Coercive Control

Evan Stark, Ph.D. MSW
Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University

Magdelena Lucsak: Killer or Victim?

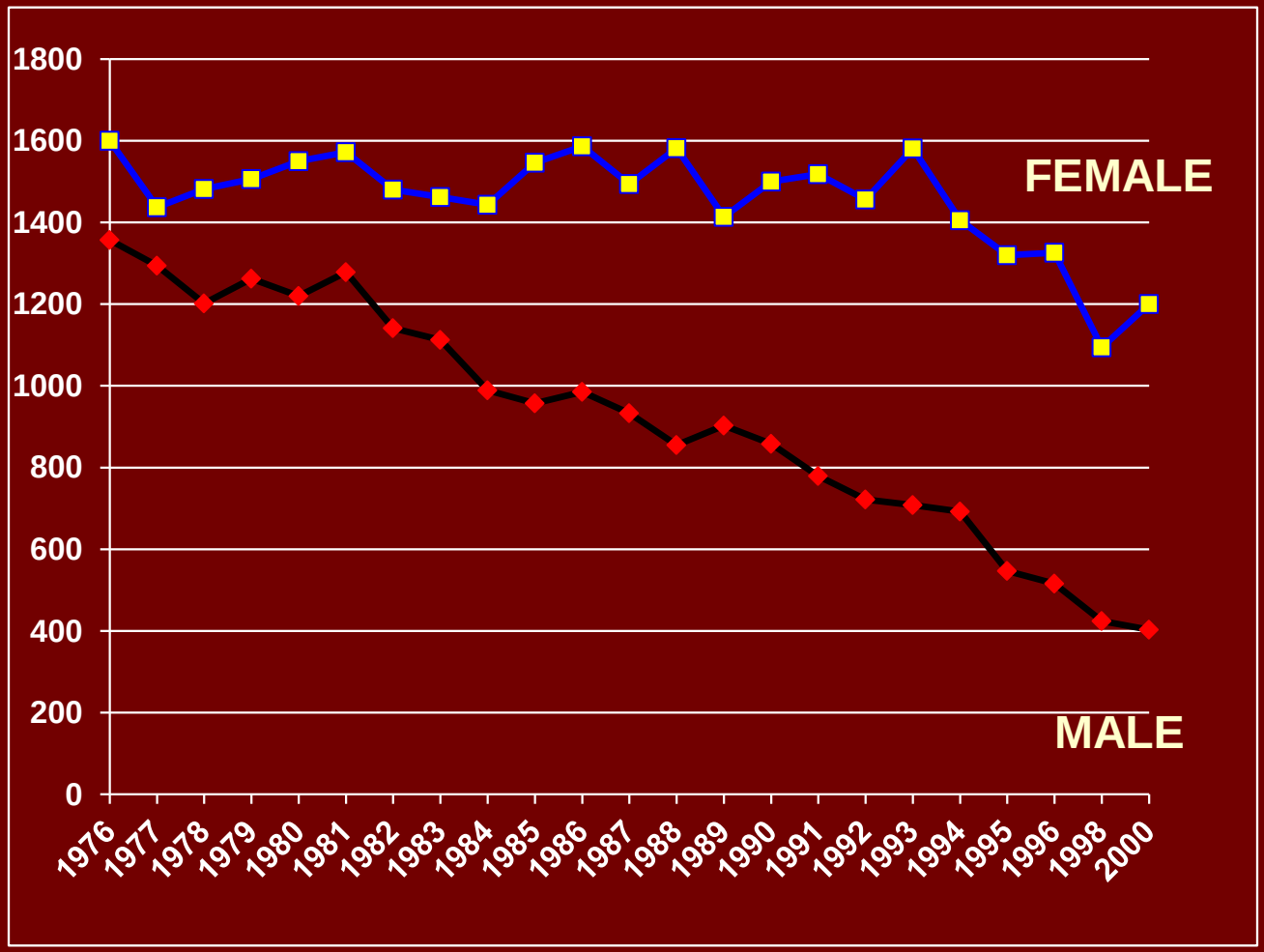
CLOSING THE GAP

LOOK BEYOND VIOLENCE	• why the violence model trivializes and normalizes woman's abuse.
UNDERSTAND COERCIVE CONTROL	• Identify the Dynamics, Scope and Consequences of Coercive Control
ADAPTING COERCIVE CONTROL TO IMPROVE PRACTICE\	• Balancing a Discourse of Safety, Rights and Empowerment
THE NEW OFFENSE	• Opportunities & Challenges • Grievability & The Dance of Justice

WHAT (IS/*WAS*) WRONG?

