Routine Activities and Criminal Victimization: The Significance of Gendered Spaces

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Abstract

Gender is arguably the most prominent correlate of criminal victimization. Few studies, however, examine gender-specific dynamics that might help advance criminology's understanding of the persistent gender gap in criminal victimization. We attempt to help fill this research void by examining data from the 2012 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) through the lens of routine activity theory to investigate the relationship between "gendered spaces" and criminal victimization. We propose that gendered spaces constructed by people's routine activities may increase their exposure to motivated offenders, which in turn may increase their risk of victimization. Our findings appear to support our proposition and to shed new light on the nature of the victimization gender gap. The results showed that females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at each of the three "feminine gendered spaces" (i.e., bank, shopping center, and grocery store). However, the relationship between gendered space and criminal victimization varied by crime type. Females were significantly more likely than males to be robbed at each of the three feminine gendered spaces. For sexual assault and aggravated assault, females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at a "masculine gendered space" (i.e.,

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bar/nightclub). For simple assault, females were significantly less likely than males to be victimized at two of the three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank and shopping center). Our findings appear to highlight the importance of gendered spaces in helping explain the gender gap in criminal victimization and suggest that future researchers should investigate how other gendered spaces formed by people's routine activities affect their risk of victimization.

Keywords
routine activity theory, gendered spaces, gender, criminal victimization

The gender gap in crime explains that males and females experience criminal victimization at different rates. With the exception of sexual assault, the consensus of numerous national crime surveys is that females have a lower rate of criminal victimization than males (e.g., Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2015). The focus of these surveys, however, is limited to long-term trends in male and female victimization and/or the narrowing gender gap for particular crimes such as aggravated assault (e.g., Truman & Langton, 2014). Overall, it appears that the importance of gender in the study of criminal victimization has been neglected (Zimring, 2007) and that criminologists have espoused mainly gender-neutral explanations of victimization (Belknap, 2007; Drawve, Thomas, & Walker, 2014). Few studies exist that examine gender-specific dynamics that might help advance the field's understanding of the persistent gender gap in criminal victimization (e.g., Popp & Peguero, 2011). For example, the authors could find no studies that examine how "gendered spaces" (Spain, 1992) formed via differences in people's routine activities might help shape the risk of victimization. We attempt to help fill this research void using the logic of routine activity theory (RAT) to examine the relationship between gendered spaces and criminal victimization.

Gendered Spaces

West and Zimmerman (1987) introduced the term "doing gender" to describe the socially constructed nature of gendered behavior. Sex and gender are distinct. Sex is innate, and gender is socially constructed via people's interaction with significant others and social institutions (e.g., the media) that model cultural norms regarding masculine and feminine attitudes and behavior (Lorber, 1994, 1996). Doing gender influences people's routine activities such as the places they frequent, the time they spend in these places, and their behavior in these places. Thus, doing gender spawns "gendered spaces" (Spain, 1992),

particular locations that exhibit one or more of the following characteristics: (a) occupants (e.g., employees and patrons) are predominantly either male or female, (b) atmosphere (e.g., décor, lighting, product placement) generally reflects the traditional interests and preferences of either females or males, and (c) occupant's behavior shaped predominantly by traditional views of either masculinity or femininity.[1] In sum, gendered spaces are social locations, which, based on prevailing views of masculinity and femininity, appear to more closely align with the routine preferences and activities of either males or females. The authors posit that gendered spaces formed by people's routine activities may increase their exposure to motivated offenders who view them as suitable targets, which in turn may increase their risk of criminal victimization. Thus, we propose that the gendered nature of certain social spaces may help explain the gender gap in criminal victimization.

RAT

RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979) is arguably the dominant criminological theory used to explain criminal victimization. RAT has been successful in helping explain several types of victimization such as burglary, larceny, vandalism, assault, robbery, fraud, and cybercrime (for a review, see Bossler & Holt, 2009). According to RAT, a trio of elements must converge in time and space for a direct-contact predatory victimization to take place: (a) a motivated offender, (b) with the presence of a suitable target,[2] and (c) in the absence of capable guardianship.[3] Motivated offenders are individuals who for various reasons possess the desire and ability to commit a crime (Cohen & Felson, 1979). People are suitable targets to the extent they spend time in the proximity of motivated offenders, if motivated offenders view them and/or their property as valuable, and if there are no (or few) capable people and/or devices (e.g., security cameras, weapons) to adequately protect potential victims and/or their property. For instance, a motivated offender patrolling a desolate part of a shopping mall parking lot where no capable guardianship is present may discover a person that he or she views as a suitable target such as an unsuspecting woman with packages in her arms and a purse around her shoulder.

