HANDBOOK OF VIOLENCE

Lisa A. Rapp-Paglicci
Albert R. Roberts
John S. Wodarski

John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
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This book is dedicated to
the thousands of people killed
at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon,
and the four commercial airplanes
that crashed on September 11, 2001,
to their families and relatives, and
to the professionals who dedicate their lives
to intervening with and facilitating the recovery
of the survivors of violent crime.
## Contents

Preface .............................................. xiii
Acknowledgments ................................. xv
About the Editors ................................. xvii
Contributor List ................................. xix

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### Section I  Family Violence

#### Chapter 1  Violence within Families through the Life Span  3

*Ann W. Burgess and Albert R. Roberts*

- Introduction .................................. 3
- Bullying Behavior ............................ 6
- **The Family** ................................ 7
  - Family Violence ............................ 7
  - The Dynamic Nature of Family Violence  8
  - Developmental Aspects of the Family and Its Structure  9
  - Explanations of Family Violence .......... 14
- **Interventions** ......................... 19
  - Courtship Violence ....................... 19
  - Assaults on Spouses ...................... 20
  - Child Abuse ............................... 21
- **Family Violence Cases by Type of Crisis: A New Typology** .......... 22
  1. Somatic Distress ........................ 22
  2. Transitional Stress ..................... 23
  3. Traumatic Stress-Crisis ............... 24
  4. Family Crises ........................... 25
  5. Serious Mental Illness ............... 26
  6. Psychiatric Emergencies ............. 27
  7. Catastrophic Crises ................... 27
- Conclusion ................................. 28
- References .................................. 29

---

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# Contents

## Chapter 2  Adolescent Dating Violence  
*Gretchen Ely, Catherine N. Dulmus, and John S. Wodarski*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Trends and Issues</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification, Classification, and Prediction of Adolescent Dating</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Prevention Programs and Empirically Based Interventions</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Management and the Strengths Perspective</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research Efforts</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 3  Children and Adolescents from Violent Homes  
*Lisa A. Rapp-Paglicci*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Trends and Issues</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification, Classification, and Prediction</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention/Intervention</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Management and Strengths</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 4  Domestic Violence in African American Families  
*Letha A. (Lee) See, William Oliver, and Oliver Williams*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence: A Working Definition</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful Theories for Explaining Domestic Violence in African American</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Strengths Perspective: A Useful Paradigm in Addressing Domestic</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence in African American Families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronology of Problems Facing Violent African American Men</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Factors of Intimate Partner Violence in African American</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships and Families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Group Approach in Working with African American Male Perpetrators</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Domestic Violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Strengths Perspective When Working with African American</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men Who Batter Their Wives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues Recorded in Working with Groups of African American Male</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batterers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rituals</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libation as a Ritual</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Circle</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Protection of Battered African American Women</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Implications 98
Conclusion 98
References 99

Chapter 5  Domestic Violence in Latino Cultures 106
Diana Valle Ferrer
Introduction 106
Domestic Violence in Latin America 107
Domestic Violence and Latino Women in the United States:
  Current Trends and Issues 114
Prevention of and Intervention in Domestic Violence 117
Women and Families 119
The Community and the Society 120
Future Research 122
References 123

Section II  Community Violence

Chapter 6  Children and Adolescents Exposed to Community Violence 129
Catherine N. Dulmus and Carolyn Hilarski
Current Trends and Issues 129
Identification, Classification, and Prediction of Violence 131
Childhood Vulnerability and Resilience 135
Empirically Based Prevention/Interventions 137
Future Research 143
References 143

Chapter 7  Assessing Violent Behavior 148
Edgar H. Tyson, Catherine N. Dulmus, and John S. Wodarski
Current Issues in Measuring Violent Behavior 148
Fundamental Measurement Issues 149
Measures of Violent Behavior in Youth 150
Measures of Violent Behaviors in Adults 156
Implications and Future Directions in Measuring Violent Behavior 164
References 165

