# Dynamics of violence between intimate partners in the narratives of incarcerated women in Canada: A violent events perspective

by
Alexandra Lysova

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies,
University of Toronto

# Dynamics of violence between intimate partners in the narratives of incarcerated women in Canada: A violent events perspective

Alexandra Lysova
Doctor of Philosophy

Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies
University of Toronto
2015

## Abstract

While we have learnt much in the last forty years about the prevalence of and risk factors for violence perpetrated by individual men and women in their intimate relationships, little research has focused on the interaction between intimate partners within a violent situation. I argue that given the complex nature of intimate relationships and intertwining roles, behaviours, and emotions of both partners, examining the couple's interaction -- rather than the disconnected behaviours of individual men or women -- can provide a deeper understanding of and new insights into the process of violence between intimate partners. Using a sample of 295 violent incidents reported by 135 incarcerated women, I explore the interactional aspects of violence in the incidents from a violent events perspective. Identifying and drawing on different dimensions of violent dynamics, e.g., initiation of violence, reaction to initial violence, the use of violence in the entire incident, and injuries to partners, I used Latent Class Analysis to identify specific classes

of violent incidents that represent more general patterns of violent dynamics. This incident-based analysis identified four distinct classes of violent incidents and characteristics associated with each of them at the individual, relationship and situational levels. My study finds evidence consistent with previously identified violent types and also detects a novel type of violent dynamics in the relationships of high-risk incarcerated women. Moreover, the context-based and interaction-based approach in my study reveals the heterogeneity of women's behaviour in a violent situation. These findings question a 'one size fits all' approach to address such a complex and multidimensional phenomenon as intimate partner violence and suggest carefully tailored interventions for different violent types/incidents.

# Acknowledgments

My thanks go to many people who were supportive and helpful as I developed my dissertation research. These include, first of all, my academic advisor and mentor Rosemary Gartner for her support, understanding and guidance; members of my dissertation committee Katreena Scott and Candace Kruttschnitt; the external examiner Vincent Sacco; members of the Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies at the University of Toronto, including Antony Doob, Mariana Valverde and Matthew Light; the Trudeau Foundation and the entire Trudeau community for its generous financial support and for providing a unique interdisciplinary environment to discuss and develop my ideas, including my Trudeau mentor Francoise Bertrand; and the intellectual and financial support of the University of Toronto, including the Connaught Foundation. I would like to especially thank my husband, mentor, a father of our child and the best friend Nikolay Shchitov.

## Table of Contents

## List of Figures and Tables

# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

> "Sam gave Mary a black eye when she shook him in the middle of the night, waking him up. She could not sleep because he had been flirting with another woman at a party, and in fact had been dancing with her in a way that was blatantly sexual. He got angry when she woke him up, refused to discuss it with her, and when she hit him with a pillow out of frustration, he punched her in the face" (Jacobson & Gottman, 1998: 48)

> …He said he was cold. I had put the air conditioner on. He got extremely pissed off because I didn't jump up to turn the air conditioner off. I took it that he was trying to pick a fight with me … He pushed me away, shoved me and I went and I turned around and I smacked him back across the face. His nose was bleeding. He came and fucking threw me and started punching me on the head. This was all over an air conditioner… (ID 98/124)

> We were at home. I don't really remember what we were fighting about. At some point he called me a slut and I was like "pardon me" …I just got really angry and lashed out at him. I slapped him or something. He grabbed me and ripped my pyjamas. We were just kind of in the bedroom and no weapons. It was punch, slap, punch, slap and it was done. I'm sure to some people it would seem a lot worse, but to me it was nothing major (ID 164/91)

The above narratives highlight the often complex and dynamic character of violent incidents between intimate partners. Moreover, both partners, a man and a woman, appear to be closely involved in the violent dynamics so that each of their acts shapes a distinct pathway that the incident takes. However, our understanding of what happens in the violent incident differs markedly depending upon which conceptualization of violence

we use while reading these stories. For instance, Jacobson and Gottman (1998) use the first narrative to illustrate men's violence against women in intimate relationships. These and some other authors, who similarly construe this situation, are likely to draw on the perspective that conceptualizes violence between intimate partners predominantly as violence against women mainly due to gender inequality and patriarchy. But, can his behaviour be understood outside the context of the dyad and the events that immediately preceded his violence? In other words, should we consider the woman's behaviour as a part of the violent dynamics in this incident, or we should simply ignore it as an "ordinary" woman's response to her frustration or a part of female victim's understandable response to the man's previous violence toward her (i.e., violent resistance or self-defence)? Moreover, can we agree that the two other narratives demonstrate women's self-protective violence, that is, the "smacking him back across the face" in response to his push and shove in the second narrative, and slapping a male partner in response to him calling her a slut in the third narrative? Or are these incidents more representative of a relationship that is mutually violent and coercive?

Incited by these questions, my thesis focuses on understanding the interactional and dynamic nature of violent relationships between intimate partners. The emphasis of my study on a couple's interaction in a violent situation is in a stark contrast with many IPV studies that focus on the individual partner and ask "Who is more violent?" and "Who needs more help?" Search for the answers to these questions has created a powerful victim-offender binary and the corresponding schism in the IPV literature between those who argue that men are predominant perpetrators of violence against women (Bograd, 1988; DeKezeredy, 2011; Kurz 1993; Stark, 2007) and those who argue that there is symmetry in the rates of violence perpetration (but not victimization) by men and women in intimate relationships (Archer, 2000; Straus, 2011). In my thesis, I shift the focus away from the prevalence of violence perpetrated by individual men and women in their relationship (the question that created the gendered victim-offender binary described above) and turn my attention to the *interaction* between the intimate partners in a violent situation instead. I argue that given the complex nature of intimate relationships and intertwining roles, behaviours, and emotions of both partners in these relationships,

examining the couple's interaction rather than the disconnected behaviours of individual men or women can provide a deeper understanding of and new insights into *the process* of violence between intimate partners.

Despite focusing on violent interaction in the IPV incident, my study recognizes "multiple inequalities" (Daly 1997) and seeks to contextualize men's and women's violence within wider socio-political and economic realities. That is, my thesis assumes the concept of intersectionality, which acknowledges the fundamental differences that exist in the life experiences of women (and men) of different ethnic/racial backgrounds, different classes, different cultures, and so forth, is important for understanding IPV (Comack, 2004; DeVault, 1996; Simpson & Gibbs, 2006). At the same time, studies suggest that many other factors – individual, relationship and situational - in addition to gender, social class, race/ethnicity, etc. can contribute to a deeper understanding of the experiences of violence in intimate relationships (e.g., Baskin & Sommers, 1998; Heise, 1998; Richie, 1996; Simpson & Gibbs, 2006). Moreover, many of these factors may be used to explain violence perpetrated by both male and female partners (Archer & Graham-Kevan, 2003; Felson & Outlaw, 2007; Medeiros & Straus, 2007; Robertson & Murachver, 2011).

The main objective of this study is to provide insight into the interactional dynamics in IPV incidents as well as to examine various risk factors at the individual, relationship, and situational levels that can predict certain patterns of violent dynamics. I am guided by sociological (Collins, 2008) and criminological perspectives (Heise, 1998; Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001; Ronel, 2011) that suggest that analysis of a couple's interaction in the context of a particular situation or a violent event is indispensable to capturing the elusive nature of IPV. This study adds to scholarship that enhances our understanding of the patterns of violent dynamics, including men's and women's roles in the evolution of a violent situation, and also the risk factors that are closely associated with different patterns of violent dynamics (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Collins, 2008; Heise, 1998; Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin, & Petrie, 2004; Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b; Olson, 2002b; Swatt & He, 2006; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005; Winstok,

2008, 2013). This knowledge may be useful for designing more finely targeted, effective and lasting interventions to address IPV. In this chapter, I briefly outline the main directions and perspectives that have guided research on IPV in criminology and adjacent disciplines. I follow this with a discussion of the broad theoretical framework within which I examine violent dynamics between intimate partners and a short examination of violent dynamics as a gendered phenomenon. Finally, I briefly outline the present study and the chapters that follow.

## 1.2 Approaches to conceptualizing and studying IPV

Intimate partner violence has been recognized as a serious social problem and has been intensely studied in Western countries in the last 40 years. First addressed by feminist movement advocates, IPV gradually became the subject of rigorous scientific investigation within a broad variety of academic disciplines, particularly sociology, psychology, social work, social policy, communication, criminology, and criminal justice. Since then, thousands of studies have obtained data that give us a better understanding of the nature and aetiology of IPV and that inform social policy and treatment programs to address this problem. For the purposes of placing my study in the broader context of IPV scholarship, I summarize the main themes in this research.

There are several main perspectives on IPV that often disagree with each other on key questions about the origins of violent behaviour, the contribution of males and females to it, and how the issue of IPV should be addressed. According to many feminist perspectives, IPV should be conceptualized primarily as violence committed by men against women because women (even in Western countries) suffer from gender inequality and patriarchal oppression, the two main factors contributing to female victimization (Devries et al. 2013; Dobash & Dobash, 1979, 1992; Garcia-Moreno et al. 2006; Heise, 1998). In spite of the emergence of various versions of feminist theorizing in the 1990s, which have a broader acknowledgment of initiative rather than responsive female aggression in an intimate relationship, lesbian violence, and the effects of other variables on IPV (intersectionality), gender remains the key explanatory concept in IPV literature (Baskin & Sommers 1998; Chesney-Lind & Pasko 2013; Richie 1996).

Sociologists working within a family violence perspective on IPV are likely to focus on structural variables associated with IPV, particularly the role of family structure, and economic and societal characteristics of society. Their research methods are usually based on large-scale quantitative surveys, cross-sectional designs, applications of the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS) to measure violence and other instruments to measure motivation and risk factors associated with violence (e.g., the Personal Relationship Profile). Results from this research often demonstrate that in terms of motivation and behaviour, men and women use violence for mostly the same reasons (Archer, 2000; Straus, 2008, 2011). At the same time, some sociologists highlight the role of social institutions in men's efforts to gain and maintain power and control over their female intimate partners (e.g., Stark, 2007).

In criminology, IPV is likely to be conceptualized as a crime and examined within the larger research literature on violence generally (e.g., Fagan, 1989; Fagan and Browne, 1994; Felson, 2002). Mainstream criminological theories and concepts (e.g., criminal career theory, rational choice theory, criminal and violent events framework) are drawn on by criminologists to provide insights into the behaviour of offenders and victims, and violent situations (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Meier, Kennedy & Sacco, 2001a, b; Ronel, 2011).

Viewing IPV first as a function of psychopathology (i.e., personality disorders of the offenders), contemporary psychologists are likely to employ a categorization scheme that takes into account developmental and descriptive characteristics of both perpetrators and victims of IPV (Babcock, Miller & Siard 2003; Henning, Renauer & Holdford 2006; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart 1994; Ross & Babcock 2012; Swan and Snow 2003). In the last twenty years, IPV has also become the focus of attention of communication researchers who focus on the underlying principles and rules of the violent interaction of two individuals in a relationship, i.e., 'aggression rules', 'negative reciprocity', and 'escalating antagonism' (Cahn, 2009; Cahn & Lloyd, 1996; Cordova et al., 1993; Jacobson & Gottman,1998; Sabourin, 1995). Recently, some psychologists and practicing

psychotherapists dealing with IPV victims and offenders have developed new approaches to conceptualizing IPV that incorporate emerging findings about the heterogeneity of IPV and the dynamic role of both male and female partners in IPV (e.g., gender-inclusive approach) (Hamel, 2005, 2008; Hamel & Nicholls, 2007). In addition, psychologists study various psychophysiological correlates of IPV, as well as the effect of violent attitudes and child abuse as predictors of IPV perpetration and victimization.

The way in which IPV is conceptualized is inherently significant for designing policies to address perpetration of violence between intimate partners. Arguably, any theory that dichotomizes victimization and perpetration is likely to lead to a response that is similarly dichotomized. Current policies based on the conceptualization of IPV primarily as a tool to exert power and control over the intimate partner argue for the allocation of funds for more shelters and help lines for female victims of IPV, on the one hand, and further criminalization of IPV perpetration by male partners, on the other (e.g., Stark, 2007). However, recent findings emphasize the inefficiency of the "one size fits all" approach to IPV in social policy, including criminal justice responses, and suggest that more elaborated and diverse approaches are needed (Buzawa, Buzawa, Stark 2012; Comack, 2004; Dutton, 2005, 2006, 2007; Gondolf, 2002; Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2010; Ross & Babcock, 2010; Snider, 1994; Stith & McCollum, 2011; Stith, McCollum, & Rosen, 2011; Wray, Hoyt, & Gerstle, 2013).

