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"So, how did you get here?"

Charting Women's Journeys: From Addiction to Recovery

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Introduction

This paper highlights an exploratory qualitative study1 recently completed on 25 women's experiences of addiction to controlled substances2 coupled with their recovery processes. This study draws on the theory of the social act (Mead, 1938), along with the conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism in order to uncover the complexities of respondents' lives. One of the theoretical challenges was to analyze women's experiences in a way that captured their agency and, at the same time, recognized shared patterns of meaning that emerged from their actions. I argued that, through social action around use/abuse of controlled substances, women's definitions of individual and social identities changed, a necessary action for them to enact both addiction and recovery processes. The following discussion highlights the background to the research, along with an overview of the study and the relevant findings germane to this work.

Background

From 1994-1997, I was involved in a community project (The WASA Project3) in Canada as a researcher/educator working with over 300 women formerly addicted to controlled substances (Grant, 1997). My job was to establish programs that would help to educate, empower and provide knowledge about alternative lifestyles for them. As I worked with these women, I was especially struck by their many stories of abuse, violence and sexual assault that had occurred in their pre-addicted years. I was also interested in how they managed to overcome addiction and to consider recovery for themselves. Many times I asked them, "So, how did you get here," meaning, "How did you get into recovery?" Their answers were varied, yet similar.

Women's stories of recovery experiences showed the use of strategies that were particularly effective in their changes: geographically moving from where they formerly lived, a rebuilding of structure in their lives that included the establishment of new relationships, as well as reestablishing previous relationships with family, children, partners, and friends, who were not addicted to controlled substances. They seemingly formed new lives for themselves as they interacted with families, partners, children and society in general. My community work experiences, my time with these women, and my academic research work has influenced my interest in these processes. Consequently, this exploratory study is a natural progression of both my previous community work in Canada and my ongoing research interests.

Previous Research

Although a vast body of work has developed during the past 20 years on drug use, abuse, addiction, and treatment, literature on women's experiences of addiction and recovery processes is not extensive (Rosenbaum, 1981; Adrian et al., 1996; Murphy and Rosenbuam, 1999; Ettorre, 1992; Campbell, 2000). There is also a singular absence of work on this issue in the field of criminology. If addressed, issues of women' experiences of addiction/recovery have centered mainly on women in conflict with the law (Rosenbaum, 1998; Currie, 1993), along with negative aspects of their lives related to their substance abuse. Much of the literature generates a stereotypical image of women who use controlled substances, thus highlighting a distortion of the reality of their lives (Campbell, 2000; Plant, 1997). Historically, concerns about women and use of controlled substances revolved around essentially moral issues: the supposed effects of alcohol and other drug use on women's "maternal instincts," their ability to care for children and husbands, sexuality and "female purity" (Blackwell et al., 1996: 229). Female users of controlled substances have been considered more pathological than male counterparts (Clark, 1996). More research is needed that focuses on women's individual experiences in addiction and recovery processes providing insight into their issues of concern and individual needs.

Such studies are important because researchers know very little about the processes through which the decision to start and subsequently stop using controlled substances occur (McIntosh and McKeganey, 2002; Woodward et al., 1997), particularly as such processes relate to women's lives. Relatively little is written about women's addiction and recovery processes from their perspectives; it has basically been a "non-field" (Ettorre, 1992: 3). This assertion implies that women's situations and needs are largely unacknowledged within the research world as related to use/abuse of controlled substances and, subsequently, to recovery processes as well.

The Study

Two objectives were of concern in this study: (1) an exploration of how respondents began to engage with controlled substances, how they processed addiction experiences, and how they disengaged from use/abuse of drugs and (2) a consideration of the relationship between substance abuse and respondents' selves and social identities through such experiences.

As described by Blumer (1969), this dissertation was influenced by the sociological principles of symbolic interactionism. The central insight of interactionist theory is that all behaviours, emotions, beliefs, rules,

and objects become meaningful within the broader social context of interaction with others (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 2001; Hewitt, 2003). This perspective views the individual as an ever-changing actor: communicating, role taking, cooperating, and problem solving in a stream of action. The symbolic interactionist perspective focuses on processes of social interaction, how people define situations and what meanings such interactions have for them (Blumer, 1969). Therefore, this paradigm allowed me to focus on social interaction for respondents in this study: a woman with herself, with others, and with the social object, controlled substances.