Chapter 8  Conduct Disorder and Substance Abuse 169
Juan J. Barthelemy, Catherine N. Dulmus, and John S. Wodarski
Introduction 169
Current Trends and Issues 170
Identification, Classification, and Prediction 172
Chapter 13  Public Concern and Focus on School Violence 262
Ron Avi Astor, Ronald O. Pitner, Rami Benbenishty, and Heather A. Meyer
Introduction 262
Scope of the Problem: Major Trends and Issues 263
Types of Interventions 272
Conclusion 296
References 297

Chapter 14  Reducing School Violence: A Social Capacity Framework 303
Gary L. Bowen, Natasha K. Bowen, Jack M. Richman, and Michael E. Woolley
Introduction 303
Current Trends and Issues 305
Prediction, Identification, and Classification 307
A Social Capacity Framework 314
Effective Prevention Programs 315
Empirically Based Practice Principles 318
Implications for Future Research 321
References 322

Chapter 15  School Violence among Culturally Diverse Populations 326
Karin Jordan
Introduction 326
Current Trends and Issues 326
Effective Prevention Programs 336
Empirically Based Interventions 338
Case Management and the Strengths Perspective 340
Future Research 341
References 342

Section IV  Workplace Violence

Chapter 16  Preventing Workplace Violence 349
John S. Wodarski and Catherine N. Dulmus
Introduction 349
Human Aggression and Personality Profiles 350
Contents

Profile of Violent Individuals 351
Hiring Smart to Avoid Workplace Violence 352
The Role of Company Culture in Workplace Violence 352
Assessment of Workplace Violence 353
Worksite Assessment 357
Violence Assessment Measures 359
Threat Assessment 361
Prevention of Workplace Violence 364
Implications for Social Work Agencies 371
The Setting and the Internal Characteristics of Organizations 371
Debriefing in the Aftermath of Trauma 372
Conclusion 374
References 374

Chapter 17  Workplace Violence: Prevention and Intervention, Theory and Practice 378
Judith A. Waters, Robert I. Lynn, and Keith J. Morgan

Introduction 378
Responses to Major Workplace Disasters 405
Conclusion 410
References 410

Chapter 18  Domestic Violence in the Workplace 414
Patricia Brownell and Albert R. Roberts

Current Trends and Issues 414
Identification and Classification 417
Effective Prevention Programs 419
Empirically Based Interventions 422
Case Management and the Strengths Perspective 423
Future Research 424
References 425

Author Index 429

Subject Index 447
It is apparent that violent crime rates are at their lowest in years. Yet, despite this decrease, violence continues to be a devastating social and public health problem. For example, according to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports, an aggravated assault occurs every 34.6 seconds; a forcible rape, every 5.8 minutes; and a murder every 33.9 minutes. The media present skewed information regarding “super predators” and “crime waves,” resulting in an increased desire, by politicians and the public, for simple answers and quick fixes for all types of violence.

There are no quick fixes. Instead we present the latest empirically based research on the comprehensive topic of violence and violence prevention. A multidisciplinary, expert group of authors have prepared original and up-to-date chapters describing family, community, school, and workplace violence from a resilience viewpoint. No other book has attempted to inclusively cover the field of violence; most volumes provide a limited view of one form or type of violence (e.g., child abuse, domestic violence, school violence). The reality of violence suggests an opposite approach: Violence is interrelated and compound. For example, children who witness a parent being battered often become violent in young adulthood, children who witness community violence are often violent in school, family violence often spills over into the workplace, and school and family violence have been repeatedly linked.

Those who work in the area of violence must increase their awareness of the breadth and depth of the problem of violence. This book expresses the enormity of violence through its comprehensiveness and its biopsychosocial perspective. Because of the prevalence of violence throughout American society, professionals have begun to systematically examine violence and violence prevention strategies in terms of: scope of the problem, classification and risk assessment, effective prevention programs, empirically based intervention,
Preface

strengths perspective, and future research. Each chapter follows this framework and includes the latest evidence-based assessment and program development practices. How professionals, legislators, and society will intervene regarding the costly, life-threatening, and appalling problem of violence throughout our society is still unknown.

