GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE SELF-REPORTING
OF PHYSICAL ASSAULT FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDERS

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

The accuracy of men’s, and women’s report of their own use of physical assault tactics is a topic that needs further exploration. The purpose of this study was to extend the current research on domestic violence offenders by including women in the offender sample. The problem was to determine if gender differences existed in reporting physical assault when both men and women were reporting from a perpetrator perspective. Responses on a self-report measure were compared to police reports in order to determine the accuracy of the self-report. Age, gender, cohabitation status, and time between arrest and assessment were evaluated to explain the variance in the tendency to accurately disclose the use of physical assault, and to determine how the variables mentioned above account for the variance in the occurrence of injury. The hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression.

This study utilized archival data that was collected as part of the intake procedures for a family violence court program. Clients entering the family violence court program completed the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, and Sugarman, 1996). Police reports were also available for this sample. Using the CTS2 as a guideline, police reports were coded by independent raters determining the occurrence and level of severity of the physical assault. The sample consisted of 204 participants. All participants were at least 18 years of age with an age
range of 18 – 62 years of age. All participants had entered a guilty plea to a domestic violence charge against a partner in exchange for entering the program.

The findings for this study indicated that for overall physical assault and minor physical assault, gender, age, and marital status did not account for a significant amount of variance in accuracy scores. For severe physical assault scores men were less accurate than women when reporting severe physical assault. These findings have meaningful implications for the assessment of physical assault for offender populations. The results suggest that men are less accurate than women at reporting severe physical assault, and suggest that individuals report physical assault differently depending on the severity of the assault.
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DEDICATION

To my parents, Clayton and Delilah Schmidt gall. It is easy to be courageous when there is a safety net in place. You have always been my safety net, which has allowed me to dare to dream.
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Violence between partners in intimate relationships is an issue that crosses cultural, socioeconomic, age, and religious boundaries. One estimate is that in the United States, approximately one million women each year suffer from nonfatal violence perpetrated by a partner (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1995). Other estimates suggest that this rate may be as high as four million women per year (American Psychological Association [APA], 1996). Although violence against women is prominent, violence against men in intimate relationships also occurs. In 1993, approximately 49,000 women were arrested for committing partner violence against men. This figure is in contrast to the 575,000 men who were arrested for violence against women (APA, 1996). Arrest statistics may not give a clear indication of the ratio of violent acts for males vs. females, however, they do indicate that violence against men does occur.

A common belief is that partner violence perpetrated by women against men is negligible or nonexistent. Women who perpetrate violence against men are said to be self-defending victims. Research that has examined characteristics of violent relationships has viewed women in the role of the victim and men in the role of perpetrators. As more women are arrested for domestic violence, and researchers begin
to study the occurrence of same sex partner violence for women, it becomes increasingly difficult to write off domestic violence as a phenomenon where the roles of perpetrator and victim are clearly distinguished by gender. It is important that alternate hypotheses be tested that differ from a gendered view of domestic violence.

**Theories**

A number of theoretical models have been used to explain the occurrence of violence in intimate relationships. Generally, these models have been viewed as being contradictory rather than complimentary. Theory development has been focused on the support of specific beliefs (i.e., violence is a function of gender) rather than being used to explain violence as a general concept. Healy, Smith, and O’Sullivan (1998) suggested that attempts to explain domestic violence could be divided into three primary frames of reference: society and culture, the individual, and the family. Social and cultural explanations view society as reinforcing violent behavior by men against women. The feminist model is one example of a societal model. The feminist model suggests that violence against women is reinforced by society and is a function of an unequal distribution of power between men and women.

Feminist perspectives on partner abuse suggest that violence is a function of a patriarchal society in which men exercise power in order to control women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Violence is one way that this control is exercised. Women who engage in violence are said to be self-defending victims (Hamberger & Potente, 1994). The violent act is a response to a fear of being harmed, or a final attempt to end years of abuse at the hands of a male partner. Hamberger and Potente suggested that women use
violence in response to having been victimized in their current relationship or a previous one. While terms such as “batterer” are commonly used for men who get arrested for domestic violence, the authors suggested using the term “domestically violent” for women who were arrested for similar offenses. The powerful language that is used for male violence suggests that violence against men is inherently different than violence against women.

Sociologists suggest that men and women engage in partner abuse equally (Straus, 1997; Steinmetz, 1978). Partner abuse studies indicate that violence against men occurs at least as often as violence against women. Straus (1999) discussed the difference in findings among feminist researchers and family violence researchers. He suggested that crime studies that are based on feminist theory find that violence is initiated by men in 90% of the cases. In family violence studies however, the rates of male and female violence are about equal. He suggested that the difference in findings was due to sampling differences. Crime studies examined the small part of the population where a crime had occurred. The focus on this population severely limits the findings to all but the most severe cases. Family violence studies, on the other hand, examined the larger over-all population and did not specifically focus on offenses that were criminal in nature. It is possible that this approach captured the nature of violence in the average American family but failed to examine the severe cases of family violence because individuals who employ severe violence in relationships may not wish to disclose the information.
Dobash, Dobash, Wilson and Daly (1992) suggested that sexual symmetry in domestic violence was a myth and disappeared when motivation and consequences were examined. The authors suggested that instruments such as the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979) were neither reliable nor valid for measuring marital violence. While there have been heated debates among researchers from both theoretical camps, both of these perspectives appear to provide a limited view of partner abuse.

Johnson (1995) examined the differences in findings and hypothesized that not only were the researchers tapping into two different populations, but were in fact studying two distinct types of violence. The author proposed that crime studies examined violence that was primarily a function of men exercising power in an attempt to control women. Family studies, however, examined what Johnson called “common couple violence” which was initiated equally by both men and women. From this perspective, partner abuse is not a unitary construct and can be divided into two distinct types of violence. It is becoming evident that partner abuse is not exclusively men attempting to control women, nor is it always asymmetrical in nature.

Individual perspectives look to the batterer’s psychological makeup to explain domestic violence. Violence, according to this model is a result of early experiences in the family of origin that shape the individual’s beliefs concerning relationship roles, or a result of psychological and/or biological dispositions to violence. Patterns of attachment learned early in life are acted out in adult relationships. Typically psychodynamic or cognitive behavioral approaches are used in treatment. Psychoanalysis is employed to
uncover deep-rooted motivations for violence and resolve the underlying issues in individual or group treatment modalities.

Family system models examine patterns of interaction in the family that support the use of violence. The focus is not on the individual but on the family system. Systemic approaches to the treatment of domestic violence have been strongly criticized and even prohibited in certain areas of the United States. Initial criticisms were focused on the concept of neutrality. Scheel and Ivey (1998) suggested that, “neutrality is a stance of non-blame and an openness to multiple perspectives” (p. 315). Criticisms of the concept of neutrality suggest that when viewing each family member in a neutral manner, the difference in power between men and other family members is not acknowledged (Avis, 1988).

Although systemic perspectives have been criticized for the concept of neutrality, it does not make sense to discard other systemic concepts that are useful in providing a framework for understanding partner abuse. Concepts such as homeostasis and equifinality are useful for explaining the violence prone system. Homeostasis is the systems steady internal state maintained through self-regulation. An example of homeostasis might include a family’s return to a state of isolation following involvement by people outside the family system. If someone outside the system, such as police officers or social workers, intervenes in the family system, the family could be encouraged to interact with the larger systems. Once the external pressure to interact is removed the family’s homeostatic functions may return the family to a state of isolation.
Equifinality suggests that there are multiple paths available to achieve the same outcome. In the violent family system it is possible that there are many paths to violence cessation. Termination of the violence may come from the victim leaving the abusive partner, or may be in response to the involvement of outside systems such as law enforcement or treatment interventions. It is the author’s belief that family systems theory allows the researcher to take into consideration societal variables, intrapersonal variables, and interpersonal variables when conceptualizing the dynamics involved in partner abuse. It is important to identify each member’s contribution to the violence prone system and identify the patterns of interaction that have developed in support of such a system. A systemic perspective was used as a guiding framework for this research.

Report Characteristics

The majority of the studies that examine spousal abuse rely on self-report measures and collaborating instruments to determine an approximation of the true level of violence. When examining report characteristics research indicates that the tendency to accurately report differs according to the population sampled. When couples seeking marital therapy (clinic samples) are examined there tends to be agreement between spouses on the husband’s level of violence when the violence is not severe (Margolin, 1987). In clinic samples when the violence is severe, men reporting from a perpetrator perspective under-report the occurrence of violence. In community samples men and women agree about the occurrence of men’s violence but both tend to under-report men’s use of violence in the relationship (Heyman & Schlee, 1997).
In an offender population, where men reported from a perpetrator perspective and women reported from a victim perspective, Heckart and Gondolf (2000a) determined that 60% of couples agreed that an assault took place, however, 29% of women under-reported victimization and 16% of men under-reported aggression. The findings indicated that men were less likely than women to deny that an assault occurred but were more likely to minimize the severity of the assault.

**Explaining Differential Reporting**

There are a number of factors that are related to differential reporting. Ehrensaft and Vivian (1996) determined that one reason that couples under-reported aggression was that aggression was perceived to be secondary to other problems. Couples also mentioned the low impact of wife to husband aggression but not for husband to wife aggression as a reason for not reporting.

There are other predictor variables that should be taken into consideration when examining differential reporting. Heckart and Gondolf (2000b) determined that younger men, white men, and men with at least one child in the household tended to underreport the occurrence of violence. The findings indicated that age, race, and family structure were related to differential reporting for men. It is unclear at this time what variables are related to differentially reporting aggression for women who are reporting from a perpetrator perspective. Langhinrichenson-Rohling and Vivian (1994) determined that incongruent perceptions of husband to wife aggression were related to relationship impairment for both partners and affective impairment for women. The authors also
determined that perpetrators of domestic violence under reported the occurrence of violence regardless of gender.

**Purpose of the Study**

Family violence surveys indicate that the frequency of partner violence is symmetrical according to gender. On the surface these findings seem to indicate that women are just as violent as men in intimate relationships. While men and women may initiate violence at similar rates, the illusion of symmetry disappears when the consequences of the violence are considered (Cantos, Neidig, & O’Leary, 1994; Dobash, Dobash, & Daley, 1992; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Neidig, & Thorn, 1995). While it can be argued that the impact is different according to gender, it is important that an attempt is made to understand how both men and women report their own use of violence when reporting from the perspective of the perpetrator of the violence. There are numerous works, both empirical and theoretical, that examine the behavior of violent men in relationships but relatively few that examine aggressive behavior on the part of women (Langhinrichenson-Rohling and Vivian, 1994). The studies that do include female aggression do so as a secondary analysis and determine research group membership based on the male’s aggression. There is danger in applying a stereotyped model of partner abuse to all cases because it is likely that the origin of the violence is misdiagnosed. There is also a chance that the intervention will be focused on areas that are not relevant for the family and protests of irrelevance may be mislabeled as a minimization of the violence.
The purpose of this study was to clarify how both men and women report from a perpetrator perspective in order to enhance domestic violence assessment. In order to gain an understanding of the violence prone system it is imperative that an empirical research base be developed that moves beyond the gender stereotypes that place men in the role of the primary aggressor and women in the role of victim.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study was to determine if gender differences existed in reporting partner violence when both men and women were reporting from a perpetrator perspective. All participants were over the age of eighteen. Participants chose to enter a specialty court for domestic violence offenders. As part of the intake procedures participants completed the revised version of the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996). Police reports were also available for program participants. CTS2 scores were compared with police reports in order to determine the accuracy of the self-report of physical aggression.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To compare a self-report measure to police reports to determine the accuracy of the self-report of physical assault.

2. To compare report tendencies of men and women to determine if there were gender differences in the tendency to accurately disclose the use of physical assault in the relationship.

3. To compare the rate of injury for men and women as reported on the police reports to determine if there were gender differences in the occurrence of injury.
4. To determine if there was a relationship between the occurrence of injury and the tendency to underreport the use of physical assault.

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this study were as follows:

1. Does gender account for a significant amount of variance of the accuracy of the self-report of physical assault when age, cohabitation status, and time between arrest and assessment are held constant?

2. Does gender account for a significant amount of variance in the occurrence of injury when age, cohabitation status, and time between arrest and assessment are held constant?

3. Is there a relationship between the tendency to accurately report physical assault and the occurrence of injury?

4. Do gender and cohabitation status interact to predict the accuracy of the self-report of physical assault?

5. Do gender and cohabitation status interact to predict injury?

**Assumptions Underlying the Problem**

The following is a list of assumptions that underlie this research.

1. The occurrence of violence in intimate relationships can be measured through a combination of self-report instruments and collaborating data (i.e., police reports.)

2. Violence in relationships is a function of societal, individual, and interpersonal characteristics that combine to support the violence prone system.
Delimitations

The generalizability of this study was limited by the characteristics of the participants. Clients that entered the Family Violence Court Program did not have a significant criminal history. A population such as this may not represent individuals from other populations such as a clinic population or a chronic offender population.

It is difficult to estimate the true level of violence that occurs in any relationship. Researchers look at what the perpetrator reports and also what the victim reports. It is possible that truth lies somewhere in the middle. Police reports represent the best attempt to gauge the level of violence that occurred during a specific incident. The police reports rely on the victim perspective, the perpetrator perspective, and collaborating evidence to determine what in fact had occurred. Even though the perspective of the arresting officer is assumed to be neutral, it is possible that the reports could be biased in either direction.

Definitions and Operational Terms

**Accurate Report.** Accurate report of physical assault was defined as the indication that an act occurred on the police report while the respondent also reported the act on the physical assault scale of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus et al., 1996).

**Common Couple Violence.** One of the two types of violence proposed by Johnson (1995). Common couple violence results from a couple’s inability to effectively resolve conflict. It is gender symmetric in initiation and reciprocity, and does not escalate over time.
Crime Studies. Studies that are presented to respondents as studies of crimes, studies of crime victimization, personal safety, injury, or violence (Straus, 1999).


Equafinality. Refers to the idea that the same result is achieved even though the starting position differs (Simon, Stierlin, & Wynne, 1985).

Family Violence Studies. Studies that are presented to respondents as research on family problems (Straus, 1999).

Feedback. Feedback is information entering and exiting the system that provides information as to how the system is functioning. Feedback serves to increase the probability of the system’s continued functioning (Becvar & Becvar, 1999). In violent relationships feedback is the information that contributes to the stabilization of the violence or to the move away from the violent family system.

Homeostasis. Homeostasis is the steady internal state of a system that is maintained through self-regulation (Simon, Stierlin, & Wynne, 1985).

Injury. For the purpose of this study injury will be defined as the absence or presence of injury that was reported on the police reports.

Neutrality. Neutrality refers to the nature of the relationship between the family and the therapist. The therapist approaches all family members with the same degree of closeness/distance (Simon, Stierlin, & Wynne, 1985).
Partner Abuse (Family Violence). “Any act or omission by persons who are cohabitating that results in serious injury to other members of the family” (Wallace, 1999, p. 3).

Patriarchal Terrorism. Patriarchal terrorism refers to men’s terroristic control of women through the use of violence, economic subordination, threats and isolation. This type of abuse is a product of patriarchal traditions (Johnson, 1995).

Perpetrator. The term refers to the individual committing the crime or the violent act. In this study the perpetrator refers to the individual that was charged with domestic violence.

Overall physical assault. For the purpose of this study overall physical assault will be defined as any act of aggression that coincides with the physical assault scale of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales i.e., threw something at partner that could hurt; twisted partner’s arm or hair; pushed or shoved partner; grabbed partner; slapped my partner; used a knife or gun on partner; punched or hit partner with something that could hurt; choked partner; slammed my partner against a wall; beat up my partner; burned or scalded partner on purpose; kicked my partner.

Severe physical assault. For the purpose of this study severe physical assault will be defined as any act of aggression that coincides with the severe physical assault subscale of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales i.e., punched or hit partner with something that could hurt; choked partner; slammed partner against a wall; beat up partner; burned or scalded partner on purpose; I kicked my partner.
Minor physical assault. For the purpose of this study minor physical assault will be defined as any act of aggression that coincides with the minor physical assault subscale of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales i.e., twisted partner’s arm or hair; pushed or shoved partner; grabbed partner; slapped my partner.

Victim. The individual who is injured or subjected to suffering.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The following topics are reviewed in this chapter: theoretical explanations of partner abuse, gender differences in partner abuse, report characteristics, and explanations for differential reporting.

Theoretical Explanations of Partner Abuse

Social and cultural theories of domestic violence examine the role that society plays in maintaining violent interactions within the family. Walker (1979) provided a conceptualization of the occurrence of violence in the family that has been adapted and used in the development of social policies that address partner abuse. Her conceptualization was influenced by feminist thought and new psychological theories that were emerging at the time.

In the 1970’s the field of psychology experienced a paradigm shift from theories of human behavior that were strictly behavioral to theories that included cognition as a mediating process. Seligman (1975) placed dogs in an aversive situation where escape was impossible. He discovered that after a number of failed attempts the dogs ceased trying to escape. Even after the situation was altered to make escape possible, the dogs refused to make an attempt. The animals had “learned” to be helpless. Walker applied Seligman’s theory of learned helplessness as an explanatory construct to explain the
experience of women who are victims of domestic violence.

According to Walker, learned helplessness theory has three basic components: (1) information about what will happen, (2) cognitive representation of what will happen, and (3) behavior towards what does happen. The problem lies in the victim’s cognitive representation of her experience. Women come to believe that they are unable to cause change in their situation and adapt a helpless perspective similar to Seligman’s dogs not trying to escape a shock. Walker (1979) stated that:

Repeated batterings, like electrical shocks, diminish the woman’s motivation to respond. She becomes passive. Secondly, her cognitive ability to perceive success is changed. She does not believe her response will result in a favorable outcome, whether or not it might. (p. 49)

Cultural conditions such as the justice system’s response to domestic violence, marriage laws, economic realities, and physical inferiorities teach the woman that she has no control over her situation or the outcome of the experience.