THE ASSAULT/HARASSMENT/INJURY MODEL
MULTIPLE DEFINITIONS
LOW REPORTING
LOW LEVEL OF CHARGES/CONVICTIONS
POOR OUTCOMES
COST INEFFECTIVE
LOW MORALE

U.S. INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RATE DECLINE 1976-2000 FBI (SHR, 1976-2000)



Life on Three Planets

Coercively Controlling Male & Cooperating Victim

Planet I

Domestic Violence: Criminal Charges;

CRIMINAL COURT

Neglectful Mother & Invisible men

Child Protection

Planet 3

Contact & Custody

FAMILY COURT

Planet 2

'Good Enough' Father & Alienating Mom

Adapted from Radford & Hester, 2006

the DEGENDERED model of partner abuse

.VIOLENCE FOCUSED

.INCIDENT BASED

.INJURY AS MARKER

.CALCULUS OF HARMS

.INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

. HOME AS LOCALE OF CRIME

NOT WHAT WOMEN & CHILDREN EXPERIENCE

Attrition from Report to Punishment (Hester 2006; Hester et al 2008)

	Reports to police	arrests	charges	convictions
2001/2002 Three areas In NE England	869	222 25.5% of incidents	60 14% of incidents	31 3.6% of incidents

Abuse and Sexual Coercion are TRIVIALIZED & NORMALIZED

When viewed through a violence lens

UK Rape cases in context of DV:

- More likely to result in arrest
- More likely to be withdrawn
- Less likely to be charged
- Less likely to result in conviction
- Convictions for lower charge of assault

(Hester, M. (2013) *From Report to Court: Rape Cases and the Criminal Justice System in the North East,* Bristol:Unversity of Bristol in association with the Northern Rock Foundation.

ABUSE CAN BE PREVENTED

- Incidence (New) = Prevalence (All)/Duration

14.6% of women in last 5 yrs. (Prevalence)
Average Duration = 7.3 yrs
Incidence = 2-3%

Of every 100 cases of abuse:

14-21 are new
79-86 involve ongoing abuse
60-80 involve coercive control

Routine Enquiry and Early Intervention

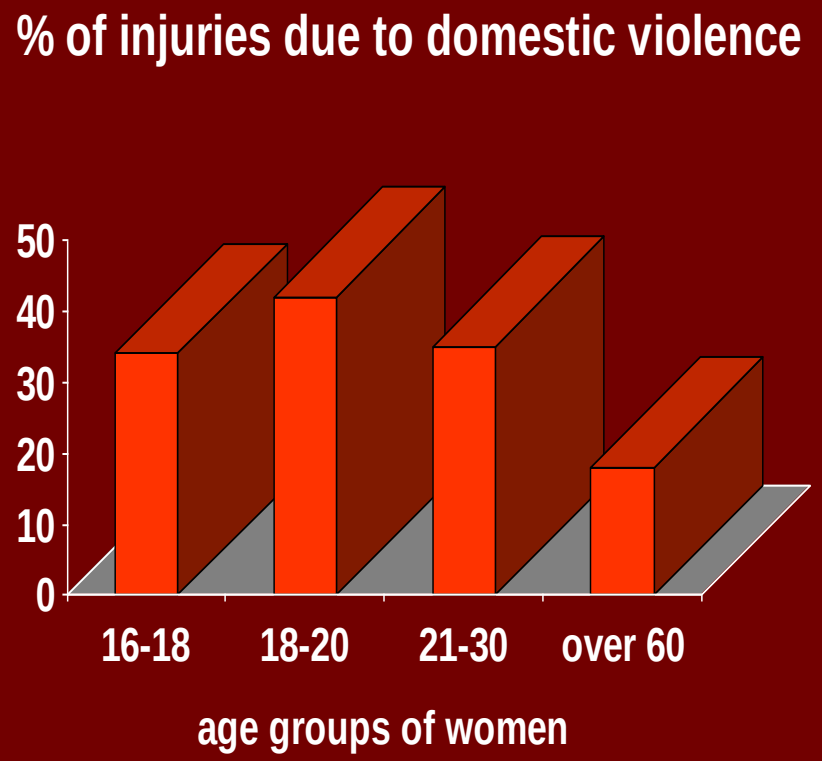
"Violence wasn't the worst part."

TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM OF ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

TYPOLOGY OF ABUSE

- FIGHTS
- PARTNER ASSAULT (20%-40%)
- COERCIVE CONTROL (60%-80%)

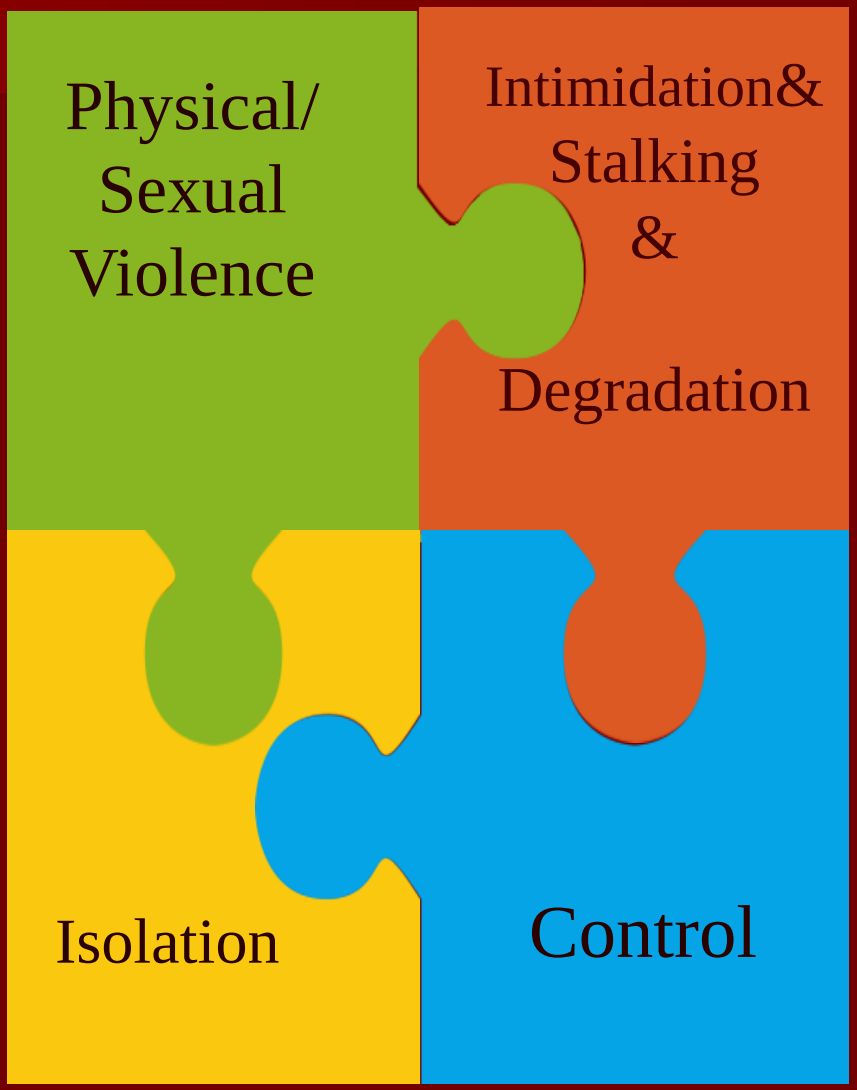
across the lifespan....



IN THE CONTEXT OF SEXUAL INEQUALITY

CC is a strategic, gender-based course of oppressive conduct designed to secure male privilege and dominate a partner by making them afraid, depriving them of resources and violating their rights and liberties.

