavior, 2 with controlling behavior only; 2 with NO history of violence OR controlling behavior – similar to larger study

In Depth Interviews (N = 30)

- Even so, 14 women (almost half) said they had NO clue how dangerous he was – but with DA, all but 3 could have been identified
- 73% of cases – significant relationship change – majority – she was leaving him but in 4 cases he had left her but got enraged when she started seeing someone else or wouldn't take him back when he changed his mind
- About 30% – clearly at risk – she was scared & we would have been scared for her – about 55% could have been identified with skilled risk assessment – but 15% almost totally out of the blue

PRIOR PHYSICAL ABUSE & STALKING EXPERIENCED ONE YEAR PRIOR TO FEMICIDE (N=311) & ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE (N=182)

	Femicide	Attempted
■ Prior physical abuse	70%	72%
■ Increased in frequency	66%	54%
■ Increased in severity	62%	60%
■ Stalked	87%	95%
■ No prior physical abuse	30%	28%
■ Stalked	58%	72%

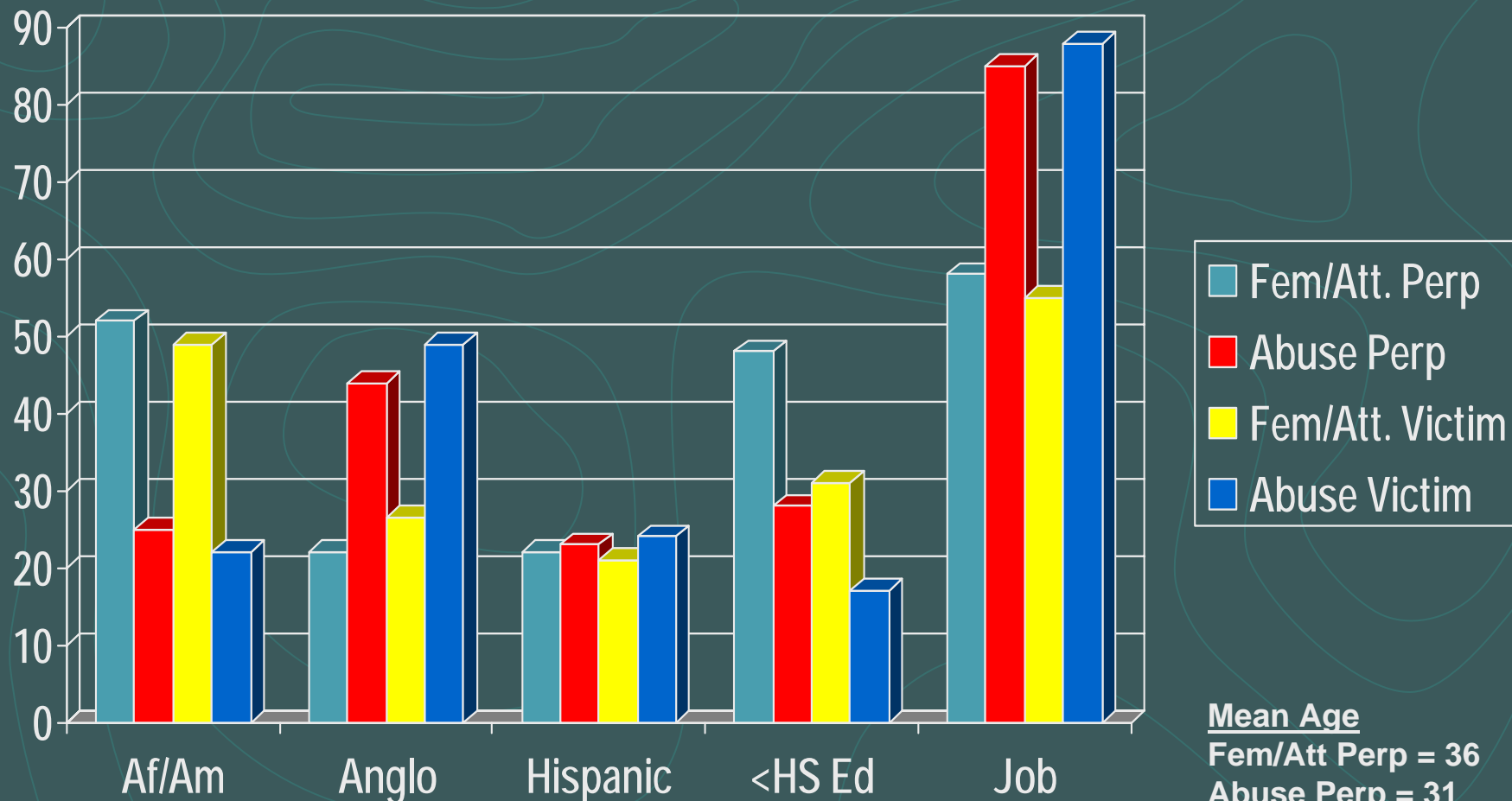
INTIMATE PARTNER ABUSED CONTROLS (N = 356)

