Analyzing Domestic Abuse Coverage in Introductory Criminal Justice and Criminology Textbooks

By

Anthony L. Sciarabba

John A. Eterno

Department of Criminal Justice

Molloy College

The dynamics of the coverage of domestic abuse in introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks are analyzed. A sample consisting of 60 textbooks is used to examine the textual coverage of domestic abuse before and after a legislative landmark for women, the 1994 Violence Against Women Act. Content analysis results indicate that coverage of domestic abuse in the introductory textbooks did increase following 1994 as predicted. This increase, which was observed in both the criminal justice and the criminology samples, is attributed to the vast strides that women have made toward equality, including the Violence Against Women Act, as well as other instances of political pressure to change sometimes draconian domestic abuse policies. Possible avenues for much needed future research are discussed.

Keywords: Bias, Content Analysis, Domestic Abuse, Textbooks, Violence Against Women Act, Criminal Justice Education

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks help reveal the type and extent of information being conveyed by scholars to students. Thomas Kuhn (1970, p.137) defines textbooks as “pedagogic vehicles for the perpetuation of science.” The college textbook can arguably be classified as the most important instrument a college student possesses. A thorough understanding of the content in textbooks can best be accomplished through various analytic techniques that unveil underlying trends, paradigmatic shifts, and subtle ideological positions of authors. Ancillary tools such as suggested reading exercises, practice tests, and extensive glossaries add to the value of textbooks as well.

In the popular culture, criminal justice issues are often portrayed in an inaccurate and exaggerated manner. For example, police are often portrayed as constantly shooting their guns, getting involved in car chases, and are generally depicted as crime fighters. This portrayal is not only inaccurate, but is damaging. Textbooks endow the student with the knowledge and understanding that is contrary to this popular culture. With respect to crime and criminology, the textbook is often the student’s first realistic exposure. This is especially true of domestic violence which is only superficially covered in college curricula, if at all. Many students only
have limited exposure to the realities of crime. The neophyte student may have some superficial knowledge of crime-related topics, but most likely not in a scholarly manner. Consequently, it is essential that these textbooks contain a thorough and extensive discussion of major topics. This necessity is critical for many reasons such as the fact that many undergraduate criminal justice and criminology students choose a career in law enforcement and public service, including social work and other closely related disciplines. Consequently, we examine the extent of coverage of domestic abuse in introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks. Before the analysis begins, it is necessary to delineate criminology from criminal justice. Criminology is an eclectic discipline built upon many established disciplines including psychology, medicine, biology, economics, sociology, and psychiatry, to name a few. The diverse discipline of criminology may be more concerned with the application of the scientific method to explain criminality. Criminal justice tends to focus on “decision-making processes, operations, and justice related concerns as the efficiency of police and courts, and corrections systems” (Adler, Mueller, & Laufer, 1995, p. 18).

The topic of domestic abuse coverage in texts has largely been ignored by previous research. We are, therefore, filling a gap in the research in this area. In the popular culture, there are many inaccuracies with respect to domestic abuse. For example, as Wallace (2005, pp. 1-2) states “It is not uncommon to hear …‘Women who stay with abusive partners must really like it.’” For the purposes of this research, domestic abuse denotes any abuse, physical, sexual, or psychological, between a domestic couple, either heterosexual or homosexual. This pervasive issue presents great challenges not only for law enforcement, but also for social workers, psychologist, sociologists, and criminologists. Issues regarding the dynamics of the crime, either the legal issues, or other dynamics must be known by practitioners to properly handle domestic abuse. This learning process can be enriched with the assistance of a textbook that discusses the issues of domestic abuse properly.

Textbooks must devote appropriate page space to discuss domestic abuse due to the dynamics of the crime itself. It is a far-reaching crime that violates humanity. Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) note that “nearly 8.5 million incidents of violence between intimate partners occur each year in the U.S.” Previous research has demonstrated that domestic abuse is relatively hidden from society, and this hidden nature of the crime may be partly responsible for creating limited coverage of the crime in scholarly sources, such as textbooks.

However, in addition to the nature of the crime itself, one must evaluate the social forces that play a key role in the repression of domestic abuse in society. The United States, like many other countries, was (and is still considered by some) a sexist society. That is, by tradition, the role of women was subservient to men. These long-held “traditions” of society are driven today by lingering residual biases, which, in part, may also be responsible for limited coverage of violence and abuse against women, particularly domestic abuse. This heavily biased stereotypical role of women is changing, but how far have we gone?