Coercive Control



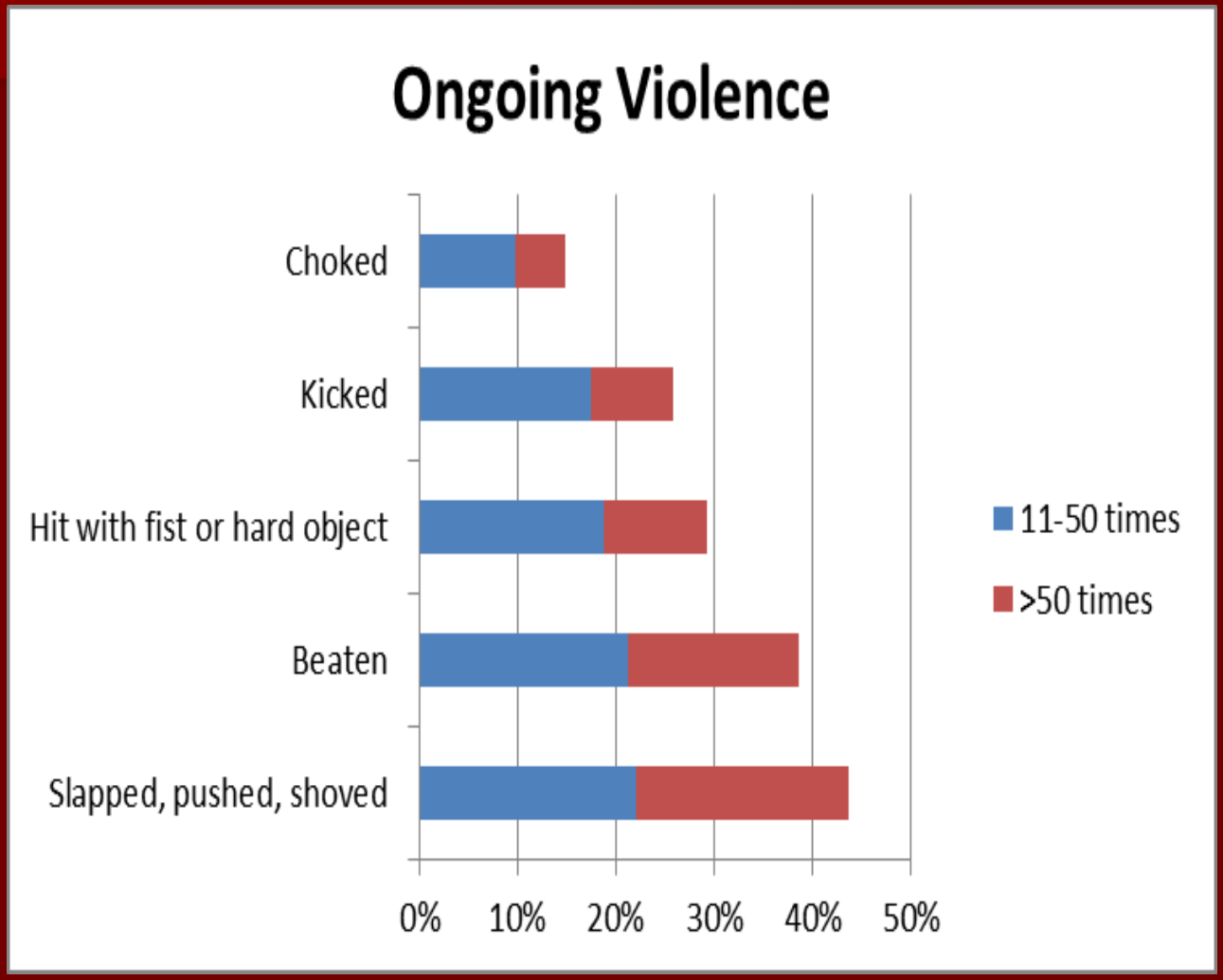
Coercion

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse….regardless of gender or sexuality. This encompasses …the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

(“New Definition of Domestic Violence” Home Office, 2014.)

Ongoing Violence: Female Victims in US (NIPSVS, CDC. 2010)



UK: “OFTEN” or “All THE TIME”

- 65.5% pushed or shoved
- 58” “shook” or “roughly handled”
- 55.2% “smacked” or “slapped” or twisted their arm
- 46.6% Kicked, bit or punched them
  - **Rees, Agnew-Davies & Barkham, 2006;**

Domestic Violence Offenders

- 50 % of perpetrators: >1 repeat incident < 3 yrs
- 18% reoffended against different partners (29 > 10 offenses)
- DV perpetrators arrested for more nondv offenses (2.24) than dv offenses (.83)
- DV offenders convicted involved in fewer incidents and more likely to be convicted again
- Previous dv offenders strongest predictor of repeat

