MENTAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE BETWEEN MARITAL AND DATING PARTNERS ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN AND IN 32 NATIONS

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Presented at the International Association of Mental Health Services annual meeting, Vancouver, BC, Canada, 26 May 2010

Other publications on this and related issues can be downloaded from http://www.pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2

The work was supported by National Institute of Mental Health grant T32MH15161 and by the University of New Hampshire

QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

1. What is the prevalence of physical assault on partners
   A. Over the life course
   B. By men and women
   C. In economically developed and developing nations?

2. To what extent are mental health problems a risk factor for partner violence?

3. Is the relation of mental health problems to partner assault different:
   A. For men and women?
   B. In economically developed and developing nations?

4. What are the implications for prevention and treatment of physical violence against partners?
   • Answer using results of several studies, but especially the International Dating Violence Study

QUESTION 1

What is the prevalence of physical assault on partners (*Partner violence* or PV from here on)

A. By men and women
B. Over the life course
C. In economically developed and developing nations?

All data is on perpetration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Severity Of Assault</th>
<th>Perpetrator</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian National Survey (Lupri, 1990)</td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Canadian General Social Survey (1999)</td>
<td>Overall rate</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Crime Survey (1996)</td>
<td>Overall rate</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>National Co-morbidity Study (Kessler, 2001)</td>
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<td>National Alcohol and Family Violence Survey (Straus, 1995)</td>
<td>Overall rate</td>
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<td>8.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunedin Health and Development Study (US Dept of Justice 1999)</td>
<td>Overall rate</td>
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<td>34.0%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>National Violence Against Women Survey (Juster &amp; Thomassen, 2005)</td>
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<td>Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Centers For Disease Control, 2006)</td>
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<td>8.9%</td>
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<td>National Youth Survey (Wolfford-Mihalic, Elliott, &amp; Menard, 1994)</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Emergency room visits for PV (Annals of Emergency Medicine)</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

PHYSICAL ASSAULT SCALE

Of The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales *

**Minor Physical Assault:**
- Threw something at partner that could hurt
- Twisted my partner’s arm or hair
- Pushed or shoved my partner
- Grabbed my partner
- Slapped my partner

**Severe Physical Assault:**
- Punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt
- Choked my partner
- Slammed my partner against a wall
- Beat up my partner
- Burned or scalded my partner
- Kicked my partner
- Used a knife or gun on my partner

**Alpha:**
- By participant - Males = .786, Females = .774, Total = .777
- By partner - Males = .785, Females = .802, Total = .797

* For papers on this test, see http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2

EVEN IN MALE-DOMINANT NATIONS, MORE GIRLS HIT PARTNERS THAN BOYS

- World Health Organization - Global School-based Health Survey
- Students 13 to 15 years old
- Asked if they had been hit, slapped or hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent “Yes”</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
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<td>Zambia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

THE INTERNATIONAL DATING VIOLENCE STUDY

http://pubpages.unh.edu/mias200.htm

- 17,404 Students At 68 Universities
- In 32 Nations
- All Major World Regions
- Convenience Samples
- Questionnaire Completed In Class
- Analyses Control For And/Or Examines Interactions With:
  * Gender and Age
  * Score on Social Desirability
  * Response set scale
  * Other controls as needed for specific analyses
- VALIDITY OF THE DATA
  * Concurrent validity correlated with recognized international statistics
  * Construct Validity. Show in many published papers

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ASSAULT TOTAL - BY PARTNER % in rank order of national context (ctaspp_1J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<td>26.4</td>
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<td>26.0</td>
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<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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ASSAULT RATE

High everywhere but also big differences between nations

Percent of women who assault partner is similar to the percent of men in all nations

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ASSAULT SEVERE - BY PARTNER % in rank order of national context (ctaspp_1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rates of severe assault also high

Approximately equal rates for men and women also applies to severe assaults

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ASSAULTS ON MARITAL AND DATING PARTNERS DECREASES OVER THE LIFE COURSE

* For men and women
* In economically developed and developing nations

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PARTNER ASSAULT RATES OVER THE LIFE COURSE BY GENDER OF OFFENDER

USA, National Family Violence Survey N = 5,229

- A higher % of female than male perpetrators until about age 25
- After that, about equal
- Shows the typical pattern of decrease in crime with age
DECREE IN SPOUSAL ASSAULT IN FIRST SEVEN YEARS OF MARRIAGE
383 newlywed couples. At the time of marriage, and Yr 1, 2, 4, & 7

SAME DECREASE OVER THE LIFE COURSE IN BANGLADESH AS UK, USA etc.

MUTUALITY OF ASSAULT PERPETRATION IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN 32 NATIONS
Study of 14,252 students in a dating relationship. This chart is for the 4,239 who reported one or more incidents of violence.