Lisa A. Rapp-Pagliacci
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SECTION I

Family Violence
Chapter 1

VIOLENCE WITHIN FAMILIES
THROUGH THE LIFE SPAN

ANN W. BURGESS AND ALBERT R. ROBERTS

INTRODUCTION

Case Examples

Sixteen-year-old Susan awakens in a room unaware of her surroundings. During a senior post-prom party, Susan had consumed a large amount of alcohol and was high from smoking marijuana, leaving her incoherent and in a daze. This physical state of mind left Susan unaware of Howard’s aggressiveness. Eighteen-year-old Howard, Susan’s new boyfriend and captain of the football team, had been taking “ecstasy” which intensified his physical and sexual feelings when he sexually abused her. Susan had gotten a ride home from her girlfriend and during the ride, tried to explain what had happened. She was not able to provide a detailed statement of what had occurred due to her semi-consciousness during the course of the events. Her parents wanted her to sign a criminal complaint against Howard, but she vehemently refused. Susan felt guilty about her own excessive alcohol and marijuana use and did not remember if she said no to Howard when he undressed her and proceeded to have sexual intercourse with her. She noticed bruises on her arms, breasts, and thighs the next day, and had no recollection of how she got bruised. However, she did agree with her father that she would never date Howard again.

Naomi is a 34-year-old single parent who was chronically abused by her husband for seven years. During her childhood, her father abused her mother. Naomi is a high school graduate and has worked for the same company for the past 14 years as a customer service representative. She described her injuries as a “broken nose, he’s tried to choke me so many times I feel that when I get older I will have cancer of the throat. I have bruises all over my body. I have a bad back, and on
4 Family Violence

Case Examples (Continued)

three different occasions my eye has been swollen from punches. He likes to
punch me in the mouth. He does it without warning. The last time he strangled
me in the kitchen, I faked passing out, and he left. He might have killed me if I
didn’t fake passing out.”...Naomi finally left her husband after attending a
support group for battered women ... She went to court and got a restraining
order (Roberts, 2002; p. 74).

Complainant was a 76-year-old female victim who was interviewed in the hospital.
She had suffered multiple injuries to her head and a broken hip. Complainant
stated that her son, daughter, and friends had held her prisoner for several days.
They stated they would kill her if she left and beat her for no reason. (Brownell,
1996; p. 44).

These three cases illustrate the fact that family violence (also known as inter-
personal violence) occurs throughout the lifecycle. Although domestic violence
seems to be decreasing, physical and sexual assault remains prevalent among chil-
dren, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. When violence against women occurs
in the family context of a shared residence, it is usually more frequent and more se-
vvere than stranger-perpetrated violence. There is rarely any warning for when the
next slap, punch, kick, or series of brutal assaults may intensify. But, the research
has consistently demonstrated that women who stay in battering relationships for
many years, eventually sustain numerous battering incidents and injuries. In sharp
contrast, there is a group of young women in dating relationships who leave the
batterer permanently after the first or second incident. They leave before the abuse
becomes chronic. These women in short-term abusive relationships usually leave
with the help of a restraining order, the support of a parent or older sibling, or a
close friend who allows them to temporarily live in their house (Roberts, 2002).

Awareness of familial violence has come a long way in the past four decades.
As a result of groundbreaking research, journal articles, books, and media atten-
tion, there are now, throughout the United States, over 15,000 programs for pre-
vention and treatment of child abuse, rape crisis, domestic violence, and elder
abuse. In 1962, C. Henry Kempe (Kempe, Silverman, Steele, Droegemueller, &
Silver) developed the term “The Battered Child Syndrome.” By 1971, Richard
Gelles, under the guidance of Professor Murray Straus, had completed his doc-
toral dissertation at the University of New Hampshire. His was the first study to
document police, hospital, court, and social service responses to the battering of
women in a small town in New Hampshire. Almost three decades ago, two es-
teemed psychiatric/mental health nursing professors, Ann Wolbert Burgess and
Lydia Holmstrom (1974), completed and published their classic research study at Boston City Hospital and coined the term “Rape Trauma Syndrome.” At the same time, psychologists Morton Bard and Katherine Ellison were training nurses, social workers, and police officers in New York City in crisis intervention. Also, during the 1970s, several large medical centers developed rape crisis programs. By 1980, Albert R. Roberts, a prominent social worker and criminologist, had completed the first national survey of the organizational structure and functions of 89 shelters for battered women and their children. Roberts’s book, *Sheltering Battered Women: A National Survey and Service Guide* (1981), focuses on staffing patterns, funding sources, crisis intervention techniques, agency and decision-making boards, positive and negative perceptions of police encounters, attempts to obtain protective orders, self-reported strengths, and limitations of shelters for battered women. Noted sociologists Murray Straus, Richard Gelles, and Suzanne Steinmetz had completed the first national prevalence study of family violence by 1980 as well.