Walker (1979) suggested that battering followed a specific cycle that consisted of three distinct phases. These phases included: (a) the tension-building phase, (b) the acute battering incident, and (c) the calm, loving respite. The tension-building phase is characterized by minor battering incidents and a building of tensions in the relationship. During this phase the woman attempts to ward off the battering incident by denying her situation and making attempts to control as many external factors as possible in order to prevent the violence. The acute battering incident is characterized by an uncontrollable discharge of the tensions that built up during phase one. In this phase the battering is out of control. What may have started as the male’s attempt to control ends up in a severe
beating. Lack of control and lack of predictability characterize phase two. The calm, loving respite is characterized by an unusual period of calm. In this phase the batterer begs forgiveness for what he has done and exhibits loving behaviors. He promises that the abuse will stop. The battered woman wants to believe that her partner will change and the new behavior is evidence of this change.

The role of society in Walker’s (1979) theory is to not acknowledge violence against women. Male violence towards women is supported by beliefs that violence in the family is a “family issue” and should be handled within the home. Walker’s theory is feminist in nature. It highlights the power differences between men and women and also the patriarchal nature of American society that tolerates male to female violence.

Many changes have occurred in law enforcement and the justice system that encourage partner abuse to be viewed as a criminal matter. Preferred and mandatory arrest policies have been instituted in many states. Government funds have been made available to provide shelters for battered woman. Government funding supports research that examines the effects of partner abuse. Much of the awareness about the need for intervention in partner abuse comes from feminist researchers and advocates that have addressed the imbalance of power in American society and have fought to make changes.

Other researchers have used the concept of power to explain partner abuse. Gelles and Straus (1988) suggested that family members use violence against other family members because they can. The rewards of the behavior outweigh the costs. The authors suggested that social and family structures are important in reducing the consequences of the behavior and increasing the rewards. In the United States, violence
is a common means of dealing with conflict. Beliefs concerning child discipline, gender roles, and the private nature of the family all support the use of violence as a means to maintain the social order. Accordingly, domestic violence is not perpetrated by people who are mentally unbalanced, and is not primarily a function of poverty or low moral standards, but is an outgrowth of the very structure of our society.

The family setting provides an environment ripe for violence. There is no other setting where the opportunity to interact is as frequent or the interactions quite as intense (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Pagelow, 1984). While intimate details of the self may be shared to increase intimacy, those same details may be used as weapons of control against a family member at a later time. It would be rare that a husband or wife would not know the areas that their partner is most sensitive. Combined with the sensitive nature of family interaction, society assigns family roles according to age and gender. The man is typically assigned the role of head of the household and the wife is assigned the household tasks such as childcare and housekeeping. In a society that encourages both equality and egalitarianism conflict is bound to occur when personal goals are blocked by role expectations (Gelles & Straus, 1988).

Other social theorists attribute partner abuse to social learning. Mihalic and Elliot (1997) tested a predictive model of marital violence for both males and females that was based on social learning theory. Archival data was used from the National Youth Survey to gather demographic information. The sample included 797 males and females that had participated in the National Youth Survey. At the time of testing, participants were between 18 and 28 years of age. The variables examined included, ethnicity, class,
witnessing of parental violence, child abuse, prior victimization, engaging in minor and severe assault, and problem alcohol use. The Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979) were used to assess marital violence. Class was assessed using the Hollingshead Two Factor Index of Social Position. Data from the National Youth Survey instruments were used to measure sex-role attitudes, child abuse, prior victimization, minor assault, felony assault, and problem alcohol use.

The authors proposed that: (a) the observation of violence in the family of origin would be related to increased adolescence violence, victimization, and problem alcohol use, (b) child abuse, prior victimization, minor and felony assault, and problem alcohol use, would be mediated by marital satisfaction and stress, (c) indirect paths between sex-role and marital violence would exist through marital satisfaction and stress, and (d) there would be a direct path between sex and marital violence.

Findings indicated that non-whites had a higher frequency of marital violence offending and victimization than whites. Witnessing parental violence, experiencing abuse during adolescence, engaging in assault, and problem alcohol use during adolescence were associated with increased marital violence. Finally, respondents who were least satisfied with their marriages and experienced greater stress had higher rates of violence offending and victimization.

Path analyses indicated that for males, minor marital violence offending was directly predicted by ethnicity, prior victimization, stress, and marital satisfaction. Ethnicity, class, and sex-role predicted severe marital violence offending. Contrary to expectations, the authors found that males with more traditional sex-role attitudes had a
lower frequency of serious marital violence offending. The minor and serious male offending models contained no indirect paths to minor marital violence offending.

For females, witnessing parental violence was directly related to five variables. Women who witnessed parental violence experienced more abuse as children, experienced more prior victimization, engaged in increased minor assault, and experienced more stress and less marital satisfaction. The only direct paths in the female minor marital violence model were from marital satisfaction and engaging in felony assault. Women who where less satisfied in their marriage, and had engaged in prior felony assault, were more likely to engage in minor marital violence. Indirect paths for female minor offending were from witnessing parental violence and prior victimization to marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction was a mediating factor. For male victims of minor and serious marital violence, ethnicity, prior victimization and marital satisfaction had direct paths to being the victim of marital violence. For female victims there was a direct path between marital satisfaction and minor and serious victimization.

Johnson (1995) examined the ongoing debate between feminist researchers and other partner abuse researchers concerning the occurrence of partner abuse. The author suggested that feminist researchers have relied on data from shelter populations, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies. Using this data, feminist researchers have conceptualized partner abuse as being perpetrated by men, towards women. From this perspective domestic violence is a function of patriarchal issues of power and control. Other partner abuse researchers have examined data from large random samples of the
adult population in the United States. This data gives the appearance that partner abuse is symmetrical according to gender and often times bi-directional.

Johnson (1995) suggested that these two seemingly irreconcilable perspectives are not a result of flaws in the research process, but rather a result of the study of two discreet populations. Johnson indicated that the data from these two perspectives suggests that there are two forms of domestic violence. One form, which the author labeled patriarchal terrorism, is a result of an androcentric society and is rooted in issues of power and control. Data from feminist research supports a gendered view of domestic violence that is perpetrated by men. Shelter and criminal justice samples may be biased towards severe violence that is a result of a male’s attempt to exercise power in relationships. The second form that the author identified was common couple violence. Common couple violence is a result of typical family conflict that at times escalates into physical altercations. According to Johnson, common couple violence is not gender specific and is characterized by occasional outbursts that may be initiated by either the male or female partner. Family violence surveys that suggest that violence is bi-directional tap into this specific population. The author suggested that men who use violence as a form of power and control are not likely to respond to surveys. This response bias results in common couple violence being over represented in survey research.

Johnson (1995) cautioned that failing to recognize multiple forms of partner abuse could be detrimental to families seeking help. If violence is viewed as primarily a function of men exercising power and control over women it is possible that patterns of interaction that support the violence prone system will not be identified. On the other
hand, if severe unidirectional violence is in place it is important to be able to differentiate severe forms of violence from less severe forms of partner abuse in order to attend to victim safety. The author suggested that these two forms of domestic violence be considered for theory development. It is important to understand how different forms of violence develop and also how different patterns of interaction play out in varied family structures.

Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) proposed that male batterers could be classified along three dimensions. These included the generality of violence, the severity of marital violence, and psychopathology. The authors proposed that batterers could be classified into three groups. Family only batterers that could be identified by low levels of family-specific aggression. Family only batterers would not typically engage in psychological or sexual abuse and would not exhibit any psychopathology. These individuals would be less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system and would not be violent outside the home. A second group, “dysphoric/borderline” batterers would engage in moderate to severe marital violence that would be family specific, and may also engage in infrequent violence outside the home. These individuals would be dysphoric and exhibit psychological distress. They would also show borderline personality disorder characteristics. Substance abuse could be an issue for this group, and they might exhibit difficulties with anger control. The third group would consist of individuals who are “generally violent/antisocial”. Individuals in the general violence group would engage in moderate to severe marital violence, have an extensive legal history and engage in violence outside the family setting. They would likely have
substance abuse issues and be more prone to exhibit anti-social personality disorder and/or psychopathy. The authors hypothesized that each of these three groups would differ on distal/historical factors (i.e., genetic/prenatal factors, family of origin, home environment and violence, and association with deviant peers) and proximal (i.e., attachment/dependency, impulsivity and social skills both in marital and other relationships, and attitudes supporting violence and hostility towards woman) factors.

In a preliminary test of these hypotheses, Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Herron, and Stuart (1999) examined married couples that volunteered for a research study of husbands (n= 63). Based on a phone intake couples were either excluded from the study or placed in one of three groups (husband violent group, nonviolent husband maritaly distressed group, and nonviolent husband nondistressed groups). In an initial lab session, husbands from the violent group completed measures that examined three dimensions: (a) severity of marital violence, (b) generality of violence, and (c) personality disorder. Cluster analyses were conducted to identify subtypes of martially violent men. The analyses yielded a four-cluster solution. The first cluster consisted of 15 men that resembled the family only batterer group. This group did not show signs of personality disorder, did not use violence outside the family and engaged in the lowest level of partner abuse. A second group showed characteristics of the hypothesized dysphoric/borderline group. Although borderline characteristics were not assessed, individuals in this group had the highest scores on the dysphoric Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory–III (MCMIIII; Millon, 1983) summary score. The third group was not predicted. This group consisted of 17 men that resembled family only batterers with
the exception of the engagement in general violence, and elevated antisocial summary scores. The fourth group resembled the generally violent/antisocial subtype. These men engaged in significantly higher marital and general violence than the other groups, and antisocial summary scores were elevated.

The authors conducted a series of ANOVAs comparing the groups on a number of variables. The authors cautioned that these results should be interpreted with caution due to low statistical power. The groups did not differ significantly on most demographic variables. The groups did differ significantly on husband to wife abuse. Wives of generally violent/antisocial men experienced the most injuries and the highest levels of psychological abuse. This group also engaged in the most violence in prior relationships.

Measures of psychopathology indicated that men from the dysphoric group and generally violent/antisocial group had the highest scores on measures designed to assess Borderline Personality Organization and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In a measure of psychopathy, as predicted, men in the generally violent/antisocial group had the highest scores. Alcohol abuse was also assessed. The generally violent/antisocial men exhibited the highest level of substance abuse and the family only group exhibited the lowest levels. On measures of anger control, generally violent/antisocial and dysphoric groups scored highest on measures of anger and hostility and lowest on measures of anger control.

The authors also conducted ANOVAs examining mean differences in distal correlates of violence. Findings indicated that when family background characteristics were examined, men in the generally violent/antisocial group reported growing up in
environments where parents engaged in antisocial behavior and also engaged in substance abuse. Men in the dysphoric group reported mothers that experienced more physical and mental health problems. The findings for home environment characteristics were not significant but were in the expected direction. Generally violent/antisocial men experienced the most parental rejection and the least parental warmth (limited to fathers). Men from the dysphoric group reporting experiencing the most childhood sexual abuse. Men from the generally violent/antisocial group associated with deviant peers more than the other groups with the difference emerging after age 15.

Measures of proximal correlates indicated that men in the dysphoric group scored higher on measures of dependency, fear of rejection, and jealousy. While the scores were in the expected direction, they did not reach statistical significance. Also, men in the generally violent/antisocial group showed the most hostile attitudes towards women and exhibited attitudes that supported violence.

Dutton (1999) proposed a trauma-based model of domestic violence. According to Dutton, violence in intimate relationships is not a response to external stimuli but rather a reaction to an internal stimulus. Domestic violence perpetrators exhibit personality characteristics that are influenced by patterns of attachment learned early in life. The author proposed that batterers exhibit certain characteristics that he labeled borderline personality organization. Individuals with these personality characteristics experienced attachment based dysphoria, rumination, and escalating rage.

Dutton (1999) suggested that the connection between the witnessing of partner abuse as a child and the perpetration of violence as an adult is not sufficient to explain
why some children who witness violence go on to abuse while others don’t. In order to provide a more complete explanation, the concepts of shame and attachment need to be included. Shame and the development of an insecure attachment style are viewed as sources of trauma that contribute to the development of the abusive personality. Shame, insecure attachment, and the witnessing of parental violence interact to produce a trauma triad that accounts for adult abusiveness better than a social learning model alone.

Dutton (1999) indicated that shaming by the parent was related to adult abusiveness later in life. As an adult, the experience of shame triggers a rage that is an attempt to protect the self from overwhelming feelings of annihilation. Attachment is viewed as a buffer against trauma. Dutton suggested that individuals with insecure attachment characteristics are unable to regulate affect. While each of these conditions alone are related to domestic abuse, the combination of a history of being shamed, an insecure attachment style, and the witnessing of parental violence account for the propensity for abusiveness in adult male batterers. Based on reports by abusers, individuals who grew up with a father that was both shaming and physically abusive, and were raised by a mother who was both warm and rejecting (ambivalent) tended to have abusive personality characteristics.

Dutton (1999) suggested that these characteristics surface in a cyclical pattern similar to Walker’s (1979) cycle of abuse. From an attachment framework, each phase of the cycle of abuse corresponds to an internal anxiety state. The tension building phase of the cycle of abuse corresponds with a dysphoric stalemate where intimacy needs are unmet and unexpressed and the abuser arches away from his partner. In the honeymoon
or contrition phase, the individual engages in extreme behaviors directed at reconciliation in order to avoid feelings of loneliness and loss.

According to the trauma model, family of origin experiences are related to specific deficits as an adult. The experience of witnessing aggression between parents results in cognitive deficits as an adult. Abuse directed toward the child results in violent responses as an adult. Shaming by the parent, according to this model, results in an externalizing/blaming attributional style. Public punishment, random punishment, and global criticism experienced as a child results in high chronic anger as an adult. Specific attachment deficits include rejection sensitivity, ambivalent attachment style, an inability to self soothe and anxiety and/or depression.

A third theoretical perspective on domestic violence is general systems theory. Systems theory suggests that partner abuse is a function of patterns of interaction in the family system that support violent behavior. These patterns are influenced by: (a) family of origin, (b) feedback loops within the system, (c) the systems level of stability and change, and (d) larger systems outside the family system.

According to Giles-Sims (1983), a system contains elements that are not connected in a cause-and-effect manner. One action in the system may be a response to a specific act but may also be a causal factor in a continuous pattern of interaction. From a systemic perspective the behavior of one individual influences the behavior of another and visa-versa. Partner abuse consists of a continuous chain of actions and reactions, with the reactions in turn becoming precipitants.
These ongoing patterns of interaction between members of the system achieve a certain degree of stability over time. The stability may range from highly stable patterns of interaction that are resistant to change to less stable patterns that are amenable to change. At different points in time, the family system can be characterized by periods of stability and also periods of relative instability.

Family systems also have boundaries that define the beginning and the end of the system and indicate what behaviors are acceptable and what behaviors are unacceptable in that particular system. When a new behavior occurs that challenges the family boundary a response is triggered. The nature of the response is influenced by how the behavior fits with the current goals of the family system. The response can either encourage the new behavior or discourage the new behavior. In systems language this response is called feedback. In other words, the response is one way that information is conveyed from one member of the family system to other members. There are two types of feedback. Negative feedback is information that discourages the new behavior and in turn encourages stability within the system. Positive feedback is information that encourages the new behavior and also encourages change within the system.

When couples begin to interact and form a system they begin to develop stable patterns of interaction. In violent families there is some point when the violence is introduced. Depending on if the feedback to the behavior is positive or negative the violence is either encouraged or discouraged. One possible response to the violent incident would be a telephone call to the police. If the offender is incarcerated and there were negative consequences for the behavior it is likely that this response would
discourage the new behavior (violence). If, on the other hand, no arrest was made it may encourage the violent behavior and contribute to the development of violence as part of the family system. The new behavior of violence would be encouraged through positive feedback, and the new behavior of alerting authorities would be discouraged through negative feedback.

Other systemic concepts that Giles-Sims (1983) included in her view of domestic violence were the open vs. closed nature of the system and the threshold of viability. According to the author, systems vary in the degree that they are receptive to outside social influences. Family systems that are not easily influenced by social forces are closed. On the other hand family systems that are receptive to social forces outside the system could be characterized as open systems. Family systems vary in the degree that they are open or closed to outside information.

Family systems regulate change and stability through positive and negative feedback processes. Patterns of interaction in violent relationships may reflect a system where violence is part of the interaction process. While the violence may be harmful for one family member, it still serves a purpose in the family system. Giles-Sims (1983) suggested that at some point women leave abusive relationships. She indicated that for women who do leave, there was some threshold that was attained where the violence prone system was no longer viable. In other words, a threshold of viability was reached.

The author proposed that in a violent family system, a series of developmental stages were experienced before the system reached a threshold of viability. The first stage in the developmental model was the establishment of the family system. In the
initial stage patterns of interaction are established and rules that govern the family system are put in place. The establishment of the new family system is influenced by the family history of each individual. In the establishment of a violent family system each individual brings with them beliefs and experiences of violence from their family of origin. If the female in the relationship witnessed violence against women in her family of origin she may believe victimization to be part of the woman’s role in relationships. On the other hand, a male that witnessed his father being violent towards his mother may include violence in his repertoire of problem solving behaviors. Social pressures also influence the new family system.

A landmark in stage two of the development of the system is the first incident of violence. Mechanisms of feedback and control influence the development of the system at this point. For the violent person, if his/her goals were satisfied, positive feedback to the violence occurred. Giles-Sims (1983) indicated that a number of the women she studied viewed the violent behavior, as an isolated incident and a large percentage were willing to forgive and forget. The positive feedback that occurred in this type of situation increased the likelihood that violence would occur in the future.

