

# **MOVING = LEAVING: HOUSING PATTERNS OF WOMEN WHO HAVE LEFT AN ABUSIVE PARTNER**

Pamela Ponic, Colleen Varcoe, Lorraine Davies,  
Marilyn Ford-Gilboe, Judith Wuest, & Joanne Hammerton

Women's Health Effects Study  
UBC, UWO, UNB  
In press, Violence Against Women  
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# Background

- Housing & violence are determinants of women's health

(Ford-Gilboe et al., 2009; Paglione, 2006; Shaw, 2004; )

- Intimate partner violence (IPV) increases women's housing instability and is the primary cause of women's homelessness

(Champion et al., 2009; Weber-Sikich, 2008; Pavao et al., 2007)

- Up to 31% of women return to abuser due to lack of housing in both Canada & US

(Melbin, Sullivan, & Cain, 2003; Taylor-Butts, 2007)

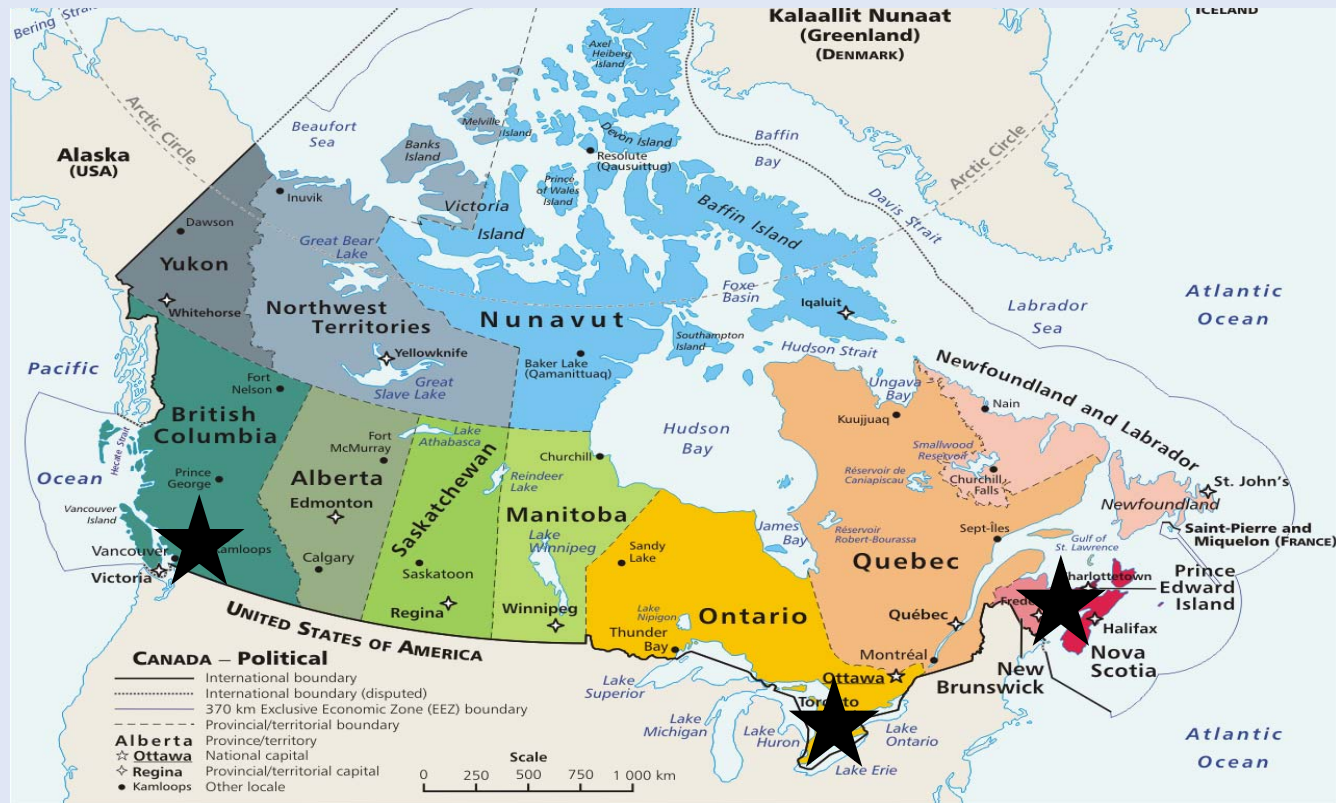
# Purpose



- To examine women's housing patterns and the factors that influence them during the immediate transition period around leaving
- Based on a community sample (n=309)

