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Fatal and Non-Fatal Intimate Partner and Family Violence Against Older Women:
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Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI):
Lynn A. Addington, JD, PhD
Professor of Justice, Law and Criminology

Contact information (address, email, telephone):
Address: American University, 4400 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington DC 20016-8043
Email: adding@american.edu
Telephone: 202-885-2902

Award recipient organization (name and address):
American University, 4400 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington DC 20016-8043

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Final Research Report

This Final Research Report summarizes the work conducted for the project entitled "Fatal and Non-Fatal Intimate Partner and Family Violence Against Older Women: An Exploration of Age and Police Response to Inform Research, Policy and Practice" funded by National Institute of Justice (NIJ) award 15PNIJ-21-GG-02801-REVA. This report is organized around the headings and sub-headings recommended by NIJ for its final reports.

Summary of the Project

Major Goals and Objectives

This NIJ-funded research project examined police response to fatal and non-fatal intimate partner violence (IPV) and family violence (FV) against older women using three existing data sources: the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), and the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS).

This project had five main goals. The first was to describe the rates and characteristics of IPV and FV against older women. The second goal sought to explore patterns of reporting to police and police actions in cases of IPV and FV against older women. The third was to examine arrest patterns for this violence and consider how arrests may be affected by victim and incident characteristics, as well as law enforcement resources concerning older adults. The fourth goal sought to ensure findings are disseminated not only to the research community but are accessible to relevant practitioner groups and policymakers. The fifth was to identify areas for future work that are built upon this study's findings.

This project had seven primary objectives: (1) to compare various age demarcation measures of the "older women" age category and how they might affect findings obtained for

rates and patterns of IPV and FV; (2) to examine the variation of older women (in terms of demographics such as age subgroups) for IPV and FV rates and patterns; (3) to describe patterns of reporting to police and police response to IPV and FV against older women; (4) to explore how arrests might vary in cases of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV; (5) to provide a context for understanding police response to IPV and FV against older women by comparing (a) violence against older women by non-intimate/family offenders and (b) IPV and FV against younger women; (6) to share these findings with relevant academic and practitioner audiences; and (7) to identify areas for future work to inform future research and policy.

Research Questions

The research questions for this project were organized into four overall categories with specific questions listed within each category.

The first set of research questions provided a context for this study with an initial understanding of the rates and characteristics of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV against older women. The specific questions included: what are the rates of IPV and FV against older women, and how might these vary across different age group demarcations? What are the rates by age subgroups? What are the incident characteristics of IPV and FV against older women, and how might these vary by demographics such as age subgroup?

A second set of questions explored patterns of police reporting, police actions at the scene, and subsequent police follow-up. Specific questions included: for non-fatal IPV and FV, what are the patterns of reporting to the police, and how might these patterns vary by age group and subgroup? What are common reasons for reporting (or not) IPV and FV across demographics such as age subgroups? What actions do police take across demographics, such as age

subgroups? For fatal IPV and FV, what are the patterns of cases where offenders have prior contact with police?

The third set of questions focused on arrest in cases of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV against older women. Specific questions included: what are the patterns of whether an arrest occurs or not? What are these patterns across demographics, such as age subgroups? Do arrest patterns vary by measures of police resources and policies that support older adults?

The final set of research questions provided a context for the reporting and police response findings and whether these might vary based on victim-offender relationship or victim age. Comparisons were made with (a) violence against older women by non-intimate/family offenders and (b) IPV and FV against younger women. Specific questions included: for non-fatal violence, do patterns of reporting and police actions vary by relationship or victim age? For fatal and non-fatal violence, do arrest patterns vary by relationship or victim age?

Research Design (methods, analytical and data analysis techniques)

Data

This study used data from the NCVS, NIBRS, and NVDRS to answer the research questions posed. All three data collections identify cases of IPV and FV against older women and the details required to study police responses. The NCVS and NIBRS identify cases of non-fatal IPV and FV. The NIBRS and NVDRS identify cases of fatal IPV and FV. All three benefit from relying on nationally representative samples (NCVS), national coverage (NVDRS), or multi-state coverage (NIBRS). These sources also collect information on non-intimate/family violence and

younger victims to allow comparisons. The following discussion briefly describes each dataset and its strengths for this study.[1]

NCVS: The NCVS is one of two national measures of crime in the United States. This survey is collected using a stratified, multistage cluster sample of households. Each household member aged 12 and older is interviewed regarding their experience with personal victimization sustained during the previous six months. Respondents who indicate they were victimized are asked follow-up questions about each incident including police reporting and actions. The NCVS is uniquely suited for the present study as it asks crime victims a series of detailed questions about reporting to police, the reasons for reporting (or not), police actions at the scene and subsequent to the incident, and if an arrest was made. This study needed to pool multiple years of NCVS concatenated victim data to have enough cases for the initial analyses. Specifically, data were used from 2011-19 based on 2011 being the year that the first members of the so-called baby boomer generation turned 65 (Census Bureau, 2019) and 2019 being the year before the global pandemic (which avoided the uncertain impact of the stay-at-home public health orders on these data collections).

NIBRS: The UCR program is the other national measure of crime in the United States and is based on official reports of crimes that come to the attention of the police. NIBRS is the current format for collecting UCR data, which captures incident-level details and replaces the former summary reporting system. As of January 2021, NIBRS was scheduled to be the only format accepted for law enforcement agencies to report their crime to the UCR program (FBI, 2020; FBI, 2016). Since the years covered by this project are prior to 2021, the NIBRS data used

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[1] More detailed and technical descriptions of these datasets can be found in sources such as the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), 2014 (for NCVS); the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2021 (for NVDRS); and Addington, 2019, and Barnett-Ryan, 2007 (for NIBRS).

provide multistate, but not national, coverage.[2] NIBRS data are uniquely well suited for this study as they collect arrest and related clearance information for each incident directly from police records. This study used 2019 for the non-fatal IPV and FV analyses.[3] The year 2019 avoided issues with the uncertain impact of the pandemic on this data collection. For fatal IPV and FV, this study pooled three years of data (2017-19) to provide additional cases for analyses and to parallel the data years pooled for the NVDRS analyses.

NVDRS: The NVDRS is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) incident-based surveillance system of homicides and other violent deaths. Quantitative variables are gathered by trained data abstractors from multiple sources including death certificates, coroner/medical examiner records, and law enforcement reports (CDC, 2021). The NVDRS started in 2002 with six states. As of 2018, all 50 states and Washington, DC, are included (CDC, n.d.). The NVDRS data have two unique strengths for this study. One is that the NVDRS takes a public health perspective and includes details not captured by the crime-centered NCVS and NIBRS. Examples include a history of abuse by the offender and roles such as the offender being a caregiver to the victim. The second is that the restricted-use NVDRS data provide abstractor narratives. These short incident summaries have the potential to provide additional incident details not captured by the quantitative variables (Lyons et al., 2020). This study pooled three years of data (2017-19) to ensure enough cases to analyze the fatal IPV and FV incidents.

Using the Three Datasets Together. Each dataset was analyzed individually, and analyses focused on the strengths of each one. This study also took a complementarity approach with the

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[2] For the years of this project, the number of states certified to contribute their UCR data via NIBRS ranged from 35 (in 2017) (FBI, 2018) to 39 (in 2019) (FBI, 2020). Certification to report NIBRS data does not automatically result in all law enforcement agencies in that state contributing NIBRS data.
[3] The number of law enforcement agencies participating in 2019 was 8,497 and 22,773 for 2017-2019 (FBI, 2018; FBI, 2019; FBI, 2020). Participating in the UCR program is voluntary but states and their law enforcement agencies must be certified to contribute their data to the UCR in NIBRS format.

three datasets. Here, the findings obtained were considered in a holistic manner that capitalized on the strengths of each one. By so doing, insights could be gained to guide future research that could not be accomplished using a single source.

Case Selection

Similar case definitions were used for all three datasets to identify the older women's age categories as well as IPV and FV. To define the older women's age categories, this study took an exploratory approach, given the lack of a uniform definition for age groups or subgroups. For the overall age group, this study used the three most common definitions (50 and older, 60 and older, and 65 and older). For age subgroups, the two most common approaches were used (specifically, the decade and Census subgroups).

IPV and FV cases were identified by the type of violence and relationship. The same types of violence were used for non-fatal IPV and FV in both the NCVS and NIBRS. These crimes included attempted and completed non-fatal physical assaultive violence (aggravated assault and simple assault) and sexual violence (rape/sexual assault). Both NIBRS and NVDRS collect information on fatal IPV and FV. NIBRS identifies these cases as murder and non-negligent manslaughter ("murders"). While the NVDRS uses the terminology "homicide", it defines "the term homicide in its narrower sense to indicate the intentional or assault-related killing of one person by another" (CDC, 2021, p. 16). This usage makes the NVDRS homicide term comparable to the NIBRS murder classification.[4] As such, this report uses "murder" to identify and discuss fatal IPV and FV incidents given the focus on police response including arrests of these cases.

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[4] The NVDRS documentation includes an extensive discussion of the homicide term and classification of cases in its data system. Interested readers are referred to the NVDRS Coding Manual (CDC, 2021).

For type of relationship, intimates in all three datasets included spouses, ex-spouses, and boy/girlfriends. The NCVS and NVDRS included former boy/girlfriends, and NIBRS included common-law spouses. All these relationships were identified as intimate partners. For this study, intimate partners were limited to opposite-sex couples. The small number of same-sex couples across the three datasets prevented analyzing these cases separately. Previous research suggests that same-sex IPV may have different characteristics than opposite-sex couples (e.g., Addington, 2020; Hillman, 2020). For FV in this study, all non-intimate family members were included. While the specific designations vary slightly across the three data collections, the effect was minimized as all three capture "other family" members. For example, all three identify "child", but only the NIBRS and NVDRS specifically identify "grandchild". While it does not specify the grandchild relationship, the NCVS would capture grandchildren under its "other family" category.

Finally, this study only included cases involving one victim and one offender. This decision is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Addington & Perumean-Chaney, 2014; Carmichael et al., 2019) and ensures statistical independence (Regoeczi et al., 2008).

Variables

In addition to the age demarcation and subgroups and types of violence, the variables used for this study can be categorized as those related to police activity (reporting to police and police response), arrest, and incident seriousness that might affect arrests. During the project, additional characteristics of the incident were identified as relevant to explore in connection with arrest patterns. These variables include exceptional clearance information,[5] indicators to explore

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[5] The FBI recognizes that circumstances may arise that prevent law enforcement agencies (LEAs) from making an arrest even though the offender is known. These situations may fall within the exceptional clearance category, which allows the incident to be cleared despite the lack of an arrest. According to the FBI (2021, p. 75): "To clear an offense by exceptional means, LEAs must meet ALL four of the following conditions: 1. The LEA investigation

paradigms of fatal violence (caregivers and mercy killings[6]) that might affect arrests, and indicators to explore ongoing violence (history of abuse and arguments) that might affect arrests.