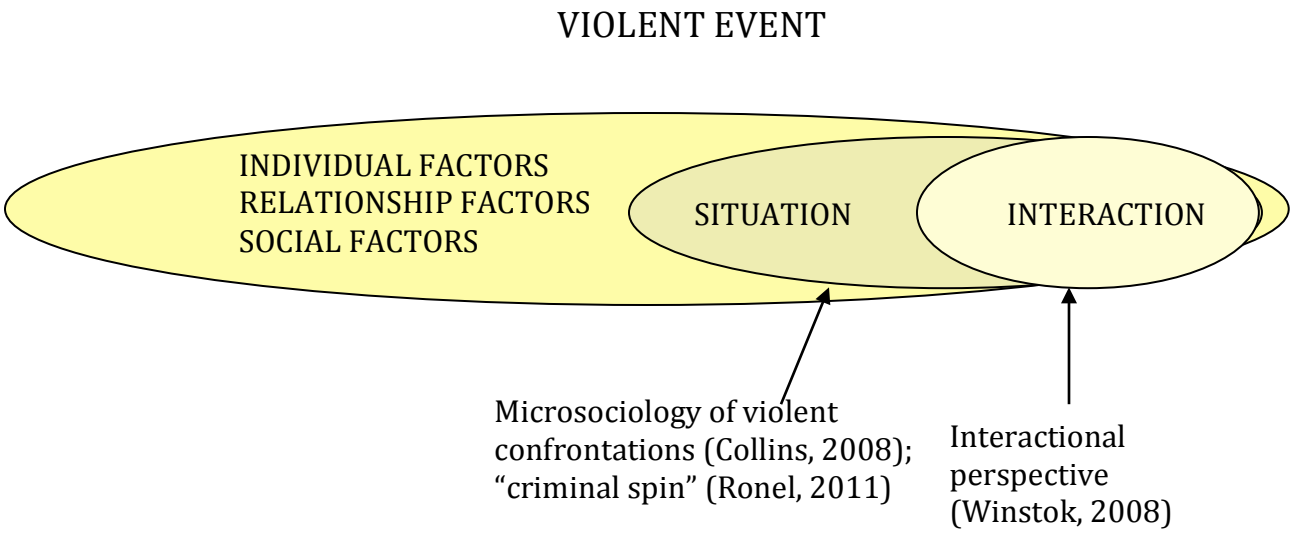
Despite significant advances in our understanding of IPV in the last decades, there are still many gaps in our knowledge of some important aspects of IPV that have not received much attention in the past, but which are indispensable to more effective social policy and health care responses. This relates mainly to interactional, situational, and contextual aspects of IPV that can provide a deeper understanding of the nature and dynamics of violent episodes and the role of both partners in them (e.g., Bell & Naugle, 2008; Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Collins, 2008; Heise, 1998; Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin, & Petrie, 2004; Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b; Olson, 2002b; Swatt & He, 2006; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005; Winstok, 2008, 2013).

In my dissertation, I carry out an exploratory study of the interactional aspects of violence in IPV incidents from the violent events perspective (VEP). Below I introduce the main principles of the VEP. Also, I briefly describe the tenets of the microsociological and interactional perspectives that can also be useful in studying the interactional aspects of violence in the IPV situation.

## 1.3 Perspectives on studying violent dynamics in IPV incidents

As noted above, most IPV theory and research tends to conceptualize the main components of IPV separately as discrete units of analyses, i.e., offenders, victims, and the social situations within which violence takes place. Moreover, the relationships between these discrete components of IPV are often formulated as binaries (e.g., victimization versus offending, male offenders versus female victims). However, recent studies by family violence researchers, criminologists, and feminist scholars appear to challenge these simplistic conceptualizations of IPV and depict a more complex picture of intimate violence as caused by a wide array of factors at the individual, interpersonal, and societal levels. Nevertheless, these studies have often failed to conceptualize the factors in ways that emphasize their interrelatedness. There are several perspectives that provide a useful framework for analysing IPV as a contextualized dynamic process and therefore correct the aforementioned limitations. One of these is a violent events perspective (VEP), which provides a basic framework for my study. Along with the external risk factors at the individual, relationship and social levels, it incorporates a microsociology of violent confrontations and "criminal spin", which focus on the IPV situation, and an interactional perspective, which emphasizes the interaction between two partners. Figure 1.1 outlines the conceptual theoretical scheme of my study. It shows that in the heart of the violent event lies interaction, which is embedded in a specific situation, and both are functions of broader individual, relationship and social factors. Below I describe each of these perspectives in detail.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual theoretical scheme of the study




*A violent events perspective (VEP)*. This perspective concentrates on the violent or criminal *event* rather than certain *actors* and their predispositions, and combines analyses of the offender, the victim, and the context (Meier, Kennedy, and Sacco, 2001b). Apart from traditional criminological theories of offending (e.g., differential association, self-control), victimization (e.g., opportunity and lifestyle theories), and situation (e.g., victim-precipitation theory, crime as a situated transaction or as self-help), VEP seeks to provide a broader view on both criminality and crime and demands that offenders, victims, and situations be considered simultaneously and dynamically. VEP seems to have much in common with situational approaches that have considered aspects such as, for example, character contests in offender-victim interactions (Luckenbill, 1977) and dominance in violent criminal interactions (Athens, 2005). However, the event perspective looks beyond the immediate settings in which crimes occur. According to Meier, Kennedy, and Sacco (2001a), "[m]ost crime requires offenders and victims, but most also require other conditions that make up what is called a "criminal event": a physical setting and time, a legal framework and perhaps personal histories among parties that condition the meaning of actions as interpreted by the participants, and a structural context (neighbourhood, community) that may influence the actions and interpretations of the participants" (p. 22).

Although a VEP is not itself a theory and does not provide an integrated theory of crime, it appears to be a feasible framework that reorganizes the field in which theory operates and thus opens an opportunity for more complete explanations of crime and violence. For example, Horney (2001) incorporated this perspective into the study of criminal careers in order to explore the patterning of violence within individuals and to learn about the relationships among violent events. Researchers Wilkinson and Fagan (2001) applied it to develop a theory of violent events among adolescents in inner cities by identifying the stages and components of violent events, including motivational, contextual, and interactive dimensions. I argue that the violent event perspective may be successfully applied to the analyses of IPV and describe it in more detail in chapter 2. Due to its content and a structure, the VEP framework allows me to incorporate perspectives that focus on the interaction (i.e., interactional perspective) and the situation (i.e., a microsociology of violent confrontations) to capture the complexity of violent dynamics (Figure 1.1). Each of these perspectives is discussed below.

*An interactional perspective.* This perspective focuses on a violent interaction between a couple and can be a promising direction of IPV studies because unlike the individual-based approaches it views each partner's behavioural acts and attitudes as embedded in rather than separated from the couple's interaction. Winstok and his colleagues (e.g., Eisikovits, Winstok and Gelles, 2002; Winstok, 2008, 2013) and some communication researchers (e.g., Gottman & Notarius, 2000; Olson, 2002a, 2004; Sabourin, 1995) have been among the first to apply an interactional perspective to IPV, which they consider to be a result of disrupted interaction. By interaction they generally understand behaviour as comprised of two consecutive acts, e.g., one party's act, such as a slap, leads to the successive act of the other party, such as a punch.

Escalation is a focal concept of an interactional approach to IPV because it is thought of as an inherent tendency of any conflict, social or interpersonal (Cairns, Santoyo, & Holly, 1994; Eckert & Willems, 2003; Winstok, 2013). Despite being an essential part of many conflicts, escalation has not been an independent field of basic sociological and criminological research. The various theories of social conflict have focused primarily on the question of why such conflicts arise in the first place and what are the general social conditions associated with these conflicts. At the same time, escalation has received some attention in social psychology and

communication studies where researchers have attempted to address the question of what causes conflicts to escalate to the point where violence is applied.

Escalation is broadly understood as "the intentional or unintentional intensification of a conflict with regard to the extent and the means used. As such, it represents an often self-amplifying process of action-reaction spirals, whose outcome is difficult to forecast or predict" (Eckert & Willems, 2003: 1182-1183). In the IPV context, escalation often represents the process of circular interaction where two parties in an intimate relationship push one another to the intensification of a dispute by adopting changing strategies, taking up new issues and demands, and finally bringing it to the point where physical violence is used (which is the focus of this thesis). It is important to note that acknowledging that both partners are involved in the dynamic of violence does not blame the victim, nor does it isolate the batterer from the context of his or her decisions.

*A microsociology of violent confrontations*. A microsociological perspective on IPV draws attention to the situational analysis of the dynamics of violence with the interaction being in the centre of this analysis. Randall Collins, a prominent proponent of this perspective, argues that the contours of situations tend to shape the emotions and acts of the individuals who step inside them, and thus can explain the onset of violence better than some background conditions (Collins, 2008). That is, age, poverty, race, and childhood experiences cannot always explain the onset of violence because many young people, black people, and poor people with the history of violent victimization do not become criminals.

However, at the same time, there is a link between micro- and macro realities because macro processes reveal themselves and unfold in the sequence of many micro-situations. In other words, every larger social entity comprises of many micro-encounters. Moreover, the larger structure appears to do most of its work preliminary to the time when the fighting actually takes place and can be seen through the confrontational tension, which is a central component of every violent incident. In turn, the situational confrontational tension largely hinges on the prior establishment of emotional dominance. The resulting actual physical violence then is a set of pathways around confrontational tension and fear.

Violence unfolds in a small number of patterns for circumventing the barrier of tension and fear in the situation of antagonistic confrontation. There are several pronounced patterns that characterize domestic violence incidents. The cases of severe violence (which Johnson (2008) named "intimate terrorism") represent the type of situation called "attacking the weak", which develops along two causal pathways: forward panic and terrorist torture regimes. In these situations, perpetrators are chiefly males and victims are often females. The weakness is understood as a situational and interactional stance rather than simply a physical weakness. Escalation and entrainment of victim with aggressor are central micro-processes that give abusive episodes their situational momentum. The mild version of IPV that Johnson terms "common couple violence" is characterized by the situational pathway which Collins calls a "normal limited conflict" (Collins, 2008). Neither of the partners is a weak victim; venting of emotion in a form of violence may be viewed as an accepted routine or even a form of excitement and entertainment. Thus, the difference between two types of violent situations that include severe and mild violence lies in the way the confrontation is handled, i.e., confrontation is channelled into protected and limited violence in the case of "common couple violence" and is suddenly released and leads to the violent outburst in the case of "intimate terrorism".

Ronel (2011) and Benison & Ronel (2012) further specify how a violent situation perpetuates a violent process, which appears to have its own "life cycle" which intimate partners may not be aware of. They termed the process of an almost inevitable chain of linked events that generate and intensify violent behaviour "a criminal spin" of an IPV incident. According to the criminal spin theory, the behaviour (e.g., arguing with one's intimate partner) or the emotion (e.g., anger or jealousy) can trigger the spin process, which then may transform into the cognitive spin, that is, a chain of decisions (often based on the distorted perceptions or misinterpretation of events) where thinking is increasingly aimed at the direction of the spin. This spin process is often referred as "a slippery slope", because after the initial choice of the certain "slope" and proceeding along the path, individuals have less freedom to choose and end up acting as though governed by the inertia of the process itself. Moreover, the criminal spin event in an individual's life may become a chronic criminal spin if this event is repeated over time (Ronel, 2011).

What is also essential for understanding violent IPV confrontations and which draws on an interactional perspective is that both the victim and the perpetrator interact to further exacerbate the spin process (Eisikovits & Buchbinder, 2000). In other words, intimate partners seem trapped in a vicious interaction, which if not directly challenged, perpetuates itself over time. This has serious implications for the prevention and treatment of IPV because attempts to stop an individual and mutual violent spin in most of IPV situations should be directed at both sides. This will be discussed in detail in chapter 6.

## 1.4 Violent dynamics as a gendered phenomenon

The examination of violent dynamics between intimate partners requires grounding this study in gender. First of all, the violent situation does not happen in a vacuum and is likely to reflect broader social, political and economic processes, including gender inequality, in society. Indeed, a large body of sociological and criminological scholarship suggests that violence is a gendered phenomenon (Daly, 1998; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1998; Maher & Curtis, 1998; Messerschmidt, 2000; Wood, 2004). Moreover, early studies of the situational dynamics of violence unequivocally pointed at the importance of examining gender (Messerschmidt, 2000; Polk, 1998). Thus, my study is premised on the idea that it is important to explore both men's and women's contributions to violence in intimate relationships (even when these experiences are reported only by men or by women and not by both partners in the relationship). Furthermore, it is increasingly recognized that to ignore or deny women's capacity for and men's vulnerability to violence limits our understanding of IPV and reduces our ability to protect women and men from injury and death at the hands of their intimate partners. Below, I briefly discuss the views on men's and women's experiences of violence in contemporary criminological and sociological literature. I also introduce the finding that most IPV appears to be bidirectional, which highlights the importance of moving away from a clear victim/perpetrator distinction in the conceptualization of IPV.

***Men's experiences of violence***. Most perpetrators of homicide or nonfatal violence (both within and outside of intimate relationships) who become known to the police are men. This fact may explain the predominant research focus of many criminologists and sociologists on men as perpetrators of violence, typically against other men. However, thanks to feminist activists, since

the early 1970s the attention of both mainstream and radical criminology was turned to men's violence against women as well. Although men's offending, including homicide, can be accounted for by many factors, i.e., individual (e.g., experience of violence as a child), situational (e.g., alcohol use), structural (e.g., marginal position in society), and cultural (e.g., honour contest), the IPV literature in the 1980s and early 1990s has put emphasis on the greater power of men in society and men's needs to control women (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Kurz, 1993). However, this one-dimensional and deterministic understanding of men's violence has gradually given way to more complex and elaborated models of men, masculinity, and crime.

One of the approaches to understanding men's violence has focused on viewing gender as a set of practices, and crime as a resource in "doing masculinities". That is, Messerschmidt (1997) examines masculinities (and femininities) as they are reproduced among different races and classes and highlights the process of 'making of crime' based on the analysis of gender, race and class. However, pondering the question why only some men choose to commit crime as a way to accomplish masculinity prompted scholars to seek ways of linking structure and agency in explaining men's violence. Some of these scholars underscore the link between poverty and violence that is mediated through masculine identity. Specifically, "violence against women is thus seen not just as an expression of male powerfulness and dominance over women, but also as being rooted in male vulnerability stemming from social expectations of manhood that are unattainable because of factors such as poverty experienced by men" (Jewkes, 2002: 1424). In his study of confrontational homicide, Polk (1998) found that extreme violence in defense of honour was quite prevalent among men from the lower social class. In another study, violence against women becomes a norm for Puerto Rican men growing up in New York slums who are pressured by models of masculinity, on the one hand, but unable to attain them due to unemployment and poverty, on the other (Bourgois, 1996).

