

# The Partner Abuse State of Knowledge Project

## A Comprehensive Research Database

### **Nature of the Project**

For various reasons, research on partner abuse has been unnecessarily fragmented. The purpose of this project is to bring together, in a rigorously evidence-based, transparent and methodical manner, existing knowledge about partner abuse.

In March, 2010, the Senior Editor of *Partner Abuse* recruited family violence scholars to conduct an extensive and thorough review of the empirical literature, in 10 broad topic areas. Researchers were selected based on their areas of expertise to catalogue and summarize all known research studies relevant to each major topic, and its sub-topics (see below). They were asked to draw upon their own existing knowledge; to conduct a formal search for additional published, peer-reviewed studies through Psych Info and other widely-used search programs; and to share with project colleagues references they might find useful.

### **Manuscripts**

Papers of 30 to 60 manuscript pages providing an overview of findings on each of the 10 main topics, will be published in *Partner Abuse*. In addition to summarizing what is known about the topic, each author has been asked to indicate what is not known, and to make suggestions for future research. All conclusions, including the extent to which the research evidence supports or undermines current theories, will be based strictly on the data collected, with due consideration for the size and type of sample (e.g., large representative sample versus small clinical sample) and type of study (e.g., experimental versus quantitative).

### **The Partner Abuse Online Updatable Data Base**

The studies cited in each manuscript will be organized in extended tables (see sample below). A table will be created for each of the sub-topics. Tables will include the following information:

**Sample size and characteristics**, including gender (whether the sample included only males, only females, or both males and females), age, ethnicity, education and SES

**Study type**, including data source (Large population surveys, Smaller community surveys, University surveys, Clinical data, Longitudinal studies and Meta-analyses); self-reported or “caught” data (e.g., reported to agency); and design (qualitative or quantitative; experimental vs. quasi-experimental)

**Results:** Significant findings, trends related to the sub-topic, and outcome measures

The studies will be listed in chronological order, with the oldest study listed first, and the most recent listed last.

**Sample Table: Impact of Physical Assaults on Partners – Psychological**

Study (full reference)	Sample Size and Characteristics	Study Type	Results
Klar, H., & Leary, K.D. (2010). Gender symmetry or asymmetry in intimate partner victimization? Not an either/or answer. <i>Partner Abuse</i> , 1 (2), 152-168.	(N = 906 ). 453 couples with 1+ children. Modal couple White. Husband and wife had 1- 3 years of college, age 30 to 39 years. Household income \$65,000 to \$100,000.	Community survey Self-report Experimental design	Men and women who indicated being physically abused on the CTS-2 scored significantly higher on Beck Depression Inventory compared to those reporting no physical abuse.  Severely victimized women were 3 times more likely than severely victimized men to have depression scores in the clinical range (27% vs. 9%).  Significant association between extent of fear of partner and extent of physical victimization for both women and men  18% of the severely victimized men and 42% of the severely victimized women reported some fear of their partner

An online document will be created of findings from each of the 10 topic areas, including all of the sub-topic tables as well as the abstracts from each of the manuscripts. A final, comprehensive manuscript, summarizing the current state of knowledge on partner abuse, will be written by the journal’s senior editors, for publication in the journal.

Sometime in early Spring, 2011, after all of the manuscripts have been written and the online document posted on the *Partner Abuse* website, scholars will be encouraged to submit new entries for inclusion in the data base. These summaries will be reviewed by the senior editors before being added to the data base.