Reporting to Police. Reporting to the police variables used information collected by the NCVS about whether the victim reported the incident to the police and the reasons they did (or did not) report. Whether the incident was reported to police or not was coded as a binary variable. The reasons for reporting (or not) were considered in rank order and compared across age and relationship groups. The categories for reporting and not reporting used by the NCVS are listed in Appendix A. The NCVS was used for this analysis as it is the only data collection of the three that provides details about reporting to police.

Police Activity. Police activity variables were based on the NCVS measures about whether police responded when the incident was reported and, if so, what specific actions they took (at the scene and in subsequent follow-ups). The actions at the scene variables were coded as a series of binary variables as to whether the police took report, searched, took evidence, asked questions, promised surveillance, or promised to follow up with the victim. The subsequent contact variable measures whether the police made any contact with the victim after the initial report. Two additional binary variables provide information on whether the victim filed a criminal complaint and whether the police made an arrest. Appendix B provides a list of the police actions and the victim-respondents who are eligible to answer those questions. The NCVS

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must have clearly and definitely established the identity of at least one offender. 2. The LEA must have sufficient probable cause to support arresting, charging, and prosecuting the offender. 3. The LEA must know the exact location of the offender so they could make an arrest if circumstances did not prevent it. 4. There must be a reason outside the control of the LEA preventing the arrest, charging, and turning over for prosecution."

[6] Mercy killings occur when the victim was killed, at the victim's request, out of compassion in order to end his or her pain or distress (CDC, 2021). To be counted as a mercy killing for purposes of the NVDRS, the CDC requires that documentation that the victim wanted to be killed and the individual who killed the victim was not charged with an intentional homicide (CDC, 2021).

was used for this analysis as it is the only data collection of the three that provides details about police activity.

Police Prior Contact with Offender. For fatal IPV and FV, the NVDRS was used at it collects information about whether the offender had contact with the police in the past 12 months. This variable was coded as a binary variable. It is limited to fatal violence, and it also does not specify whether the prior contact is related to the fatal IPV or FV incident.

Arrests. Both the NCVS and NIBRS collect arrest information. Of the two, the NCVS is the more limited measure, as it requires that the victim is aware of the arrest and has knowledge of it prior to their NCVS interview. In conducting the analysis for this study, too few cases involved an arrest to allow for detailed analyses. As such, this study focuses on NIBRS arrest data as they are a direct measure from police records.

Exceptional Clearances. NIBRS also identifies if an exceptional clearance occurred (i.e., the offender is known but certain circumstances prevent an arrest). During the research conducted for this project, it became apparent that exceptional clearances would be an important component for understanding arrest patterns. Clearances were considered separately from arrests. The three most relevant exceptional clearance circumstances for this study were (1) death of the offender, (2) prosecution declined by the prosecutor for reasons other than lack of probable cause, and (3) victim refused to cooperate in the prosecution.[7]

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[7] As noted above, the FBI (2021, p. 75) requires "[t]o clear an offense by exceptional means, LEAs [law enforcement agencies] must meet ALL four of the following conditions: 1. The LEA investigation must have clearly and definitely established the identity of at least one offender. 2. The LEA must have sufficient probable cause to support arresting, charging, and prosecuting the offender. 3. The LEA must know the exact location of the offender so they could make an arrest if circumstances did not prevent it. 4. There must be a reason outside the control of the LEA preventing the arrest, charging, and turning over for prosecution."
The list of accepted reasons for an exceptional clearance are: death of the offender, prosecution declined (by the prosecutor for other than lack of probable cause), the offender is in custody of other jurisdiction (includes extradition denied), victim refused to cooperate (in the prosecution), and juvenile/no custody (the handling of a juvenile without taking him/her into custody, but rather by oral or written notice given to the parents or legal guardian in a case involving a minor offense, such as petty larceny) (FBI, 2021).

Incident Seriousness. Previous studies of IPV overall (not limited to older women) suggest incident seriousness is associated with police reporting and arrest (Addington, 2020; Dichter et al., 2011). For this project, incident seriousness was measured as two binary variables: firearm-involved for fatal IPV and FV and non-simple assaults for non-fatal IPV and FV.

Additional Incident Context. The NVDRS includes variables that allow exploration of paradigms of fatal violence against older adults such as offenders who are caregivers and violent deaths characterized as mercy killings. Both might affect arrests and exceptional clearances. To be counted as a mercy killing, the CDC has a strict definition that requires "documentation that the victim wanted to be killed (e.g., left a note, told a relative or friend) and the law enforcement are not charging the suspect with an intentional homicide" (CDC, 2021, p. 121). For this study, the caregiving and mercy killing variables were coded as binary variables. The NVDRS also included variables that allow exploration of indicators of possible ongoing violence (history of abuse and arguments) that might affect arrests. The variables were coded as binary variables.

Comparison Groups

Two comparison groups were used to explore possible differences in reporting and police response. One comparison was based on victim-offender relationship. Here, comparisons were made with older women who experience violence committed by non-intimate/family members. These comparisons considered strangers as well as relationships other than intimates and family members. The other was based on age where comparisons were made with younger women who experience IPV or FV. These comparisons considered those under age 50 as well as the emerging adult ages of 18-25 given the risk of IPV in this age group (Rennison & Addington, 2015; Truman & Morgan, 2014).

Analysis Plan

As this project was exploratory in nature, descriptive statistics are informative and were used to answer the research questions posed. The specific analyses included rate calculations, the estimation of joint frequencies, and multivariate contingency tables. The analyses were conducted for each dataset separately. Separate analyses also were conducted for fatal IPV, non-fatal IPV, fatal FV, and non-fatal FV.

Victimization Rates. Fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV rates were calculated for the different age measures of older women (overall groups and subgroups). Separate rates were calculated for each of the three datasets (NCVS, NIBRS, NVDRS). Victimization rates were calculated using the number of victimizations as the numerator and specific population numbers from Census data as the denominator.[8]

Descriptive Analyses. Joint frequency distributions compared police response and incident characteristics across the different age group/subgroup categories. Descriptive analyses have two purposes. First, and primarily, is that they are informative in themselves. Little is known about IPV and FV against older women especially in terms of police response. Describing initial frequencies of police response as well as patterns from bivariate relationships constitute an important initial step. In addition, "visualizing" the data is a critical aspect of data analysis that criminologists often overlook (see Maltz, 2010, for a discussion). Descriptive statistics can identify patterns masked by complex statistical models. The second purpose is to consider the feasibility of additional analysis. In addition, small case counts for certain subgroups may require relying on descriptive analyses for insights.

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[8] To calculate the rates, the population denominator relied on the same years as were used to generate the numerator. The NCVS rates used Census data pooled from 2011 to 2019. The NVDRS rates used Census data pooled from 2017 to 2019. The non-fatal NIBRS rates used 2019 Census data, and the fatal rates used Census data pooled from 2017 to 2019.

Multivariate Analyses. The proposed analysis plan included multivariate analysis in the form of binary logistic regression modeling to identify relationships between incident characteristics and the outcomes of reporting to police and arrest. Due to limitations with the data, the proposed models could not be estimated. To address this unexpected limitation, multivariate contingency tables were developed to explore patterns among age subgroups, victim-offender relationships, incident characteristics, and arrests.

Expected Applicability of the Research

As noted in the proposal for this project, research is needed on IPV and FV against older women including work to gain an understanding of police responses to this violence. This response can be an important resource to ensure victims get immediate help, access to the justice system, and assistance with victim services (Augustyn & Willyard, 2022). While substantial bodies of work address domestic violence and elder abuse, little is known about older women who experience IPV or FV (Roberto et al., 2013; Meyer et al., 2020) or police reporting and arrests (Kang & Lynch, 2014; Klein et al., 2008). This lack of attention occurs despite the fact women are at risk for IPV and FV throughout their lifetimes including later life (Breiding et al., 2014) and older women endure more severe harms as a result of this violence than younger women (Crockett et al., 2015).

Work to address this gap in the literature is challenged by the absence of a common definition for the "older women" age category. This lack of consensus hinders building knowledge across studies (Crockett et al., 2015; Krienert & Walsh; 2010; Hall et al., 2016). Researchers also tend to group older women into a single age category, which can span 30-plus years. This practice prevents exploring patterns within this age group. The single age category

also reinforces viewing older women as a monolithic group and ignores differences across racial, ethnic and other identities.

Addressing this gap in the research is important for a few reasons. One is that the population at risk not only continues to grow (Ortman et al., 2014) but also continues to remain active. Traditional paradigms of aging are being challenged as older adults remain active at work, in dating and intimate relationships, and in caregiving for younger family members (Johnson & Parnell, 2016; Roberts et al., 2018; Pew Research Center, 2020). These changes have the potential to affect the risk of IPV and FV against older women (Salari & Maxwell, 2016). Second, work is needed to improve understanding of police response to this violence. Identifying police action can support future work to assess and improve the response to this violence. Third, addressing this research gap can inform practice and policy by supporting education for officers who work with older victims (Klein et al., 2008). Understanding this violence also could help challenge stereotypes of older women that may hinder police response (Brossoie & Roberto, 2015).

Given the limited knowledge in this area, it is important to first conduct what the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) called "basic research" in its *Visions 21* report (OVC, 2013; p. 1). Basic research generates foundational knowledge. It involves exploiting existing data sources to see how they can contribute to understanding the issues and generating an agenda for future research (OVC, 2013).

To summarize, the expected applicability of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV against older women using existing data sources (NCVS, NIBRS, and NVDRS) that have not previously been directed at this topic. Specifically, this study generated the recommended basic research/foundational knowledge by conducting

exploratory and descriptive analyses of these three data sources that identify what they collect and the limits of each. By providing this information, the present study created a framework to guide future work that can support effective law enforcement interventions in cases of IPV and FV against older women.

Participants and Other Collaborating Organizations

This project did not engage in original data collection. There were no participants or collaborating organizations.

Changes in Approach from Original Design and Reason for Change (if applicable)

The original design needed to be changed in two ways during the course of conducting this research. Both changes resulted from issues identified after the data were obtained and initially analyzed. In both cases, though, alternative analytical strategies were identified and implemented to allow the research questions to be answered.

One change was the need to pivot away from the proposed binary logistic regression models. The original research design proposed conducting a multivariate analysis of the NCVS and NIBRS data via binary logistic regression. A caveat was noted that this plan may need to be adjusted once the data were obtained and analyzed. When the data were accessed and reviewed, it became apparent these models could not be satisfactorily estimated. For the NCVS data, the limited number of unweighted cases prevented the estimation of binary logistic models. The option to pool more than the nine years of data was considered. Additional years did not generate an adequate number of cases without introducing unnecessary noise in the interpretation of the results. The NCVS data were used to provide descriptive details about police reporting, response, and activity. While the NIBRS data provided more cases than the NCVS, estimating the binary logistic models presented challenges. As discussed in the findings below, initial analyses

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identified the unexpected need to include exceptional clearance types. As a result, the variable of interest was no longer the binomial arrest measure. Alternative strategies were pursued, including multinomial logistic regression analyses. Ultimately, the decision was made to use multivariate contingency tables. Since this study was exploratory in nature, these tables were informative and provided key insights to understand arrest and exceptional clearance patterns across age subgroups and incident characteristics in cases of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV.