RAT acknowledges gender as an important influence in shaping people's routine activities as well as people's risk of victimization, and posits that gender differences in criminal victimization can be explained by the behaviors each gender engages in on a frequent and repetitive basis (Popp & Peguero, 2011). The consensus of RAT research is that people's repetitive activities are more strongly correlated with victimization rates than simply the number of times people leave their homes to pursue these activities

(Mustaine & Tewksbury, 1998, 2002). Cohen and Felson (1979) stated, " . . . It is ironic that the very factors which create the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of life also may increase the opportunity for predatory violations" (p. 605).

Unfortunately, the role of gender in shaping criminal victimization has not been fully considered by RAT. The bulk of RAT research uses gender merely as a control variable to account for a lower risk of victimization for females and neglects to examine gender-specific differences that might affect the risk of criminal victimization (Jensen & Brownfield, 1986; VanDorn, 2004). Most RAT research has not considered whether the impact of routine activities on criminal victimization is gender neutral or varies by gender. For example, although most victims of violent crime are male, the risk of victimization is not equal for all males and should vary in relation to a male's routine activities. Thus, a motivated offender's preference for victims may also relate to gendered spaces spawned by gender differences in routine activities that reflect different cultural expectations for males and females (Dugan & Apel, 2003). Viewed through the logic of RAT, gendered spaces may influence people's risk of victimization by influencing a motivated offender's perception of a suitable victim and level of guardianship (Peguero, 2009; Tillyer, Fisher, & Wilcox, 2011). In other words, a motivated offender's view of a suitable target and guardianship level may vary by gendered space. Popp and Peguero (2011) stated,

> The conceptualization of gender as a risk factor independent of RAT minimizes the issue of being a suitable victim and may lead to erroneous interpretations regarding the relationship between gender and victimization. When utilizing the gender measure in social science research we are without a doubt capturing size and strength differences, but we are more importantly capturing gender differences in routine activities that were typically not controlled for in previous victimization research. (p. 2418)

In sum, although criminal victimization varies by gender and crime type, the fact that for most crimes females have a lower risk of victimization than males has not been satisfactorily explained by RAT. The socially constructed nature of gender clearly influences people's beliefs, perceptions, and behavior, including their routine activities that regularly place them in locations that can be considered gendered spaces. The authors posit that the gendered spaces formed by people's routine activities may increase their odds of being victimized. Specifically, we propose that gender influences peoples' employment and/or patronage at particular places, which in turn may increase their likelihood of encountering motivated offenders who view them as suitable
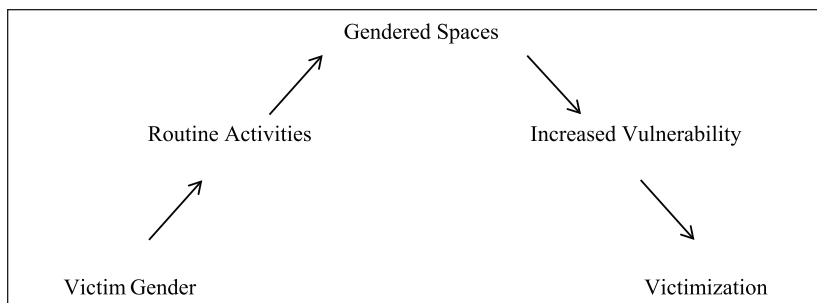
Figure 1. A proposed process from victim gender to victimization.

targets and in turn increase their odds of being victimized. A representation of our proposed process from victim's gender to gendered spaces to criminal victimization is presented in Figure 1.

The study that follows investigates whether certain gendered spaces formed by people's routine activities may help shape their risk of criminal victimization. Specifically, this study investigates the following question: "Does the impact of routine activities on criminal victimization vary by gendered space?" Put another way, "Does a routine activity that increases a female's risk of criminal victimization have the same relationship for males?"

The Present Study

Method

Gendered spaces. The authors identified three National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) incident locations as "feminine gendered spaces": *grocery store*, *shopping center*, and *bank.* It appears that a combination of socialization, structural forces, and historical influences has resulted in each of these locations having one or more of the aforementioned components of a gendered space (Spain, 1992). For example, we classified banks as gendered spaces because females are significantly more likely than males to be employed as bank tellers and bank financial clerks. This has not always been the case, however. Before World War II, males were the dominant holders of these positions. However, during the war, females took over the majority of these positions replacing males who went to fight. When the war ended, many returning male veterans sought more lucrative and prestigious employment and, over time, females came to hold these positions at higher rates than males (Padavic & Reskin, 2002). In 2016, the U.S. Bureau

of Labor Statistics reported that 81.7% of bank tellers and 63.9% of bank financial clerks were female.