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1 See for example Eterno (2006) with respect to policing. However, countless journals are devoted to gender stratification. See for example Gender and Society, Women’s Studies, and Women and Criminal Justice, as well as books on the subject including “The Feminine Mystique” (Friedan 1963).
This research has three objectives. First, is to analyze the coverage of domestic abuse before and after 1994, a major year for domestic abuse legislation, as the 1994 Violence Against Women Act was signed into federal law. It is also important to note that 1994 was also the time that O. J. Simpson faced double-murder charges for the killings of his ex-wife and her friend in Los Angeles. This case helped alert the public to the problem of domestic abuse. Second, a thematic analysis on the type of coverage of domestic abuse present in the criminal justice and criminology textbooks will be performed utilizing specified indicators of coverage. Third, a comparative analysis will be performed comparing the coverage of domestic abuse between the criminal justice and criminology textbooks to examine for changes in type of coverage between the disciplines over time.

The current research seeks to fill a prominent void in the domestic abuse literature by analyzing textbook content that many students, and perhaps academics, have taken for granted. Additionally, it is important to note that this is the first analysis of its kind, as far as this research can detect, that measures domestic abuse in criminal justice and criminology texts.

**THE 1994 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT**

The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 was developed in order to assist victims of domestic violence. The legislation “takes aim at [domestic violence] from four different perspectives; rectifying imbalances [between men and women], helping survivors, providing education, and requiring equal treatment” (Biden, 1993). Enacted by Congress and signed into law by then President Bill Clinton, this ground-breaking legislation was the initial action by the government to combat domestic violence (McMillion, 2000), making certain forms of domestic abuse a federal crime, therefore punishable by federal sanctions.

This legislation granted states federal funds, nearly $1.6 billion distributed over a six-year period, in order to update and strengthen each states criminal justice institutions to better handle domestic abuse incidents.

In addition to the criminal provisions of interstate domestic violence, controversial civil provisions were included. If a crime is motivated by gender, this constitutes a civil rights violation (McTaggart, 1998), therefore, in addition to federal sanction, allowing a victim of domestic abuse to take private civil action against the abuser. Other provisions include the creation of the Violence Against Women Office, which currently operates within the Department of Justice.

As noted, these provisions are federal law and therefore applicable across the country, making the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 an important milestone in the fight against domestic abuse. This being the case, greater public awareness has brought domestic abuse to the attention of policymakers. Additionally, feminist groups have joined together to help increase the public’s awareness of the ever pervasive issue of wife-battering.

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2The O.J. Simpson trial was included due to the fact that this occurred in 1994, the same year as the primary interest of this research, the Violence Against Women Act.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior research analyzing the coverage of domestic abuse in introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks is quite limited, though the topic has been speculated upon before (see Wright 1995, 113). There has been some research conducted on the coverage in criminal justice/criminology texts with respect to treatment of domestic abuse by the media, the representation of women in media, and feminism. For example, Maxwell, Huxford, Borum, and Hornik (2000) examined newspaper coverage of domestic abuse before and after the O. J. Simpson double murder trial. The study examined the frequency as well as the content of newspaper articles that pertained to domestic abuse. In order to effectively examine coverage, ten indicators of social coverage and four indicators of broader domestic abuse were developed. Results indicated that there was an increase in domestic abuse related articles immediately after the O. J. Simpson case. However, the authors caution “a long term positive trend in domestic [abuse] coverage [was present] before the Simpson case” (Maxwell et al., 2000, p. 262). Absent from the Maxwell et al. study was any consideration of the possible effects that the 1994 Violence Against Women Act may have had on the coverage of domestic abuse.

Hawkins and Humes (2002, p. 247) contend that the “O. J. Simpson case forced domestic violence issues into the national spotlight and undoubtedly opened political doors.” Nevertheless, the coverage of domestic abuse by the media appears to be somewhat dependent upon an external stimulus. The media coverage of domestic abuse has been previously shown to be subject to misinterpretations of factual evidence, personal biases, and ignorance of the dynamics of domestic abuse. This was the case in research conducted by Bullock and Cubert (2002), who conducted a content analysis examining domestic abuse fatalities in forty newspapers.