Data and Methods

At the beginning of this study, posters were put in the local newspaper and various public forums in the community. Since this was a self-selective study respondents were free to call and offer to be interviewed. Many respondents were acquired through the snowball sampling technique. Specific criteria for respondents to be interviewed were that women had to be 20 years of age or older and in recovery for 18 months or more. Directors of addiction centres suggested that since 18 is the age whereby clients come to the centre, and since I wanted to interview women who had been abstinent for the period of 18 months, 20 years of age was the obvious choice to have as the starting age for participants. There were two advantages that I saw to interviewing women who had been abstinent for 18 months: (1) women were more apt to be stable in recovery after this period of time, and (2) because of this confidence, they were more apt to feel free to talk about past experiences as women formerly addicted to controlled substances.

Women ranged in age from 20 to 75, with a median age of 40. Data were collected during unstructured, intensive, audiotaped interviews whereby women were asked to describe their addiction to and recovery from substances in detail. Interviews were not overly structured, as they were open and flexible to allow respondents to talk about topics ranging from early lives and addiction, along with recovery experiences. Respondents' drug(s) of choice4 ranged from alcohol (52%), alcohol and marijuana (28%), marijuana only (4%), cocaine (8%), Ecstasy (4%), and Darvocet (4%).

Interviews were 1½ to 2 hours in length and were transcribed and analyzed using grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1994). This inductive method enabled me to explore women's views of their reality and, subsequently, to establish a theoretical understanding of the generated concepts that emerged from the initial coding, findings and patterns. Through the analysis, I explored the domains of home, work, intimacy, sexuality and leisure in these women's lives, thus revealing the ways in which respondents created multiple and often contradictory discourses as they actively produced meaning on both an individual and social level. Seeing identity formation as a lifelong, socially constructed process enabled me to interrogate the intersection of structure, culture and agency in these women's lives.

Findings

Applying the theory of social action (Mead, 1938) to this work, I argued that respondents evolved through three stages in their actions toward addiction and, then, into recovery: (1) the pre-addicted self,

(2) the addicted self, and (3) the recovering self. The following discussion describes the findings from these three stages in respondents' lives.

(1) The Pre-Addicted Self Stage: In this stage respondents selected controlled substances as the social objects to which they paid attention and began to experiment with other users. In this stage, women's lives had been shaped by substance abuse within particular social environments, with families, friends, peers, and/or boyfriends. Of the 25 women, 52% experienced either sexual or personal abuse from male relatives. One respondent highlights her experience:

The abuse was long-term, for me long-term, lots of perpetrators. My youngest

brother who was six years older than I, he was my long-term perpetrator. By the

time I was six, he was bringing his friends home to abuse me.

Fifty-two percent also witnessed violence against their mothers from their fathers and/or mothers' partners. Four percent experienced violence from mothers, and 24% felt abandoned, disconnected or isolated due to adoption, death or rejection from parents. Eighty-four percent of respondents had family members who used drugs to varying degrees.

Drifting into substance abuse was a common occurrence for some respondents, but others used drugs to help them deal with personal problems. The ages at which most respondents became addicted centred on the years 10-20 (76%), with 4% becoming addicted before the age of 10. Twelve percent became addicted between ages 21 and 30, while 12% were over 30.

Drugs were helping many respondents to 'shut off their emotions' and to deal with pain in their lives. As one woman stated:

I used it to help me deal with the pain I was experiencing. I didn’t just want to feel

any pain. I think it was just from all the trauma and stuff like that I dealt with and

I didn’t know how to deal with it. And I just didn’t want to feel anything.

Women's self-perceptions started to change as meanings toward themselves began to alter as they were now seeing themselves in a different light. They were not yet, "seasoned users" (Rosenbaum, 1981: 35), but, in this stage, their drug habits had begun.

(2) The Addicted Self Stage: In this stage respondents began their addictions in earnest that continued for varying lengths of time from months to years. Controlled substances were helping respondents deal with how they felt about themselves, as illustrated through one woman's comment: "I drank to fit in, not to fit in with them (other users), but to fit in with me."

In the Addicted Self Stage drugs provided women with other, emergent identities. In this stage, their use/abuse of drugs was having an influence over their lives, their self-concepts and actions. Respondents were rejecting others to whom they were previously socially connected, while other

reference groups were becoming salient, thus helping women to integrate themselves into addictive lifestyles. They were also developing new relationships and self-concepts that either excluded or depreciated their old values. I argued that, in this stage, respondents were experiencing individual and social identities that were, finally, helping them to feel 'okay' with

themselves. Drugs were offering them other sources of meaning. They had become "inundated" (Rosenbaum, 1981: 48) into a drug culture with other users and had now procured addictive identities.