The second change concerned the generation of proposed additional variables. One source of proposed variables involved quantitative variables from NVDRS narratives, such as arrest information and protective orders. A review of the NVDRS narratives indicated that the information they provided was too sporadic to create useful variables for this project. To illustrate this challenge, narratives rarely indicated that a protection order had been sought and/or issued. The absence of this information, though, cannot be interpreted as meaning that no protection order was in place. It could only be said that the abstractor's narrative did not include this information. While the generated variables were not successful, this project did capitalize on NVDRS quantitative variables that were not originally identified in the proposed study. The relevance of these variables became apparent as the data were assessed. The other source of proposed variables was state mandatory arrest laws and law enforcement resources for the NIBRS analyses. Review of state mandatory arrest laws indicated limited variation, especially for IPV. Exploration of law enforcement resources indicated little variation as very few law enforcement agencies have resources aimed specifically at older adults. These limitations suggest a potential avenue for future study to consider ways that law enforcement could work with older adult communities to identify engagement opportunities and violence prevention strategies.

Results and Findings

The discussion of this project's results and findings below is organized by research question. For each set of questions, results are summarized with a focus on the main findings. To illustrate these key points and to facilitate discussion of the overall results, select findings and tables are presented. The tables presenting additional findings are available from the principal investigator (PI) upon request.

Research Question 1: IPV/FV Across Different Age Definitions of Older Women

The first set of research questions provided a context for this study through the rates and characteristics of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV against older women. Addressing these questions focused on examining the variation within IPV and FV against older women by (1) rates for (a) age groups and subgroups and (b) victim race-ethnicity and (2) contingency table estimates for (a) specific victim-offender intimate partner and family relationship and (b) incident seriousness as measured by using firearms/weapons for fatal incidents and type of crime for non-fatal incidents.

Victimization Rates

Overall, the victimization rates obtained highlighted the variation across age groups and the need to consider age subgroups (rather than a single age demarcation, such as 50-plus or 65-plus). The tables below highlight this variation and indicate similar patterns across all three datasets. These patterns suggest that, although the three datasets are based on different disciplinary perspectives and sources of information, they all tapped into similar behaviors. Based on these patterns, the remainder of this report (following the rate tables) relies on analyses of the age 50 demarcation group and decade age subgroups in an effort to streamline the presentation of findings and the discussion of results.

The rates are presented in the following order. First non-fatal IPV and FV rates are presented for the NCVS and then NIBRS. Next fatal IPV and FV rates are presented for NIBRS and the NVDRS. For all three data collections, rates are computed using the corresponding sex/age population group data from the U.S. Census.

Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates: NCVS

NCVS rates were based on nine years (2011-19) of weighted NCVS data (Tables 1-3). In keeping with NCVS practice, rates are presented as rate per 1,000 women of that particular age group or subgroup (such as women over 50). For the NCVS rates, the rate of FV was greater than IPV for all age groups and subgroups except for the over 50 (age group/demarcation) and the 50s decade (age subgroup).

Table 1. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age Group Demarcation, NCVS 2011-19 (weighted) Concatenated File

Age Group Demarcation	Non-fatal IPV rate per 1,000 women of that age group	Non-fatal FV rate per 1,000 women of that age group
50 plus	0.88	1.32
60 plus	0.34	0.90
65 plus	0.29	0.69

Table 2. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 50 Subgroup, NCVS 2011-19 (weighted) Concatenated File

Age Subgroup	Non-fatal IPV rate per 1,000 women of that age subgroup	Non-fatal FV rate per 1,000 women of that age subgroup
50 to 59	1.75	1.20
60 to 69	0.58	0.77
70 to 79	0.12	0.30
80 plus	0.05	0.26

Table 3. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 65 Subgroup, NCVS 2011-19 (weighted) Concatenated File

Age Subgroup	Non-fatal IPV rate per 1,000 women of that age subgroup	Non-fatal FV rate per 1,000 women of that age subgroup
65 to 74	0.50	0.70
75 to 84	0.02	0.30
85 plus	0.10	0.17

Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates: NIBRS

The NIBRS non-fatal IPV and FV rates were based on the 2019 NIBRS Extract File

Incident data (Tables 4-6). In keeping with UCR/NIBRS practice, rates are presented as rate per

100,000 women of that particular age group or subgroup (such as women over 50). One caveat is

that the rates are likely underestimated based on the use of U.S. population data to calculate the

rates. For the NIBRS rates, the rate of FV was greater than IPV for all age groups and subgroups

except for the over 50 (age group/demarcation) and the 50s decade (age subgroup). This pattern

paralleled the findings obtained using the NCVS data.

Table 4. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age Group Demarcation, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

Age Group Demarcation	Non-fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age group	Non-fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age group
50 plus	14.49	13.13
60 plus	5.67	9.42
65 plus	3.61	7.77

Table 5. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 50 Subgroup, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

Age Subgroup	Non-fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup	Non-fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup
50 to 59	30.09	19.68
60 to 69	8.61	12.08
70 to 79	3.34	7.69
80 plus	1.46	4.92

Table 6. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 65 Subgroup, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

Age Subgroup	Non-fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup	Non-fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup
65 to 74	4.84	9.24
75 to 84	2.40	6.71
Over 85	0.97	3.88

Fatal IPV and FV Rates: NIBRS

The NIBRS fatal IPV and FV rates were based on the 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident data (Table 7-9). In keeping with UCR/NIBRS practice, rates are presented as rate per 100,000 women of that particular age group or subgroup (such as women over 50). As with the NIBRS non-fatal IPV and FV rates, one caveat is that the rates are likely underestimated based on the use of U.S. population data to calculate them. Looking across these rates, the fatal IPV rates were consistently higher than the fatal FV rates for all age group demarcations and age subgroups, with the exception of the 85-plus Census age subgroup.

Table 7. Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age Group Demarcation, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

Age Group Demarcation	Fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age group	Fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age group
50 plus	0.15	0.09
60 plus	0.13	0.10
65 plus	0.13	0.11

Table 8. Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 50 Subgroup, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

Age Subgroup	Fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup	Fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup
50 to 59	0.19	0.07
60 to 69	0.14	0.09
70 to 79	0.12	0.11
80 plus	0.13	0.10

Table 9. Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 50 Subgroup, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

Age Subgroup	Fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup	Fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup
65 to 74	0.14	0.10
75 to 84	0.12	0.11
85 plus	0.10	0.13

Fatal IPV and FV Rates: NVDRS

The NVDRS fatal IPV and FV rates were based on the 2017-19 NVDRS Restricted-Use Incident Data (Tables 10-12). To facilitate comparisons with the NIBRS results, NVDRS rates are presented as rate per 100,000 women of that particular age group or subgroup (such as women over 50). For the NVDRS rates, the fatal IPV rates were consistently higher than the fatal FV rates for the over-50 demarcation group, but not the other two groups (although the over-60 group was nearly equal). The NVDRS rates for the age subgroups were comparable to the NIBRS rates, as the fatal IPV rates were consistently higher than the FV rates for all but the oldest age subgroups (80-plus for the decade age subgroup and 85-plus Census age subgroup).

Table 10. Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age Group Demarcation, 2017-19 NVDRS Restricted-Use Incident Data

Age Group Demarcation	Fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age group	Fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age group
50 plus	0.39	0.27
60 plus	0.30	0.31
65 plus	0.31	0.35

Table 11. Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 50 Subgroup, 2017-19 NVDRS Restricted-Use Incident Data

Age Subgroup	Fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup	Fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup
50 to 59	0.53	0.22
60 to 69	0.30	0.27
70 to 79	0.34	0.31
80 plus	0.28	0.38

Table 12. Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 65 Subgroup, 2017-19 NVDRS Restricted-Use Incident Data

Age Subgroup	Fatal IPV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup	Fatal FV rate per 100,000 women of that age subgroup
65 to 74	0.31	0.28
75 to 84	0.36	0.30
85 plus	0.21	0.46

Victim Race-Ethnicity Rates

Another example of variation within IPV and FV against older women was observed in victim race-ethnicity. This project computed rates victim race-ethnicity for all three data collections and used the corresponding sex/race/age population group data from the U.S. Census. While all three datasets collect a range of race and ethnicity details, the information presented below focuses on white and Black racial groups. The primary reason for this decision was that 96% of the cases reported to NIBRS involved either white or Black women. The lack cases for other racial groups limited additional analyses of these groups. Additional information about the underlying racial group numbers is available upon request from the PI.

This study found consistent patterns across all three data collections for fatal and non-fatal IPV as well as fatal and non-fatal FV. For IPV across all age groups and subgroups (with the exception of the oldest 80-plus age subgroup), older Black women had higher rates of victimization than older white women. For FV across all age groups and subgroups without exception, older Black women had higher victimization rates than older white women. Table 13 illustrates this pattern using non-fatal IPV and FV rates estimated using NIBRS data. As noted above, a caveat in interpreting the specific NIBRS rates is that they are likely underestimated based on the use of U.S. population data for the rate calculation.

Table 13. Non-Fatal IPV and FV Rates by Age 50 Subgroup by Victim Racial Group, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data

	Victim Age				
Victim Racial Group	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (over 50)
Non-Fatal IPV Rates					
White	98.04	25.27	9.86	4.30	42.30
Black	169.12	50.16	13.70	3.83	86.10
Non-Fatal FV Rates					
White	63.86	36.11	21.93	13.24	38.73
Black	113.77	68.10	39.60	22.95	76.63

Rates presented per 100,000 women of that age and racial group.

Initial Descriptive Comparisons

Addressing the first set of research questions also included considering variation within IPV and FV against older women by (a) specific victim-offender intimate partner and family relationship and (b) incident seriousness as measured by using firearms/weapons for fatal incidents and type of crime for non-fatal incidents. While conducting the analysis work on this project, two additional incident characteristics were identified as relevant to this study (offender sex for FV and firearm use/victim age/relationship for fatal IPV and FV). As such, comparisons based on offender sex for fatal and non-fatal FV and firearm use by specific relationship and age for fatal IPV and FV were added and are presented below. As similar patterns were observed across all three data collections, selected findings are presented to illustrate these results and simplify their overall presentation. The complete set of tables is available from the PI.

Specific Victim-Offender Relationship – Fatal and Non-Fatal IPV

The analyses of specific intimate partner relationships highlighted that fatal and non-fatal IPV against older women were much more varied than identified by previous studies. While spousal relationships made up most fatal and non-fatal IPV, dating relationships were an important component as well.

For fatal IPV, similar patterns were observed in both the NIBRS and NVDRS datasets. As illustrated with the NIBRS data in Table 14, spouses accounted for the largest percentage of specific intimate partners across age groups. Dating partners were the most common for the two youngest age subgroups (50s and 60s).