The 1980s seemed to be the decade in which awareness of domestic violence and an aid-for-crime-victims movement flourished. Within the women’s movement, local NOW chapters, statewide domestic violence coalitions, and legislative advocates all united in a call for specific domestic violence legislation, major federal funding initiatives, increased research and demonstration projects, and legal remedies. In 1984, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) was passed—the first major legislation that aided crime victims throughout the United States. In 1985, a child psychologist, Jane Nady Burnley, became the first Director of the new federal Office for Victims of Crime, in Washington, DC. She and her staff were responsible for distributing the VOCA funding to the states, and for monitoring and evaluating programs nationwide. By 1990, Albert Roberts, in his national survey of 184 victim/service and victim/witness assistance programs, indicated that more than 3,000 rape crisis intervention, sexual assault prevention, domestic violence intervention, and victim/witness assistance programs had been funded through the VOCA initiative.

The possibility that people might be injured or have their homes invaded by strangers is a frightening thought. But hundreds of thousands of Americans face an even more devastating reality when they are harmed, not by strangers, but by someone they trusted. Vicious crimes of violence are committed by or against children, parents, grandparents, spouses, and other close relatives. The family is still viewed as the center of society. To be abused by a partner, a parent, a trusted adult, or one’s own child, or to witness such abuse, leaves deeply ingrained fears and other serious consequences. Victims of domestic violence must wrestle with feelings of fear, loyalty, love, self-blame, guilt, and shame—all at the same time. These emotions are not experienced by victims of strangers. Adults become torn between
their desire to shield and help a loved one and their responsibility toward their own safety and the safety of others in the household. Children face the reality that those who should protect them are, in fact, sources of harm. For most people, home represents security. To domestic violence victims, home is a place of danger.

The problem of family violence is not new. Women have been battered by their partners in almost every society in history. In the United States, the beginning of services for battered women and children dates back to 1885, when the Chicago Protective Agency for Women, established to help women who were victims of physical abuse, provided legal aid, court advocacy, and personal assistance. An abused woman could receive up to four weeks of shelter at a refuge operated by the Women’s Club of Chicago. The agency helped women to secure legal separations, divorces, and equitable property distributions. Between 1915 and 1920, 25 cities followed Chicago’s lead in developing protective agencies for women; by the 1940s, few shelters remained, due, in part, to casualties and marital separations during World War II (Pleck, 1987; Roberts, 1996).

Throughout history, records of childhood are replete with suffering that was well documented from biblical times to the present. The landmark Wilson case, in 1874, pricked the national social conscience and opened America’s eyes to the plight of many children. Eight-year-old Mary Ellen Wilson lived with her adoptive parents in New York City. She was held there in chains, starved and beaten. The police responded but could do nothing because it was a “family matter,” and parents held the “rights” (Zigler & Hall, 1989). A man named Henry Berg was contacted. He had founded a protective group the preceding year: The Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals. Berg was able to extricate Mary Ellen from her family torture chamber.

This chapter presents definitions and current statistical trends from a developmental perspective of family violence. It covers bullying behavior as a precursor to abusive dating relationships; courtship abuse; partner threat and violence; domestic violence and pregnancy; batterers’ stalking patterns; domestic homicide; child abuse, neglect, and sexual assault; and elder abuse. The chapter also discusses key concepts of family violence: socialization into violence; learned socialized violence; the psychodynamics of violent behavior, including altered attachment, jealousy, guilt, and revenge; and the biology of trauma.

