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A Survey of Print Media Coverage of Domestic Violence in New Mexico, 2001-2004

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ABSTRACT

Intimate partner violence has often been considered a problem best discussed within the framework of social advocacy or more recently the criminal justice system. However, it is important to realize that it is also a key public health issue to which widespread public attention must be turned in order to ameliorate its far-reaching effects. Research has shown that the public would likely be willing to provide support to domestic violence prevention programs if it were to recognize the full extent of the problem. However, it has been argued that our society has an underlying belief that intimate partner violence is a private rather than a public affair. Such a belief must be altered in order for awareness of the issue to be improved and its incidence decreased. One of the major ways people learn about social problems in which they are not intimately involved is the media, which not only provides facts but also shapes the way in which people think about or even experience such issues. Because the public tends to find newspaper articles the most credible of all sources of information, we would expect the public to be most swayed in their opinions and actions by what they read in the newspaper. We have thus attempted to determine how the Albuquerque print media has reported on intimate partner violence and whether its portrayal correlates with the actual incidence of domestic violence in Bernalillo County specifically and New Mexico generally.

We have collected two sources of data in order to answer our primary question. Comprehensive and current data regarding the incidence of domestic violence and associated demographics and characteristics has become available from the New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository for the years 2001 through 2004, allowing for the analysis of trends through time. In addition, we have identified over 650 appropriate articles about intimate partner violence from the major Albuquerque newspapers for these same years and coded attribute data to allow for the identification (or not) of correlation between incidence data and newspaper data. Finally, we have calculated the number of articles about intimate partner violence per the incidence of domestic violence in order to more directly evaluate any correlation between the two.

A qualitative analysis of our data reveals several general trends. The incidence of domestic violence has decreased while the number of newspaper articles about intimate partner violence has increased over the years 2001 to 2004. There is also an increase in the number of articles relating to intimate partner violence per the actual incidence of domestic violence over the years 2001 to 2004. This indicates that the incidence of domestic violence and its portrayal by the media are negatively correlated. However, the actual numbers of articles per incidence is very small, indicating that the public is receiving only a very small (though increasing) portion of information about this crisis.

It is important to note, however, that correlation does not equal causation. Future research should include a more refined coding algorithm for a more thorough quantitative analysis of the data. In addition, expansion of the research parameters may allow for the clarification of these results. Ultimately, however, it does seem clear that there is some relationship between the incidence of domestic violence and the media portrayal of intimate partner violence. This indicates that further enhancement of domestic violence coverage by the media could not only increase public knowledge and opinion but may also help decrease the rates of domestic violence as well.

INTRODUCTION

Although domestic violence has often been considered a problem best discussed within the framework of social advocacy or more recently the criminal justice system, it is important to recognize that domestic violence is also a key public health issue that has been largely underrepresented as such, both within the medical community as well as by the public at large (Gelles 2000). Yet it is essential to identify domestic violence as a significant public health concern so that widespread attention can be turned toward it, allowing for the amelioration of this problem and its far-reaching effects.

When the public thinks of domestic violence, it tends to picture the immediate and more obvious consequences of such violence. It sees a young woman with a blackened eye or a small child with a fractured skull or a large man with a weapon standing over a crumpled body. However, in addition to these immediate and devastating effects of domestic violence, there are also many well-documented long-term health effects that contribute to its importance as a public health issue. These effects encompass the physical, sexual, and psychological health domains and include chronic pain, recurring central nervous system symptoms, gastrointestinal disorders, cardiac symptoms, sexually transmitted diseases, decreased sexual desire, chronic pelvic pain, urinary tract infections, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, insomnia, and suicide. In addition, victims of domestic violence consume much more medical care, including prescriptions and hospital admissions, than do the general population (Campbell 2002).

Although there is wide disagreement on the actual numbers of people who experience domestic violence every year and throughout their lifetime, it can be definitively stated that it is a problem that affects a large portion of our population. Analysis of data gathered by the National Violence Against Women Survey and considered to be representative of the general population

of the United States indicates that almost 29% of women and 23% of men experience some form of domestic abuse within their lifetime (Coker *et al* 2002). Analysis of data gathered from health care settings indicates a 4 to 23% yearly incidence and a 33 to 39% lifetime prevalence of domestic violence (Campbell 2002). New Mexico ranks fifth in the nation as to the number of domestic violence cases and has the highest incident rate per capita (New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2005). And yet New Mexico is one of only five states to have no mandatory reporting laws for physicians who become aware of the presence of domestic violence in a clinical setting (Houry *et al* 2002).

It is because of these long-term health effects in combination with the high prevalence of domestic violence in our society that it is so important for the public to become aware of this crisis. Only with public knowledge and support can this issue be fully addressed and overcome.

Research has shown that the public considers health maintenance and promotion, *i.e.* public health activities, at least as important as the treatment of active disease. Within this context, there is some evidence that the public would be willing to provide economic support to domestic violence prevention efforts if given the chance (Sorenson 2003). Unfortunately, it is less clear that the public actually recognizes the full extent of the problem of domestic violence. This may be for a variety of reasons, including differences between various groups (*e.g.* legal, social, medical) as to what constitutes the definition of domestic violence (Kilpatrick 2004), the scarcity of current integrated data regarding the actual incidence and prevalence of the problem (Clark & Du Mont 2003), and the lack of appropriate dissemination to the public of specific information available to the various groups. The former two of these issues require thorough investigation and agreement between agencies in order to facilitate accurate data collection and analysis as to the true scope of the problem of domestic violence.

It is the purpose of this research to examine the latter of these issues, the poor distribution of complete and accurate information regarding domestic violence on which the public may base its views. It has been argued that our society implicitly condones and accepts violence against women, *i.e.* intimate partner violence, with a basic underlying belief that such violence is a private rather than a public matter (Ghez 1995). Such a belief undermines efforts by various groups to improve awareness of the issue of domestic violence and to decrease its incidence. One of the primary ways that such a belief can be altered is through exposure to alternate opinions and realities such as provided through the mass media. And indeed the public is often made aware of the presence and severity of a wide-ranging social or public health issue through exposure to the topic by the various news media. In fact, a major source of information for people learning about social problems in which they are not intimately involved is the media, which not only provides facts to the public but also shapes the way in which the public thinks about or even experiences such social problems as domestic violence (Berns 2004).

The media is not a completely objective purveyor of all news. Each news organization cannot give equal attention to every available newsworthy item. There is choice involved as to what stories and details are judged most important. Thus, there is inevitable subjectivity and bias within the news media in general and within each story more specifically. For any particular issue then, the news media may inflate or deflate the issue's importance, emphasize or de-emphasize certain aspects of the issue, ignore the issue altogether, or provide the appropriate amount of coverage and emphasis to reflect reality (assuming that there is such a thing). This is significant, because the way in which issues such as that of domestic violence are presented in the media can have a great impact, not only on what the public thinks about the issue, but also if and how the public reacts to it (Lebow 1999).

In terms of the specific problem of domestic violence, there is evidence that the news media can change its coverage of domestic violence in response to guidance from social advocacy groups in such a way that the issue can begin to be seen as a social problem warranting public intervention rather than as an assortment of unpredictable private tragedies (Ryan *et al* 2006). However, it is still unclear whether changing media coverage and even changing public knowledge and opinion about domestic violence can result in decreasing rates of domestic violence. This then is the concern and basis of our investigation, whether the actual incidence of domestic violence and media portrayal of domestic violence correlate with one another, indicating any fundamental relationship between the two.

Thus, acknowledging that domestic violence is an important public health issue with many long-term physical, psychological, and social effects and recognizing that the mass media can have a profound effect on how the public views and responds to a social issue such as domestic violence, we will attempt to determine how the print media in Albuquerque has reported on domestic violence and how its portrayal relates to the actual incidence of domestic violence as experienced by the population of Bernalillo County and, more generally, New Mexico. We would expect that reporting by the Albuquerque print media will reflect the realities of the issue of domestic violence. Presumably, if domestic violence is linked to public perception of the issue, the incidence of domestic violence and its portrayal by the media should correlate with one another. If they do trend together in this preliminary analysis, this would provide at least indirect evidence of a link, allowing for further refinement and analysis in the future. We will thus determine how the media portrays domestic violence, identify (if any) discrepancies between reporting and statistical data, and discuss what steps might be taken (if necessary) in order to increase correspondence between the two.

METHODS

There has been a lack of agreement between and even within various organizations involved in domestic violence issues as to its definition. This is particularly obvious when comparing the approaches of the criminal justice system and social and public health groups to the issue. In general, the criminal justice system's view of domestic violence is much more narrowly defined and may not consider acts involving psychological abuse, deprivation, or neglect as domestic violence. In addition, the criminal justice system tends not to focus on the relationship between perpetrator and victim and often considers domestic violence as simply a subset of crimes such as murder, assault, and rape (Kilpatrick 2004). In contrast, it has been shown that the public tends to evaluate the existence and severity of domestic violence within several contexts, including the relationship between perpetrator and victim, the presence of alcohol as a factor, and the racial or economic status of the involved parties (Langhinrichsen-Rohling *et al* 2004). Social advocacy and medical groups tend to define domestic violence even more broadly and as including a wide variety of coercive, controlling, or demeaning behaviors such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, social isolation, deprivation, intimidation, and economic control which are used to establish and maintain power over an intimate relation, which may be a partner, a child, an elder, or any other individual who is being cared for (Director *et al* 2004). While we believe that this latter more inclusive definition is most appropriate for a full discussion of domestic violence, we feel that it is necessary to limit our definition for the purposes of this research since most statistical data emphasizes physical and sexual abuse and does not include more subtle though no less damaging types of abuse. In addition, since the scientific literature and statistical data tends to differentiate between types of domestic violence based on the age group being victimized and the relation of the victim to the perpetrator, we will

focus on just one of these categories for the purposes of this research. Thus, rather than focusing on the broader category of domestic violence, we will focus on the narrower category of intimate partner violence for this first approximation of the correlation between media portrayal and actual incidence of domestic violence. In addition, our definition of intimate partner violence will adhere to that of law enforcement and the criminal justice system as this definition is the most concrete and least subject to interpretation. Thus, our definition of intimate partner violence is based on the New Mexico “Crimes Against Household Members Act” and characterized by the New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository as including all incidents of assault, aggravated assault, battery, and aggravated battery against a household member, which may be a spouse or former spouse with cohabitation not a necessary component of the relationship (Caponera 2004, Caponera 2005).

There are two main sources of data we have collected in order to answer our primary questions. The first involves the examination of statistical data in order to determine the actual incidence of intimate partner violence in Bernalillo County as well as the state of New Mexico. The second involves the analysis of newspaper articles in order to determine what the Albuquerque print media is actually presenting to the public in regard to intimate partner violence.