But, as addiction progressed for respondents, they became self-loathing and disgusted with themselves as they started to see how their actions were affecting their lives in negative ways. Their addiction had seemingly run its course. This was exemplified through one woman's comment: "I was no longer in love" (with alcohol, her drug of choice), along with another respondent, who said, "It (drug of choice) stopped working." What was evident as this stage progressed was that respondents began to realize that something was skewed in their sense of individual identities and they needed to counter negative self-feelings in this stage. Therefore, they now had to learn to end addiction and manage recovering selves.

(3) The Recovering Self Stage: Finally, in the recovering self stage, women came to realize that they had to relinquish addictive individual and social identities and work actively in order to create new non-addictive lives. As one respondent said as she described her recovery to me:

For sure, there's a self-change. But when I got into recovery, I didn’t know

who I was. I think that, actually, at the beginning of recovery, you start

discovering yourself. It's almost like finding out who you really are. And, actually,

whenever you started (on drugs) you left off at that part of your life at that age.

Respondents were beginning to "beat the dragon of their addiction" (McIntosh and McKeganey, 2002: 41) as they left addictive behaviors behind and began their journeys to recovery. What became obvious in this stage of respondents' lives was that, as they entered recovery, they developed plans of action into how best they could become and stay abstinent. Overall, women were beginning to redefine their experiences with substances, along with relationships to themselves.

As they strategized in recovery, respondents were creating non-addictive environments within a non-addictive social world. For example, as they began to disengage from addictive lifestyles, they began to reengage with either significant others (i.e., family, children, partners) and/or new reference groups (i.e., church and community groups). Many were attending either university or community college (24%), while others (28%) were working at new jobs. They gained new non-using friends, along with new partner relationships. Ongoing recovery consisted of strategies, or "contexts of action" (Kiecolt, 1994: 61), thus enabling them to develop social agency. Sixty-eight percent of respondents attended A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous) and/or N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous), while others worked with counselors as they struggled to stay abstinent. Twelve percent of women did not avail themselves of institutional help, but were supported by friends, family and/or partners as they began recovery. Some made geographical moves (32%) into new communities in order to leave using friends behind. And many were involved in

community work (64%), or were helping others, thus enabling them to develop healthy social relationships in a non-addictive world. Relapses had been of some concern for 48% of respondents in early recovery, but, overall, as one woman made note and which was applicable for all respondents: "I'm not that person anymore. I'm happy within myself."

Summary

Current thinking about addiction and recovery has tended to emphasize men's processes of these experiences (Goode, 1999; Rosenbaum, 1981). Although this current study has limitations (i.e., limited sample size, therefore no determination corresponding to representativeness), I have attempted to explore women's processes in particular and to demonstrate the complexities of 25 women's addiction and recovery processes as seen through their experiences through the paradigm of symbolic interactionism.

Using Mead's (1938) outline of social action theory, I argued that respondents, through varying stages, became immersed into addictive lifestyles and, consequently, through various actions, into recovery for themselves. I argued that the key to achieving substance-free statuses were their abilities to take on new non-addictive identities and roles as non-addicts by transforming central relationships to selves and others through which they structured new identities. I have also attempted to show how respondents were strategic actors in their recovery processes. Focusing on women's lived experiences and accounts, this study has outlined the central features of these women's lives. More specifically, it has endeavored to contribute to existing literature on women's addiction and recovery processes.

Respondents have traveled pathways into addiction and, then, roads to recovery. As one respondent insightfully made note, "Recovery is the absence of insanity." For these women their addiction and recovery processes had been arduous journeys, journeys of coming back from their 'insanity'. Knowledge gained through these journeys provided respondents not only with new individual and social identities, but also wisdom, which enabled them to continue to move forward as they constructed new lives.

Endnotes

1 This overview is part of a larger study which includes my dissertation work

2 The terms, controlled substances and/or drugs, are used in this study to include all drugs, licit and illicit (prescription and nonprescription), including alcohol. Tobacco is not included.

3 The WASA Project, an acronym for The Women and Substance Abuse Project, was funded by the Health and Promotions Branch, Health Canada, and was sponsored by the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Moncton; Crossroads for Women, Inc. Moncton;

and Support to Single Parents Inc., Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, during the years, 1994-97.

4 Respondents' drugs of choice were the ones that they identified as their primary or faovurite drug; they one they used regularly, or the one that they were recovering from when they became abstinent.

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WHAT ABOUT THE WOMEN?