We also designated shopping centers and grocery stores as feminine gendered spaces. Regarding shopping centers, in 2010, the International Council of Shopping Centers reported that females made up two thirds of shoppers at shopping malls and spent nearly 10 more minutes in the mall per visit than males. Hu and Jasper (2004) reported that females spend up to 29 min longer than males on each shopping mall visit, and report enjoying the shopping mall experience significantly more than males. Also, on average, the atmosphere (i.e., décor, lighting, product placement) in shopping centers and grocery stores appears to cater more to traditional feminine attitudes. For example, the typical shopping mall has more female-oriented stores than male-oriented stores (Hu & Jasper, 2004). Furthermore, considerable research shows the shopping behavior of females and males tend to differ. For example, Wolin and Korgaonkar (2003) reported that, on average, females have an emotional connection with shopping whereas male shoppers tend to be more goal oriented. Finally, regarding grocery stores, the NPD Market Research Group (2014) reported that in the United States, females are the primary grocery shoppers and, on average, spend considerably more time grocery shopping than males.

We also identified one NIBRS incident location as a "masculine gendered space": *bar/nightclub.* On average, bars and nightclubs are patronized more by males than by females. Also, the average time spent by male in bar/nightclub patrons exceeds the time spent by female patrons. In 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that approximately 65% of employees in bars and nightclubs were female, which tends to attract male patrons. Furthermore, on average, the atmosphere in bars and nightclubs (e.g., programs displayed on TV screens) tends to reflect traditional masculine attitudes. Finally, in general, the behavior displayed in bars and nightclubs tends to mirror traditional ideas of masculinity (Graham & Homel, 2008).

NIBRS. This study uses data from the NIBRS for the year 2012 obtained from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data. The NIBRS extract files contain the following merged segment levels: (a) administrative data, (b) offense data, (c) property data, (d) victim data, (e) offender data, and (f) arrestee data. The NIBRS collects these crime data from various U.S. law enforcement agencies, which submit monthly reports to the FBI. Unlike the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) System, which collects data at the aggregate level, the NIBRS collects incident-level data (Addington, 2007). Furthermore, the NIBRS expands the level of collection by including 46 Group A Offenses, whereas the UCR includes only eight Index

Offenses (Addington, 2007). Other advantages of the NIBRS over the UCR include (a) victim type is identified (i.e., individual or business), (b) additional victim demographic information is collected, and (c) location of the victimization is specified. The NIBRS also eliminates the UCR hierarchy rule. When multiple offenses are committed, the NIBRS records every offense rather than only the most serious. In sum, the NIBRS appears to be an ideal data set for this study because it provides incident-level data, which specifies particular crimes at particular locations (e.g., parks, residential homes, parking lots, garages, streets, fields, places of worship, high schools, government buildings). Because the major units of analysis in this study are crime type and location, the NIBRS allowed us to classify particular locations as "gendered spaces" and to determine the odds of victimization for females and males at these locations for specific property and person crimes.

Hypotheses. The hypotheses for this study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: It is expected that females will be significantly more likely than males to be victimized at three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., shopping centers, grocery stores, banks).
Hypothesis 2: For the crime of robbery, it is expected that females will be significantly more likely than males to be victimized at three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., shopping centers, grocery stores, banks).
Hypothesis 3: For the crime of sexual assault, it is expected that females will be significantly more likely than males to be victimized at a masculine gendered space (i.e., bars/nightclubs).
Hypothesis 4: For the crime of aggravated assault, it is expected that females will significantly be more likely than males to be victimized at a masculine gendered space (i.e., bars/nightclubs).
Hypothesis 5: For the crime of simple assault, it is expected that females will be significantly more likely than males to be victimized at a masculine gendered space (i.e., bars/nightclubs).

Variables

Victim gender. Victim gender is measured using a dichotomous variable: coded 0 if male and coded 1 if female.[4]

Gendered spaces. Gendered space is measured using four dummy variables—bank: coded 0 if no, and coded 1 if yes; grocery store: coded 0 if no, and coded 1 if yes; shopping center: coded 0 if no, and coded 1 if yes; and bar/nightclub: coded 0 if no, and coded 1 if yes.

Age of the victim. Victim's age is measured as a dichotomous variable where individuals between ages 15 and 55 are coded as 1 and all other ages will be coded as 0.

Time of day of the victimization. Time of day of the victimization is coded into two separate dummy variables: 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (0 = no, 1 = yes) and 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. (0 = no, 1 = yes). The reference category is 12:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.

Victim/offender relationship. Relationship of the victim and offender is measured using three dummy variables: stranger (0 = no, 1 = yes), intimate partner (0 = no, 1 = yes), and acquaintance (0 = no, 1 = yes).