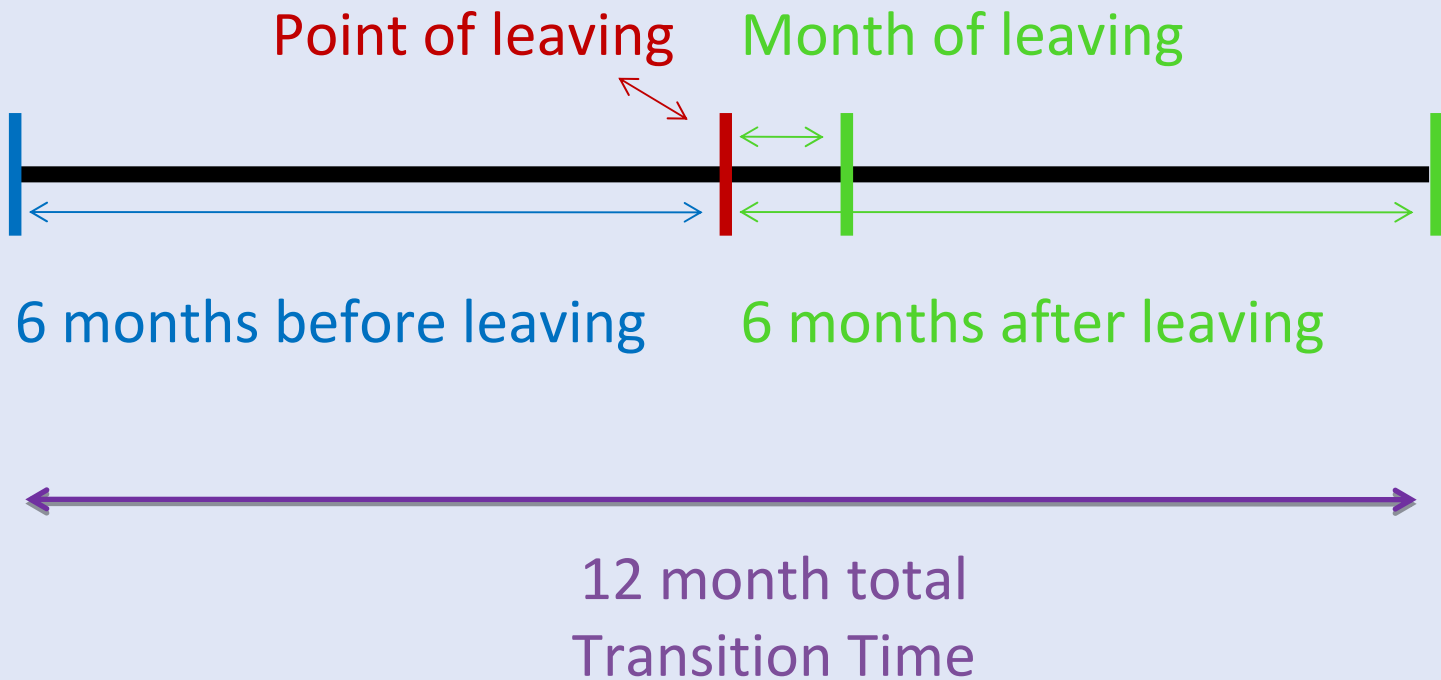


# The Women's Health Effects Study



- 5 year longitudinal study
- **Community sample** of 309 Canadian women who **left** abusive male partners between 3 months and 3 years before first interview (on average 20 months previously).