A FEMINIST COMMENTARY ON CRIME INSIDE PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS*

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In a recent article, Ireland and colleagues (2003, p. 5) correctly point out that, "valid scientific knowledge about the extent of crime among public housing residents is actually extremely limited." In fact, to date, most of the information on violent and other offenses occurring in North American public housing communities is produced by journalists who portray crimes committed by and against those who live there as little more than "aberrations in an otherwise well-functioning system" (Reiman, 2001, p. 173). Ireland et al.'s (2003) work is an important contribution to refining our understanding of crime in public housing because it provides rich data that challenge myths and stereotypes about the criminogenic consequences of being isolated in "cities-within-cities" (Venkatesh, 2000). For example, their Rochester, New York self-report data show that adolescent public housing residents are not at higher risk of committing violent crimes than members of the same age group not living in public housing.

Based on Ireland et al.'s (2003) research, it appears that, contrary to popular belief, violence is not a "ghetto-specific" crime in Rochester (Wilson, 1996). However, are all types of violent crime committed by adolescents equally distributed in that city? What would Ireland et al.'s data look like if violence against women items were added to their interview schedule? Surprisingly, these questions were not raised in several essays written in reaction to Ireland et al. (see Lab, 2003; Popkin, 2003; Venkatesh, 2003). But these are not trivial questions, given that 90% of the more than 1.27 million public housing households in the U.S. are headed by women (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000). Of course, one study cannot address every social problem, and our intent here is not to attack or diminish the important scholarly contributions made by Ireland et al. (2003). Rather, our main objective is to refocus empirical, theoretical and political attention on what happens to women inside public housing units, an issue that has thus far received selective inattention in the extant scientific literature on crime in these social settings.

PRIVATE CRIME IN PUBLIC HOUSING

Less than a handful of studies have examined male-to-female violence against women in North American public housing, but they show that the extent of this harm is much higher than that found in the general population. For example, conducted in six public housing estates located in an Eastern Ontario city, DeKeseredy et al.'s (1999) Quality of Neighborhood Life Survey (QNLS) uncovered an incidence rate (events that occurred in a one-year period) of 19.3% using a modified rendition of Straus et al.'s (1996) revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS-2). Certainly, this figure is markedly higher than those

gleaned by the majority of North American representative sample surveys that used a similar measure, including Tjaden and Thoennes' (1998) National Violence Against Women Survey (1.9%) and Statistics Canada's (1993) national Violence Against Women Survey (3%). Still, the QNLS rate is much lower than that generated by Renzetti and Maier's (2002) study of 36 female residents of public or Section 8 housing in Camden, New Jersey. In that study, 33 percent of the women were victimized during the year before being interviewed, and 50 percent were assaulted by a husband/ex-husband, boyfriend/ex-boyfriend, or an acquaintance (e.g., a friend, a neighbor).

The above estimates, although alarmingly high, are underestimates for the several reasons, including memory error, small samples, reluctance to recall traumatic memories, fear of reprisal, and embarrassment (DeKeseredy, 1995; Kennedy & Dutton, 1989; Schwartz, 2000; Smith, 1987, 1994). Sizeable portions of female public housing residents are also recent immigrants from war-torn countries, dictatorships or police states. For example, about 20 percent of the women who answered the QNLS stated that they were refugees or recent immigrants to Canada, and the research team strongly suspects that this group constituted a much higher percentage of those women who did not complete the questionnaire (DeKeseredy et al., 2003). Hence, many women probably did not believe assurances of confidentiality because of prior traumatic experiences with authority figures (e.g., police) (Schwartz, 2000). It is also possible that language barriers precluded many ethnic minority women from filling out the QNLS (Koss, 1993).

It is fair to argue, then, that had Ireland et al. (2003) included measures of male-to-female violence, significant differences in rates of violence reported by Rochester public housing residents and those who do not live in public housing would have emerged. Moreover, the rates of violence reported by their adolescent Pittsburgh public housing residents would have also been even higher than they were compared to those gleaned from people not living in public housing. However, this is an empirical issue that can only be addressed empirically. Hopefully, future surveys on violence in public housing communities will pay more careful attention to the gendered nature of criminal victimization in and outside these neighborhoods.

THE VALUE OF GATHERING QUALITATIVE DATA

As Lab (2003, p. 42) reminds us in his response to Ireland et al.'s (2003) article, many criminologists avoid, for one reason or another, gathering qualitative data, which contributes to "the lack of contextual depth in much research." Hence, in addition to measuring violence against women and other forms of woman abuse (e.g., verbal harassment in public places), researchers should conduct rich in-depth interviews and use observational techniques. These are methods that feminist and other scholars have used for years and they yield valuable data that can contribute to the development of even better surveys, as well as theoretical perspectives. Consider Bourgois' (1995) path-breaking ethnographic study of crack dealing in East Harlem. He found that violence against women in public housing areas is fostered by a "crisis in patriarchy" generated by men's inability to find legitimate employment. Indeed, as others have argued (DeKeseredy, Alvi, & Schwartz, 2003; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2002; Websdale, 2001), psychological stress spawned by the failure to fulfill the role of "bread winner" in a current political economic order characterized by the rapid disappearance of working-class jobs motivates

economically and socially disenfranchised men to beat or sexually assault their female partners "to reassert their grandfathers' lost autocratic control over the household…." (Bourgois, 1995, p. 85).