Unfortunately, there is somewhat of a scarcity of recent data about the incidence of intimate partner violence in the state of New Mexico as well as nationally. Although state and national collections of data, including those from the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, the Center for Injury Prevention Research and Education, the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, and the Bureau of Justice, do exist, the information contained within tends not to be very recent with detailed analyses generally several years behind. In addition, many of these

collections have somewhat limited types of information or present data based on estimates rather than actual incidents. Thus, until this point it has been difficult to pursue a meaningful and current analysis and discussion of intimate partner violence in New Mexico. Fortunately, more comprehensive and current data has become available recently from the New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository (Caponera 2004, Caponera 2005). This data set is quite comprehensive and includes information about the incidence of domestic violence in New Mexico as well as demographics and characteristics of such cases, generally from the point of view of law enforcement and the criminal justice system but also from the point of view of domestic violence providers. In addition, data sets are available for each of the years from 2001 through 2004, providing appropriate data for the proposed research and allowing for the correlation of media reporting of intimate partner violence with the actual incidence of intimate partner violence. The data included in this data set are summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

The public has a “hierarchy of credibility” which it uses to evaluate how much credence should be given to any particular category of media (Berns 2004). Based on this hierarchy, the public tends to find newspaper articles as the most credible of all sources of information, believing that if something is printed in a newspaper, then it must be true (Berns 2004). We would expect the public to be most swayed in their opinions and actions regarding various social issues by the information they read in the newspaper. We have thus chosen the two major Albuquerque newspapers, the Albuquerque Journal and the Albuquerque Tribune, as the source data for our analysis of the news media. We have selected these newspapers as those with the widest distribution in New Mexico that also focus on local, *i.e.* New Mexico, news. In addition, they would be the source of information that the public would most likely be influenced by in regard to its perception of the problem of domestic violence. As our incidence data covers the

years from 2001 through 2004, we have also chosen those years for our analysis of newspaper articles. We have selected articles from the 2001 through 2004 archives of the two newspapers using the search term “domestic violence.” Although we are focusing on intimate partner violence, a search of “intimate partner violence” resulted in a small number of articles that were duplicated by our “domestic violence” search. In addition, since most articles identified by “domestic violence” were specifically about intimate partner violence, this was an appropriate search term for our analysis. We also searched for “homicide” and “assault” for one of our analysis years in order to determine if we could identify additional articles that involved intimate partner violence without an explicit reference to such. Though there were a small number of unique articles that were identified with these search terms, this subset was insignificant in proportion to the larger number of articles identified by “domestic violence.” In addition, these more generic search terms would not only introduce increased subjectivity into our analysis but would also not allow us to capture the detail we are really interested in which is the media portrayal of intimate partner violence to the general public. If acts of domestic violence are not identified as such by the media, the public tends not to see the incident as part of the more general problem of domestic violence but as simply a private tragedy. We have therefore limited our search to “domestic violence,” resulting in the identification of hundreds of articles for each of the years 2001 through 2004. We then read each article retrieved in order to determine which were actually relevant to our topic. Articles were deemed relevant if they explicitly discussed intimate partner violence or if it was clear from the article that physical or sexual violence was perpetrated by a partner or former partner. Each relevant article was then examined more thoroughly to code certain attributes that contributed to a content analysis of these articles in regard to their coverage of intimate partner violence (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2004,

Studebaker *et al* 2000, Writing Center at Colorado State University 2005). The attributes included in this data set are summarized in Table 3.

The final area of analysis involves the combination of the two data sets previously analyzed. In order to determine beyond just general trends how actual incidents of domestic violence and newspaper reporting of domestic violence correlate, we have calculated the number of articles about incidents of intimate partner violence as well as articles about intimate partner violence in general per actual incidents of domestic violence in Bernalillo County and New Mexico.

RESULTS

All of the statistical data for the years 2001 through 2004 obtained from the New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository (Caponera 2004, Caponera 2005) regarding the incidence of domestic violence and associated attributes from in Bernalillo County are summarized in Tables 4 and 5 while the incidence of domestic violence and associated attributes in New Mexico are summarized in Tables 6 and 7. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the raw data regarding the number of incidents, victims, and suspects (no suspect data for Bernalillo County) identified by law enforcement. Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate the number of domestic violence incidents per 1000 persons, with much higher incidents per 1000 identified in Bernalillo County than in New Mexico in general. There does appear to be a definite trend down in incidents per 1000 in Bernalillo County, from 23.9 to 21.4, though there is no major trend identified in New Mexico. Figures 5 and 6 reveal the number of victims, suspects (no suspect data for Bernalillo County), arrests, and protection orders filed per total number of domestic violence incidents identified by law enforcement, with much higher percentages of victims identified in New Mexico than in Bernalillo County. In regard to percentage of incidents with an identified victim, there does appear to be a general trend up in Bernalillo County, from 10% to 24%, but there

appears to be a general trend down in New Mexico, from 75% to 66%. There is also a general trend down in New Mexico, from 66% to 59%, in regard to percentage of incidents with an identified suspect. There is a trend up in percentage of protection orders filed, from 11% to 17% in Bernalillo County and from 21% to 26% in New Mexico. There does not appear to be any major trend in the percentage of arrests made either in Bernalillo County or New Mexico.

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate the raw data for the number of domestic violence cases disposed of and the number of convictions obtained in district courts and in magistrate and Bernalillo metropolitan courts (no Bernalillo metropolitan court data available for 2001). Figures 9 and 10 demonstrate the percentage of disposed cases with convictions in district courts and in magistrate and Bernalillo metropolitan courts (no Bernalillo metropolitan court data available for 2001) as well as the percentage of incidents with convictions obtained in any court. In general, there is a much higher conviction rate in district courts than in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts. There does not appear to be any major trends in the conviction data except for a trend down in the percentage of convictions obtained in magistrate and Bernalillo metropolitan courts, from 16% to 6% in Bernalillo County and from 34% to 27% in New Mexico.

The articles identified by the search term “domestic violence” were examined thoroughly in order to identify the major topic of each article. Table 8 summarizes this information with a total of 1678 articles identified for the years 2001 through 2004. There were 12 articles that were unrelated to intimate partner violence as we have defined it. These articles were therefore eliminated from the rest of our analysis, resulting in 1666 articles. Each article was then placed into a percentage category based on how much of the article was actually related to intimate partner violence. Table 9 and Figure 11 illustrate this information. We have chosen 20% as the cutoff point for inclusion of an article in our analysis. If 20% or less of an article was about

intimate partner violence, we have characterized that article as not truly being about intimate partner violence in any meaningful way but rather with intimate partner violence as a side issue. These articles were also eliminated from the rest of our analysis, resulting in a total of 656 articles, 130 from 2001, 157 from 2002, 173 from 2003, and 196 from 2004. Figure 11 illustrates these numbers and demonstrates the upward trend in number of articles about intimate partner violence from 2001 through 2004. All of the associated attributes coded for this remaining data set of newspaper articles are summarized in Tables 10 through 16. Figures 13 and 14 illustrate the raw data concerning the number of articles that fall into each story type as identified in Table 3. Figures 15 and 16 demonstrate the percentage of articles that fall into each story type. The major trends identified include an increased percentage of articles about incidents, from 12% to 19%, about victims, from 2% to 6%, and about perpetrators, from 10% to 17% as well as a decreased percentage of articles about advocates and organizations, from 14% to 8%, and about funding, from 18% to 5%. Figure 17 illustrates the placement of articles in the newspaper. There is an increase in the percentage of articles on the front page of sections of the newspaper other than the front page of the paper, from 11% to 19%, with a corresponding decrease in the percentage of articles found elsewhere in the paper, from 78% to 68%. Figure 18 demonstrates the percentage of articles with statistics and graphics relating to intimate partner violence. There is no major trend relating to this data, though there is a spike in the presence of statistics that evens out over time. Figure 19 illustrates the percentage of articles with specific incident details and with “domestic violence” in the headline of the article. The percentage of articles with specific details regarding an incident of intimate partner violence trends up, from 16% to 23%, though there appears to be no major trend in the appearance of “domestic violence” in the headline.

The final area of analysis involves the combining of statistical data from the New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository (Caponera 2004, Caponera 2005) and attribute data from our analysis of newspaper data. Table 17 summarizes the raw data regarding the number of articles about incidents of intimate partner violence per actual incidents in Bernalillo County and New Mexico. Table 18 summarizes the raw data regarding the number of articles about intimate partner violence in general per actual incidents in Bernalillo County and New Mexico. Figure 20 illustrates the above data with upward trends noted for all categories, from a range of 0.06% to 0.14% for articles about domestic violence incidents per actual incidents in New Mexico, to a range of 0.98% to 1.65% for articles about domestic violence in general per actual incidents in Bernalillo County.

DISCUSSION

The above results may be generally summarized as follows. Statistical data obtained from the New Mexico Interpersonal Violence Data Central Repository (Caponera 2004, Caponera 2005) reveals the following:

- Trend down in incidents per 1000 in Bernalillo County but no major trend in New Mexico
- Trend up in percentage of incidents with an identified victim in Bernalillo County but trend down in New Mexico, trend down in percentage of incidents with identified suspect in New Mexico, no major trend in percentage of incidents with an arrest in Bernalillo County or New Mexico, trend up in percentage of incidents where a protection order was filed in Bernalillo County and New Mexico
- Trend down in percentage of disposed cases with convictions obtained in magistrate and Bernalillo metropolitan courts in Bernalillo County and New Mexico, no major trend in percentage of disposed cases with convictions obtained in district courts in Bernalillo County or New Mexico or in percentage of incidents with convictions obtained in any court in Bernalillo County or New Mexico

Coded attribute data from the analysis of newspaper articles reveals the following:

- Trend up in numbers of newspaper articles about intimate partner violence

- Trend up in percentage of articles about specific incidents and victims and perpetrators, trend down in percentage of articles about advocates and funding, no major trend or unclear trend in percentage of articles about legislation or domestic violence mentioned in passing or funding or domestic violence in general but as focus of article
- Trend up in percentage of articles on front page of section, no major trend in percentage of articles on front page of paper, trend down in percentage of articles elsewhere in paper
- No major trend in percentage of articles with statistics or graphics related to intimate partner violence
- Trend up in percentage of articles with specific details regarding an incident of intimate partner violence, no major trend in percentage of articles with “domestic violence” in headline

The combination of statistical data and attribute data from analysis of newspaper articles reveals the following:

- Trend up in number of articles about incidents involving intimate partner violence and about intimate partner violence in general per actual number of incidents of domestic violence in Bernalillo County and New Mexico

Thus, several revealing points may be made about this data. First, although the incidence of domestic violence has decreased only slightly in New Mexico as a whole, it has decreased significantly in Bernalillo County over the period from 2001 to 2004. However, while the number of protection orders filed per incidence of domestic violence has increased, the number of convictions per incidence has remained static or decreased over the period from 2001 to 2004. This indicates that while the incidence of domestic violence has improved, the reaction to it, *i.e.* conviction, has deteriorated. It may also be noted that a much larger percentage of district court cases result in conviction, likely because more serious offenses with more pressure for conviction are prosecuted in these courts.

