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A Gender Comparison of Motivations for Physical Dating Violence Among College Students

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Abstract

There are limited empirical investigations that directly compare men and women's motivations, or reasons, for perpetrating physical dating violence (DV). In an attempt to further understand whether men and women have similar or different motives for physical DV, the purpose of the current study was to conduct a gender comparison motives in a sample of male ($n = 163$) and female ($n = 319$) college students. Motivations for physical DV were classified according to seven broad categories proposed by Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues (2012): (a) power/control, (b) self-defense, (c) expression of negative emotion (e.g., anger), (d) communication difficulties, (e) retaliation, (f) jealousy, and (g) other (e.g., because it was sexually arousing, the influence of alcohol, the influence of drugs). The prevalence of physical violence perpetration in the overall sample was 29.4%. Results indicated that communication difficulties and self-defense were among the most frequently endorsed motive categories for both male and female perpetrated dating violence. In addition, results demonstrated gender similarity in all of the examined motive categories. Research and clinical implications are discussed.

Keywords

physical aggression; dating violence; motivations; gender

Dating violence, or acts of physical assault, psychological aggression, and sexual coercion, is an alarming and prevalent problem that occurs for many young adults in intimate relationships (Shorey, Brasfield, Febres, & Stuart, 2011). Because dating violence encompasses physical, psychological, and sexual acts of aggression, for the purposes of the current study and for clarity, when the term "dating violence" is used in this study, it refers only to the physical form of such aggression. It is estimated that physical assault occurs in 20-37% of college student dating relationships (e.g., Shorey, Cornelius, & Bell, 2008a). According to the Centers for Disease Control, physical violence "is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury, or harm. Physical

violence includes, but is not limited to, scratching; pushing; shoving throwing; use of a weapon; biting; choking; slapping; and use of restraints or one's body size, or strength against another person," (Saltzman, Fanslow, McMahon, & Shelley, 2002, p. 11). In general, men tend to be more physically aggressive than women (Archer, 2004). However, in dating relationships, physical violence is generally equivalent across genders, with over 200 studies have demonstrating that men and women perpetrate physical violence at comparable rates (Straus, 2010). For example, Carney & Barner (2012) reviewed the existing literature on controlling coercive violence and reported that the prevalence of power and control behaviors is comparable across gender. Furthermore, existing research suggests that the frequency of violence against intimate partners is highest during early adulthood (O'Leary, 1999). Given the high prevalence of violence among young dating couples, there has been a growing impetus within the field to elucidate the unique risk factors, predictors, correlates, and consequences associated with dating violence (Chan, Straus, Brownridge, Tiwari, & Leung, 2008; Shorey et al., 2008a). Of particular importance is an understanding of the proximal motivations for dating violence perpetration and whether these motivations differ for men and women (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, McCullars, & Misra, 2012). Unfortunately, there have been few direct gender comparisons of self-reported motivations for physical dating violence (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). This is significant, as examining whether the proximal motivations for dating violence differ between men and women may highlight potential points for intervention to reduce dating violence.

Early examinations of the motivations of violence against partners focused on male perpetrated violence and were largely based on feminist theories that hypothesized that power/control was the main motivating factor for male perpetrated violence (Leisring, 2013). Moreover, it was theorized that self-defense was the main motivating factor for female perpetrated violence (Leisring, 2013; Shorey et al., 2008a). For example, in his seminal study on the motivations for dating violence in a college sample, Makepeace (1986) found that intimidation was the most common self-reported reason for male perpetrated physical aggression and self-defense was the most frequently endorsed motive for female perpetrated aggression. However, overall research has not consistently supported feminist theories and, in many cases, has found results opposite of what you would expect based on feminist theory. Subsequent studies using undergraduate and graduate student samples, batterer samples, and discordant marital couple samples both supported and challenged feminist assumptions about violence motivations, finding that the primary reasons for male perpetrated intimate partner violence (IPV) were partner behavior, anger, power/control, and self-defense (Bonem, Stanley-Kime, & Corbin, 2008; Cascardi, Vivian, & Meyer, 1991; Hamberger, Lohr, & Bonge, 1994; Harned, 2001).