Offender gender and race. Gender of the offender is measured using two dichotomous variables: male (0 = no, 1 = yes) and female (0 = no, 1 = yes). Race of the offender is measured using two dichotomous variables: White (0 = no, 1 = yes) and Black (0 = no, 1 = yes).

Race of the victim. Race of the victim is measured using three dichotomous variables: White (0 = no, 1 = yes), Black (0 = no, 1 = yes), and Asian (0 = no, 1 = yes).

Victimization type. Four victimization types are examined in this study: simple assault (0 = no, 1 = yes), aggravated assault (0 = no, 1 = yes), robbery (0 = no, 1 = yes), and sexual assault (0 = no, 1 = yes).[5]

Analytic Strategy

Because victim gender is a dichotomous variable, we used logistic regression rather than ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to test our hypotheses (DeMaris, 1995).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the study variables are presented in Table 1. The 2012 NIBRS shows that 51% of crime victims were female and 49% were male.[6] Regarding victims' race, 68% were White and 31% were Black. Regarding victims' age, 83% were between the ages of 15 and 55 and 17% were above age 55. Regarding victim/offender relationship, 19% were

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for All Study Variables.

	Percentage	N
Dependent variable		
Victim gender	51	243,096
Independent variables		
Target suitability		
15-55 (victim age)[a]	83	243,096
7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (time of day)[b]	40	243,096
4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. (time of day)[b]	41	243,096
Incident location		
Bar[c]	5.30	243,096
Shopping center[c]	1.80	243,096
Grocery store[c]	1.02	243,096
Bank[c]	0.30	243,096
Control variables		
Victimization type		
Simple assault	58	243,096
Aggravated assault	13	243,096
Robbery	7	243,096
Sexual assault	4	243,096
Race of victim		
White victim	68	243,096
Black victim	31	243,096
Asian victim	1.0	243,096
Offender characteristics		
Acquaintance	33	243,096
Stranger	23	243,096
Intimate partner	19	243,096
Male offender	76	243,096
White offender	57	243,096
Black offender	41	243,096

[a]Reference category is >55 years old.
[b]Reference category is 11:01 p.m. to 6:59 a.m.
[c]Reference category is other location.

victimized by an intimate partner, 33% were victims of a known person other than an intimate partner, and 23% were victims of a stranger. Regarding race of the perpetrator, 57% were victimized by a White offender and 41% were victims of a Black offender. Finally, regarding time of the victimization, 40% of victimizations occurred between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and 41% of the victimizations occurred between 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

The predatory crimes examined in this study accounted for 82% of victimizations as follows: simple assault, 58%; aggravated assault, 13%; robbery, 7%; and sexual assault, 4%. Furthermore, 62.7% of simple assault victims were female and 37.3% were males; 43.6% of aggravated assault victims were female and 56.4% were male; 30.1% of robbery victims were female and 69.9% were male; and 86% of sexual assault victims were female and 14% were male.

Logistic Regression Findings

Findings from the logistic regression are presented in Table 2. According to Model 1 of the logistic regression, females between the ages of 15 and 55 were significantly more likely to be victimized than people above the age of 55. Also, Model 1 shows that females were significantly more likely to be victimized between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. compared with the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. No significant difference was found for people's risk of victimization between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Finally, compared with males, females were significantly more likely to experience a sexual assault, and were significantly less likely than males to be victims of simple assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Findings regarding risk of victimization in gendered spaces are also shown in Models 1 and 2. Model 1 shows that females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at two feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank and shopping center). Model 2, however, shows that females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at all three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center, and grocery store). Thus, females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at all three feminine gendered spaces. Model 1 also shows that females were significantly less likely than males to be victimized at bars/nightclubs.

Findings regarding the interaction of victimization type with gendered space are shown in Model 2 of the logistic regression. Regarding robbery, Model 2 shows a significant positive interaction between robbery and each of the three feminine gendered spaces. Females were significantly more likely than males to be robbed at banks, shopping centers, and grocery stores. No significant difference for risk of robbery for females and males was found for the masculine gendered space (i.e., bars/nightclubs).

For sexual assault, the only significant interaction shown in Model 2 was for the masculine gendered space (i.e., bars/nightclubs), and it was positive. Females were significantly more likely than males to be sexually assaulted at bars/nightclubs. No significant difference between males and females was found for risk of sexual assault victimization at the three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center, grocery store).