Second, the total number of articles about intimate partner violence has increased significantly over the period from 2001 to 2004. In addition, an increasing number of articles tend to be primarily about incidents, victims, and perpetrators of intimate partner violence, while there are also more articles that have specific details regarding incidents of intimate partner violence over the period from 2001 to 2004. This indicates that the Albuquerque print media has not only improved its domestic violence coverage in the total number of articles it devotes to intimate partner violence but also supplies more articles about the formerly private details of intimate partner violence, thrusting the issue into the public domain where it may be seen as a social problem requiring action.

Third, although the percentages are quite small, there is a very definite increase in the number of articles relating to intimate partner violence per the actual incidence of domestic violence in both Bernalillo County and New Mexico as a whole over the period from 2001 to 2004. This again indicates that the Albuquerque print media has improved its domestic violence coverage over this time period.

Although the data collected for this research lends itself to qualitative rather than quantitative analysis, it does provide some preliminary answers to our questions. Tentatively we can say that there does appear to be a link between the incidence of domestic violence and its portrayal by the media. The two appear to be negatively correlated with the incidence of domestic violence decreasing as the media coverage of intimate partner violence increases. However, it should be noted that, although there does appear to be a correlation between domestic violence incidence and media portrayal of intimate partner violence, the absolute numbers of articles related to intimate partner violence are actually very small, indicating that the public is receiving information about only a very small segment of the crisis that is domestic

violence in our society. In addition, although incidence of domestic violence may be slightly decreasing and the media coverage of intimate partner violence may be slightly increasing, there are other variables related to the public response to the issue that must be clarified as well. For example, a greater number of convictions per incidence of domestic violence would be a concrete attribute that would indicate that change is being actively pursued by the public. Ultimately, however, it seems clear that further enhancement of domestic violence coverage by the media could not only increase public knowledge and opinion of the issue but may also help decrease the rates of intimate partner violence as well.

Further trends regarding media portrayal of intimate partner violence have also been subjectively identified during the coding process of newspaper attribute data. In general, newspaper articles about intimate partner violence tend to group around Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October) or in “special” issues about domestic violence. In addition, newspapers tend to focus on certain incidents with multiple articles. Such incidents include especially violent crimes such as homicides, particularly if bystanders or law enforcement personnel have also become victims, or incidents involving a famous person or a law enforcement individual as the perpetrator. “Domestic violence” also tends to be a buzz word that is briefly mentioned by politicians while running for office but rarely at other times.

Given the trends identified through our analysis, the question of the impetus behind these changes remains. One possibility may lie with the election of Bill Richardson as governor of the state of New Mexico. He began his tenure in 2003 with a stated concern for the issue of domestic violence. He declared a commitment to the problem of domestic violence at that time and began to work towards its eradication. This has included action involving law enforcement, legislation, and funding as well as simply “getting the word out.” It will be some time before the

full impact of his actions on domestic violence in New Mexico can be truly assessed. However, it is certainly possible that such a commitment to the issue of domestic violence may have already had some small immediate impact on the incidence of domestic violence and on media portrayal of intimate partner violence.

One of the major limitations of this research has been the sole use of the qualitative analysis of trends to make preliminary arguments about our data. Future research should include a comprehensive coding of newspaper attribute data in order to perform a more thorough content analysis of the articles in order to allow for quantitative analysis of the data. In addition, an expansion of the temporal or definitional parameters of our research may allow for more significant results. It is also important to note that correlation does not equal causation. Other variables besides reporting of the Albuquerque print media should be included in future research in order to identify other correlations and possible causative factors.

Finally, as health professionals, the question remains as to what we can do to help ameliorate the effects of this far-ranging social issue. Certainly, we have the power as respected professionals to lend our voice to the opposition to domestic violence. In addition, the healthcare community is certainly one of the first places that victims of intimate partner violence turn, allowing us to provide support and care if we recognize the need. Thus, we must not only be vigilant in screening for domestic violence but must also become aware of the many medical, social, and legal resources available to victims of intimate partner violence so that we may offer appropriate help that is so urgently required by so many.

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TABLES

Table 1: Available statistical data regarding domestic violence in Bernalillo County, 2001-2004

Year	2001, 2002, 2003, 2004
DV Incidents	Total incidents identified by law enforcement
DV Incidents per 1000	Total incidents per 1000 persons
Victims	Total victims identified by law enforcement
% Victims	Percentage of incidents with an identified victim
% Arrests	Percentage of incidents resulting in an arrest
% Protection Orders	Percentage of incidents in which a protection order was filed
DC Disposed	Total cases disposed of in district court
DC Convicted	Total cases with convictions in district court
% DC Convicted	Percentage of disposed cases with convictions in district court
MC Disposed	Total cases disposed of in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts
MC Convicted	Total cases with convictions in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts
% MC Convicted	Percentage of disposed cases with convictions in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts
% Convictions	Percentage of incidents with convictions in any court

Table 2: Available statistical data regarding domestic violence in New Mexico, 2001-2004

Year	2001, 2002, 2003, 2004
DV Incidents	Total incidents identified by law enforcement
DV Incidents per 1000	Total incidents per 1000 persons
Victims	Total victims identified by law enforcement
% Victims	Percentage of incidents with an identified victim
Suspects	Total suspects identified by law enforcement
% Suspects	Percentage of incidents with an identified suspect
% Arrests	Percentage of incidents resulting in an arrest
% Protection Orders	Percentage of incidents in which a protection order was filed
DC Disposed	Total cases disposed of in district court
DC Convicted	Total cases with convictions in district court
% DC Convicted	Percentage of disposed cases with convictions in district court
MC Disposed	Total cases disposed of in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts
MC Convicted	Total cases with convictions in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts
% MC Convicted	Percentage of disposed cases with convictions in magistrate or Bernalillo metropolitan courts
% Convictions	Percentage of incidents with convictions in any court

Table 3: Attributes coded for individual newspaper articles captured with search term “domestic violence,” 2001-2004

Year	2001, 2002, 2003, 2004
Word Count	Total number of words in article
DV Word Count	Number of words in article actually pertaining to domestic violence (if whole article is not about domestic violence or if only a portion of article briefly refers to domestic violence, word count is defined as the number of words in each paragraph that is related to domestic violence)
% Article	Percentage of article that is actually related to domestic violence
Story Type	Topic of the article, <i>i.e.</i> how the article refers to domestic violence: 0 = domestic violence not used in the way we are using it, including non-intimate partner violence 1 = incident (alleged) of domestic violence 2 = victim (alleged) of domestic violence 3 = perpetrator (alleged) of domestic violence 4 = domestic violence advocate/organization/shelter 5 = legislation relating to domestic violence 6 = funding or fundraising for domestic violence 7 = domestic violence just mentioned in passing, including as “buzz word” by politicians 8 = event related to domestic violence 9 = domestic violence in general but as focus of article
Placement	Placement of the article in the newspaper: front page of paper, front page of section, elsewhere in paper
Statistics	Statistics relating to domestic violence present or absent
Graphics	Graphics relating to domestic violence present or absent
Incident information	Specific details about domestic violence incident present or absent
Headline	Headline with term “domestic violence” present or absent

Tables 4 & 5: Raw data regarding domestic violence in Bernalillo County, 2001-2004

	DV Incidents	DV Incidents per 1000	Victims	% Victims	% Arrests	% Protection Orders
2001	13325	23.9	1282	10%	25%	11%
2002	12684	22.7	1890	15%	24%	13%
2003	11848	21.3	2479	21%	22%	17%
2004	11897	21.4	2895	24%	23%	17%

	DC Disposed	DC Convicted	% DC Convicted	MC Disposed	MC Convicted	% MC Convicted	% Convictions
2001	644	256	38%				
2002	684	293	43%	4420	725	16%	8%
2003	635	289	45%	4446	422	9%	6%
2004	1306	556	43%	3754	234	6%	7%

Tables 6 & 7: Raw data regarding domestic violence in New Mexico, 2001-2004

	DV Incidents	DV Incidents per 1000	Victims	% Victims	Suspects	% Suspects	% Arrests	% Protection Orders
2001	26544	15.5	19913	75%	17648	66%	28%	21%
2002	24905	15.8	17397	70%	16082	64%	33%	26%
2003	25644	14.7	15517	60%	14284	56%	31%	27%
2004	26940	15.3	17793	66%	15866	59%	30%	26%

	DC Disposed	DC Convicted	% DC Convicted	MC Disposed	MC Convicted	% MC Convicted	% Convictions
2001	1403	606	43%				
2002	1678	729	43%	10490	3527	34%	17%
2003	1076	487	45%	11125	3300	30%	15%
2004	2809	1281	46%	11489	3146	27%	16%

Table 8: Total Number of Articles per Year per Story Type

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
2001	7	17	5	51	40	5	48	160	17	27	377
2002	2	35	7	38	16	11	26	214	17	41	407
2003	1	35	5	37	24	22	17	201	17	51	410
2004	2	40	12	71	18	4	18	278	13	28	484
Total	12	127	29	197	98	42	109	853	64	147	1678

Table 9: Number of Articles per Percentage of Article Devoted to Subject of Domestic Violence (not including 12 articles unrelated to domestic violence, *i.e.* story type 0)

	< 1%	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%
2001	0	187	53	17	5	1
2002	3	195	50	12	7	3
2003	1	183	52	11	6	1
2004	2	213	71	31	13	4
Total	6	778	226	71	31	9

	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-99%	100%	Total
2001	2	2	1	0	0	102	370
2002	2	2	0	0	0	131	405
2003	2	0	0	0	0	153	409
2004	6	0	0	0	0	142	482
Total	12	4	1	0	0	528	1666

Table 10: Number of Articles per Year per Story Type (not including articles with $\leq 20\%$ of article devoted to subject of domestic violence)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
2001	16	3	13	18	3	24	19	8	26	130
2002	25	4	16	12	6	13	26	14	41	157
2003	33	4	16	19	8	11	19	14	49	173
2004	38	11	33	15	4	10	46	11	28	196
Total	112	22	78	64	21	58	110	47	144	656

