

EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON THOSE WHO USE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE



Dr. Christauria Welland
Clinical Psychologist

Symposium on Domestic Abuse and Violence in Catholic Families

Catholic University of America

July 7, 2016

ST. JOHN PAUL II

- ✦ Whenever a man is responsible for offending a woman's personal dignity and vocation, he acts contrary to his own personal dignity and his own vocation.

On the Dignity of Women, 1988, #10



RISK FACTORS FOR PERPETRATION OF IPV

- ✦ Persons with certain risk factors are more likely to become victims or perpetrators of intimate partner violence (IPV).
- ✦ Those risk factors contribute to IPV but might not be direct causes.
- ✦ Not everyone who is identified as "at risk" becomes involved in violence.

CDC, 2016

RISK FACTORS FOR PERPETRATION OF IPV

✦ **DEMOGRAPHIC**

- ✦ Younger age
- ✦ Low income
- ✦ Unemployment
- ✦ Stress: Financial, parenting, work-related, acculturation

✦ **FAMILY**

- ✦ Witnessing parental IPV
- ✦ Being child abuse victim

✦ **PEER ASSOCIATIONS & INFLUENCE**

- ✦ Association with deviant peers

Capaldi, Knoble, Wu Shortt, & Kim, (2012)

RISK FACTORS FOR PERPETRATION OF IPV

✦ **PSYCHOLOGICAL & BEHAVIORAL**

- ✦ Conduct disorder
- ✦ Antisocial Behavior
- ✦ Early aggression
- ✦ Negative Emotionality:
Anger & Hostility
- ✦ Low verbal IQ
- ✦ Some personality
disorders
- ✦ Depression (for female
abusers)

- ✦ Alcohol use
- ✦ Drug use
- ✦ Polysubstance use

COGNITION

- ✦ Hostility towards women
(by men)
- ✦ Attitudes approving of
violence

RISK FACTORS FOR PERPETRATION OF IPV

▣ RELATIONSHIP

- Marital status, especially for separated & divorced women
- Relationship conflict
- Insecure attachment
- Jealousy and negative emotionality



TODAY'S PERPETRATOR IS OFTEN YESTERDAY'S VICTIM: CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN THE FAMILY OF ORIGIN

- ✦ Male abusers produce higher scores on measures of psychopathology than control groups.
- ✦ They often have symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, related to childhood experience of and exposure to violence.
- ✦ This trauma affects their sense of self, their ability to trust, and their view of the world, and affects their ability to withstand real or perceived stressors.

Welland & Ribner, 2007

LEARNING FROM PARENTS

- ✦ Learning violent behavior through modeling by adults, especially parents, is the basic tenet of *social learning theory* as applied to IPV. As Rogelio stated:
- ✦ “I learned that from my father. That you have to hit women to teach them that you're a man... You use force because, to start with, you have that tradition that that's the way to educate her. By force. To the wife, but also to your children. To both. That's the mentality you have. That's the way you teach people, by hitting them, shoving them, and shouting at them.”

Welland & Ribner, 2007

HEALING & RECOVERY, NOT JUST RETRAINING

- ✦ Because the abuse that men perpetrate is often patterned on the abuse they suffered as children, many researchers and clinicians suggest that retraining is inadequate as a means to change.
- ✦ Abusers need healing and recovery, like any other victim, before they can stop using the coping patterns affected by their own victimization.

UNDERSTANDING WITHOUT EXCUSING

- ✦ We need to balance the recognition of many of our clients' status as past victims with their current status as perpetrators.
- ✦ This can be done without ever insinuating that their past experience excuses their present behavior.
- ✦ Not to recognize past trauma and empathize with it is to risk never building rapport with these men
- ✦ Thus we lose the opportunity to make a profound difference in their lives and in the lives of their families.

ABUSERS WHO HAVE WITNESSED IPV

- ✦ If the therapist has the trust of the clients, the men themselves can tell you all you want to know about how it feels, since about half of them have been in the position of a terrified, angry, sorrowing child watching helplessly while their mother is attacked.
- ✦ A very powerful intervention is to allow men to role-play their child's experience when they attacked their partner, with the goal of developing empathy in the client.