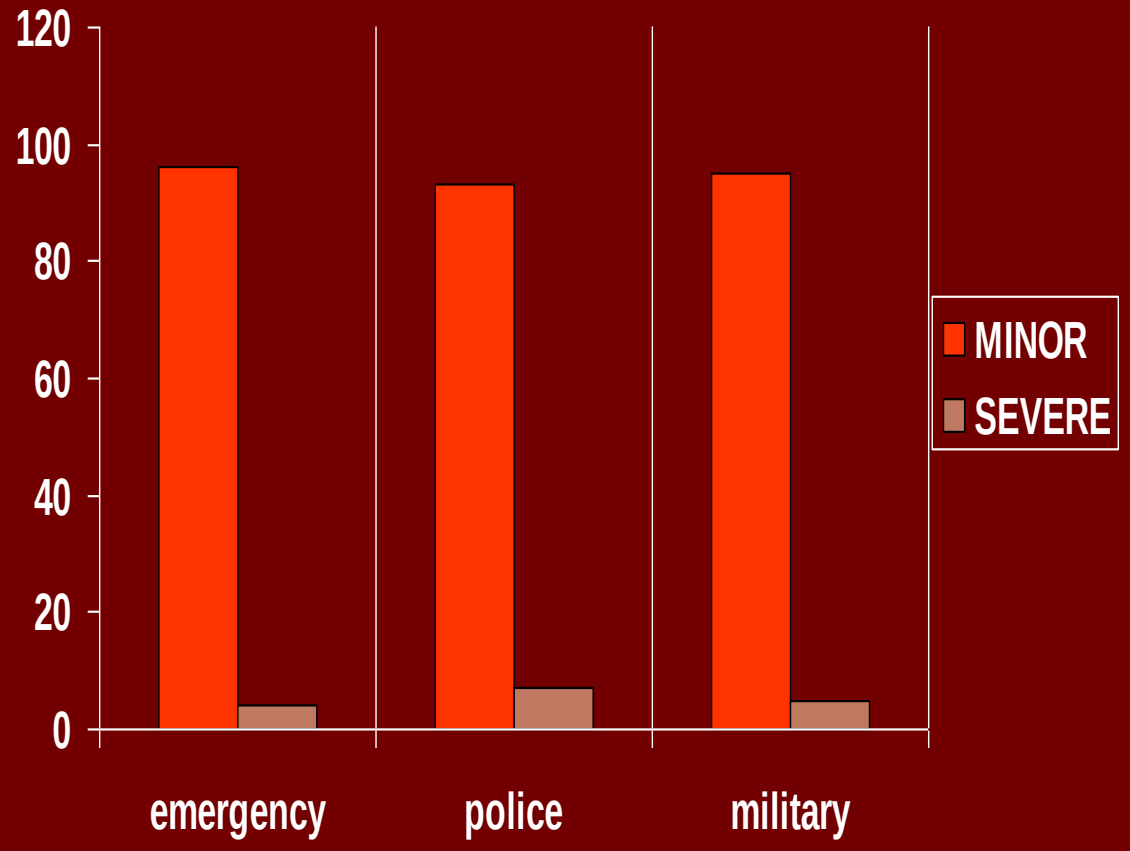
- (Hester et al 2008)

FREQUENCY IS GENDERED

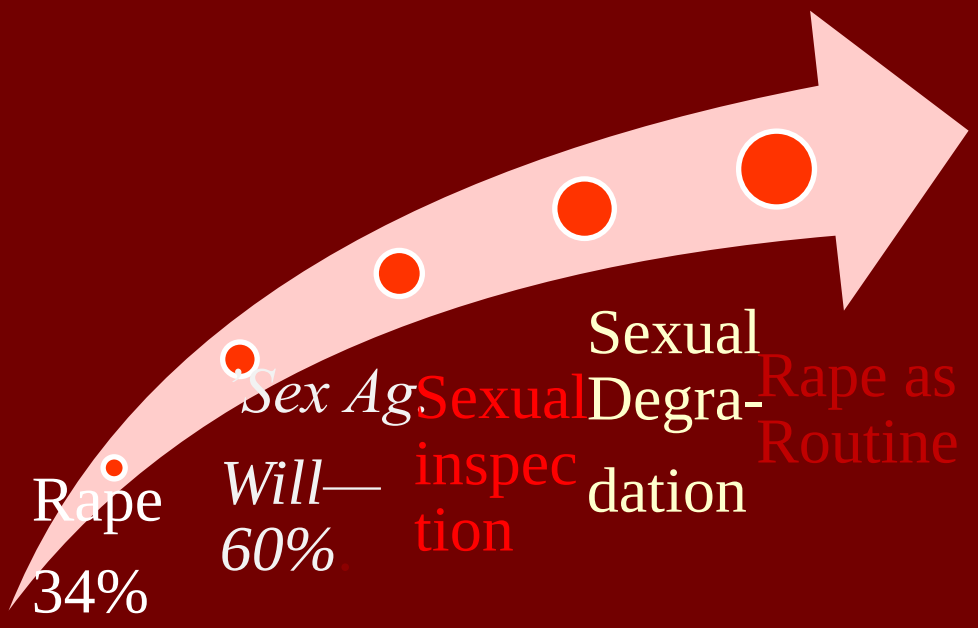
- Female sole perpetrators < 4% of police reports
- 53% of men but only 3% of women > 3 reports
- BUT...women are arrested in 1 of every 3 reports. Men are arrested in only l in 10 reports

- Hester, M. Who Does what to Whom? Gender and domestic violence perpetrators in English police records. BJC 2013 (Forthcoming)

IS DV ABOUT SEVERE INJURY?