Table 11: Percentage of Articles per Year per Story Type (not including articles with $\leq 20\%$ of article devoted to subject of domestic violence)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2001	12%	2%	10%	14%	2%	18%	15%	6%	20%
2002	16%	3%	10%	8%	4%	8%	17%	9%	26%
2003	19%	2%	9%	11%	5%	6%	11%	8%	28%
2004	19%	6%	17%	8%	2%	5%	23%	6%	14%

Table 12: Number and Percentage of Articles per Year per Placement of Article

	Front Page of Paper	Front Page of Section	Elsewhere in Paper	Front Page of Paper	Front Page of Section	Elsewhere in Paper
2001	14	14	102	11%	11%	78%
2002	22	36	99	14%	23%	63%
2003	32	41	100	18%	24%	58%
2004	25	38	133	13%	19%	68%
Total	93	129	434			

Table 13: Number of Articles per Year per Presence or Absence of Statistics Relating to Domestic Violence

	Presence of Statistics	Absence of Statistics	Presence of Statistics	Absence of Statistics
2001	15	115	12%	88%
2002	26	131	17%	83%
2003	27	146	16%	84%
2004	30	166	15%	85%
Total	98	558		

Table 14: Number of Articles per Year per Presence or Absence of Graphics Relating to Domestic Violence

	Presence of Graphics	Absence of Graphics	Presence of Graphics	Absence of Graphics
2001	27	103	21%	79%
2002	39	118	25%	75%
2003	54	119	31%	69%
2004	37	159	19%	81%
Total	157	499		

Table 15: Number of Articles per Year per Presence or Absence of Specific Details Regarding a Domestic Violence Incident

	Presence of Incident Details	Absence of Incident Details	Presence of Incident Details	Absence of Incident Details
2001	21	109	16%	84%
2002	26	131	17%	83%
2003	41	132	24%	76%
2004	45	151	23%	77%
Total	133	523		

Table 16: Number of Articles per Year per Presence or Absence of “Domestic Violence” in Headline of Article

	Presence of “DV” in Headline	Absence of “DV” in Headline	Presence of “DV” in Headline	Absence of “DV” in Headline
2001	13	117	10%	90%
2002	23	134	15%	85%
2003	24	149	14%	86%
2004	20	176	10%	90%
Total	80	576		

Table 17: Percentage of Articles about Domestic Violence Incidents per Actual Incidents of Domestic Violence as Identified by Law Enforcement per Year

	Articles About DV Incidents per Actual Incidents in Bernalillo County	Articles About DV Incidents per Actual Incidents in New Mexico
2001	0.12%	0.06%
2002	0.20%	0.10%
2003	0.28%	0.13%
2004	0.32%	0.14%

Table 18: Percentage of Articles about Domestic Violence in General per Actual Incidents of Domestic Violence as Identified by Law Enforcement per Year

	Articles About Domestic Violence per Actual Incidents in Bernalillo County	Articles About Domestic Violence per Actual Incidents in New Mexico
2001	0.98%	0.49%
2002	1.24%	0.63%
2003	1.46%	0.67%
2004	1.65%	0.73%

FIGURES

Figure 1: Bernalillo County: Total Incidents and Victims Identified by Law Enforcement

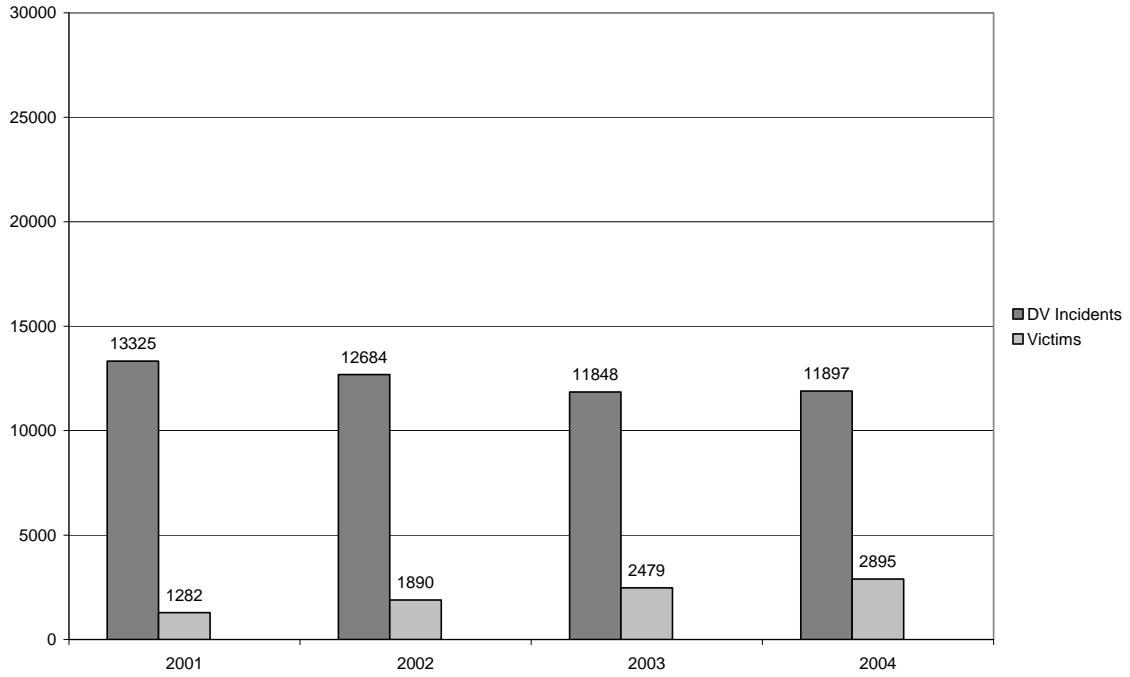


Figure 2: New Mexico: Total Incidents, Victims, and Suspects Identified by Law Enforcement

