Types of Domestic Violence
Research Evidence

Michael P. Johnson, Ph.D.
Sociology, Women's Studies, and
African & African American Studies
Penn State


CDVC3
Toronto, Ontario
February 28, 2013
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
- 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
Deny the Role of Gender
Attack Feminist Research
Attack Programs that Address Violence against Women

◆ “Men as likely to suffer spousal abuse, Statscan says.” Globe and Mail July 27, 2002 (Web site)

◆ “Feminist ideologues ignore research that shows domestic violence is just as often started by women as by men.” Pittsburgh Post Gazette July 26, 2009

◆ “…the Ontario Government may be in violation of their obligations… [because] the existing network of shelters for victims of family violence exclude[s] men….” The Men’s Project, February 2009: Submission to the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
General Surveys Indicate That Women Are as Violent as Men

Heterosexual intimate partner violence by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada, GSS, 2009</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway, Statistics Norway, 2003</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden, university students, c. 2001</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S., NSFH, 1988</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S., NFVS, 1975—the beginning</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But Agency Studies Indicate That Men Are the Primary Batterers

Heterosexual intimate partner violence by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweden, partner assault, 2010</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada, spousal homicide, 2009</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S., partner assault, 1996-2001</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K., emergency rooms, 1988</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario, family court, 1982</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland, divorce court, 1966</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differentiating Among Types of Intimate Partner Violence 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
- 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
Intimate Terrorism/Domestic Violence

Adapted from Pence & Paymar, 1993.
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).
Intimate Terrorism
Violent Coercive Control

◆ General pattern of violent coercive control
  ◆ Attempt to exert total control
  ◆ Specific control tactics vary from case to case, e.g., economic control, isolation, emotional abuse, intimidation, use of children

◆ In heterosexual relationships, primarily but not exclusively men

◆ Two major subtypes identified for men
  ◆ Emotionally dependent
  ◆ Antisocial
Violent Resistance
Resisting the Intimate Terrorist

◆ Many victims of IT do respond with violence
◆ Sometimes, but not always, self-defense
◆ In heterosexual relationships, most violent resistors desist and turn to other tactics, either to mitigate the violence or to escape
Situational Couple Violence
Situationally-provoked Violence

- Conflicts turn into arguments that escalate
- Both men and women do this, but...
  - Men’s violence more likely to injure and frighten
- By far the most common type
- Huge variability
  - 40% only one incident, but can involve chronic and severe violence
  - Variable causes of chronic SCV: chronic conflict, substance abuse, anger issues, dependent or antisocial personality, communication issues, etc.
### Gender Symmetry/Asymmetry by Type of Violence

(1970s Pittsburgh: Violent husbands and wives)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence</th>
<th>Husbands</th>
<th>Wives</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimate terrorism</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent resistance</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational couple violence</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2000s Britain: IT 87% male; VR 10% male; SCV 45% male
The Biases of Major Sampling Plans (Violent men: Pittsburgh)

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

2000s Britain: IT by sample type: General = 13%, Shelter = 88%.
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
- 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

76% severe
75% escalated
29% mutual

General

2-4%

Shelter
80-90%

Mixed sample, married
Pittsburgh, 1970s

General Motive: To control the relationship

Situational Couple Violence

28% severe
28% escalated
69% mutual

Shelter
10-20%

12-18%

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

Johnson, 2006

Shelter
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

British data, c.2000
Mixed sample
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

Canadian GSS, 2004
Previous or current partner
### Women’s Health Outcomes by Type of Male Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>SCV (%)</th>
<th>IT (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any Injury</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada, GSS</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe injury</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada, GSS</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General health</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-traumatic stress</td>
<td>U.S., NVAW++</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ Hospital treatment
++ Percent above the median for female victims of partner violence
# Relationship Outcomes by Type of Male Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pittsburgh</th>
<th></th>
<th>Intimate Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low marital happiness</strong></td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left more than once</strong></td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rarely a good time</strong></td>
<td>U.S., NVAW</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex often unpleasant</strong></td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Need to Re-assess Everything
Multiple Studies by a Variety of Social Scientists
(various years, locations, sample types, and measures)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCV</th>
<th>IT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational “transmission”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$d = 0.11$</td>
<td>$d = 0.35$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$b = -0.62$</td>
<td>$b = 0.58$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender traditionalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$d = -0.14$</td>
<td>$d = 0.80$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility toward women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$mdiff = 1.29$</td>
<td>$mdiff = 21.26$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

www.personal.psu.edu/mpj
Support Your Local Women’s Shelter

- Safety
- Support
- Information
- Advocacy