

Newer Perspectives on Domestic Violence

A Medical/Psychiatric View

Presenter Disclosure Information Arnold Robbins., M.D.

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Conclusions

- Domestic Violence is NOT gender specific in terms of victims or perpetrators
- There are MAJOR pre-existing medical (psychiatric) and social determinants
- Theories regarding male patriarchal aggressive dominance as prime motivation in DV are very flawed

Conclusions Cont.

- Criminal justice approaches to DV have in many ways failed, and caused more suffering
- The “Human Services” approach has much to offer in terms of prevention and treatment

Consequences of Domestic Violence (Intimate Partner Violence)

- Emotional Devastation (long lasting)
- Physical Injury (More frequent to women—common in children)
- Effects on family life and children
- Huge public expenditures in the health care and legal systems

Public Responses

- Largely and deeply emotional
- Not science based or analytical
- Based on emotional and political suppositions

Women's Responses

- Have varied depending on individual viewpoints and reaction
- The “conservative” feminist response has been in the forefront in speaking for women and defining the public's response

Women's Responses Cont.

- The conservative or radical viewpoint:
 - Men as a group have tendencies to aggression, domination and rape
 - DV is gender specific. Men are perpetrators and women victims
 - DV is a criminal matter without extenuating or mitigating circumstances
 - The underlying motivation is men's patriarchal attempts at control and dominance over women.

Male Responses

- Zealous defenders of womanhood
- Passive bewilderment and discomfort with adversarial roles to women
- Sympathy for female victims but deep concern over the attack on civil liberties and constitutional rights, areas where men have been so active for generations.

Male Responses Cont.

- Many men felt unfairly discredited and degraded (akin to the propaganda against African Americans in years gone by)

The Beginnings of Other Approaches

- Murray Strauss
- Mark Rosenthal
- Warren Farrell

Monumental Am. J. Pub Health Study of 2007

- Authors Daniel Whitaker, Tadesse Hurleyesus, Monica Swahn, Linda Saltzman
- Study: Reciprocal and non reciprocal IPV
- Goal: To determine whether reciprocity is related to violence frequency and injury
- N studied: 18,761

Monumental Am. J. Pub Health Study of 2007 Cont.

- Results
 - 24% of all relationships had some violence
 - ½ of those were reciprocally violent
 - In non-reciprocal violence, women were the perpetrators in over 70% of the cases
 - Reciprocity was associated with much more frequent violence among women, but not men (adjusted odds ratios 2.3 vs. 1.26)

Monumental Am. J. Pub Health Study of 2007 Cont.

- Results cont
 - Men were more likely to inflict injury (1.5 to 1)
 - Reciprocal IPV was associated with more injury regardless of gender

Monumental Am. J. Pub Health Study of 2007 Cont.

- Conclusions
 - Authors' shock and surprise at the data
 - "Prevention approaches that address the escalation of partner violence may be needed to address the reciprocal violence"

J. Violence and Victims

- Recent study funded by NIMH and National Institute on Drug Abuse, Dec. 2009
- Researchers from The U. of Washington Social Development Research Group
- N of 800

J. Violence and Victims Cont.

■ Results

- Nearly 2 times as many women as men said they perpetrated DV in the past year (kicking, biting, punching, threatening to throw, pushing, grabbing, shoving)
- Positive link between chronically aggressive adolescents, male or female, to later DV
- A major episode of Depression increases the incidence of a DV episode

J. Violence and Victims Cont.

■ Results Cont.

- Being on Welfare increased the likelihood of DV
- Having a drug abusing partner, or one who sold drugs, increases the likelihood of DV
- Having a history of violence or arrests increases incidence of DV
- Unemployment increases likelihood of DV

J. Violence and Victims Cont.

- Results cont.
 - Disorganized neighborhoods increases likelihood of DV

Am. J. of Orthopsychiatry

- From "Girls, Aggression, and Emotion Regulation" (author Anne Conway---Literature Review) 2005
- Gender differences in aggressive behaviours disappear when relational aggression is included
- Relational aggression is designed to harm the relationship goals of others by spreading rumors, gossiping, eliciting peer rejection (?soul murder?)

Studies of Lesbian Couples and IPV

From "Intimate Betrayal" (Kaschak, E., editor) 2001

- Many founders of the battered women's movement were lesbians
- Issues of battering between women remain deeply buried, ignored or denied by heterosexual women and lesbians alike

Studies of Lesbian Couples and IPV Cont.

- Directly challenges the link between male socialization with violence in relationships
- Abuse among lesbians occurs with far greater frequency than among heterosexuals (est. between 47-60%)

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (SAMHSA) 2009

- 26.75% of adolescent females engaged in at least one violent behaviour in the past year
- Substance abuse increased the likelihood of violence

Archives of General Psychiatry Fazel, et al 2010

- The incidence of violence was over twice as great in individuals diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder

Recent Study by Richard Heyman – Suny Stonybrook

- Studies 33,000 active Army personnel
- 4.4% of female soldiers had committed severe DV in the past year
- 2.5% of men reported committing severe DV in the past year

Arch. Gen. Psych. 2010 - Author Fang et al

- ADHD (Hyperactive Impulsive Type) and IPV are associated
- Conduct disorder and IPV are associated
- COMMENT: ADHD is far more common in Males and remains seriously under-diagnosed and undertreated

Am. J. Prev. Med. 2011 – Roberts et al

- Individuals with recent stressors and history of childhood adversity are at particularly elevated risk of IPV
- Prevention efforts should target this population

Not all DV is IPV

- DV should include violence and neglect of children
- The national abuse rate is 12.3 per 1,000 (1.23%)
- In 2005, 35,214 children were confirmed as abused or neglected
- 40% mistreated by the mother alone
- 19% by fathers alone
- 18% abused by both mother and father
- 13% abused by non-parent
- "Child Maltreatment" US Dept of Health & Human Services, 2002

New Approach to the Problem

- Predominantly Medical/Psychiatric
- Secondarily Criminal Justice

New Approach to the Problem Cont.

- Problems with our current approach
 - Large number of false charges
 - Restraining orders issued frequently without study or substantiation
 - Restraining orders often carry with them a criminal record lasting 5-10 years, substantiated or not (included in CORI checks)

New Approach to the Problem Cont.

- Problems with our current approach cont.
 - Tragic loss of job status
 - Restraining orders result in the breakup of families and estrangement for the children of one or both parents

New Approach to the Problem Cont.

- The “Human Services Approach”
 - Excepting cases of imminent, serious, deliberate aggression
 - Very similar to approaches in child abuse and neglect
 - Similar agency to our current DCF or DSS or perhaps an extension of these agencies

New Approach to the Problem Cont.

- The “Human Services Approach” cont.
 - Requires immediate investigation by trained personnel
 - Mental illness evaluated and treated
 - Substance abuse illnesses evaluated and treated
 - Education mandated and initiated when indicated

New Approach to the Problem Cont.

- The “Human Services Approach” cont.
 - Cognitive treatments, groups, and self help groups, psychotherapy and psychiatric interventions would be available
 - Protection and “detoxification” of children would begin at once
 - 24hr support would be offered

New Approach to the Problem Cont.

- The “Human Services Approach” cont.
 - Among other gains from this approach
 - Men & Women would again be working together to solve this problem
 - Political gains and false claims would diminish
 - Over 500 year history of enlightened constitutional liberties and guarantees would be restored
 - More families would be kept together where possible