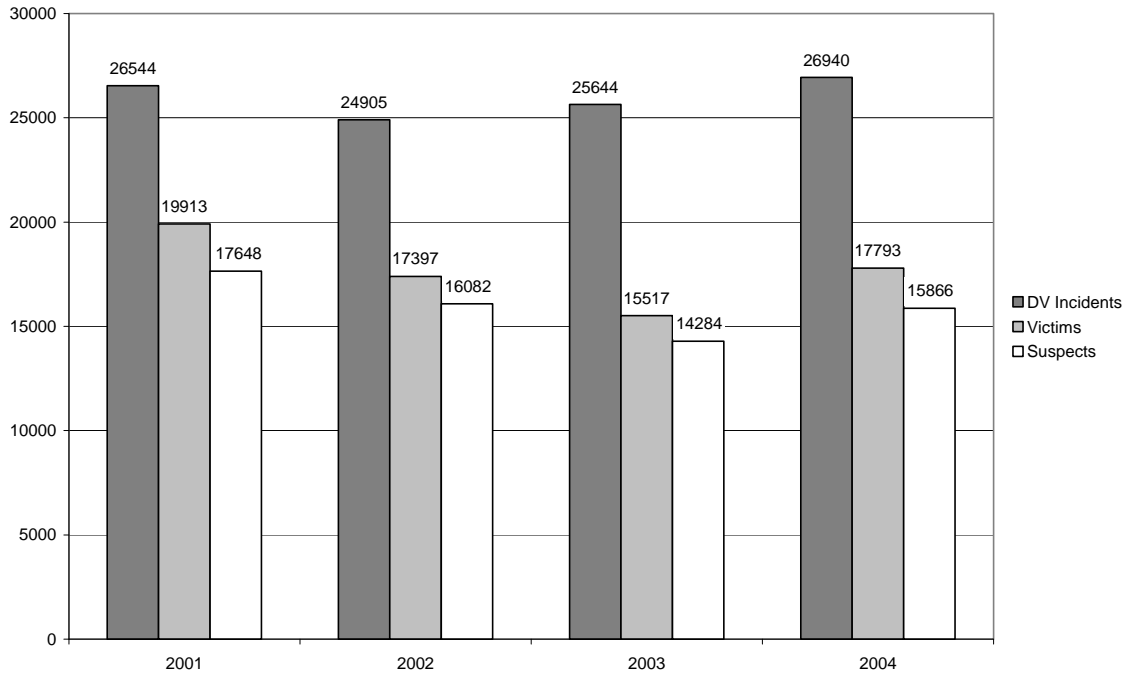


Figure 3: Bernalillo County: DV Incidents per 1000

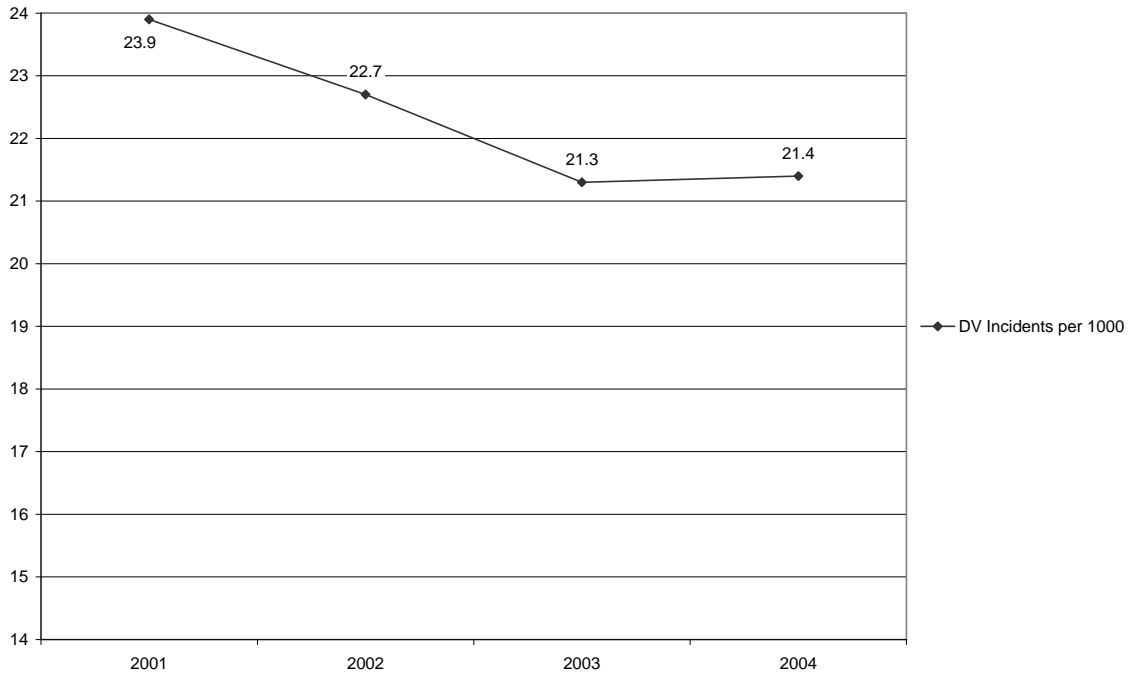


Figure 4: New Mexico: DV Incidents per 1000

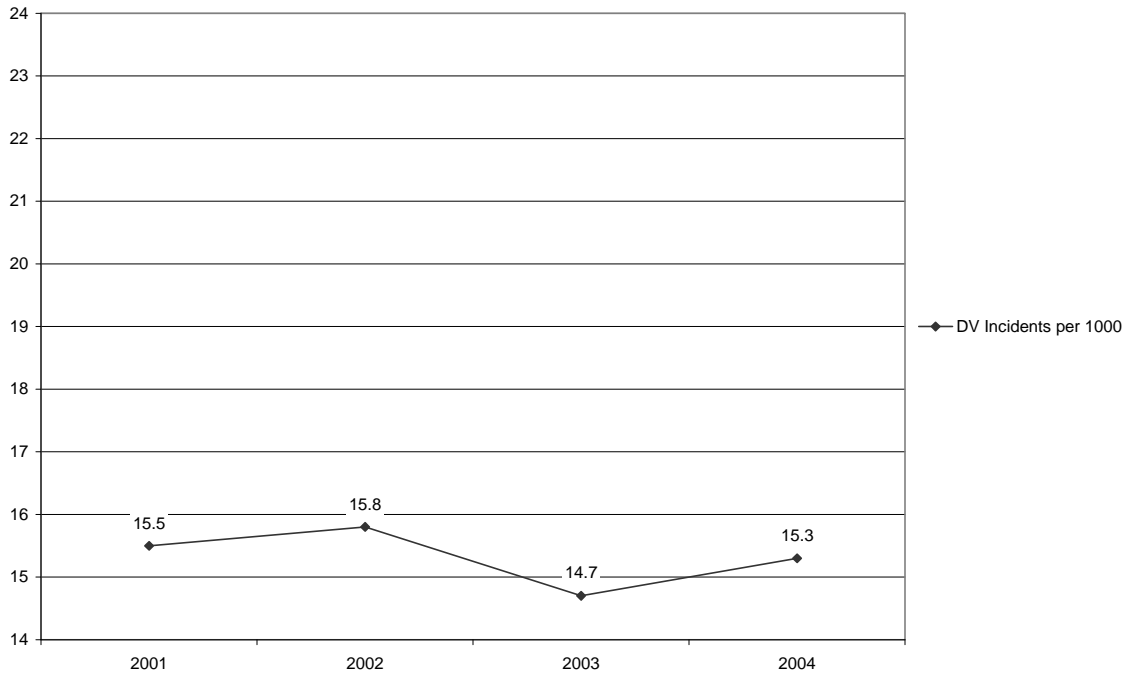


Figure 5: Bernalillo County: Percentage of Incidents with an Identified Victim, Resulting in an Arrest, and Resulting in the Filing of a Protection Order

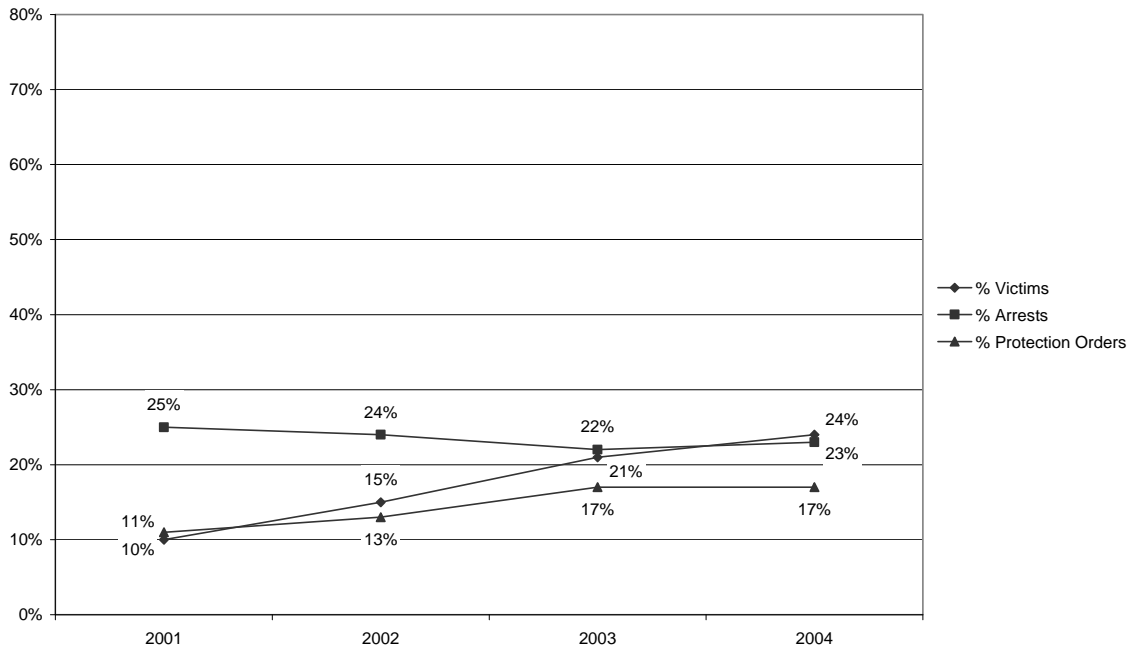


Figure 6: New Mexico: Percentage of Incidents with an Identified Victim, an Identified Suspect, Resulting in an Arrest, and Resulting in the Filing of a Protection Order

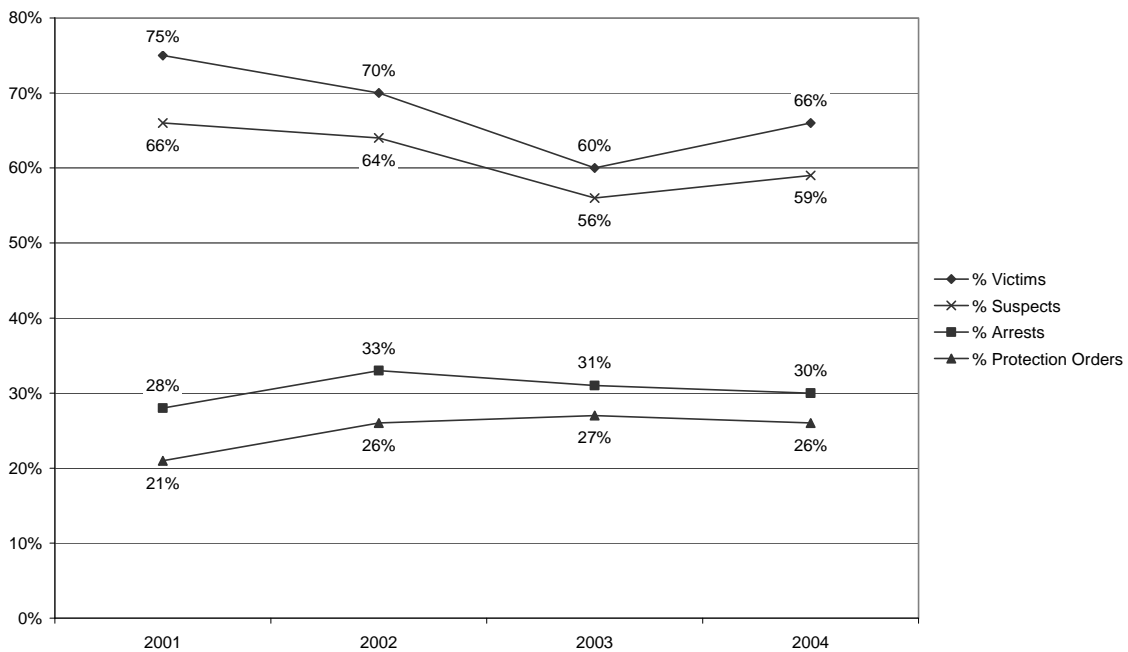


Figure 7: Bernalillo County: Cases Disposed of and Convictions for District Courts and for Magistrate and Bernalillo Metropolitan Courts

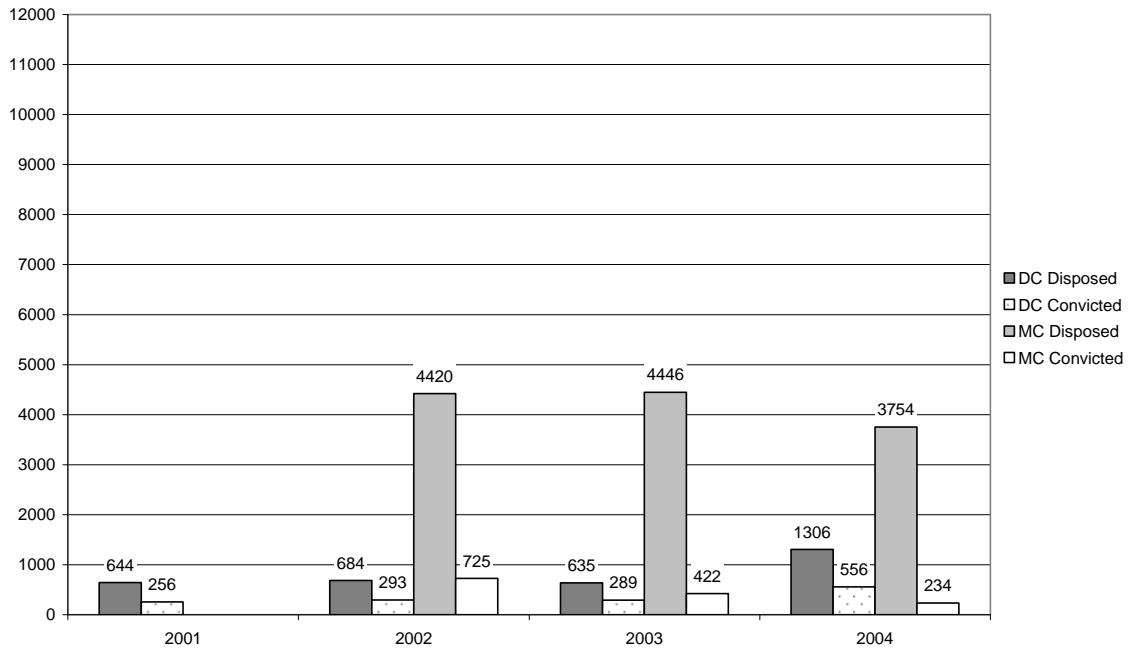


Figure 8: New Mexico: Cases Disposed of and Convictions for District Courts and for Magistrate and Bernalillo Metropolitan Courts