Table 14. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Specific Intimate Partner Relationship, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV)

Victim Age	Victim was …				
	Wife	Common-Law Wife	Girlfriend	Ex-Wife	Total
50s	78	3	40	4	125
	62.4%	2.4%	32%	3.2%	100%
60s	62	3	16	2	83
	74.7%	3.6%	19.3%	2.4%	100%
70s	38	0	3	1	42
	90.5%	0%	7.1%	2.4%	100%
80 plus	27	0	0	0	27
	100%	0%	0%	0.%	100%
Total (over 50)	205	6	59	7	277

For non-fatal IPV, most intimates were spouses across both the NIBRS and NCVS data collections. This pattern was also similar for fatal IPV. As illustrated in the NIBRS findings (Table 15), the main difference between fatal and non-fatal IPV was that more dating partners were observed in the older age groups (70s and 80s) for non-fatal IPV.

Table 15. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Specific Intimate Partner Relationship, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV)

Victim Age	Victim was …					
	Wife	Common-Law Wife	Girlfriend	Ex-Wife	Ex-Girlfriend	Total
50s	7,485	669	10,407	727	422	19,710
	38%	3.4%	52.8%	3.7%	2.1%	100%
60s	2,557	168	2,056	194	85	5,060
	50.5%	3.3%	40.6%	3.8%	1.7%	100%
70s	907	35	220	27	11	1,200
	75.6%	2.9%	18.3%	2.3%	0.9%	100%
80 plus	262	2	32	7	5	308
	85.1%	0.6%	10.4%	2.3%	1.6%	100%
Total (over 50)	11,211	874	12,715	955	523	26,278

Specific Victim-Offender Relationship – Fatal and Non-Fatal FV

The analyses for specific family relationships also highlighted that fatal and non-fatal FV against older women was much more varied than identified by previous studies. While victims who were parents (mothers) make up most of the fatal and non-fatal FV, grandparents (grandmothers) were another important group to consider.

For fatal FV, similar patterns were observed in both the NIBRS and NVDRS datasets. As illustrated using NIBRS data (Table 16), victims who were mothers accounted for the largest percentage of family relationships across age groups. Not surprisingly, this percentage decreased in the oldest age subgroups. Victims who were grandmothers accounted for the second largest percentage of family relationships overall, and this percentage increased with the oldest age subgroups.

Table 16. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Specific Family Relationship, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal FV)

Victim Age	Victim was …						
	Mother	Sister	Grandmother	In-Law	Stepmother	Other Family	Total
50s	35	4	0	2	0	6	47
	74.5%	8.5%	0%	4.3%	0%	12.8%	100%
60s	26	5	10	4	1	9	55
	47.3%	9.1%	18.2%	7.3%	1.8%	16.4%	100%
70s	26	3	8	0	0	3	40
	65%	7.5%	20%	0%	0%	7.5%	100%
80 plus	16	0	3	1	0	1	21
	76.2%	0%	14.3%	4.8%	0%	4.8%	100%
Total (Over 50)	103	12	21	7	1	19	163

For non-fatal FV, similar patterns were observed across both the NIBRS and NCVS data collections. As illustrated using NIBRS data in Table 17, victims who were mothers accounted for the largest percentage of family relationships across age subgroups. The main difference

between fatal FV was the larger percentage of grandmothers and the variety of family

relationships that were observed in the older age groups for non-fatal FV.

Table 17. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Specific Family Relationship, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal FV)

			Victim was …						
	Mother	Sister	Grand-mother	In-Law	Step-mother	Step-child	Step-sister	Other Family	Total
50s	8,506	1,212	718	467	155	58	20	1,757	12,893
	66%	9.4%	5.6%	3.6%	1.2%	0.4%	0.2%	13.6%	100%
60s	4,197	537	1,208	292	55	17	6	787	7,099
	59.1%	7.6%	17%	4.1%	0.8%	0.2%	0.1%	11.1%	100%
70s	1,590	85	759	86	19	2	2	224	2,767
	57.5%	3.1%	27.4%	3.1%	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%	8.1%	100%
80 plus	618	22	272	40	4	0	1	79	1,036
	59.7%	2.1%	26.3%	3.9%	0.4%	0%	0.1%	7.6%	100%
Total over 50	14,911	1,856	2,957	885	233	77	29	2,847	23,795

Seriousness-Weapon: Fatal IPV and FV

In terms of seriousness for fatal IPV and FV, different patterns emerged. For fatal IPV,

firearms were the most common weapons, especially in the oldest age subgroups (ranging from

56.8% to 85.2%) (Table 18). Based upon findings obtained in this study, additional multivariate

analyses explored the firearm-involvement pattern in conjunction with relationship type. This

investigation indicated the important pattern of spouses and firearms as women age (Table 19).

Spouses/husbands typically used firearms (primarily handguns) to kill their wives. The

percentage of spousal firearm deaths increased as women age. Unlike fatal IPV, fatal FV

involved a broader range of weapons, with firearms being involved in 21.3% to 35% of cases

(Table 20).

Table 18. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Weapon Type, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV)

Victim Age	Weapon Type					
	Firearm	Knife	Blunt object	Personal weapons	Other weapons	Total
50s	71	21	7	10	16	125
	56.8%	16.8%	5.6%	8%	12.8%	100%
60s	54	9	4	7	9	83
	65.1%	10.8%	4.8%	8.4%	10.8%	100%
70s	35	3	2	1	1	42
	83.3%	7.1%	4.8%	2.4%	2.4%	100%
80 plus	23	0	2	0	2	27
	85.2%	0%	7.4%	0%	7.4%	100%
Total (over 50)	183	33	15	18	28	277

Table 19. Victim Age 50 Subgroup and Specific Intimate Relationship Type, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV Involving Firearms)

Relationship Type	Victim Age				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (50 plus)
Spouse	49	43	32	23	147
	60.5%	66.2%	84.2%	85.2%	69.7%
Dating	18	9	2	0	29
	45%	56.3%	66.7%	0.0%	49.2%
Ex-spouse	4	2	1	0	7
	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%

Table 20. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Weapon Type, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal FV)

Victim Age	Weapon Type					
	Firearm	Knife	Blunt object	Personal weapons	Other weapons	Total
50s	10	20	5	4	8	47
	21.3%	42.6%	10.6%	8.5%	17%	100%
60s	14	18	8	7	8	55
	25.5%	32.7%	14.5%	12.7%	14.5%	100%
70s	14	11	6	7	2	40
	35%	27.5%	15%	17.5%	5%	100%
80 plus	5	1	4	5	6	21
	23.8%	4.8%	19%	23.8%	28.6%	100%
Total (over 50)	43	50	23	23	24	163

Seriousness-Specific Offense: Non-Fatal IPV and FV

For non-fatal IPV and FV, the most common offense was simple assault (Tables 21-22).

This pattern was consistent in both the NIBRS and NCVS datasets and across age groups.

Additional analyses not presented here considered the type of offense by relationship and age.

These findings also indicated that the majority of offenses are simple assault, and this did not

vary by relationship and age for non-fatal IPV or FV.

Table 21. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Type of Crime, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV)

	Type of Crime			
Victim Age	Rape/Sexual Assault	Aggravated Assault	Simple Assault	Total
50s	433	3,175	16,102	19,710
	2.2%	16.1%	81.7%	
60s	109	801	4,150	5,060
	2.2%	15.8%	82%	
70s	22	158	1,020	1,200
	1.8%	13.2%	85%	
80 plus	10	33	265	308
	3.2%	10.7%	86%	

Table 22. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Type of Crime, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal FV)

	Type of Crime			
Victim Age	Rape/Sexual Assault	Aggravated Assault	Simple Assault	Total
50s	98	1,468	11,327	12,893
	0.8%	11.4%	87.8%	
60s	28	934	6,137	7,099
	0.4%	13.2%	86.4%	
70s	17	376	2,374	2,767
	0.6%	13.6%	86%	
80 plus	16	169	851	1,036
	1.5%	16.3%	82.1%	

Additional Comparison: Sex of Offender for FV

As noted above, the need for additional comparisons was identified during the course of

this project. One example was the sex of the offender for fatal and non-fatal FV. Sex of the

offender had not been included in the original proposed comparisons. For intimates, offender sex was a constant since only opposite-sex relationships are analyzed. This pattern was not the case for family violence. As such, patterns of offender sex were considered here and in connection with arrests (discussed in Research Question 3). The vast majority of fatal and non-fatal FV incidents were committed by male offenders who were primarily adult sons. For fatal FV, a higher percentage of female offenders committed FV against the oldest (80-plus) age subgroup (Table 23). For non-fatal FV, this percentage was stable across age subgroups (Table 24).

Table 23. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Type of Crime, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal FV)

	Victim Age Group				
Offender Sex	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (Over 50)
Male Offender	40	47	33	13	133
	85.1%	85.5%	82.5%	61.9%	81.6%
Female Offender	7	8	7	8	30
	14.9%	14.5%	17.5%	38.1%	18.4%
Total	47	55	40	21	163

Table 24. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Type of Crime, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal FV)

	Victim Age Group				
Offender Sex	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (over 50)
Male Offender	7,469	4,158	1,629	588	13,844
	57.9%	58.6%	58.9%	56.8%	58.2%
Female Offender	5,424	2,941	1,138	448	9,951
	42.1%	41.4%	41.1%	43.2%	41.8%
Total	12,893	7,099	2,767	1,036	23,795

Research Question 2: Police Reporting and Actions in IPV/FV Involving Older Women

The second set of research questions explored patterns of reporting to the police and police actions. Here, the focus was on non-fatal IPV and FV. For these questions, the NCVS was uniquely suited to provide details on police response. For this project, the NCVS's main

limitation was that it only covers non-fatal violence. In addition to the NCVS data, the NVDRS provided an additional perspective as it collects information on prior contact the offender had with police within the past 12 months. Before exploring the detailed findings based on the NCVS analysis, the NVDRS insights are presented below.

Prior Contact with Police: Fatal IPV and FV

The NVDRS quantitative variables collect information as to whether the offender had prior contact with law enforcement in the 12 months preceding the incident. This "contact" does not need to have involved an arrest. For this project, the contact variable is limited, as it is unclear whether that contact was related to the fatal IPV or FV (such as the police responding to a previous IPV or FV incident). Approximately 16.2% of fatal FV of women over age 50 involved an offender who had prior contact with law enforcement. Almost 8% of fatal IPV of women over age 50 involved an offender who had prior contact with law enforcement. Since both fatal IPV and FV, these percentages were relatively stable across age subgroups, the underlying tables are not presented for these analyses.

Police Reporting and Actions: Non-fatal IPV and FV

Findings obtained as part of this project appeared in a recent publication of police reporting and response to violence against older women (Addington, 2025). The following discussion is based on that publication. The tables and discussion include comparison groups of stranger violence and under-age-50 female victims. While Research Question 4 specifically addresses these comparisons, they are discussed here for ease of comparison and context.