The third stage is characterized by the stabilization of the violence. Systems theory predicts that with positive feedback the violence will continue and escalate in time. If the violence achieves the intended goal for the perpetrator and there is no feedback from outside the family system that discourages violence, violence will become part of the family’s patterns of interaction.
The fourth stage is the point of choice. If the violence continues and begins to escalate it is likely that the victim will reach a point where remaining in the system is no longer considered a viable option. For women, that were interviewed by Giles-Sims, (1983) the point of choice was triggered by new information in the system or a critical incident. The critical incident usually fell under one of three themes: (a) fear that the children would be harmed, (b) resentment towards the spouse for allowing the children to witness the violence, or (c) people outside the family system becoming aware of the violence. There are two possible outcomes as a result of this new input. The first possible outcome is that the system would begin a process of change, or morphogenesis, where new rules are constructed and new patterns and responses are developed. The second possible outcome is that the violence will continue to escalate. At this point the victim may begin to make plans to leave the relationship. The victim begins to seek feedback outside the relationship and prepare for the actual event.

The fifth stage occurs when the victim decides to leave the relationship. The act of leaving forces the family system to readjust and enter a period of change. The goals during this stage are different for the victim and the family system. Does the woman want to begin to develop a new system with others or return to the family system? The sixth stage is resolution or more of the same. The victim may choose after a time to begin to negotiate for change in the family system and choose to return, leave the system and develop new sources of support, or return to the original patterns of interaction.

The systems approach to viewing partner abuse is attractive because it is not a static model. Feedback from within the family system and feedback from larger systems
can be accounted for with this perspective. In the early stages of partner abuse research, social policies were in place that encouraged the use of violence in the family setting. Gelles and Straus (1988) suggested that people were violent in families because they could be. Violence was socially sanctioned and the view that violence in the family should be handled in the family reinforced the use of violence. By using systems theory as a lens to research partner abuse it is possible to take into account the social policy changes that have influenced partner abuse i.e., preferred and mandatory arrest policies, stricter sentencing guidelines, and protection orders. Systems theories have been criticized over the years because of the potential to blame the victim for the violent behavior. While victim blaming is a possibility, it is not likely that a clear understanding of partner abuse will occur without examining the interactions between victims and offenders and the larger social system.

More recent family systems researchers have chosen to examine patterns of interaction within the violence prone family system. Jacobson et al. (1994) studied arguments of couples with a violent husband and examined the affect, verbal content, and psychophysiology of the participants. Women with violent husbands were expected to exhibit more fear than men did during violent arguments and more fear than nonviolent controls during nonviolent arguments. The authors hypothesized that the cessation of male violence would not be predicted by wife behaviors and that women in violent relationships would be violent largely in response to male violence. The authors also predicted that violent husbands would express more verbal aggression, and provocative forms of anger such as belligerence and contempt than nonviolent husbands. It was
predicted that women would express anger in less aggressive forms and that women in violent relationships would express more fear and physiological arousal than women in nonviolent relationships.

The sample consisted of sixty couples experiencing husband-to-wife domestic violence (DV) and 36 couples that were martially distressed but nonviolent (DNV). A structured laboratory interview was employed to assess the interactional dynamics of both violent and nonviolent arguments. Interviews were coded according to the Specific Affect Coding System (SPAFF; Gottman and Krokoff, 1989) and The Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979) was used to assess husband to wife aggression using the wife’s report. The Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; Locke and Wallace, 1959) was used to classify the DNV group using the wife’s score. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976) was used to measure marital satisfaction. Three measures of physiology were employed.

In a lag one sequential analysis the authors determined that there were certain wife behaviors that were predictive of husband violence. According to wives report, husbands were more inclined to continue violence if the wives were violent, if they verbally defended themselves, and if they withdrew. While these behaviors predicted the continuance of violence neither wives nor husbands reported any behavior that predicted suppression of husband violence. According to husbands, their violence only continued if their wife was violent or emotionally abusive. Both husbands and wives reported three likely responses to husband violence: violence, self-defense, and psychological distress.
The authors examined the following lag one sequences. Positive reciprocity, which was the probability that one partner would be positive given that the other partner behaved positively; negative reciprocity, which was the probability that one partner would behave aggressively given that the other partner has just behaved aggressively; and start up, which was the probability that one partner would respond to the other’s positive behavior without aggression. Results indicated that husbands were inclined towards positive reciprocity in nonviolent arguments (both husbands and wives report). The same was true for wives.

To examine base rate differences between violent and nonviolent arguments, a three-way (actor, reporter, type of argument) analysis of variance was conducted. The authors determined that husbands exhibited a higher proportion of aggressive affect in violent vs. nonviolent arguments. Wives’ affect was constant across the two types of arguments and in both types of arguments men were more emotionally abusive than women. There were no differences in emotional abuse between violent and nonviolent arguments.

When affect and verbal content during nonviolent arguments were examined it was determined that both DV wives and husbands displayed more anger than DNV partners. Husbands in both groups were more inclined than women to be domineering and defensive. Wives in both groups were more inclined to be angry than husbands. The examination of verbal content indicated that DV husbands exceeded DNV husbands in contempt and there were no differences between DV and DNV wives. DV husbands showed more belligerence than DNV husbands and once again there was no difference
between DV and DNV wives. DV wives showed greater tension and fear than DNV wives and there were similar rates of belligerence and contempt between DV wives and DV husbands. Physiological findings indicated that that DV wives could be distinguished from DNV wives by differences in cardiovascular arousal.

In a similar study Gottman et al. (1995) examined the relationship between heart rate reactivity, emotionally aggressive behavior, and general violence in batterers. The purpose of the study was to examine physiological responses of violent men during marital conflict. Measures included the CTS (Straus, 1979) and instruments intended to measure physiological variables (heart rate reactivity), i.e., cardiac interbeat interval, pulse transmission time to the finger, finger pulse amplitude, skin conductance level, and general somatic activity. The MCMI-II (Millon, 1983) was used to examine personality factors.

Results indicated that husbands who lowered their heart rates (type I reactors) during marital conflict were more verbally aggressive towards their wives than men whose heart rates increased (type II reactors). Wives responded to these type I husbands with fear and sadness. Type I reactors also scored higher on a measure of generally antisocial behavior, and sadistic aggression.

All couples with a type I husband remained married at a two year follow up compared to 27% separation/divorce rate for couples with a type II husband. The authors hypothesized that these women stay with their husband out of fear. It was noted that women in relationships with type I men, and the men themselves, exhibited elevated antisocial behavior scores.
Berns, Jacobson, & Gottman (1999) examined demand-withdraw interaction and battering in couples with a violent husband. The authors hypothesized that batterers would be both more demanding and more withdrawing than nonviolent men and that battered women would be more demanding and less withdrawing than women in nonviolent marriages. The sample consisted of 95 Married couples that responded to public service announcements. The Short Marital Adjustment Test (SMAT; Locke & Wallace, 1959) and the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979) were used to place couples in one of three groups. Couples in the domestically violent (DV; n = 49) group contained husbands who had engaged in six or more “low-level” violence acts such as pushing or shoving, or two or more severe violence acts such as hitting with a closed fist, or one life threatening act such as beating up or threatening with a knife or gun. Couples were classified as nonviolent when no acts of physical aggression were reported for the past five years. The SMAT was used to differentiate couples that were happily married and nonviolent (HNV; n = 16) from distressed nonviolent (DNV; n = 30) couples.

Results indicated that batterers were both more demanding and more withdrawn than men from the nonviolent groups. Women in the DV were more demanding and less withdrawing than women in the nonviolent groups. The authors interpreted these findings to indicate that the women in the DV group showed increased demands for change in an effort to stay safe from abuse. Less withdrawing behaviors were also interpreted in the same light. The author’s suggested that it was not safe for women in the DV group to withdraw while their violent husbands were making demands for
change. These findings suggest that patterns of interaction exist that regulate abuse in relationships where the husband is violent.

**Gender Differences in Partner Abuse**

From a social and cultural perspective men have been viewed as the primary aggressors, and women as the primary victims, when discussing partner abuse. Women who used violence in intimate relationships were said to be “self-defending victims”. Violence on the part of women was in response to fear of injury from a physically stronger male. Research on gender differences in aggression indicates that explaining the roles of men and women in violent relationships is not so simple.

Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling (1994) examined characteristics of victimization for couples that exhibited bi-directional violence. The authors employed a multidimensional approach to the identification of subgroups of violent couples. It was hypothesized that mutually victimized husbands’ and wives’ experience of aggression would be different if marital violence was assessed in context rather than one dimensionally. It was predicted that husbands and wives would report equivalent frequencies of a range of violent acts, however wives were expected to report greater negative impact and injury.

The authors also predicted that two subgroups would emerge. One larger subgroup of “mutually violent” couples based on frequencies and presence of aggression but predominant wife victimization based on other dimensions (negative impact and injury) and a second subgroup reporting mutual levels of low victimization. The authors also predicted that a small proportion of couples would present with mutual severe
victimization or greater victimization on the part of the husband. It was expected that the subgroup of mutually victimized (MV) couples could be differentiated from each other and from a nonaggressive (NA) control group on measures of marital and individual functioning. It was also predicted that highly victimized wives, as compared to their husbands and spouses in all other groups, would show the greatest level of marital distress and wives in the highly victimized group were expected to report more negative affective states.

Spouses in the “mutual low” group were expected to treat violence as inconsequential. The “mutual low” and nonaggressive groups would report similar and higher levels of marital and individual adjustment than other aggressive groups. Spouses in the “mutual high/highly victimized husband” subgroup would show comparable levels of marital distress. Wives in this group were predicted to exhibit greater distress than their husbands on some indices of relationship and personal functioning. Spouses in the third group were expected to show greater levels of marital distress than spouses in the “mutual low” and nonaggressive subgroups.

The sample consisted of 57 couples that reported mutual aggression. They were chosen from a pool of 145 couples that sought therapy at a university marital therapy clinic. Aggression was assessed using The Adapted Conflict Tactics Scale (ACTS; Vivian, 1990). The ACTS is a 29-item inventory that was designed as an extension of the original Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979). The number of positive and negative communication items were increased and included global assessments of the psychological impact of aggression/victimization on self, partner, and relationship,
degree of blame, and type of injuries sustained. Other measures included the Spouse Verbal Problems Checklist (SVPC; Haynes, Chavez, & Samuel, 1984), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), the Conflict Emotion Checklist (CEC; Fincham & Bradbury, 1987) and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI; Beck, 1978).

Results indicated that husbands’ and wives’ reports concerning the frequency of acts of physical victimization did not differ however victimized wives appeared more negatively affected. Wives reported more negative psychological impact and more severe injuries. Thirty-two percent of wives and 25% of husbands reported an injury as a result of partner aggression. Wives sustained more injuries than husbands (chi-square [1] = 6.56, p < .01).

Cluster analyses were conducted using standardized scores from the ACTS for both victimized husbands and wives. A two-cluster solution yielded one group characterized by high amounts of mutual victimization and a second group reporting low amounts of victimization. A three-cluster solution yielded one cluster of couples presenting moderate to low levels of victimization for the husbands and elevated levels of victimization for the wives, one cluster characterized by mutually low levels of victimization, and a the third cluster that included a small group of couples characterized by high levels of victimization for the husband and moderate levels of victimization for the wives.

A comparison of mutually victimized subgroups vs. clinical nonaggressive couples on measures of marital and individual functioning produced the following results. When partner’s verbal hostility was examined, high violence wives (HJV) reported
more partner verbal hostility than their own husbands and than spouses in the mutual/low and nonaggressive (NA) groups and they did not differ from either spouse in the high violence husbands (HVH) group. Husband and wives in the HVH group reported equivalent levels of partner verbal hostility. They also reported more verbal hostility than the mutual/low and the NA groups.

When partner’s psychological abuse was examined, HVW wives reported more psychological victimization than their husband’s did, and more than spouses in the mutual/low and NA groups. Contrary to expectations, they did not report more frequent psychological victimization than husbands and wives in the HVH group. Husbands in the HVH group reported more psychological victimization than their wives and more frequent victimization than NA spouses. Husbands and wives in the mutual/low group reported equivalent levels of psychological victimization, while reporting more frequent psychological victimization than NA spouses. An analysis of reports of marital satisfaction indicated that there were few differences among the MV groups. Couples in the HVH group showed a trend toward reporting lower levels of marital satisfaction than couples in the mutual/low group and NA couples were significantly more satisfied than the other groups.

When impact of psychological victimization was examined, wives in the HVW group rated the impact more negatively than husbands. Ratings of wives in the HVW group were comparable to husbands and wives in the mutual/low and HVH groups. Husbands and wives rating in the HVH group did not differ and husbands in the HVW
group gave the least negative impact ratings when compared to all other MV groups. Ratings were comparable to the NA spouses.

The authors found differences between groups concerning emotional reactions to marital conflict. Wives across all clinical groups consistently rated their emotional reaction to marital conflict as more negative than their husbands did. Wives in the two highly victimized groups reported the strongest negative emotions. HVW, mutual/low, and HVH couples reported similar and elevated levels of depressive symptomology that was significantly higher than couples in the NA group. The differences in depression became insignificant when demographic differences were covaried.

It is apparent that aggression is often bi-directional in intimate relationships. It appears that while often both parties engage in aggression, it is the level of impact that differs. Cantos, Neidig, and O’Leary (1994) examined the extent of injuries of women and men in a treatment program for domestic violence. The authors examined both the conflict tactics that were used by each partner and the difference in impact between men and women. The sample consisted of 180 couples that had been referred to a treatment program for domestic violence located on three military bases.

A modified version of the Conflict Tactics Scales was used to identify the conflict tactics used in the relationships, and spouse reports of injuries sustained were gathered during a structured conjoint interview. Participants were asked to classify the injury sustained in their last aggressive episode as follows: (1) no injuries, (2) minor; no treatment needed (3) moderate; treatment needed, (4) serious; hospitalization (5) permanent disability.
On the modified Conflict Tactics Scale, 82% of couples reported that both the husband and wife engaged in physical aggression. Based on reports by wives, ten percent of the aggression was husband only aggression. Based on reports by husbands and wives, four percent of couples presented with wife only aggression. Overall, 65% of couples reported an injury as a result of the violence and 24% of couples reported injuries requiring treatment. In 38% of the couples, the wife reported receiving injuries when the husband did not and in five percent of the couples the husband reported being injured when the wife did not. An analysis of the data from the modified Conflict Tactics Scale indicated that husbands of wives who had reported injuries, reported using more severe conflict tactics than husbands of the wives that did not report injuries. Men reported themselves more frequently than women to: (a) push, grab, or shove the spouse, (b) choke or strangle the spouse, (c) physically force the spouse to have sex, and (d) to beat up the spouse. Women reported themselves more frequently to: (a) have kicked, bit, or hit the spouse with a fist, (b) threatened the spouse with a knife or gun, (c) used a knife or gun on the spouse.

Archer (2000) conducted a meta-analysis that examined sex differences in aggression between heterosexual partners. The author asked the following questions: (a) do men and women differ in the occurrence and frequency of physical aggression? (b) Do they differ in terms of injuries sustained from their partners? (b) Where samples selected for male violence are concerned, is the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979) a sensitive measure of sex differences?
Studies were included if an effect size could be calculated for sex difference. Studies that examined married couples typically obtained self and partner reports. Studies that involved dating partners typically involved men and women who were not necessarily partners. Archer (2000) included both categorical and continuous data. Categorical data consisted of: (a) source of data, (b) measurement instrument, (c) country, (d) age category, (e) type of sample, (e) majority marital status, (f) level of measurement, (g) outcome measure (injury), (h) source of data (self-report, partner report, or composite), (i) reference period, and (j) sex of first author. Continuous data included (a) date of publication, (b) proportion of women, (c) proportion of the sample that were married or cohabitating, (d) proportion of men in the sample showing at least one act of aggression during the reference period, (e) mean age of sample, (f) sample size, (g) level of measurement (nominal or interval), and (h) sample (student or community).

The majority of studies were conducted in the 1980’s and 1990’s, in the United States. Roughly half of the studies involved college or high school students in dating relationships. Preliminary comparisons indicated that according to self-reports, women were more likely to commit acts of physical aggression while partner reports indicated that the frequency was similar.

Archer (2000) examined overall sex differences in injury measures and concluded that both measures used indicated that significantly more women than men were injured by their partners although removing outliers reduced the overall effect size. Specifically,
measures that reported injury indicated that 65% of those injured were women. When injury requiring medical treatment was examined that proportion rose to 71%.

The results, when the categorical variables were examined, indicated that for self and partner reports in unpublished studies, effect sizes were significantly higher in the female direction than in published studies. Also, contrary to the hypothesis, single rather than married or cohabitating people showed effect sizes in the female direction. When sample type was examined, results indicated that when samples were taken from student or community populations, effect sizes were in the female direction. Although only two studies were examined, when samples were taken from a battered women’s refuge, effect sizes were in the male direction. Couples undergoing treatment for marital problems including marital violence also showed an effect size in the male direction. The effect size for the treatment population was smaller than the effect size for the shelter population. When injury measures were examined, couples receiving treatment or marital counseling showed effect sizes in the male direction. The effect sizes for the community samples and student samples also showed effect sizes in the male direction but were lower than the treatment samples. When all samples were combined the effect size was near zero.

Results of regression analyses indicated that the proportion of men who were physically aggressive was highly correlated with the proportion of women who were physically aggressive indicating that physical aggression is often reciprocal. Only the proportion of physically aggressive men was positively correlated with the effect size for
sex difference indicating that the level of men’s aggression is associated with the sex differences obtained.

**Report Characteristics**

Margolin, (1987) compared couples that used physical aggression in conflict from those who did not. The author examined the rate of agreement between husbands and wives as to the presence of aggression in the relationships. The data analyzed consisted of responses on the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979) for 103 volunteer couples, of which 50 reported some type of physical aggression within the past year. Margolin examined the extent of reported physical aggression that was bi-directional, husband-to-wife, or wife-to-husband. Frequencies were reported for wives’ reports only, husbands’ reports only, and agreement between husbands and wives’ reports.