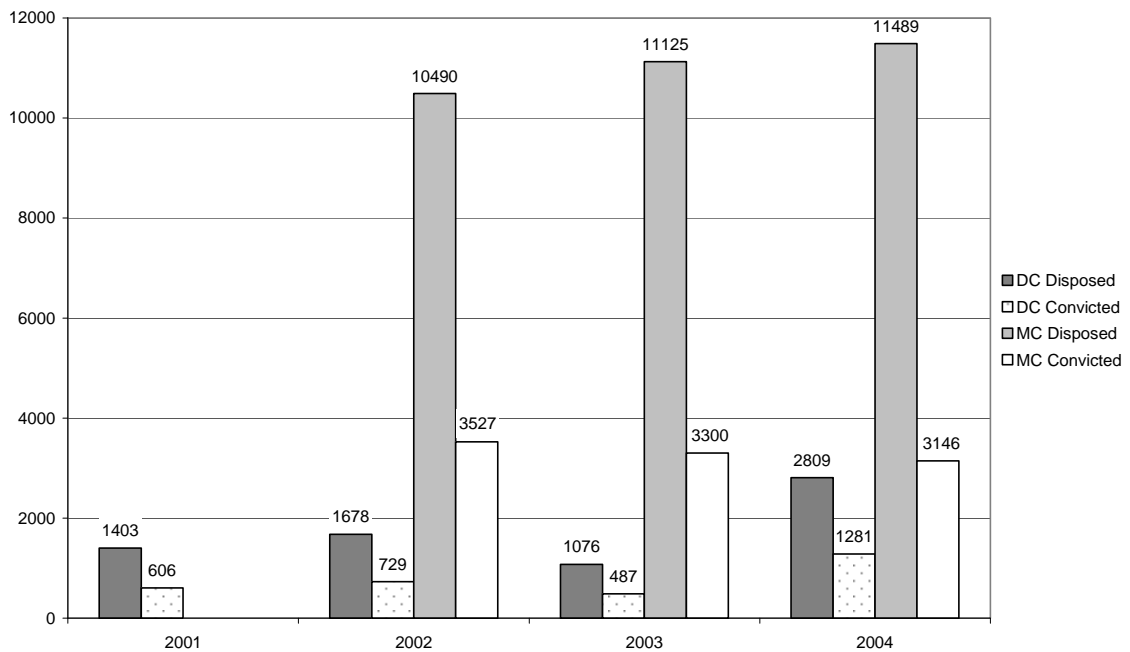


Figure 9: Bernalillo County: Percentage of Disposed Cases with Convictions in District Courts and in Magistrate and Bernalillo Metropolitan Courts, Percentage of Incidents in Which a Conviction Was Obtained

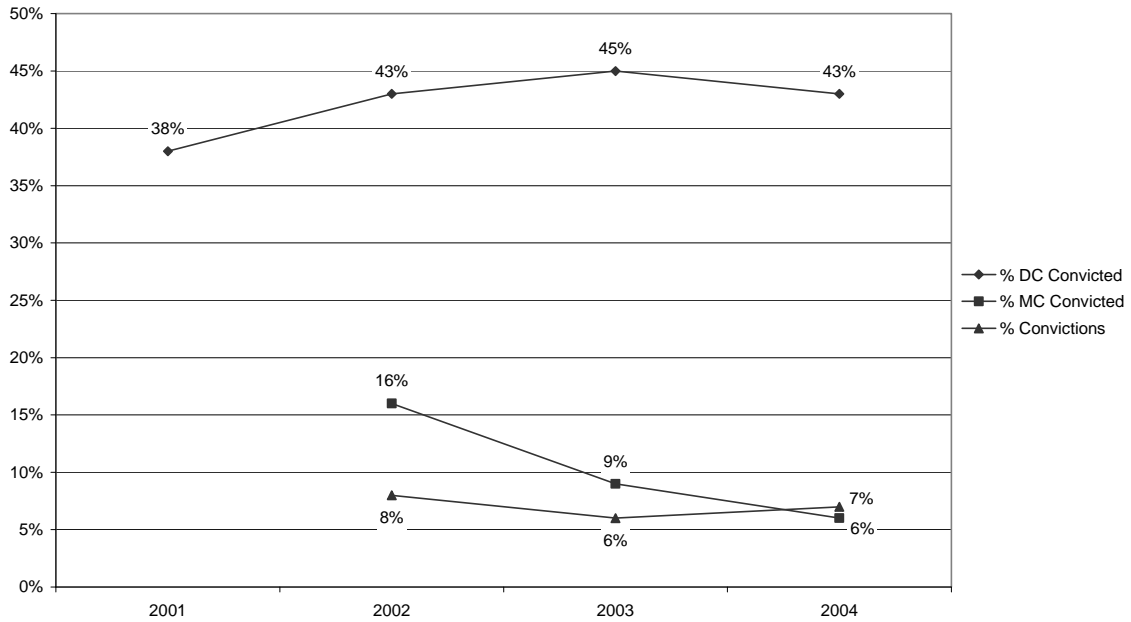


Figure 10: New Mexico: Percentage of Disposed Cases with Convictions in District Courts and in Magistrate and Bernalillo Metropolitan Courts, Percentage of Incidents in Which a Conviction Was Obtained

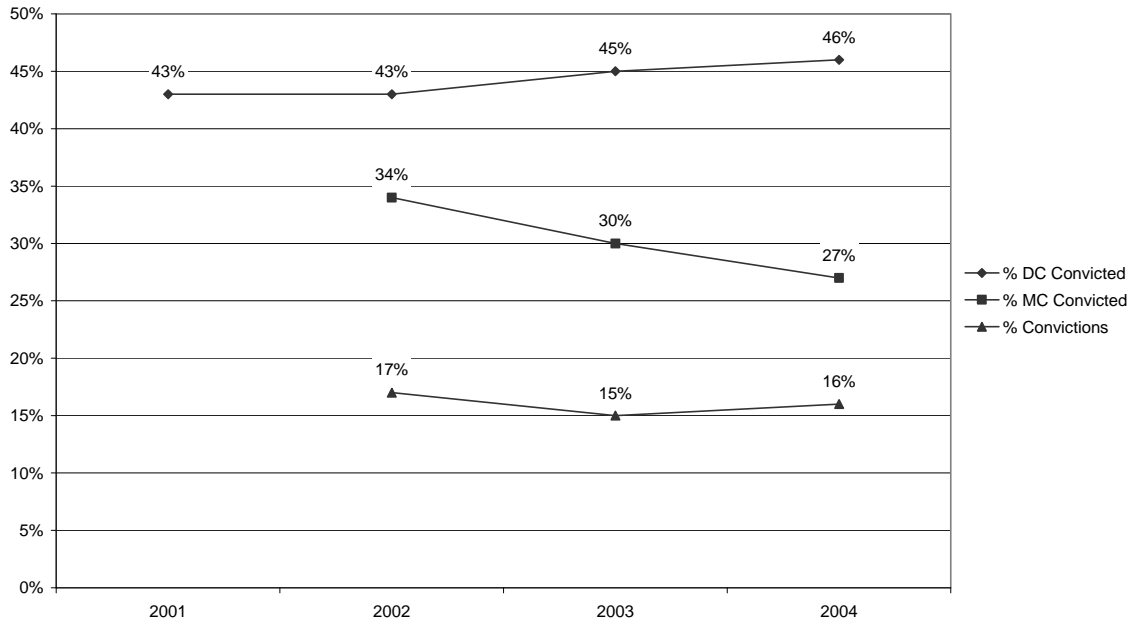


Figure 11: Number of Articles per Percentage of Article Devoted to Subject of Domestic Violence (not including 12 articles completely unrelated to domestic violence, *i.e.* story type 0)

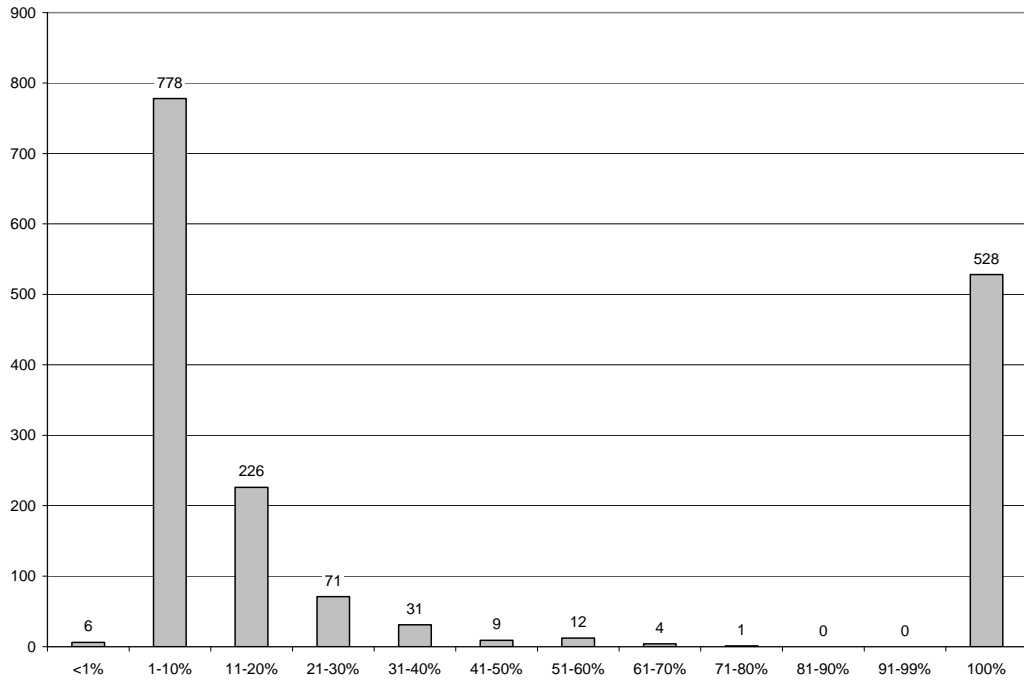


Figure 12: Number of Articles per Year (not including articles with $\leq 20\%$ of article devoted to subject of domestic violence)