- Random sample selected from same cities as femicide and attempted femicide cases
- Telephone survey conducted 11/98 - 9/99 using random digit dialing
- Women in household 18-50 years old & most recently celebrated a birthday
- Women abused (including sexual assault & threats) by an intimate partner w/in 2 years prior – modified CTS
- Safety protocols followed

Sample – (only those cases with prior physical abuse or threats)

	Number
■ <i>FEMICIDE CASES</i>	220
■ <i>ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE CASES</i>	143
■ <i>ABUSED CONTROLS</i>	356

Sociodemographic comparisons



Mean Age

Fem/Att Perp = 36

Abuse Perp = 31

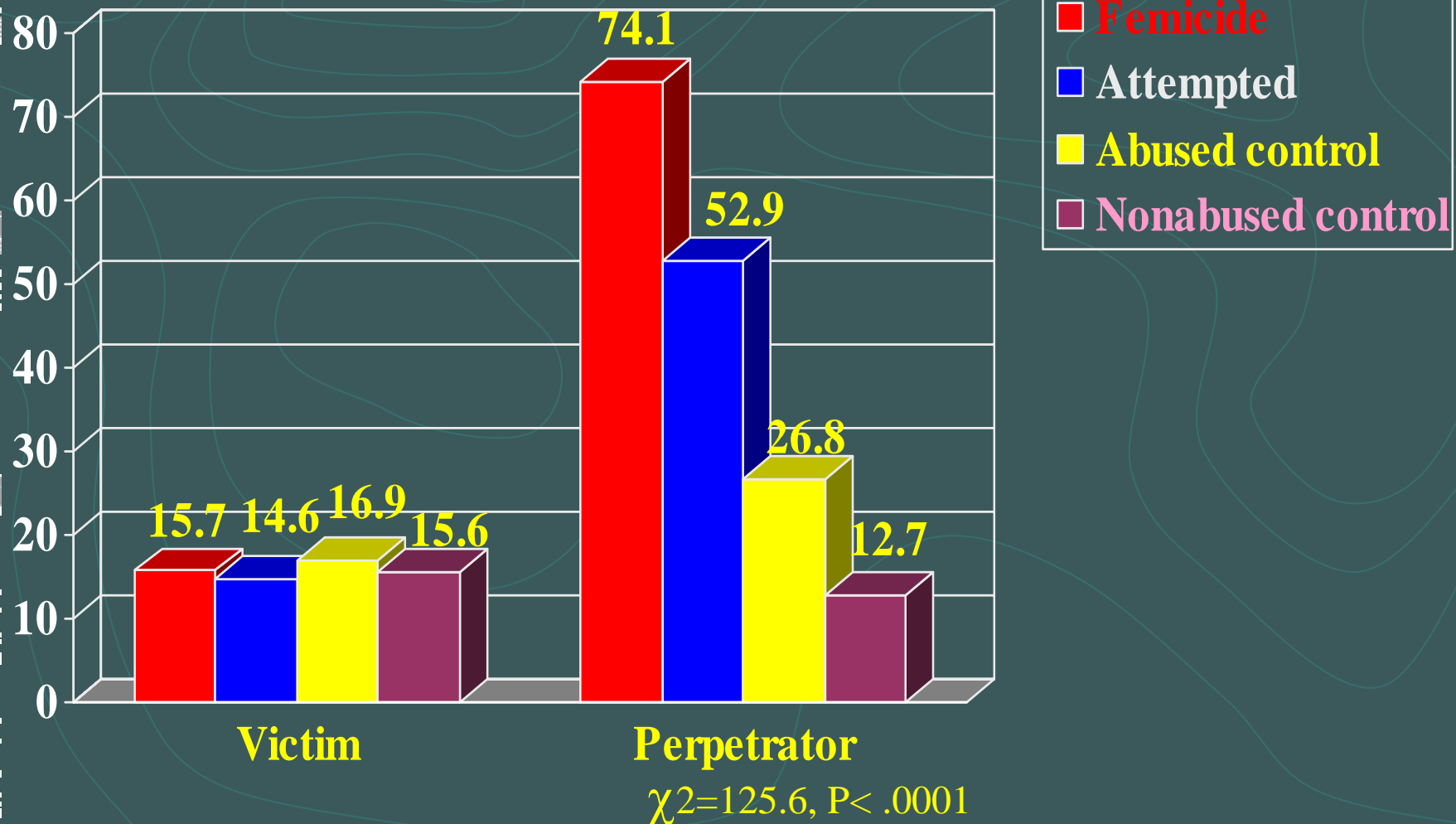
Fem/Att Victim = 34

Abuse Victim = 29

DANGER ASSESSMENT ITEMS COMPARING ACTUAL & ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE SURVIVORS (N=493) & ABUSED (WITHIN PAST 24 MONTHS) CONTROLS (N=427) (*p < .05)

	Att/Actual	Control
Physical violence increased in frequency*	56%	24%
Physical violence increased in severity *	62%	18%
Partner tried to choke victim *	50%	10%
A gun is present in the house *	64%	16%
Partner forced victim to have sex *	39%	12%
Partner used street drugs *	55%	23%
Partner threatened to kill victim *	57%	14%
Victim believes partner is capable of killing her *	54%	24%
Perpetrator AD Military History (ns.)	16%	22%
Stalking score*	4.6	2.4

VICTIM & PERPETRATOR OWNERSHIP OF WEAPON IN FEMICIDE (N = 311), ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE (N = 182), ABUSED CONTROL (N=427) & NON-ABUSED CONTROL (N=418) CASES



DANGER ASSESSMENT ITEMS COMPARING ACTUAL & ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE SURVIVORS (N=493) & ABUSED (WITHIN PAST 24 MONTHS) CONTROLS (N=427) (*p < .05)

	Att/Actual Control	
■ Partner is drunk every day *	42%	12%
■ Partner controls all victim's activities *	60%	32%
■ Partner beat victim while pregnant *	36%	7.7%
■ Partner is violently jealous of victim (says things like "If I can't have you, no one can") *	79%	32%