The author determined that reports of men’s overall violence was the only measure of total violence on which there were more agreements (25) than disagreements (14). Severe bi-directional violence also showed slightly more agreements (3) than disagreements (2). For each of the other four variables, there were as many, or more, disagreements than agreements. With respect to the wives’ severe physical aggression, there were 7 agreements and 11 disagreements, while for husbands there were 4 agreements and 4 disagreements. The data revealed greater disagreement regarding women’s, as compared to men’s aggression. Seven wives as compared to five husbands reported severe forms of husband-to-wife violence. Yet total husband to wife violence was reported by more men that women. More men than women also reported more wife-husband violence as well as bi-directional violence.
Studies that examined the prevalence of marital violence indicate that for the most part couples under-report incidences of violence (Heyman & Schlee, 1997). Heyman and Schlee examined married couples in order to develop a correction equation for determining the prevalence of marital violence as determined by the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979). The authors examined a clinic sample (n = 256) that was obtained from the University Marital Clinic at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Two community samples were also included (n = 393; n = 839). Participants were asked to report on male aggression towards their female partners. Measures included: (a) the Marital Adjustment Test (Locke & Wallace, 1959) which was used to measure marital adjustment and, (b) the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979) which were used to assess aggression.

The results indicated that in situations where severe violence was reported in community samples, men and women agreed about the prevalence of violence, and both men and women tended to under-report. When severe violence was reported in clinic samples, men greatly underreported and women provided a fairly accurate picture of the occurrence of violence in the relationship. The authors suggested the following correction equation for adjusting the accuracy of report for analyzing reporting characteristics for specific populations. When estimating overall aggression in clinic samples male report should be multiplied by 1.3 and female report by 1.2. When focusing on severe aggression male report should be multiplied by 2.4 and female report should be multiplied by 1.1. These adjustment procedures should not be applied to individual reports, however, may be appropriate for large samples.
Heckert and Gondolf (2000a) examined self-report characteristics of batterer program participants and their partners in order to assess the validity of men’s aggression and women’s victimization reports of relationship violence by comparing self-reports to police reports. The authors hypothesized that women’s reports would be more accurate than men’s reports. Information from a multi-site database of court mandated domestic violence offenders and their female partners were accessed to analyze report characteristics. Two hundred and ten men where recruited from each site for a total of 840 participants. The availability of police reports was limited to one site (n = 145).

Assault was operationalized by using the violence scale of the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979). If the program participant answered yes to any of the nine items on the CTS violence scale a value of one was given indicating acknowledgement of assault. The CTS violence scale is divided into two levels, minor and severe. If the individual endorsed any items that indicated severe assault a value of one was given for severity. Police reports were coded using a nine-item version of the CTS. Items were taken from the violence scale of the CTS. Under-report was defined as a participant not reporting the occurrence of an incident on the CTS when police reports indicated otherwise.

Concurrent validity of men’s and women’s reports was assessed by cross tabulating any assault and severe assault scores with the police reports. The percentage of under-report was then examined. The authors concluded that 60% of couples agreed that an assault took place. When self-reports were compared to police reports, 29% of women under-reported victimization, and 16% of men under-reported assault. Although
men were less likely to deny that an assault occurred, they were more likely to minimize the severity of the assault. These findings indicate that in a criminal justice setting, men tended to acknowledge that an assault had occurred but minimized the level of severity. The findings also suggest that women underreport victimization. Overall, agreement between men’s reports of assault and women’s reports of victimization showed moderate agreement at intake and then again at a twelve month follow-up.

Schafer, Caetano, & Clark (2002) investigated inter-partner agreement about the occurrence of violence in a large sample of couples in the United States. Ninety percent of the couples were married, with a mean relationship length of 15 years and a mean age of 42 years for females and 45 for males. This study reported on both male to female violence and female to male violence. The authors determined that there was considerably disagreement about the occurrence of violence in the relationship. Agreement about the non-occurrence of violence was higher than the agreement about the occurrence of violence. The authors also determined that women reported more violence than men did for both male to female violence and also female to male violence.

Many studies that focus on the occurrence of violence in intimate relationships make use of the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979) as a measurement for the occurrence of violent acts. The use of a common measure allows for the aggregation of results across many studies. Archer (1999) conducted two meta-analyses of studies that used the CTS to examine the instrument’s reliability. Two populations were examined, one sample involved couples and the other involved data on individual ratings for male and female aggression. The author examined self-agreement and partner agreement for
physical aggression as measured by the CTS. It was hypothesized that: (1) men would
under-report their own aggression considering the widespread disapproval of men hitting
women, (2) both male and female perpetrators would under-report aggression considering
the disapproval of any form of female aggression, and (3) men would under-report their
victimization in light of negative attitudes toward male victimization.

Differential reporting for couples and self-reports were examined. The author
concluded that when examining couple ratings, partner ratings of aggression were higher
than self-ratings. There were no statistical differences between male and female ratings,
although female ratings were slightly higher than male ratings. Categorical variables
were also examined. In general there was a difference between published and
unpublished studies. In published studies male aggression was significantly higher than
female aggression. In unpublished studies there was no difference. An interesting
finding was that in published studies, partner reports of female aggression were higher
than self-reports, however in unpublished studies the reverse was true. Age was also a
significant predictor of agreement. For men between ages 23 – 30, there was more
agreement than for men between 19 – 22 and 31- 49.

For the individual sample, partner ratings of aggression were higher than self-
ratings for both sexes and differences were greater for men than for women. Categorical
analysis showed that in unpublished studies self-ratings of aggression were higher for
both males and females and there was a reverse trend in published studies. For men, the
discrepancy between reports was similar for married and single samples. For women, the
married sample exhibited the greatest discrepancy between reports.
It is evident that clinical, community and offender populations differ in how they report the occurrence of partner abuse. In community samples both men and women tend to agree on the prevalence of violence when men are reporting from a perpetrator role and women are reporting from a victim role. In clinic samples men tend to greatly underreport the occurrence of violence and women accurately report. In offender samples, men report the occurrence of violence at a greater rate than women, however they minimize the severity of the violence. Age and marital status also appear to be related to differential reporting

Explaining Differential Reporting

Spouses give a number of reasons for not reporting marital violence. The most common reason being that the aggression is not perceived as a problem, or is perceived as secondary to other problems (Ehrensaft & Vivian, 1996). Ehrensaft and Vivian examined the reasons provided by aggressive spouses for failing to report marital aggression as a problem when seeking marital therapy. The authors proposed the following hypotheses: (a) the most common reasons for not reporting aggression by both husbands and wives would be a low perceived frequency of aggression, low impact of aggression, and the perception of aggression as being a secondary problem, (b) individuals who had experienced or perpetrated severe versus mild aggression, would be less likely to mention low frequency or low impact as reasons for not reporting, (c) both husbands and wives would mention low impact as a reason for not reporting when referring to husband to wife aggression, and (d) husbands would be more likely than wives to not report because they perceived the aggression as being an isolated incident.
Participants for this study were 136 couples who had contacted the University Marital Therapy Clinic at Stony Brook, New York, to request marital therapy. Clients were asked to list their marital problems in order of importance. The Adapted Conflict Tactics Scale (Vivian, 1990) was used to assess psychological impact, blame, and injury associated with marital violence. The Structured Marital Interview (Vivian, 1990) was used to measure contextual variables of marital aggression such as marital problems, and attributions for the aggression.

Results indicated that the most common reasons for not reporting aggression for both husbands and wives were that the aggression was not perceived as a problem, the aggression was unstable or infrequent, and that aggression was secondary to other problems. The second hypothesis was not supported in that spouses who engaged in, or were victims of mild aggression rather than severe aggression were not more likely to report infrequency of aggression as the reason for not reporting. The third hypothesis was supported in that both husbands and wives were more likely to mention the low impact of the aggression when referring to wife to husband aggression, however, contrary to expectations, husbands were not more likely than wives, to attribute the failure to report to the infrequency of the aggressive incidents. These findings are unique in that they include female to male aggression in a clinic sample. The results indicate that while female to male aggression does occur, both husbands and wives agree that the impact of female aggression is less than the impact of male aggression.

Heckart and Gondolf (2000b) examined predictors of under-reporting male violence. The authors hypothesized that personality traits would be the best predictors of
male under-report of violence, and relationship variables would best predict female
under-report of victimization. Assault was operationalized by using the violence scale of
the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979). Interviews were used to assess
relationship variables. A series of open-ended questions were asked about the
relationship. The CTS was then administered to offenders, their initial victims, and new
partners. Police reports were coded using a nine-item version of the CTS that examined
physical assault. Under-report was defined as not reporting an assault on the CTS when
police reports indicated that an assault had occurred. Follow-up was conducted at twelve
months.

Predictor variables included: (a) social background characteristics (i.e., age, race,
employment status, education, and women’s utilization of social services), (b) attributes
of the relationship (relationship status, living situation, time involved with partner,
number of children living with man/woman, man’s self-report of likelihood of violence
toward current partner, woman’s report of likelihood, and woman’s feelings of safety),
(c) alcohol and drug use, (d) personality assessment, and (e) program attendance.
Alcohol and drug use were measured using the Michigan Alcohol Screening Test
(MAST; Selzer, 1971). Personality was assessed using the Millon Clinical Multiaxial
Inventory Version III (MCMI; Millon, 1983).

Logistic regression equations were developed. The dependent variable (male
under-report) was regressed on four blocks of predictors in hierarchical fashion: (a) social
background, (b) relationship variables, (c) alcohol/drug use and (d) personality variables.
For females a stepwise regression analysis was used due to a small sample size. Results
indicated that there was a weak relationship between the predictor variables for male under-report at intake ($X^2 = 15.9$).

Men who were white-collar workers and were married were more likely to under-report while men who reported being drunk in the past three months and were living with their partners were less likely to under-report. The authors concluded that personality was not a significant predictor of under-reporting at intake. At follow-up a modest relationship between the predictor variable and under-report was discovered ($X^2 = 64.95$). Younger men, white men, and men with at least one child living with them were more likely to under-report at follow-up. Conversely, men with severe anti-social tendencies and men with narcissistic personality characteristics were less likely to under-report.

There was a modest relationship for female under-report at intake ($X^2 = 54.5$). Minority women, women without a high school diploma, women in a relationship with severe narcissists, and women who reported living with a partner that had been drunk in the past three months or had received drug or alcohol treatment were more likely to under-report. Women who were married or reported feeling safe in the relationship were very likely to under-report. Women who were in relationships with men who presented with antisocial personality characteristics were less likely to under-report.

Research indicates that not only do couples fail to report, but spouses also disagree about the prevalence of violence (Langhinrichenson-Rohling & Vivian, 1994). This incongruence influences relationship satisfaction as well as affective functioning. Langhinrichenson-Rohling and Vivian compared husbands' and wives' reports of engaging in, and or, experiencing marital aggression in order to determine the congruence
of reported violence. The authors hypothesized that discrepancies about spouses' reports of marital violence would result in decreased relationship satisfaction and decreased affective functioning.

The sample consisted of 112 couples that sought treatment at a University Marital Therapy Clinic at Stony Brook, New York. Data was utilized from an ongoing study that was designed to assess communication, and cognitive styles of maritally distressed and violent couples. The measures included: (a) the Adapted Conflict Tactics Scale (Vivian, 1990) which is a 29-item questionnaire adapted from the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus, 1979), on which spouses identify aggressive tactics used by their spouses or themselves in the previous year, (b) the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) a 32-item measure of marital adjustment used to differentiate adjusted from maladjusted couples, (c) the Spouse Verbal Problem Checklist (Haynes et al., 1984) which is a 27-item questionnaire that assesses spousal perception of his or her partners communication, (d) the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1978) a 21-item self-report inventory used to assess symptoms of depression, and (e) a semi-structured marital interview (Vivian, 1990) in which each spouse was asked to report his or her current level of anger toward their partner.

Results indicated that there was a considerable amount of disagreement between husbands and wives concerning the occurrence of aggression. One third of the sample was classified as incongruent for both husband to wife, and wife to husband levels of aggression. The majority of incongruence resulted from the perpetrator under-reporting his or her aggression; however, a significant percentage was also due to over-reporting.
The author's hypothesized that incongruent couples would report more marital dissatisfaction and poorer communication. Results indicated that incongruence for husband to wife aggression was associated with relationship impairment for both spouses, and also associated with affective impairment for incongruent wives. No relationship was found between incongruent wife to husband aggression and relationship functioning or affective functioning for either spouse.

A number of factors are related to differential reporting. Perception of the aggression influences the way couples report. If the aggression is not perceived as a problem, or is believed to be secondary to other problems, both men and women fail to report. Other factors that are related to the way an individual reports aggression include marital status, alcohol use, level of education, and minority status. Differential reporting has been shown to impair relationships for both men and women, and for women it may lead to affective impairment.

Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature. The chapter began by examining theoretical explanations of partner abuse. Theoretical explanations were divided into three primary frames of reference. Social and cultural models explained domestic violence as a function of a patriarchal society where men had power over women. Individual perspectives looked to the perpetrators psychological makeup to explained violent behavior. From this perspective violence was a result of personality development, or a disruption in the attachment process, and was centered within the individual. Family systems approaches examined family interaction patterns that supported the violence
prone family system. Violence was encouraged through feedback that supported the violent behavior.

This chapter also examined gender differences in the use of violence, report characteristics, and reasons for differential reporting. The articles that were reviewed indicated that domestic violence is not only perpetrated by men against women. Both men and women use physical assault as a means of coercion in intimate relationships, however, it is usually the female that is injured. When reporting their own use of domestic violence, couples often disagree about the occurrence of physical assault. Women are represented as accurate reporters of their own victimization and men under-report, or minimize their use of physical assault. The primary reason that couples give for not reporting an occurrence of an assault is that the assault was secondary to other problems.

The majority of the studies reviewed examined men’s use of violence. Men reported on their own violence, and for the most part women reported from the perspective of the victim. Even in studies that included women’s use of violence it was included as a secondary analysis. Group membership and including in the studies were determined by the male’s use of violence.
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Research Design

The present study employed an ex-post facto design using archival data. Ex-post facto or “after the fact” designs have been criticized because the researcher is not able to directly manipulate the independent variables. Due to the inability to manipulate the variables, causality cannot be inferred. Although causality cannot be inferred, ex-post facto designs are still useful, and vary in the degree of internal validity. There are basically three types of ex-post facto designs, those that do not include hypotheses, those with hypotheses, and those that test alternative hypotheses (Newman & Newman, 1994). Of the three types of designs, those that test alternative hypotheses represent the most internal validity. This study included alternative hypotheses to be tested. The predictor variables consisted of gender, age, cohabitation status, and time between arrest and assessment. The criterion variables included the accuracy of the self-report of relationship violence, and the occurrence of injury.

Method

Setting

This research was conducted through a specialty court program in a midsize mid-western city. All participants were charged with a domestic violence offense against a
partner. The specialty court program included a presiding judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, battered women’s shelter advocate, case managers, and batterer intervention staff. The program was a diversion program. Participants were given the choice to enter the program on the condition that a guilty plea was entered. If participants successfully completed the program, the charge was dismissed (diverted) upon completion.

The participants met specific eligibility requirements before entering the program. In order for an offender to participate, there could be no objection to the offender’s participation by either the arresting police department or the victim of the offense. The offender could have no more than five contempt citations, no more than one non-violent felony conviction, and no more than two misdemeanor convictions. The participant could not be on active felony or federal probation, parole, or community control. In addition the participant could not have a pending felony charge or felony companion case. The offender was required to be a willing participant in the program.

Participants

Participants for this study consisted of individuals who chose to enter the family violence court program. All participants were at least 18 years of age with an age range of 18 – 62 years of age. Seventy-eight percent of the participants were male (n = 160) and 22 % of the participants were female (n = 44). Fifteen percent of the participants were single, 45 % were cohabitating, 37 % were married, and 3 % were separated or divorced. Fifty-nine percent of the participants were Caucasian, 40.5% were African American, and .5%, or one individual, was of Asian descent. All participants had entered
a guilty plea to a domestic violence charge against a partner in exchange for entering the program.

**Sampling Procedures**

This study utilized archival data that was collected as part of the intake procedures for the family violence court program. Demographic information was gathered from information obtained during the initial intake interview and from police reports. Clients entering the family violence court program completed the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus et al., 1996). This study used data collected between the years 2001 and 2004.

**Instrumentation**

Instruments in this study included the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus et al., 1996), specifically the physical assault scale of the CTS2, and police reports for each participant.

**The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales**

The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus et al., 1996) was designed to measure the extent to which partners in a dating, marital, or cohabitating relationship engage in psychological and physical aggression, as well as their use of reasoning to deal with conflict. The revised version of the Conflict Tactics Scales is an enhanced form of the original version.

The original CTS (Straus, 1979) is a self-report instrument that was intended to measure behaviors used to resolve conflict of interest within a family or between a couple. Conflict of interest refers to conflict that arises in response to each family
member seeking to achieve goals that invariably differ. According to Straus (1979), the presence of conflict is not important in that all families experience conflict. What is important is how the members resolve conflict. The scale has been used to assess dating aggression, spousal violence, intrafamily violence, and gender differences in the reporting of violence (Caulfield & Riggs, 1992; Pan, Neidig, & O’Leary, 1994; Schafer, 1996; Straus, 1979). The CTS (Straus, 1979) has been used with over 70,000 participants in over 20 countries. Data from the CTS has been used in approximately 400 research studies (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, and Sugarman, 1996).

Straus (1979) identified three types of conflict resolution tactics. These approaches to conflict resolution comprised the three scales of the CTS. The first scale was the verbal reasoning scale. This scale consisted of items designed to measure conflict tactics such as the use of discussion, or argument, as an attempt to resolve intrafamily differences. The second scale was the verbal aggression scale. This scale was designed to measure the use of verbal and nonverbal behaviors that symbolically hurt the other. The third scale was the violence scale. This scale was intended to measure the use of physical force as a means of conflict resolution.

The CTS was developed using a 3 x 8 factorial design experiment (Straus, 1979). The first factor levels consisted of verbal reasoning, verbal aggression, and violence. The second factor levels were family role structures; husband – wife, wife – husband, father – child, child – father, mother – child, child – mother, child – sibling, and sibling – child. This combination results in a total of 24 possible CTS scores. The CTS contained a list of actions that one may engage in as a way of dealing with conflict. The list progressed
from acts low in coerciveness (discussion) to acts high in coerciveness (slapping, hitting).
The respondents are asked the number of times they have engaged in each activity in the past year, ranging from “never”, to “more than 20 times.” Scoring is accomplished by summing the responses for the scale of interest. Each scale consists of five items with scores ranging for 0 – 5, with a possible total score of 20.

