

Types of Domestic Violence

Research Evidence

Michael P. Johnson, Ph.D.

Sociology, Women's Studies, and

African & African American Studies

Penn State

Photos from Donna Ferrato, *Living with the Enemy*. New York: Aperture, 1991



McKeesport, PA

CREVAWC - LCCEWA

London, Ontario

October 6, 2010

- ◆ Are Women Really as Violent as Men?
 - ◆ Anti-feminist politics and conflicting data
 - ◆ Explaining the ostensible contradictions
- ◆ A Control-based Typology of Partner Violence
 - ◆ The three major types (plus one or two)
 - ◆ Gender differences and sampling biases
- ◆ Dramatic Differences Among the Types
 - ◆ Violence severity, frequency, mutuality, and escalation
 - ◆ Health consequences
 - ◆ Relationship consequences
 - ◆ Miscellaneous other major differences

The Anti-feminist Backlash

- ◆ The Men's Project, February 2009: Submission to the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
 - ◆ ...the Ontario Government may be in violation of their obligations... [because] the existing network of shelters for victims of family violence exclude men....
- ◆ Pittsburgh Post Gazette July 26, 2009
 - ◆ Feminist ideologues ignore research that shows domestic violence is just as often started by women as by men
- ◆ Globe and Mail July 27, 2002 (Web site)
 - ◆ Men as likely to suffer spousal abuse, Statscan says.

General Surveys Indicate That Women Are as Violent as Men

Heterosexual intimate partner violence by gender

<u>Data Source</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Canada, GSS, 2004	54%	46%
New Zealand, young adults, 2002	39%	61%
U. of Maine, students, 1997	39%	61%
North Carolina, 8 th & 9 th Grade, 1994	35%	65%
U.S., NSFH, 1988	53%	47%
U.S., NFVS, 1975—the beginning	51%	49%

But Agency Studies Indicate That Men Are the Batterers

Heterosexual intimate partner violence by gender

<u>Data Source</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Canada, Spousal Homicide, 1995-2005	82%	18%
U.S., FBI, Partner Assault, 1996-2001	75%	25%
U.K., Emergency Rooms, 1988	83%	17%
Santa Barbara, CA, Police, 1983	94%	6%
Ontario, Family Court, 1982	94%	6%
Cleveland, Divorce Court, 1966	92%	8%

A Small Theory that Reconciles the Contradiction

- ◆ There is more than one type of partner violence
- ◆ The different types are differently gendered
- ◆ Both major sampling plans are biased
 - ◆ General survey studies are biased toward situationally-provoked violence, which is perpetrated about equally by men and women.
 - ◆ Agency studies are biased toward coercive controlling violence, which is perpetrated almost entirely by men.

- ◆ Are Women Really as Violent as Men?
 - ◆ Anti-feminist politics and conflicting data
 - ◆ Explaining the ostensible contradictions
- ◆ A Control-based Typology of Partner Violence
 - ◆ The three major types (plus one or two)
 - ◆ Gender differences and sampling biases
- ◆ Dramatic Differences Among the Types
 - ◆ Violence severity, frequency, mutuality, and escalation
 - ◆ Health consequences
 - ◆ Relationship consequences
 - ◆ Miscellaneous other major differences

Intimate Terrorism

Violent Coercive Control

Violent Resistance

Resisting the Intimate Terrorist

Situational Couple Violence

Situationally-provoked Violence

Separation-instigated Violence

No Prior History of Violence or Control

Mutual Violent Control

Two Intimate Terrorists

Intimate Terrorism

Violent Coercive Control

- ◆ Primarily but not exclusively men
- ◆ Two major subtypes identified for men
 - ◆ Emotionally dependent
 - ◆ Antisocial
- ◆ High risk at separation, especially for emotionally dependent subtype
- ◆ One basic pattern with variations
 - ◆ Attempt to exert general control
 - ◆ Specific control tactics vary from case to case

Domestic Violence/Intimate Terrorism



Two major subtypes: (a) Emotionally dependent; (b) Antisocial

Coercive Control Scale

Thinking about your husband [yourself], would you say he [you]...

- ◆ is jealous or possessive?
- ◆ tries to provoke arguments?
- ◆ tries to limit your contact with family and friends?
- ◆ insists on knowing who you are with at all times?
- ◆ calls you names or puts you down in front of others?
- ◆ makes you feel inadequate?
- ◆ shouts or swears at you?
- ◆ frightens you?
- ◆ prevents you from knowing about or having access to the family income even when you ask?

*These are items from the 1995 National Violence Against Women Survey (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). They were adapted from the Canadian Violence Against Women Survey (Holly Johnson, 1996).