Table 2. Logit Coefficients From Logistic Regression Predicting Female Victimization.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age of victim (0 = 56+)				
15-55	0.494*	0.383*	0.381*	0.379*
	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Time of crime (0 = 12:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.)				
7 a.m. to 3 p.m.	0.053*	0.068*	0.068*	0.073*
	(0.007)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
4 p.m. to 11 p.m.	−0.013	0.012	0.020	0.025
	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Location of crime (0 = other location)				
Bank	0.739*	0.936*	0.710*	0.506*
	(0.085)	(0.147)	(0.171)	(0.184)
Shopping center	0.380*	0.537*	0.382*	0.583*
	(0.034)	(0.064)	(0.067)	(0.063)
Grocery store	0.084	0.227*	0.124	0.253*
	(0.044)	(0.080)	(0.088)	(0.087)
Bar	−0.248*	−0.210*	−0.016	0.570*
	(0.020)	(0.070)	(0.047)	(0.040)
Race of victim (0 = other race)				
White	−0.402*	−0.340*	−0.340*	−0.344*
	(0.032)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Black	−0.443*	−0.280*	−0.279	−0.283*
	(0.033)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Asian	−0.340*	−0.240*	−0.372*	−0.373*
	(0.034)	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.070)
Victim/offender relationship (0 = other family)				
Intimate partner	1.07*	1.63*	1.64*	1.63*
	(0.007)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)
Acquaintance	−0.321*	−0.122*	−0.131*	−0.124*
	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.011)
Stranger	−1.07*	−0.602*	−0.602*	−0.601*
	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Gender of offender (0 = female offender)				
Male offender	0.466*	−0.855*	−0.854*	−0.803*
	(0.006)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Race of offender (0 = other race)				
White offender	0.082*	−0.008*	−0.005	0.001
	(0.022)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)
Black offender	0.572*	0.352*	0.353*	0.358*
	(0.023)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.037)
Crime type (0 = other crime)				
Simple assault	−0.253*	−0.358*	−0.353*	−0.352*
	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.012)

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Aggravated assault	−0.922*	−0.967*	−0.962*	−0.960*
	(0.009)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Sexual assault	1.49*	2.19*	2.21*	2.21*
	(0.016)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)
Robbery	−1.00*	−0.702*	−0.685*	−0.684*
	(0.017)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Location by crime type				
Bank × Simple Assault		−0.725*		
		(0.209)		
Bank × Aggravated Assault		−0.614		
		(0.367)		
Bank × Sexual Assault		−0.621		
		(1.07)		
Bank × Robbery		0.567*		
		(0.210)		
Shopping Center × Simple Assault		−0.168*		
		(0.079)		
Shopping Center × Aggravated Assault		0.020		
		(0.147)		
Shopping Center × Sexual Assault		−0.275		
		(0.269)		
Shopping Center × Robbery		0.404*		
		(0.140)		
Grocery Store × Simple Assault		−0.075		
		(0.101)		
Grocery Store × Aggravated Assault		0.067		
		(0.180)		
Grocery Store × Sexual Assault		0.614		
		(0.530)		
Grocery Store × Robbery		0.675*		
		(0.173)		
Bar × Simple Assault		0.135		
		(0.074)		
Bar × Aggravated Assault		0.236*		
		(0.086)		
Bar × Sexual Assault		1.71*		
		(0.348)		
Bar × Robbery		0.149		
		(0.185)		
Location by victim/offender relationship				
Bank × Stranger			0.540*	
			(0.207)	

Table 2. (continued)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Shopping Center × Stranger			0.327*	
			(0.088)	
Grocery Store × Stranger			0.404*	
			(0.116)	
Bar × Stranger			−0.193*	
			(0.059)	
Bank × Intimate Partner			−0.434	
			(0.317)	
Shopping Center × Intimate Partner			−0.289*	
			(0.123)	
Grocery Store × Intimate Partner			−0.059	
			(0.157)	
Bar × Intimate Partner			−0.297*	
			(0.076)	
Bank × Acquaintance			−0.538*	
			(0.256)	
Shopping Center × Acquaintance			0.012	
			(0.092)	
Grocery Store × Acquaintance			0.005	
			(0.118)	
Bar × Acquaintance			0.155*	
			(0.057)	
Location by male offender				
Bank × Male Offender				0.428*
				(0.206)
Shopping Center × Male Offender				−0.156*
				(0.076)
Grocery Store × Male Offender				0.000
				(0.102)
Bar × Male Offender				−0.880*
				(0.045)

Note. Standard errors in parentheses.
*$p < .05$.

Regarding aggravated assault, the only significant interaction shown in Model 2 was for the masculine gendered space (i.e., bar/nightclub), and again it was positive. Females were significantly more likely than males to be victims of aggravated assault at bars/nightclubs. No significant gender difference was found for the risk of aggravated assault at the three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center, grocery store).