The concept of blaming a victim for her own felonious victimization has been examined in criminology textbooks as well. Wisan (1979) noted that the coverage of rape in criminology textbooks often includes the stereotypical rape myths as a modeling theme. The very existence of such myths in any authoritative textual context maybe due to the personal stereotypes held by the author. Wright (1988, p. 158) concurs and notes that the “treatment of women as victims is by far more common than the treatment of women as resistors.”

There has been additional research examining the amount of representation that women receive in the media. Various previous analyses have indicated that women do not receive an adequate amount of textual coverage. The representation of women and crime issues has also been examined. Prior research also indicates that even though scientific advances are published in scholarly journals, there appears to be great hesitation among textbook authors to update their material. Wright (1992) contends that textual coverage of women and crime can go unmodified for great periods of time.

These results and contentions are further supported by additional previous analyses examining women in news photos and concluding that women are under-represented. Photograph analyses in criminal justice and criminology textbooks have also yielded similar results. Dorworth and Henry (1992) noted that women were under-represented in photographs in their sample of 22 introductory criminal justice textbooks printed between 1984 and 1989. It is
important to note that while their research was extensive, the authors neglected any serious mention of domestic abuse. In a similar study, Baro and Eigenberg (1993) examined 1,373 photographs in 22 introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks printed between 1988 and 1991. Their results supported the findings of Dorworth and Henry and indicated that “women [were] rendered invisible” (Baro and Eigenberg 1993, p. 3). However, this study also ignored any serious mention of domestic abuse.

In addition to the overall apparent suppression of women in media and textbooks, there is evidence that indicates that feminism and feminist beliefs are also suppressed. For instance, Lind and Salo (2002) concluded that feminists and feminism ideologies are rather absent from news television programs. There is additional evidence that extends this claim to introductory criminology textbooks. For instance, in a content analysis of 35 criminology textbooks printed between 1985 and 1992, Wachholz (1994) concluded that feminist scholarship, ideals, and theories were treated less than fairly and were subject to overly negative criticism.

METHOD

Utilizing a sample consisting of 31 introductory criminal justice and 29 introductory criminology textbooks, the research objective was to analyze the amount and type of textual coverage that domestic abuse received in the sample textbooks. Textbooks in the study were published from 1984 until 2004. Therefore, observations are made before and after the hypothesized critical year, 1994: the year of the Violence Against Women Act, as well as the O. J. Simpson trial. Coverage is measured by analyzing the total percentage of the textbooks’ coverage of domestic abuse. This value is the summation of the indicators (see table 1), added to the pertinent photograph value, divided by the total pages of the particular textbook.

A thematic analysis on the presentation of domestic abuse in the sample textbooks from 1984 until 2004 is also performed, utilizing the eleven indicators of domestic abuse textual coverage in order to examine the type of presentation (see table 1). Questions of particular interest include: What particular dynamics are being presented over others? How exactly has the presentation of domestic abuse evolved over the time parameter? This application of the indicators allows a micro-level examination of the textual presentation of domestic abuse.

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3 The authors undertook a comprehensive search for all criminal justice and criminology textbooks during the timeframe of study (e.g. WorldCat and publisher websites were consulted). While it is impossible to say that every textbook was included, the sample of 60 were the only ones reasonably available. The authors are confident that this was a representative sample of penned texts during this period. Readers are cautioned that while this sample is certainly representative, the authors had some limited access to older texts which is a limitation of this study.

4 Please see references section for complete listing of texts. Note that some texts are different editions.

5 The total page count does not include the table of contents, appendices, or index. The count starts on the first page of the text designated as “page 1."
A comparative analysis between the criminal justice and criminology textbooks is also performed. The indicators are again used in order to examine the overall presentation of domestic abuse as well as the type of presentation of domestic abuse. Though there are similarities between the two disciplines and some scholars use the terms “criminal justice” and “criminology” interchangeably, there may exist subtle differences in the coverage of domestic abuse between the textbooks. The purpose of this objective is to compare and contrast the coverage of domestic abuse in books that identify themselves as criminal justice versus those that are identified as criminology. Questions of particular interest include: What type of textbook presents more overall information about domestic abuse? What particular dynamics are presented in the two types of textbooks?