Since the seminal study by Makepeace (1986), there has been a proliferation of research that has further challenged the feminist assumption that men perpetrate violence to maintain power/control and women perpetrate violence out of self-defense (Harned, 2001; Hettrich & O'Leary, 2007; Leisring, 2013; Olson & Loyd, 2005; Shorey, Meltzer, & Cornelius, 2010; Stuart, Moore, Hellmuth, Ramsey, & Kahler, 2006a). For example, Leisring (2013) examined the self-reported reasons for physical aggression perpetration among a sample of college women and found that anger, retaliation, jealousy, and stress were among the most commonly endorsed reasons for perpetrating physical aggression. Additional studies have

found that psychological factors (e.g., personality traits, anger, depression, emotional distress; Olson & Loyd, 2005), communication difficulties (Hettrich & O'Leary, 2007; Olson & Loyd.), retaliation (Stuart, Moore, Gordon, Hellmuth, Ramsey, & Kahler, 2006b), emotional regulation (Hettrich & O'Leary, 2007; Stuart et al., 2006a), and alcohol use (Olson & Loyd, 2005) are all commonly endorsed reasons for female perpetrated violence.

A few studies have compared men and women's motives for dating violence in an attempt to clarify whether men and women differ in their self-reported motives for aggression. However, the findings have been equivocal, with some studies supporting gender differences and others supporting gender similarity (Follingstad, Wright, Lloyd, & Sebastian, 1991; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2005; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012; Shorey et al., 2010). For example, Harned (2001) compared men and women's motives for dating violence and found that women were more likely to perpetrate physical aggression because of anger/jealousy than men. Similarly, in a sample of men and women court-ordered to batterer intervention programs (BIPs), Ross (2011) found that women were more likely to report being violent in response to infidelity than men. Results further indicated that men were more likely to report retaliation and women self-defense as primary motivators for partner aggression. In an additional BIP sample, Elmqvist and colleagues (in press) found that women were significantly more likely than men to report retaliation and expression of negative emotions as primary motives for IPV perpetration.

On the other hand, some of the extant literature has provided support for gender similarities in motives for dating violence (Elmqvist et al., in press; Perry & Fromuth, 2005; Shorey et al., 2010). Perry & Fromuth (2005) examined dating violence in a college sample of fifty heterosexual couples and found gender similarities for the motives of anger, retaliation, jealousy and/or control, and self-defense. Elmqvist and colleagues (in press) demonstrated that, with the exception of retaliation and expression of negative emotions (i.e., anger), gender symmetry exists for a majority of the motive categories (e.g., jealousy, power/control, and self-defense). Shorey and colleagues (2010) compared the motives for physical dating violence in a sample of undergraduates and found evidence suggesting gender similarity in most of the assessed motives for physical violence. Notably, women were not more likely to report self-defense as a primary motive relative to men. The empirical investigation by Shorey and colleagues was one of the first to provide a comprehensive assessment of motives that enabled respondents to endorse multiple motives, thereby providing a potentially more accurate account of the motives for dating violence. However, a notable limitation of this investigation is it relied on a small sample of men ($n = 43$).

In sum, the existing literature has indicated that both men and women endorse a variety of reasons for perpetrating physical aggression in dating relationships, yet research is mixed as to whether men and women differ in their self-reported motives for dating violence perpetration (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). Additionally, there are a number of limitations in the pre-existing literature examining men and women's motives for dating violence. For instance, the extant literature is limited by small sample sizes (e.g., see Shorey et al., 2010) and assessment of only a limited number of potential motives for violence (Follingstad et al., 1991; Harned, 2001; Makepeace, 1986). To enhance gender comparisons in dating violence motivations, clearer operational definitions and frameworks of