Violent Resistance

Resisting the Intimate Terrorist

- ◆ Most victims do react with violence at some point
- ◆ Not always self-defense
- ◆ Some evidence that violent resistance increases risk
- ◆ Most violent resisters turn to other tactics to mitigate the violence or escape

Situational Couple Violence

Situationally-provoked Violence

- ◆ Conflicts turn to arguments that escalate
- ◆ Both men and women do this
 - ◆ Men's violence more likely to injure and frighten
- ◆ Huge variability
 - ◆ 40% only one incident
 - ◆ Can involve chronic and severe violence
- ◆ Causes include chronic conflict, substance abuse, anger management, communication issues, among others

Gender Symmetry/Asymmetry by Type of Violence

(1970s Pittsburgh: Violent husbands and wives)

	<u>Husbands</u>	<u>Wives</u>	<u>N</u>
Intimate terrorism	97%	3%	97
Violent resistance	4%	96%	77
Situational couple violence	56%	44%	146

2000s Britain: IT 87% male; VR 10% male; SCV 45% male

The Biases of Major Sampling Plans (Violent men: Pittsburgh*)

	<u>General Sample</u> (n = 37)	<u>Court Sample</u> (n = 34)	<u>Shelter Sample</u> (n = 50)
Intimate terrorism	14%	68%	78%
Violent resistance	0%	0%	2%
Situational couple violence	86%	29%	18%

*The pattern is essentially the same for the British research.

- ◆ **Are Women Really as Violent as Men?**
 - ◆ Anti-feminist politics and conflicting data
 - ◆ Explaining the ostensible contradictions
- ◆ **A Control-based Typology of Partner Violence**
 - ◆ The three major types (plus one or two)
 - ◆ Gender differences and sampling biases
- ◆ **Dramatic Differences Among the Types**
 - ◆ Violence severity, frequency, mutuality, and escalation
 - ◆ Health consequences
 - ◆ Relationship consequences
 - ◆ Miscellaneous other major differences

Pittsburgh data

Mixed sample

Intimate Terrorism

76% severe

75% escalated

29% mutual

1/25
couples

General Motive: To control the relationship

Situational Couple Violence

28% severe

28% escalated

69% mutual

1/8
couples

Situational Motive: To win, get attention, get even, etc.

British data

Mixed sample

Intimate Terrorism

43% severe

78% escalated

15% mutual

General Motive: To control the relationship

Situational Couple Violence

13% severe

20% escalated

87% mutual

Situational Motive: To win, get attention, get even, etc

Canadian GSS 1999

Previous partner

Intimate Terrorism

41% frequent violence

56% feared for life

General Motive: To control the relationship

Situational Couple Violence

8% frequent violence

17% feared for life

Situational Motive: To win, get attention, get even, etc

Canadian GSS 2004

Previous/current
partner

Intimate Terrorism

57% frequent violence

60% feared for life

General Motive: To control the relationship

Situational Couple Violence

8% frequent violence

9% feared for life

Situational Motive: To win, get attention, get even, etc

Women's Health Outcomes by Type of Male Violence

		<u>SCV</u>	<u>IT</u>	
<u>Any Injury</u>	Pittsburgh	56%	94%	***
	Canada, GSS	32%	54%	
<u>Severe injury</u>	Pittsburgh	28%	76%	***
	Canada, GSS ⁺	5%	21%	
<u>General health</u>	Chicago	Good to Very Good	Fair to Good	*
<u>Post-traumatic stress</u>	U.S., NVAW ⁺⁺	37%	79%	***

⁺Hospital treatment

⁺⁺ Percent above the median for female victims of partner violence

*.05 ** .01 ***.001

Relationship Outcomes by Type of Male Violence

Situational

Couple Violence

Intimate Terrorism

<u>Low marital happiness</u>	Pittsburgh	13%	50%	***
<u>Left more than once</u>	Pittsburgh	26%	74%	***
	U.S., NVAW	7%	29%	***
<u>Rarely a good time</u>	Pittsburgh	3%	20%	***
<u>Sex often unpleasant</u>	Pittsburgh	9%	23%	***

***.001

Need to Re-assess Everything

Variety of Studies by Various Social Scientists

- ◆ Intergenerational “transmission”
 - ◆ SCV $d = .11$; IT $d = .35$
 - ◆ SCV odds ratio = 2.40; IT odds ratio = 7.51
- ◆ Marriage
 - ◆ SCV $b = -.62$; IT $b = .58$
- ◆ Gender traditionalism or hostility toward women
 - ◆ Traditionalism: SCV $d = -.14$; IT $d = .80$
 - ◆ Hostility: non-viol., SCV, IT, IT = 154, 153, 135, 131
- ◆ Gender, frequency, severity, escalation, mutuality, impact on victim, impact on children, etc.

Different types of partner violence have...

- ◆ Different causes
- ◆ Different developmental trajectories
- ◆ Different effects
- ◆ Different implications for policy and practice

**We make big mistakes if we don't
make big distinctions.**

Support Your Local Women's Shelter

- ◆ Safety
- ◆ Support
- ◆ Information
- ◆ Advocacy

Photos from Donna Ferrato, *Living with the Enemy*. New York: Aperture, 1991



Philadelphia, PA shelter