



# **GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FIRST-TIME HOMELESS ADULTS\***

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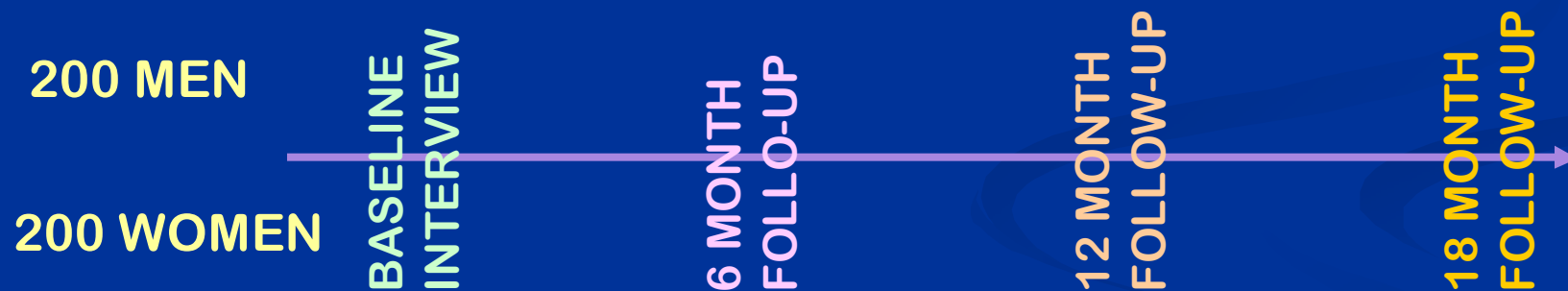
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# GENDER AND HOMELESSNESS

- About two-thirds of all homeless adults are men (Burt et al., 2001)
  
- Numerically a minority, single homeless women report
  - Greater childhood adversity
  - Greater life stress in adulthood
  - Trauma and victimization
  - Psychiatric hospitalization(Zugazawa, 2004)
  
- Gender differences have been studied among runaway and homeless youth and single adults, but gender comparisons among first-time homeless single adults are rare in the literature on homelessness

# LONGITUDINAL STUDY DESIGN





# INCLUSION CRITERIA

- **First time literally homeless**
  - Initial shelter admission
  - Onset of housing loss within two weeks prior to shelter admission
  - Homeless History Form (Link et al., 1995)
- **Age range 18-65 years**
- **Fluent in English or Spanish**
- **Plan to remain in NYC for at least one year**



# RECRUITMENT

- Sample selected over 12 month period to include newly homeless persons throughout all four seasons
- Recruitment was carried out in New York City Department of Homeless Services assessment shelters (there are 6, 3 for women, 3 for men)



# PREDICTOR VARIABLES

- Sociodemographic Characteristics
- Childhood Antecedents (foster care placement, family disorganization)
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment History
- Arrest History
- Reasons for Homelessness
- Current Psychiatric Status (SCID DSM-IV diagnosis)
- Current Substance Abuse (SCID DSM-IV diagnosis)