Before presenting the police reporting and response findings, a general comment is necessary regarding the small cell sizes that limit the analyses for this study. Overall and for purposes of the present study, violent victimization is a relatively rare event. Table 25 illustrates

how dramatically the filter of police reporting further reduced the initial small violent

victimization samples. Using this filter was key to studying police response, but it limited the

interpretation of the findings. The oldest age subgroups were particularly unstable. As a result of

these small underlying samples and the filtering questions, the following discussion focuses on

overall patterns rather than specific relationships.

Reporting to Police

Table 25 summarizes the results for incidents reported to the police for the three types of

violence (IPV, FV, and stranger) across the four older women age groups and with the younger

women comparison group. For IPV, 40%-50% of cases were reported to the police across all age

groups (with the exception of the oldest group). For FV, over half were reported with higher

reporting for the two oldest age groups. For stranger violence, a higher percentage of older

women reported to police than younger women, but these percentages still accounted for less

than half of the victims (with the exception of the 80-plus group).

Table 25: Frequencies and Percentages of Incidents Reported to Police, NCVS 2011-19 Concatenated File (Violent Incidents against Women Victims)

	Women Victim Age Groups				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Under 50
Incidents Reported to the Police					
IPV Reported to Police	69	18	2	1	692
	44.5%	38.30	40%	100%	52.1%
FV Reported to Police	82	59	15	9	231
	49.1%	54.1%	71.4%	64.30	56.9%
Stranger Violence Reported to Police	97	49	10	6	357
	47.3%	49%	41.7%	60%	37.9%
Unweighted Total (reported and unreported)					
IPV	155	47	5	1	1328
FV	167	109	21	14	406
Stranger Violence	205	100	24	10	941

Table Notes: The frequencies and percentages are based on unweighted data.
To facilitate review of the findings, only affirmative frequencies and percentages are presented.

Reasons for Reporting to the Police or Not

Table 26 identifies the top three reasons victims reported to the police or not. While the specific ranking might vary, the reasons for not reporting were shared across age groups. As noted in Table 26, the two oldest age groups were excluded due to small cell sizes resulting from question filtering. For IPV and FV, reasons for not reporting clustered around incident-specific reasons, such as the incident being a private matter, the victim not wanting to get the offender in trouble, or fear of retribution.

Reasons for reporting to the police were also similar across age groups and types of violence. Stopping the incident was the most important reason for addressing all types of violence, regardless of age. Victims also indicated that the behavior being a crime motivated their decision to report.

Table 26: Top Three Reasons IPV or FV Incident Was Not or Was Reported to the Police, NCVS Concatenated File 2011-19

	IPV			FV		
	50s	60s	Under 50	50s	60s	Under 50
<u>Reason Not Reported to Police</u>						
Private, personal matter	1	2	1	1	1	1
Not get offender in trouble	2		2	2	2	3
Fear of retribution	3	1	3			
Kid stuff					3	
Minor, unsure if crime						2
Other		3		3		
<u>Reason Was Reported to Police</u>						
Stop the incident	1	1	1	1	1	1
Prevent more crimes against respondent	2	2 (tie)	2	3	2	2
It was a crime	3 (tie)	2 (tie)*	2	2	3 (tie)	3
No one reason more important	3 (tie)				3 (tie)	

*No third reason appeared among the responses.
Table Notes: Numbers indicate ranking for that age group/type of violence.
Age groups 70s and 80s are not presented, given the small underlying sample sizes.

Police Arrival on Scene and Initial Actions

Table 27 indicates that police tended to arrive at the scene when they were called, which was consistent across types of violence and age groups. A higher percentage of IPV and FV victims indicated the police arrived when called as compared to victims of violence by strangers.

Table 27: Frequencies and Percentages of Incidents Reported to Police Where Police Arrived, NCVS 2011-19 Concatenated File (Violent Incidents against Women Victims)

	Women Victim Age Groups				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Under 50
<u>Police Arrived When Called</u>					
IPV Police Arrived	60	17	2	1	556
	87%	94.4%	100%	100%	80.3%
FV Police Arrived	74	44	15	9	190
	90.2%	74.6%	100%	100%	82.3%
Stranger Violence Police Arrived	64	32	8	3	264
	66%	65.3%	80%	50%	73.9%
Unweighted Total (reported to police)					
IPV	69	18	2	1	692
FV	82	59	15	9	231
Stranger Violence	97	49	10	6	357

Table Notes: The frequencies and percentages are based on unweighted data.
To facilitate review of the findings, only affirmative frequencies and percentages are presented.

When the police arrived, they tended to engage in similar actions across victim age groups and violence types (Tables 28-30). Taking a report was the most common police action for all victim age groups and violence types. Police asking questions of witnesses or suspects was the second most common response across all age groups. Table 30 highlights the role that stranger violence appeared to have on police response. Here, taking a report and asking questions were the most common actions for all age groups, but police engaged in a wider variety of actions than with IPV or FV. These differences were likely due to the need for more investigation to identify the offender in stranger violence cases than where the offender is known, which would be the case for IPV and FV.

Additional Actions

Tables 28-30 also identify additional police actions and whether the victim filed a complaint. These questions are asked of all respondent-victims whose incident was reported to the police (whether the police arrived when called or not). In terms of subsequent contact from the police, less than half of victims reported receiving any follow up contact. This pattern was observed across all age groups and types of violence with the exception of 70-year-olds who experienced IPV. The under-50 group who experienced IPV reported the highest percentage of subsequent police response (46%). In terms of filing a complaint, stranger violence experienced by any age group had the lowest percentage of complaints being filed. In general, family violence had the highest percentage of complaints filed in terms of type of violence for older victims (especially those in their 60s, 70s and 80s) (Table 29). IPV incidents had the highest percentage of complaints filed by victims under 50 (Table 28). The majority of incidents across all ages and types of violence did not result in an arrest. This pattern was particularly pronounced for violence committed by a stranger (Table 30). Arrest patterns are explored in more detail below with the discussion of NIBRS data in response to Research Question 3. For IPV and FV. One explanation for less than half of incidents not resulting in a complaint or arrest may be connected to the most common reasons for calling the police, which was to stop the incident. Similarly, motivations based upon not wanting to get the offender in trouble (which is a top reason for not reporting IPV and FV to the police) may also play a role in not filing a complaint or requesting an arrest.

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Table 28: Frequencies and Percentages of Various Police Responses to IPV Incidents, NCVS 2011-19 Concatenated File (Violent Incidents against Women Victims Reported to the Police)

	Women Victim Age Groups				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Under 50
Initial Response*					
Police took report	52	13	2	0	475
	86.7%	76.5%	100%	0%	85.4%
Police searched	13	2	0	0	108
	21.7%	11.8%	0%	0%	19.4%
Police took evidence	6	2	0	0	69
	10%	11.8%	0%	0%	12.4%
Police asked questions	24	7	2	1	214
	40%	41.2%	100%	100%	38.5%
Police promised surveillance	3	1	0	0	38
	5%	5.9%	0%	0%	6.8%
Police promised follow up	5	3	0	0	74
	8.3%	17.6%	0%	0%	13.3%
n (police arrived when called)	60	17	2	1	556
Subsequent Actions					
Subsequent contact with police	22	4	2	0	321
	31.9%	22.2%	100%	0%	46.4%
Complaint Filed					
Victim filed complaint	32	6	2	0	379
	46.6%	33.3%	100%	0%	54.8%
Any Arrest					
Police made an arrest	31	6	1	0	279
	44.9%	33.3%	50%	0%	46.4%
n (reported to police)	69	18	2	1	692

*More than one form of initial police response could be reported by victims.

Table Notes: The frequencies and percentages are based on unweighted data.

To facilitate review of the findings, only affirmative frequencies and percentages are presented.

Table 29: Frequencies and Percentages of Various Police Response to FV Incidents, NCVS 2011-19 Concatenated File (Violent Incidents against Women Victims Reported to the Police)

	Women Victim Age Groups				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Under 50
Initial Response*					
Police took report	50	37	11	7	149
	67.6%	84.1%	73.3%	77.8%	78.4%
Police searched	10	2	1	1	9
	13.5%	4.5%	6.7%	11.1%	4.7%
Police took evidence	3	1	0	1	14
	4.1%	2.3%	0%	11.1%	7.4%
Police asked questions	35	21	5	5	98
	47.3%	47.7%	33.3%	55.6%	51.6%
Police promised surveillance	2	2	0	0	2
	2.7%	4.5%	0%	0%	1.1%
Police promised follow up	3	7	0	0	13
	4.1%	15.9%	0%	0%	6.8%
n (police arrived when called)	74	44	15	9	190
Subsequent Actions					
Subsequent contact with police	26	17	6	1	85
	31.7%	28.8%	40%	11.1%	36.8%
Complaint Filed					
Victim filed complaint	27	31	7	4	83
	32.9%	52.5%	46.7%	44.4%	35.9%
Any Arrest					
Police made an arrest	23	22	7	6	82
	28%	37.3%	46.7%	66.7%	35.5%
n (reported to police)	82	59	15	9	231

*More than one form of initial police response could be reported by victims.
Table Notes: The frequencies and percentages are based on unweighted data.
To facilitate review of the findings, only affirmative frequencies and percentages are presented.

Table 30: Frequencies and Percentages of Various Police Response to Stranger Violence Incidents, NCVS 2011-19 Concatenated File (Violent Incidents against Women Victims Reported to the Police)

	Women Victim Age Groups				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Under 50
Initial Response*					
Police took report	48	26	6	3	194
	75.0%	81.3%	75%	100%	73.5%
Police searched	14	9	2	2	74
	21.9%	28.1%	25%	66.7%	28.0%
Police took evidence	6	2	3	1	35
	9.4%	6.3%	37.5%	33.3%	13.3%
Police asked questions	25	14	5	1	128
	39.1%	43.8%	62.5%	33.3%	48.5%
Police promised surveillance	5	2	1	1	15
	7.8%	6.3%	12.5%	33.3%	5.7%
Police promised follow up	14	6	4	1	42
	21.9%	18.8%	50%	33.3%	15.9%
n (police arrived when called)	64	32	8	3	264
Subsequent Actions					
Subsequent contact with police	26	8	4	2	87
	26.8%	16.3%	40%	33.3%	11.5%
Complaint Filed					
Victim filed a complaint	27	4	3	1	75
	27.8%	8.2%	30%	16.7%	21%
Any Arrest					
Police made an arrest	21	5	4	2	89
	21.6%	10.2%	40%	33.3%	25.9%
n (reported to police)	97	49	10	6	357

*More than one form of initial police response could be reported by victims.
Table Notes: The frequencies and percentages are based on unweighted data.
To facilitate review of the findings, only affirmative frequencies and percentages are presented.