Within a broader perspective of viewing men as violent offenders, some scholars -- predominantly psychologists -- identify types of male IPV offenders and thus strongly suggest that this is not a homogeneous group (e.g., Dutton, 2006; Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Johnson, 2008). Many scholars agree that there are at least three salient types of male batterers, i.e., generally violent and antisocial batterers (who are likely

to engage in moderate to severe levels of marital violence and the highest levels of extrafamilial violence; and often demonstrate criminal behaviour, arrests, and substance abuse); dysphoric or borderline batterers (who are likely to engage in moderate to severe levels of marital violence, but not much violence outside of family; and often demonstrate emotional lability, intense and unstable interpersonal relationships, jealousy and fear of rejection); and family-only batterers (who engage in the least marital and extramarital violence and whose violence seems to be more situational and related to stress and marital conflict) (Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004).

Moreover, scholarship attentive to men's voices about their experiences of violence, including perpetration of and victimization resulted from a female intimate partner's violence, has emerged recently. It differs from the approaches described above because it draws on the understanding of men's violence as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be attributed to a few factors. Also, men are allowed to describe their perception of the violent incidents without being seen as using the "abuse excuse". For example, Wood's (2004) study of perspectives on violence against female intimate partners among men who were convicted of assaulting their partners reveals a rich diversity of men's accounts of their involvement in violence. Although accepting responsibility for violence, all 22 men in her study explained why their actions were "appropriate, reasonable, necessary, within the actor's right, or that the action was not as bad as perceived" (Wood, 2004: 562). Most of the men mentioned being disrespected as men, having the right to control/discipline his woman, and being provoked by verbal aggression and "pushing the button" by their female partners. Most of the men did not see themselves as "real abusers" and regretted that they abused their female partners. Wood (2004) suggests that the heterogeneity of men's accounts of PV may be associated with the conflicting codes of manhood that are present in US society.

Finally, some scholars intend to enrich our understanding of men's experiences of violence by examining men as victims of females' violence in intimate relationships (Hines, Brown & Dunning, 2007; Hines & Douglas 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001). They find a wide range of IPV committed against men by their female partners, including psychological aggression, controlling behaviour, and severe violence in the form of "intimate terrorism". These findings add to the complex picture of men's experiences of IPV. Despite these

various deliberations concerning male offenders, what still appears to be missing is the consideration that male offenders "may also be subject to personal frailties, family pressures, and external disadvantages" (Allen, 1998: 66).

***Women's experiences of violence.***

Historically, there has been a gradual shift from seeing women as only victims of crime and violence, including interpersonal violence, to recognition of their more active involvement in violent offending. Specifically, after being ignored or denied for some time, women's offending moved into the spotlight in the 1970s after Freda Adler's 1975 book *Sisters in Crime: The Rise of the New Female Criminal*. In light of the growing data on female criminality, more and more scholars have acknowledged the constraints of seeing women exclusively as 'passive' and 'nonaggressive' victims of men's violence (White & Kowalski, 1994; Richardson, 2005) and launched explorations of the issue of female offending. Despite an ensuing greater readiness to acknowledge female criminality, the idea that women engaged in violence not simply in self-defence or to protect others was not something that became accepted easily, especially among some feminist scholars. Many scholars initially were explicitly discouraged from studying female violence (Holtzworth-Munroe, 2005; Straus, 1999) but the pendulum has moved and a body of research on female offending began to grow in the 1990s and has continued apace in many industrialized countries.

Some scholars tend to conceptualize female violence mainly as a reaction to a history of violence and gender discrimination or as a self-defence in the immediate violent situation (e.g., Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Chesney-Lind, 1989; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Moe, 2004; Richie, 1996; Stark, 2007). Scholars within this perspective generally argue that women commit violent acts because they are physically or sexually victimized in their family of origin and/or in order to cope with abuse in their intimate relationships. However, although this hypothesis is supported in many studies, it fails to represent the entire complexity of women's violent offending.

Furthermore, some scholars have critiqued the antiagentic representation of women's offending in both the media and the criminal justice system (Allen, 1998; Downs, 1996; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006; Morrissey, 2003). These scholars suggest that female offenders were

shown almost invariably as victims rather than as actors in the crimes they committed and that this representation was likely to harm women. It has been argued that by denying the possibility of female agency in violent crimes, the best of intentions actually deny women the full freedom to be human.

Many other scholars have provided empirical evidence for the diversity of contexts and motives for female violence (Baskin & Sommers, 1998; Daly, 1998; Gartner & McCarthy, 2006; Miller & Mullins, 2006). By uncovering a wide range of motives for women's involvement in violent offending, their work challenges views of women offenders as passive and lacking agency, as inherently evil, or as mentally disordered. According to this work, although women's violence is sometimes clearly motivated by the same economic and status factors that motivate men's violence (e.g., the desire for money and respect), it is also at times motivated by gendered considerations, e.g., threats to their status as a good mother or a faithful partner. These studies further acknowledge the role of women's agency, albeit an agency constrained by the limited choices available to women.

Some scholars, primarily psychologists, have enriched our understanding of female involvement in violence by identifying distinct types of violent women depending on the different context and motivations for the use of violence (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003; Henning, Renauer, & Holdford, 2006; Ross & Babcock, 2012; Swan & Snow, 2003). Specifically, Babcock, Miller, & Siard (2003) singled out two types of women who use violence in the intimate relationships that are similar to those for men, i.e., partner-only and generally violent women. Other studies distinguish women who perpetrate coercive control (Robertson & Murachver, 2011) and intimate terrorism against their male partners (Hines & Douglas, 2010b; Ross & Babcock, 2012).

The existing knowledge on female violent offending suggests that women are much more likely to perpetrate violence against a male partner in an intimate relationship rather than against a male stranger (Ben-David, 1993; Winstok & Straus, 2011). One of the factors that explain this from an evolutionary perspective is fear. Fear can be seen as an adaptive mechanism that reduces exposure to physical violence for women. In intimate relationships, however, women are likely to have reduced fear, which is mediated by the hormone oxytocin (Cross & Campbell, 2011).

Required for the establishment of sexual relationships with the partner, oxytocin can also disinhibit aggression toward a partner (Cross & Campbell, 2011), which, arguably, contributes to the higher propensity of a woman to attack a male intimate partner rather than a male stranger (Winstok & Straus, 2011).

Despite the growing acknowledgement and understanding of women's violent offending within and outside of intimate relationships, many women are undeniably victims of gender-based violence, as it is also commonly known in the IPV research literature (e.g., Palermo, Bleck & Peterman, 2014). The most recent comprehensive review of data on violence against women in intimate relationships, based on 141 studies in 81 countries, estimates that globally in 2010 30% of women aged 15 and over had experienced physical and /or sexual violence at some point in their intimate relationships (Devries et al., 2013). This study also identified notable regional differences in the prevalence of women's victimization ranging from 16% in East Asia to 66% in Central Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite regional variations in the prevalence of gender-based violence, the risk factors appear to be similar across many countries. Specifically, ideologies of male superiority, gender inequality (with the lesser power of women in family and society), along with some situational (e.g., heavy alcohol use by both partners), relationship (e.g., length and type of relationship), and individual (e.g., older age of women and histories of child abuse for both partners) factors, can significantly increase risk of violence against women worldwide (Abramsky et al., 2011; Jewkes, 2002). Violence against women in intimate relationships has adverse public health effects on women around the world, including injury, unwanted pregnancy, chronic pain, physical disability, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, homicide and suicide (Ellsberg et al., 2008). Moreover, negative consequences of violence for women are not always physical and therefore visible; violence against women is strongly associated with mental health problems in women, such as posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, suicidal thoughts, substance abuse problems, eating disorders, as well as antenatal and postnatal mental disorders (García-Moreno & Riecher-Rössler, 2013).

The aforementioned review of the research data on women's experiences of violence suggests that this is a highly multifaceted phenomenon, which is evoked by sundry motives, can take different shapes, and is linked to various types of situational contexts and women's individual

characteristics. Despite many shared aspects, women's engagement in violence differs from the men's and hence may benefit from an integrated approach, i.e., one that combines traditional theories of crime and violence and gender perspectives.

***Mutual or bidirectional violence.***

Mutuality (aka bidirectional and reciprocal violence) refers to the perpetration of assault by both partners within the IPV incident. It is important to distinguish mutuality from symmetry of IPV, which signifies approximately equal rates of IPV perpetration by male and female partners at the population level (Straus, 2011). A growing body of IPV studies suggests that mutuality appears to be a characteristic of most couples that experience violence (Chiodo et al., 2012; Gabora et al., 2007; Goldenson, Geffner, Foster, & Clipson, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Kwong, Bartholomew, & Dutton, 1999; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010; Palmetto, et al., 2013; Swan & Snow, 2002; Whitaker et al., 2007). It is important to note though that most of the studies of IPV, including those that find mutuality as a prevalent pattern of IPV interactional dynamics, refer to heterosexual intimate relationships and are carried out in the Western developed countries. One possible explanation for high rates of IPV mutuality is provided by the phenomenon termed "assortative mating". According to this perspective, individuals self-select into relationships with other individuals prone to relationship violence. Hence, risk factors in common to both partners can increase the likelihood of bidirectional violence in these couples (Carbone-Lopez & Kruttschnitt, 2010; Palmetto, et al., 2013). Another potential explanation for the high prevalence of mutual IPV comes from social learning theory, which states that intimate partners in these relationships are more likely to have been exposed to violence in their family of origin than partners from nonviolent relationships (e.g., Palmetto et al., 2013).

Studies also suggest that mutual violence may represent a distinct phenomenon compared to a unilateral or one-sided violent relationship (Caetano et al., 2005). However, there is no consensus in the IPV literature on the association of mutuality of IPV with the frequency, severity, and rate of injuries to one or both partners. Some studies suggest bidirectional violence is associated with more severe injuries to partners (Caetano et al., 2005; Capaldi, Kim, & Shortt, 2007; Palmetto et al., 2013; Whitaker et al., 2007), while some find that mutual violence is associated with less severe consequences than if only one partner, male or female, is violent

(Swan & Snow, 2003; Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994). Overall, studies of mutuality of IPV are still in their infancy and there are many gaps in our understanding of the processual aspects of mutual violence (because many studies have cross-sectional designs), its predictors, and consequences.

## 1.5 The Present Study

My dissertation aims to identify prevalent patterns of violent dynamics in IPV incidents and their significant correlates at the individual, situational, and relationship levels based on violent events and interactional perspectives. More specifically, this study (1) will critically review the dominant perspectives on IPV and will identify their key limitations in relation to explaining situational and interactional aspects of IPV; (2) will provide a comprehensive overview of theories that explain escalation/deescalation of violence within an IPV incident; (3) will further develop and implement a dimensional approach to measuring violent dynamics within a violent incident between intimate partners, (4) will identify the prevalent patterns of violent dynamics within a violent event, and (5) will examine the factors associated with prevalent patterns of violent events at the situational, individual, and relationship levels.

Therefore, the main questions my research will address are: (1) What are the advantages of violent events and interactional perspectives in capturing the complexity and multidimensionality of IPV in comparison with the theoretical approaches that focus on the individual behaviour/roles of the partners? (2) Which dimensions of the violent event can help differentiate subtypes of the IPV dynamics? (3) What are the distinct types of IPV incidents reported by my sample of incarcerated women and how do they correspond to the typologies of violence identified in other studies? (4) How can the different classes of violent incidents that I identify be accounted for by situational, individual, and relationship variables? (5) What are the policy implications of my findings for treatment for and prevention of IPV?

This research will offer both empirical and theoretical contributions to the study of IPV. Empirically, it will address the need in the literature for more context-inclusive and interaction-based research on IPV. In fact, this is one of few studies that examines the patterns of interaction

in a couple with the focus on escalation to violence and that uses the interaction as a unit of analysis to explore the significant correlates at the situational, individual, and relationship levels. Theoretically, this research seeks to move away from the individual-based gendered conceptualization of IPV that characterizes much of the literature and that has raised such questions as, "Who is more violent: men or women?" or "Who deserves more help as a result of IPV: men or women?" Being informed by the dominant IPV perspectives, I will consider and explore alternative approaches that offer promise for enhancing our understanding of IPV and address the critiques associated with the extant conceptualizations of IPV.

On the one hand, my dissertation research draws on and further develops an interactional perspective on IPV. This approach conceptualizes IPV in terms of an interactional dynamic of both partners in a couple that experiences violence rather than in terms of the individual behavioural acts by each of these partners in isolation (as it has been conceptualized in both feminist and family violence perspectives). Specifically, the interactional perspective guides my research in identifying prevalent patterns in the evolution of IPV incidents based on the concept of violent conflict escalation. Many researchers have become increasingly cognisant of the fact that the escalatory dynamics of a violent conflict are a key factor in understanding IPV (Eckert & Willems, 2003; Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles, 2002; Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977; Olson, 2002b, 2004; Retzinger, 1991; deTurck, 1987; Winstok, 2008, 2013). However, despite acknowledging their importance, the dynamics of both social and partner conflict that escalates to violence have received little theoretical and empirical attention (Eckert & Willems, 2003; Winstok, 2013).

On the other hand, the violent events perspective (VEP) (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b; Wilkinson & Fagan, 2001) treats violent interactions or violent escalatory patterns as an unfolding process within the context of a violent event. Such analyses incorporate sociocultural, relationship, and individual factors found to be related to IPV as well as factors related to the dynamics of IPV events, e.g., escalation to violence within and between violent events. At the same time, it is important to note that because the research questions addressed within the dominant perspectives on IPV differ, the interactional perspective embedded in the VEP and

elaborated in this dissertation should be considered as complimentary to rather than a substitute for both feminist and family violence perspectives.

This study relies upon data collected as a part of the Canadian-based *Women's Experiences of Violence: Victimization and Offending in the Context of Women's Lives* study (WEV, hereafter).[1] Women incarcerated in a provincial correctional facility in Ontario, Canada, regardless of their committing offense or history of violence, provided detailed accounts of what happened during IPV incident(s) that took place during the three years prior to their incarceration. Respondents had been imprisoned for a variety of crimes, including property crimes (31%), violent crimes (24%), and drug-related crimes (15%). Three quarters of the respondents were Caucasian, 15% Aboriginal, and 5% Afro-Canadians. In general, respondents' socio-economic status was quite low, which is consistent with other research on incarcerated women (Gabora et al. 2007; Richie, 1996).