# Life History Calendars

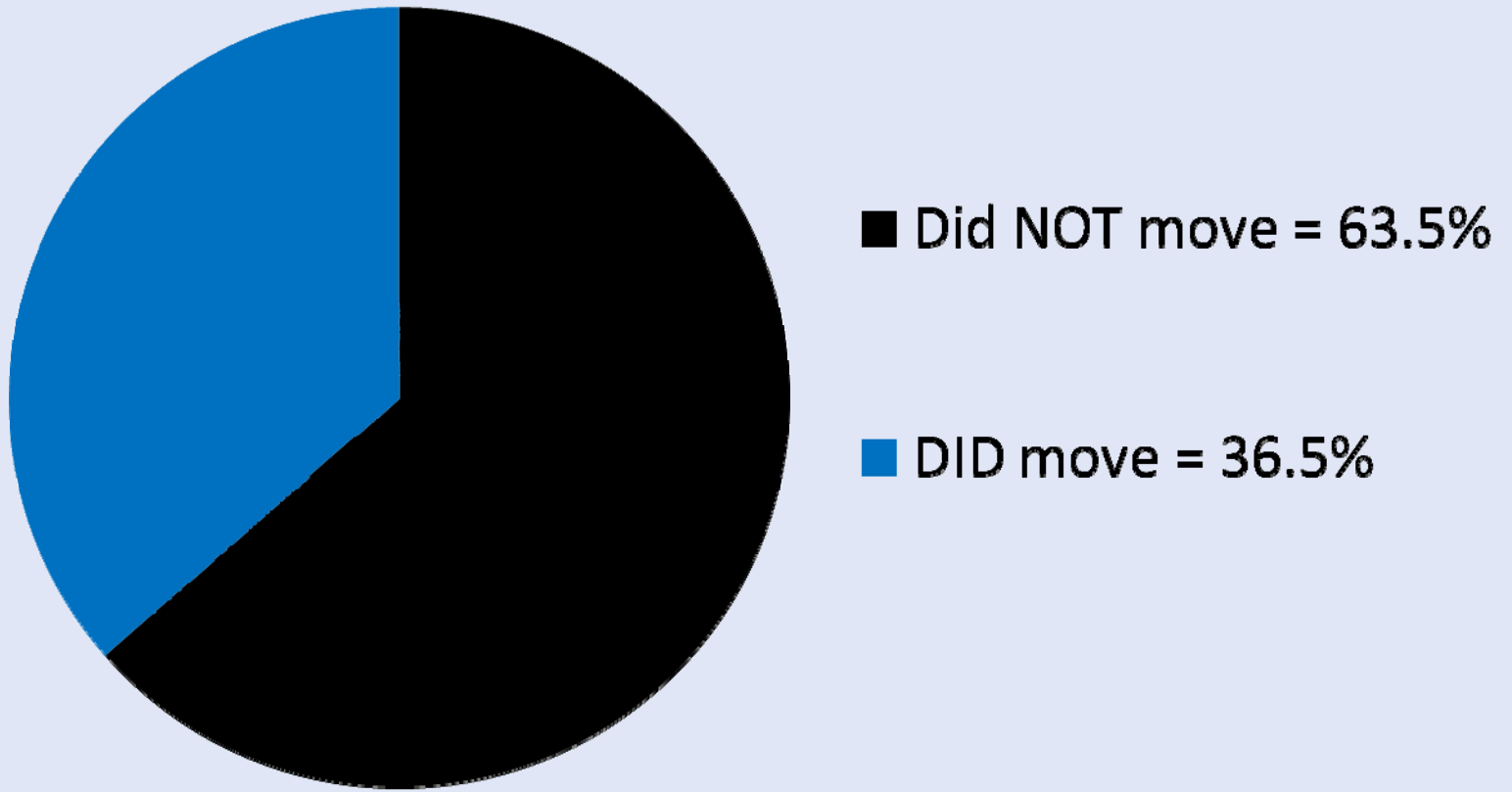


# Research Question #1

What are the housing patterns of women in the transition period around leaving an abusive male partner?