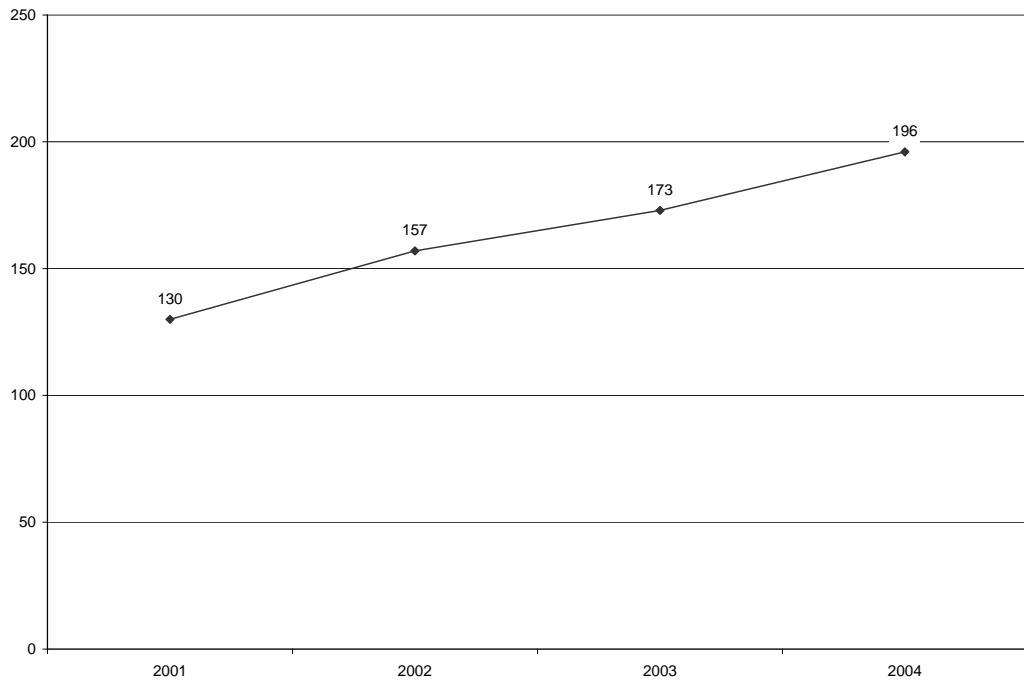


Figure 13: Number of Articles per Year per Story Type

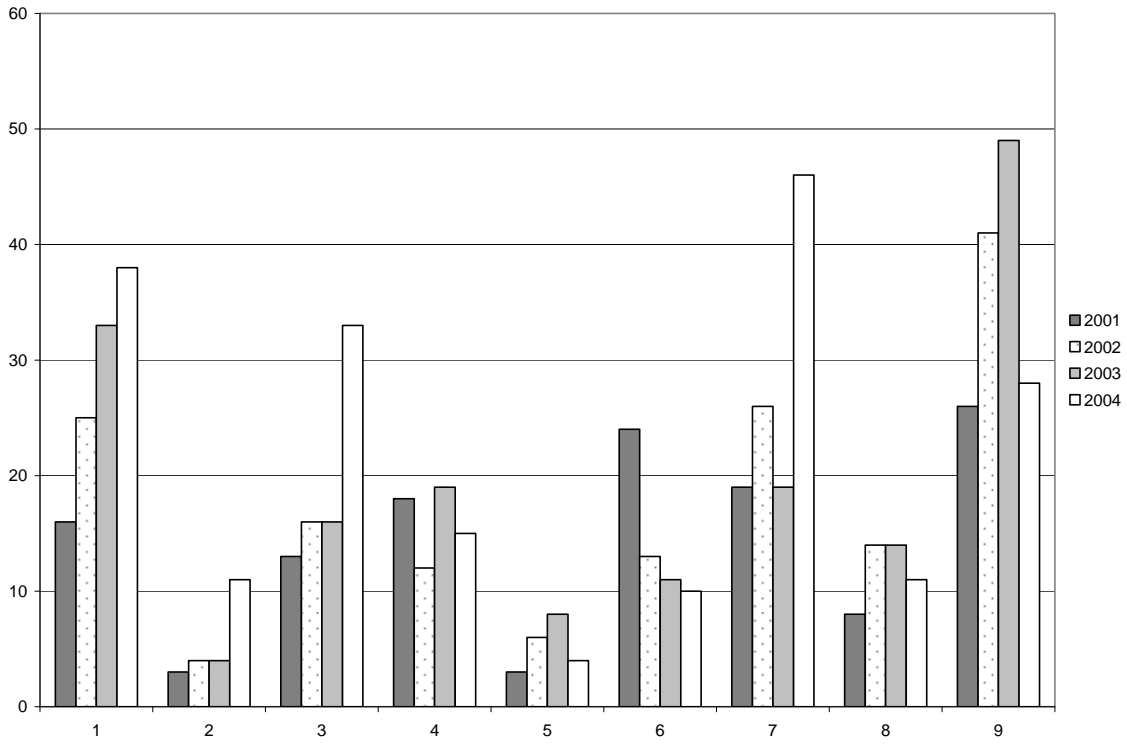


Figure 14: Number of Articles per Story Type per Year

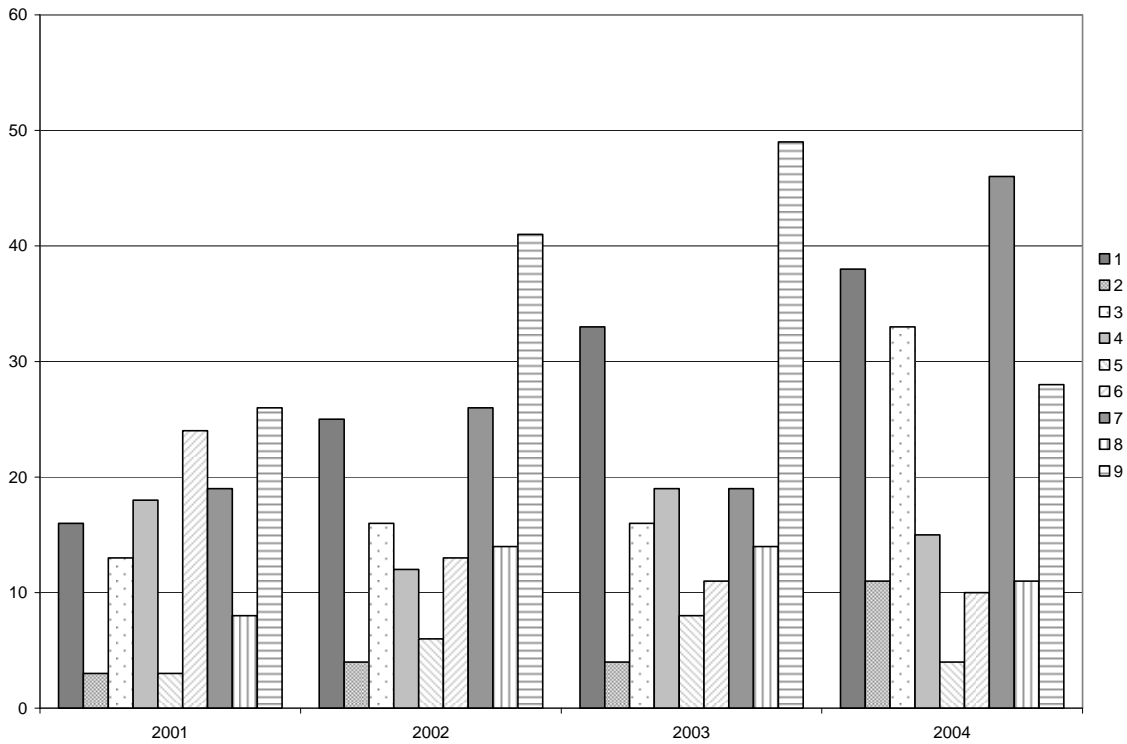


Figure 15: Percentage of Articles per Year per Story Type

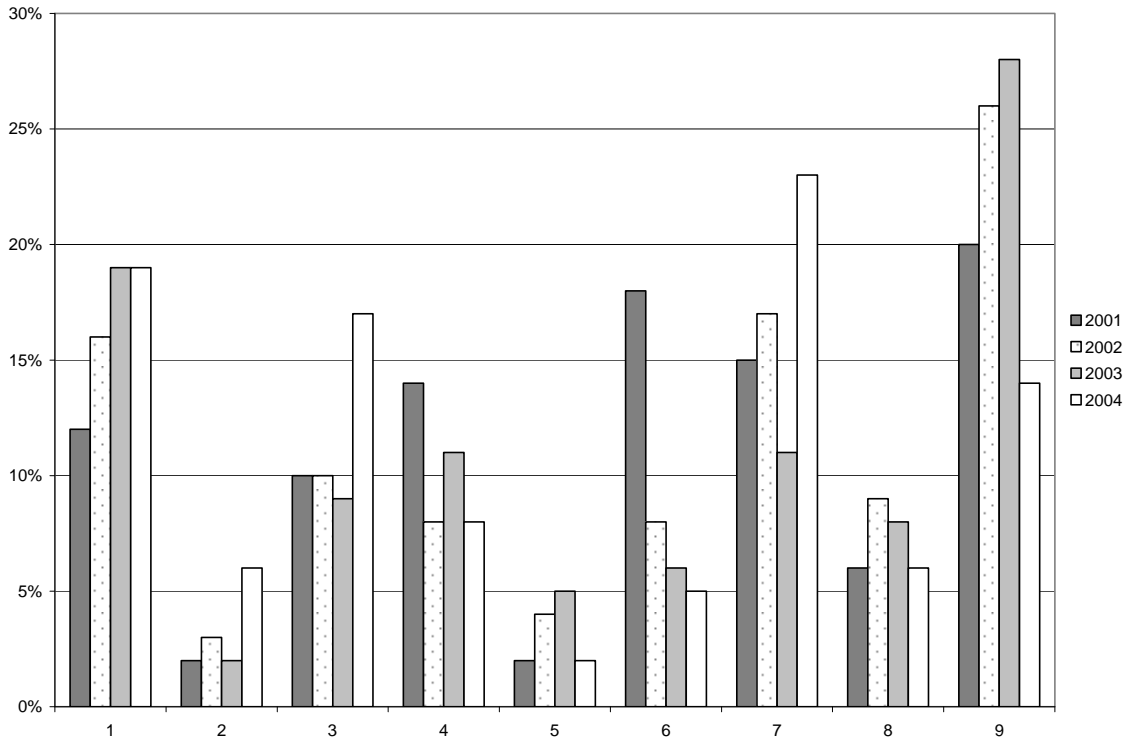


Figure 16: Percentage of Articles per Story Type per Year

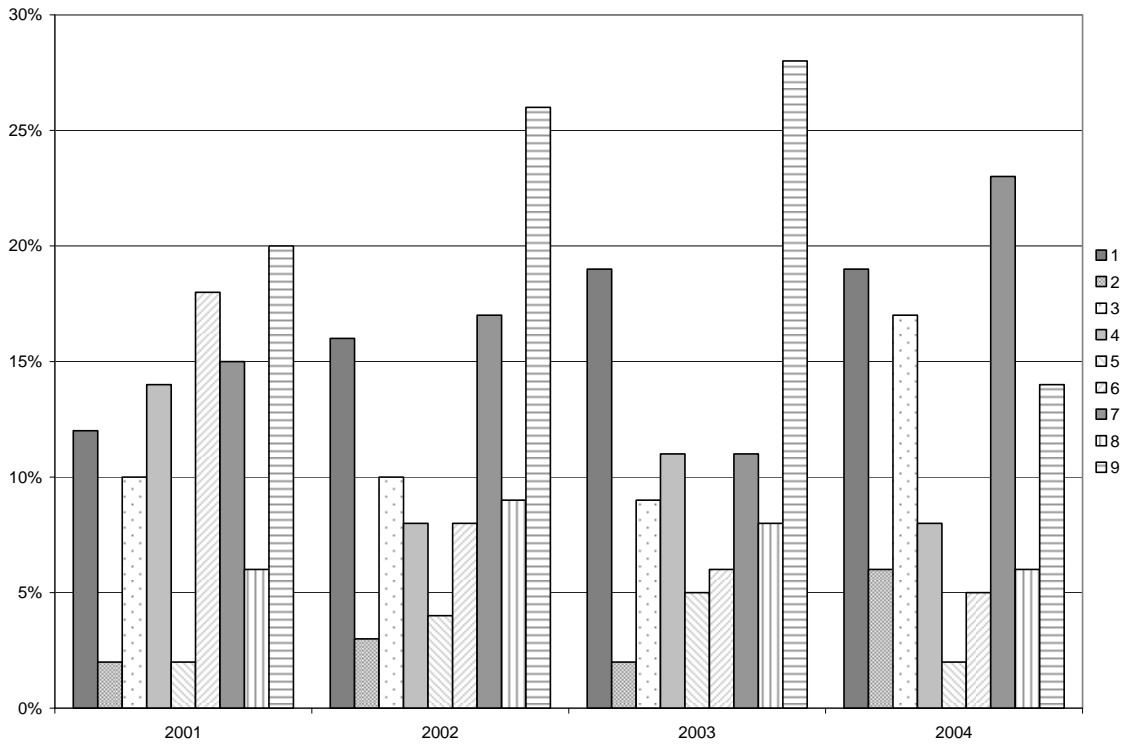


Figure 17: Percentage of Placement of Article per Year