Women were asked to describe incidents of serious violence,[2] which they could remember clearly, and each woman could report up to eight incidents. A total of 135 women reported 295 violent episodes with a partner during the three years prior to their incarceration. Neither the sample of women nor the sample of the IPV incidents is random or representative of any known population. However, given the focus of my exploratory study on the intra-incident dynamics of IPV, this sample is appropriate and allows me to address the research questions. Moreover, self-reported accounts of the respondents' violent interactions rather than directly observed IPV incidents provide a valuable account of women's *perceptions* and *understanding* of what has happened to them in the course of these incidents and of the motives for their own actions (Eisikovits & Winstok, 2002; Enosh & Buchbinder, 2005; Flynn & Graham, 2010).

---

[1] The WEV project is a multi-site study of incarcerated women that started with a seed grant from the (U.S.) National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR) to Professors Julie Horney, Sally Simpson, Rosemary Gartner, and Candace Kruttschnitt. Professor Rosemary Gartner was subsequently awarded a grant (410-2000-0030) by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to collect data in Ontario, Canada. Data were also collected in Baltimore, Maryland (Sally Simpson, PI) and in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Candace Kruttschnitt, PI) using the same study design, instrument, and procedures.

[2] In the WEV study, if women reported incidents that involved only pushing, shoving, or grabbing where there were no injuries, a violent incident report was not filled out.

Guided by the VEP described above, the IPV incident rather than an individual woman is the unit of analysis in this study. Women provided a narrative account of each incident, describing how the fight began, who did what to whom, who said what to whom, whether weapons were involved, the extent of injury experienced by the combatants, how the confrontation came to an end, and any other details the respondent could remember about the violent altercation. After providing their narrative descriptions, the women were then asked a series of structured follow-up questions for each reported incident including questions about the location of the incident, number of bystanders, relationship between opponents, demographic characteristics of the opponent, and use of drugs or alcohol on the part of either opponent, among other details.

Because studies of the interactional dynamics of IPV incidents are still in their infancy, I created a coding scheme and applied it to the 295 narratives of violent incidents to identify whether male and female partners used violence in the entire incident, who initiated physical violence, what the partner's reaction to the initial violence was (i.e., escalation or deescalation), and whether either partner was injured as a result of the violence. Next, a graduate student with training in coding qualitative data and I separately read and coded ten of the narratives and I assessed inter-rater reliability. We then discussed the discrepancies in our coding and reached agreement on the appropriate codes. Then we independently coded the next ten incidents, which resulted in 95 - 100% agreement. After we resolved these discrepancies, the coder continued coding the rest of the incidents, consulting with me whenever she had questions about a coding decision.

Then, drawing on these observed variables, I used Latent Class Analysis (LCA) to identify the classes of IPV incidents that represent patterns of violent dynamics. This approach produced a latent unobserved variable with four classes of incidents depending on the types of violent dynamics that characterize them. Then I used methods of multiple regression to examine the contribution of individual, situational, and relationship variables to the different classes of violent incidents. Finally, the findings formed the basis for my conclusions and policy recommendations.

## 1.6 Description of Chapters

My examination of types of violent incidents based on the patterns of violent dynamics and reported by incarcerated women in the WEV study is organized into six chapters. In this chapter, I situated my study within the IPV literature and explained my research interests in examining interactional aspects of violent dynamics in the specific violent event rather than in focusing on the individual behaviour of each intimate partner in cross-sectional studies. I briefly outlined dominant perspectives on IPV, their basic principles and critique mainly stemming from the individual-based approach to conceptualising couple's violent interaction. Based on this discussion, I provided a rationale for applying a context- and situation-based approach to studying the dynamic aspects of IPV and at the same time emphasized the importance of grounding this study in gender. Finally, I briefly outlined my study and presented the conceptual theoretical framework used in this research.

In Chapter Two, I review in more detail research pertinent to my examination of the situational dynamics of IPV. Specifically, I provide a comprehensive review of various criminological and sociological theoretical perspectives on violent conflict escalation and also outline some recent approaches from social sciences, social and clinical psychology, and communication studies that are relevant for explaining conflict escalation and dynamics. This chapter also describes the violent events perspective that serves as a general analytical foundation for this dissertation research and specifically the interactional perspective that guides my empirical study of violent conflict escalation in the IPV incident. In the conclusion of Chapter Two, I outline the specific research hypotheses or rather expectations that frame my study.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the research methods I use to address my research questions. I begin by discussing the type of data required to identify the patterns of violent dynamics in the IPV situation. Next, I briefly describe data from the Women's Experiences of Violence (WEV) project on which my analyses rely, and outline my sampling strategy and data collection procedures. I also assess strengths and weaknesses of the WEV data as a data source for answering my specific research questions. Then this chapter describes my approach to conceptualising and measuring violent dynamics in IPV incidents, that is, I discuss the coding scheme for the dependent variables, which represent the main dimensions of a violent situation

and provide a detailed rationale for my decisions. Chapter Three concludes with a description of the key dependent and independent variables.

The results of an analysis of the bivariate relationships between the main dimensions of the violent dynamics and independent variables are presented in Chapter Four. First, it provides detailed analysis of the characteristics of incarcerated women who reported IPV incidents for this study and a description of the sample of IPV incidents. Then I describe all dependent and independent variables in my study. Finally, I report and discuss statistically significant bivariate relationships between the dependent variables that represent dimensions of the violent dynamics in the IPV incident and individual, relationship, and situational variables.

Chapter Five presents and discusses the results from my analyses that aim to identify the classes of IPV incidents based on different patterns of violent dynamics. First, drawing on the dimensions of a violent interaction, the latent class analysis differentiates between four distinct types of IPV incidents, and I provide descriptive statistics for each of them. Then I present bivariate relationships and multivariate models for each pattern of violent dynamics to identify the relative contribution of different aspects of women's lives, relationships and characteristics of the situation. In the conclusion, I discuss the main findings from my analysis in the context of the literature on various types of IPV.

In Chapter Six, I provide a summary and discussion of the central research questions, the main findings, and their implications for both academic and policy audiences. I begin by reviewing the central issues that motivated my specific research questions. Following this, the chapter describes the main findings of my study. The chapter continues by providing an overview of the theoretical and policy implications stemming from the research. I conclude by outlining the key limitations of my study and offering recommendations for how future research can extend work on the dimensions and typologies of violent interactions within and across IPV incidents and to different populations.

# Chapter 2. Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter 1, many sociological and criminological perspectives on IPV emphasize the individual-based behaviour of each partner in a couple that experiences violence. Focus on the gender of a perpetrator and a victim of IPV has resulted in what some term a "perpetrator/victim" binary or "the trap of gendered dualism" (White & Kowalski, 1994: 504). In a feminist scholarship, for instance, this binary is often represented as a "male perpetrator/female victim". Although a family violence perspective emphasizes a similar violent potential of the both partners (what is known as "gender symmetry"), neither model is very helpful for understanding the heterogeneity of IPV. Moreover, this dichotomised view on IPV from these two perspectives is misleading for several reasons.

First, the nature of intimate relationships (compared to relationships between strangers and acquaintances) is that they are intense, emotional, and both partners are actively engaged in dynamic communication with each other over many interactions. Thus, both partners' behaviour shapes the couple's communication and thus, the acts of both should be considered when we examine IPV. Second, both aforementioned perspectives seem to do disservice to couples involved in IPV by addressing the questions "Who is more violent: men or women?" and "Who mostly deserves to get help: men or women?" Both sides of the binary -- i.e., "male perpetrator/female victim" and "gender symmetry" --appear inconsistent with the empirical evidence. Research demonstrates that both men and women can become victims of IPV and that both initiate and perpetrate IPV, however, not exactly at the same or symmetrical level. Moreover, studies have identified different types of IPV that cannot be solely described by either of these concepts. Third, the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS), as the most commonly used tool to measure individual-based violent behaviour in relationships, does not allow us to understand the escalatory dynamics and gender differences in these violent interactions because of its cross-sectional design (for more detail, see Winstok, 2013: 117) and other measurement limitations (Gondolf & Beeman, 2003). Finally, both perspectives tend to deal mainly with macro- or large-scale variables such as patriarchy, gender inequality, economic deprivation, unemployment, and

social isolation. It appears that there is an insufficient attention to the micro-sociological, e.g., behavioural factors, that can be of a high value to family practitioners seeking to develop and target intervention strategies that will ameliorate domestic violence.

This chapter will first discuss the violent events perspective, which serves as a framework for my study, and will also provide a comprehensive review of the various theories that explain why and how escalation to violence occurs in an intimate conflict. Then, it will describe the main research objectives and research questions of this study.

## 2.2 Interactional and violent events perspectives on IPV

A violent events perspective (VEP) provides a useful framework for studying dynamic aspects of IPV because it concentrates on the violent *event* rather than certain *actors* and combines analyses of the offender, the victim, and the context (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b). As was discussed in chapter 1, VEP seeks to provide a broader view on both criminality and crime and demands that offenders, victims, and situations be considered simultaneously and dynamically. In this respect, VEP addresses the specific nature of intimate relationships, in which participants are often active decision makers whose decisions reflect the interaction of motivation and social context, and are contingent on the actions of others (Wilkinson & Fagan, 2001). Also, the VEP framework satisfies the call for event-based research and studies of the context of IPV (Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin & Petrie, 2004). However, despite some attempts to apply a VEP to studying different aspects of the IPV, the gaps in our understanding of IPV events are still many and current studies are riddled with methodological limitations (for an overview, see Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005).

A violent events perspective considers violent events as having first precursors, i.e., factors that precede and shape the content of events, then transactions, i.e., the interactions involving offenders, victims and the immediate environment, and lastly an aftermath, i.e., the consequences of the events for offenders, victims, and the larger community and the reactions of police and criminal justice agencies. Explaining the relationships among these components, which are often seen as separate elements, is the key to a richer understanding of IPV. The examples of questions

that can be addressed from this perspective are the following: why women in certain relationships are more likely to be injured as the result of IPV, what "rules" both intimate partners have that govern how their disputes are settled, what the stages in a violent interaction are from the beginning of an incident until the end, and when and where IPV incidents are likely to occur.

Thus, application of a VEP makes it possible to develop a model or a series of models that describe and predict the evolution of IPV events. More specifically, at the individual (micro) level, it is important to know individual characteristics of both partners (e.g., physical abuse in the family of origin, criminal history) and their relationships (e.g., length of relationships, frequency of quarrels). Further, at the meso level, the model suggests considering the situational contexts (e.g., the location, presence of bystanders, substance use before the incident) and processual dynamics of IPV events (e.g., sequential actions of the actors and injuries). Finally, at the macro level, different socio-economic and cultural factors, e.g., social disorganization, poverty, and culture of violence, may increase or decrease the opportunities and motivations for IPV transactions.

One of the central elements of the violent events framework is an emphasis on the interaction between two parties in a violent situation, where the roles of perpetrator and victim are not fixed, but rather emerge in the process of the violent interaction. Indeed, many studies suggest that women can also be violent in intimate relationships and their perpetration and victimization often overlap. In this respect, victim-offender binaries are not useful or accurate in many violent events. Because violent events reflect the convergence of motivations, social and situational context, and the complex interaction between two parties, IPV may take a variety of forms or is likely to be heterogeneous.

Escalation, as one of the key concepts of the interactional perspective, refers to the increasing severity of aggressive means used in a violent situation by either side (Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles, 2002). Designating a severity level for each violent action is a prerequisite for evaluating escalation. The action completing the interaction (the second action) can be more severe (increasing or escalation), equally severe (conserving, stable, or reciprocation), or less severe

(decreasing or deescalation) than the action that started it (the first one) (Winstok, 2008: 304). Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles (2002) argue "both parties have an inherent capacity of being victims and /or perpetrators and social contextual variables will determine which of these will be in the foreground or the background interchangeably" (p.150). Based on this, researchers of the escalation process have argued for replacing the static terms "victim" and "offender" with parallel terms that would reflect action modes, such as "escalator" and "de-escalator", demand-withdraw, or "challenger and retaliator" (Savitz, Kumar & Zahn, 1991: 27). Hence, the question of who is the perpetrator and who is the victim is replaced by the question of who increases, decreases, or conserves the severity of violence between the parties. Notably, this means that within the same event one party can be an escalator and a de-escalator – which again allows one to move away from fixed binaries.

In addition to the aforementioned aspects, violent conflict escalation can be viewed as occurring both within and between IPV incidents. The discussion above primarily relates to a violent conflict dynamic within a violent incident. However, there have been attempts to study escalation of violence across IPV incidents. Because my dissertation focuses on the violent conflict escalation within an IPV incident, I will only briefly describe the attempts to understand violent conflict escalation across IPV incidents over time.

Unlike an intra-incident escalation of violence that can be measured by the differences in severity of violent acts perpetrated by each partner, an escalation of violence across IPV incidents can represent itself through the frequency of IPV incidents and the severity of consequences, e.g., injuries across the IPV incidents over time. Increased frequency and intensity of IPV incidents that result in severe injuries for one or both partners manifest violent conflict escalation while the decrease in frequency of IPV conflicts and severity of injuries, including the complete termination of violence over time, designates the process of deescalation or desistance of violence over time.

The IPV literature provides rather inconsistent results on the patterns of violent conflict escalation over time. On the one hand, there are studies that suggest that assaults in intimate relationships tend to continue indefinitely and escalate over time (Eisikovits & Buchbinder,

2000; Giles-Sims, 1983; Pagelow, 1981). For example, in their study of couples that stayed together despite violence, Eisikovits & Buchbinder (2000) delineated a continuum of living with violence and identified the ways in which situational violence transformed into a violent way of life. First, partners were likely to experience violence as related to specific topics. However, as this experience accumulated with time, violence extended beyond specific occurrences and started to affect the entire relationship leading to the loss of trust and an increase in partners' hostility to each other. By using violence to stop violence, partners found themselves entrapped in an endless vicious circle of violence that started to represent a violent way of life (see also, Brockner & Rubin, 1985).