DOMESTIC ASSAULTS BY BOTH MEN AND WOMEN DECLINE WITH AGE
British National Crime Survey, 1996

WHEN THERE IS VIOLENCE MUTUAL VIOLENCE PREDOMINATES
SIX OF THE 17 GENERAL POPULATION STUDIES SHOWING MUTUAL VIOLENCE PREDOMINATES, EXCEPT FOR KOREA

ASSAULT, TOTAL: % BOTH VIOLENT (AMONG VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS) AS REPORTED BY MEN AND WOMEN (In rank order of national context, start a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>61.6%</td>
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<td>54.4%</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SEVERE ASSAULT: % BOTH VIOLENT (AMONG VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS) AS REPORTED BY MEN AND WOMEN (in rank order of national context (CUAS_3J)

According to both women & men, mutual violence is predominant for severe assaults as well as minor assaults.

Percent mutual is close to results of other studies.

IS MUTUALITY A RESULT OF SELF-DEFENSE BY WOMEN?

- World Health Organization report on violence (Krug, 2002)
- Where violence by women occurs it is more likely to be in the form of self-defense (32, 37, 38)
- What do references 32, 37, and 38 really show?

- All three asserted that women's violence was primarily in self-defense, but:
  #32 Saunders reports that 70% of the minor violence and 60% of the severe violence was NOT in self-defense
  #37 DeKessereedy et al. 37% of the minor violence and 43% of the severe violence was inflated by women.
  #38 Johnson & Ferraro (Michael P. Johnson & Ferraro, 2000) cites references 32 and 37 but presents no new data.

- Six other studies report data on self-defense
  * One found high rates of self-defense, but percent in self-defense was slightly greater for men (66%) than for women (42%) (Harned, 2001)

OTHER DATA THAT CONTRADICTS THE SELF-DEFENSE EXPLANATION

- About the same percent of women as men are the first to hit (Straus, 2005)
- About a quarter of partner-violence is female only (see previous table)
- Most usual proximate motivations for violence by women, like motivations of men, are:
  - Anger
  - Coercion to do or stop doing something
  - Punishing partner's misbehavior (Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Fiebert & Gonzalez, 1997; Pearson, 1997)

Example:

Pearson (1997): 90% of women studied assaulted their partner because they were furious or jealous, or frustrated, not to defend themselves.

MUTUAL VIOLENCE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT BECAUSE

- Associated with 2 to 5 times higher rate of injury
- When violence is mutual there is little difference in injury rates for men and women
- This applies to injury sustained and injury inflicted by women and by men, and as reported by women as well as by men
- An additional reason why prevention and treatment must address "women as well as men"
- Essential to recognize for effective treatment
Question 2:  
To what extent are mental health problems a risk factor for partner violence?  

Question 3:  
Is the relation of mental health problems to partner assault different:  
A. For men and women?  
B. In economically developed and developing nations?

THE PERSONAL AND RELATIONSHIPS PROFILE (PRP)  
Measures 25 Risk Factors For Partner Violence  
16 Scales For Individual Characteristics  
- ASP Antisocial Personality Symptoms  
- BOR Borderline Personality Symptoms  
- CH Criminal History  
- DEP Depressive Symptoms  
- GHM Gender Hostility To Men  
- GHW Gender Hostility to Women  
- LD Limited Disclosure  
- POS Positive Parenting  
- PTS Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms  
- SUB2 Alcohol Abuse  
- SUB 3 Drug Abuse  
- SC Self-Control  
- SI Social Integration  
- STR Stressful Conditions  
- SAH Sexual Abuse History  
- VA Violence Approval  
- VS Violent Socialization  

8 Scales For Couple Relationships  
- AM Poor Anger Management  
- CP Communication Problems  
- CON Conflict  
- DOM Domination  
- JEL Jealousy  
- NA Negative Attribution  
- RC Relationship Commitment  
- RD Relationship Distress  

This test is available on my website

THE LINK BETWEEN ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY & ASSAULT APPLIES TO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN  

THE HIGHER THE AVERAGE ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY SCORE OF STUDENTS IN A NATION, THE HIGHER THE AVERAGE ASSAULT SCORE FOR THAT NATION

High Antisocial And high assault nations

Antisocial Personality F=33.5, p<.001  
Gender F=160.4, p<.001  
Gender*Antisocial F=5.9, p<.001
The link between antisocial personality & assault is stronger for assaults by women than by men, even though women have lower ASP.

Assault Scale

PRIOR CRIME is associated with a 77% increase in assault.

Criminal History (Quintiles)

PRIOR CRIME is associated with assault by both men & women even though women commit far fewer crimes.

Criminal History (Quintiles)

The higher the PRIOR CRIME score of students in a nation, the higher the average assault score for that nation.