It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to uncover such data using only survey research techniques. Similarly, it is highly unlikely that a survey would reveal what Websdale (2001) found in his ethnographic study of African-American public housing residents in Nashville, Tennessee. In the community he examined, violence against women occurred in the context of "the frantic competition between men in the projects over every conceivable issue, including sexual access to women" (2001, p. 134). His data, those gathered by Bourgois (1995), and in-depth interviews conducted by Renzetti and Maier (2002) also call into question the value of reducing violence rates through changing the physical structure of public housing. For example, if poor men are primarily motivated to beat, rape, and psychologically abuse women because of perceived threats to their masculine identity, transferring them and women into smaller housing developments will do little, if anything, to eliminate the alarming amount of violence-induced pain and suffering that occurs behind closed doors. To develop truly effective means of curbing "intimate intrusions" (Stanko, 1985), the major causes must first be identified. It is to this issue that we turn to next.

THE NEED TO THEORIZE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PUBLIC HOUSING

Commonly espoused theories of crime in public housing communities, such as defensible space, social disorganization, and "broken windows," may account for adolescent street crime in these areas (see, for example, Ireland et al., 2003), but they cannot explain why so many female public housing residents are physically and sexually victimized by male partners and acquaintances. Even feminist scholars have devoted little theoretical attention to the abuse of economically marginalized women in North American public housing. Perhaps the paucity of theoretical work on this topic is due in large part to the fact that research on crime in public housing is in a state of infancy. Regardless of what accounts for the lack of theory testing and construction, ethnographic studies reviewed here and elsewhere (see Renzetti & Maier, 2002) make it clear that economic and cultural variables need to be incorporated into the "current theoretical mix" (Raphael, 2001, p. 454).

To the best of our knowledge, only one theoretical perspective on violence against women in public housing was constructed accordingly (see DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2002). Heavily influenced by theoretical work done by Sernau (2001), DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993) and Young (1999), this economic exclusion/male peer support model combines both macro- and micro-level factors, such as formal labor market exclusion and patriarchal male subcultural dynamics. Still, at this point in time, the model lacks strong empirical support because it has not been tested, and future testing will depend to some extent on the availability of funding. As several studies reveal (Savelsberg et al., 2002; Schacht & Eitzen, 1990), state funded research is more likely to focus on micro- than on macro-level analysis, which is one of the key reasons why virtually all of the public housing studies done so far have "failed to theorize the state or its role constructing social life" (Venkatesh, 2003, p. 53). Moreover, it is doubtful that federal agencies driven by an intense neo-conservative agenda will fund research on how the current political economic order contributes to violence against women.

Neglecting to address the state and broader political economic forces is more evident in work done by consultants and other nonacademic researchers because their livelihoods depend primarily on state-sponsored grants and contracts. This is not to say, however, that all nonacademic researchers are driven by the principles of "administrative criminology." For example, Popkin et al. (2000) sharply critique the Chicago Public Housing Authority, and their book was co-authored by several researchers who are not based in institutions of higher learning. Social scientists affiliated with the Center for Impact Research (CIR) in Chicago also devote much attention to showing how various types of inequality and government policies contribute to major social problems such as violence against women in public housing. Further, CIR has co-sponsored three Trapped by Poverty/Trapped by Abuse Conferences, which have included several papers on public housing presented by critical criminologists.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PUBLIC HOUSING?

Given their findings, it is not surprising that Ireland et al. (2003) suggest moving families out of large public housing developments and into smaller ones. Many other researchers and policy analysts offer similar solutions, especially those informed by crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). Will this strategy reduce the amount of crimes committed by adolescents living in public housing? Since the world is multivariate, one thing we know for sure is that this initiative alone will do little, if anything, to reduce acts of woman abuse committed by adults and adolescents alike because architectural design does not address the main causes of this problem. These are: unemployment, gender status inconsistency, poverty, patriarchal male peer support, and the adherence to the ideology of familial patriarchy (Bourgois, 1995; DeKeseredy et al., 2003; Raphael, 2001; Renzetti & Maier, 2002; Websdale, 2001).