In order to effectively measure the amount of textual coverage of domestic abuse within the sample textbooks, a quantitative ratio scale is utilized. The unique page space scale or (UPS) measures textual content by assigning a quantitative value to pertinent text. The scale was first used by Stolley and Hall (1994) and used in subsequent research (Hall and Stolley, 1997). This scale assigns a value of .05 for each pertinent sentence and a value of 1.00 for each pertinent page. In order to effectively measure domestic abuse, this research expanded the ratio scale to measure photographs that often appear throughout textbooks. Photographs that are relative to domestic abuse are assigned a quantitative value relevant to the approximate page space they occupy. These values are .25 for a photograph that occupies approximately 25% of a page, .50 for a photograph that occupies approximately 50% of a page, .75 for a photograph that occupies approximately 75% of a page, and 1.00 for a photograph that occupies a full page. This photograph scale is titled the pertinent photograph scale, or (PPS). Total (PPS) results are counted separately from the totals of the (UPS) except when reporting the total percentage of coverage that domestic abuse occupies in the sample textbooks. The formula used to calculate total space occupied by domestic abuse in a particular text is conveyed in equation (1):

\[
\text{Total} \% = \frac{\sum \text{UPS} + \sum \text{PPS}}{\text{Total Pages}}
\]

Whereas % is the total percent that domestic abuse occupies in the textbook. This is the sum of the (UPS) and the (PPS) divided by the total pages of the textbook. The total percentages as well as the (UPS) values listed were based on examination of textual content that started on page one and ended on the last page of the last chapter of the textbooks.

In order to locate all relevant text associated with domestic abuse, the index and table of contents of each book in the sample was exhaustively consulted and examined, a method similar to previous research (Burns, 2002; and Lynch, McGurrin, & Fenwick, 2004). By using this method, we minimize, to the extent possible, hidden measurable text. However, it is still possible that pertinent text could be missed and this is an inevitable result of any textual content analysis (Burns, 2002). However, we do take an additional step to further minimize any missed text; any topic that is even remotely associated (i.e. anything referring to domestic abuse, male or female, heterosexual or homosexual, etc) with domestic abuse was consulted.

Once all of the appropriate pages were recorded, each page was consulted and its text was coded for manifest content pertinent to domestic abuse (see table 1) in accordance with the discontinuous quantitative ratio scale guidelines discussed earlier. Manifest content is defined as
what is written in a given communication. Potter and Donnerstein (1999, p. 265) contend that
the coding of manifest content “is one of clerical recording [where the] coder marks the
occurrence on a coding sheet every time they see the appearance of the manifest content.”
Again, this is common practice among social scientists using this method. One main issue that
arises during the coding of manifest content involves the objectivity of the coder. Potter and
Donnerstein (1999, p. 265) contend “objectivity is quite a reasonable expectation when coding
manifest content.” The now-coded text was then categorized utilizing a specially designed
coding sheet and the eleven classificatory indicators of domestic abuse textual coverage (see
table 1). To ensure content validity, these categories were developed after a rather extensive
review of the scholarly literature focusing on the dynamics of domestic abuse. These indicators
are both exhaustive and mutually exclusive whereas each individual sentence can only be
counted once (given a value of .05) and can only be classified for one category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Indicators of Domestic Abuse Textual Coverage</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Victim Characteristics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Offender Characteristics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Theoretical Perspective</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Homosexual Domestic Abuse</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Legal and Policy Matters</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Feminist Perspective</strong></td>
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<td><strong>In-Depth Case Study</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Nature of Domestic Abuse</strong></td>
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Before the sample procurement stage, three criteria were developed in order to ensure
that each textbook was appropriate to this study. The first criterion was that each textbook be
either of criminal justice or criminology scholarship. This was relatively easy to confirm since
most of the textbooks in the sample were labeled as either criminal justice or criminology.
Books that were not labeled as either were selected after a thorough examination of prior content.
analyses of introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks. The second criterion was
that each textbook be of introductory level. This was moderately easy to confirm since many of
the textbooks were labeled as an introductory text. However, in cases where this was not true,
the bulk of previous content analyses were consulted. The third criterion was that each textbook
had to be published within the time frame parameters of this study, 1984 to 2004. This period of
ten years before and after the hypothesized interruption, 1994, was thought to be necessary in
order to examine the hypothesized change in the coverage of domestic abuse. This was done in
order to acquire as many textbooks as possible.