Criminal History (Mean for students in each nation)
FOR THE OTHER FIVE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

- Only discuss the “main effect” slide (just flash by the others)
- All follow the same pattern
  - The higher the mental health problem score, the more assault
  - Same relationship for men and women, and for low and high economic development nations
- But all available on my website (Google my name)

POPP STARC STRESS SYMPTOMS
ARE STRONGLY RELATED TO ASSAULT BY WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN

- Post Traumatic Stress (Quintiles)
- Gender F=86.6, p<.001
- PTSD*Gender F=1.9, p=.114

THE HIGHER THE POST TRAUMATIC STRESS SYMPTOMS OF STUDENTS IN A NATION, THE HIGHER THE ASSAULT RATE FOR THAT NATION

- Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms
- Borderline F=53.4, p<.001

BORDERLINE PERSONALITY SYMPTOMS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH A 66% INCREASE IN ASSAULTING A DATING PARTNER
The link between Borderline Personality Symptoms and assaulting a partner applies to both men and women

Borderline Personality is a risk factor for partner violence at all four levels of national economic development

The higher the average Borderline Personality score of students in a nation, the higher the rate of assault

Depressive Symptoms are more closely related to assaults by women

The higher the Depressive Symptoms score of students in a nation, the higher the average assault score for that nation
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
1. Partner violence may be the most frequent type of assault
2. Like other acts of violence and other crime, it declines rapidly with age
3. Most partner violence is mutual
4. Retaliation is common, self-defense is a low percent of partner violence
5. At least 7 types of mental health problems are risk factors for partner violence
6. All five of the above apply to:
   * Women as well as men
   * In developing as well as economically developed nations
A manifestation of "patriarchy" as THE cause

A method for murder: An

analysis of homicides by women

School

addressed to both genders – not "gender neutral"

Almost all social science and most medical research results are like this.

Risk factors not one-to-one relationships

B. IMPLICATIONS FOR VICTIM SERVICES. PREVENTION, AND TREATMENT

Victim Services: Maintain focus on women because women

Are injured more and have less resources

But also provide services for male victims

Prevention programs: Replace programs directed to men and boys with programs explicitly addressed to both genders – not "gender neutral"

Treatment of partner violence: Replace "patriarchy" assumption with:

- Initial screening to determine whether it is unilateral or mutual,
- Treatment based on that diagnosis, rather than one size fits all,
- Stop blocking anger management and mental health treatment


Straus, M. A. (2009). Why the overwhelming evidence on partner physical violence by women has not been perceived and is often denied. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 18(3), 552-571.


SOME REFERENCES ON THE INTERNATIONAL DATING VIOLENCE STUDY


SELF-DEFENSE REFERENCES


NATION ABBREVIATIONS
(for those who download the slides)
AUS Australia; BEL Belgium; BRA Brazil; CAN Canada; CHE Switzerland; CHN China; DEU Germany; GBR Great Britain; GRC Greece; GTM Guatemala; HKG Hong Kong; HUN Hungary; IND India; IRN Iran; ISR Israel; JPN Japan; KOR South Korea; LTU Lithuania; MEX Mexico; MLT Malta; NLD Netherlands; NZL New Zealand; PRT Portugal; ROU Romania; RUS Russia; SGP Singapore; SWE Sweden; TWN Taiwan; TZA Tanzania; USA United States; VEN Venezuela; ZAF South Africa

Example of cause that is not a mental health problem

THE MORE DOMINANCE BY ONE PARTNER, THE HIGHER THE PROBABILITY OF AN ASSAULT, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE DOMINANT PARTNER IS MALE OR FEMALE


Depressive Symptoms (Quintiles)

Depression F=9.9, p<.001
GDP F=31.2, p<.001
Depression*GDP F=1.3, p=.22

THE HIGHER THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN A NATION, THE LOWER THE DOMINANCE OF MEN IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS (29 Nations)

Partial r = -.69

THE HIGHER THE DRUG ABUSE SCORE OF STUDENTS IN A NATION, THE HIGHER THE AVERAGE ASSAULT SCORE FOR THAT NATION

Assault

THE DRUG ABUSE & ASSAULT LINK IS STRONGER FOR ASSAULTS BY WOMEN THAN BY MEN, EVEN FEWER WOMEN ABUSE DRUGS

Assault
The link between alcohol abuse & assault is stronger for women than by men, even though women have lower alcohol abuse.

\[ r = 0.27 \quad r = 0.13 \]

The higher the alcohol abuse score of students in a nation, the lower the average assault score for that nation.

\[ r = 0.23 \]

The link between borderline personality & assault is stronger for assault by women than by men.

\[ r = 0.34 \quad r = 0.66 \]

The link between post traumatic stress & assault is stronger for assaults by women than by men.

\[ r = 0.22 \quad r = 0.59 \]

The combination of all seven mental health problems has the strongest relation to assaulting a dating partner.

\[ 161\% \text{ increase} \]

The combination of all seven mental health problems is strongly related to assaulting a dating partner by both men & women.
The combination of all seven mental health problems is strongly related to assaulting a partner at all four levels of economic development.

### Causes Partner Violence

- Mental health problems extremely important
- But **not** the most prevalent cause

A. High level of conflict in families
B. Dominance of one partner, especially male dominance
C. Cultural norms tolerating partner violence
D. Parental training in violence
E. Violence in the society

D. Mental health problems — The focus today

- Multiple causes, all interwoven

### The Average Score for Male Students Is Higher Than the Score of Female Students for All Mental Health Problems Except PTS Symptoms (all differences significant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Antisocial Personality</th>
<th>Borderline Personality</th>
<th>Depressive Symptoms</th>
<th>PTS Symptoms</th>
<th>Criminal History</th>
<th>Alcohol Abuse</th>
<th>Drug Abuse</th>
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Social causes most prevalent

The focus today—

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