Research Question 3: Police Arrests in IPV/FV Cases Involving Older Women

The third set of research questions focused on arrests in cases of non-fatal and fatal IPV and FV against older women. The NCVS and NIBRS both collect information on arrests. The analyses presented here were based on NIBRS data, as the NCVS data did not provide enough cases to support these analyses. The analyses included fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV arrests by age subgroup as well as arrests by specific intimate and family relationships, exceptional

clearance patterns by relationship and age subgroup, race of victim and arrest, use of a firearm and arrest for fatal IPV and FV, and offender sex with arrests for fatal and non-fatal FV. As part of work on this project, additional analyses were identified that involved the NVDRS. The NVDRS was used to explore incident characteristics related to paradigms of murders involving older women and intimate partner/family violence. This information was not captured by the NIBRS data and provides additional context for arrest and clearance patterns.

Arrests: Fatal IPV and FV

Table 31 compares fatal IPV and FV as well as fatal violence against older women not involving an intimate or family member (non-IPV/FV). The non-IPV/FV comparison was part of Research Question 4, but it is presented here to provide context for this discussion. Table 31 highlights two key patterns from this analysis. One is that fatal FV had the highest percentage of arrests. In contrast, the percentage of arrests for fatal IPV was comparable to arrests for non-intimate/family violence. The second is a consistent decline in the percentage of arrests in fatal IPV cases as women age. These two patterns prompted additional exploratory analyses that investigated the low percentage of arrests for a serious crime (murder) where the offender is known (especially for intimate partners). Tables 32-36 delve into these patterns via specific victim-offender relationships and exceptional clearance data.

Table 31. Percentage of Arrests by Victim Age 50 Subgroup and Type of Relationship, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV, FV and non-intimate/family violence)

Relationship		50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (50 plus)
			Victim Age Group			
Non-Intimate/Family		54	36	16	15	121
		41.2%	55.4%	47.1%	32.6%	43.8%
	n	131	65	34	46	276
Intimates		64	40	12	4	120
		51.2%	48.2%	28.6%	14.8%	43.3%
	n	125	83	42	27	277
Family		35	41	22	14	112
		74.5%	74.5%	55%	66.7%	68.7%
	n	47	55	40	21	163

Note: The Table only presents affirmative responses (arrest occurred)

Of the specific intimate relationships (Table 32), spouses had the lowest percentage of arrests for the 50-plus age group overall. Looking at the age subgroups and spouses, the percentage of arrests consistently (and dramatically) dropped as women get older.

Table 32. Arrests by Victim Age 50 Subgroup and Specific Intimate Partner Relationships, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV)

Relationship		50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (50 plus)
			Victim Age Group			
Spouse		41	31	10	4	86
		50.6%	47.7%	26.3%	14.8%	40.8%
	n	81	65	38	27	211
Dating		22	7	2	0	31
		55%	43.8%	66.7%	0.0%	52.5%
	n	40	16	3	0	59
Ex-Spouse		1	2	0	0	3
		25%	100%	0%	0%	42.9%
	n	4	2	1	0	7

Note: The Table only presents affirmative responses (arrest occurred)

In contrast, specific family relationships (Table 33) for the 50-plus age group indicate that offenders were arrested in almost all cases involving the killing of a grandmother and nearly two-thirds of cases where the mother was killed. Looking within the age subgroups, a higher

percentage of arrests was observed for victims who were mothers and who were other family members for the younger groups (50s and 60s), as compared to the oldest age groups.

Table 33. Arrest by Victim Age 50 Subgroup and Specific Family Relationships, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal FV)

		Victim Age Group			
Relationship	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Total (50 plus)
Parent/Mother	25	19	13	10	67
	71.4%	70.4%	50%	62%	64.4%
n	35	27	26	16	104
Grandmother	0	8	8	3	19
	0%	80%	100%	100%	90.5%
n	0	10	8	3	21
Other family	10	14	1	1	26
	83.3%	77.8%	16.7%	50%	59.6%
n	12	18	6	2	38

Note: The Table only presents affirmative responses (arrest occurred)

In addition to arrest information, NIBRS data captures whether "exceptional circumstances" were present. These situations occur where the offender is known, but an arrest cannot be made for one of the five listed reasons. Based on the arrest findings obtained, this study explored the applicability of exceptional circumstances to understanding these patterns, especially for fatal and non-fatal IPV, with its low percentage of arrests. The three most relevant exceptional clearance circumstances for this study were (1) death of the offender, (2) prosecution declined by the prosecutor for reasons other than lack of probable cause, and (3) victim refused to cooperate in the prosecution (FBI, 2021). For fatal IPV, the death of the offender was the most common exceptional circumstance. For the over-50 age group, over a quarter involved the death of the offender. Looking across the age subgroups, over 50% of the cases occurred in the oldest (80-plus) age subgroup. Information provided by the NVDRS indicated that these situations were primarily murder-suicides (as opposed to situations where the offender is killed by law enforcement). As indicated in Table 34, incorporating exceptional clearances/death of the

offender provided a more complete picture of the arrest patterns. Looking at the percentage of "no arrests" (between 24%-45.2% for fatal IPV), though, indicated a substantial number of cases remain that did not involve an arrest or other clearance. Future work is needed to understand this pattern.

Table 34. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest and Death of Offender Exceptional Clearance, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV)

Victim Age	Arrest/Clearance			
	No arrest	Arrest	Death of Offender	Total
50s	30	64	31	125
	24%	51.2%	24.8%	100%
60s	25	40	18	83
	30.1%	48.2%	21.7%	100%
70s	19	12	11	42
	45.2%	28.6%	26.2%	100%
80 plus	8	4	15	27
	29.6%	14.8%	55.6%	100%
Over 50 (total)	82	120	75	277
	29.6%	43.3%	27.1%	100%

Additional analyses explored the death of the offender pattern in fatal IPV. Examining the specific intimate partner relationship highlighted the role spouses play in understanding this pattern. It also highlighted the limitation of relying on arrests alone to understand police response to fatal IPV against older women by their husbands. The percentage of fatal IPV involving the death of the offender increased rapidly as women age (Table 35). In tables not presented here, additional analyses considered these patterns of specific intimate relationships with clearance and victim age across victim race. A higher percentage of older white women were the victims of fatal IPV, involving cases where the offender died. This pattern increased with age, going from about a quarter of incidents for victims in their 50s to over half for victims who are 80 or older. The same pattern was not observed for older Black women.

Table 35. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest and Death of Offender Exceptional Clearance, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV – Spouses Only)

Victim Age	Arrest/Clearance			
	No Arrest	Arrest	Death of Offender	Total
50s	18	41	22	81
	22.2%	50.6%	27.2%	100%
60s	19	31	15	65
	29.2%	47.7%	23.1%	100%
70s	18	10	10	38
	47.4%	26.3%	26.3%	100%
80 plus	8	4	15	27
	29.6%	14.8%	55.6%	100%
Over 50 (total)	63	86	62	211
	29.9%	40.8%	29.4%	100%

In contrast to fatal IPV, few fatal FV cases involved the death of the offender (or any other exceptional clearance circumstance). As shown in Table 36, only 7.7% of fatal FV for the over-50 age group resulted in the death of the offender. One additional point is worth noting when looking across Tables 34 and 36. Comparing the percentage of "no arrest" cases between fatal IPV and FV after including exceptional clearance information indicated a narrowing of the differences observed when only arrests were considered. A similar percentage was observed for the over-50 age group (29.6% vs. 26.2%), but differences were noted across age subgroups.

Table 36. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest and Death of Offender Exceptional Clearance, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal FV)

Victim Age	Arrest/Clearance			
	No Arrest	Arrest	Death of Offender	Total
50s	8	28	3	39
	20.5%	71.8%	7.7%	100%
60s	12	27	0	39
	30.8%	69.2%	0%	100%
70s	11	19	5	35
	31.4%	54.3%	14.3%	100%
80 plus	3	12	2	17
	17.6%	70.6%	11.8%	100%
Over 50 (total)	34	86	10	130
	26.2%	66.2%	7.7%	100%

Arrests: Non-Fatal IPV and FV

For arrests in the cases of non-fatal IPV and FV, different patterns were observed as compared to those obtained for fatal IPV and FV. Here, a more consistent pattern was observed between IPV and FV. In addition, a greater percentage of arrests occurred for both non-fatal IPV and FV as compared to non-IPV/FV. One difference between IPV and FV arrest patterns was that the percentage of arrests for non-fatal IPV appeared to drop as victims age, which was not observed for FV. Like the fatal IPV arrest patterns, though, a substantial percentage (nearly half) of non-fatal IPV and FV cases did not result in the arrest of the offender.

Table 37. Arrest by Victim Age 50 Subgroup, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV, FV and non-IPV/FV)

		Victim Age Group			
Relationship	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Over 50 (total)
Non-intimate/family	5,638	2,095	533	158	8,424
	27%	24.8%	19.3%	8.1%	24.7%
n	20,908	8,459	2,759	1,958	32,084
Intimate partner	11,004	2,808	604	97	14,513
	55.8%	55.5%	50.3%	31.5%	55.2%
n	19,710	5,060	1,200	308	26,278
Family	6,731	3,859	1,544	498	12,632
	52.2%	54.4%	55.8%	48.1%	53.1%
n	12,893	7,099	2,767	1,036	23,795

Note: Table only presents affirmative responses (arrest occurred)

In exploring arrests with specific relationships, patterns were stable across all but the oldest age subgroups for intimate partners (Table 38) and family members (Table 39). Grandmothers present one exception where the percentage of arrests increased as victims age. Tables 38 and 39 also highlighted a broader range of relationship types observed for the non-fatal IPV and FV as compared to those identified with fatal IPV and FV.

Table 38. Arrest by Victim Age 50 Subgroup and Specific Intimate Relationship, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV)

Relationship	Victim Age Group				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Over 50 (total)
Spouse/wife	4,656	1521	461	76	6714
	57.1%	55.8%	48.9%	28.8%	55.6%
N	8,154	2,725	942	265	12,085
Dating	5,821	1154	127	15	7117
	55.9%	56.1%	57.7%	46.9%	56%
N	10,407	2,056	220	32	12,715
Ex-Spouse/wife	331	90	10	4	435
	45.5%	46.4%	37%	57.1%	45.5%
N	727	194	27	7	955
Ex-Dating	196	43	6	2	247
	46.4%	50.6%	54.5%	40%	47.2%
N	422	85	11	5	523

Note: Table only presents affirmative responses (arrest occurred)

Table 39. Arrest by Victim Age 50 Subgroup and Specific Family Relationship, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal FV)

Relationship	Victim Age Group				
	50s	60s	70s	80 plus	Over 50 (total)
Parent/mother	4,876	2,512	956	293	8,637
	56.3%	59.1%	59.4%	47.1%	57%
n	8,661	4,252	1,609	622	15,144
Grandparent/mother	342	615	418	160	1,535
	47.6%	50.9%	55.1%	58.8%	51.9%
n	718	1,208	759	272	2,957
Child/daughter	123	21	2	1	147
	36.1%	31.3%	25%	33.3%	35.1%
n	314	67	8	3	419
Other family	1,499	724	169	45	2,437
	43.1%	44.4%	42.6%	31.5%	43.2%
n	3,475	1,629	397	143	5,644

Note: Table only presents affirmative responses (arrest occurred)

As with fatal IPV and FV, exceptional clearances were explored for the non-fatal IPV and FV. Here, only few involved the death of the offender (unlike fatal IPV). The two most common forms of exceptional clearance were the prosecution being declined for reasons other than a lack

of probable cause and the victim refused to cooperate in the prosecution. Across age groups for

IPV, these two categories accounted for between 8.5% to 13.9% of the exceptional clearances.