THE BISHOPS OF MEXICO ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

Violence within families breeds new forms of social aggression, since “family relationships can also explain the tendency to a violent personality. This is often the case with families where:

- ✦ communication is lacking
- ✦ defensive attitudes predominate
- ✦ members are not supportive of one another
- ✦ family activities that encourage participation are absent
- ✦ the parental relationship is frequently conflictual and violent
- ✦ relationships between parents and children are marked by hostility.

Violence within the family is a breeding-ground of resentment and hatred in the most basic human relationships”.

Amoris Laetitia, 2016, #51

EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON THE PERSON WHO COMMITS IT

- ✓ Incarceration
- ✓ Loss of employment
- ✓ Increased abuse of alcohol or drugs
- ✓ Isolation and depression
- ✓ Loss of love and trust of family
- ✓ Financial burden as consequence of violence
- ✓ Distance in relationship with children
- ✓ Existential diminishment
- ✓ Distance in relationship with God

Welland, C. & Ribner, N. (2007). *Healing from Violence: Latino Men's Journey to a New Masculinity*



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THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND IPV

THE SPOUSAL (NUPTIAL) MEANING OF THE BODY IS A SIGN OF THE IMAGE OF GOD

- ✦ The call to love as God loves is inscribed in the human body as male and female. The nuptial meaning of the body is *“the capacity of expressing love, that love in which the man-person becomes a gift and—by means of this gift—fulfills the meaning of his being and existence.”*

St John Paul II, 16/01/1980

- ✦ **FROM THIS TEACHING IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS CONTRARY TO THE SACREDNESS OF THE HUMAN PERSON AND THE HUMAN BODY**

WHAT DO ABUSERS HAVE IN COMMON?

- ❖ Approval of violence and force
- ❖ Distortion of causes of behavior, theirs and others
- ❖ Assumption that partner has negative intent
- ❖ Less able to use reasoning
- ❖ Higher level of arousal in conflict situations
- ❖ More generalized anger and hostility
- ❖ Labeling many negative emotions (hurt, jealousy, fear) as anger
- ❖ More likely to be unemployed
- ❖ More likely to abuse substances
- ❖ More likely to have witnessed family violence in childhood

Wexler, 2013. The STOP Domestic Violence Program

TWO BROAD CATEGORIES OF ABUSERS

INTIMATE PARTNER TERRORISM

- ❖ Primary abuser almost always male
- ❖ Abuse more frequent and severe, especially emotional abuse
- ❖ Systematic use of “coercive control”
- ❖ Abused partner afraid, demoralized, feels trapped

SITUATIONAL COUPLE VIOLENCE

- ❖ Not characterized by “coercive control”
- ❖ May be initiated equally by men or women

Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Johnson, 2008

TYOLOGY OF MALE PERPETRATORS: NOT ALL ARE ALIKE!



- ❖ Generally violent aggressor
- ❖ Family only
- ❖ Low level antisocial
- ❖ Borderline/Dysphoric

Holtzworth-Munroe, 2000

WHY IS THIS USEFUL INFORMATION TO HAVE?

- ✦ Helps to assess the abuser for most appropriate treatment; not all abusers respond equally to treatment
- ✦ Helps when interviewing those who have been or are being abused, to assess issues of risk and danger
- ✦ Makes our counsel carry more weight, e.g., if we understand better what the abuser/abused person is experiencing
- ✦ Provides direction for prevention efforts

TYOLOGY OF MALE PERPETRATORS



GENERALLY VIOLENT AGGRESSOR

- ❖ Generally antisocial personality; may have criminal history
- ❖ Commits instrumental violence across situations/victims
- ❖ Hostile and belligerent
- ❖ More likely to be victim of child abuse
- ❖ Limited capacity for empathy and attachment
- ❖ Very negative attitudes towards women; rigid views of relationships
- ❖ Substance abuse is common
- ❖ High levels of psychological and sexual abuse
- ❖ Attitudes supportive of violence
- ❖ Little or no remorse

TYOLOGY OF MALE PERPETRATORS



FAMILY ONLY

- ❖ Little or no evidence of psychopathology
- ❖ Mild social skills deficits
- ❖ Moderately dependent and jealous
- ❖ Passive and passive/aggressive style
- ❖ Overcontrolled hostility: Suppresses emotions/withdraws
- ❖ Later explodes into violence
- ❖ Acts of abuse are usually less severe
- ❖ They feel remorse for their actions
- ❖ Least likely to be violent outside the home
- ❖ More open attitudes towards women (in comparison)
- ❖ Least likely to have been abused as children