motivations are needed (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). Towards this end, Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues (2012) proposed seven categories of motives that can be utilized to directly compare motives across genders. The seven categories are (a) power/control, (b) self-defense, (c) expression of negative emotion (i.e., anger), (d) communication difficulties, (e) retaliation, (f) jealousy, and (g) other (e.g., because it was sexually arousing, the influence of alcohol, the influence of drugs). Although a few studies have compared men and women's reasons for dating violence (Shorey et al., 2010), to our knowledge, there has been only one study that has applied Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues' (2012) motive categories to make direct gender comparisons (Elmquist et al., in press). Moreover, Elmquist and colleagues (in press) utilized samples of men and women arrested for domestic violence, which previous research has found to have significantly elevated rates of violence perpetration relative to college students (e.g., Stuart et al., 2006a). Therefore, in order to advance our understanding of potential gender differences in motivations for dating violence, additional research is needed that examines the motivational category framework of Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues (2012).

Purpose of the Current Study

The current study sought to extend and replicate the existing literature regarding gender differences and/or similarities in motivations for physical dating violence by utilizing Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues' seven-motive categories to directly compare male and female undergraduates' self-reported motives for dating violence using a larger sample size and more comprehensive assessment of motives. Given that there is no dominant theory of gender comparisons and dating violence, hypotheses for the current examination were based on extant research. Based on the previous research, we hypothesized that both male and female undergraduates would endorse multiple and varied reasons for perpetrating dating violence. However, the discrepancies between the current college sample and past BIP samples (e.g., Elmquist et al., in press) in conjunction with the fact that no studies, to our knowledge, have used the seven motive categories in an undergraduate sample precluded making a priori hypotheses regarding gender differences and/or similarities in the seven broad motive categories. To our knowledge, this is one of the first studies that provides a more careful and comprehensive assessment of gender differences in the motivations for physical dating violence based on the large literature review of Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues (2012). Specifically, categorizing motives for physical violence into broad categories enables a more parsimonious and comprehensive gender comparison, which ultimately provides an opportunity to examine whether results are consistent with feminist theory. Finally, this study may inform intervention and prevention efforts, such that clinicians could target the motive categories that most frequently precede violence.

Method

Participants

Male ($n = 163$) and female ($n = 319$) undergraduate students from a large, public southeastern university participated in the current study. Of these participants, 76.6% were freshman, 13.7% sophomores, 6.6% juniors, 2.9% seniors, and less than one percent were

post-baccalaureate. The mean age of the participants was 18.81 years ($SD = 1.96$). The mean age based on academic level was 18.26 ($SD = .918$) for freshman, 20.23 ($SD = 3.72$) for sophomores, 20.66 ($SD = 1.29$) for juniors, and 22.14 ($SD = 1.75$) for seniors. The ethnic composition was 81.4% ($n = 390$) White, 8.4% ($n = 40$) Black/African American, 3.5% ($n = 17$) Asian American, 3.1% ($n = 15$) more than one race, 1.9% ($n = 9$) Indian/Native American, 1.3% ($n = 6$) Hispanic/Latino, and less than one percent ($n = 2$) “Other.” In terms of race/ethnicity, the sample in the current study was reflective of the overall undergraduate psychology and non-psychology student population of the university where the study was conducted. The sexual orientation of the sample was 95.8% ($n = 461$) heterosexual, 2.5% ($n = 12$) homosexual, 1.5% ($n = 7$) bisexual, and less than one percent ($n = 1$) “Other”. At the time of the study, the mean number of months that participants reported dating their partners was 14.82 ($SD = 14.45$).

Procedure

The University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved all study procedures. Participants were recruited from undergraduate psychology courses. Eligible students completed informed consent online through a secure, online survey system. After informed consent was obtained, participants completed all study questionnaires on the online survey system. Participation was voluntary, and all participants received partial course credit for their completion of the study questionnaires. The eligibility requirements for the current study included (1) being 18 years of age or older and (2) being in a current dating relationship of one month or longer.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire—A demographic questionnaire was used to gather information on participants’ age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and duration of their relationship.

