

Gender biased police misbehavior

Analyzing deviant police practices and female offenders' experiences

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Research Question

1.- Along what lines and under what circumstances did police deviant behavior occur in Ecuador and how was it confronted by female offenders between 1979 and 2010?

Project Overview

Police deviance covers all forms of illegal and unethical conduct by the police. Previous research has revealed that the occurrence of police criminal and corrupt activities not only destabilizes the police organization's legitimacy, but also affects that of the State. This qualitative study analyzes in detail the circumstances in which police deviance occurred in Ecuador after the democratic transition (1979-2010), as well as the factors influencing this behavior. The study also examines the distinct strategies employed by female offenders to resist their victimization by the police. The study was based on 51 oral testimonies from female inmates and 50 in-depth interviews with police officers. The qualitative part of the research was complemented by archival information found in court documents and female prisoner's files produced between 1979 and 2010.

Methods

Oral testimonies and in-depth interviews

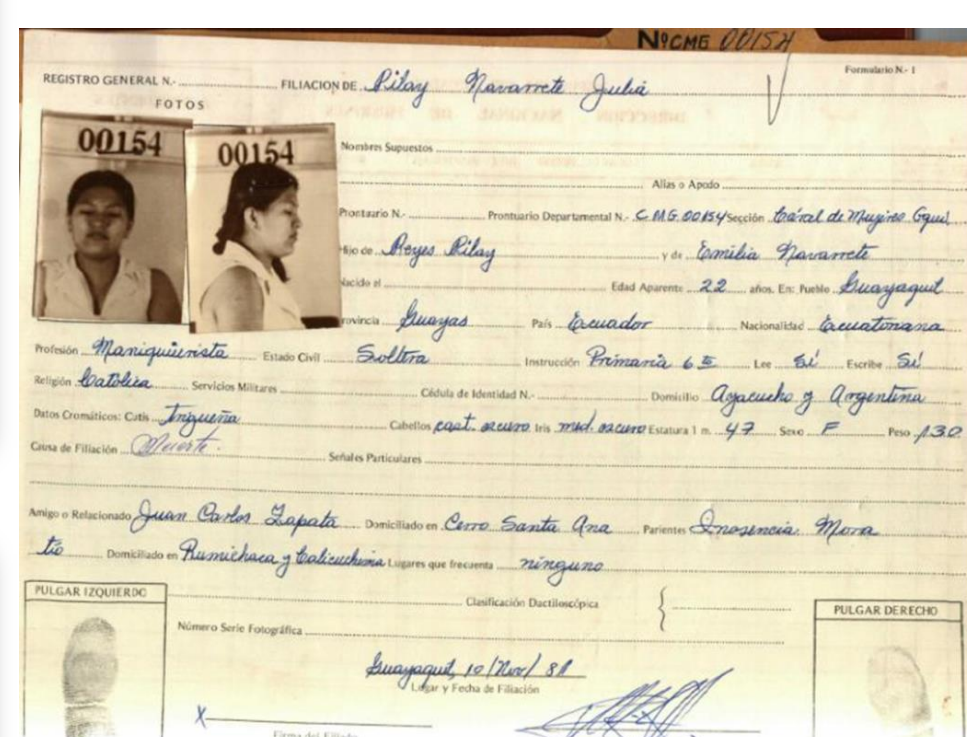
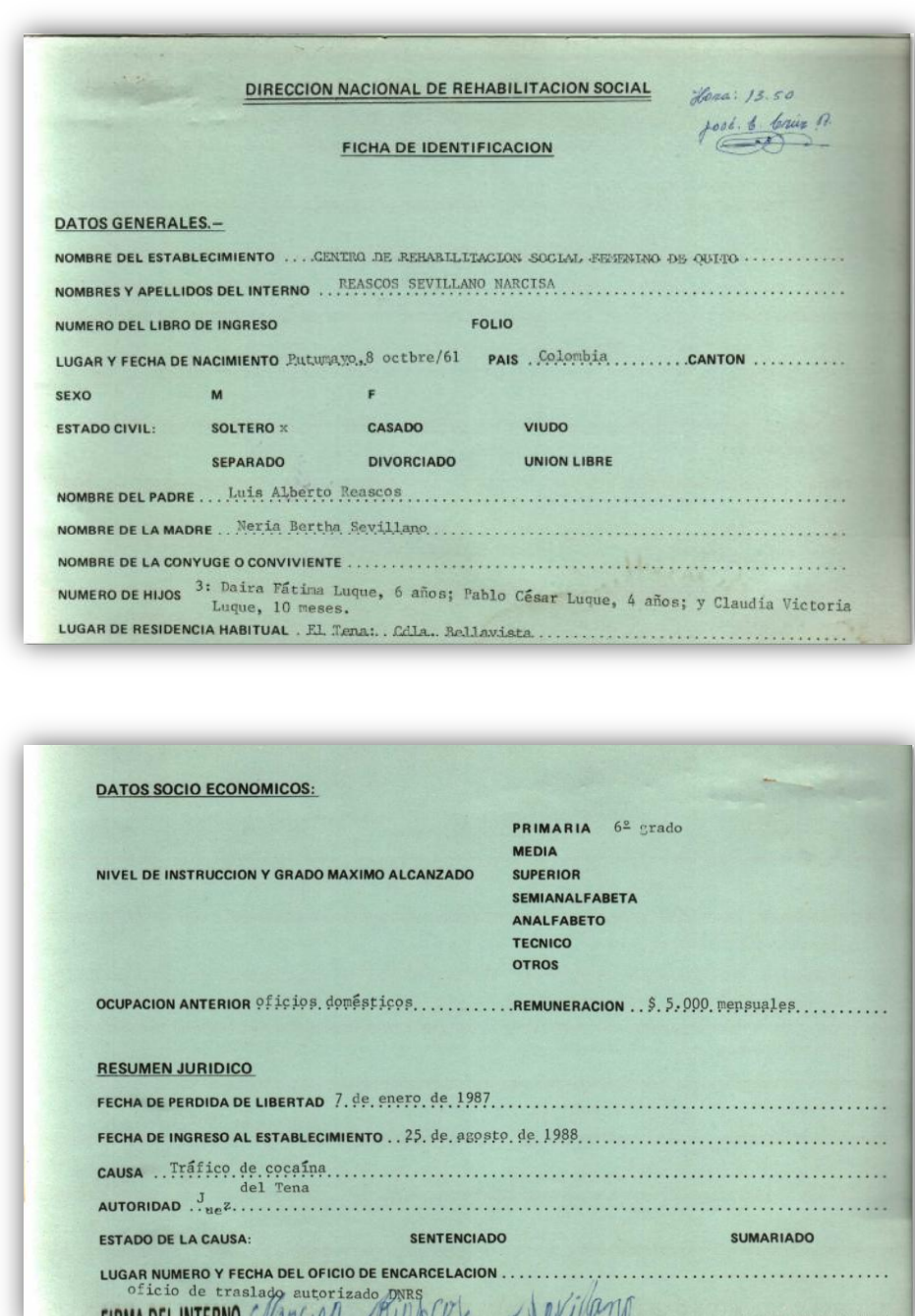
Fifty one (51) women deprived of their liberty