■ Victim threatened/trying to commit suicide	7%	9%
■ Partner threatened/trying to commit suicide *	39%	19%
■ Partner is violent toward victim's children *	9%	3%
■ Partner is violent outside house *	49%	38%
■ Partner arrested for DV* (<i>not criminality</i>)	27%	15%
■ Partner hurt a pet on purpose	10.1%	8.5%

Nonsignificant Variables of note

- Hurting a pet on purpose -10% of attempted/actual victims vs. 8.5% of controls
 - BUT – a few clear cases of using cruelty to a pet as a symbolic threat to kill
 - WAS a risk for women to be abused (compared to nonabused controls)
 - AND more risk in attempted femicide sample – perhaps proxies not as knowledgeable about pets – warrants further investigation
- Perpetrator military history – 16% actual/attempteds vs. 22% of controls

Risk Models

- Femicides with abuse history only (violence & threats) compared to abused controls (*N=181 femicides; 319 abused controls – total = 500 (18-50 yo only))
- Missing variables
 - variables had to be excluded from femicide model due to missing responses – if don't know – no – therefore underestimate risk
- Logistic Regression Plan – comparing cases & controls
 - Model variable in blocks – background characteristics – individual & couple, general violence related variables, violent relationship characteristics – then incident level
 - Interaction terms entered – theoretically derived

Significant ($p < .05$) Variables (Entered into Blocks) before Incident (overall fit = 85% correct classification)

■ Perpetrator unemployed	OR = 4.4
■ Perpetrator gun access	OR = 5.4
■ Perpetrator Stepchild	OR = 2.4
■ Couple Never Lived Together	OR = .34
■ Highly controlling perpetrator	OR = 2.1
■ Estranged X Low control (interaction)	OR = 3.6
■ Estranged X Control (interaction)	OR = 5.5
■ Threatened to kill her	OR = 3.2
■ Threatened w/weapon prior	OR = 3.8
■ Forced sex	OR = 1.9
■ Prior Arrest for DV	OR = .34