On the other hand, guided by the criminal career perspective, which appears to be suitable for viewing IPV as a phenomenon nested within a broader explanation of violence (Fagan & Browne, 1994), other studies suggest that the IPV is likely to deescalate over time. For instance, in their study of the nature of "careers" of wife assault, Feld and Straus (1989) found that despite widespread beliefs about the persistence and escalation of wife abuse over time, marital violence, in fact, is transient and desistance is common, which makes marital abuse similar to other forms of deviance and crime. In another study of cessation of family violence, Fagan (1989) in detail discussed three major patterns of desistance, i.e., reductions in violence resulting from interventions or "deterrence", shifts in the victimization patterns of abusers or "displacement", and cessation resulting from strategies employed by the victim to end violence or "dissuasion". He found that desistance from family violence tended to be similar with other behaviours whose origins were quite different.

In addition to the aforementioned patterns of violent conflict escalation over time, i.e., steady escalation or deescalation across the incidents, another pattern has been identified in the IPV literature as well, i.e., a cyclical three-phased process of growing tension, acute battering, and loving contrition that occurs repeatedly over the whole relationship (Walker, 1979, 2009). Moreover, over time tension building happens more often and loving contrite behaviour actually declines (Walker, 2009). Some other authors have also delineated the heterogeneity of violence over time, with the suggestion that the general course of IPV is desistance, but that for a

subgroup of men, there is escalation over time. These men are also the ones most likely to overlap with the general criminal population (e.g., Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004).

## 2.3 Theories of violent dynamics within the IPV incident

Because criminological and sociological literature provides little theorising on the question of violent dynamics and, in particular, escalation, I will outline some recent approaches from social sciences, social psychology, and communication studies that are the most relevant for explaining violent escalation and dynamics. In general, the literature suggests that escalation to violence may be treated either as an aspect of rational conflict strategies (e.g., relational approach, rational choice theory) or as an expression of irrationality due to various reasons, e.g., as a part of human nature (psychopathology and psychophysiology of escalation) and/or due to problems during the attribution and communication processes in a couple (i.e., interactionist and various social psychological explanations). Below I elaborate on the theories of violent conflict escalation in relation to the IPV context.

***Escalation as a Rational Strategy.*** These theories assume that the use and escalation of violence in the IPV situation is the result of individual benefit maximization strategies, which are directed at achieving desired outcomes. In other words, increasing violence helps accomplish a desired goal whereas the cost of it is overall lower than the cost of any other possible actions.

*Rational choice theory.* Rational choice theory (Cornish & Clarke, 1998) specifies that the offender performs a cost-benefit analysis, taking into account the characteristics of the offence, victim, and his or her own opportunities and capabilities. However, decision-making and choices are not completely rational because they are often constrained by time, cognitive ability, and information. Moreover, the decisions and factors affecting them vary greatly at different stages of decision making, such as initial involvement, continuation, and desistance.

Application of this theory to an IPV incident suggests that the first instance of violence most probably appears after other non-violent means were used and proved ineffective. It is expected that the severity of violence gradually increases if the partner does not comply. The process ends when the demands are fulfilled or are no longer worth pursuing. As the persuasion or

compliance-gaining literature suggests, violence in an IPV incident can also be used as a strategy of punishment-based persuasion (deTurck, 1985, 1987). Similar reasoning may characterise the opponent's behaviour that escalates, reciprocates, or de-escalates in response to the partner's initiative attack.

The choice-structuring properties of violent conflict escalation by either partner thus may possibly include an easily available victim, no expertise required, and low risk of apprehension during an escalating IPV incident. The availability of legal and extralegal resources that allow intimate partners to be protected from violence in an intimate relationship also appears to affect the violent dynamic in an IPV incident (for a review, see Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). Specifically, women seem to reciprocate or escalate in response to male partners' violence less if legal and extralegal help is available (Browne & Williams, 1989). Informal police mediation and separation also appears to provide nonviolent alternatives to intimate partners and thus decreases the chances of violent conflict escalation (Fagan, 1989).

In addition to variables identified within a rational choice theory, characteristics that reflect each partner's exposure to violence and that proved to be an effective tool to get what one wants can arguably increase the likelihood both of using initiative violence and also responding with escalation to the partner's initiative violence. In my dissertation, the variables that may represent these influences are violent socialisation (i.e., violence by a caregiver and violent attitudes acquired in childhood), violent offending, and criminal subculture.

*Relational Approach.* This approach, postulated by Gould (2003), sheds light on the differences in the process of violent conflict escalation in symmetrical (ambiguous in terms of rank and status) and asymmetrical (well established hierarchical) relations. This approach suggests that symmetrical relations, including relationships between the intimates (Gartner, Griffiths, & Yule, 2012; Griffiths, Yule, & Gartner, 2011)[3], are more prone to conflict and subsequent escalation to violence than are asymmetrical relations. Physical violence between intimate partners is likely to

[3] Gould (2003) assumed intimate heterosexual relationships were inherently asymmetrical based on a rationale that "gender is an organizing principle for [intimate] relationships" (p.88) but did not test this assumption.

start symbolically (often because of incompatible expectations about deference) in the form of a verbal altercation. Next, in the absence of any external criterion for deciding who should prevail in symmetrical relations, disputants will most probably persist and escalate to physical violence, hoping that doing so will persuade the other to give in. This confrontation between the equals can sometimes lead to homicide simply because each party expects the other to back down. In other words, these people often "find themselves locked in lethal battles before their disputes end" (Gould, 2003: 93). In contrast, people in clear hierarchical (asymmetrical) relations usually have many more structural brakes on conflict and thus, on average, are more likely to resolve their disputes before they become lethal. The relational approach overall suggests that despite being an inherent aspect of any social and interpersonal conflict, escalation of violence should characterise intimate relationships more often than other relationships with a clear hierarchy and distribution of power.

***Psychophysiology and psychopathology of a violent escalation.*** A second set of approaches explains the process of conflict escalation to violence as a natural by-product of neural processing, psychophysical states, and personality disorders. Because IPV does not happen only in disadvantaged families, is perpetrated not only by men but also by women, and occurs in a minority of relationships, it can hardly be adequately explained exclusively by poverty, patriarchy, gender inequality, and social norms. Psychologists and psychiatrists argue that when people act in a chronically dysfunctional manner that violates the norms of their culture, their behaviour may be explained by a personality disorder. Moreover, perpetrators with different personality disorders tend to create different patterns of abuse (e.g., Hamberger & Hastings, 1986; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Jacobson & Gottman, 1998; Saunders, 1992; Tweet & Dutton, 1998).

*Personality disorder and psychopathology.* Regarding the explanation of conflict escalation to violence, personality theories move our understanding of IPV beyond the "stimulus–response" models of social learning theory and focus on cyclical buildups of internal tension as a key element in intimate abusiveness. In other words, escalation to violence appears to be not necessarily linked to the disrupted interaction or dysfunctional communication between the partners, but rather is a result of an individual personality disorder. The types of personality

disorder that are potentially relevant to understanding conflict escalation to violence are borderline and antisocial personality disorders. For example, male partners with antisocial personality traits usually initiate verbal aggression and quickly escalate to severe physical violence against their wives (e.g., using a knife or a gun). Jacobson and Gottman (1998) called this type of male batterer 'Cobras'. The "battering cycle" pattern described by Walker (2009) closely resembles the dynamic that characterizes relationships with a borderline or cyclic perpetrator.

*Psychophysiology of escalation.* Within the literature on the physiology of emotional reaction, escalating conflict can be conceptualized as a sequence of provocations, each triggering an excitatory reaction that materializes quickly and dissipates slowly (Zillmann, 1990). If a second sympathetic reaction occurs before the first has dissipated, the second reaction combines with the tail end of the first. It produces anger and angry reactions that are incommensurate with the subsequent provocation.

In addition, neural processes in our brain also seem to contribute to the process of escalation in response to initial force. In the tit-for-tat experiment conducted by Shergill, Bays, Frith, and Wolpert (2003), the researchers exerted force on a participant's finger. Then the participant was instructed to apply the same amount of force on a finger of another participant. After that, the participants took turns exerting force on each other's fingers being instructed to apply the same amount of force that the other participant had just exerted on them. The experiment has demonstrated that despite the instruction, the amount of force exerted on participants' fingers escalated rapidly across six pairs in the experiment as well as within every pair of participants. This study demonstrates that when force is used according to a tit-for-tat principle, it actually escalates. The experiment also suggests that people are more sensitive to the force exerted by others on them than to the force they exert upon others (Winstok, 2013).

These findings suggest that in my study using force in response to the partner's initial violence may in fact be seen as escalation and that the reciprocal reaction in response to the first violence can be meaningfully designated as an escalatory reaction as well. However, it should be further

explored if reciprocal reaction in the form of self-defence can be considered as escalation of a violent conflict as well.

***Social Psychological and Interactionist Approaches to Escalation.*** These approaches focus on subjective perceptions, restricted cognitions, and individual attitudes and values in explaining the mechanisms of escalatory violent dynamics.

*Symbolic interactionist theory.* Symbolic interactionists suggest that conflicts arise not solely as the result of some objective circumstances (e.g., conflicting interests), but mostly due to the specific perceptions and interpretations of these circumstances by the participants (Athens, 2005; Felson, 1993; Goffman, 1963), which get reflected in implicit "rules of relationships" (Denzin, 1970; Hepburn, 1973). Maintaining one's self-image, negotiating identities, and 'saving face' in light of perceived disrespect, disparagement, or insult can often lead to the spiral way of conflict escalation in which one or more often both partners seek redress in response to an action deemed personally offensive (Athens, 2005; Felson and Tedeschi, 1993; Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977; Roloff, 1996). For example, Hepburn (1973) explained the ever-increasing escalation to violence in interpersonal relationships by the adaptation of face-saving tactics of retaliation in response to identity threats, rejected claims, and low accountability. Moreover, the longer this process lasts, the lower the chances of using alternative tactics of avoidance or acceptance by both partners. The theory of the criminal spin (Ronel, 2011) elaborates on this aspect of violent dynamics and discusses this in terms of the victim-perpetrator chronic interactive spin dynamic, according to which violent interaction represents a specific spin process, in which the acts of both partners seem to be guided by the inertia of the process itself (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012).

The specific mechanism linking humiliation with anger and ensuing escalation to violence has been thoroughly studied in the psychology and sociology of emotions literature (Dutton, 2007; Katz, 1988; Retzinger, 1991; Roloff, 1996). Katz (1988) defines humiliation as a loss of control over one's identity. He argues that when humiliated, the person is overcome with an intolerable discomfort that can be eased by expressing rage, because one is the opposite of the other. Echoing Katz (1988), Retzinger (1991) focuses on a shame-anger connection and demonstrates the role of hidden alienation and shame as the source of repetitious cycles of conflict in intimate

relationships. Hence, escalation to physical violence in an IPV incident can be seen as a form of self-defence against a perceived or imagined attack on the self.

Applying Hepburn's concept to homicides, Luckenbill (1977) describes the process of escalation to homicide in interpersonal relationships as a "character contest", in which at least one but usually both parties attempt to establish or save face at the expense of others by "standing steady" or "demonstrating character".[4] A series of unfolding stages of such a contest usually includes a personal offense initiated by a later victim, interpreted by an offender as an offense and followed by retaliation at a victim. If the conflict does not end with an immediate killing at this stage, the interaction moves to an implicit "working agreement" between two parties when a victim appears committed to battle and gets engaged in a physical interchange. This stage turns to a battle and subsequent death of a victim. It is important to note that since the statuses of "victim" and "offender" can change at different points in the conflict and are defined such depending on the outcome of an incident (the victim is the one who is killed), then the "challenger" and "retaliator" seem to be more precise terms (Savitz, Kumar, & Zahn, 1991: 27). Although Luckenbill's concept of "character contest" has proven to be a valuable one (Savitz, Kumar, & Zahn, 1991), there have also been other slightly modified approaches to describing the processual stages of a violent conflict evolvement (e.g., Athens, 2005; Felson, 1982; Felson and Steadman, 1983; Levi, 1980).

Based on the social psychological and interactionist understanding of escalating violent dynamics, my study will examine how various motives for violence, the presence of an audience, intoxication and other factors are associated with different patterns of violent dynamics in the IPV incident. Specifically, the discussion above suggests that the motives for IPV incidents in my study that relate to the predominant emotions of shame and humiliation (i.e., challenge of authority and sexual jealousy) may be associated with violent escalation more often than incidents about alcohol/drug use, money, or household responsibilities. Studies of the role of third parties in IPV suggest that the presence of bystanders may threaten intimate partners' social

[4] Separation as one of the important variables in understanding lethal domestic violence most often committed by men against women is more relevant to the issues of control and dominance in the relationship than to the situational "character contest" discussed here.

identity and provide implicit or explicit support for face-saving tactics that escalate to violence (Hepburn, 1973; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005); at the same time, third parties can interfere and prevent violence from escalating. Hence, isolation may be associated with violence mainly perpetrated by men against non-violent women; however, I will refrain from putting forth more specific hypotheses given the overall dearth of studies in this area. Finally, alcohol intoxication in the IPV situation as a factor that has been found to contribute to the partners' identity threat, relational rules' violation and a narrowed choice of threat-reducing tactics (Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005) can arguably be associated with the overall escalation of violence in the IPV incident.

*Communication theories of escalation.* The role that communication plays in escalating and inhibiting physical violence within intimate relationships has been long overlooked (Cahn, 2009; Cordova et al., 1993: Lloyd, 1990; Sabourin, 1995). The main concepts germane to understanding violent escalation in an IPV incident that are often inextricably intertwined are relationship dissatisfaction, communication competence, negative reciprocity, and control/dominance in the relationship.