Fifty (50) active and retired police officers

Archival data

5000 female prisoner files which included:

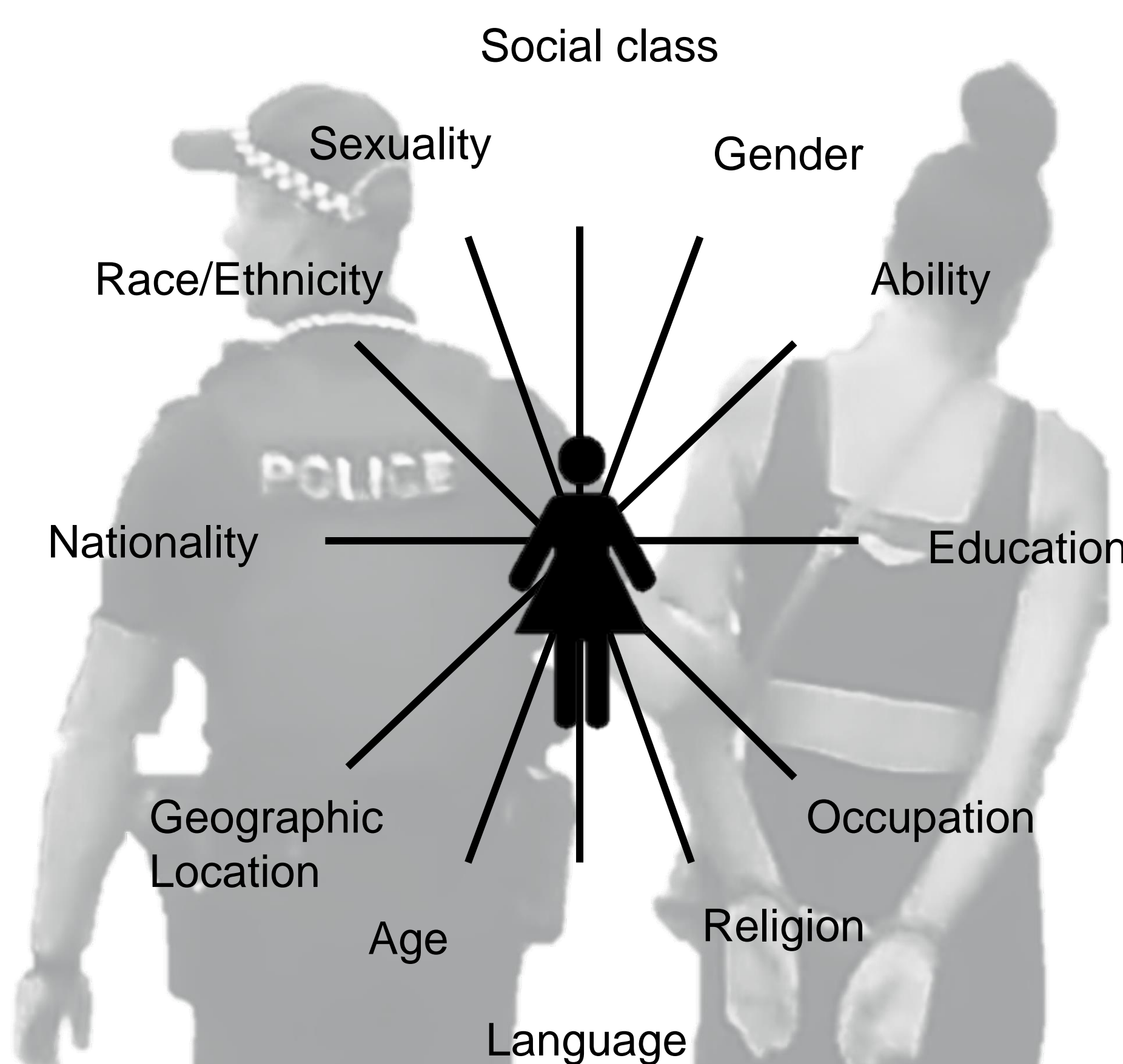
- Court documents
- Conduct certificates
- Criminal history



Theoretical Framework



Routine Activities Theory: Crime or victimization occurs when these 3 elements converge in time and space (Cohen and Felson, 1979).