Topic 1: Prevalence of Partner Abuse: Physical Assault Rates

Authors: Sarah Desmarais, Tonia Nicholls and Kimm Reeves

Topics covered:

- Physical assault prevalence rates for males and females in the United States: Large populations surveys
- Physical assault prevalence rates for males and females in the United States: Community surveys
- Physical assault prevalence rates for males and females in the United States: University surveys

- Physical assault prevalence rates for males and females in the United States: Clinical studies
- Physical assault prevalence rates for male and females in other industrialized English speaking countries: U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand

#### Topic 2: Prevalence of Partner Abuse: Rates of Emotional Abuse and Control

Author: Michelle Carney

Topics covered:

- Emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males and females in industrialized English speaking countries (not including stalking or sexual coercion)
- Sexual coercion prevalence rates for males and females in industrialized English speaking countries
- Stalking prevalence rates for males and females in industrialized English speaking countries
- Rates of combined physical assaults and emotional abuse/control, sexual coercion and stalking for males and females in industrialized English speaking countries; prevalence of controlling/coercive violence (Michael Johnson)

#### Topic 3: The Dynamics and Context of Partner Abuse

Author: Jennifer Langhinrichsen-Rohling

Topics covered:

- Extent of unilateral versus mutual abuse
- Motives: rates of initiation versus self-defense or retaliation
- Motives: intent to control versus to express anger, satisfy attachment needs, other
- Typologies and their usefulness

#### Topic 4: Partner Abuse Worldwide

Author: Sherri McCarthy

Topics covered:

- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females in Europe (excluding United Kingdom)
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females in Asia
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females in Africa
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females in Middle East
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females in Mexico, Central America and South America
- Similarities/differences between above countries and industrialized English speaking countries (prevalence, etiology, motives)

#### Topic 5: Partner Abuse in Ethnic Minority and LGBT Populations

Author: Carolyn West

Topics covered:

- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females among African-Americans
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females among Latino Americans
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females among Asian Americans (including South Asian, East Asian)
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females among Native Americans
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females among Americans from other ethnic or religious minority groups (e.g., Middle Eastern descent)
- Physical assault and emotional abuse/control prevalence rates for males, females in LGBT populations

#### Topic 6: Risk Factors for Partner Abuse

Author: Deborah Capaldi

Topics covered:

- Proximal risk factors
- Distal risk factors

#### Topic 7: Impact and Consequences of Partner Abuse for Partners.

Author: Erika Lawrence

Topics covered:

- Impact of physical assaults on partners: physical injuries
- Impact of physical assaults on partners: psychological (e.g., anxiety, PTSD, depression, attempted or completed suicide)
- Impact of physical assaults on partners: other consequences (e.g., physical health and economic consequences)
- Impact of emotional abuse/control on partners
- Impact of combined physical assaults and emotional/abuse/control on partners

#### Topic 8: Impact and Consequences of Partner Abuse for Children and the Family System

Author: Miriam Ehrensaft

Topics covered:

- Impact of witnessed physical assaults on children
- Impact of witnessed parental conflict, emotional abuse/control on children
- Correlation between partner abuse and child abuse and the relative impact of each

- Impact of partner abuse on the family system – e.g., levels of stress, boundaries, alliances and family structure, other

#### Topic 9: Partner Abuse Criminal Justice Interventions

(Part 1) Authors: Christopher Maxwell & Joel Garner

Topics covered:

- Rates of prosecution and conviction in mandatory arrest and pro-arrest states and their effects on rates of perpetration and help-seeking by victims
- Rates of prosecution and conviction in discretionary arrest states, and their effects on rates of perpetration and help-seeking by victims

(Part 2) Author: Stan Shernock

Topics covered:

- Extent of bias in rates of arrest and prosecution based on gender or sexual orientation
- Extent of bias in rates of arrest and prosecution based on culture, ethnicity and socioeconomic status
- Effects of restraining orders on perpetration rates, victim safety

#### Topic 10: Partner Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Authors: Christopher Eckhardt, Christopher Murphy & Daniel Whittaker

Topics covered:

- Effectiveness of prevention programs
- Usefulness of assessment protocols
- Effectiveness of traditional group batterer intervention (recidivism rates, other outcome measures) for men and for women
- Effectiveness of alternative batterer interventions (individual, couples, family)
- Effectiveness of programs for victims, male and female