The CTS2 (Straus et al., 1996) is an enhanced version of the original CTS (Straus, 1979). In the new version the old scales were augmented through the addition of new items and additional scales. The violence scale was renamed as the physical assault scale because the new name better captured the essence of the scale items. In addition to the three original scales, two new scales were added to measure sexual coercion, and injury. The authors indicated that new items were added on the basis of their experience in research, battered women’s shelters, and in clinical work. In addition, the authors conducted a review of critiques and modifications of the CTS and related measures. A pool of revised items was administered to an undergraduate population for additional feedback, which prompted continued revisions of the items.

While the original CTS has been examined at length (for a complete review see; Straus & Gelles, 1990), the data obtained from the student sample was used for a preliminary analysis of the new scales for the CTS2. The CTS2 scales showed good internal consistency with a range of alpha coefficients between .79 and .95. The psychological aggression scale was the least internally consistent (alpha = .79), and the injury scale, the most internally consistent (alpha = .95).
Construct validity is the ability of the instrument to measure the construct that it was intended to measure. According to Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991) “Construct validation is a never ending process” (p. 59). To demonstrate construct validity a test must be correlated with other variables in which there is a theoretical association. The authors of the CTS2 hypothesized that men were more likely than women to use coercion to obtain sex, therefore, the psychological aggression scale and the physical assault scale would be more highly correlated with the sexual coercion scale for men, than for women. The authors determined, using $z$ tests for differences between correlations, that this was in fact the case. For men, the psychological aggression scale was correlated with the sexual coercion scale to a greater degree than for women ($r = .66$ for men and $.25$ for women, $z = 4.53$, $p < .01$). The authors also determined that the physical assault scale was also correlated with the sexual coercion scale to a greater degree for men than for women ($r = .90$ for men and $.26$ for women, $z = 10.17$, $p < .01$).

Straus and his colleagues (Straus et al., 1996) suggested that if in fact assaults by men resulted in injury more often than assaults by women, there would be a higher correlation between the physical assault and injury scales of the CTS2 for men than for women. The authors did find the predicted higher correlation for men than for women ($r = .87$ for men and $.29$ for women, $z = 9.10$).

In order to demonstrate divergent validity, the Straus (Straus et al., 1996) chose two pair of scales that in theory should not be related to each other and tested the relationship between the two. The authors proposed that the negotiation scale would not be correlated with the sexual coercion scale and also would not be correlated with the
injury scale. Results indicated that these scales were not significantly correlated. The correlation between the negotiation and sexual coercion scales was $r = .03$, and the correlation with the injury scale was $r = .01$.

The present study used the physical assault scale of the CTS2. The physical assault scale is comprised of twelve items that represent physical assault. The response items range from a push or shove to threatening with a knife or gun. The physical assault scale can be divided into two subscales, one that represents minor assault, and one that represents severe assault. Physical assault was coded as a dichotomous variable. If any of the twelve items were endorsed a value of one was assigned indicating that an overall assault had occurred. If any of the items on the severe subscale were endorsed, a value of one was also assigned indicating severe assault occurred. If any of the items on the physical assault minor subscale were endorsed a value of one was assigned indicating minor assault.

Police Reports

Heckart and Gondolf (2000a) suggested that although police reports are subject to the impressions of the arresting officer, they tend to be more objective than future recall or individual accounts. The authors suggested that police reports represent a triangulation of (a) immediate information from the victim, offender, and other witnesses, (b) the officer’s direct observation of the scene and the participants, and (c) related information through dispatchers, previous contact with the offender, and questioning of informants. It is reasonable to assume that police reports provide an approximation of the incident that led to police involvement. The police reports used in this study included a
narrative section that was written by the arresting officer after the arrest was made. The narrative was primarily a summary of the incident. There was also a section on the police report where the officer indicated if the victim had been injured.

Inter-rater Reliability

The present study used three independent raters to code the narrative section of the police reports. Coders were given a copy of the narrative along with a copy of each of the items that comprise the CTS2 physical assault scale. The raters were asked to report if the police narrative indicated that the perpetrator engaged in any of the items listed on the CTS2 physical assault scale. If the narrative indicated that the specific behavior had occurred, a one was assigned to indicate the presence of the behavior. If the behavior was not present a zero was assigned to indicate the absence of the behavior. Three raters independently coded the narratives for each of the participants. The rater’s responses were then compared for agreement. Inter-rater reliability was determined for the overall physical assault scale and also the minor and severe subscales. In instances where there was disagreement, the two matching reports were used to confirm or disconfirm the presence of the behavior. A trial coding session was conducted to determine inter-rater reliability without specific training in coding the physical assault scale. Agreement among the three raters was 71.2 % for the minor subscale, 75.6 % for the severe subscale, and 97.6 % for the overall physical assault scale.

In an attempt to increase inter-rater reliability a training session was developed and a second group of raters was trained to code the available police reports (see appendix F). Following a forty-five minute training session, the second group of raters
coded the police reports. Agreement among the three raters was 91.2 % for the minor subscale, 91.2 % for the severe subscale, and 96.6 % for the overall physical assault scale. This data was used for analysis.

There were 18 cases where two of the three raters agreed and one disagreed on coding the minor and severe subscales. In order to retain all of the data the item was coded according to the two raters that agreed. If the two raters agreed that the response was accurate, the item was coded as a 1. If the two raters agreed that a response was inaccurate the item was coded 0. The data analysis was conducted using all data, and then again after dropping the data where there wasn’t complete agreement. For all of the hypotheses, with the exception of hypothesis 1.2, dropping the data did not influence significance. For hypothesis 1.2, when the items that did not have complete agreement were dropped from the analysis, after employing a Bonferroni type correction equation, the results became non-significant, p = .028. Using this data, 2 % of the variance in accuracy scores could be accounted for by gender.

**Data Collection**

For this study two instruments were chosen: (a) The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus et al., 1996), and (b) police reports. In an initial interview, using the CTS2 as a self-report instrument, all clients entering the family violence court program were asked to report on how they dealt with conflict, as well as their perception of how their partner handled conflict in the relationship. Clients were instructed to indicate how often each of the items on the CTS2 had happened in the past year. Responses range from
zero, indicating that the item had not occurred in the past year, to six indicating that an item had occurred more than twenty times in the past year.

A number of other variables collected from the police reports were included for the data collection but not used in the statistical analysis. These variables included an injury code which the arresting officer coded for status of injury; minor injury, possible internal injuries, no injury, and injury unknown. If the victim was referred for hospital treatment, or required emergency medical services, (EMS) these services were noted on the incident report. This data is included in the discussion section of chapter five.

Hypotheses

The rational for the research hypotheses are presented in this section.

Derivation of Hypotheses (1 – 3)

The hypotheses tested in this study were based on the literature that examined differential reporting of domestic violence according to gender. When marital couples were studied, couples disagreed about the occurrence of violence in the relationship (Margolin, 1987). The nature of the disagreement was dependent upon what population the sample was taken from (Heyman & Schlee, 1997). Heyman and Schlee (1997) determined that when severe male to female violence was reported in community samples both men and women tended to under-report. In clinic samples when severe violence was present, men greatly underreported and women provided a fairly accurate picture of the relationship violence. When women’s use of violence was included in clinic samples women reported both their own use of violence and their partners use of violence at a higher rate than men reported (Schafer, Caentano and Clark, 2002).
In offender samples, when reporting their own use of violence, men tended to under-report that violence had occurred less than women under-reported the occurrence of victimization. Although men under-reported the occurrence of aggression less often than women under-reported victimization, men minimized the severity of the violence (Heckert & Gondolf, 2000a).

The present study specifically examined an offender population. The hypotheses were derived from the research that used community, clinic, and offender samples. If the research findings that were reviewed in chapter two can be extended to an offender population, it is reasonable to assume that there will be gender differences in the reporting of relationship violence. This study was designed to extend the research on domestic violence to include report characteristics of female offenders.

**General Hypothesis 1**

GH 1: Female perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

**Specific Hypotheses 1.1**

1.1: Female perpetrator’s self-report of overall physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of overall physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 overall physical assault scale when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

**Specific Hypotheses 1.2**

1.2: Female perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 severe physical assault subscale when
perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

Specific Hypotheses 1.3

1.3: Female perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 minor physical assault subscale when perpetrator’s age and couple’s marital status and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

General Hypothesis 2

GH 2: Female victims will be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

Specific Hypotheses 2.1

2.1: When injury is tested, female victims will be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

General Hypothesis 3

GH 3: There are statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 3.1

3.1: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and marital status in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 3.2

3.2: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and age in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

General Hypothesis 4

GH 4: There are statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the occurrence of injury.
Specific Hypotheses 4.1

4.1: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and marital status in predicting the occurrence of injury.

Specific Hypotheses 4.2

4.2: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and age in predicting the occurrence of injury.

General Hypothesis 5

GH 5: There is a correlation between the occurrence of injury and the self-report of physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 5.1

5.1 There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the occurrence of victim injury and the accuracy of the perpetrator’s report of overall physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 5.2

5.2 There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the occurrence of victim injury and the accuracy of the perpetrator’s report of minor physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 5.3

5.3 There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the occurrence of victim injury and the accuracy of the perpetrator’s report of severe physical assault.

Statistical Analysis

This study used both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics that were employed included calculations of the means, frequencies, and percentages.
This study tested both categorical and continuous data. The most common statistic used for testing categorical data is the chi-square test of independence (Leitner, 1979). Leitner suggested that while a significant chi-square value gives the researcher reason to reject the null hypothesis, it does not give any indication as to the strength of the relationship (effect size). It is possible that a researcher could obtain a statistically significant chi-square value but explain little of the variance in the criterion variable that is accounted for by the predictor variable. Multiple linear regression (ordinary least squares) has been shown to produce identical results as chi-square analysis for any 2 X k matrix. (Leitner, 1979; Pohlmann & Leitner, 2003). Newman, Williams, and Bobner (1982) demonstrated that the multiple $R^2$ obtained when using multiple linear regression procedures produced the same proportion of variance accounted for as when using chi-square procedures. That is: $\frac{X^2}{N} = R^2 = \Phi^2$.

While the chi-square statistic would be appropriate for testing a limited number of the research hypotheses presented in this study, the statistic is not as flexible as multiple linear regression. Multiple linear regression (MLR) is the general case of the ordinary least squares solution of which ANOVA is a specific case. One is able to write models that reflect the specific research hypotheses that are being tested. Multiple linear regression can be used with unequal N sizes, and both categorical and continuous data (Newman, 1976). The $F$ test, analysis of variance, was the inferential statistic used to test the statistical significance of the proposed research hypotheses.

One-tailed tests of significance were conducted to test specific research hypotheses 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3. Studies that examine gender differences in reporting
relationship violence indicate that men minimize the severity of the violence that has occurred and women give a fairly accurate report. It was also hypothesized that gender would interact with cohabitation status to predict the overall report of relationship violence ($\alpha = .05$, two-tailed).

A one-tailed test of significance was conducted to test specific research hypothesis 2.1. Studies that examine the level of injury as it relates to gender indicate that it is the woman who is most often injured. It was also hypothesized that gender and cohabitation status would interact to predict overall injury ($\alpha = .05$, two-tailed).

McNeil, Newman, & Kelly, (1996) suggested that “Power is the ability of the statistical analysis to find significance if in fact significance is there” (p. 168). Four parameters must be considered when determining power. These include alpha, effect size, $N$ size, and power. It is possible to determine the power of an analysis if the other three parameters are known.

Cohen (1988) suggested three guidelines for effect size when examining effects in the behavioral sciences. An effect size smaller than $f^2 = .15$ is considered a small effect size, an effect size of $f^2 = .15$ to $.35$ is considered a medium effect size. An effect size larger than $f^2 = .35$ is considered a large effect size. A sample of 204 subjects was chosen to ensure that there was a greater than .99 percent chance of detecting a medium effect size if in fact a difference existed.

The use of multiple statistical tests may increase the chance of making a type one error. If one hypothesis is tested with the probability of a type one error being set at .05 it implies that 5 times out of 100 the obtained results will be due to chance. The rate of
error increases in relation to the number of tests that a researcher uses for a specific family of hypotheses. If two tests are used, the chance of making a type I error increases accordingly. With an alpha level of .05, using two tests increases the probability of making a type I error to .10.

In order to maintain an overall error rate of alpha = .05, a Bonferroni-type adjustment procedure was used to correct for family-wise rate of error (Newman, Fraas, & Laux, 2000). An adjustment formula was employed where the probability of a type one error (\( \alpha \)) was divided by the number of statistical tests that were used (\( N \)). A total of five \( F \) tests were conducted to test hypotheses where the accuracy of self-report was the criterion variable (Specific hypotheses 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1 and 3.2). These hypotheses employed five statistical tests so the adjusted rate of error was \( \alpha/N = \) adjusted alpha, or \( .05/5 = .01 \). The \( p \) value was changed from .05 to .01 in order to hold alpha constant at .05. Also, a total of three \( F \) tests were conducted to test the research hypotheses where injury was the criterion variable (Specific hypotheses 2.1, 4.1, and 4.2). Once again in order to control for inflated error rates the individual \( p \) value for each test was set at \( p = .016 \).

**Limitations**

The following limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. In ex-post facto research, the researcher is not able to directly manipulate the independent variable. The lack of control over the independent variable threatens the internal validity of the study and does not allow for the researcher to infer causality.
The generalizability of the results of this study are limited to the specific nature of the sample. The population used for this study was an offender population with a limited criminal history. A population such as this may not represent individuals from other groups such as a clinic population or a chronic offender population.

It is difficult to know the true rate of occurrence of violence within the family. This study assumes that police reports approximate the occurrence of violence for one specific incident. Police reports do not portray a cycle of violence within the family. The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales examine violence that has occurred within the past year. By comparing police reports to scores on the CTS2 it is possible to identify the specific violent incident that resulted in police intervention, however police reports do not identify recurrent patterns of violence. The variables self-report of physical assault overall, self-report of physical assault minor, self-report of physical assault severe were coded as dichotomous variables. Although it is possible that the participants endorsed more than on item, the endorsement of physical assault was coded as 0 for the no endorsement or 1 for endorsement of an item on the overall scale and each of the subscales. Data was coded so that the researcher could examine each of the subscales rather than focusing on specific items. When coding in this manner it is possible that some information is lost as compared to coding items in a cumulative manner.

**Summary**

This study examined the role of gender in the occurrence of partner abuse. The study explored the relationship between the tendency to report the occurrence of violence
and the subject’s age, gender, cohabitation status and the time between arrest and assessment. Gender differences in the level of injury to the victim were also examined.

This chapter outlined the research process that included the research design, methodology, instrumentation used, variables examined, hypotheses, statistical analyses, and limitations of the study.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The results of the study are presented in this chapter. The chapter outlined the demographic descriptive statistics and the results of the inferential statistics. The demographic statistics consisted of the means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. The demographic statistics are presented for men, women, and the overall group. Intercorrelations between predictor and criterion variables are presented in appendix I. The inferential statistic used to test the hypotheses was multiple linear regression.

Demographic Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 represents the frequencies for criterion and predictor variables. When coded police reports were compared to self-reports it was determined that 54.4 % of men, and 40.9 % of women accurately reported engaging in minor assault; 44.4 % of men and 63.6 % of women accurately reported engaging in severe physical assault; and 82.5 % of men and 88.6 % of women accurately reported engaging in physical assault overall (see Table 1).
Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages for the Criterion Variables Injury and Accuracy of Self-Report of Physical Assault and Predictor Variables of Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Participants (n = 160)</th>
<th>Female Participants (n = 44)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCMINOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCSEVER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCOV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSSING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSCOHAB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSMARRI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSSEPDIV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Injury = the presence or absence of injury; ACCMINOR = Accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault; ACCSEVER = Accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault; ACCOV = Accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced.
Table 2 represents the means and standard deviations for the variables age at intake, and time between arrest and assessment. The sample consisted of 160 males and 44 females. The mean age at the time of intake was 31.74 for men, 31.36 for women, and 31.66 overall (see Table 2).

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Age at Intake and Time Between Arrest and Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Male Participants n = 160</th>
<th>Female Participants n = 44</th>
<th>Total Group n = 204</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at Intake</td>
<td>31.74</td>
<td>9.74</td>
<td>31.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Between Arrest and Assessment</td>
<td>20.78</td>
<td>22.80</td>
<td>15.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of Testing the Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses 1 – 4 were tested using multiple linear regression. Alpha was set at .05. A Bonferonni-type adjustment was made to control for family-wise error. See appendix H for model summaries.

General Hypothesis 1

1: Females perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.
Specific Hypotheses 1.1

1.1: Female perpetrator’s self-report of overall physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of overall physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 overall physical assault scale when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

This hypothesis stated that female perpetrator’s self-report of overall physical assault would be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of overall physical assault when age, marital status, and time between arrest and assessment were held constant. To test this hypothesis full and restricted models were tested. The full model (accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault = gender + age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error) which produced an $R^2 = .019$ was compared to the restricted model (accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault = age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error).