Dating Violence—The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996; Straus, Hamby, & Warren, 2003) assessed dating violence perpetration and victimization within the past year. The CTS2 contains subscales that assess physical aggression, psychological aggression, sexual coercion, injury, and negotiation. Participants were provided with 78 acts and asked to rate the frequency with which each of these acts occurred on a 7-point scale (1= this never happened; 7= more than 20 times). The CTS2 also has separate scores to account for severe and minor-to-moderate physical violence. The CTS2 has demonstrated adequate internal consistency with estimates ranging from .79 to .95 (Straus et al., 1996). For the purposes of the current study, only the physical aggression subscale was utilized in analyses. In the current sample, the physical aggression subscale (perpetration, $\alpha = .74$; victimization, $\alpha = .76$) demonstrated adequate reliability.

Motives for Dating Violence—Participants’ motives for perpetrating physical dating violence were assessed with the Reasons for Violence Scale (RVS; Stuart et al., 2006a). The scale contains 29 different motives (see Table 1) and asks participants to rate the percentage of physically violent episodes in which each motive was the reason they engaged in physical aggression against their dating partners. Scores range from 0% to 100% with higher scores

indicating that a motive was involved in more violent episodes. In order to account for the varied causes of dating violence, the RVS enables respondents to endorse multiple motives for their violence. For example, a participant could select “to get your partner’s attention” for 60% of their physical violence and “to show anger” for 60%, thus the items will not equal 100%. In the current study, the RVS showed good internal consistency ($\alpha = .98$). We categorized all RVS items into each of the seven motive categories proposed by Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues (2012). The classification of the motive items is displayed in Table 1. In order to determine the frequency of each motive category, individual motives for each category were summed and then divided by the number of items in that category.

Results

Raw scores were utilized to calculate the means and standard deviations for dating violence variables (e.g., physical aggression perpetration and victimization). The overall prevalence of physical violence in the current sample was 29.4%. Chi-square analysis indicated that men (15.4%) and women (19.1%) did not differ significantly on the prevalence of physical violence. Among those who reported perpetrating at least one act of physical violence, analyses indicated that in the year prior to the study male participants perpetrated a mean of 7.53 ($SD = 9.87$) acts of physical aggression and were the victims of 7.13 ($SD = 7.37$) acts of physical aggression. Female participants reported perpetrating a mean of 8.88 ($SD = 13.5$) acts of physical aggression, and were the victims of 7.81 ($SD = 14.8$) acts of physical aggression in the year prior to the study. Log transformations were utilized to correct for skewed distributions of all dating violence variables. T-tests indicated that men and women did not differ significantly on self-reported physical violence victimization and perpetration.

To determine whether there were gender differences on the demographic variables, independent samples *t*-tests were conducted for continuous variables (e.g., age) and chi square analyses were conducted on dichotomous variables (e.g., race/ethnicity). Findings are presented in Table 1. Analyses indicated that men and women significantly differed on age, $t(476) = 2.74, p < .05$, such that men were older than women. Men and women did not significantly differ on any other demographic variables.

Findings from the Reasons for Violence Scale are presented in Table 2. Motives for violence were only examined among those participants who reported at least one act of physical aggression perpetration. The most commonly endorsed motives for perpetrating dating violence among men were because “it was sexually arousing” (27.06%; $SD = 28.67$; $n = 17$), “to prove that you love your partner” (25.88%; $SD = 37.43$; $n = 17$), “self-defense” (22.35%; $SD = 33.45$; $n = 17$), and “to show feelings that you couldn’t explain in words” (22.35%; $SD = 30.73$; $n = 17$). According to the seven broad motive categories proposed by Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al. (2012), the most frequently endorsed motive *categories* for men were self-defense (22.35%; $SD = 33.45$; $n = 17$), communication difficulties (16.08%; $SD = 24.43$; $n = 17$), and expression of negative emotions (12.10%; $SD = 22.56$; $n = 17$). The most commonly endorsed reasons for perpetrating dating violence among women were because “it was sexually arousing” (22.35%; $SD = 31.21$; $n = 51$), “to show anger” (21.57%; $SD = 24.85$; $n = 51$), and “to get your partner’s attention” (19.4%; $SD = 26.64$; $n = 51$). The motive *categories*

most frequently reported by women were communication difficulties (16.01%; $SD= 23.73$; $n= 51$), self-defense (14.51%; $SD= 25.08$; $n =51$), and jealousy (14.31%; $SD= 26.25$; $n= 51$).