The sampling technique was purposive. The researchers exhaustively pursued textbooks
that fit the three criteria and managed to obtain at least one textbook for each specified year of
observation. The utilization of a purposive sample was necessary since there are no existing
sampling frames of introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks. To ensure the study
included as many of the textbooks as possible, other textbook analyses in criminal
justice/criminology were extensively reviewed. The literature indicates that the use of non-
probability sampling in content analyses of criminal justice and criminology textbooks is
appropriate (Burns 2002; and Lynch et al., 2004). Several textbooks selected did have the same
author, but were different editions (printed at different time periods). This was not a concern
since the purpose of the current research was to measure textual coverage of domestic abuse over
time. Textbook authors do change their material between editions, usually adding updated
material. This “adding” of new text was observed in the books examined.

As noted, the textbooks collected covered a time period of 21 years, 10 years before and
10 years after the 1994 Violence Against Women Act. Textbooks were also collected for the
1994 period. The number of texts used in this study is one of the most extensive to date.
Additionally, it is the only study examining domestic violence coverage in such textbooks. The
publishing date was used as a dividing point for sample inclusion.

To help minimize coding errors and to increase coder reliability, the sample texts were
read and coded twice with a two month interruption between observations. There were very few
inconsistencies in the coded content between the first and second observations, indicating strong
reliability. However, when an inconsistency was found, that particular text was re-coded in its
entirety. This procedure helped minimize the inconsistencies in the data.

Research Questions

The primary question of this research concerns presentation over time. Does the overall
amount of coverage of domestic abuse within the sample textbooks increase following 1994 (the
year the Violence Against Women Act was signed into federal law)? To assist the formulation of
this hypothesis, we turn to related research. Maxwell et al. (2000, p. 269), asserts that
“recognition of and discussion about a public issue prompt legislative responses that promote
additional news coverage.” Therefore it is possible that criminal justice and criminology

6 This research was limited by the amount of funds available to the researchers. One graduate
student was used as a coder under the strict supervision of an experienced researcher. While, this
is not unusual, the authors would have preferred to have had a team of coders. Nevertheless, the
authors are confident that the study is presenting accurate results.
textbooks have also increased coverage of domestic abuse following 1994. This is the basis for Hypothesis 1, in which we expect the total UPS coverage of domestic abuse in the sample textbooks will visibly increase following 1994. Hypothesis 2 focuses on the thematic content of domestic abuse in the textbooks. We expect that the values of the indicators of coverage outlined in table 1 will be numerically greater following 1994.

A third hypothesis was examined that focuses on the comparative aspects of the criminal justice and criminology textbooks. Historically, the foundation of modern criminal justice began as a means to provide education to law enforcement officers. Today, the criminal justice discipline is classified by scholars as focusing on "decision-making processes, operations, and justice related concerns as the efficiency of police and courts, and corrections systems" (Adler, Mueller, and Laufer 1995, p.18). Conversely, criminology originates from many diverse and established disciplines including psychology, medicine, biology, economics, sociology, and psychiatry, to name a few. The discipline of criminology is concerned with the application of the scientific method to explain criminality from a diverse standpoint. In particular, legal guidelines are an excellent indicator of the differences of criminal justice and criminology texts. The law will likely be more relevant to those working in the criminal justice system rather than criminologists who take a more positivist approach. Thus, Hypothesis 3 expects that the legal and policy categories of domestic abuse (see table 1) will receive greater coverage in the criminal justice textbooks compared to criminology textbooks in both pre and post-1994 periods.

RESULTS

A total of sixty ($N = 60$) introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks were analyzed for their coverage of domestic abuse between 1984 and 2004. There were 31,233 total pages in the textbooks with an overall mean of 519 pages per textbook. As noted, this research had three objectives. First, was to analyze the coverage of domestic abuse before and after 1994. The second objective was to perform a thematic analysis on the coverage of domestic abuse in the criminal justice and criminology textbooks. The third objective was to perform a comparative analysis comparing the coverage of domestic abuse between the criminal justice and criminology textbooks over time.