SEXUAL COERCION



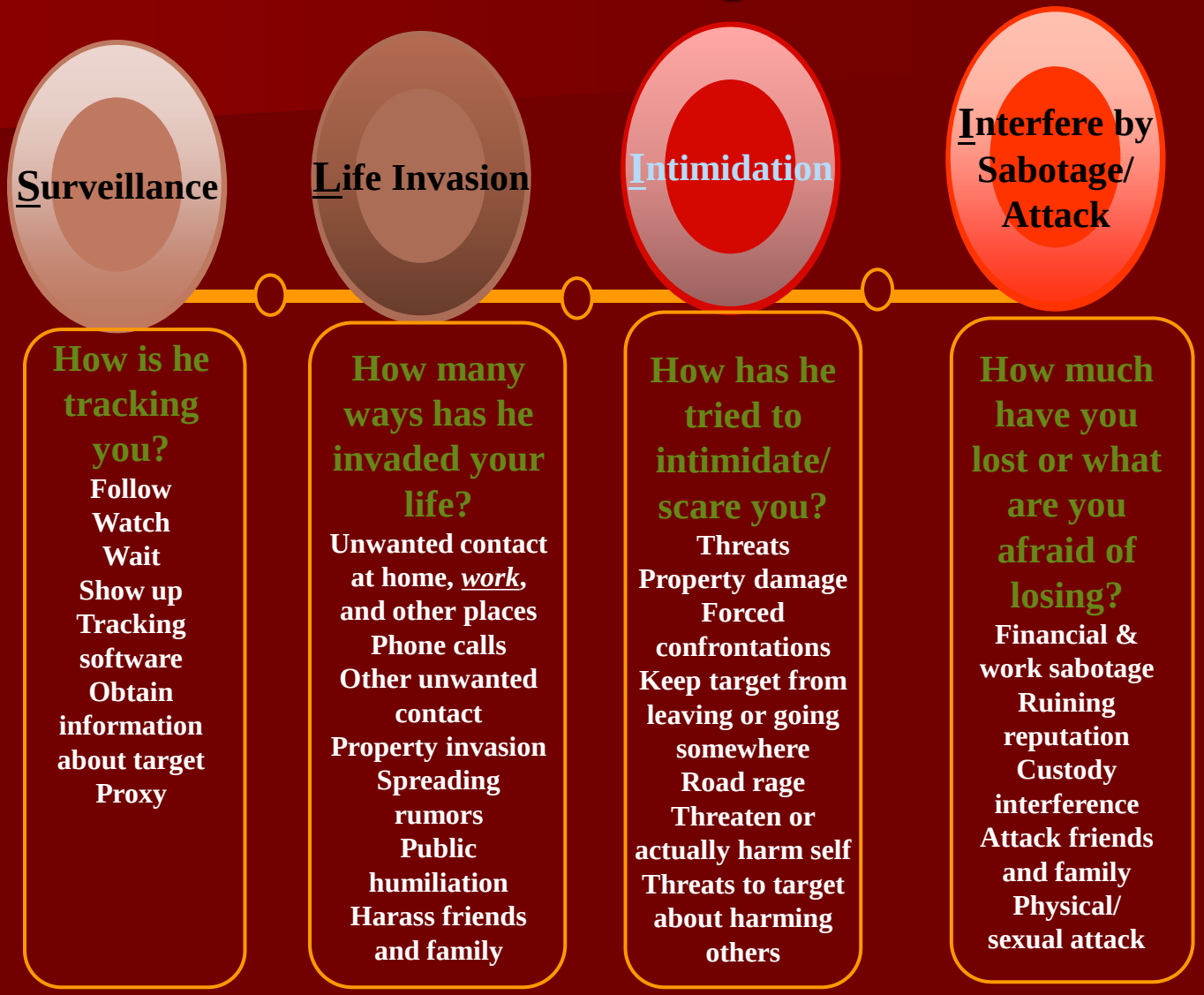
Rape as Routine

- He told me he wanted to fool around and I told him no. He kept persisting and taking off my clothes and I kept fighting him off. He took his belt and tied my hands behind my back aqnd he had fun. I never wanted him to do that again like that so I never said ‘no.
- ***Dila, age 26***