To determine whether males and females' motives for dating violence were different or similar, seven independent samples *t*-tests were conducted on each motive category. Results indicated that there were no significant gender differences on any of the seven motive categories. *T*-tests were also used to examine whether motives differed depending on the severity of violence (i.e., minor versus severe), with results demonstrating no significant differences based on violence severity. Additionally, *t*-tests were utilized to examine whether within each gender there were differences in endorsement of motive categories for those who engaged in severe physical violence compared to minor to moderate physical violence. Results indicated that there were no significant gender differences on any of the seven motive categories depending on the severity of violence. Analyses of Covariance were also conducted to determine if men and women differed on motives controlling for age. Analyses demonstrated that men and women did not differ on motive categories with age included as a covariate, and age was also not significantly correlated with any motive categories endorsed.

Discussion

The current study sought to further elucidate whether the reasons underlying men and women's perpetration of physical aggression in dating relationships are similar or different. In an effort to extend and to help clarify inconsistencies in the existing literature regarding motives for dating violence, the seven broad motive categories proposed by Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al (2012) were utilized in order to enable a more direct gender comparison. To our knowledge, this is the first study to directly compare college males' and females' reasons for dating violence using the seven motive categories while also employing a larger sample size and a more thorough assessment of motives for physical dating violence.

Results indicated numerous similarities across genders in self-reported reasons for dating violence perpetration. First, results from male and females' self-reported motives for dating violence, including severe dating violence, indicated gender similarity in all seven broad motive categories. Moreover, although men and women significantly differed on age (i.e., men were older than women), when age was included as a covariate, analyses indicated that men and women did not differ on motive categories. Moreover, the current study found that communication difficulties and self-defense were two of the most frequently endorsed motive categories for both genders. This is consistent with results in a study by Elmqvist and colleagues (in press) who found communication difficulties to be a commonly endorsed motive for partner violence among a sample of male and female BIP participants. Therefore, when direct gender comparisons are utilized, men and women often report similar motives for perpetrating dating violence. The finding from the current study that communication difficulties is a common motivator for physical aggression among college students is in line with previous research that has found poor communication skills to be associated with an increased risk for perpetrating dating violence (Cornelius, Shorey, & Beebe, 2010; Follingstad, Bradley, Laughlin, & Burke, 1999).

Additionally, the finding that males and females did not differ significantly in their endorsement of self-defense as a reason for dating violence is similar to existing research that has yielded results inconsistent with feminist assumptions regarding violence against partners, namely that male perpetrators of dating violence are primarily motivated by power/control and female perpetrators by self-defense. It appears that, at least according to college student participants' self reports, both males and females report using self-defense in order to protect themselves from physical aggression to approximately the same extent. In sum, the results from the current study, in combination with past research (e.g., Shorey et al., 2010), provide support for gender symmetry in many of the motives of dating violence, and provide results that are inconsistent with feminist theories. Moreover, this examination represents a more careful assessment of different motives for physical dating violence than previous studies.

Second, as hypothesized, both male and female undergraduates endorsed multiple, different motives, thus underscoring the significant heterogeneity that exists among perpetrators of dating violence. The variability in self-reported motives that emerged from the current sample is consistent with previous research (e.g., Shorey et al., 2010; Stuart et al., 2006a), and highlights the importance of considering this heterogeneity when examining the correlates, predictors, and causes of dating violence. Specifically, motivations may differ as a function of the context in which the physically aggressive acts occur, although this remains an empirical question for future research to investigate.