## COMMON DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF BOTH GENDERS

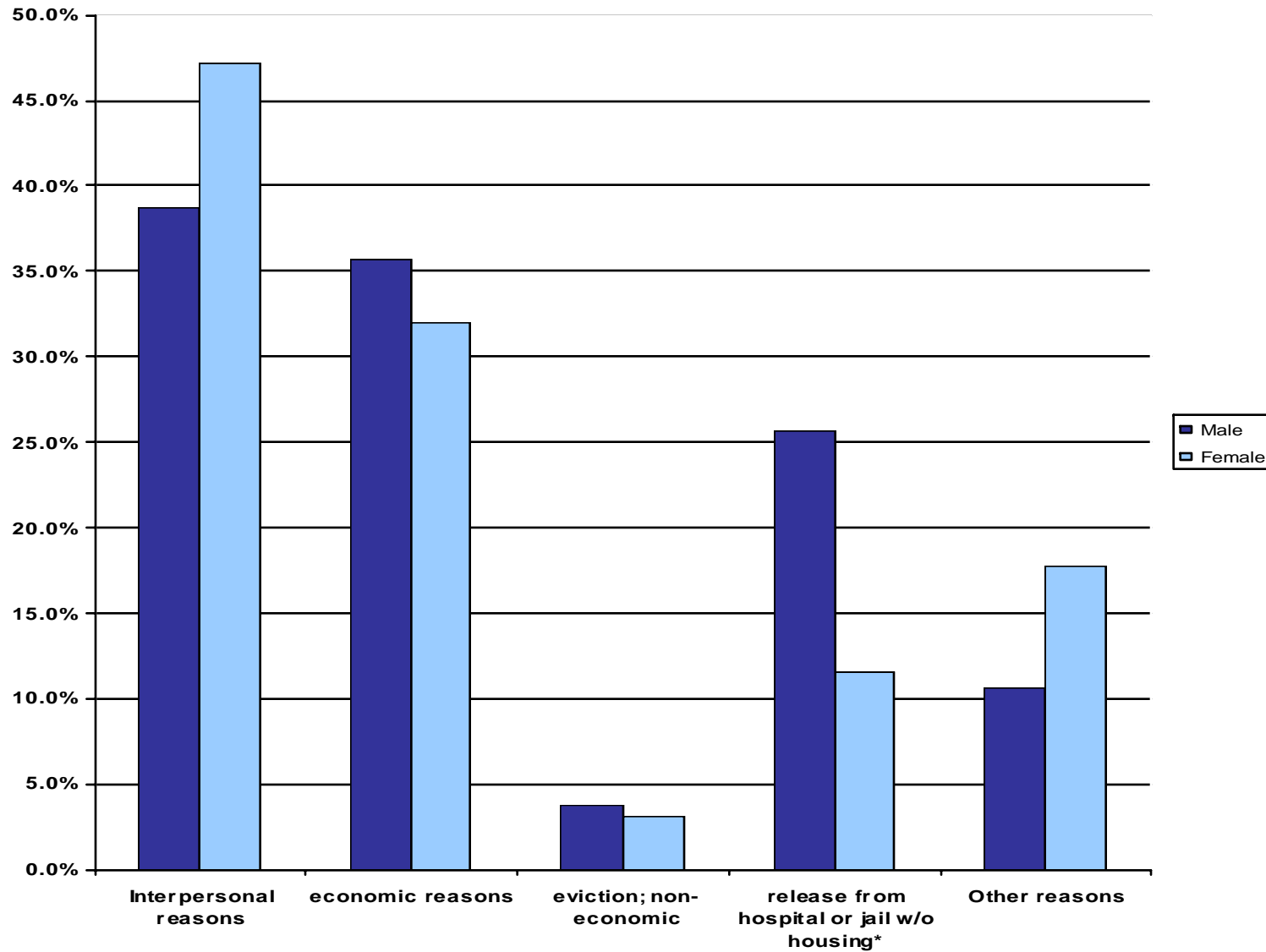
- The average age was between 35 and 40 years
- 66% were Black and 20% Hispanic/ Latino
- 85% were American-born
- 66% had not completed high school
- 88% were unemployed
- 34% of men and 29% of women had earned income
- 30% of men and 39% of women had benefit income





# GENDER DIFFERENCES

# REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS



# Childhood Antecedents

	Men (N=160)	Women (N=191)	Test	Significance
Childhood Physical Abuse	13%	23%	LRT= 5.65	0.036
Childhood Sexual Abuse	3%	16%	LRT= 13.21	0.000
Out-of-Home Placement	18%	26%	LRT= 3.35	0.07
Family Disorganization	mean= 12.07	mean= 13.62	t= -3.36	0.001

# Gender Differences in Substance Use Disorder and Treatment on Shelter Admission

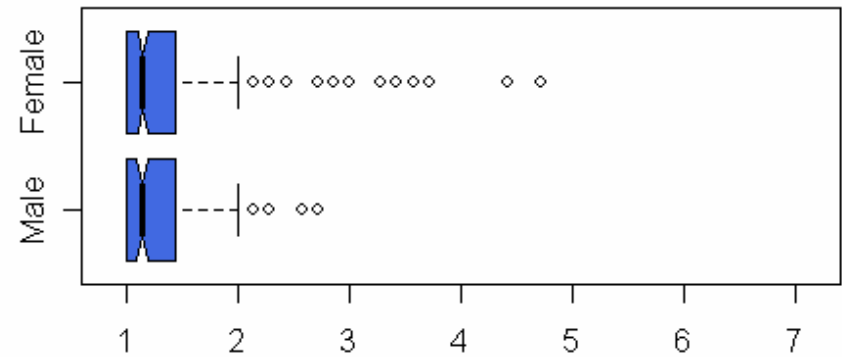
	Men (N=160)	Women (N=191)	LRT	Significance
Substance Use Disorder (Lifetime)	58%	38%	13.65	0.000
Substance Use Disorder (Prior Month)	29%	17%	7.79	0.005
Drug Treatment (Lifetime)	38%	30%	1.98	N.S.
Alcohol Treatment (Lifetime)	31%	18%	8.47	0.003