For the oldest (80-plus) age subgroup, the percentage of prosecutions declined was about double

that of the younger age groups. While the specific percentages were lower for exceptional

clearances in non-fatal FV than IPV, similar patterns of arrests and exceptional clearances were

observed.

Table 40. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest and Exceptional Clearance Categories, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV)

Victim Age	Arrest/Clearance					
	No arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Prosecution declined	Victim refused	Total
50s	7,030	11,004	14	777	885	19,710
	35.7%	55.8%	0.1%	3.9%	4.5%	100%
60s	1,796	2,808	11	218	227	5,060
	35.5%	55.5%	0.2%	4.3%	4.5%	100%
70s	481	604	0	54	61	1,200
	40.1%	50.3%	0%	4.5%	5.1%	100%
80 plus	167	97	1	29	14	308
	54.2%	31.5%	0.3%	9.4%	4.5%	100%
Over 50 (total)	9,474	14,513	26	1,078	1,187	26,278
	36.1%	55.2%	0.1%	4.1%	4.5%	100%

Table 41. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest and Exceptional Clearance Categories, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal FV)

Victim Age	Arrest/Clearance					
	No arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Prosecution declined	Victim refused	Total
50s	5,006	6,731	4	479	673	12,893
	38.8%	52.2%	0%	3.7%	5.2%	100%
60s	2,571	3,859	6	273	390	7,099
	36.2%	54.4%	0.1%	3.8%	5.5%	100%
70s	962	1544	1	104	156	2,767
	34.8%	55.8%	0%	3.8%	5.6%	100%
80 plus	439	498	0	61	38	1,036
	42.4%	48.1%	0%	5.9%	3.7%	100%
Over 50 (total)	8,978	12,632	11	917	1,257	23,795
	37.7%	53.1%	0%	3.9%	5.3%	100%

In analyses not presented in tables here, the race of the victim and arrests for non-fatal IPV and FV were explored. For older white victims, relatively similar arrest and clearance patterns were observed for both non-fatal IPV and FV. Specifically, there was an increase in non-arrest cases as victims aged (going from about one-third for the 50s age subgroup to about half in the 80-plus subgroup). One contributing reason may be due to an increase in prosecutorial declination with age (going from 3% for the 50s age subgroup to 10% in the 80-plus age subgroup). Future work should explore reasons for this pattern. In contrast, victim refusal to cooperate remained stable across age groups (around 5% of cases).

Clearance and arrest patterns for older Black victims experiencing non-fatal IPV also indicated an increasing percentage of non-arrest cases as victims aged (going from 41% for those in their 50s to 56% for those over 80). The findings also suggested a similar pattern as observed with white victims in terms of the exceptional clearance of prosecution declined cases. For Black victims, the percentage of these cases also increased with age (going from 5% to 11%). For clearance and arrest patterns for Black victims experiencing non-fatal FV, the percentage of non-

arrest cases was around 45% for all age groups. Other patterns were comparable across age groups.

Arrests: Sex of the Offender in Fatal and Non-Fatal FV

As discussed in Research Question 1, sex of the offender was constant for IPV in this study as only opposite-sex relationships were included. The sex of the offender was explored for fatal and non-fatal FV in terms of arrests and clearance circumstances. For fatal FV, there was a slightly higher percentage of non-arrests for male family member offenders as compared to female family members. While there were few "death of the offender" cases overall for fatal FV, a higher percentage of these situations involved male offenders than female offenders.

Table 42. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest/Exceptional Clearance Categories and Offender Sex, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal FV)

| Offender Sex | Victim Age | Arrest/Clearance | | | |
		No Arrest	Arrest	Death of Offender	Total
Male Offender	50s	8	29	3	40
		20.0%	72.5%	7.5%	
	60s	12	34	1	47
		25.5%	72.3%	2.1%	
	70s	10	18	5	33
		30.3%	54.5%	15.2%	
	80 plus	3	7	3	13
		23.1%	53.8%	23.1%	
	Total (Over 50)	33	88	12	133
		24.8%	66.2%	9.0%	
Female Offender	50s	1	6	0	7
		14.3%	85.7%	0%	
	60s	1	7	0	8
		12.5%	87.5%	0%	
	70s	2	4	1	7
		28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	
	80 plus	1	7	0	8
		12.5%	87.5%	0%	
	Total (Over 50)	5	24	1	30
		16.7%	80.0%	3.3%	

For non-fatal FV, the percentage of arrests and exceptional clearances across offender sex and victim age groups was comparable. A slightly higher percentage of victims refused to cooperate in non-fatal FV involving female offenders as compared to male offenders.

Table 43. Victim Age 50 Subgroup by Arrest/Exceptional Clearance Categories and Offender Sex, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal FV)

Offender Sex	Victim Age	Arrest/Clearance					
		No arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Prosecution declined	Victim refused	Total
Male Offender	50s	2,855	3,995	3	271	345	7,469
		38.2%	53.5%	0%	3.6%	4.6%	
	60s	1,429	2,356	6	149	218	4,158
		34.4%	56.7%	0.1%	3.6%	5.2%	
	70s	547	956	0	51	75	1,629
		33.6%	58.7%	0.0%	3.1%	4.6%	
	80 plus	224	320	0	29	15	588
		38.1%	54.4%	0.0%	4.9%	2.6%	
	Total (Over 50)	5,055	7,627	9	500	653	13,844
		36.5%	55.1%	0.1%	3.6%	4.7%	
Female Offender	50s	2,151	2,736	1	208	328	5,424
		39.7%	50.4%	0.0%	3.8%	6.0%	
	60s	1,142	1,503	0	124	172	2,941
		38.8%	51.1%	0.0%	4.2%	5.8%	
	70s	415	588	1	53	81	1,138
		36.5%	51.7%	0.1%	4.7%	7.1%	
	80 plus	215	178	0	32	23	448
		48.0%	39.7%	0.0%	7.1%	5.1%	
	Total (Over 50)	3,923	5,005	2	417	604	9,951
		39.4%	50.3%	0.0%	4.2%	6.1%	

NVDRS Incident Characteristics

While NIBRS provides direct measures of arrests and clearance details, it is limited on incident details and a larger context to understand arrest (and non-arrest) patterns. Although the NVDRS does not provide arrest information, it does provide some contextual details via its

public health approach that are not collected by the NCVS or NIBRS. These details provided insights into the context of fatal IPV and FV that may help in directing future work to understand arrest patterns for fatal IPV and FV against older women.

Four incident characteristics were explored using NVDRS data. Two concern common paradigms about fatal IPV and FV against older women in that these murders are committed by a loved one who is a caregiver or as part of a mercy killing. The other two provide indicators of possible ongoing violence, which are whether the offender had a history of abuse against this victim and whether an argument occurred prior to the murder.

Table 44 presents the findings obtained for these four characteristics using the overall relationship groups (intimates or family). Few fatal IPV or FV cases fit the caregiver or mercy killing paradigms of murders against older women by intimates or family members for the younger age subgroups (50s and 60s). For the oldest (80-plus) subgroup, 30.5% of fatal IPV and 26.3% of fatal FV involve a caregiver. Few fatal IPV cases and no fatal FV cases can be categorized using the CDC indicia-based definition of mercy killings. For prior history of abuse, a higher percentage are observed for fatal IPV than FV and for the 60s age subgroup for both IPV and FV. Arguments prior to the murder are most common among the two younger age subgroups (50s and 60s) for both fatal IPV and FV.

Table 44. Select Incident Characteristics by Over 50 Age Subgroup, 2017-19 NVDRS Restricted-Use Incident Data

	Victim Age Group			
Incident Characteristics	50s	60s	70s	80 plus
Age-Related Stereotypes				
Offender was caregiver (fatal IPV)	*	*	19	18
			15.3%	30.5%
Offender was caregiver (fatal FV)	*	*	15	21
			13.4%	26.3%
Mercy killing (fatal IPV)	*	*	10	*
			8.1%	
Mercy killing (fatal FV)	*	*	*	*
Indicators of Possible Ongoing IPV/FV				
History of abuse (fatal IPV)	*	71	31	*
		20.7%	17.6%	
History of abuse (fatal FV)	*	20	*	*
		12.7%		
Argument prior to murder (fatal IPV)	130	42	21	*
	37.9%	23.9%	16.9%	
Argument prior to murder (fatal FV)	44	52	23	17
	30.6%	32.9%	20.5%	21.3%

Note: Table only presents affirmative responses (characteristic present)
*redacted due to small cell size pursuant to NVDRS restricted-use agreement

Research Question 4: Comparison Groups to Provide Context for Police Response

The final set of research questions provided a context for the reporting and police response findings and whether these might vary based on victim-offender relationship or victim age. Comparisons were made with (a) violence against older women by non-intimate/family offenders and (b) IPV and FV against younger women. The findings obtained indicated that limited variation was observed when comparing with younger women or non-IPV/FV cases.

The discussion of Research Question 2 (police reporting and response) included comparisons with non-IPV/FV against older women and IPV and FV against younger women. These comparisons indicated relatively similar patterns across the age groups (especially younger women and older women in the 50s age subgroup). All victims also had similar reasons

for reporting or not reporting to the police. Stopping the incident was the most important reason for calling the police across all victim age groups and types of violence. For all victim age groups and types of violence, taking a report was the most common initial action. Stranger violence involved a more varied range of activity for all victim age groups than IPV or FV. Patterns of non-IPV/FV violence varied somewhat in terms of police response, which was not surprising given the unknown nature of the offender requires more investigation to identify a potential suspect.

The discussion of Research Question 3 (arrests) included comparisons with non-IPV/FV incidents and the similarity in arrest (but not exceptional clearance) patterns between fatal IPV and fatal non-IPV/FV. In contrast, a lower percentage of non-fatal non-IPV/FV cases ended in arrest as compared to non-fatal IPV or FV. Patterns for arrests among younger women were not explored as part of that question and are presented here.

Arrest Patterns for Fatal IPV and FV against Emerging Adult Women

In comparison to older women, a larger percentage of fatal IPV and FV ended in arrest or the death of the offender for emerging adult (18–24-year-old) women (Table 45). For IPV, this pattern was consistent across all older women's age subgroups, with the exception of the 50s age subgroup. For FV, all of the cases in this sample ended in some form of arrest or clearance. It is worth noting that fewer younger women are killed by a family member than older women.