This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H). F equaled .625 with df1 equal to 1 and df2 equal to 197. The $p$ value was equal to .186 (one-tailed) with an $R^2$ change, due to gender, equal to .004. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female = 1. Females were not more accurate than males at reporting overall physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 1.2

1.2: Female perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault as indicated
by police reports coded using the CTS2 severe physical assault subscale when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

This hypothesis stated that female perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault would be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self report of severe physical assault when age, marital status, and time between arrest and assessment were held constant. To test this hypothesis full and restricted models were tested. The full model (accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault = gender + age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error) which produced an $R^2_F = .058$ was compared to the restricted model (accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault = age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error). This hypothesis was found to be significant. $F$ equaled 2.005 with df1 equal to 1 and df2 equal to 197. The $p$ value was equal to .01 (one-tailed) with an $R^2$ change, due to gender, equal to .026. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female =1. As one can see from the positive regression weight reported (.199) the data indicated that females were significantly more accurate than males in reporting their own use of severe physical assault tactics (see Table 3).
Table 3

Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Relationship Between Gender and the Self-Report of Severe Physical Assault

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>df1/df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p (one-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Specific Hypothesis 1.2:** Female perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of severe physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 severe physical assault subscale when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

Full Model: $ACCSEVER = .338 + .199(Gender) - .002(Age) + .174(MSSING) - .012(MSMARRI) - .236(MSSEPDIV) - .002(TIMELAPS) + E$.  
Matrix: $\begin{bmatrix} .058 \\ .032 \end{bmatrix}$  
1/197 .01 2.005 .01 S

Restricted Model: $ACCSEVER = .452 + .002(Age) + .160(MSSING) - .017(MSMARRI) - .190(MSSEPDIV) - .002(TIMELAPS) + E$.  
Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .01

ACCSEVER = Accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures. E = Error.

None of the variables were significant with the exception if gender. Gender was significant at the $p = .01$ level when controlling the other variables in the full model.

**Specific Hypotheses 1.3**

1.3: Female perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 minor physical assault subscale when perpetrator’s age and couple’s marital status and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.
This hypothesis stated that female perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault would be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self report of minor physical assault when age, marital status, and time between arrest and assessment were held constant. To test this hypothesis full and restricted models were tested. The full model (accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault = gender + age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error) which produced an $R^2 = .052$ was compared to the restricted model (accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault = age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error). This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H). $F$ equaled 1.813 with df1 equal to 1 and df2 equal to 197. The $p$ value was equal to .954 (one-tailed) with an $R^2$ squared change, due to gender, equal to .014. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female =1. Females were not more accurate than males at reporting minor physical assault.

**General Hypothesis 2**

GH 2: Female victims will be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

**Specific Hypotheses 2.1**

2.1: When injury is tested, female victims will be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.
This hypothesis stated that female victims would be injured more often than male victims when age, marital status, and time between arrest and assessment were held constant. To test this hypothesis full and restricted models were tested. The full model (injury = gender + age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error) which produced an $R^2_F = .146$ was compared to the restricted model (injury = age + marital status single + marital status married + marital status separated/divorced + time between arrest and intake + error). This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H). $F$ equaled 5.633 with df1 equal to 1 and df2 equal to 197. The $p$ value was equal to .45 (one-tailed) with an $R$ square ($R^2$) change, due to gender, equal to .000. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female = 1. Injury was coded as 0 = no injury, 1 = yes. Female victims were not injured more often than male victims.

**General Hypothesis 3**

GH 3: There are statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

**Specific Hypotheses 3.1**

3.1: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and marital status in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

This hypothesis predicted that gender and marital status would interact to predict the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault. The full model included both additive and multiplicative terms. The full model which produced an $R^2_F = .026$ was
compared to the restricted model which just had the additive effects of gender and marital status. Therefore the test of significance between the full and restricted models tested the effect of the multiplicative variables over the additive effects of gender and marital status. The difference between these two models is the test for interaction. This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H). F equaled .578 with df1 equal to 3 and df2 equal to 194. The p value was equal to .69 (two-tailed) with an R square (R^2) change, due to interaction between gender and marital status, equal to .007. R^2 squared change was calculated by subtracting the R^2 value of the full model from the R^2 value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female =1. Gender and marital status did not significantly interact to predict the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 3.2

3.2: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and age in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

This hypothesis predicted that gender and age would interact to predict the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault. The full model included both additive and multiplicative terms. The full model which produced an R^2_F = .020 was compared to the restricted model which just had the additive effects of gender and age. Therefore the test of significance between the full and restricted models tested the effect of the multiplicative variables over the additive effects of age and gender. The difference between these two models is the test for interaction. This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H). F equaled .567 with df1 equal to 1 and df2 equal to 196.
The $p$ value was equal to .63 (two-tailed) with an $R^2$ change, due to interaction between gender and age, equal to .001. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female =1. Age ranged from 18 – 62 years of age. Gender and age did not significantly interact to predict the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault.

General Hypothesis 4

GH 4: There are statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the occurrence of injury.

Specific Hypotheses 4.1

4.1: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and marital status in predicting the occurrence of injury.

This hypothesis predicted that gender and marital status would interact to predict victim injury. The full model included both additive and multiplicative terms. The full model which produced an $R^2_F = .032$ was compared to the restricted model which just had the additive effects of gender and marital status. Therefore the test of significance between the full and restricted models tested the effect of the multiplicative variables over the additive effects of gender and marital status. The difference between these two models is the test for interaction. This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H).

$F$ equaled .721 with $df1$ equal to 3 and $df2$ equal to 194. The $p$ value was equal to .62 (two-tailed) with an $R^2$ change, due to interaction between gender and marital status, equal to .009. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and
female =1. Gender and marital status did not significantly interact to predict victim injury.

**Specific Hypotheses 4.2**

4.2: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and age in predicting the occurrence of injury.

This hypothesis predicted that gender and age would interact to predict victim injury. The full model included both additive and multiplicative terms. The full model which produced an $R^2_F = .089$ was compared to the restricted model which just had the additive effects of gender and age. Therefore the test of significance between the full and restricted models tested the effect of the multiplicative variables over the additive effects of gender and age. The difference between these two models is the test for interaction. This hypothesis was not found to be significant (see appendix H). $F$ equaled .687 with df1 equal to 1 and df2 equal to 196. The $p$ value was equal to .77 (two-tailed) with an $R^2$ change due to interaction between gender and age, equal to .000. $R^2$ squared change was calculated by subtracting the $R^2$ value of the full model from the $R^2$ value of the restricted model. Gender was coded as male = 0, and female =1. Age ranged from 18 – 62 years of age. Gender and age did not significantly interact to predict victim injury.

In order to test general hypothesis five, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted (see table 4).
Table 4

Summary of the Correlations Between Injury and The Accuracy of the Self-Report of Physical Assault

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Injury</th>
<th>Accuracy Minor</th>
<th>Accuracy Severe</th>
<th>Accuracy Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>.163**</td>
<td>.142*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy Minor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy Severe</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.267**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accuracy Minor = Accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault; Accuracy Severe = Accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault; Accuracy Overall = Accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault;
Note: The relationships between injury and accuracy severe, and accuracy overall are shown as statistically significant, however, the relationships were not in the hypothesized direction so therefore non-significant.

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed)

General Hypothesis 5

GH 5: There is a correlation between the occurrence of injury and the accuracy of self-report of physical assault.

Specific Hypotheses 5.1

5.1: There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the occurrence of victim injury and the accuracy of the perpetrator’s report of overall physical assault.

This hypothesis was not found to be significant, $R = .142, p = .98$ (1-tailed). The relationship was not in the stated direction.

Specific Hypotheses 5.2

5.2: There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the occurrence of victim injury and the accuracy of the perpetrator’s report of minor physical assault.
This hypothesis was not found to be significant, $R = - .010, p = .45$ (1-tailed).

**Specific Hypotheses 5.3**

5.3: There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the occurrence of victim injury and the accuracy of the perpetrator’s report of severe physical assault.

This hypothesis was not found to be significant, $R = .163, p = .99$ (1-tailed). The relationship was not in the stated direction.

**Summary**

This chapter presented the results of testing the research hypotheses. The first general hypothesis stated that female perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault would be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment were held constant. Results indicated that gender did not account for significant differences in the accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault or the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault. Results indicated that there was a statistically significant gender difference in the self-report of severe physical assault with women reporting more accurately than men.

The second general hypothesis stated that female victims would be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment were held constant. Results indicated that gender did not account for significant differences in injury. The third general hypothesis stated that there were statistically significant two-way interactions
between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault. Results indicated that there were no significant interactions between gender and marital status, or gender and age, in predicting the accuracy of self-report of physical assault. The fourth general hypothesis stated that there were statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the occurrence of injury. Results indicated that there were no significant interactions between gender and marital status, or gender and age, in predicting injury. The fifth general hypothesis stated that there was a negative correlation between the occurrence of injury and the self-report of physical assault. Results indicated that there were no statistically significant negative correlations between injury and the self-report of physical assault.

In summary, gender differences were found when the accuracy of the self-report of severe physical assault was examined. Women accurately reported the use of severe physical assault tactics more often than men did. There were no statistically significant gender differences for the self-report of minor physical assault or overall physical assault. Age, marital status, and time between arrest and assessment did not explain a statistically significant amount of variance in accuracy scores. Gender, age, marital status, and time between arrest and assessment did not explain a statistically significant amount of variance in the presence of victim injury.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will provide a discussion of the research findings. It is divided into three sections. Section one presents a summary of the study and includes a restatement of the problem, outline of the procedures, and a review of the hypotheses. Section two presents the conclusions and includes a summary of the findings. Section three presents the implications and includes the theoretical implications, limitations, suggestions for future research, and a chapter summary.

Summary of the Study

Restatement of the Problem

This study examined the relationship between gender and the accurate reporting of the use of physical assault by domestic violence perpetrators. The study also examined the relationship between gender and the occurrence of victim injury. Gender, age, cohabitation status, and the time between arrest and assessment were the predictor variables. Injury and the accuracy of the self-report of physical assault were the criterion variables. Participant responses on the physical assault scale of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus et al., 1996) were compared to police reports to determine the accuracy of the self-report. Using the CTS2, police reports were coded by three independent raters using the physical assault
scale. Police reports were also used to determine injury. Officers noted the occurrence of injury on the incident reports.

Outline of the Procedures

This research was conducted through a specialty court program in a midsize midwestern city. All participants were charged with a domestic violence offense against a partner. Participants for this study consisted of individuals who chose to enter the specialty court program. All participants were at least 18 years of age with an age range of 18 – 62 years of age. All participants had entered a guilty plea to a domestic violence charge against a partner in exchange for entering the program.

Instruments in this study included the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus et al., 1996), specifically the physical assault scale of the CTS2, and police reports for each participant. The present study employed an ex-post facto design using archival data. Inter-rater agreement was determined for the physical aggression scale of the CTS2. Regression analyses were conducted to test the research hypotheses. Three independent raters were trained in coding the narrative section of the police reports using the nine items of the physical assault scale of the CTS2. Agreement among the three raters was 91.2 % for the minor subscale, 91.2 % for the severe subscale, and 96.6 % for the overall physical assault scale.

The Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses were developed to extend the research on gender differences in report characteristics of domestic violence offenders. The research hypotheses stated that there would be gender differences in the self-report of the use
physical aggression and also gender differences in the presence of victim injury. These differences would still be evident when age, cohabitation status, and time between arrest and assessment were held constant. It was also hypothesized that age and cohabitation status would interact with gender to predict injury and also interact with gender to predict the accuracy of the self-report of physical assault. All research questions were tested at an alpha level of .05. A Bonferroni-type adjustment procedure was employed to control for inflated error rates.

**General Hypothesis 1.** Female perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of physical assault when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

**General Hypothesis 2.** Female victims will be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.

**General Hypothesis 3.** There are statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.

**General Hypothesis 4.** There are statistically significant two-way interactions between gender and marital status, and gender and age, in predicting the occurrence of injury.

**General Hypothesis 5.** There is a correlation between the occurrence of injury and the self-report of physical assault.
Conclusions

Summary of the Findings

The hypotheses for this study can be divided into four sections; hypotheses concerned with gender differences in the self-report of assault using the physical assault scale of the CTS, hypotheses concerned with gender differences in victim injury using police reports to determine the presence of injury, hypotheses that examined interaction, and a correlational analysis of the relationship between the self-report of physical assault and injury.

General hypothesis one examined the relationship between gender and the accuracy of the self-report of physical assault. The overall responses on the CTS2 were examined as well as responses on the minor and severe subscales. The hypotheses that examined gender differences in accuracy of the self-report of minor physical assault and the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault were not statistically significant. The hypothesis that tested the accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault was statistically significant, however, only three percent of the variance in accuracy scores was explained by gender differences. This finding showed that women (63.6%) were accurate more often than men (44.4%) in reporting severe physical assault.

For the overall scale men accurately reported the use of physical assault in 82.5% of the cases and women were accurate reporting in 88.6% of the cases. Accuracy on the overall scale indicates that the participant reported that some type of assault occurred but the level of severity was not identified. Differences were more pronounced when the subscales were examined. When the severe subscale was examined, men accurately
reported in 44.3 % of the cases while women accurately reported in 63.6 % of the cases. When the minor subscale was examined, women were accurate in 40.9 % of the cases and men were accurate in 54.4 % of the cases. These findings provide support for research that suggests that men minimize the severity of their own use of violence (Heckert & Gondolf, 2000a).

When perpetrator reports are compared to victim reports in clinic samples, there is typically more disagreement than agreement concerning the perpetrator’s use of physical assault tactics (Margolin, 1987; Schafer, Caentano, & Clark, 2002). Heyman and Schlee (1997) determined that when couples in clinical samples reported on severe male aggression, men under-reported their own use of violence. A correction factor was proposed indicating that male self-report of physical assault in clinic samples be multiplied by 2.4 to give a closer approximation of the level of male aggression. In community samples, both men and women agreed about the use of violence but both men and women under-reported. It was suggested male self-report be multiplied by 1.7, and female self-report of male aggression by 1.5 in order to determine an approximation of the current level of male aggression. The authors suggested that these adjustment equations be used to adjust population scores rather than for individual assessment.

The results from the current study are unique because the sample included both male and female perpetrator’s responses that were compared to police reports. Results from previous research indicated that when victim reports were used to determine the rate of relationship violence there was considerable disagreement between perpetrator and victim reports. When reporting on men’s aggression in offender populations both
perpetrators and victims under-reported the use of physical assault and male perpetrators minimized the severity.

The present study suggests that male and female perpetrators of domestic violence accurately reported the overall use of physical assault in more than 80% of the cases. Men in this study were more accurate than women in reporting minor physical assault but were less accurate in reporting severe physical assault. Only the finding for severe assault was statistically significant. These findings fit with the findings of Heckart and Gondolf (2000a) suggesting that men minimize the severity of the violence in offender populations. Overall, there were no significant gender differences when examining overall physical assault, however, statistically significant differences emerged when severe physical assault was examined.

One possible explanation is that men and women have different perceptions of what constitutes minor and severe violence. Men may view a greater proportion of violent acts as minor, while women view a larger proportion of violent acts as severe. If these findings do represent a difference in the perception of the severity of the assault, it is possible that men are desensitized to the use of violence by society’s support of men’s use of violence. The results of the present study support findings by Langhinrichsen-Rohling and Vivian (1994). Langhinrichsen-Rohling and Vivian examined the agreement of couple’s reports of physical assault. The authors found there was disagreement about the occurrence of husband to wife violence and also disagreement about the occurrence of wife to husband violence. Sixty-five percent of couples were incongruent because the husband reported engaging in less aggression that the wife
reported experiencing in the relationship. This incongruence would make sense from a social and cultural perspective that suggests that men are socially conditioned to be violent and therefore are desensitized to the use of violence.

The second general hypothesis tested the relationship between gender and injury. It was hypothesized that women would be injured more often than men would be injured. The results for this hypothesis were non-significant. The findings suggest that when one looks at the percentages obtained, men are injured at a similar rate as women. For this population, police reports indicated that men were injured in 82.5% of the incidents, and women were injured 81.8% of the incidents.

Data collected indicated that male victims (N = 153) were not injured in 18.1% of the cases, 66.3% received minor injury, .6% (or one individual) received possible internal injuries, and in 10.6 percent of the cases injury was unknown. Emergency medical services (EMS) were present in 13.1% of the cases and not present in 78.8% of the cases (N =147). Male victims were referred for hospital treatment in 7.5 % of the cases.

Data collected on female victims (N = 42) indicated that female victims were not injured in 20.5% of the cases, 63.6% received minor injury, and in 11.4 percent of the cases injury was unknown. Emergency medical services (EMS) were present in 4.5% of the cases and not present in 90.9% of the cases (N =42). Female victims were referred for hospital treatment in 4.5 % of the cases.

The present study gives the impression of gender symmetry when victim injury is examined. These findings are contrary to other findings that suggest that female victims are injured more often than male victims (Archer, 2000; Cantos, Neidig, & O’Leary,
1994). One possible explanation is that police reports do not give an accurate portrayal of the occurrence of injury. The reports that were used gave the option of coding injury as either yes or no. The option was also given to record the type of injury including: none, broken bones, possible internal injuries, severe laceration, loss of teeth, unconsciousness, other major injury, minor injury, and unknown. The absence or presence of injury was used for the data analysis for this study.

It is possible that when using binary data information is lost. Using a yes or no format for injury does not acknowledge the severity of the injury. While the severity of the injury was not used for analysis, examining the injury codes on the police reports give a similar picture as the binary coding of injury. Nineteen and one half percent of the reports indicated no injury, one report suggested possible internal injury, 11.3% of the reports indicated that type of injury was unknown, and 68.7 % reported minor injury. The remaining coding options (broken bones, severe laceration, loss of teeth, unconsciousness, and other major injury) were not endorsed. The injury codes appear to support the findings of the binary data, that suggest that for the population studied, injury was most often of a minor nature.

The coding options on the police reports represent severe forms of violence. It would be useful to reconsider the options for recording injury to include other items such as bite marks, scratches or tissue swelling. Training could be offered that would include operational definitions of different types of injuries. Once a consensus is reached concerning what constitutes injury, the identification and documentation of injury could be applied to domestic violence training for police officers. A precise definition of injury
would aid in prosecution of domestic violence offenders. It is also important to develop a
definition of injury that could be used across disciplines. When all professionals working
in the area of domestic violence are able to speak the same language a more meaningful
discussing of the issues surrounding domestic violence will be possible.

A second explanation concerns the population that was used for this study.
Requirements for entering the program were such that the offender could not have a
previous violent conviction and not have an extensive criminal history. It is possible that
these requirements limited the population to one where minor violence was the norm and
more severe cases of violence were assigned to other courts for felony prosecution. The
findings from this study should not be extended beyond groups with a limited criminal
history.