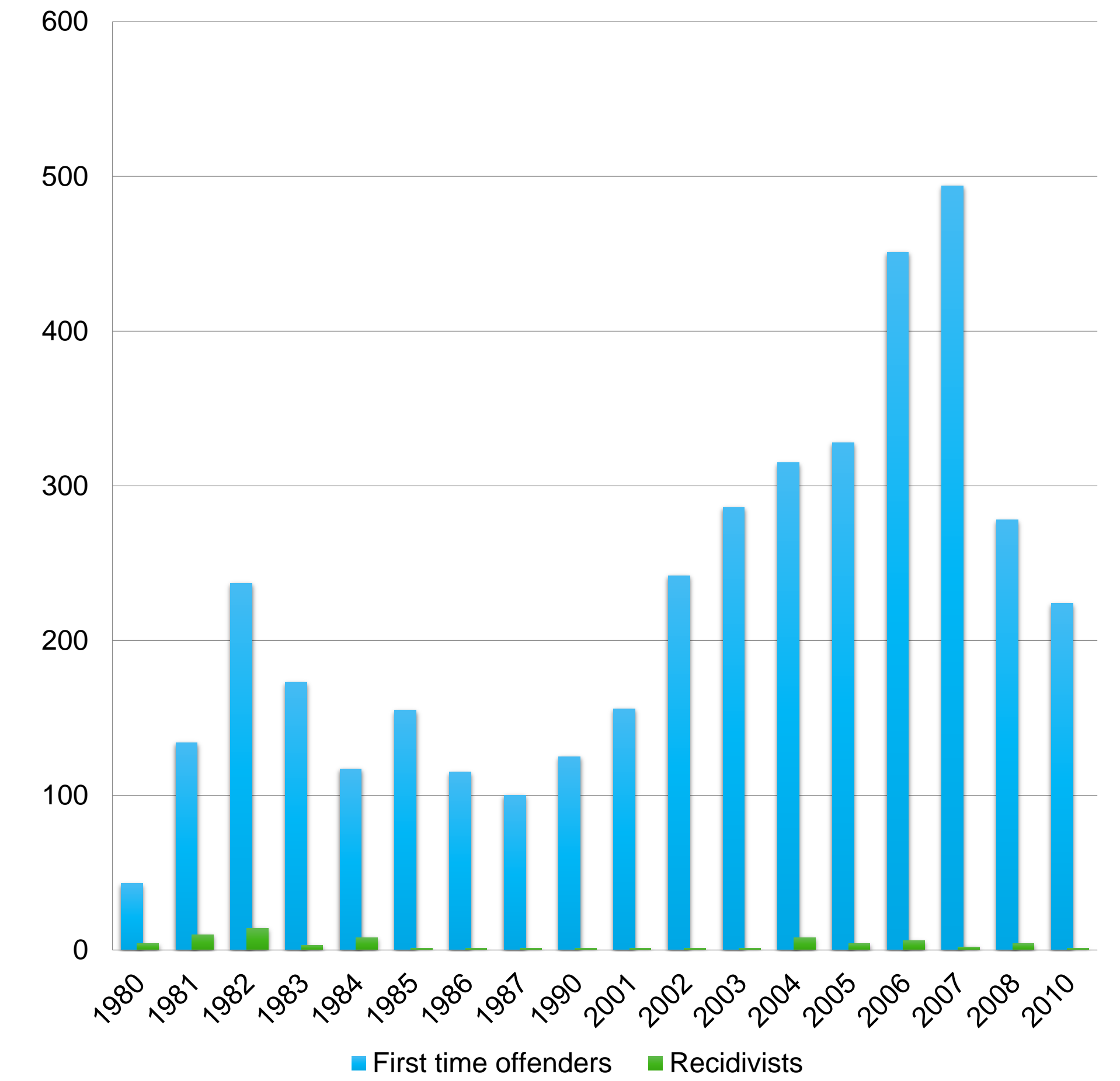
Intersectionality: Systems of power are multiplicative, inextricably linked, and simultaneously experienced (Burgess-Proctor, 2006; Crenshaw, 1989)

Results

Lack of capable guardianship and Motivation of offenders

- The Public Defense Service did not exist in the country until 2010
- Other criminal justice system officials condoned this behavior
- The fuero policial protected the officers until 2009
- Public and organizational recognition as well as financial incentives/needs motivated the officers
- Women became a threat to police officers' careers from 2008 onwards
- Only in 2010 cases of torture were not reported

Number of recidivists (1980-2010)