For simple assault, Model 2 shows a significant negative interaction for two of the three feminine gendered spaces. Females were significantly less

likely than males to experience a simple assault at banks and shopping centers. No significant difference between females and males was found for risk of simple assault at either grocery stores (i.e., feminine gendered space) or bars/nightclubs (i.e., masculine gendered space).

Regarding the relationship between victim and offender, Model 3 shows females were significantly more likely to be victimized by a stranger at each of the three feminine gendered spaces. Also, although females were significantly less likely to be victimized by a stranger than by a known offender, when gendered space was added to the analytic, females' risk of stranger victimization increased. Compared with the reference group, females were approximately 1.7 times more likely to be victimized by a stranger at a bank, about 1.4 times more likely to be victimized by a stranger at a shopping center, and around 1.5 times more likely to be victimized by a stranger at a grocery store. This finding appears noteworthy because many crimes perpetrated by strangers (e.g., robbery) involve the use of force (at times with a weapon), which increases the likelihood that a victim will be physically harmed.

According to Model 4, females were significantly less likely to be victimized by a male offender at one feminine gendered space (i.e., shopping center). Viewed through the logic of RAT, this finding was not unexpected because, on average, compared with male offenders, female offenders (a) are less likely to "stand out" at this feminine gender space, (b) are better able to establish close proximity to a suitable female target, (c) can enter the same rest room as a potential female target, (d) are more familiar with the shopping habits of females (e.g., value of purchases, placement of cash and credit cards), and (e) like their male counterparts, tend to view female targets as more vulnerable and less likely to resist than male targets (Miller, 1998).

Furthermore, females were significantly less likely to be victimized by a male offender at the masculine gendered space (i.e., bar/nightclub). Considering the masculine nature of the typical bar or nightclub, this finding may at first seem puzzling. However, the consensus of considerable research on assaultive behavior in bars and nightclubs (e.g., Krienert & Vandiver, 2009) shows that females are more likely to assault other females and that males are more likely to assault other males. For example, Collins, Quigley, and Leonard (2007) examined 92 recorded bar-related incidents, and reported that 55 (60%) were between two female patrons.

Discussion

The findings of this study appear to support four of our five hypotheses. Hypothesis 1, that females will be significantly more likely than males to be victimized at all three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center,

grocery store), was partially supported by Model 1, and fully supported by Model 2. Model 1 showed that females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at two feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank and shopping center). Model 2, however, showed females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at all three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center, and grocery store). Specifically, females were around 2.6 times more likely than males to be victimized at a bank, about 1.7 times more likely than males to be victimized at a shopping center, and approximately 1.3 times more likely than males to be victimized at a grocery store. Viewed through the logic of RAT, this finding was expected because (a) more females than males are typically present at these locations; (b) on average, females spend more time than males at these locations; (c) females at these locations typically possess property that is highly valued by offenders (e.g., cash, credit cards, merchandise); (d) motivated offenders are familiar with the layout and level of guardianship at these locations (e.g., escape routes, number and location of guards and security cameras); and (e) on average, motivated offenders tend to view females as more suitable targets than males. This finding appears to support our proposition that gendered spaces help shape people's risk of victimization.

Robbery Victimizations

Regarding robbery victimizations, Hypothesis 2 was supported. Females were significantly more likely than males to experience a robbery at each of the three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center, and grocery store).[7] It appears noteworthy that Model 1 shows that females were significantly less likely than males to experience a robbery. However, when the interaction of robbery with gendered space was considered, females were around 1.8 times more likely than males to be robbed at a bank, about 1.5 times more likely than males to be robbed at a shopping center, and around 2 times more likely than males to be robbed at a grocery store.

It is not uncommon for robberies to occur at locations that have a high population turnover such as banks, shopping centers, and grocery stores. Generally speaking, robbery locations are not picked at random by motivated offenders. These perpetrators typically choose these locations based on how familiar they are with them, how comfortable they are operating in them, the amount of guardianship present, the availability of easily accessed escape routes, and the attractiveness of potential targets (Miethe & McCorkle, 1998). Thus, on average, females at these locations and/or walking to and from these locations through parking lots and parking structures (often with low guardianship) are more likely than males to be viewed by motivated offenders as

vulnerable and attractive targets (Felson & Messner, 1996). This finding also appears to support our proposition that gendered spaces help shape the risk of victimization.