The Coverage of Domestic Abuse Before and After 1994

Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics of the total unique pages devoted to the coverage of domestic abuse in the sample textbooks of both disciplines before and after 1994. Overall

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7 It is possible that the due process revolution of the 1960’s is having more of an impact now as criminal justice policy makers and practitioners of earlier eras retire (see for example Eterno (2003)).

8 However, since we expect overall coverage to increase, we are only comparing legal and policy coverage in this hypothesis. Statistically, one must be careful not to compare this legal coverage with overall coverage because domestic violence coverage as a whole has increased so dramatically.

9 The methodology utilized in this study is common to content analysis. The authors reviewed previous literature in this area and used statistical analyses widely accepted in this field.
coverage of domestic abuse in the pre-1994 textbooks ($n = 32$), both criminal justice and criminology, consisted of 40.10 total pages covering domestic abuse. This was out of a total of 16,570 pages. Examining only criminal justice textbooks prior to 1994 ($n = 16$), we see that
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Detailing the Coverage of Domestic Abuse in the Textbook Sample

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>CRIMINAL JUSTICE TEXTBOOKS (N = 31)</th>
<th>CRIMINOLOGY TEXTBOOKS (N = 29)</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Pre-1994 (n = 16)</td>
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<td>-Victim Characteristics</td>
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<td>.60 .04 .11 .45</td>
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<td>.35 .02 .04 .15</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Offender Characteristics</td>
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<td>1.20 .08 .13 .50</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Theoretical Perspective</td>
<td>.10 .01 .03 .10</td>
<td>.80 .05 .11 .40</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Homosexual Domestic Abuse</td>
<td>.00 .00 .00 .00</td>
<td>4.50 .35 .79 2.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Physical Domestic Abuse</td>
<td>.10 .01 .03 .10</td>
<td>.90 .06 .12 .45</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Sexual Domestic Abuse</td>
<td>.20 .01 .05 .20</td>
<td>2.65 .20 .29 .95</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Psychological Domestic Abuse</td>
<td>.00 .00 .00 .00</td>
<td>9.20 .60 .79 2.40</td>
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<td>-Feminist Perspective</td>
<td>.10 .01 .03 .10</td>
<td>5.45 .42 .56 1.65</td>
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<td>Policy Matters</td>
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<tr>
<td>-In-Depth Case Study</td>
<td>.95 .06 .17 .70</td>
<td>4.70 .36 .78 2.75</td>
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<td>-Nature of Domestic Abuse</td>
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<td>1.25 .10 .13 .30</td>
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<td>16.10 .12 .14 .80</td>
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<td>Total UPS = 13.10 / 8,643 pgs.</td>
<td>Total UPS = 40.50 / 8,474 pgs.</td>
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<td>% of Texts = .16 %</td>
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<td>Total UPS = 27.00 / 7,927 pgs.</td>
<td>Total UPS = 53.05 / 6,189 pgs.</td>
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<td>% of Texts = .37 %</td>
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- Legal and Policy Matters
.16%, or 13.10 pages covered domestic abuse of the total 8,643 pages. Pre-1994 criminology textbooks \((n = 16)\) spent approximately .37%, or 27.00 pages covering domestic abuse of 7,927 total pages.

As for the post-1994 textbooks, Table 2 shows that there was an increase in the coverage of domestic abuse. Overall coverage of domestic abuse in the post-1994 textbooks \((n = 28)\), both criminal justice and criminology, consisted of 93.50 total pages covering domestic abuse. This was out of a total of 14,663 pages. Post-1994 criminal justice textbooks \((n = 15)\) spent approximately .55%, or 40.50 pages covering domestic abuse of 8,474 total pages, thus reflecting an increase of approximately 209%. Post-1994 criminology textbooks \((n = 13)\) spent approximately .91%, or 53.05 pages of their 6,189 total pages covering domestic abuse, thus reflecting an increase of 96%. Hypothesis 1, which expected that the total UPS coverage of domestic abuse in the sample textbooks will be greater following 1994, was, in fact, supported (see Table 2).