Target suitability

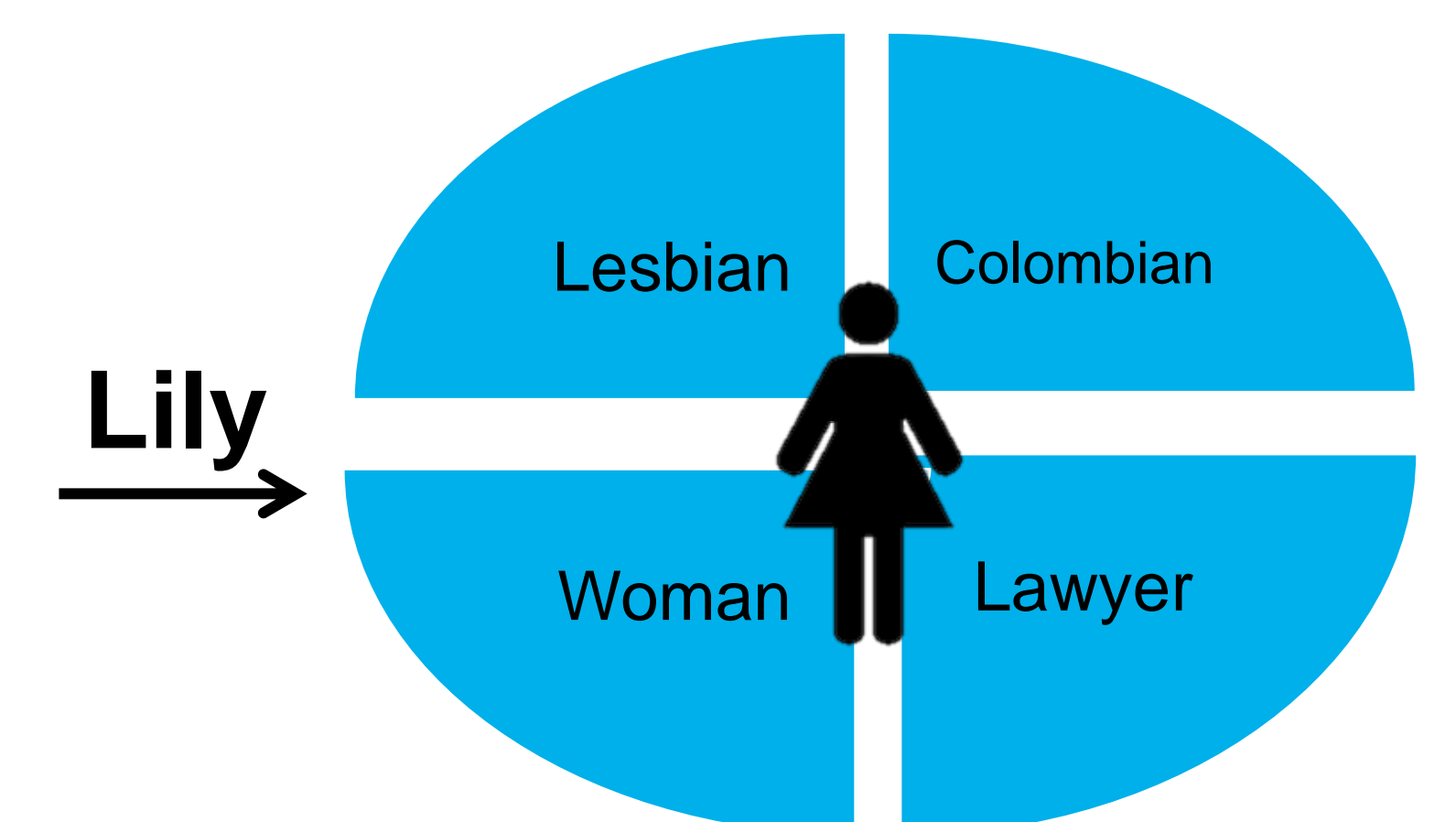
- Not experienced criminals
- Lack of familiarity with the law
- Represented a source for sexual gratification
- Minorities were more at risk

Police Sexual Misconduct

Victims	Witnesses	Both
15	16	2

Non-criminal forms of PSM	Criminal forms of PSM
25	6

Intersectional Discrimination



Conclusions

- Some aspects of the theory must be rethought in line of this study's findings.
- To tolerate the violation of the rule of law by the police and police brutality in certain scenarios will sustain deviant behavior
- More research needs to be conducted on the qualitative experiences of offenders with mixed intersecting identities.