PARTNER STALKING

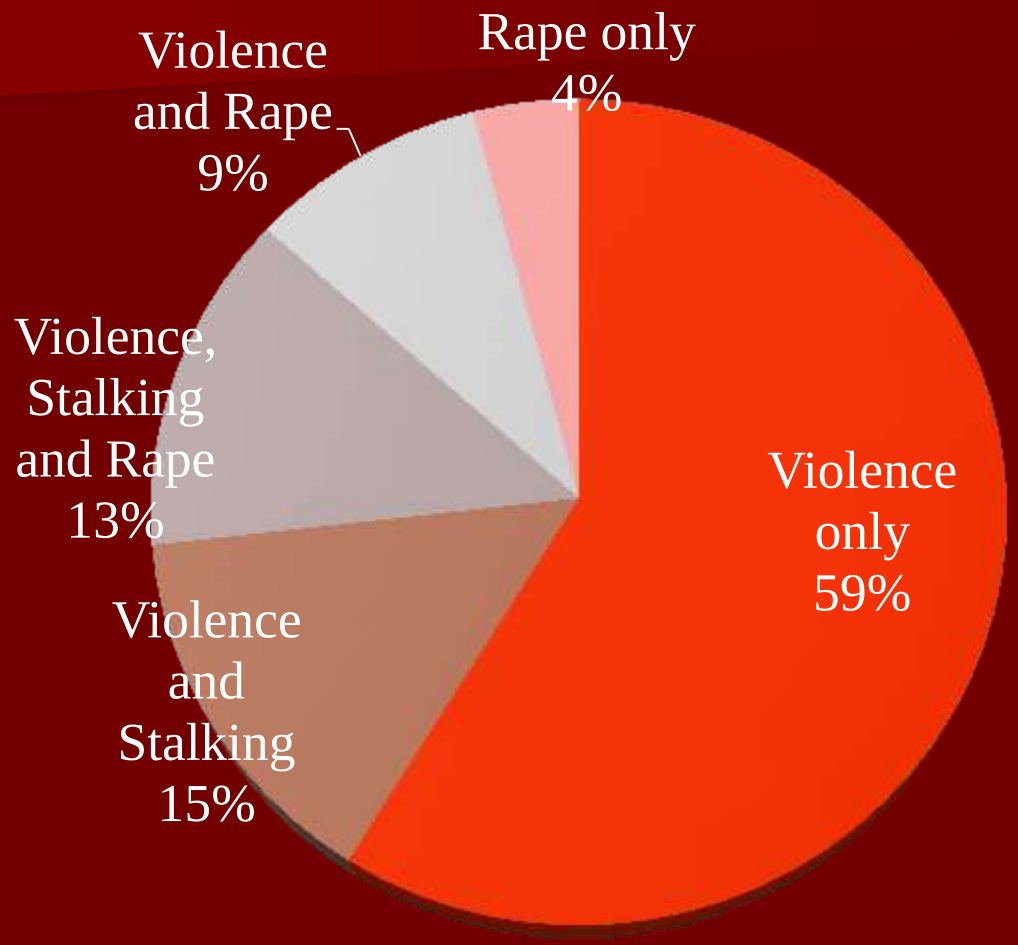
- Largest category (50%)
- 4.8%-14.5% of women vs. .6% men 18+
- 74%-81% experienced violence/sexual assault
- 2.2 yrs (vs. 1 yr by strangers)
- 57% stalked during relationship
- > 50% report “proxy stalking”
- Greater psychological stress than violence
- 8.4 times more likely to experience threats to children

SLII Strategies



NISVS, 2010

Violence, Rape and Stalking




What kind of a welcome home will you be getting tonight?
Text message
Home
UR L8
IM W8ING
4 U
Start
Contacts
1 in 4 people suffer domestic violence and abuse
If you or someone you know needs help or support, visit www.adva.org.uk
Home is where the hurt is
adva
Devon

DEGRADATION

- ritual enactments associated with sex, bodily functions or obedience

- TARGET AREAS OF GENDER IDENTITY FROM WHICH PARTNERS GET THEIR SELF-RESPECT, ESTEEM AND POWER
- Link to Ownership

From injury to ENTRAPMENT

What makes a battered woman is her socially constructed inability to effectively resist or escape