Significant ($p < .05$) Variables at Incident Level

Perpetrator unemployed	OR = 4.4
Perpetrator Stepchild	OR = 2.4
Couple Never Lived Together	OR = .31
Threatened w/weapon prior	OR = 4.1
Highly controlling perpetrator	OR = 2.4
Estranged X Low control (interaction)	OR = 3.1
Estranged X Control (interaction)	OR = 3.4
Perpetrator Used Gun	OR = 24.4
Prior Arrest for DV	OR = .31
Trigger - Victim Leaving (33%)	OR = 4.1
Trigger – Jealousy/she has new relationship	OR = 4.9

Femicide – Suicide Cases (32% of femicide cases in study – 29% US)

- Significant explanatory power for same femicide – suicide risk factors.
 - Partner access to gun
 - Threats with a weapon
 - Step child in the home
 - Estrangement
- Unique to femicide – suicide:
 - Partner suicide threats – history of poor mental health
 - Married
 - Somewhat higher education levels (unemployment still a risk factor), more likely to be white
 - May have been treated as a “mercy killing” but her family may not agree

Conclusions – Advice for DoD Fatality Reviews

- Vital to get information from family members of victims – sisters, brothers, best friends, parents – most knowledgeable about circumstances – otherwise will miss true dynamics
 - Family members want to contribute to process
 - DV vastly underreported in military – even more than civilian
- May be an active duty military female – civilian or retired military perpetrator (Campbell et. al. '02) – 21.6% prevalence of DV during service for active duty military women
- More sources of information the better

Conclusions – More Advice for DoD Fatality Reviews

- Be careful to remember that cases that close quickly are often homicide-suicides – those are not the only dynamics – keep track of other cases not closed yet
- Importance of comparisons – e.g. issue of deployment – will look common but most couples with deployment don't kill
- Importance of own biases – knowledge you bring is valuable but also can be misleading
- Getting cases – review newspapers close to major bases – use state DV Coalitions & Cities & States with Fatality Reviews

Implications for Policy & Safety Planning

- Clinical assessment (psychiatry, psychology) needs specific DV training
- Batterer intervention - she needs to stay gone until he completes & his attendance monitored
- Employment issues – especially for African American men
- Protective order for stalking - or use stalking laws
- Issues with various “risk” lists included in safety planning
- Importance of getting the gun's out – Brady Bill – in Military – Lautenberg Amendment