The third set of hypotheses tested interaction effects. It was hypothesized that
there would be interactions between gender and cohabitation status, and between gender
and age in predicting the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault. The
results were non-significant. It is interesting that no interaction effects were found. It
makes intuitive sense that cohabitation status would interact with gender to predict the
accuracy of the self-report of physical assault. Interaction was specifically examined for
the overall scale. Results might have been different if the interaction was tested for more
severe forms of violence where gender differences were evident. Another variable that
could be considered for future research is the couple’s level of enmeshment. While
cohabitation status represents physical proximity, it is likely that it does not measure the
couple’s level of emotional involvement.
There was no interaction between gender and age in predicting the accuracy of the self-report of overall physical assault. It is possible that when examining the overall use of physical assault, rather than focusing on more severe forms of assault, interaction effects do not emerge. It would be useful to examine the interaction between gender and age in populations that utilize more severe forms of violence. The fourth set of hypotheses suggested that there would be an interaction between gender and age, and gender and marital status in predicting the occurrence of injury. These hypotheses were not found to be statistically significant. These results suggest that gender did not interact with age or cohabitation status to predict injury. Once again, it is possible that interaction between the variables may not be apparent in a population characterized by minor injury. It would be useful to examine populations that are characterized by more severe forms of violence in order to determine interaction effects when predicting injury.

The fifth hypothesis suggested that there would be a negative correlation between the occurrence of injury and the tendency to accurately report physical assault. This hypothesis was not supported. There was however, a positive relationship between injury and the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault, $R = .142, p = .02$. There was also a positive relationship between the occurrence of injury and the accuracy of the self-report of severe physical assault, $R = .163, p = .01$.

These results make sense when the population differences in the accuracy of report are examined. In clinic samples both men and women tend to under-report physical assault. In offender samples men are more accurate in their self-report but tend to minimize the violence. Offending women in the present study were more accurate at
reporting severe physical assault. Although not statistically significant, women were less accurate, at reporting minor physical assault. This pattern is indicative of gender differences in the perception of what constitutes both minor and severe assault tactics. Another possibility is that for men in an offender sample it is more difficult to maintain denial of the occurrence of the incident so minimization of the occurrence is employed.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

Social and cultural theories of domestic violence indicate that the patriarchal nature of American society at worst encourages, and at best does not discourage, the use of male violence as a means of controlling women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Research from this perspective suggests than men are the primary aggressors and that women are the primary victims. Women who do offend are said to be responding to years of abuse, or self-defending victims (Hamberger & Potente, 1994). The fact that 22% of this sample is made up of female offenders appears to contradict feminist perspectives of domestic violence. Feminist researchers would argue that, although this population includes women, violence perpetrated by women is qualitatively different than violence perpetrated by men. Renzetti (1999) stated that men’s violence:

is a routinized method of controlling others; they are prepared, both physically and emotionally, to behave violently. Most women do not exhibit such proficiency, but they are well aware of their male partner’s proficiency in violence and this, in itself, intimidates them. Few women intimidate others the way men can. (p. 46)

A feminist perspective is limiting in that it assumes that domestic violence is the same for all populations. According to this perspective, violence by men is always a function of
power and control, and women are always in a subordinate position based on fear. The results from the present research suggest that not all domestic violence offenders can be classified using a feminist model. Theories that explain domestic violence are typically based on severe case scenarios. While these scenarios make sense when explaining violence for repeat offenders, they are not likely to be appropriate for first time offenders.

If one follows the line of reasoning that women are in fact self-defending victims it is possible that they are being drawn into the criminal justice system by arrest policies that were implemented to keep victims of domestic violence safe. With the introduction of preferred and mandatory arrest policies the likely-hood increases that someone will be arrested if the police are called to the scene. When the police respond to a domestic call it is the officer’s responsibility to determine the primary aggressor. It is possible that the arresting officer is in fact arresting a self-defending victim rather than the primary aggressor. Given that men under-report in community samples and women accurately report the use of violence, it is reasonable to assume that men minimize their own use of violence when reporting to the investigating officer and that women accurately report and therefore are arrested as the primary aggressor.

Another possibility is that the officers are in fact arresting the primary aggressor and that women make up about 22% of first time arrests for domestic violence. These results contradict a learned helplessness theory of domestic violence (Walker, 1979) but support a modified version of the theory proposed by Johnson (1995). Johnson suggested that researchers study two discrete populations when they study domestic violence. One population is represented by criminal justice research and is indicative of a patriarchal
society. Violence is primarily perpetrated by men and is rooted in issues of power and control. The second population is evident in family violence research that taps into the general population. The author labeled this type of violence common couple violence. Common couple violence is characterized by occasional outbursts that can be initiated by either the male or the female. This type of violence is not gender specific and is not cyclical in nature.

In the present study, due to the existence of both men and women in this population, and the absence of gender differences in injury, it is likely that the population represents what Johnson (1995) termed common couple violence. Even though the participants have entered the criminal justice system the population is characterized by a minor injury and appears symmetrical according to gender. A tentative conclusion is that common couple violence would be prominent in a population such as the population represented in this research, while patriarchal terrorism would function in a repeat offender population.

Individual perspectives on domestic violence examine individual characteristics to explain the occurrence of domestic violence. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stewart (1994) suggested that batterers could be classified along three dimension; the generality of the violence, the severity of the violence, and psychopathology. The authors suggested that batterers could be classified into three groups. Family only batters that exhibited minor marital violence within the family, dysphoric/borderline batterers that would engage in moderate to severe levels of family-specific violence and engage in occasional violence
outside the home, and generally violent antisocial individuals who engaged in both family violence and violence outside the home and also had a extensive criminal history.

The population examined for the present study appears to represent the family only group. Participants did not have an extensive criminal history, and did not have a criminal history of violence outside of the home. The presence of what could be categorized as minor violence in this population could represent a fit between Holtzworth-Munroe and Stewart’s (1994) conceptualization of a family only batterer and the population examined in the present study. The studies that conduct research from an individual perspective typically examine exclusively male behavior and are limited due to the exclusion of female perpetrators. The present study extends the current individual perspectives by showing that, at least for relationships where levels of injury are minor, no significant gender differences concerning injury were present.

Given that the present population appears similar to Johnson’s (1995) common couple violence population and Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart’s (1994) family only batterers, it makes intuitive sense that the entry into a family violence court program is well timed. Police involvement may intervene in the family before violence becomes a stable part of the family’s pattern of interaction. A family systems perspective suggests that the behavior of one individual influences the behavior of another and also operates in a reciprocal manner. Over time patterns of interaction become stable, and become part of the family’s pattern of interaction. Giles-Sims (1983) suggested that following an incident of violence, the violence would be encouraged or discouraged, depending on the response that was received. Interventions that target the first time offender may in fact
provide feedback into the family system that discourages the use of physical aggression and encourages more positive ways of conflict resolution.

Intervention at the point of initial arrest, for first time offenders, offers the opportunity to discourage the use of violence through court sanctions. Counseling provides a means to teach and encourage alternate ways of conflict resolution such as healthy communication and problem solving techniques. While intervention may be helpful at this point in the family life cycle, popular approaches to treatment are limited because they focus primarily on the offender’s behavior and do not acknowledge the interactional nature of the family system. In other areas of mental health practice best practice approaches have been employed. In domestic violence treatment it is time to ask the question does treatment work and for whom? The inclusion of varying population characteristics such as common couple violence and patriarchal terrorism will be instrumental in determining the best approaches to treatment.

Conflict is a normal part of all intimate relationships. Conflict in itself is not inherently destructive and is necessary for the identification of problem areas within a relationship. What can be problematic is the way that conflict is resolved. On one level many factors influence behavior. Family transitions such as the loss or addition of a member, job loss or other changes can trigger conflict in a relationship. If violence is perceived by the family members as an acceptable approach to conflict resolution, the violence is likely to become part of the family’s stable interactional pattern. A systemic approach to family violence is necessary because it takes into consideration intrapersonal variables such as family of origin, personality factors, and attachment issues. This
approach should take into consideration the needs of the family, including the safety of each family member. Finally, a systemic approach could be useful in examining the effects of larger systems such as the courts, current arrest policies, and treatment polices that interact to influence behavior within the family.

Systemic approaches have not been well received in the area of domestic violence intervention. The view that all members of the family system are able to influence their environment does not fit with a social and cultural perspective of patriarchal control. By employing perspectives that acknowledge the interactional nature of behavior within the family system it is possible to empower family members to make healthy changes within the system. The results of this research support the belief that the patriarchal model of domestic violence does not apply in all of the cases. While patriarchal terrorism may in fact fit for a subset of individuals arrested for domestic violence, it would be an injustice to apply this model to all cases of domestic violence.

What is required is a systemic approach to family violence that takes into account individual personality characteristics, interaction patterns among family members, interaction patterns with larger systems (criminal justice system, battered women’s shelters), and the boundaries that are in place that control information exchange (feedback). All of these factors need to be considered when developing an approach to assessment and treatment that is respectful of the stability of the family unit, safety of family members, and the relationship goals of each member.

When developing a systemic perspective of domestic violence it will be important to examine the influence of societal variables on the family. In the 1970’s, feminist
theories examined the power differences between men and women and how the effects of a patriarchal society influenced these differences. During this period in time, law enforcement personnel treated family violence as a problem to be handled within the family and took a “hands off” approach. Efforts of feminist researchers and battered women’s advocates promoted changes in the social response to domestic violence that altered the view that domestic violence was a family matter, to domestic violence being viewed as a criminal matter. With the introduction of stiffer criminal sanctions, and the implementation of more stringent arrest policies, a greater number of people (including women) are being arrested for domestic violence.

Considering the changes that have occurred at a societal level it will be important to determine how current domestic violence policies influence the family unit. If, as Johnson (1995) suggests, two discreet populations exist, it is likely that current policies addressing domestic violence would differentially influence the family based on family dynamics. Giles-Sims (1983) suggested that a threshold of viability existed where once the threshold was reached the victim chose to leave the relationship. A systemic perspective will need to take into consideration the centripetal and centrifugal forces that operate in the relationship in order to identify who is moving toward the relationship and who is moving away from it.

Gottman (1995) differentiated between Type I and Type II emotional reactors when examining men who were violent in intimate relationships. Type I reactors responded to marital conflict with a lowered heart rate while type II reactors responded with an elevated heart rate. Type I men were more aggressive than Type II men and the
wives of type I men reacted with fear and sadness. Both type I men and their wives exhibited elevated antisocial behavior scores. One interesting finding was that for couples with a type I male, the divorce/separation rate was zero at a two year follow up while for couples with a type II male the divorce separation rate was 27%. In developing a systemic perspective on domestic violence it will be important to determine how individual characteristics (level of aggression, personality factors) are related to the threshold of viability for couples. In other words, why do partners of type I males remain in the relationship. Gottman hypothesized that they remained out of fear but this hypothesis has yet to be tested

A systemic perspective will also need to take into consideration interaction patterns within the family. Jacobson (1994) determined that for couples where husband violence was prominent, some behaviors predicted the continuance of husband violence (wife is violent, wife withdraws, wife defends self), while no behaviors predicted the suppression of husband violence. Berns, Jacobson, and Gottman (1999) determined that violent men were both more demanding and more withdrawn than nonviolent men. Women with a violent husband were more demanding and less withdrawn than women with a nonviolent husband. Patterns of pursuit and distance that are in operation in the family should be considered for assessment and intervention.

Suggested Further Research

One focus for future research on domestic violence is theory building. It is necessary that theories allow for multiple forms of domestic violence. Currently, with a few exceptions, domestic violence is primarily viewed as men attempting to maintain
power and control over women. While this model is applicable in some cases it is not applicable in all. It is necessary to examine multiple forms of domestic violence that include; bi-directional violence (both parties initiate and engage in violence), patriarchal terrorism (male-female violence), violence that is primarily female to male, and same sex violence.

Once multiple forms of partner violence are identified the next step is to examine patterns of interaction in family relationships where domestic violence occurs. There has been some progress identifying patterns of interaction in relationships where the violence is in the male-female direction (Berns, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1999), however this research needs to be extended to other populations.

Giles-Simms (1983) suggested that victims reach a threshold of viability where they no longer perceive the relationship as being viable. It is possible that domestic violence offenders also reach a point where they are moving away rather than towards the relationship. It would be useful to determine if the individual is working out of the relationship or still clinging to the relationship to discover how these centripetal or centrifugal forces influence the tendency to remain in the relationship. It would be useful for future research to investigate the role of relationship investment in report characteristics of domestic violence offenders.

Feminist and individual perspectives are limited in that they take a reductionistic approach to domestic violence. The focus is on the perpetrator of the violence rather than the couple, or the family system. It is essential that researcher begin to examine patterns of interaction within the family system. The system would include children that are in
the home and also extended family. Interviewing children and assessing family relations would add a piece to the puzzle that is currently missing. A second consideration is the examination of the family’s interaction with larger systems such as the criminal justice system or social service systems.

Currently, treatment effectiveness focuses on recidivism as an outcome variable. While recidivism might give an idea about the offender’s reentry into the criminal justice system, tracking recidivism does little to quantify treatment effectiveness. A more useful approach would look at the change in relationship patterns in the family system or change in family structure.

It is not clear if there are gender differences in the perception of what constitutes physical assault. It is important that future research examine the relationship between gender and the perception of the severity of assault in a number of populations. Offender populations may differ from clinical populations, and gender differences may also exist for police officers that are reporting the assault. This in turn may influence the tendency to arrest in areas where preferred and mandatory arrest policies are in place.

It is possible that the pattern of interaction contributes to escalating conflict (Berns, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1999). While some acts of violence may be minor, they may contribute to a pattern of escalation that ends in severe violence and are independent of gender. One topic of future study would be to determine if an escalation process does exist and how family patterns differ according to varying populations.
Limitations of the Study

The generalizability of this study was limited by the characteristics of the participants. Clients entering this program had a limited criminal history and for many, this was a first offense. It would be an error to extend these findings to felony offenders or individuals with a significant criminal history. It is likely that repeat offenders would represent a patriarchal terrorism model as suggested by Johnson (1995) or Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart’s (1994) generally violent/antisocial batterers.

A second limitation concerns attempting to estimate a true level of violence in a relationship. The use of police reports represented what the author believed to be the best attempt to gauge the level of violence that occurred during a specific incident. The police reports relied on the victim perspective, the perpetrator perspective, and collaborating evidence to determine what in fact had occurred. Even though the perspective of the arresting officer was assumed to be neutral, it is possible that the reports were biased in either direction.

It is possible that the results of this study were limited by the use of binary coding methods. Results for the hypotheses that examined self-report of physical assault indicated that there were gender differences in self-report when the severe subscale was examined. Each scale was coded in a binary manner giving the opportunity to examine both severe and minor forms of assault tactics. When injury was examined the presence or absence of injury was coded. One explanation for the lack of significant results concerning injury was that no minor distinctions of severity were available. Future research would benefit from more sensitive measures of injury.
Summary

This chapter restated the problem, outlined the procedures used in this dissertation, discussed the conclusions and implications from the findings, and suggested future areas of study. A trend emerged that indicated that for the most part, men and women were fairly accurate in reporting their own use of violence. Also, differences emerged suggesting that women were more accurate than men in reporting severe violence. It was suggested that this difference could in fact reflect gender differences in perceptions of what constitutes minor and severe assault. No gender differences were found concerning injury.

The results from this study suggest that there are population differences that could determine treatment outcomes. Assessment and intervention needs to include the family system as well as the family’s response to larger systems in order to plan successful interventions. It is apparent that domestic violence is not just a function of a patriarchal society and should include common couple violence.

Suggestions for future research include an increased emphasis on the development of theories that take into account multiple populations and that examine patterns of interactions, both in the family and among larger social systems, with a focus on how these patterns differ according to the population that is sampled. A final suggestion is that researchers examine gender differences in the perception of violence for a variety of populations that include domestic violence offenders, clinical populations, and law enforcement officers. Although there are a large number of research articles that examine domestic violence from many perspectives, the field as a whole is still in its infancy. It is
necessary to develop more complex models of domestic violence that incorporate research from all available perspectives. We are just now beginning to break away from the social and political constraints and are beginning to examine this topic in a scientific manner. We are learning that it is necessary to pull from many areas of research and develop more complex images of what domestic violence looks like. It is no longer sufficient to use a “one size fits all” approach to researching or conceptualizing domestic violence.
REFERENCES


Vivian, D. (1990). The Adapted Conflict Tactics Scale, Department of Psychology, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York, 11794-2500, Unpublished manuscript.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD PERMISSION LETTER

Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Akron, OH 44325-2102
(330) 972-7686 Office
(330) 972-6281 Fax

February 23, 2004

Kirby Schmidtgal
3224 Patton Place NW
Canton, Ohio 44708

Mr. Schmidtgal:

The University of Akron’s Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) completed a review of the protocol entitled “Gender Differences in the Self-Reporting of Assault for Domestic Violence Offenders”. The IRB application number assigned to this project is 20040219.

The protocol qualified for Expedited Review and was approved on February 20, 2004. The protocol represented minimal risk to subjects. Additionally, the protocol matched the following federal category for expedited review:

Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected or will be collected solely for nonresearch purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis

This approval is valid until February 20, 2005 or until modifications are proposed to the project protocol, whichever may occur first. In either instance, an Application for Continuing Review must be completed and submitted to the IRB.

Please note that within one month of the expiration date of this approval, the IRB will forward an annual review reminder notice to you by email, as a courtesy. Nevertheless, please note that it is your responsibility as principal investigator to remember the renewal date of your protocol’s review.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation, you must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Sharon McWhorter, Associate Director

Cc: Stanley Silverman, Department Chair
    John Zaske, Advisor
    John Queener, IRB Vice Chair
    Phil Allen, IRB Chair
February 7, 2005

Kirby Schmidtgal
2924 Patton Place NW
Canton, Ohio 44708

Mr. Schmidtgal:

The University of Akron’s Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) completed a review of your application for continuing review entitled “Gender Differences in the Self-Reporting of Assault for Domestic Violence Offenders”. The IRB application number assigned to this project is 20040219-2.