**BULLYING BEHAVIOR**

Bullying is the abuse of power by one child over another through repeated aggressive behaviors (Connolly, Pepler, Craig, & Taradash, 2000). For bullies, power may arise from physical strength and maturity; higher status within a peer group; knowledge of another child’s weakness; or recruitment of support
from other children (O’Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999; Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1996). As bullies age, they rely less on physical means to intimidate their victims and turn, instead, to indirect forms that entail verbal abuse and social exclusion (Olweus, 1991).

Like aggressive and antisocial children, children who bully often come from homes that are neglectful, and their parents often use harsh punishment (Olweus, 1993). Children who become bullies are at risk for continuing difficulties into adulthood, in the form of criminality, domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual harassment.

In a study of 1,758 students in grades 5 through 8, 196 young adolescents who self-reported they bullied their peers were compared to a control group of nonbullying youth. The results indicated that bullies started dating earlier and engaged in more advanced dyadic dating than comparison adolescents. Bullies were highly relationship-oriented, yet their views of their friends and boyfriends or girlfriends were less positive and less equitable than those of the comparison adolescents. Finally, bullies were more likely to report physical and social aggression with their boyfriends and girlfriends. The results suggest the hypothesis that adolescents whose peer relationships are characterized by bullying are at risk in their development of healthy romantic relationships (Connolly et al., 2000).

THE FAMILY

Because violence within families has only recently surfaced as a legal matter, research into the causes and consequences is limited. As a first step, definitions are provided in order to begin classification for the research process.

Due to the myriad of different statutes and regulations, there is no national legal definition of a family.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Nowhere in the criminal law and its administration is the social construction of violent crime changing more rapidly than in what constitutes family violence and society’s response to it (Reiss & Roth, 1993:222).

Data on family violence are classified by current marital status (married, separated, divorced, or single), spousal status (spouse/ex-spouse), or relationships among members of a household (cohabitants, child/parent, sibling, parent). Given these categories, statistics on family structure changes can be generated over time. For example, the Bureau of the Census (1990, 1991) has reported that the proportion of all households accounted for by two-parent families declined from 40% in 1970 to 26% in 1990. The number of
unmarried-couple households almost tripled between 1970 and 1980 and grew by 80% between 1980 and 1990, from 1.6 to 2.9 million. The proportion of children under 18 years of age living with two parents declined from 85% in 1970 to 73% in 1990. An estimated 15% of these children were stepchildren. And, in 1990, 19% of white, 62% of black, and 30% of Hispanic children under age 18 lived with only one parent.

Trends in family violence, according to Reiss and Roth (1993), must be interpreted against a decline in the percentage of households containing, exclusively, married couples and their biological children. Violence between growing numbers of same-sex and opposite-sex cohabiting partners is increasingly being regarded as family violence, regardless of legal marital status. Violence between divorced or separated ex-couples is also listed as family violence.

The National Research Council’s Panel on Understanding and Preventing Violence (Reiss & Roth, 1993) considered all violent behavior within a household as family violence—specifically, spouse assault, physical and sexual assault of children, sibling assaults, and physical and sexual assaults of other relatives who reside in the household. Missing from this list are events such as verbal abuse, harassment, or humiliation, in which psychological trauma is the sole harm to the victim. This category is under consideration by the Panel on Research on Violence Against Women, which will also be considering threat assessment and stalking behavior.

Like the term “family,” the term “violence” has no universal definition. However, the definition published in the report “Understanding and Preventing Violence,” by Reiss and Roth (1993), may be useful. It states that interpersonal violence is “behavior by persons against persons that intentionally threatens, attempts, or actually inflicts physical harm.”

THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Several characteristics distinguish family violence from stranger violence (Reiss & Roth, 1993:222–223). While the continuing relationship among family members is similar to other relationships—teacher-student, employer-employee, child-caretaker, and so on—daily interaction and shared domicile increase the opportunities for violent encounters. Because family members are bound together in a continuing relationship, repeat violations by the offender are quite likely. An unequal power relationship makes the victim more vulnerable to the aggression and violence of the offender. Moreover, the offender often threatens additional violence if the incidents of violence are disclosed. The victim, anticipating stigmatization and denigration, may refrain from disclosure. Because