Implications for Policy & Safety Planning

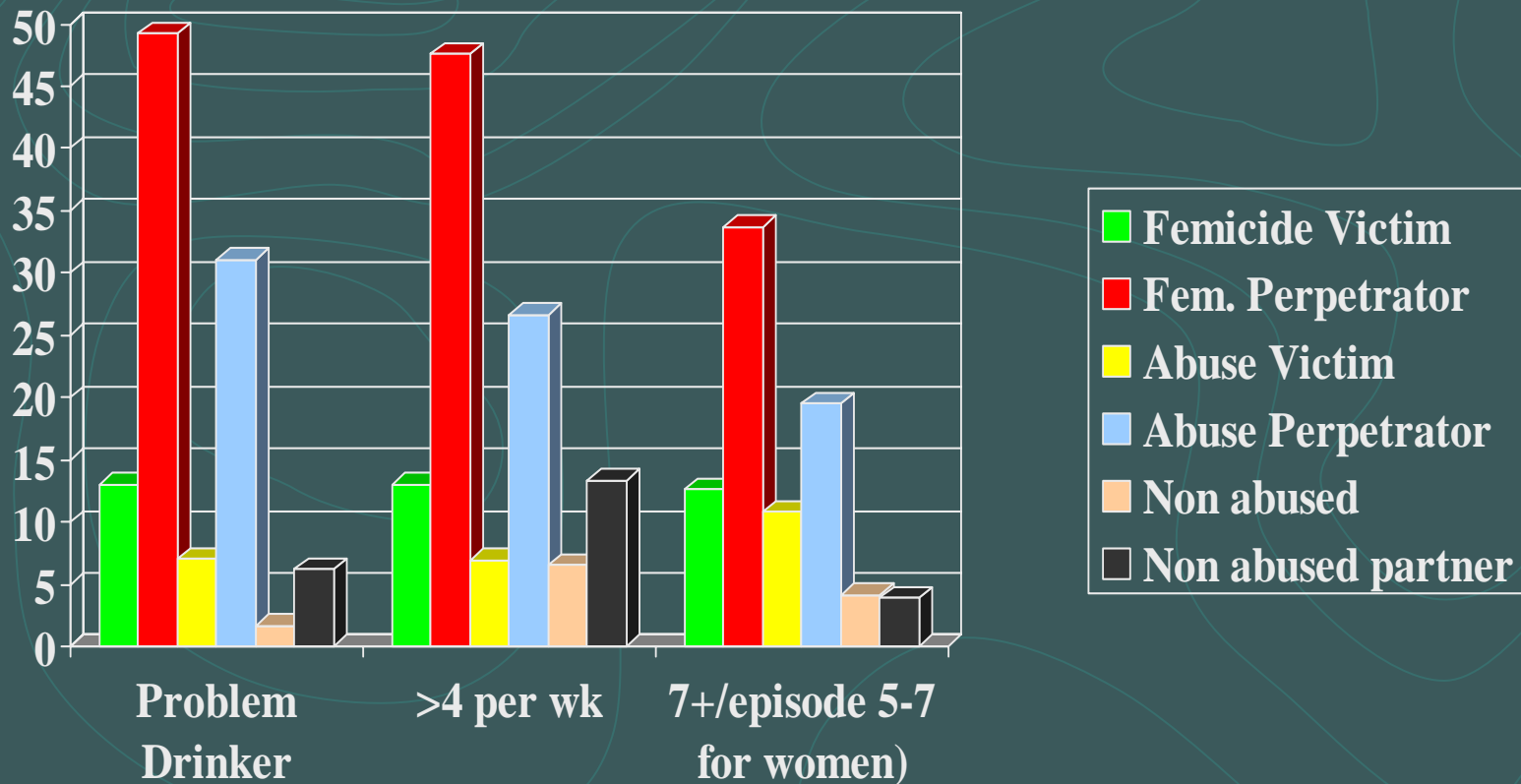
- Engage women's mothering concerns & skills (Henderson & Erikson '97 '93; Humphreys '93; Sullivan et. al.'00)
- If she says she's going to leave, cannot leave face to face
- Importance of forced sex & stepchild variables – not on most risk assessment instruments
- Make sure she knows entire range of shelter services
- Be alert for depressed/suicidal batterer
- Batterer intervention programs working with partners

"He Killed My Mommy" – kids in the homes

59% of Actual Femicides; 74% of Attempteds

- 32% Witnessed Femicide; 58% Witnessed Attempts
- 43% & 37% Found Mother
- Received Counseling
 - 60% - all children of actuals; only 28% of attempted
 - 56% & 40% of children who witnessed femicide & attempts
 - 57% & 54% of children who found the body
- 71% & 76% of mothers abused
- 22% & 27% threats to take children if she left
- 20% & 13% threats to harm children if she left
- 8% fathers reported for child abuse – both actuals & attempted