The protocol qualified for Expedited Review and was approved on February 7, 2005. The protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for expedited review:

(5) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected or will be collected solely for non research purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis)

This approval is valid until February 20, 2006 or until modifications are proposed to the current project protocol, whichever may occur first. In either instance, an Application for Continuing Review must be completed and submitted to the IRB.

Please note that within one month of the expiration date of this approval, the IRB will forward an annual review reminder notice to you by email, as a courtesy. Nevertheless, please note that it is your responsibility as principal investigator to remember the renewal date of your protocol’s review. If your project is funded, failure to comply with IRB requirements could jeopardize your continued funding. Please submit your continuation application at least two weeks prior to the renewal date, to ensure the IRB has sufficient time to complete the review.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation, you must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Sharon McWhorter, Associate Director

Cc: James Rogers, Interim Chair
    Phil Allen, IRB Chair
APPENDIX B

VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PERMISSION LETTER

February 10, 2004

To whom it may concern:

This letter authorizes Mr. Kirby Schmidtgal, cand. Ph.D., to utilize agency records for the purpose of correlating agency cases and the documents upon which they are based, with the Conflict Tactics scale, CTS-2. Such use is limited to the parameter of his dissertation.

Records will be maintained within the agency’s policies and procedures of confidentiality and no identification of clients will appear beyond the level necessary for coding.

The agency strongly supports the research Mr. Schmidtgal is performing and believes the results will be an important addition to the field of knowledge and practice.

Sincerely,

Robert Denton, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence this 10th day of February 2004.

Signed ________
Arden Snyder

Celebrating 30 Years of Service in Summit County
Ohio's First Victim Assistance Program: Comprehensive Services to Victims of All Violent Crime
APPENDIX C

PERMISSION TO USE THE REVISED CONFLICT TACTICS SCALES

APPLICATION TO USE THE CTS

THIS APPLICATION COVERS (circle): (CTS2) CTSF Both
PROJECT TITLE/PURPOSE OF ADMINISTERING THE TESTS: Family Violence

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS TO BE TESTED
WOMEN: 75  MEN: 25  COUPLES (both tested) CHILDREN:
MONTH AND YEAR TESTING WILL BEGIN: Ongoing AND END:

DO YOU PLAN TO CARRY OUT AND PROVIDE US WITH PSYCHOMETRIC ANALYSES (See attached page) OF THE DATA?
If YES, please attach a paragraph describing your plan
If NO, please indicate the form in which you plan to provide data to us for purposes of our conducting psychometric analyses
   ___ Test answer sheets or test booklets (these will be returned to the Cooperating User by the Authors)
   ___ File of data on disk in one of the following formats (circle one) ASCII, WordPerfect, Word, SPSS, SAS, STATA.

Name of Cooperating User: Kirby Schmidtgal
Address: Victoria Avenue Poynam
          150 Fauver Street
          Akron, OH 44304
PHONE (330) 376-0091  FAX (330) 376-0851
E-Mail Kirby@uakron.edu

I agree to the terms of agreement on page 2 and to provide data as indicated above.

Cooperating User Signature: Kirby Schmidtgal DATE 9-30-02

STUDENTS: Please have the faculty advisor for this research sign this form:
Faculty Advisor Signature: __________________________________________________________________ DATE __________

(Please Print) Advisor Name, Title: ____________________________________________________________

Institution: __________________________________________________________

For the Test Authors*: ________________________________________________ DATE: ________

* The Test Authors of the CTS2 are Murray A. Straus, Sherry L. Hamby, Sue Boney-McCoy, and David B. Sugman. The Test Authors of the CTSPC are Murray A. Straus, Sherry L. Hamby, David Pinklethor, David W. Moore and Desmond Runyan.
RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIORS

No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with the other person, want different things from each other, or just have spats or fights because they are in a bad mood, are tired, or for some other reason. Couples also have many different ways of trying to settle their differences. This is a list of things that might happen when you have differences. Please circle how many times you did each of these things in the past year, and how many times your partner did them in the past year. If you or your partner did not do one of these things in the past year, but it happened before that, circle “7.”

How often did this happen?

1 = Once in the past year
2 = Twice in the past year
3 = 3-5 times in the past year
4 = 6 -10 times in the past year
5 = 11-20 times in the past year
6 = More than 20 times in the past year
7 = Not in the past year, but it did happen before
0 = This has never happened

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<td>1.</td>
<td>I showed my partner I cared even though we disagreed.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>My partner showed care for me even though we disagreed.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>I explained my side of a disagreement to my partner.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>My partner explained his or her side of a disagreement to me.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>I insulted or swore at my partner.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>I threw something at my partner that could hurt.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>I twisted my partner’s arm or hair.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>I had a sprain, bruise, or small cut because of a fight with my partner.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>My partner had a sprain, bruise, or small cut because of a fight with me.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>I showed respect for my partner’s feelings about an issue.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>My partner showed respect for my feelings about an issue.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>I made my partner have sex without a condom.</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>I pushed or shoved my partner.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>I used force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make my partner have oral or anal sex.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>I used a knife or gun on my partner.</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>I passed out from being hit on the head by my partner in a fight.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>My partner passed out from being hit on the head in a fight with me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>I called my partner fat or ugly.</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>My partner called me fat or ugly.</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>I punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt.</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>I destroyed something belonging to my partner.</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>I went to a doctor because of a fight with my partner.</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>My partner went to a doctor because of a fight with me.</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>I choked my partner.</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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35. I shouted or yelled at my partner.  
36. My partner did this to me.  
37. I slammed my partner against a wall.  
38. My partner did this to me.  
39. I said I was sure we could work out a problem.  
40. My partner was sure we could work it out.  
41. I needed to see a doctor because of a fight with my partner, but I didn’t.  
42. My partner needed to see a doctor because of a fight with me, but didn’t.  
43. I beat up my partner.  
44. My partner did this to me.  
45. I grabbed my partner.  
46. My partner did this to me.  
47. I used force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make my partner have sex.  
48. My partner did this to me.  
49. I stomped out of the room or house or yard during a disagreement.  
50. My partner did this to me.  
51. I insisted on sex when my partner did not want to (but did not use physical force).  
52. My partner did this to me.  
53. I slapped my partner.  
54. My partner did this to me.  
55. I had a broken bone from a fight with my partner.  
56. My partner had a broken bone from a fight with me.  
57. I used threats to make my partner have oral or anal sex.  
58. My partner did this to me.  
59. I suggested a compromise to a disagreement.  
60. My partner did this to me.  
61. I burned or scalded my partner on purpose.
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<td>62.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>63.</td>
<td>I insisted my partner have oral or anal sex (but did not use physical force).</td>
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<td>64.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>65.</td>
<td>I accused my partner of being a lousy lover.</td>
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<td>66.</td>
<td>My partner accused me of this.</td>
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<td>67.</td>
<td>I did something to spite my partner.</td>
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<td>68.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>69.</td>
<td>I threatened to hit or throw something at my partner.</td>
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<td>70.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>71.</td>
<td>I felt physical pain that still hurt the next day because of a fight with my partner.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
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<td>72.</td>
<td>My partner still felt physical pain the next day because of a fight we had.</td>
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<td>73.</td>
<td>I kicked my partner.</td>
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<td>74.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
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<td>75.</td>
<td>I used threats to make my partner have sex.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>My partner did this to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>I agreed to try a solution to a disagreement my partner suggested.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>My partner agreed to try a solution I suggested.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX E

SAMPLE POLICE REPORT
## APPENDIX F

### List of Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Variables</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Data Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INJ</td>
<td>The presence of victim injury as indicated by the injury section of the police report.</td>
<td>1 if injured 0 if not injured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCMINOR</td>
<td>Accurate report of minor physical assault as determined by a comparison of the self-report of minor physical assault using the CTS2 minor physical assault subscale and the police report of minor physical assault.</td>
<td>1 if Yes 0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCSEVER</td>
<td>Accurate report of severe physical assault as determined by a comparison of the self-report of severe physical assault on the CTS2 severe physical assault subscale and the police report of severe physical assault.</td>
<td>1 if Yes 0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCOV</td>
<td>Accurate report of overall physical assault as determined by a comparison of the self-report of overall physical assault on the CTS2 physical assault scale and the police report of overall physical assault.</td>
<td>1 if Yes 0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictor Variables</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Data Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>Gender of participant.</td>
<td>0 if male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 if female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 if Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 if Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>Age of participant.</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSSING</td>
<td>Marital status single.</td>
<td>1 if Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSCOHAB</td>
<td>Marital status cohabitating.</td>
<td>1 if Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSMARRI</td>
<td>Marital status married.</td>
<td>1 if Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSSEPDIV</td>
<td>Marital status separated or divorced.</td>
<td>1 if Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 if No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMELAPS</td>
<td>Time between arrest and assessment measured in days.</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G
CODING GUIDELINES

Each numbered section consists of a narrative for a number of acts of aggression. Each act of aggression is separated by a hyphen. The number of narrative items are not the same for each section. Please code each act of aggression using the scale listed below the item. Mark an X by the scale item that matches the narrative item. If two or more narrative items match the same scale item, code the scale item only once. It is possible that there will be fewer items marked on the scale than are represented on the narrative. There are also some narrative items that cannot be coded. These are listed below. When an item isn’t coded do not mark an X for that item on the item scale. It is possible that a narrative item does not fit any scale item and is not able to be coded according to the coding guidelines. It this is the case do not code the item. Please circle all no code items.

The suspect listed refers to the aggressor whose acts are being coded. The victim refers to the recipient of the aggression.

(7) I threw something at my partner that could hurt ________
(9) I twisted my partner’s arm or hair ________
(17) I pushed or shoved my partner ________
(21) I used a knife or gun on my partner ________
(27) I punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt ________
(33) I choked my partner ________
(37) I slammed my partner against a wall ________
(43) I beat up my partner ________
(45) I grabbed my partner ________
(53) I slapped my partner ________
(61) I burned or scalded my partner on purpose ________
(73) I kicked my partner ________

Grabbing hair is coded under 9

Item 9 I twisted my partners arm or hair

When the victim was “thrown around” but not into an object i.e., floor, nightstand, ground, etc. = 17
Pushed down = 17

Item 17 I pushed or shoved my partner

Threatened with knife or gun = 21 (Threat is the same as use for this item)

Item 21 I used a knife or gun on my partner

When the word struck is used but it is not defined (not defined as closed or open fist; or slapped) code = 27

Item 27 I punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt

Grabbed by the neck or throat = 33

Item 33 I choked my partner

If item indicates that the victim was pushed or thrown into an object code = 37

Tackled = 37

Item 37 I slammed my partner against a wall.

Snatched = 45 I grabbed my partner

Dragged = 45 I grabbed my partner

Wrestling = 45

Item 45 I grabbed my partner

No codes = do not code item as physical assault

There is no code for bit

There is no code for scratched

There is no code for cut with something other than a knife
APPENDIX H

REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS

Table 5

Specific Hypothesis 1.1: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Relationship Between Gender and the Self-Report of Overall Physical Assault

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df1/df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p (one-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Hypothesis 1.1:</strong> Female perpetrator's self-report of overall physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator's self-report of overall physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CTS2 overall physical assault scale when perpetrator’s age, couple's marital status, and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Model:</strong> ACCOV = .900 + .005(Gender) - .001(Age) - .005(MSSING) + .002(MSMARRI) - .12(MSSEPDIV) - .001(TIMELAPS) + E.</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>1/197</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restricted Model:</strong> ACCOV = .919 - .001(Age) - .009(MSSING) + .001(MSMARRI) - .107(MSSEPDIV) - .001(TIMELAPS) + E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .01
ACCOV = Accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures. E = Error.
None of the variables were significant.
Table 6

Specific Hypothesis 1.3: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Relationship Between Gender and the Self-Report of Minor Physical Assault.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df1/df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p (one-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Hypothesis 1.3:</strong> Female perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault will be more accurate than male perpetrator’s self-report of minor physical assault as indicated by police reports coded using the CT52 minor physical assault subscale when perpetrator’s age and couple’s marital status and the time between arrest and assessment are held constant.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Model: ACCMINOR = .447 - .145(Gender) + .003(Age)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- .203(MISSING) + .012(MSMARRI) + .179(MSSEPDIV) + .001(TIMELAPS) + E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Model: ACCMINOR = .401 + .003(Age) - .192(MISSING) + .016(MSMARRI) + .146(MSSEPDIV) - .001(TIMELAPS) + E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .01

ACCMINOR = Accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures. E = Error.

None of the variables were found to be significant.
Table 7

Specific Hypothesis 2.1: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Relationship Between Gender and Victim Injury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df/df0</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p (one-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Hypothesis 2.1:</strong> When injury is tested, female victims will be injured more often than male victims as indicated by police reports when perpetrator’s age, couple’s marital status, and the time between intake and assessment are held constant.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Model: INJ = .551 + .01(Gender) + .002(Age) + .022(MSSING) + .079(MSMARRI) + .092(MSSEPDIV) + .01(TIMELAPS) + E.</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>1/197</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>5.633</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Model: INJ = .555 + .002(Age) + .024(MSSING) + .078(MSMARRI) + .095(MSSEPDIV) + .01(TIMELAPS) + E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .016
INJ = Victim injured; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures. E = Error.
Time between arrest and assessment was significant at p = .000
### Table 8: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Interaction Between Gender and Marital Status in Predicting the Accuracy of Self-Report of Overall Physical Assault

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P (two-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific Hypothesis 1um There is a statistically significant interaction between gender and marital status in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Model: ACCOV = 0.891 - 1.790(Gender) - 0.00(Age) - 0.05(MARRIED) - 0.03(SEPARED) - 1.94(Female) - 0.05(MISSING) + 0.10(MISSING) - 0.05(RESPFV) - 0.01(RESPFV)</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.578</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Model: ACCOV = 0.909 - 0.375(Gender)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Alpha level after Type I error adjustment = 0.05 for both physical assault: MARRIED = Marital status single; SEPARED = Marital status gap and divorced. TIMELAP = Time between arrest and intake procedures. F = F-Ratio.
Table 9

Specific Hypothesis 3.2: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Interaction Between Gender and Age in Predicting the Accuracy of Self-Report of Overall Physical Assault.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df1/df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p (two-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific Hypothesis 3.2: There is a statistically significant two-way interaction between gender and age in predicting the accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Model: ACCOV = .921 - .04(Gender) - .002(Age) - .001(TIMELAPS) - .005(MISSING) + .004(MSMARRI) - .125(MSSEPDIV) + .093(Female * Age) + E.</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>1/196</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.567</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Model: ACCOV = .900 + .057(Gender) - .001(Age) - .001(TIMELAPS) - .005(MISSING) + .002(MSMARRI) - .120(MSSEPDIV) + E.</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .01
ACCov = Accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault; MISSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures. E = Error.
None of the variables were found to be significant.
Table 10

Specific Hypothesis 4.1: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Interaction Between Gender and Marital Status in Predicting Victim Injury.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df1/df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p (two-tailed)</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Model: INJ = .860 + .01(Gender) - .003(Age) + .003(TIMELAPS) + .014(MISSING) + .02(MSMARRI) + .18(MSEPDIV) - .247(Female * MISSING) + .036(Female * MSMARRI) + .021(Female * MSEPDIV) + E.</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>3/194</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td>.621</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Model: INJ = .860 - .005(Gender) - .003(Age) + .002(TIMELAPS) - .026(MISSING) + .026(MSMARRI) + .200(MSEPDIV) + E.</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .016
INJ = Victim injured; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married;
MSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures.
E = Error.
None of the variables were found to be significant.
Table 11

Specific Hypothesis 4.1: Results for the Hypothesis Testing the Interaction Between Gender and Age in Predicting Victim Injury.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis and Models</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>df1/df2</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Model</strong>: INJ = .874 - .069(Gender) - .003(Age) + .002(TIMELAPS) + .026(MISSING) + .027(MSMARRI) + .197(MSSEPDI) - .002(Female * Age) + E.</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>1/196</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Restricted Model**: INJ = .860 - .060(Gender) - .003(Age) + .002(TIMELAPS) + .026(MISSING) + .027(MSMARRI) + .197(MSSEPDI) + E.

Note. Alpha level after Bonferroni-type adjustment = .016
- INJ = Victim injured; MISSING = Marital Status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married;
- MSSEPDI = Marital status separated or divorced; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and intake procedures.
- E = Error.
- None of the variables were found to be significant.
### APPENDIX I

**INTERCORELLATIONS BETWEEN CRITERION AND PREDICTOR VARIABLES**

Table 12

Intercorrelations Between the Criterion Variables Victim Injury, and Accuracy of Self-Report and Predictor Variables of Age, Gender, Marital Status, and Time Between Arrest and Assessment \( (N = 204) \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INJ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.166*</td>
<td>.181**</td>
<td>-.109</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>-.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ACCMINOR</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>-.163*</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>-.111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ACCSEVER</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.267**</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>-.028</td>
<td>-.075</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>-.115</td>
<td>.159*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ACCOVER</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>-.101</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. MSSING</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.323**</td>
<td>-.080</td>
<td>-.380**</td>
<td>-.277**</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>-.056</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. MSMARRI</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.144*</td>
<td>-.684**</td>
<td>.280**</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. MSSEPDIV</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.169*</td>
<td>.156*</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. MSCOHAB</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.128</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. AGE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. TIMELAPS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Gender</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INJ = Victim Injury; ACCMINOR = Accuracy of self-report of minor physical assault; ACCSEVER = Accuracy of self-report of severe physical assault; ACCOVER = Accuracy of self-report of overall physical assault; MSSING = Marital status single; MSMARRI = Marital status married; MSSEPDIV = Marital status separated or divorced; MSCOHAB = Marital status cohabitating; AGE = Clients age at intake; TIMELAPS = Time between arrest and assessment.

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)