For example, a smaller housing development is obviously not going to reduce the stress caused by unemployed men's inability to live up to the culturally defined role of breadwinner, and being an economic provider is still fundamental to most men's identity (Conway, 2001; DeKeseredy, Alvi, & Schwartz, 2003; Edin, 2000). Again, these men feel an increased need to dominate their partners through abuse because "their normal paths for personal power and prestige have been cut off" (Raphael, 2001, p. 703). Moreover, unless male public housing residents acquire steady meaningful jobs, their lives will remain relatively unstructured and they will have ample time to spend with male peers drinking, doing drugs, and "talking about hard times" or "mourning for what has been…lost" (Conway, 2001, p. 186; Sernau, 2001). Note, too, that many male pubic housing residents' male friends view wife beating and other variants of woman abuse as legitimate and useful techniques of reclaiming patriarchal authority (Raphael, 2001). In addition to explicitly stating that woman abuse is a valid way of "keeping women in their place," they also serve as role models since many of them abuse their own partners (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2002).

Male adolescent public housing residents are usually exposed to different patriarchal male peer support dynamics. These boys may not be emotionally attached to women and do not intend to create a family, but many of them become active members of peer groups that pressure them to be sexually active, brag about their sexual relations, and praise them for convincing resistant women to have sex with them (Anderson, 1999; Wilson, 1996). If, however, these boys cannot not live up to their peers' high

expectations, they experience relative deprivation and become more likely to engage in sexual assault. Like college students and professional athletes, sexual assaults committed by adolescent and young adult male public housing residents are more strongly associated with the need to achieve status among their peers than biological factors (Benedict, 1998; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2002; Godenzi et al., 2001).

Much more can and has been said about the pitfalls of CPTED as well as other gender-blind solutions to crime in public housing such as "fixing broken windows" (Kelling & Coles, 1997) and the "One strike and you are out" initiative. The most important point to consider here is that policy development requires taking gender seriously and, so far, most policies aimed at alleviating crime and its consequences in public housing do not. Note, too, that we do not totally reject reducing public housing density or moving people into other neighborhoods. Still, if this is to be done, then people should be integrated into mixed income neighborhoods characterized by stable quality employment, healthy public schools, and affordable public transportation (DeKeseredy et al., 2003; Raphael, 2001; Santiago et al., 1999; Wilson, 1996). This approach would not only reduce woman abuse, but would also curb other types of crime such as offenses identified by Ireland et al. (2003) and other public housing researchers (e.g., Popkin et al., 2000). So would state sponsored daycare, a higher minimum wage, and an educational curriculum designed to promote gender, race and class equality. Despite taking issue with some elements of the majority of the extant research on crime in public housing that intentionally or unintentionally ignores the gendered nature of crime, there is perhaps one thing all of us who conduct research on crime in public housing have in common: building tall "fortresslike" public housing developments that cram poor people together in socially and economically isolated urban areas is not an effective solution (Currie, 1993).

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SUCCESS FACTORS IN ASSASSINATIONS

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Assassination is a method of revolt that has existed since the beginning of organized society. Assassinations are motivated by many factors including issues involving politics, religion, and differing ideologies. Different groups will make use of assassination as a means of striking social change. Groups who have power will assassinate individuals threatening their way of life or the status quo, and groups who do not have power will assassinate individuals in positions of power to provoke social change for the betterment of their life circumstances. This paper seeks to address factors associated with successful assassinations, as defined by termination of the target.

TURKS THEORY OF POLITICAL CRIMINALITY

Turk's (1982) model of political criminality focuses on the power struggles that can exist between the authority and the challenger group. The authority consists of individuals in positions of power. These people govern the society in which they live in a manner comfortable and consistent with their ways of life. Their power allows them to determine what is right and wrong, legal or illegal.

This manner of living is not always a positive way of life for individuals in the challenger groups. According to Turk (1982), challenger groups are individuals who lack power and feel oppression in some capacity as a result of the authority group. Challenger groups organize and display dissent in some capacity against the authority. The more knowledge and resources a challenger group has, the more success they will see in their pursuit for change.

Challenger groups that attempt change in a society threaten the status quo. The status quo is a comfortable manner of life for those in authority, and as long as the status quo is met, there is peace in a society. When challenger groups press for societal change they are met with strong opposition from the authority, the group who is trying to maintain their comfortable way of life. If change cannot be achieved on terms that are comfortable for both groups, displays of open dissent can result in violence on both sides. In circumstances where change is not met, a representative or figure of power in either of these groups, the authority or the challenger group, can be faced with assassination. According to Turk (1982), this assassination can act as a dire attempt by the authority group to "behead" the challenger group who is seeking to change the status quo. In opposition, assassination for the challenger group can act as a catalyst for social change. Each side can utilize assassination as a technique to serve their agenda in this power struggle.