Sexual Assault Victimizations

Regarding sexual assault victimizations, Hypothesis 3 was supported. The only significant interaction between sexual assault and gendered space was for the masculine gendered space (i.e., bar/nightclub), and it was positive. Females were significantly more likely than males to experience a sexual assault at a bar or nightclub. This finding may seem like a "no brainer" until one considers the following. Model 1 showed that females were about 1.5 times more likely than males to be sexually assaulted. However, when gendered space (i.e., bar/nightclub) was added to the analytic in Model 2, females were approximately 2.2 times more likely than males to experience a sexual assault. Viewed through the lens of RAT, this increase in sexual assault risk for females at bars or nightclubs was not unexpected because on average (a) most sexual assaults against females are perpetrated by males, (b) more males than females are typically present at bars and nightclubs, (c) exaggerated masculine attitudes (e.g., macho) and behavior (e.g., aggressive, obtrusive) are more likely to be displayed at bars and nightclubs than at other incident locations, and (d) the consumption of alcohol (and other drugs) at bars and nightclubs often compromises the common sense and self-control of males and females and can inhibit the ability of females to recognize danger and take appropriate defensive action (Buddie & Parks, 2003). Again, this finding appears to support our proposition that gendered spaces help shape people's risk of criminal victimization.

Aggravated Assault Victimizations

Regarding aggravated assault victimizations, Hypothesis 4 was also supported. Females were significantly more likely than males to experience an aggravated assault at a bar or nightclub. Viewed through the logic of RAT, this finding was also expected for many of the same reasons cited earlier for females' increased risk of sexual assault at a bar or nightclub. Compared with other locations, bars and nightclubs are places where high-risk behaviors are more likely to converge and increase the likelihood of violence (Homel, Tomsen, & Thommeny, 1992; Stockwell, Lang, & Rydon, 1993). For example, it is not uncommon for fights to break out in these establishments related to people competing for and/or seeking the attention of other individuals or because of one person's rude or sexually suggestive comment to another

person's friend or significant other. Females can be subjected to violence either indirectly or directly during such altercations. Also, females in inebriated states of mind are more likely to engage in heated arguments with others and/or to become uncharacteristically bold toward someone who makes a rude or sexually suggestive comment. Assaults in bars and nightclubs are typically "expressive crimes" involving strong emotions such as frustration, anger, and rage, which tend to be exacerbated by alcohol and other drugs (Parker, 1995; see Note 7). This finding appears to provide additional support for our proposition that gendered spaces help shape the risk of victimization.

Simple Assault Victimizations

Regarding simple assault victimizations, Hypotheses 5 was not supported. The only significant finding was in the opposite direction of what was predicted. Females were significantly less likely than males to experience a simple assault in two feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank and shopping center). One possible explanation for this unexpected finding is that, on average, females are less likely than males to allow disagreements with employees and patrons in these locations to escalate into physical aggression. On average, females are less likely than males to respond to interpersonal conflict and the perceived wrongdoings of others with physical violence.

Implications for Prevention

Public and private security is a ubiquitous reality in society. It is not uncommon for individuals to encounter security guards in parking lots during their daily routine activities. This is particularly true for highly frequented businesses such as banks, shopping centers, grocery stores, and bars. Consequently, the enhanced use of security in gendered spaces may have implications for improving the safety and welfare of individuals visiting these locations. By understanding victimization in gendered spaces, these businesses can tailor their security measures to better protect their male and female customers and staff (e.g., use of closed-circuit television). Private businesses have been held accountable by courts of law for crime happening at their establishments due to premises liability for negligent security (Savard & Kennedy, 2013). Victims of crime in gendered spaces may seek redress through civil lawsuits. However, security is not a one-size-fits-all approach, wherein the use of security measures in gendered spaces may be demarcated by their location and history (Savard & Kennedy, 2014). Furthermore, increasing the public's awareness of differences in gender victims at certain locations may heighten the motivation of people who frequent these locations to better protect themselves.

Limitations

There are several limitations with this study that beg for more research questions and additional studies. The NIBRS, for example, provides limited coverage and consequently is not representative of all police departments across the United States. In 2012, although 6,115 law enforcement agencies submitted crime data using the NIBRS, only 30% of the United States was covered (FBI, 2012). Furthermore, the NIBRS has been criticized for having a "small agency bias" (Addington, 2009). On average, small police agencies have been more willing than larger police agencies to shift their crime-reporting practices to the NIBRS (Maxfield & Babbie, 2005). Although the study's findings are limited by these issues, other crime surveys fail to provide specific victimization locations necessary to identify gendered spaces. Nevertheless, this study should be replicated in the future after larger police agencies begin reporting victimization data to the NIBRS.

The cross-sectional analysis of the data in this study limits the ability to establish a causal relationship between gendered spaces and criminal victimization. Future research should consider using longitudinal data to develop a causal model linking gendered spaces to criminal victimization. Furthermore, this study distinguished only four gendered spaces and examined the interaction of these locations with only four types of victimization. Future studies should distinguish additional gendered spaces and examine their relationship with other types of victimization (e.g., bullying). For example, future studies might identify gendered spaces formed by the routine activities of male and female students at colleges and universities. It is possible that the routine activities of students related to particular courses, majors, student organizations, and extracurricular activities form gendered spaces that might influence the risk of criminal victimization (Popp & Peguero, 2011).