**Micro-level Analysis of the Coverage of Domestic Abuse: Pre and Post 1994**

Hypothesis 2, which expected that the all of the indicators of coverage (see Table 1) would be greater in the post-1994 textbooks than the pre-1994 textbooks, was nearly fully supported. Table 2 presents the results of the application of the eleven domestic abuse indicators on the textbooks pre and post 1994. Many of the indicators of coverage did feature an increase following 1994, including victim characteristics, offender characteristics, theoretical perspectives, physical domestic abuse, psychological domestic abuse, feminist perspectives, legal and policy matters, in-depth case studies, and the nature of domestic abuse (see Table 2). Interestingly, the homosexual domestic abuse indicator did increase in the post-criminology texts but not in the post-criminal justice textbooks. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the second hypothesis was the decreasing coverage of sexual domestic abuse in the criminology textbooks following 1994. Analyzing this decrease from a feminist perspective may very well be indicative of an underlying bias against women in criminology textbooks, and therefore requires additional study.

**The Comparative Analysis of the Criminal Justice and Criminology Textbooks**

This research also determined if any difference or similarities in the coverage of domestic abuse exist between criminal justice versus criminology textbooks. Overall, the criminology textbooks, both pre and post-1994, did exhibit more coverage of domestic abuse compared to their criminal justice counterparts. Utilizing the eleven indicators of coverage, results did indicate that the criminal justice textbooks covered domestic abuse mainly from a legalistic approach. For instance, the pre-criminal justice textbooks spent approximately 82%, or 10.70

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It is important to note that the post-criminology textbook sample size \((n = 13)\) is three less than the sample of the pre-criminology textbooks \((n = 16)\). However, this decrease may be too substantial to blame on the lack of 3 textbooks. To explain further, the mean amount of coverage of sexual domestic abuse in the post-criminology textbooks was .42 pages \((s = .56)\). However, the extreme range of coverage of sexual domestic abuse was 1.65 pages. Therefore, it is possible, but not probable that this dramatic decrease can be attributed to the lack of three textbooks. It is our opinion that this decrease warrants additional study.
pages, of their total coverage of domestic abuse focusing on the legal and policy issues, whereas the pre-criminology textbooks spent approximately 21%, or 5.80 pages, of their total coverage of domestic abuse focusing on the legal and policy issues. Interestingly, the post-criminal justice and criminology textbooks nearly doubled and tripled their legalistic and policy coverage, respectively. Therefore, hypothesis 3, which predicted greater coverage of legal and policy matters in the pre and post-1994 criminal justice textbooks than the criminology textbooks, was supported. Interestingly, both criminal justice and criminology texts increased their coverage of the other aspects of domestic abuse, therefore reducing their heavy coverage of the legalistic and policy issues. For instance, the post-criminal justice and criminology textbooks spent approximately 50% and 30% of their total coverage of domestic abuse focusing on the legal and policy issues, respectively. One explanation for this is that the extensive coverage of the legalistic and policy approach in the criminal justice textbooks may be attributed to the foundations of the discipline, which was essentially to provide education to law enforcement officers.

The coverage of domestic abuse in the criminology textbooks suggests they use a more eclectic approach, utilizing all of the indicators in both pre and post observations. This approach may be attributed to the foundations of criminology, which, as previously noted, is an eclectic discipline built upon many established disciplines including psychology, medicine, biology, economics, sociology, and psychiatry, to name a few. The diverse discipline of criminology may be more concerned with the application of the scientific method to explain criminality, while criminal justice tends to focus on “decision-making processes, operations, and justice related concerns as the efficiency of police and courts, and corrections systems” (Adler, Mueller, & Laufer, 1995, p. 18).
DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The coverage of domestic abuse was examined in 60 criminal justice and criminology textbooks printed before and after 1994, the year the Violence Against Women Act was signed into law. As predicted, there was an increase in the overall coverage of domestic abuse following 1994 (see Table 2 & Figure 1).\textsuperscript{11} In addition to the impact of the 1994 Violence Against Women Act, we attribute this increase in textual coverage to the vast strides that women have achieved over the past 25 years as well as the subsequent shifts to modernize and eliminate outdated domestic abuse policies.\textsuperscript{12} Injustices were brought to the attention of the public as well as the academic community through groundbreaking research, including the Minneapolis

\textsuperscript{11} While this research is indicative of the impact of the 1994 VAWA, it is likely that cultural and other influences not measured here were contributing factors as well.