Table 45. Arrest and Exceptional Clearance Categories by Relationship Group for Female Emerging Adults, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV and FV)

	No arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Total
Intimate	36	101	24	161
	22.4%	62.7%	14.9%	100%
Family	0	11	3	14
	0%	78.6%	21.4%	100%

Arrest and clearance patterns for specific intimate relationships indicated a slightly higher percentage of incidents involving the death of the offender occur for spouses and a higher percentage of arrests occur in dating relationships. Almost no incidents involved ex-spouses. Those that did, all ended in an arrest. Given the small number of fatal FV, these relationships were not presented here. In about half of the cases, the victim was the child/daughter of the offender and the other half involved other family members.

Table 46. Arrest and Exceptional Clearance Categories by Specific Intimate Relationship for Female Emerging Adults, 2017-19 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Fatal IPV)

Relationship	Arrest/Clearance			
	No arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Total
Spouse/wife	8	15	6	29
	27.6%	51.7%	20.7%	100%
Dating	28	84	18	130
	21.5%	64.6%	13.8%	100%
Ex-Spouse/wife	0	2	0	2
	0%	100%	0%	100%

In comparison to older women, a smaller percentage of non-fatal IPV and FV ended in arrest or exceptional clearance for emerging adult (18–24-year-old) women. This pattern appeared to be driven by a higher percentage of arrests for older women in these cases (as compared to exceptional circumstances). A similar pattern was observed across specific types of intimate relationships (Table 47).

Table 47. Arrest and Exceptional Clearance Categories by Relationship Group for Female Emerging Adults, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV and FV)

Relationship	Arrest/Clearance					
	No Arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Prosecution Declined	Victim refused	Total
Intimate	30,007	36,355	24	2,478	3,112	71,976
	41.7%	50.5%	0%	3.4%	4.3%	100%
Family	8,267	7,175	5	611	834	16,892
	48.9%	42.5%	0%	3.6%	4.9%	100%

Table 48. Arrest and Exceptional Clearance Categories by Specific Intimate Relationship for Female Emerging Adults, 2019 NIBRS Extract File Incident Data (Non-Fatal IPV)

Relationship	No Arrest	Arrest	Death of offender	Prosecution Declined	Victim refused	Total
			Arrest/Clearance			
Spouse/wife	3,498	5,247	4	314	401	9,464
	37.0%	55.4%	0.0%	3.3%	4.2%	100%
Dating	24,270	29,143	19	2,051	2,524	58,007
	41.8%	50.2%	0.0%	3.5%	4.4%	100%
Ex-spouse/wife	824	554	0	51	67	1,496
	55.1%	37.0%	0.0%	3.4%	4.5%	100%
Ex-Dating	1,415	1,411	1	62	120	3,009
	47.0%	46.9%	0.0%	2.1%	4.0%	100%

Areas for Future Work

Previous research has failed to examine variation across older women, especially in terms of age subgroups, type of intimate relationship, specific family member, or any combination of these characteristics. As such, the present study contributes important initial insights to address these gaps. The findings and results that address the research questions posed can guide areas for future work. Examples of this future work include building upon themes identified by looking at all three data collections in a holistic manner, topics related to the NCVS police response findings, and issues related to the arrest findings.

Future Research Based on Holistic Findings

A holistic review of the findings from the three data collections provides insights for future work. The NCVS reporting to police findings can help inform the NIBRS arrest and clearance patterns. The NCVS findings suggested most older women who called the police for IPV or FV did so because they wanted help ending that incident. One of the main reasons these victims did not call the police is that they did not want to get the offender in trouble. Viewing IPV and FV as events of ongoing or continuous duration (that is, the violence is not an isolated incident) suggests that both motivations may be involved. These dual motivations may underlie

the arrest and exceptional clearance patterns observed in the NIBRS analyses. For example, if the main motivation for police involvement was to get the current incident to stop (rather than wanting the offender punished for a crime) and the victim was also concerned about not getting the offender in trouble, victims in this context might not want an arrest. For that victim, a successful resolution of the incident would not necessarily involve pressing for an arrest or having the offender prosecuted. For older women (especially those in the oldest age subgroups), these mixed motivations may be complicated by other attributes of the intimate/family relationship. For example, findings from the NVDRS suggest that fatal IPV and FV were committed by a caregiver. Assuming similar patterns for non-fatal IPV and FV, the reliance on a caregiver suggests another reason a victim may be reluctant to cooperate. These findings indicated areas for future work to explore these explanations for older women experiencing IPV and FV.

Future Research Based on NCVS Police Response Findings

For the police response findings, future work should consider the need to ensure an adequate number of cases for analysis. The present study was limited by the small number of unweighted cases. This issue highlighted the need for survey data collections to work to ensure the older population is adequately represented, which may require oversampling. This issue is even more relevant when studying a rare event like violence within a specific population such as older women. The NCVS collects a great amount of incident detail, but the "skip patterns" (or question filters to obtain this information) further reduce the number of observations available for study. To address this issue, some researchers collapse victim categories. For those interested in specific victim groups (such as older women), this solution eliminates critical nuances. Another strategy is to pool additional data years as this study did. While NCVS question

consistency over time allows this option, it might not be a satisfactory solution for researchers interested in particular time periods.

A second issue for future research in the police response findings is the need for a procedural justice perspective that considers older women. A positive experience with police (no matter the end result) can improve IPV victims' health, quality of life, and willingness to engage with the justice system in the future (Calton & Cattaneo, 2014). Studying the responses older women receive is necessary to begin to understand whether these actions meet their needs. The redesigned NCVS may provide this opportunity with its victim expectation and satisfaction questions. Taken as a whole, these questions allow a direct measure and way to connect the actions undertaken by the police with what the victim expected or wanted. Historically, the assumption is that more police investigatory work is better. Depending on the situation, minimal actions by the police might be in line with expectations. For example, merely responding and easing tensions or providing a report for insurance purposes might be adequate. In other cases, failing to conduct a minimal amount of investigation may fall short of expectations. The newly added questions provide a clearer context for studying police response.

Future Research Based on NIBRS Arrest Findings

The arrest findings also identified additional areas for future research. Three examples illustrate this work. One is the finding that a substantial number of fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV do not involve an arrest or other clearance circumstance. For example, between 24%-45.2% of fatal IPV do not involve an arrest or clearance. In these cases, the offender is known and the crime is serious (a murder). Research is needed to understand how these cases are handled and why they do not end in arrest or clearance. The second is in the cases of non-fatal IPV, the percentage of prosecutors declining to prosecute these cases doubles for the oldest age

subgroups. Research is needed to understand this pattern such as prosecutors being motived by ageism and other assumptions about age or actual issues such as mental illness or dementia. The final example is in the cases of non-fatal IPV, the patterns of the victim refusing to cooperate with the prosecution may be related to concerns about not getting the offender in trouble or fear of losing health insurance, caregiving, or retirement income.

Limitations

While this study obtained new insights into fatal and non-fatal IPV and FV against older women by engaging in new analyses of the NCVS, NIBRS, and NVDRS, this study had limitations to be considered when reviewing and interpreting the results. Some limitations in the cases available for analysis and additional variables have been noted previously in the "Changes in Approach" section. A few additional limitations are listed here. One limitation arose with the IPV and FV measures. For this study, the data sources used for IPV and FV could only indicate the victim-offender relationship. They could not identify whether the violence was the result of an ongoing abusive situation. A related issue was that older women tend to experience IPV and FV that is not physical in nature and that might not be captured in these data collection efforts (via NCVS screen questions, NIBRS crime types, or NVDRS prior abuse indicator). Another limitation has been previously noted and concerns the small number of older victims, especially with the NCVS. This sample size prevented fully exploring characteristics that might affect police reporting, response, and actions. A related limitation concerned a technique to overcome these limited samples by pooling years for NCVS data, which may have resulted in a victim appearing in the sample more than once. An additional limitation arose from the NIBRS data design that requires incidents come to the attention of the police. For fatal cases, this filter was less of a concern than for non-fatal cases. For non-fatal IPV and FV, especially for older women,

victims may be reluctant to report to the police for a variety of reasons, including not appreciating that the behavior is a crime. These patterns, combined with the inability of NIBRS to capture non-physical forms of abuse, may result in an undercount of IPV and FV.

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Appendix A: List of Reasons Victim-Respondents Did or Did Not Report the Incident and Most Important Reason for Reporting or Not. NCVS Incident Report Questionnaire

Question Prompt	Response Options
Questions for victims who reported to police	
Besides the fact that it was a crime, did you have any other reason for reporting this incident to the police? (Respondents can offer all reasons that apply)	1 Stop or prevent this incident from happening 2 Needed help after incident due to injury, etc. 3 To recover property 4 To collect insurance 5 To prevent further crimes against respondent/ respondent's household by this offender 6 To stop this offender from committing other crimes against anyone 7 To punish offender 8 Catch or find offender - other reason or no reason given 9 To improve police surveillance of respondent's home, area, etc. 10 Duty to let police know about crime 11 Other reason
Which of these would you say was the most important reason why the incident was reported to the police?	Same list of reasons (from above) with the additional two options: 12 No one reason more important 13 Because it was a crime was most important
Questions for victims who did not report	
What was the reason it was not reported to the police? (Respondents can offer all reasons that apply)	1 Reported to another official (guard, apt. manager, school official, etc.) 2 Private or personal matter or took care of it myself or informally; told offender's parent 3 Minor or unsuccessful crime, small or no loss, recovered property 4 Child offender(s), "kid stuff" 5 Not clear it was a crime or that harm was intended 6 No insurance, loss less than deductible, etc. 7 Didn't find out until too late 8 Could not recover or identify property 9 Could not find or identify offender, lack of proof 10 Police wouldn't think it was important enough, wouldn't want to be bothered or get involved 11 Police would be inefficient, ineffective (they'd arrive late or not at all, wouldn't do a good job, etc.) 12 Police would be biased, would harass/insult respondent, cause respondent trouble, etc.

	13 Offender was police officer 14 Did not want to get offender in trouble with the law 15 Was advised not to report to police 16 Afraid of reprisal by offender or others 17 Did not want to or could not take time too inconvenient 18 Other
Which of these would you say was the most important reason why the incident was not reported to the police?	Same list of reasons (from above) with the additional option: 19 No one reason more important

Source: NCVS-2 Incident Report Instrument (https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs22_cir.pdf)

Appendix B: List of Police Response Questions and Victim-Respondents Eligible To Be Asked Each. NCVS-2 Questionnaire

Variable	Which Respondents Asked Question
Police arrived when called	Those who reported to police
Immediate action: Police took a report	Those who indicated police arrived when called
Immediate action: Police searched	Those who indicated police arrived when called
Immediate action: Police gathered evidence	Those who indicated police arrived when called
Immediate action: Police questioned witnesses	Those who indicated police arrived when called
Immediate action: Police promised surveillance	Those who indicated police arrived when called
Immediate action: Police promised follow up	Those who indicated police arrived when called
Police had subsequent contact with victim	Those who reported to police
Police made an arrest	Those who reported to police
Victim signed a complaint against offender	Those who reported to police

Source: NCVS-2 Incident Report Instrument (https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs22_cir.pdf)