# Housing Patterns

Percentage of women who moved in month left





# Housing Patterns

Percentage of women who moved in the 1-year transition period

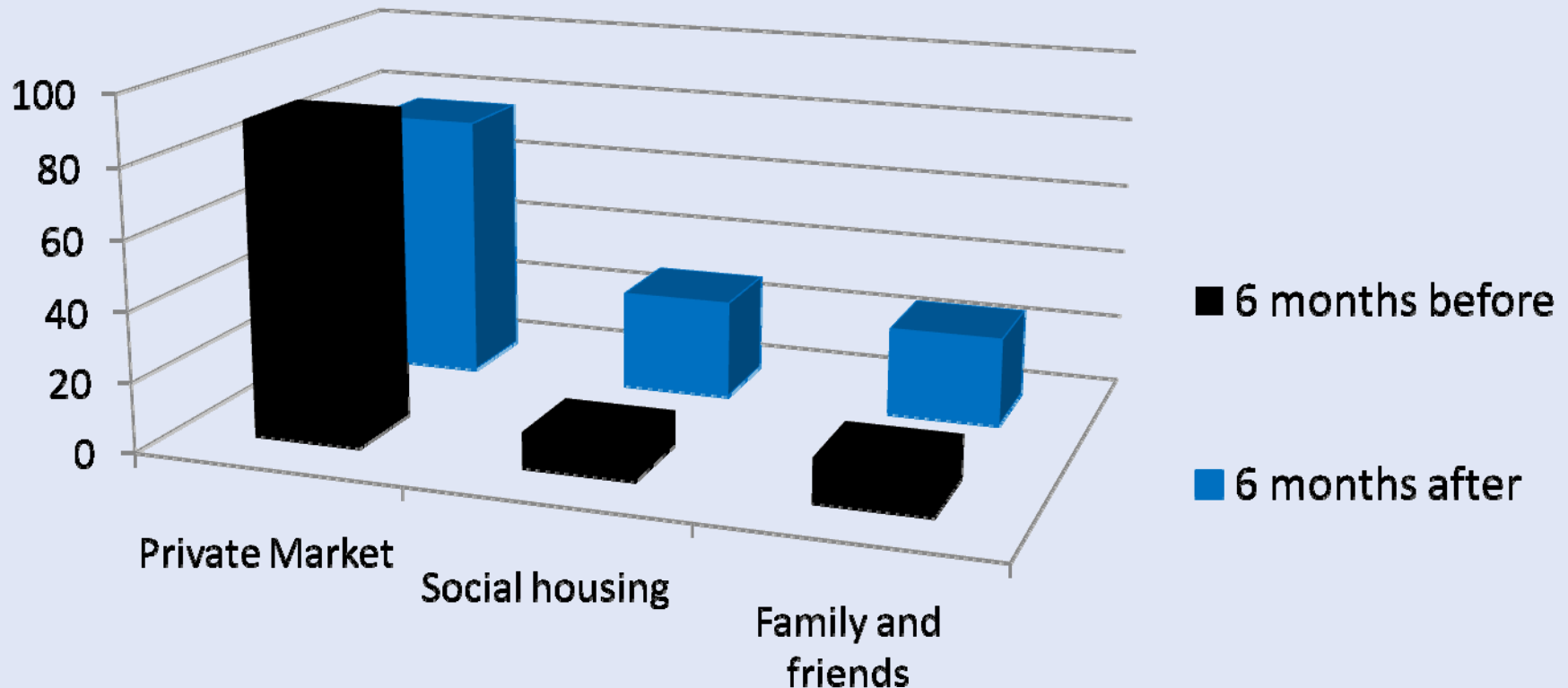


■ Non-movers = 35.5%

■ Single movers = 30.9%

■ Multiple movers = 33.6%

# Housing Type



**Note: 16.8% used transition house in 6 month period after leaving**

## Research Question #2

What factors influence women's housing patterns in the transition period around leaving an abusive male partner?

# Influences on Housing Patterns

- Multiple movers significantly more likely to:
  - Have higher levels of housing-specific financial strain
  - Live on lower incomes
  - Be on social or disability assistance
  - Live in social housing or with family/friends
  - Have experienced higher levels of violence

# Implications

- Leaving ≠ moving
- Housing instability mirrors financial insecurity and levels of violence experience
- Policy and service provision:
  - Housing as a resource that facilitates leaving IPV
  - Housing support options that accommodates multiple moving patterns and economic realities
  - Works toward long-term stability and security
  - Integrated with violence-specific social and health services
- Future longitudinal analyses on violence/housing/health

**Thank you!**

# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE (N=309)

Variable	Range	Mean	SD
<i>Age</i>	19-63	39.4	9.80
<i>Education (years)</i>	6-22	13.4	2.60
<i>Time Out (months)</i>	3-40.5	20.9	10.20
<i>Annual Income</i>	\$0 - \$95,000	\$20,516	\$17,195

## % sample

*Children (< 18)*

57

## *Income Sources*

Employed

45

Social assistance

33.6

Disability

10.7



# *CULTURAL PROFILE*

## *(N=309)*



<i>Variable</i>	<i>% sample</i>
<i>Visible Minority</i>	<b>16.8</b>
<i>Aboriginal</i>	<b>7.4</b>
<i>English First language</i>	<b>92.4</b>
 <i>Location</i>	
<b>Large City/Metro Area (250,000 +)</b>	<b>37.2 %</b>
<b>Medium City (45,000 – 249,999K)</b>	<b>33.8 %</b>
<b>Small City (20 – 44,999K)</b>	<b>8.2 %</b>
<b>Town (5-19,999K)</b>	<b>7.8 %</b>
<b>Rural Area (0-4,999)</b>	<b>13.0 %</b>

# ABUSE HISTORY (N= 309)