Summary Victim & Perpetrator Alcohol Use

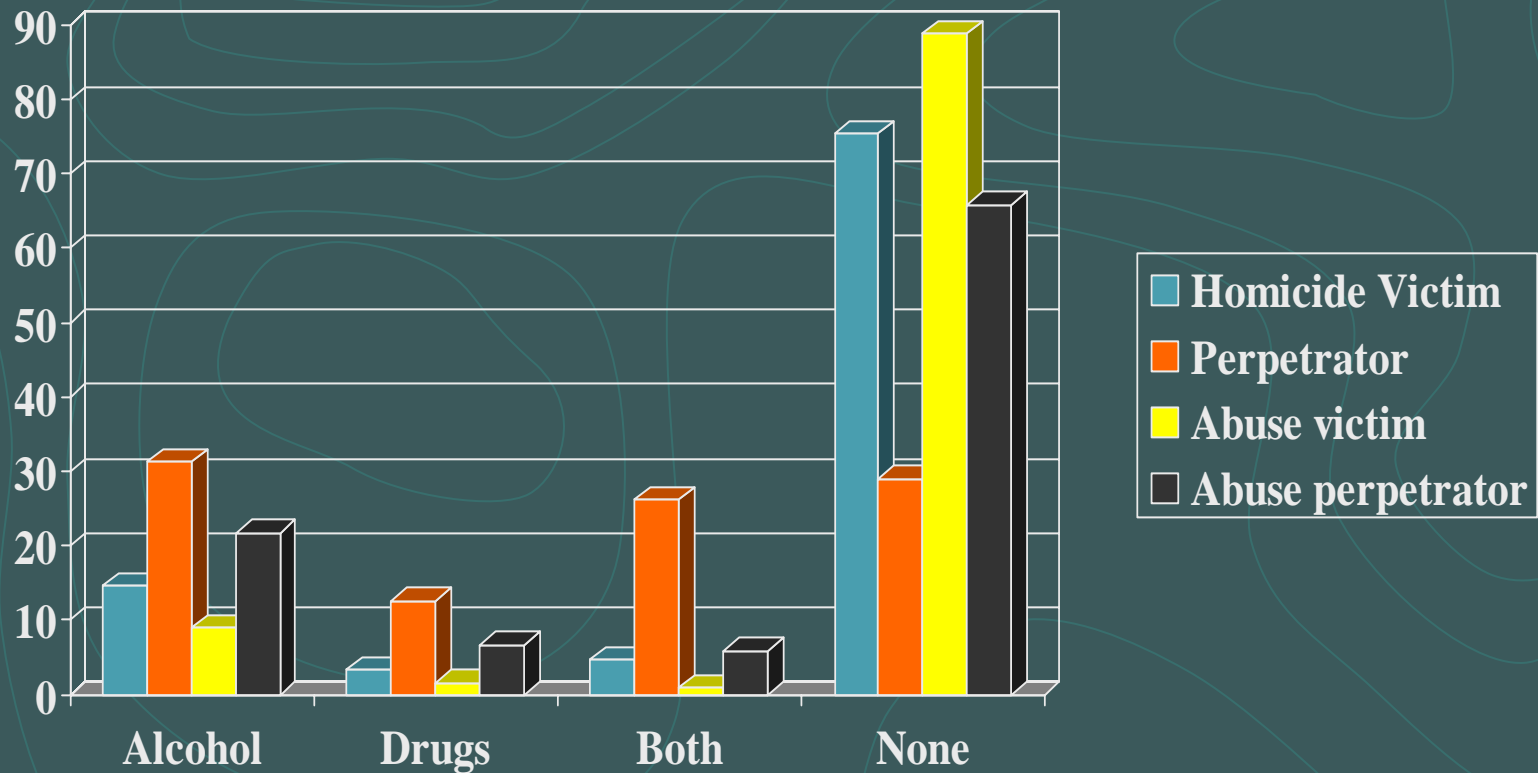


Final Results of Substance Abuse Multiple Logistic Regression (controlling for demographic differences)

- Perpetrator problem drinking increased risk of IPV (OR = 6.6 $p = .001$) & femicide/attempted femicide (OR = 2.01, $p = .014$)
- Both frequency of drinking & drinking >5 drinks per episode increased risk of abuse (OR=3.08 $p=.001$; 3.53 $p=.004$).
- Perpetrator problem drinking & frequency (not binge) increased risk for femicide/attempted femicide (OR = 2.01, $p=.004$ & OR = 2.08, $p = .039$) vs. Abused Controls
- But not as strong as other risk factors in multivariate analysis
- Adjusted relative risk - controlling for demographics - all victim associations disappear

Use of Alcohol &/or Drugs - Time of (n=456)