TYOLOGY OF MALE PERPETRATORS



LOW LEVEL ANTISOCIAL

- ❖ Overlapping research category, between Generally Violent and Family Only
- ❖ Less generalized violence than GVA
- ❖ More violent than Family Only

TYOLOGY OF MALE PERPETRATORS



DYSPHORIC/BORDERLINE

- ❖ Higher levels of psychopathology, impulsivity, and aggression
- ❖ Experienced parental rejection and abuse
- ❖ Emotionally volatile
- ❖ Violent only in the family
- ❖ More isolated, less socially competent
- ❖ Highest levels of anger, depression, jealousy, and fear of abandonment
- ❖ Depression and feelings of inadequacy are prominent
- ❖ Most severely abused as children
- ❖ [May threaten suicide; may commit femicide/suicide]

FACING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ABUSING

- ✦ Mistreating a woman and being violent doesn't lead to anything good. They're things that, instead of taking us to a happier place, to union with each other, we're throwing ourselves away. We lose what's most important to us. I was like that until my eyes were opened, when this problem happened. Because I've talked to my wife since then, and she has told me how I was, how I killed the love she had for me bit by bit, and the affection. All those things made me think, they opened my eyes.

“Blas” : Welland, 1999

FEMALE ABUSERS

- ✦ Female-to-male IPV has been increasingly researched in the last decade
- ✦ There was/is fear of *blaming the victim*. We must exercise caution and examine the facts
- ✦ Retaliation or self-defense can be an explanation in some cases
- ✦ The statistics for female-to-male IPV are on a par with male-to-female IPV, though women are more often injured and negatively impacted
- ✦ Children are as negatively affected by exposure to female IPV as to male IPV

FEMALE PERPETRATORS

- ✦ Risk factors are similar to male perpetrators: history of witnessing IPV, child abuse, corporal punishment, parental substance abuse, parental separation, insecure attachment and hypersensitivity to abandonment.
- ✦ Depression in women puts them at risk of abusing.
- ✦ Conduct disorder, antisocial personality, history of aggression, substance abuse.
- ✦ Female perpetrators have high rates of PTSD.
- ✦ Incarcerated female perpetrators were just as likely as partner-abusive men to use minimization, denial and blaming.

POPE FRANCIS: NO TO VIOLENCE

- ✦ Do not let the day end without making peace in your family. Our first reaction when we are annoyed should be one of heartfelt blessing, asking God to bless, free and heal that person.
- ✦ “On the contrary bless, for to this you have been called, that you may obtain a blessing” (1 Pet 3:9).
- ✦ If we must fight evil, so be it; but we must always say “no” to violence in the home.

Amoris Laetitia, 2016, #104

A TURNING POINT IN MY LIFE

✦ In Memoriam:

Ana y Dolores, 1980

Lomas de Santo Domingo, DF



“YOU DID IT TO ME”

Matthew 25



SIN GOLPES

Cómo transformar la respuesta violenta de los hombres
en la pareja y la familia

A Cultural Treatment Model for Latin American Partner-Abusive Men



Welland & Wexler
Editorial Pax, México, 2007

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WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HEAL THE EFFECTS OF USING ABUSE AND VIOLENCE, SPIRITUALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY?

- ✦ Stay tuned tomorrow!
- ✦ Friday 8:45 – 9:30
 - ✦ The Archdiocese of Chicago Model, Rev. Chuck Dahm
- ✦ Friday 10:30 – 11:45
 - ✦ How to motivate the abuser to seek healing
 - ✦ Dr. Christauria Welland & Maxine Davis
- ✦ Books available for sale (30% discount) at the Pax in Familia table

A TIME OF MERCY FOR US ALL



This is the time for mercy. It is the favorable time to heal wounds, a time not to be weary of meeting all those who are waiting to see and to touch with their hands the signs of the closeness of God, a time to offer everyone the way of forgiveness and reconciliation.

*Pope Francis, Vespers of Divine Mercy
Sunday, 2015*