Many studies of IPV suggest that relationship dissatisfaction, including a high level of couple disagreement, is a necessary condition for violence (e.g., Lloyd, 1996). In unhappy/dissolving relationships, partners hurt one another and view defeat of the partner as more important than either winning issues or solving specific problems (for a review, see Cahn, 1990). The partners in these relationships are likely to engage in destructive communication behaviour by directly attacking and negatively evaluating the other's feelings, by indirectly blaming the other, and by justifying their own actions. Distressed couples are more defensive than non-distressed couples and are likely to begin a discussion by using negative reciprocity (Sabourin, 1995) and cross-complaining (Gottman et al., 1977, in Cahn, 1990: 11). Emotionally, these intimate partners experience high levels of antagonism and alienation that often results in physical violence. Frequency of arguments can also reflect the deficit of communication skills (for a review, see Bell & Naugle, 2008, and Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005; Lloyd, 1996).

The process of violent conflict escalation between intimate partners has also been described and explained through the process of "negative reciprocity" (Sabourin, 1995) or "escalating antagonism", which focuses on control or dominance in the intimate relationship. Negative reciprocity or escalating antagonism signifies the occurrence of aversive behaviour on the part of one partner given aversive behaviour by the other, often in the process of a struggle to define the relationship where neither of the partners accepts the other's attempt to control (Sabourin, 1995: 272).

Research literature suggests several possible patterns of escalation depending on the controlling or domineering behaviour of one or both partners in the intimate relationship. First, in asymmetrical relationships that are characterized by an imbalance of control between the partners, violence tends to be one-sided and directed against the partner with lower power, who usually submits to the dominant partner and does not reciprocate. This pattern of violence has been designated intimate terrorism (Johnson, 2008), abusive relationships (Olson, 2004), Cobra couples (Jacobson & Gottman, 1998), clinically violent couples (Ehrensaft, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2004), and cycle of violence (Walker, 2009). Contrary to Johnson's (2008) assumption that violence in relationships that experience situational couple violence does not escalate, Olson (2002, 2004) uncovered various types of violent couples within this category. Despite being symmetrical in their power relationships, the two types of violent couples – violent relationships and aggressive relationships - differ in the level of violence and in the type of the escalatory dynamic of a violent conflict. Violent relationships seem to include high levels of violence that partners use reciprocally against each other in the process of a severe power struggle. Disruptive communication patterns discussed below are likely to escalate verbal aggression to dangerous forms of physical violence (Olson, 2002a). In contrast to violent relationships, aggressive relationships tend to be more egalitarian, have healthier communication that allow the partners to avoid engaging in the escalatory dynamic of negative reciprocity, and overall experience substantially lower levels of violence (Olson, 2004).

Two salient communication patterns that characterise violent relationships are demand-withdraw pattern (i.e., violence or aggression as the way to get partner's attention) and negative reciprocity (i.e., violence as a way to match partner's aversive behaviour). The demand-withdraw

communication pattern is one of the most disruptive for relationships and is characterized by a set of behaviours in which one partner tries to discuss problems, criticizes or blames his or her partner for problems, or pressures the partner to change; conversely, the other partner tries to avoid discussion of the problem or passively withdraws from the interaction (Christensen & Heavey, 1990). In nonviolent couples the pattern is often wife-demand/husband-withdraw, but in couples with abusive husbands, husbands are both demanding and withdrawing (Berns et al., 1999). Moreover, demand-withdraw interaction appears to escalate over time, which may explain marital deterioration and divorce. In Holtzworth-Munroe et al.'s (1998) study, which looked at mutually violent couples, both partners engaged in uniquely high levels of demanding and withdrawing behaviour. That is, when discussing a topic raised by the wife, violent-distressed couples exhibited high levels of husband demand and wife withdrawal, as compared with violence-non-distressed, nonviolent-distressed, and nonviolent-non-distressed couples. Similarly, when discussing a topic raised by the wife, violent-distressed couples showed high levels of wife demand and husband withdrawal. Negative reciprocity reflects the tendency on the part of spouses to continue negative behaviour once it begins (Cordova et al., 1993; Sabourin, 1995). In contrast to some descriptions of women as experiencing battered women's syndrome and not reciprocating to the abusive behaviour of their husbands (Walker, 2009), Cordova et al. (1999) found that even in more severely violent populations, women in abusive relationships are at least as likely as their husbands to reciprocate verbally aversive behaviour.

Each of the escalation theories discussed above has identified specific factors at the individual, relationship, and situational levels that will be used to examine the characteristics of violent dynamics within IPV incidents in my study. The measures of each of these variables will be discussed in detail in chapter 3.

## 2.4. Perspectives on female offending in IPV literature

As was briefly discussed in chapter 1, the views on female offending, in particular, perpetration of violence in the intimate relationship, have changed dramatically in the last 40 years. This section aims to present and discuss several major perspectives on female offending in the IPV literature, although it is not exhaustive in its coverage of existing approaches. First, I will discuss a victimization-offending perspective that attributes female offending primarily to women's prior

victimization experiences often associated with the inequalities and disadvantages in women's lives. Then I will look at perspectives that emphasize the agentic nature of female offending while preserving the relevance of victimisation experiences in the aetiology of female offending. I will end this section with a discussion of the growing literature on typologies of female perpetrators.

***Victimisation-offending perspective (female perpetrators as victims)***.[5] A large group of scholars contextualises female offending in terms of the broader socio-political and economic forces structured around sexual inequality and male oppression. From this perspective, female victimization is seen as a key explanatory factor for female offending (e.g., Chesney-Lind, 1989; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Moe, 2004; Richie, 1996; Stark, 2007; Swan & Snow, 2006). In other words, women commit IPV (or other crimes and acts of delinquency) because they are physically or sexually victimized in their family of origin and/or in order to cope with the abuse in their intimate relationships.[6]

Moreover, the nexus between female offending and female victimization extends beyond the domain of intimate relationships. Studies that draw on a model of female delinquency that is sensitive to the situations of girls and women in a patriarchal context document salient links between women's childhood physical and sexual victimization and their later criminal careers (Chesney-Lind and Pasko, 2013; Chesney-Lind, 1989). First, due to gender-specific socialization patterns, girls experience problems in their families, including physical and sexual abuse. When abused girls attempt to escape violence or cope with it, they commit so-called "status offences", i.e., they run away from home, become "beyond control" or "truant", in need of "care and protection", etc. (Chesney-Lind, 1989). Once on the streets, girls are compelled further toward crime (e.g., prostitution, panhandling, and theft) in order to survive. In turn, statutes within the

[5] As with any generalizations, these categories cannot represent the full diversity and depth of the scholarship provided by the authors in each category, and some of these categories may overlap. For example, those who believe that women are aggressive because they experienced violence from their partners (female perpetrators as victims) can also think that fighting back to retaliate is an expression of women's agency.

[6] This argument, however, is rarely applied to male offenders of IPV and thus, male engagement in IPV continues to be explained by these authors mainly by the motives of control, domination, and oppression of women.

juvenile justice system that originally were developed to 'protect' young people, in fact, criminalise young girls' survival strategies. Thus, females' offending often results from the criminalization of girls' survival strategies (Chesney-Lind, 1989).

Many recent studies document the specific circumstances in which women's survival strategies have been viewed and responded to as law-breaking behaviour. For example, in their analysis of women who smoke crack and engage in street-level sex work in New York city, Maher and Curtis (1998) highlighted women's experiences within the context of both male dominated structures and occupational opportunities for women in the informal economy. They suggested that crack cocaine was not a way of liberation for women but rather a coping strategy for women embedded in the context of poverty, violence and disrespect. In the context of the sex-segmented informal economy, women crack smokers often found themselves engaged in street-level prostitution as a means of supporting drug consumption. The "war on drugs" directed against poor minority women who used crack cocaine and the changes in the price and nature of sex work, increased women's violent victimisation by male clients, police and neighbourhood youth. Maher and Curtis (1998) suggest that the increased rates of women's participation in "criminal" activities such as robbery and assault more accurately reflects women's continued subjugation and necessitated adaptations to survive rather than "masculinization" of women and a shift away from traditional female roles.

In another study, Richie (1996) develops a gender-entrapment theory that explains the involvement of Black battered women into illegal activities. She argues that these women are not "criminals" but rather "victims of crimes" who were set up or entrapped in their lives by socially constructed conditions. Typically, they were deeply misunderstood and betrayed by their families, abused and degraded in intimate relationships and in the end criminalized and stigmatized by the criminal justice system (Richie, 1996: 5). All these processes taken together comprise what Richie called "gender entrapment". She illustrates how Afro-American battered women who were incarcerated for violent, property, drug-related crimes, and prostitution were in fact compelled to commit crimes by their male partners, and also under the pressure of early childhood experiences, socially-constructed cultural/racial identity, violence in intimate relationships, and other negative social factors.

Although many studies in both industrialized and non-industrialized countries indeed support what has come to be known as a victimization-offending hypothesis, this perspective used alone does not seem to represent the complexity of women's violent offending. Specifically, one of the limitations of attributing female offending exclusively to female victimization is that it overlooks or diminishes the weight of women's agency, responsibility, and understanding of their violent behaviour. Furthermore, the victimization-offending hypothesis also tends to essentialize the weaknesses and victimhood of women in IPV situations (e.g., Daly, 1998; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006). Indeed, many scholars working in this perspective notably use the passive voice when it comes to illustrating women's lives and their paths to offending, including in the titles of their books (e.g., Richie's *Compelled to Crime)*. This perspective tends to reject the very human nature of women who occasionally or often feel angry, jealous, or envious, strive for control and dominance, have personality disorders, etc. By focusing on the overarching role of a patriarchal context in the victimization of female offenders, this perspective also appears to underestimate the potential role of class, race, immigration and other factors that intersect with gender in explaining offending by different women in different contexts.

***Agentic perspectives on female offending***. Scholarship that emerged in several industrialized countries in the late 1990s challenged the myth of a nonaggressive woman (e.g., Baskin & Sommers, 1998; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006) and critiqued the anti-agentic representation of women's offending in both the media and the criminal justice system (Allen, 1998; Downs, 1996; Morrissey, 2003). These scholars suggest that female offenders are shown almost invariably as victims rather than as actors in the crimes they committed and that this representation is likely to harm women. Scholars within this perspective argue that by denying the possibility of female agency in violent crimes, the best of intentions actually deny women the full freedom to be human.

Specifically, Allen (1998) demonstrated that the severity of women's violence tends to be moderated (i.e., by referring to the psychological and medical aspects of female crimes), domesticized (by invoking her "feminine" position as a woman, as a mother, and as a wife), and normalised (by considering female crimes as "impersonal misfortunes rather than personal

misdeeds", as acts committed "without volition, intention, understanding or consciousness") by psychiatrists and probation officers (Allen, 1998: 63).

Downs (1996) comes to a similar conclusion about the detrimental effect of the victimisation discourse on female offenders in his book *More than Victims* (1996). In it, he discusses the use of the Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS) as a legal defence and shows how the syndrome's logic harms those it is trying to protect. The major flaws of the BWS lie in seeing battered women as lacking the will, responsibility, and mental capacity for handling the situation; its group-based approach to gender justice; a rigidity that can compromise the prospects of defendants who do not fit the stereotypes of the syndrome; and its "excuses" and "justifications" for criminal acts. His study provides a powerful analysis of female victims' role in IPV without denying their victimization, minimizing the problem, or exonerating women who killed or injured their male partners. Downs (1996) shows that justice in domestic violence cases can be achieved without sacrificing the presumptions of reason and responsibility. He argues for abandoning BWS in favour of standards of responsibility that provide justice for women (not just those who fit the syndrome) and apply equally to all citizens. In his opinion, the law of self-defence provides a more appropriate framework for treating cases of battered women who resort to lethal force since it addresses their individual situations and does not rely on pseudo-scientific stereotypes of helplessness and lack of will (Downs, 1996: 223).

Morrissey's (2003) position echoes Downs' (1996) argument in the way that she supports the application of self-defence law rather than any of the syndromes for battered women who kill. In her discussion of battered women who kill, Morrissey (2003) argues that these women need recognition of their accountability for their crimes and acknowledgement of their agency without a concomitant increase in their liability for punishment. Thus, a new legal narrative is needed based upon a concept of determined agency whereby battered women might be considered as making a rational choice in killing abusive, life-threatening partners, and at the same time as being coerced into this decision through a lack of societal support and recognition of their situation. Moreover, Morrissey (2003) shows why and how women's violence that cannot be explained in conventional ways (e.g., child abuse or spouse abuse) leads to an essentialist conception of the nexus between sex and gender.

Many other scholars have provided empirical evidence for the diversity of contexts and motives for female violence (Baskin & Sommers, 1998; Daly, 1998; Gartner & McCarthy, 2006; Miller & Mullins, 2006). These scholars have challenged anti-agentic, passive views on female offenders who were long characterized as inherently evil, sick, or overly determined by early victimization by uncovering a wide range of motives for women's involvement in violent offending. Although some motivations are clearly related to economic and social status, violence by women is also motivated by gendered considerations, e.g., threats to their status as a good mother or a faithful partner. These studies further highlight the idea of female agency and the limited choices these women have.

For instance, a study of 170 women who committed nondomestic violent felony crimes (robbery, assault, and homicide) in New York City suggested that these women were not simply "coerced" or "forced" by male partners and family members into crime but expressed their agency in making personal decisions related to their participation in crime. For example, a common theme in many of the accounts describing assault is that the use of violence was seen by women as a legitimate method to avenge being "dissed" and one of the most effective ways of gaining respect and "saving face" (Baskin & Sommers 1998: 117-118). The study also revealed the importance of other social factors, mainly neighbourhood environments, in accounting for female violent career patterns.