In addition, our findings demonstrated that male and female college students endorsed similar individual motives and motive categories. Specifically, the most frequently endorsed individual motives across genders were "because it was sexually arousing." The elevated frequency of the sexual arousal motive is consistent with previous research finding that sexual arousal was a common motive for dating violence (Harned, 2001; Shorey et al., 2010). The findings from the current study in conjunction with previous research indicate that college might provide a context in which physical aggression results from a desire to explore sexuality and sexual experiences and achieve heightened sexual arousal (Patrick, Maggs, & Abar, 2007; Shorey et al., 2010). Furthermore, the current study's replication of previous findings indicate that sexual arousal may be an important motivation that should be targeted in prevention and intervention programs for dating violence (Shorey et al., 2010).

Limitations and Future Directions

There are a number of limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the findings from the current study. First, the sample in the current study was largely comprised of female undergraduates. However, numerous studies on dating violence have consistently utilized significantly fewer male participants (e.g., Bell & Naugle, 2007; Perry & Fromuth, 2005; Prospero & Vohra-Gupta, 2008; Shorey et al., 2010). Thus, this investigation contributes to the existing literature by utilizing a larger male sample relative to previous research. Nonetheless, future research utilizing a larger, more balanced gender distribution is needed to further examine the differences and/or similarities in men and women's motives for dating violence. This would increase statistical power. Moreover, the sample in the current study consisted of primarily White, heterosexual undergraduates, thus limiting the

generalizability to more diverse populations. Research that examines motives for dating violence in a more diverse sample is needed. Third, the current study was cross-sectional, thus precluding a determination of causality among study variables. Future research utilizing prospective assessments of the motives for physical aggression should be conducted. Fourth, assessments of dating violence and the motives for dating violence were based on self-reports from one member of the relationship dyad. Research using both members of the relationship dyad and both qualitative and quantitative assessments of the motives of dating violence is needed. Finally, the current study focused only on physical aggression. Given that psychological aggression occurs in 70-90% of dating relationships (Shorey et al., 2008a), future research should examine potential gender differences in motives for psychological aggression in dating relationships.

Implications

The results from the current study have potentially important clinical and treatment implications. Specifically, the motives for dating violence as reported by both male and female college students should be addressed in violence prevention and intervention programs. For instance, sexual arousal was a motive in 22% of women's and 27% of men's violent episodes. This finding in combination with previous research (Harned, 2001; Shorey et al., 2010) indicates that college students may be engaging in risky sexual behaviors that are indicative of dating violence. Furthermore, research has supported that college is an important development period in which significant changes in sexual behavior occur (Patrick et al., 2007). Thus, prevention programs that increase and promote sexual health could ultimately help decrease the link between sexual arousal and dating violence (Schulenberg & Maggs, 2002; Turrissi, Jaccard, Taki, Dunnam, & Grimes, 2001).

Additionally, results from the RVS suggest that strategies aimed at increasing effective, nonviolent communication and conflict resolution could help reduce dating violence resulting from ineffective communication and problems with emotional expression. Researchers have suggested the utility and benefit of including strategies that enhance adaptive skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, nonviolent conflict resolution, adaptive communication) in reducing the likelihood of subsequent dating violence (O'Leary, Woodin, & Frtiz, 2006; Shorey, Cornelius, & Bell, 2008b; Shorey, Zucosky, et al., 2012). For example, Shorey and colleagues (2012) reviewed the literature on dating violence prevention programs and suggested that mindfulness based and dialectical behavioral interventions could be useful in reducing partner aggression among college students.

Conclusions

In summary, the findings from the current study contribute to the literature on the motives for dating violence. This is the first study, to our knowledge, that utilized Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues' (2012) seven broad motives categories to conduct a direct gender comparison of males and female's motives for dating violence in a sample of college students. Results demonstrated gender symmetry in all motive categories. Future research is needed to further understand the differences and/or similarities in men and women's motives for dating violence in different contexts and samples.