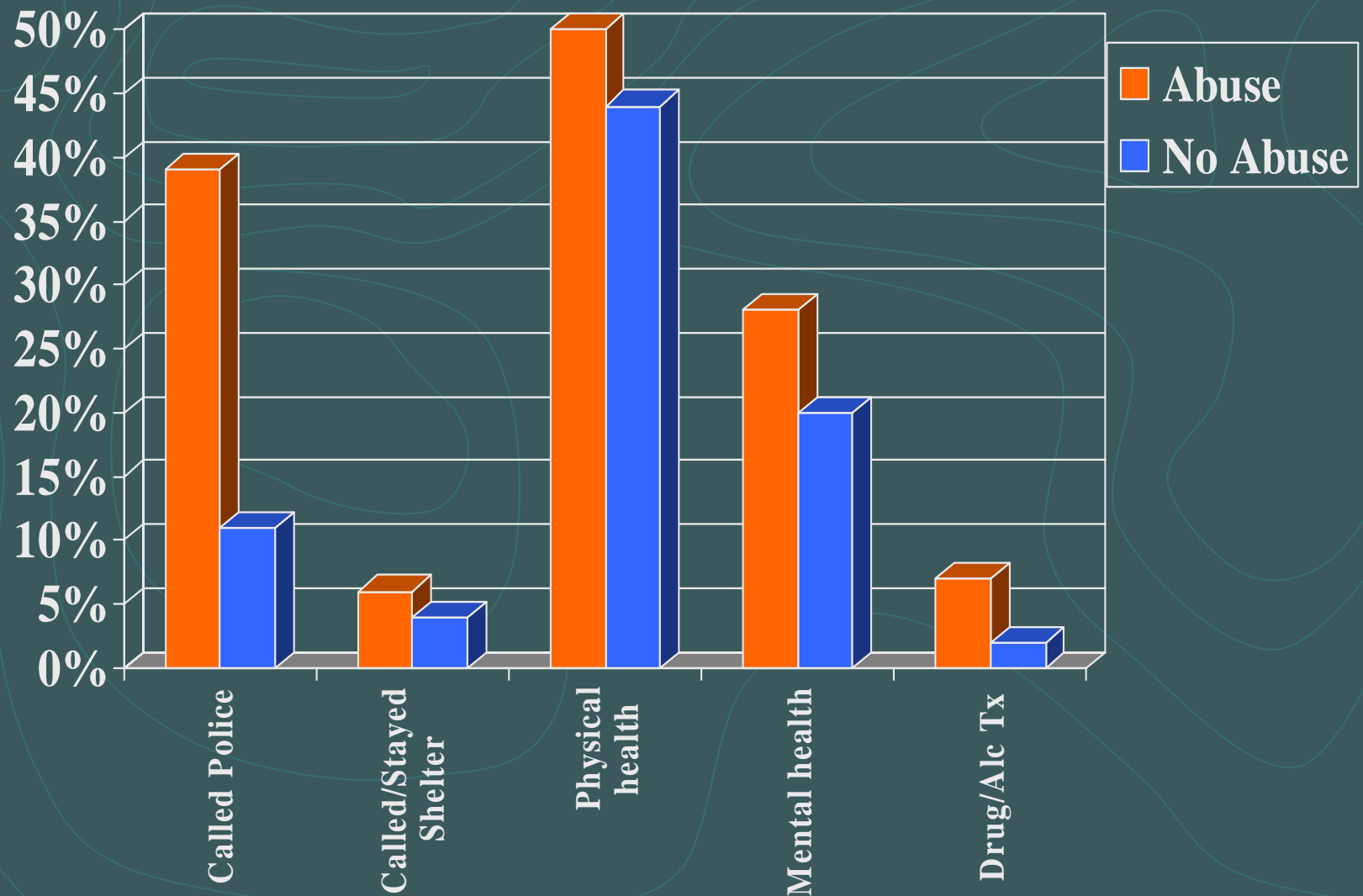
Homicide/Attempt or Worst Abuse (n=427)



MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: ATTEMPTED & ACTUAL VICTIMS SEEN IN SYSTEM ONE YEAR PRIOR TO INCIDENT

- 47% went to a medical care provider for physical/injuries
 - 35% of them went to ED
- 25% went to mental health professional
- Called police - 29% overall - 38% of abused
- Called or went to a shelter - 4% overall
- Alcohol or Drug Treatment - 7% overall
 - 24% of alcohol abuse had alcohol treatment
 - 18% of those with drug abuse problems had drug treatment

ATTEMPTED & ACTUAL VICTIMS SEEN IN SYSTEM



MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: ACTUAL & ATTEMPTED PERPETRATORS

Characteristics of Perpetrators:

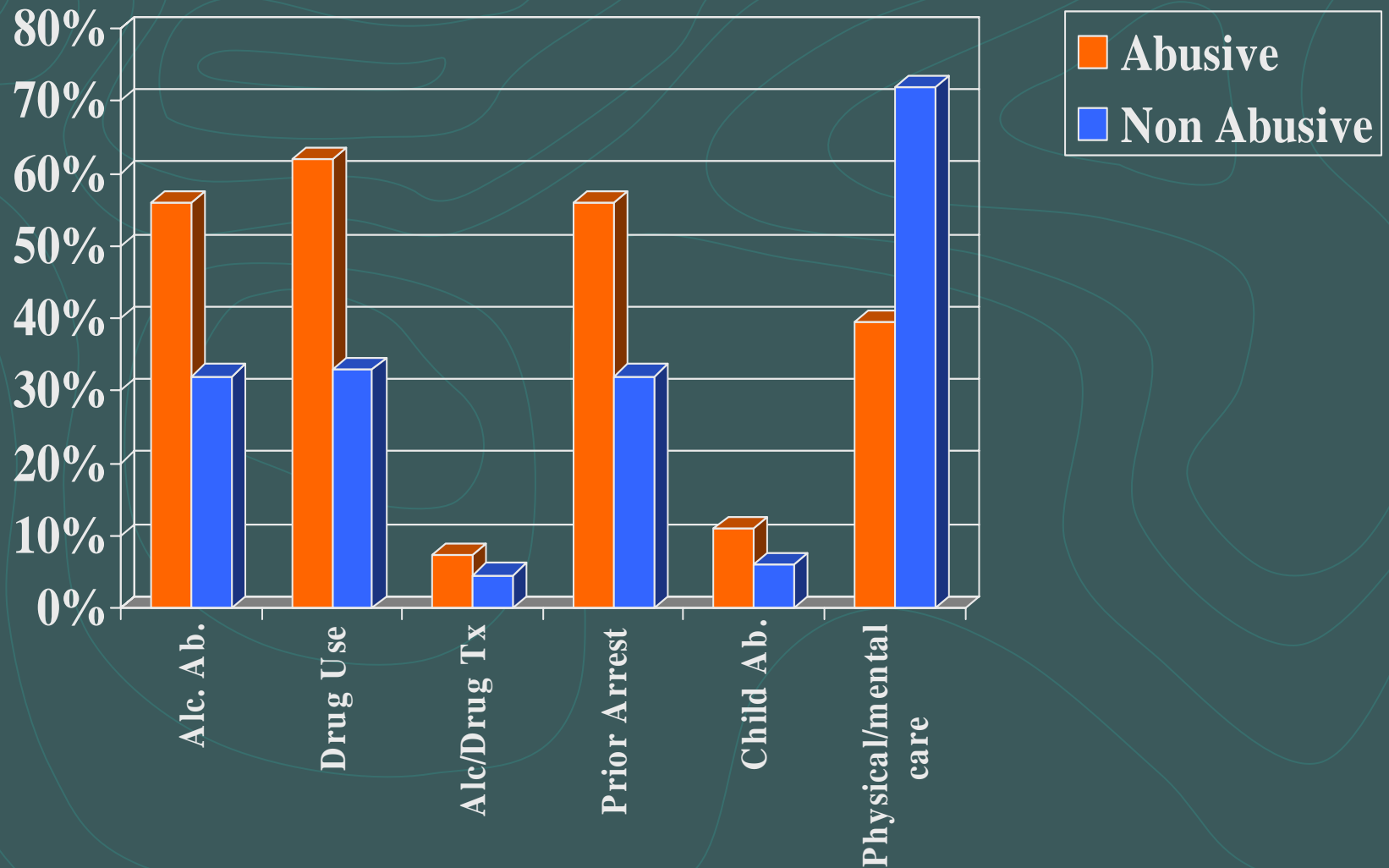
- More abusive perpetrators described with poor mental health

- Abusive = 38%
- Non Abusive = 30%

- However, significantly more non-abusive perpetrators saw MH professionals ($p=0.001$)

- Abusive = 15%
- Non Abusive = 37%

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: PERPETRATORS



MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: PREVENTION - 83% of Cases

VICTIMS


- Police Contacts - 66% of stalked & battered women
- Any Medical Visit - 56% (27% ED visits only)
- Shelter Contacts - 4% of battered women
- Substance abuse Tx - 6%

PERPETRATORS

- Prior Arrest - 56% of batterers (32% of non)
- Mental Health System - 12%
- Substance Abuse Tx - 6%
- Child Abuse - 11% of batterers; 6% of non



Never forget who it's for -



**“please don’t let her death be for nothing –
please get her story told”**

(one of the Moms)