Female offenders' agency appears to be denied particularly in the cases of infanticide. These women were long seen by criminologists as evil or impotent due to victimhood or madness. Gartner and McCarthy (2006) examined the undetected cases or the "dark figure" of infanticides by women hoping that it might provide an alternative understanding of their violent behaviour. Comparing two data sets of infanticides in which parents were identified as killers and in which the offender was not identified revealed a more complex characterization of women who killed their children. Some of the women who killed their children but were never identified as such presumably had sufficient resources and a sense of self-preservation to hide their crimes. However, this does not deny that these women might have experienced many other problems, e.g., psychological and structural, that could constrain their choices. At the same time, Gartner

and McCarthy (2006) argued that given these constraints women still had agency and ability to make choices in their lives.

A steering committee established by the US Congress to develop a detailed research agenda on violence against women emphasized the importance of further studies on the links between women's PV victimization and offending (Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin & Petrie 2004: 87). Based on an extensive review of studies of IPV, the authors, however, acknowledged that women's violence against partners could not be completely explained as defensive, i.e., by female victimization only. Thus, a framework that could connect different types of violence in which women play roles of offenders or victims should be considered. In relation to female victimization, the committee found that despite widely held beliefs that the factors behind female victimization differ from those affecting rates of male victimization, risk factors seem to be very similar to those for other kinds of criminal offending and victimization. As a result, the authors called for expansion of both theoretical and empirical models that would provide a better understanding of such female-perpetrated violence, including an examination of individual factors, the environments, and the cultural context of violent women.

Overall, these and other studies reveal the complex aetiology of female offending that extends beyond prior victimisation to many other individual, situational, relationship, and societal factors and reflects the inherent agency of women who commit crime, including violent offences. Furthermore, these studies suggest that the myth of the nonaggressive woman can in fact reinforce male power, silence women's voices, impede attempts to solve the problems that lead to female aggression, and deny that women have power to control others (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010; White & Kowalski, 1994).

***Typological approaches on female offenders***. Some scholars, primarily psychologists, have enriched our understanding of female involvement in violence by identifying distinct types of violent women depending on the different context and motivations for the use of violence (Babcock, Miller & Siard, 2003; Henning, Renauer & Holdford, 2006; Ross & Babcock, 2012; Swan & Snow, 2002). Similarly to violent men, scholars identify at least two types of women who use violence in intimate relationships: partner-only (PO) and generally violent (GV) women

(Babcock, Miller & Siard, 2003). PO women are those who use violence only in the context of an intimate relationship, often in self-defence, and who have learnt through their adult relationships that violence is an acceptable and effective way to deal with conflict in intimate relationships. Additionally, comparison of perpetrator typologies by gender using a community sample has identified nearly equal and low rates of men and women who may be classified as partner-only perpetrators (Monson & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2002). GV women, on the other hand, are likely to use violence in a variety of situations, including intimate relationships, mostly for the purposes of retribution or gaining compliance or control; and they tend to demonstrate many traumatic symptoms (e.g., memory problems, a desire to hurt themselves) (Babcock, Miller & Siard, 2003).

A study of women convicted of IPV by Henning, Renauer & Holdford (2006) has further demonstrated the heterogeneity of female IPV offenders. The authors identified a small group of these women (9%) who were primary aggressors in the relationship, which is close to the proportion of GV women in other classifications. These women used coercive violence and serious aggression with their partners more often than other women; also, they experienced early conduct problems and greater exposure to family violence in childhood than other women convicted of IPV. Contrary to researchers' expectations about these women's continuing violence against their male partners, these women were in fact more likely to become victims in subsequent PV reports than offenders. One of the explanations is that women's physical aggression may increase the risk for future victimisation. The majority of women who were convicted of IPV offenses in the Henning et al. (2006) study, however, were women whom they called victims. Researchers found that in the majority of couples in which women were arrested for IPV the male was much more often the primary aggressor than the female, which suggests that women's use of violence in these cases was motivated primarily by self-protection or that both partners were violent towards each other in an attempt to control, but women lost more often.

Swan & Snow's study (2002, 2003) of the women who had used physical violence with a male partner in the previous six months echoes Henning et al.'s (2006) findings and suggests that, although there are at least four different types of women's violence in intimate relationships,

almost all of these women experienced physical abuse from their male partners. Notably, some of the identified types of women's violence appear to fit some of the types of violence established by Johnson (2008). For example, the 'women as victims' type may match Johnson's (2008) intimate terrorism type, while the 'women as aggressors' type seems to lack the patriarchal power structure to fit this category. In fact, the researchers concluded that they needed more information to determine whether female aggressors could be intimate terrorists. Two other types, i.e., the mixed-female and the mixed-male coercive relationships fit what Johnson (2008) called situational couple violence and violent resistance respectively.

Other studies distinguish a type of female offender who engages in coercive control (Robertson & Murachver, 2011) and intimate terrorism against their male partners (Hines & Douglas, 2010b; Ross & Babcock, 2012). Specifically, in a comparative study of men who sought help for IPV victimisation and men from the community sample, Hines and Douglas (2010b) found that female partners of the men who sought help were much more likely to hit first during the last physical argument and ever in the relationship, and also engaged in significantly higher rates and frequency of all types of IPV, including controlling behaviours and minor physical aggression, than female partners of men from a community sample.

Based on this work, it appears that although female offenders have experienced enormous victimisation in their lives (much greater than women from a community sample), their offending can also be attributed to many other motives, e.g., contextual, individual, and socio-economic. Moreover, many scholars emphasise the decision-making process of offending women in the constraints of the situation. Overall, the studies of female offenders suggest that they are a heterogeneous group who perpetrate crime, including IPV, in different contexts and for various reasons. This implies that the explanation of women's engagement in crime and violence may benefit from an integrated approach, i.e., one that combines gender perspectives on the one hand and classical criminological, sociological and psychological theories on the other. I turn now to discussing how the current study builds upon and extends the research in this area.

## 2.5 Research Objectives

By giving priority to violent dynamics within IPV incidents in my analysis, I seek to highlight issues important for understanding the extent to which partners' individual and relationship characteristics, as well as aspects of the situation, shape patterns of violent interaction. Previous scholarship on this topic has demonstrated convincingly that the potential for such analysis exists. This body of work has further established that, as a nuanced and heterogeneous phenomenon, IPV should be considered as comprised of different patterns or types of violence, and that additional work is needed to more fully describe each of these types. My analyses build on the existing research in several ways to address a number of important gaps and shed further insight into the dimensions and typologies of IPV. In particular, I aim to address five features of the extant literature.

First, my research expands upon recent studies of the context-inclusive, interaction- based and dyadic research on IPV as opposed to individual-based and non-contextual studies. In other words, the theoretical basis for my analysis is the assumption that violence in a relationship is an interactional dyadic phenomenon, and the behaviour of both partners is crucial for understanding, preventing and treating IPV (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010; Straus, 2013). Moreover, this interactional perspective helps me identify prevalent patterns in the intra-incident evolution of violence based on the concept of violent conflict escalation (Eckert & Willems, 2003; Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles, 2002; Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977; Winstok, 2008, 2013). Despite acknowledging the importance of partner conflict dynamics that escalate to violence, this topic has received little theoretical and empirical attention. Therefore, in the current study I develop a measure of violent dynamics that allows me to identify the patterns of the violent interaction in IPV incidents.

Second, due to the cross-sectional and survey design, many current studies of IPV do not obtain detailed information about the context of the particular violent incidents. This makes it difficult to determine the effect of a wide range of interactional and situational risk factors on the patterns of violent dynamics. To avoid this problem, my study draws on data that provide detailed descriptions of violent situations and uses IPV incidents as the unit of analysis. Therefore, prompted by the call for more context- and event-based studies of violence (Bell & Naugle,

2008; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005) and guided by the violent events perspective (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b), my study concentrates on violent situations, including partners' interaction, their individual and relationship characteristics, and the immediate environment.

Third, given the increased interest in typologies of IPV in existing research, especially after Johnson's and Holtzworth-Munroe's typologies of domestic violence first published in mid-1990's, my study contributes to this literature by using the violent incident as the unit of analysis. However, there have been increasing questions about adequacy of categorical/typological approaches in research on IPV. Specifically, while "types" of batterers, for example, can improve our ability to make predictions about their behaviour, not all individuals will fit neatly within a particular subtype. That is why dimensional approaches to the study of IPV may be methodologically superior and thus preferable (Ross & Babcock, 2010). Consequently, my study first develops dimensions for measuring violent dynamics, which later in my work are used for creating a typology of violent patterns within IPV incidents.

Fourth, there is still a shortage of studies of IPV experiences in the lives of incarcerated women who represent an extremely high-risk population (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Gabora et al., 2007; Richie, 1996) and thus my study contributes to this literature. Moreover, unlike most other studies, the women in my study are not necessarily victims (as in shelter samples) or perpetrators of IPV (as in IPV offender programs) and were not asked to provide a specific experience of IPV either as victims or perpetrators of IPV. Doing so allows me to explore the wide range of violent situations and experiences.

Finally, although my study draws on an interactional or dyadic approach in studying IPV and takes into consideration the behaviour of the both partners in the conflict situation, I seek to elucidate the role of women in a violent dynamics First, my data about violent situations were provided by women and, hence, are likely to represent women's perceptions and memories of these events. Second, views on women in violent relationships have changed dramatically from the dawn of IPV research (e.g., Holtzworth-Munroe, 2005). My study moves away from seeing women as either victims or perpetrators of IPV, and aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of women's roles in different types of violent situations.

## 2.6 Research Questions

Two main research questions guide my analysis. The first question asks: What are the dimensions of violent dynamics in the IPV event? This question also considers whether and to what extent individual, relationship and situational factors shape intra-incident patterns of IPV dynamics. It involves empirically identifying and describing various aspects of the IPV event, e.g., how violence starts, evolves and ends, and whether the characteristics of the intimate partners, of their relationship or of the situation contribute to various dimensions of IPV dynamics.

Given the exploratory nature of my study, it is difficult to hypothesize a priori how exactly the independent variables representing the individual, relationship, and situational characteristics will affect different dimensions of the violent dynamics in IPV incidents. However, I present my expectations about the direction, strength, and interpretation of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in my study based on previous studies in chapter 4, where I discuss each of the independent variables in my study.

The second question that guides this study asks: What are the salient patterns or classes of violent dynamics in the IPV events and how are individual, relationship and situational characteristics associated with them? Since no studies, to my knowledge, have yet employed the violent events perspective to identify the classes of IPV incidents based on patterns of violent interaction, I do not present specific hypotheses that would delineate the entire range of possibilities regarding the relationship between classes of IPV incidents and my independent variables. However, given that some studies have developed typologies of domestic violence (Johnson, 2008), of violent couples (Olson, 2004), of violent women (e.g., Swan & Snow, 2002) and others have also examined the interactional patterns of violent situations (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Winstok, 2013), I can tentatively offer expectations about classes of IPV incidents and their relationships with some of the independent variables in my study.

First, based on studies of the interactional aspects of violent communication between intimate partners (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Collins, 2008; Ronel, 2011; Winstok, 2008, 2013) and studies that developed the IPV typologies (Johnson, 2008; Olson, 2004), I expect to identify two to six distinct classes of IPV incidents that would represent relatively stable patterns of violent dynamics. In other words, I believe that types of violent dynamics attached to specific situations can represent spin processes, in which the acts of both partners seem to be guided by the inertia of the process itself (Ronel, 2011), and in which partners believe to be entrapped (Brockner & Rubin, 1985; Collins, 2008; Eisikovits & Buchbinder, 2000).

Second, I expect to identify a class of IPV incidents in which women will be primarily victims of men's violence. Because women in my study described incidents of the most severe violence in their relationships that they could remember, I believe that this class of the incidents will represent the largest group (Johnson, 2008). According to previous studies, I expect that these incidents are more likely to happen in relationships of longer duration (Stets & Straus, 1999; Straus & Ramirez, 2004), in relationships that are described by women as generally unsatisfactory (Capaldi et al., 2012; Lloyd, 1996), and in relationships that can be characterized by the disruptive demand-withdraw communication pattern (Berns et al., 1999). Women in this type of incidents are expected to be generally much less violent than women engaged in other types of violent dynamics. On the other hand, male partners in this class of IPV incidents are expected to exhibit the elements of borderline or antisocial personality disorders (Dutton, 2007; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Walker, 2009), and to engage in attempts to control and dominate their female partners (Jacobson & Gottman, 1998; Stark, 2007). Overall, this class of IPV incidents is expected to represent the IPV type also known as "intimate terrorism" (Johnson, 2008), the "abusive" or "violent couples" in the violent couple typology (Olson, 2004), the generally violent/antisocial type of abusers (Babcock et al., 2003; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994), and the type of IPV situations Collins (2008) describes as "attacking the weak".

Third, I expect to identify a large class of IPV incidents associated with mutual or bidirectional violence. Studies suggest that mutuality appears to be a characteristic of most couples that experience violence (Chiodo et al., 2012; Gabora et al., 2007; Goldenson, Geffner, Foster, & Clipson, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Kwong, Bartholomew, & Dutton, 1999; Langhinrichsen-Rohling,

2010; Palmetto, et al., 2013; Swan & Snow, 2002; Whitaker et al., 2007). However, there is no consensus in the IPV literature on the association of mutuality of IPV with the frequency, severity, and rate of injuries to one or both partners. Some studies suggest bidirectional violence is associated with more severe injuries to partners (Caetano et al., 2005; Capaldi, Kim, & Shortt, 2007; Palmetto et al., 2013; Whitaker et al., 2007), while some find that mutual violence is associated with less severe consequences than if only one partner is violent (Swan & Snow, 2003; Vivian, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994). Johnson's (2008) IPV typology can help address this discrepancy, because it distinguishes between several types of mutual violence, i.e., violent resistance, situational couple violence, and mutual violent control. However, because these violent types have not been rigorously empirically examined (especially using a sample of incarcerated women) and my study does not contain a comprehensive measure of general and situational control, which would allow me to discriminate between these types, I refrain from more specific hypotheses. What I can expect, however, is that, although both men and women will use physical violence in this class of IPV incidents, men will be more likely to inflict injury on female partners (Archer, 2000; Ehrensaft, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2004; Straus, 2011; Swan & Snow, 2003).