Control

a course of conduct, knowingly undertaken, making a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday lives.
British Home Office (2013)

ISOLATION

- Family **and friends**
- **School, work, church**
- **Communication/Transportation**
- **Helping Professionals**
- **Private Life**

CONTROL

- EXPLOITATION (woman as servant)
- DEPRIVATION (woman as prisoner)
- REGULATION – “Arbitrary Deprivations of Liberty.” (woman as slave)

what to cook

no friends

when to sleep

no personal money

what to wear

no transportation

when to have sex

no contraceptives

Control Prevalence among Women Seeking Help US/UK

- Took her Money (.54)
- Monitored Time (.85) (.66)
- Kept from Medical Care (.29) (.22)
- Did Not Allow to Go to School (.62) (.52)
- No Socializing with Friends (.79) (.71)
- Kept from Seeing Family (.60) (.50)
- Restricted Car Use (.54) (.31)
- Can't Leave House (.62) (.47)
- Threatened to Take Children (.44) (.40)
- Did Not Allow to Work (.34) (.40)
- Tried to Make Crazy (.89) (.75)

Sources: Tolman,l989; Rees, Agnew-Davies & Barkham, 2006; Buzawa et al. l999

Coercive control is the single most common context in which child abuse occurs

COERCIVE CONTROL & CHILDREN

- EXTENSION OF VIOLENCE
- INTIMIDATION
  - Weaponization
- ISOLATION
  - Safety Zones vs.
    - Search and Destroy
- CONTROL
  - Regimented living
  - RIGID GENDER ROLES

Particularity of Coercive Control

- Ongoing
- Personalized
- Significance of sexual coercion
- Extends through social space
- Micro-management- sex stereotypes
- Links to Sexual inequality

SAFETY ZONES

SEARCH & DESTROY MISSIONS

SEARCH AND DESTROY

I'd go to the bathroom and if I was in there, you know, just sitting there was relief. [She thought], “Thank God, I'm alone.” Just to go to the bathroom--To me that was like going to Paris for some women. And if I was in there two minutes longer than he thought I should be just come in there [and she motioned grabbing her
hair, showing how he would drag her out of the bathroom right off the toilet]. And if I was just in there, he would
say I was thinking --” conspiring.”

CONTROL IN THE CONTEXT OF NO CONTROL

Invisible in Plain Sight

- There is nothing like it in men's experience
- Liberties violated are taken for granted
- Corresponds with women's default roles
- There are no words to describe it
- There are few images on the media
- Victims may not associate with abuse
- It is built around personal knowledge and invention
- Some acts criminal, others only as part of conspiracy/pattern

DISADVANTAGES

- Unfamiliar model
- CONSEQUENCE RATHER THAN BEHAVIOR
- Ends with Separation?
- LACK OF GENDER FOCUS
- MISUSE BY FATHER'S RIGHTS?
- Possible Application to other family members
- Lack of judicial/CPS buy-in
- INCIDENT DISAPPEARS behind Pattern
- DEPENDENCY DEFENSE

ADVANTAGES

1. Close the Gap
2. Change the Story
3. Risk Assessment to Risk Prevention
4. Increase reporting
5. Get "Bad Guys" Out
6. Police Tool to Use what They know
5. Reduce case-loads

6 .Increase police morale ("real police work")

7. Increase victim satisfaction

8.Increase status of abuse offenses

9.Broaden role for community partners

10. Save money without cuts

Challenges Ahead

- Add CC to research, policy & program definitions
- Make the Defense of Women's autonomy, dignity and liberty the focus of support & intervention
- Shift Prevention focus from violence to CC -- Change the Story
- Integrate response to coercive control of women and of children
- Move from "cultural sensitivity" & to political awareness
- Shift from "harms" & "Trauma" to Rights and Liberties
- Join the VAW and Gender Equality Agendas

THE DANCE OF JUSTICE

- RIGHTLESSNESS
- GRIEVABILITY
- OUTRAGE
- THE DANCE OF JUSTICE

"FREEDOM IS NOT FREE"

WOMAN ABUSE IS NOT (ONLY) ABOUT WHAT MEN DO *TO* WOMEN BUT ABOUT WHAT THEY KEEP WOMEN FROM DOING FOR THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES, THEIR COMMUNITY AND THEIR NATION

COERCIVE CONTROL = Patriarchy at the level of Personal Life

So…….this is where reconstruction must begin