# Gender Differences in Psychiatric Diagnosis on Shelter Admission

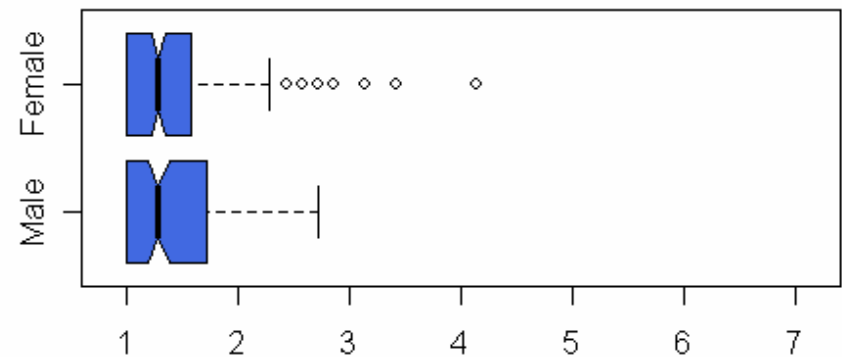
	Men (N=160)	Women (N=191)	LRT	Significance
DSM-IV Axis I Diagnosis (Lifetime)	46%	58%	LRT=4.97	0.05
Psychotic Symptoms	13%	11%	LRT=0.35	NS
Mood Disorder	41%	53%	LRT=4.70	0.05
Antisocial Personality Disorder	23%	11%	LRT=8.17	0.004
Psychiatric Treatment History	36%	53%	LRT=10.22	0.01