\textsuperscript{12} Some may argue that women have not made vast strides, but given the fact that women were not voting less than 100 years ago, the authors are confident in this statement. However, this does not mean that women have achieved full equality. Indeed, the authors believe that discrimination (e.g. glass ceiling), sexual harassment, domestic violence, and other issues are particularly noteworthy for improvement.
Domestic Violence Experiment (Sherman & Berk, 1984), and subsequent replication studies. Additionally, laws and policies regarding domestic abuse have been changed and some have been eliminated entirely. For example, a man living in the U.S. today can now be prosecuted for marital rape due to the elimination of the marital rape exemption. The results of this paper clearly indicate that coverage of domestic abuse in text is increasing. This more accurate portrayal should eventually lead to legislation and a society with less domestic abuse (e.g. the reauthorization of the 1994 VAWA in 2000). This is a topic for future researchers to address.

It is evident that the fight against the injustices of domestic abuse as well as the policies and procedures dealing with it is an ongoing battle. It is our belief that this ongoing battle may be partly responsible for maintaining an upward trend in the presentation of domestic abuse in criminal justice and criminology textbooks. Figure 1 depicts this apparent upward trend. Although the 1994 Violence Against Women Act was a tremendous milestone in this battle, additional victories have been achieved including numerous successful lawsuits filed by victims of domestic abuse, and additional protective legislative acts (i.e. the 2000 re-authorization of the original Violence Against Women Act of 1994).

Additionally, this analysis did examine the coverage of homosexual domestic abuse. As Table 2 indicates, coverage of this dynamic was absent from both the pre and post-1994 criminal justice textbooks. Similarly, the criminology textbooks surveyed were also lacking in-depth coverage of this dynamic. This lack of coverage may be due to the absence of legitimacy of the homosexual couple in modern society. There have been very few strides and victories by this group to remedy the issue of legitimacy. We believe that this present state of affairs of the homosexual couple may be responsible for the lack of coverage of the homosexual dynamic we observed in the texts.

Based on this research, we expect the textual coverage of homosexual domestic abuse to increase in the near future, as the popular culture changes. In July 2005, Canada became the third country in the world to legalize homosexual marriage, joining Belgium and the Netherlands. As these newly legalized couples increase in numbers, it is logical to assume that incidents of homosexual domestic abuse will start to gain the attention of both the legal and academic communities. An interesting topic for future research to address is the path of recognition and subsequent legitimization of the homosexual couple and the situation of domestic abuse within this couple and how these factors may influence textual coverage in introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks.

As noted, this analysis did observe a decrease in the coverage of sexual domestic abuse in the post-1994 criminology texts. Since this was the only decrease of all the indicators, this result appears to be authentic. This decline may be due to a lack of new research or perhaps an over-dependence on older studies on sexual domestic abuse. Analyzing this decrease from a feminist perspective may very well be indicative of an underlying bias against women in criminology textbooks. However, this assertion does warrant additional research.

Judging from this analysis, the textual coverage of domestic abuse has advanced in quantity and quality over the time parameter of this study. However, there is room for
improvement, and one possible solution includes introductory textbooks devoting an entire chapter to domestic abuse rather than including it in a sub-section hidden in a chapter on “violent crime” or “women and crime”. This separation may help to convey the obvious importance of the issue of domestic abuse to the student and therefore may be treated with a higher level of regard.

Another improvement includes using the most up to date research focusing on domestic abuse in addition to the more classic studies. Textbook authors should include more current research from diverse sources. There have been numerous recent contributions to the body of literature of domestic abuse from the nursing field, medical field, and family studies to name only a few, and it is believed that the use of materials from these diverse sources may help expand the students base of knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse. Since criminal justice and criminology are interdisciplinary fields, textbook authors would do well to familiarize themselves and utilize this “modern” material.

Given the importance of textbooks, authors/publishers owe to the student timely, accurate, and extensive coverage. As noted, the increase in textual coverage of domestic abuse observed in this research is a very positive sign indicating progress. Some topics, however, had only cursory information such as homosexual domestic violence. Such topics, as noted in this research, need to be revisited by future research.

REFERENCES


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13 Readers are referred to *The Journal of Family Violence, Violence Against Women, Violence and Victims, Women And Criminal Justice, Social Science and Medicine, Violence and Abuse, Journal of Clinical Nursing,* and the *Journal of Human Development* among the many others.