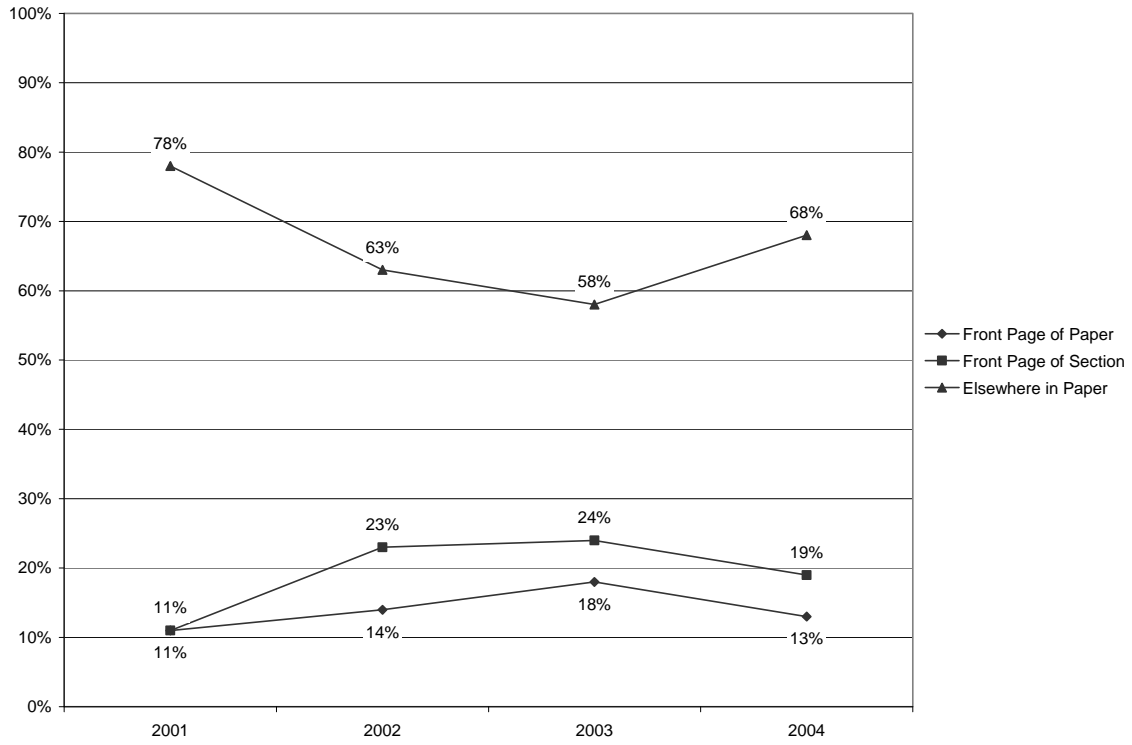


Figure 18: Percentage of Articles with Statistics and with Graphics per Year

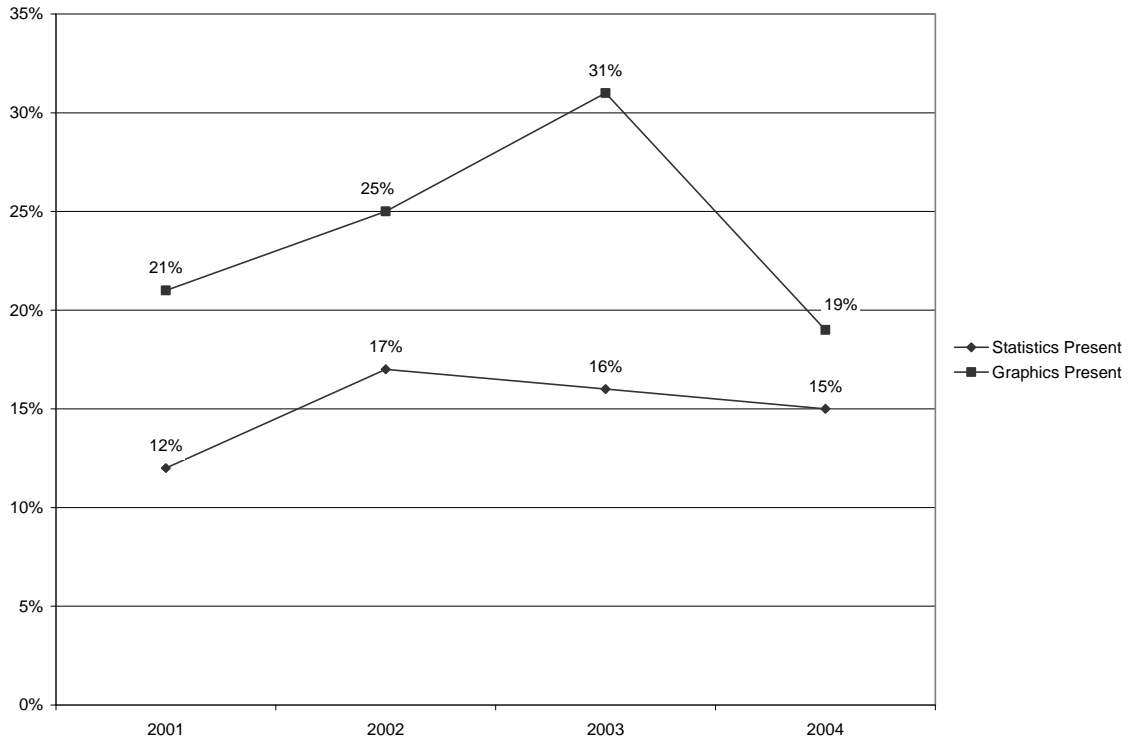


Figure 19: Percentage of Articles with Specific Details Regarding a Domestic Violence Incident and with “Domestic Violence” in Headline per Year

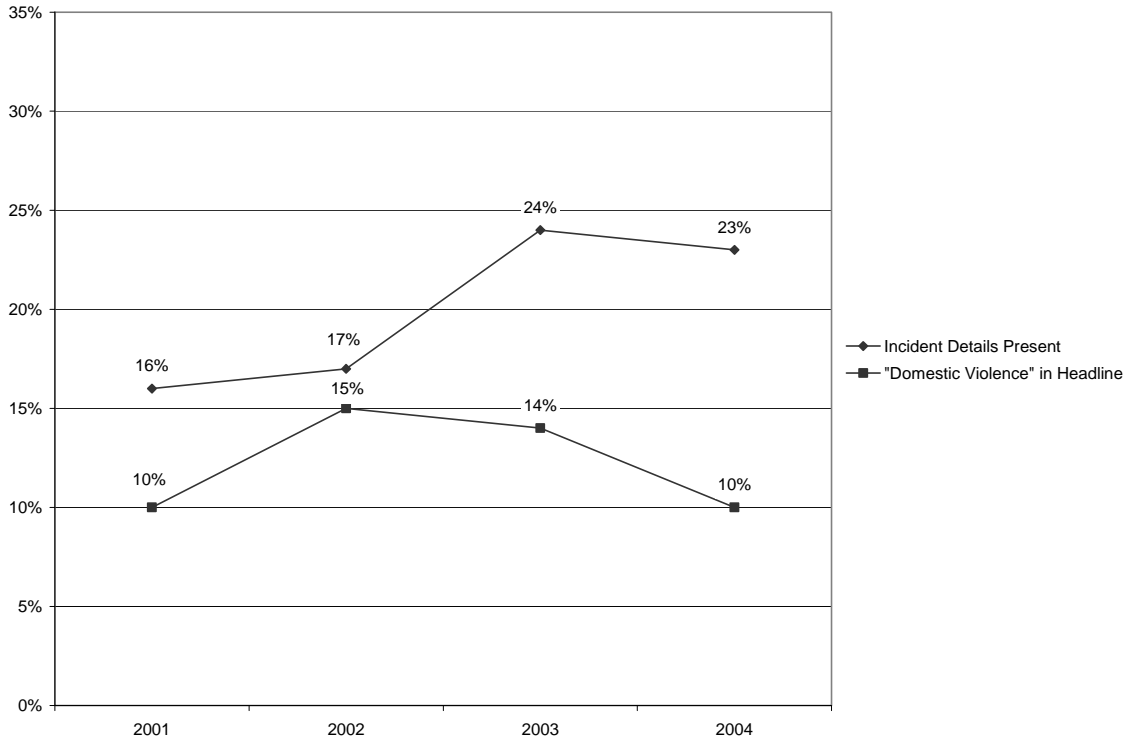


Figure 20: Percentage of Articles about Domestic Violence Incidents and Domestic Violence in General per Actual Incidents of Domestic Violence as Identified by Law Enforcement per Year