# Positive and Negative Symptom Scale

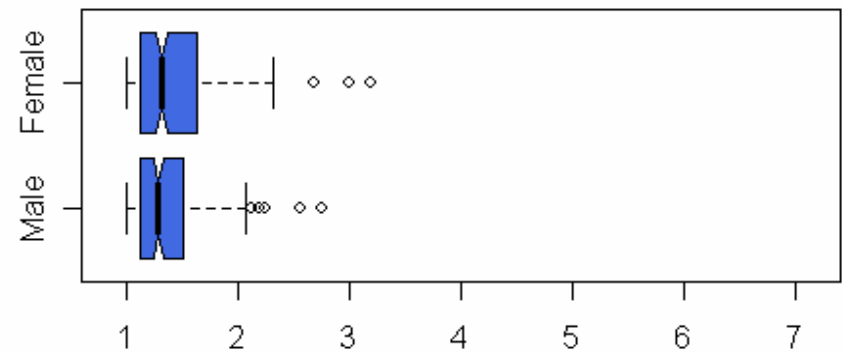
**Panss Positive**



**Panss Negative**



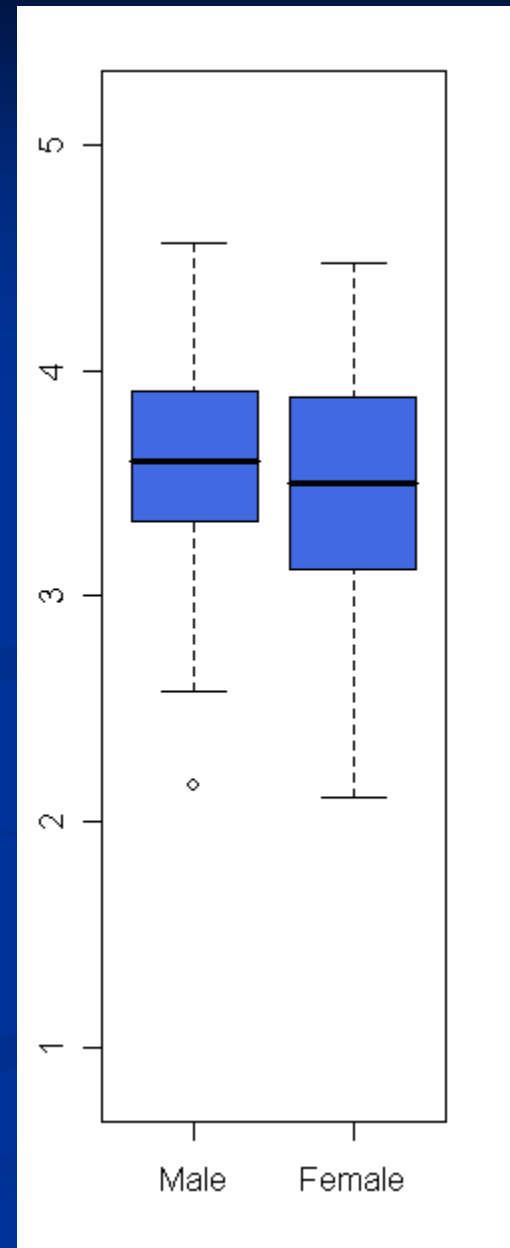
**Panss General**



# Modified Erickson Psychosocial Stage Inventory

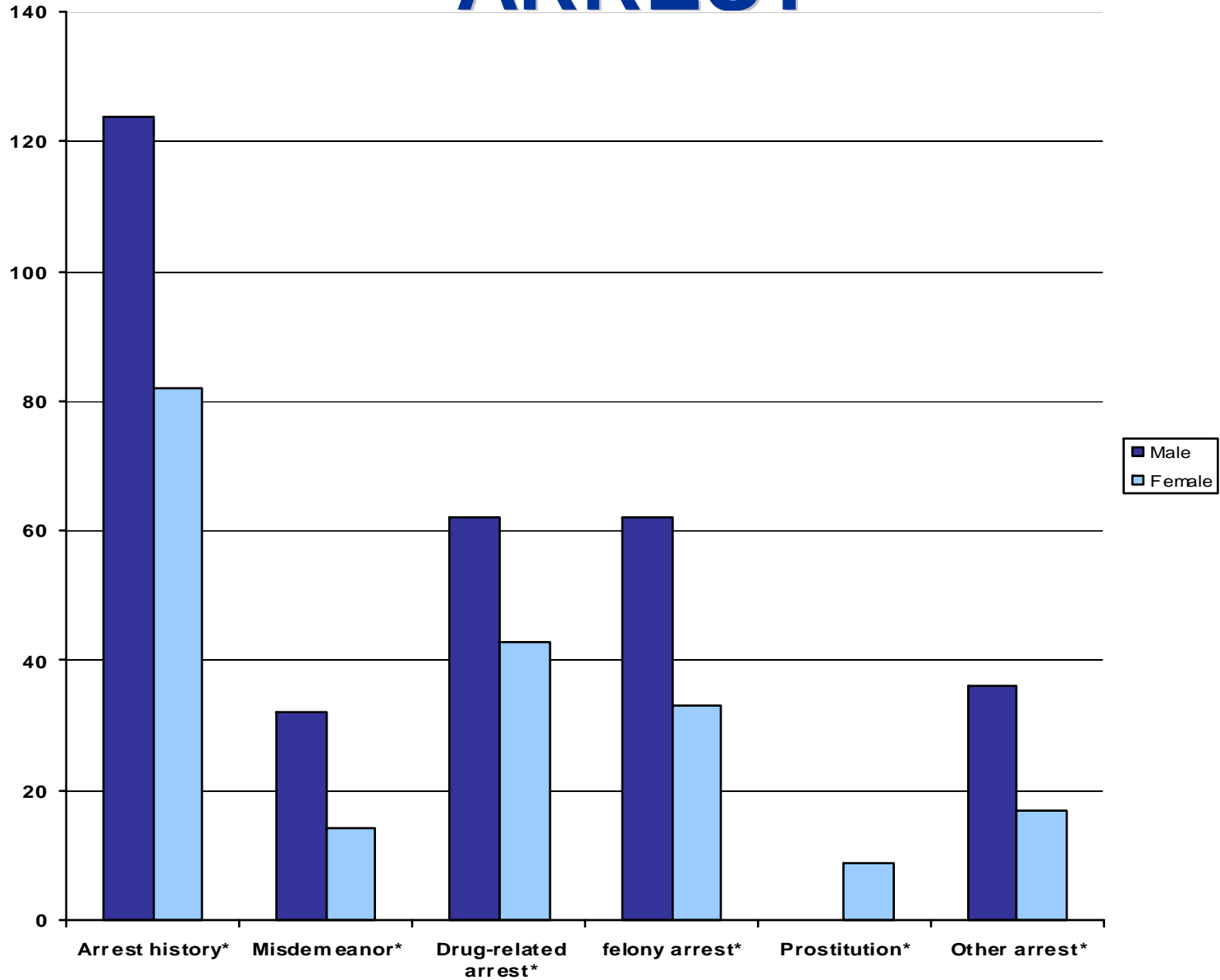
**T=1.934**

**P value = 0.054**





# ARREST







# CONCLUSION

- **First-time homeless men and women have markedly different profiles in histories of childhood adversity, reasons for homelessness, psychiatric and substance use disorders, prior treatment, and arrest history.**
- **Such differences underscore the need for gender-specific services to address the respective problems that men and women present at shelter entry that may impair the ability to achieve lasting housing stability.**