DATA AND METHODS

A secondary data source is utilized for the research in this study. The original data were collected by; Feierabend, Feierabend, Nesvold, and Jagger, and is titled "Data Bank of Assassins. This data file contains information about all assassinations and assassination attempts that occurred between 1948-1967. The researchers compiled this data using the New York Times index.

The dependant variable for this study is whether or not the assassination was successful, defined as termination of the target. The outcome is defined as an assassination that is either successful or unsuccessful.

The first independent variable is the presence of minority hostility. Countries characterized by minority hostility are hypothesized to have a higher incidence of successful assassinations than countries lacking minority hostility. This terminology is not referencing racial motivations. Rather, the majority groups are defined as the groups that have power, whereas minority groups are defined as groups that do not have power. The second independent variable is country rank. Countries can be classified as first, second, or third world. The third independent variable is derived from Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy (Scott 1992). Weber outlines three different forms of authority; traditional, legitimate, and charismatic. Traditional authority is obtained through heredity as is the case with royalty, legitimate authority is obtained through political maneuvering such as a president or a prime minister, and charismatic authority is power obtained through personality, as was displayed through the actions of charismatic leader Martin Luther King Jr. The fourth independent variable, collateral damage, is defined as injuries to individuals other than the target. The fifth independent variable focuses on how the nature of tension will affect the outcome of the assassination. For the purposes of this work, the focus will be on a presence of political tension.

The following hypotheses were developed utilizing the previously discussed variables that are grounded in Turk's theory:

H1: Assassinations committed in countries characterized by minority hostilities are more likely to be successful.

H2: Assassinations are more likely to be successful in first world countries.

H3: Charismatic authority figures (whether related to authority or challenger groups) are most likely to be the targets of successful assassination attempts.

H4: Collateral damage (injuries to individuals that are not the assassination target) is negatively associated with successful assassination attempts.

H5: Assassination attempts related to political tension are more likely to be successful than attempts related to other types of tension.

FINDINGS

Table 1 presents univariate analysis on the dependant and independent variables.

Table 1: Frequencies (N=409)

As indicated, 35% were successful, while 65% of the assassinations were not successful. Assassinations committed in countries characterized by minority hostility occurred 7.8% of the time, while 92.2% of the attacks occurred in countries that lacked minority hostility. Legitimate authority figures were the most frequent target of attempt with 81.4% of the targets falling into this classification. Charismatic authority figures that were targeted consisted of 10.5% of the targets, while traditional figures made up only 7.1% of the targets in this study. The most common country status where assassinations occurred were third world countries, where 73.3% of all assassination attempts and successes occurred. First world countries housed 14.4% of all attacks, while 12.0% of attempts occurred in second world countries. Collateral damage did not occur frequently with 90.0% of all attempts resulting in no wounds to bystanders. In 9% of all attempts, one individual was wounded in the attack, while the remaining .9% of all assassination attempts and successes resulted in the wounding of a number of individuals, between 2 and 5 in those cases. Political tension was present in 95.6% of all attempts, while non-political forms of tension were involved in 4.4% of all attacks.

Table 2 presents bivariate analysis on all independent variables.

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Table 2 presents bivariate analysis on all independent variables.

frequency

percent

OUTCOME

Outcome

133

35.0

Unsuccessful

266

65.0

MINORITY HOSTILITY

Yes

32

7.8

No

377

92.2

AUTHORITY OF TARGET

Traditional

29

7.1

Legitimate

333

81.4

Charismatic

43

10.5

COUNTRY STATUS

First

59

14.4

Second

49

12.0

Third

300

73.3

NUMBER OF WOUNDED

0

368

90.0

1

37

9.0

2

1

.2

4

1

.2

5

2

.5

NATURE OF TENSION

Political

391

95.6

Non-Political

18

4.4

wounding of a number of individuals, between 2 and 5 in those cases. Political tension was present in 95.6% of all attempts, while non-political forms of tension were involved in 4.4% of all attacks.

Table 2 presents bivariate analysis on all independent variables

Table 2. Bivariate Analysis

Charismatic authority figures were most likely to be the target of a successful assassination occurring 58.1% of the time. This finding is significant (c2=.003). Assassinations that took place in countries characterized by minority hostility occurred in only 43.8% of attempts, making it more likely to occur than in countries not bothered by minority hostilities. However, these findings did not yield significance (c2=.278). Assassinations related to political tension were more likely to be successful than attacks provoked by other forms of tension. Political tension related assassinations achieved a triumphant outcome in 34.2% of the cases. Again, this finding was not significant as yielded by the chi-squared statistic (c2=.721). Third world countries were more likely to house successful assassination attempts. Such attempts occurred in third world countries 37.0% of the time. Despite this high likelihood, the finding was not significant (c2=.379). Collateral damage was negatively associated with successful assassinations. Unsuccessful assassinations occurred 65.0% of the time where a bystander was wounded during the attempt on the target's life. This finding was significant (c2=.000).