Conclusion

The gender gap in crime explains that males and females experience criminal victimization differently. Crime statistics, particularly those from trusted government sources, consistently show that males are more likely than females to be crime victims, particularly victims of violent crime. RAT posits that people's risk of criminal victimization can be explained by gender-specific differences in routine activities (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Viewed through the lens of RAT, if the impact of routine activities is added to the analytic, the significance of gender should be neutralized or significantly reduced.

After controlling for routine activities, however, our findings show that the impact of gender continued to be significant in mediating the risk of victimization.

Using data from the 2012 NIBRS, we identified three "feminine gendered spaces" (i.e., banks, grocery stores, and shopping centers) and one "masculine gendered space" (i.e., bars/nightclubs). We then found that females were significantly more likely than males to be victimized at three feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank, shopping center, and grocery store). We also found that for several serious predatory crimes, the risk of victimization for females varied by gendered space. Females were significantly more likely than males to experience a robbery at all three feminine gendered spaces. Also, females were significantly more likely than males to be victims of both sexual assault and aggravated assault at the masculine gendered space (i.e., bars/nightclubs). However, females were significantly less likely than males to be victims of simple assault at two feminine gendered spaces (i.e., bank and shopping center). Overall, our findings appear to support our proposition that gendered spaces help shape people's risk of criminal victimization and appear to shine new light on the persistent victimization gender gap.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Notes

1. It is not the authors' intention to stereotype any social space as masculine or feminine. We are sensitive to the fact that socially constructed ideas regarding gender can have negative consequences. We are simply using the theoretical ideas regarding gendered spaces and routine activities in an attempt to explain possible differences in the likelihood of criminal victimization for females and males.
2. The term "suitable target" was chosen by Cohen and Felson (1979) rather than "victim" because these researchers wanted to include property, as well as people, as a target of crime.
3. The term "capable guardian" was chosen by Cohen and Felson (1979) rather than "police" because informal guardians such as friends, family members, and bystanders can also provide guardianship. In fact, it is rare that a police professional is present at the time of a victimization incident (Cromwell, Dunham, Akers, & Lanza-Kaduce, 1995).
4. It should be noted that we are not predicting an individual's gender; rather, we are using gendered spaces and specific crimes to predict whether a crime victim is more likely to be male or female. Furthermore, it is not unheard of for researchers to use gender as a dependent variable (see, for example, Krienert & Vandiver, 2009).

5. Generally speaking, simple assault differs from aggravated assault by the amount of harm/injury inflicted on a victim. A person who suffers serious bodily injury due to a stab wound, for example, would likely be considered a victim of aggravated assault, whereas a person who is assaulted but does not experience serious bodily injury would likely be seen as a simple assault victim. Generally speaking, robbery involves taking something of value from a person or persons using force or the threat of force. Four offense types were included under sexual assault (i.e., forcible rape, forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling). Generally speaking, a sexual assault involves any type of contact of a sexual nature where consent was not given by the victim. Other serious predatory crimes such as murder and kidnapping were not included because so few of these crimes occurred in the gendered spaces identified in this study. Also, the low base rate of criminal victimizations at banks, grocery stores, and shopping malls may be partly explained by the fact that these locations are typically considered to be "crime attractors." Motivated offenders are attracted to these locations because they typically contain a large pool of suitable targets. However, this does not mean that these locations have particularly high crime rates because they are places of business and the level of risky behavior of employees and patrons is comparatively low. Bars and nightclubs, however, are typically viewed as "crime generators" because, on average, their employees and patrons display higher levels of risky behavior.

6. The fact that the 2012 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) shows that females have a higher victimization rate than males may seem puzzling. However, the NIBRS has been criticized for having a "small agency bias" (Addington, 2009). On average, small police agencies have been more willing than larger police agencies to shift their crime-reporting practices to the NIBRS (Maxfield & Babbie, 2005). Because large police agencies cover large cities, which typically include several high crime areas, a substantial number of serious person and property crimes that tend to be disproportionately perpetrated against males were not accounted for in the 2012 NIBRS.

7. This finding may in part relate to different target criteria considered by motivated offenders for different types of victimization. For violent crime, motivated offenders tend to select targets based on various psychological and/or social rewards (Augustine, Wilcox, Ousey, & Clayton, 2002; Fisher, Sloan, Cullen, & Lu, 1998). For property crime, however, offenders are typically motivated by economic factors (Augustine et al., 2002; Finkelhor & Asdigian, 1996).

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