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Table 1

Summary statistics for men and women

	Males	Females
Age, mean (SD), years	19.22 (2.62)	18.61 (1.48)
Race, no. (%)		
White	135 (83.3)	255 (80.4)
Black/African American	11 (6.8)	29 (9.1)
Asian American	8 (4.9)	9 (2.8)
More than one race	2 (1.2)	13 (4.1)
Indian/Native American	5 (3.1)	4 (1.3)
Hispanic/Latino	1 (>1)	5 (1.6)
Other	0 (0)	2 (>1)
Relationship Length, mean (SD), months	14.10 (16.42)	15.18 (13.35)
Academic Standing, no. (%)		
Freshman	119 (73.0)	250 (78.4)
Sophomore	24 (14.7)	42 (13.2)
Junior	12 (7.4)	20 (6.3)
Senior	8 (4.9)	6 (1.9)
Post Baccalaureate/Graduate School	0 (0)	1 (<1)
Sexual Orientation, no. (%)		
Heterosexual	155 (95.1)	306 (96.2)
Homosexual	7 (4.3)	5 (1.6)
Bisexual	1 (<1)	6 (1.9)
Other	0(0)	1 (<1)

Men and women significantly differed on age.

Table 2

Reasons for Dating Violence Perpetration among College Males and Females

Reasons for Violence	M% (SD) ^a	
	Males	Females
Power/Control	8.01(17.16)	9.89(20.91)
To feel more powerful	13.13(23.58)	10.59(20.73)
To get control over your partner (e.g., show that you're boss)	9.41(19.51)	11.96(22.36)
To get your partner to do something or to stop your partner from doing something (e.g., going out with friends)	7.06(14.48)	13.53(23.65)
Because you needed to make your partner agree with you	10.59(23.31)	8.24(19.67)
To shut your partner up or to get your partner to leave you alone	6.47(13.20)	10.78 (19.88)
To make your partner afraid or scared	4.12(12.28)	7.06(20.03)
Because you wanted to have sex and your partner didn't	5.29 (13.75)	7.06(20.03)
Self-Defense	22.35(33.45)	14.51(25.08)
To protect yourself (e.g., self-defense)	22.35(33.45)	14.51(25.08)
Jealousy	10.59(23.31)	14.31(26.25)
Because you were jealous	10.59(23.31)	14.31(26.25)
Communication Difficulties	16.08(24.43)	16.01(23.73)
To show feelings that you couldn't explain in words	22.35(30.73)	16.08(22.28)
To get your partner's attention	18.24(25.06)	19.41 (26.64)
Because your partner was going to walk away or leave the conflict before it was solved	7.65(17.51)	12.55(22.26)
Expression of Negative Emotions	12.10(22.56)	12.92(22.21)
To show anger	15.29(20.35)	21.57(24.85)
To prove that you love your partner	25.88(37.42)	12.94(23.52)
Because you were angry at someone else and took it out on your partner	8.24(22.15)	11.57(22.75)
Because you were afraid your partner was going to leave you	8.82(24.21)	9.61(20.68)
Because you didn't believe your partner cared about you	7.65(16.78)	9.41(20.33)
Because you didn't know what else to do with your feelings	8.82(19.00)	12.16(20.43)
Because of stress	10.00(18.03)	13.20(22.90)
Retaliation	5.78(14.64)	11.99(21.77)
To get back at your partner or to get revenge for being hit first	11.76(22.43)	13.14(24.04)
To punish your partner for wrong behavior	5.88(13.72)	11.96(21.26)
To get back at or to retaliate for being emotionally hurt by your partner	5.88(15.02)	16.27(24.65)
To hurt your partner's feelings	2.94(12.12)	9.22(19.88)
Because your partner provoked you or pushed you over the edge	4.71(12.31)	12.35(20.94)
Because your partner cheated on you	3.53(12.21)	9.02(19.82)
Other	11.45(18.08)	13.77(24.62)
Because it was sexually arousing	27.01(28.67)	22.35(31.21)
Because you were under the influence of alcohol	9.38 (18.06)	12.75(24.09)

Reasons for Violence	M% (SD) ^a	
	Males	Females
Because you were under the influence of drugs	5.29(12.81)	9.20(22.21)
To get away from your partner	4.12 (12.78)	10.78(20.96)

^aListed is the percentage of violent episodes for which the motive was endorsed.