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assassinations. Unsuccessful assassinations occurred 65.0% of the time where a bystander was wounded during the attempt on the target's life. This finding was significant (c2=.000).

Outcome

Successful

Unsuccessful

Authority of Target (sig. .003)

Traditional

9 (31.0%)

20 (69.0%)

Legitimate

107 (32.1%)

226 (67.9%)

Charismatic

25 (58.1%)

18 (41.9%)

Minority Hostility (sig. .278)

Yes

14 (43.8%)

18 (56.3%)

No

129 (34.2%)

248 (65.8%)

Nature of Tension (sig. .721)

Non-Political

7 (38.9%)

11 (61.1%)

Political

136 (34.8%)

255 (65.2%)

Country Status (sig. .379)

First World

18 (30.5%)

41 (69.5^)

Second World

14 (28.6%)

35 (71.4%)

Third World

111 (37.0%)

189 (63.0%)

Table 3 presents the multivariate analysis of factors that are associated with successful assassination outcomes.

Table 3. Multivariate analysis of factors associated with successful assassination attempts

*sig. at .05

Logistic regression was utilized for the multivariate table. Assassination attempts that occur in third world countries (B=.329) are 1.39 times more likely to be successful than assassination attempts that take place in first or second world countries. Despite the higher likelihood, this finding was not significant and cannot be generalized beyond this study. Assassinations that focus on charismatic individuals (B=1.16) are 3.20 times more likely to result in success than assassinations focused on legitimate or traditional authority figures. This finding can be generalized beyond this study due to statistical significance. Assassinations that result in success in countries characterized by minority hostility (B=.515) are 1.67 times more likely to occur than assassinations in countries lacking minority hostility. This result was not significant, therefore this finding cannot be generalized beyond this study. Assassinations that result in success that are politically motivated (B=.718) occur 2.05 times more than assassinations that are not politically motivated. Assassinations that did not yield collateral damage (B=-1.279) resulted in successful outcome 5.26 times more so than assassinations that caused frequent wounding among bystanders. This finding is significant and can be generalized beyond the scope of this study.

DISCUSSION

Charismatic figures were hypothesized to be the most successful target of assassination attempts. This hypothesis held true in the analysis of this study. The rationale for this hypothesis stems from a charismatic figures ability to generate emotional responses from the group of people they represent. It was surmised that the high level of emotion yielded from a group by a charismatic leader results in the strength of a challenger group's actions. be removed, by the termination of the charismatic figure.

Collateral damage was hypothesized to be negatively associated with successful assassination attempts. This hypothesis was supported by the data, and was found to be significant. The reasoning behind this hypothesis is in the assassin's desire for the target to be terminated. If the assassin is distracted by bystanders, the target would have a chance to flee the scene, or be protected by their security. If an assassin is not distracted by bystanders, they are more likely to achieve a successful kill in their target.

Assassination attempts related to political tension were hypothesized to be more successful than assassinations that are driven by other forms of tension. There was a higher likelihood of political tension as a motivating factor, however it was not significant.

Political tensions may not be as large of an issue as were hypothesized. Other factors could take precedence over this area (i.e. religiously based motivations, economic issues, racial oppression), driving successful assassination. Success was hypothesized for assassinations occurring in countries characterized by minority hostilities. Similarly to political tensions, countries with the issue of minority hostility were more common, but not significant.

First world countries were hypothesized to result in more assassination success than country classifications. This hypothesis was derived from Turk's (1982) Political Criminality, which attributes success in assassinations to knowledge and resource. The hypothesis was based on these points, making the assumption that those with the most knowledge and resources would be members of countries that had high-quality standards of living, first world countries. . Assassinations were not more likely to occur in first world countries, and this statistic yielded no significance. Third world countries were the country status that yielded the most success in assassination outcome. This finding was surprising when regarded in a perspective that focuses solely on knowledge and resources. The average member of a third world country typically has limited resources, and limited to no formal education. Therefore, it would seem that they would have less success in executing a target. . It could be hypothesized that members of third world countries experience so much hardship that their anger outweighs their disadvantage, resulting in a stronger determination to successfully assassinate their target. It could also be hypothesized that individuals in a third world country have higher motivation to achieve success in assassination due to their life circumstance. Members of third world countries have less to lose than individuals in first world countries. As a result there could be less fear of consequence, resulting in a higher success rate.

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2004 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

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