Finally, given the growing body of literature on violent women, on the one hand, and the discretely high-risk group of women in my study, on the other, I expect to identify a class of IPV incidents in which women will be unilaterally violent against their male partners. Moreover, studies suggest that females who engage in IPV are a heterogeneous group (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003; Conradi et al., 2009; Gabora et al., 2007; Goldenson et al., 2007; Goldenson et al., 2009; Hines & Douglas, 2010b; Ross & Babcock, 2012; Swan & Snow, 2002, 2003). I will explore which type of female perpetrator is likely to engage in violence against their male partners. Also, based on previous studies, I expect that women in this class of IPV incidents are more likely to come from dysfunctional families (e.g., to have fewer years of education and mothers who tend to approve of violence), and to be more generally violent (Conn et al., 2010; Henning, Jones, & Holford, 2003; Komarovskaya, Loper, & Warren, 2007; Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter & Silva, 2001).

## 2.7 Conclusion

I began this chapter by discussing the violent events perspective, which serves as a framework for my study. I also highlighted the advantages of this approach in studying IPV in comparison with other approaches, and emphasised the concept of escalation in a violent conflict, which has not been well examined in the IPV literature. Although focusing on a dyadic or interactional approach in studying IPV dynamics and hence taking into consideration the behaviour of the both partners in the conflict, I seek to shed more light on the behaviour of women in the violent situation. This explains why I have discussed perspectives on female perpetrators in the IPV literature. I concluded this chapter with research objectives and research questions. I turn now to Chapter Three in which I discuss the data, sample, and methods I use to address my research questions.

# Chapter 3 - Data and Methods

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the data, sample, analytic strategy, and key measures I use to examine the interactional patterns within IPV incidents as reported by incarcerated women. I begin by discussing the type of data needed to address questions about violent dynamics in an IPV incident. Next, I provide a brief overview of the project from which my dissertation draws its data and assess its strengths and weaknesses as a data source for answering my specific research questions. I then outline my sampling strategy, analytic technique, and key measures (dependent and independent variables), and discuss their respective implications for advancing and/or limiting my study of the dynamic intra-incident patterns of IPV.

## 3.2 Data

In order to identify the patterns of interactional dynamics within IPV incidents and to examine the association between these patterns and the relevant variables at the individual, relationship, and situational levels, I require data with four key characteristics. First and foremost, the data must contain sufficient detail about the evolution of IPV incidents to identify variation in the number and type of IPV interactions for analysis. This is a fairly challenging data issue because most studies of IPV have been designed as cross-sectional surveys without detailed narratives of IPV episodes. Second, studying IPV from an interactional perspective requires data on the behaviours of both partners engaged in IPV incidents. Third, data capturing the diversity of non-violent and violent engagement of both partners in IPV incidents are needed to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the interaction in the IPV incident. It is therefore important that my data are collected from a sample of individuals who have not been selected based on a particular type of IPV offending or victimization. Finally, there are likely to be characteristics of partners' lives and situations associated with female and male engagement in violent dynamics that need to be investigated and/or statistically controlled when estimating the relationship between prevalent interactional pathways of IPV and individual, situational,

relationship, and sociocultural correlates. Information on such characteristics is thus needed. I turn now to a discussion of a data set that meets most of these needs.

*Data Source*

My dissertation analyses rely upon data collected as part of the Canadian-based *Women's Experiences of Violence: Victimization and Offending in the Context of Women's Lives* study (WEV, hereafter).[7] The primary objective of the WEV study was to learn more about women and violence within the context of their life circumstances over a three-year period. It sought to understand the role of violence in women's lives, and how violence arises out of, is embedded within, and has consequences for women's relationships with others, their leisure and income-generating activities, and their neighbourhoods and networks. To accomplish these goals, the WEV study gathered detailed information on incarcerated women's lives, including their family and intimate relationships, their work, their routine activities, their criminal behaviour, and all forms of their violent experiences with intimate partners and non-partners.

The WEV study is an appropriate source of information to conduct research on violent conflict escalation and to test the relationships of variables at situational, individual, and relationship levels to conflict escalation. First and foremost, the data contains sufficient information on the interactions within each IPV incident for analysis because women provided detailed accounts of what happened during the incident, including the behaviour of the partner. Women revealed diverse dynamics in IPV incidents also because they were not necessarily victims (as in shelter samples) or perpetrators of IPV (as in IPV offender programs) and were not asked to provide a specific experience of IPV either as victims or perpetrators of IPV. At the same time, the women in the sample represent an

[7] The WEV project is a multi-site study of incarcerated women that started with a seed grant from the (U.S.) National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR) to Professors Julie Horney, Sally Simpson, Rosemary Gartner, and Candace Kruttschnitt. Professor Rosemary Gartner was subsequently awarded a grant (410-2000-0030) by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to collect data in Ontario, Canada. Data were also collected in Baltimore, Maryland (Sally Simpson, PI) and in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Candace Kruttschnitt, PI) using the same study design, instrument, and procedures.

extremely high-risk population and, as research literature suggests, have higher chances than non-criminalized populations to face IPV in their lives (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Gabora et al., 2007; Richie, 1996). It is important to emphasize, however, that this is a sample of convenience and does not represent the female prison population in Canada, in the province of Ontario, or in the prison facility where the study was conducted. Hence, the results of my study cannot be generalized to the broader female prison population.

Second, the women's detailed narratives of IPV incidents in the WEV data compensate for the generally lower reliabilities of women's aggression subscales as compared to both men's aggression and of women's victimization subscales in survey studies (Swan & Snow, 2002). A few studies, which explore proactive rather than reactive women's violence in intimate relationship, suggest that women's and men's violent behaviours differ given the gender roles and cultural expectations regarding gender. For example, Koonin and Kabarcas (2000, cited in Swan & Snow, 2002) illustrate how aggressive acts by women and men have both gender specific characteristics as well as similarities: "He uses his physical power/she uses her verbal power," "He raises his fist/she raises a knife," "He controls her spending/she runs up the credit cards," and "He quizzes the kids about her/She denies visitation". Regarding gender-specific aspects of violent acts, the advantage of the WEV study is that women reported about their own perpetration of IPV in their own words so that this behaviour can be put in the situational and the broader socio-cultural context.

Third, the WEV data set contains extensive details about the characteristics of the violent incidents (e.g., presence of others, alcohol or/and drug use, law enforcement involvement) and the characteristics of incarcerated women's lives aside from their offending (e.g., their intimate relationships, family socialisation, friends, income, attitudes to violence, stress, and access to social support) that will allow me to test the relationship of these variables to patterns of interactional dynamics of the IPV incident. I will describe the relevant variables in more detail below.

Fourth, the design (i.e., a life events calendar approach) and measures used in the WEV study help to address some of the issues associated with women's self-reports of IPV experiences. As with any undesirable behaviour, perpetration of IPV is likely to be underreported. However, there are conflicting findings on the validity of IPV reports by men and women. Some studies find that women's reports are likely to suffer from similar biases to men's (e.g., Sugarman & Hotaling, 1997). Likewise, Swan and Snow's study (2002) found that women tended to underreport their own commission of different types of violence against a partner, including physical, sexual, emotional violence and coercive control, but appeared to be more sincere about their victimization, as judged by the social desirability scale. Similarly, Henning, Jones, and Holdford (2005) found that partner-violent women and men both showed evidence of socially desirable responding, but that women blamed their victims significantly more often than did men. On the other hand, Ross and Babcock (2012) found that women's reports showed more construct validity than men's reports of IPV. However, the majority of studies seem to suggest that women's self-reports should be treated with the same caution as men's.

The administration of a life events calendar (LEC) technique in the WEV study that documents month-by-month retrospective self-report accounts of respondents' life circumstances, including incidents of violence with an intimate partner, can contribute to greater reliability of reported data (Sutton et al., 2011). In addition, application of the LEC in the WEV study aimed to improve recall by increasing respondents' ability to place different activities within the same time frame. Moreover, an interaction between the interviewer and respondent in the form of the conversational dynamic that is non-threatening for a respondent made it easy to pose follow-up questions aimed at clarifying responses and adding details to the narratives of the IPV events.[8]

[8] The longitudinal data and multilevel design of the WEV study also allow me to assess the independent contributions of individual and relationship characteristics to the dynamics of women's involvement in intimate partner violence using hierarchical linear modelling. However, this analysis lies beyond this thesis and can be potentially implemented at the later stages of this study.

However, there are several caveats associated with this data source in relation to my study that should be kept in mind while interpreting my findings. First, in analysing the process of interactional dynamics in IPV incidents using the WEV data, I deal with self-reports of women rather than direct observation of the interactional IPV process. In other words, the women's narratives of IPV appear to represent reconstructed reality rather than the precise description of what happened in reality. Hence, we have no knowledge of objective reality.

However, narrated rather than directly observed IPV incidents should not necessarily be viewed as a limitation of the WEV data. In fact, women's self-reports of their experiences in a violent episode provide a valuable account of their *perceptions* of what happened and why. Research literature suggests that self-reported accounts of the respondents' violent interactions can reveal a much broader range of descriptions than those discussed in the literature (Fenton & Rathus, 2010; Flynn & Graham, 2010), and reflect women's understanding of what has happened to them in the course of these incidents (Eisikovits & Winstok, 2002; Enosh & Buchbinder, 2005). Hence, by using the WEV data, this study can actually add to the existing literature not just by identifying the perceived reasons for violence (Flynn & Graham, 2010), but also by uncovering the women's perception of the processual aspects of a violent incident.

Another potential limitation of the data for this study comes from the fact that reports on a couple's conflict evolution have been provided by only female partners. In other words, I have no couple data to match the reports provided by both partners. At the same time, because women in the study were asked to provide a detailed description of partners' behaviour in a conflict, there is in fact detailed information on the role of both partners in a violent conflict. Studies comparing couples' reports of abuse suggest quite accurate but incomplete assessments of the abuse (Heckert & Gondolf, 1997). Archer's (1999) meta-analysis of six studies that assessed correlations between couples' reports of each other's abusive behaviours found significant, moderate-sized correlations between men's and women's reports of women's abuse and men's abuse.

Third, despite the overall thorough description of the violent incidents and follow-up clarifications of the missing parts by the interviewers, narratives still vary in terms of details about who started verbal aggression and what the sequence of acts of each partner was. While some narratives meticulously describe the source and stages of the conflict until the end of the incident, others chart the incident in quite broad and ambiguous terms. However, each IPV incident does describe the occurrence of violence, i.e., who started violence and what the immediate reaction to the initiative violence by the other partner was. Moreover, the interviewers asked follow-up questions, which clarified and/or added missing details to the IPV narratives, thus compensating for the differences in the details among the narratives.

Finally, the WEV study covers a relatively short period of time (three years), which means that we do not know about the dynamic of violence in intimate relationships of these women before this period, and thus we cannot examine how IPV escalates or deescalates over time. However, given the focus of my exploratory study on the intra-incident dynamics of IPV rather than on the dynamics over time, the three-year period seems quite appropriate.

## 3.3 Sample

In-depth interviews lasting between two and six hours were conducted between 2001 and 2004 with 261 women incarcerated in a provincial correctional facility (the Vanier Institution for Women) in Ontario, Canada. Researchers obtained a sample from the population of women at Vanier by soliciting volunteers regardless of their committing offense or history of violence. Thus, the sample is not random and is not representative of any known population. The participation in a study was entirely voluntary and the women were not compensated for their time.

Using a life-event calendar methodology, the women were asked questions about their lives on a month-by-month basis in the three years prior to being incarcerated. In addition to questions about various aspects of their lives (e.g., their living arrangements, intimate relationships, drug and alcohol use, criminal history), the women were asked a series of

screening questions to determine whether they had been involved, as either users or targets, in any incidents of serious violence[9] including physical confrontations with their intimate partners over the calendar period. Physical confrontations involving serious violence included incidents in which either opponent used any weapon, threw an object that could hurt at the opponent, punched, slapped, choked, kicked or threw the opponent to the ground or against the wall. Women who recalled such incidents were asked to identify the month or months in which the incident(s) occurred. Over the half of the total sample of women in the Canadian sample reported at least one incident of IPV in the calendar period (52%, n=135).[10] Because each woman could report up to eight incidents of IPV, the total number of IPV incidents in the sample of 135 women comprises 295 incidents.[11]

The interviewer then asked the women to provide, in their own words, a narrative account of up to eight incidents, describing how the fight began, who did what to whom, who said what to whom, whether weapons were involved, the extent of injury experienced by the combatants, how the confrontation came to an end, and any other details the respondent could remember about the violent altercation. After providing their narrative descriptions, the women were then asked a series of structured follow-up questions for each reported incident including questions about the location of the incident, number of bystanders, relationship between opponents, demographic characteristics of the opponent, and use of drugs or alcohol on the part of either opponent, among other details.

---

[9] Narratives were not collected about incidents that involved only pushing, shoving, or grabbing where there were no injuries.

[10] This number includes women who had male partners only. An additional six women who reported nine violent incidents in the calendar period with a same-sex partner were excluded from further analysis because this number is too small for any meaningful statistical analyses. However, this issue -- violent dynamics in the IPV incidents between same-sex partners -- is important and requires further investigation.

[11] Women were also allowed to briefly describe 'series incidents', that is, a set of incidents that were so similar in their characteristics and occurred so frequently that the women could not distinguish among them or place them precisely in time. These series incidents are not included in my analysis.

## 3.4 Analytic Strategies

Many researchers have become increasingly cognisant of the fact that the interactional dynamics of a violent conflict are a key factor in understanding IPV (Collins, 2008; Eckert & Willems, 2003; Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles, 2002; Hepburn, 1973; Katz, 1988; Luckenbill, 1977; Olson, 2002b, 2004; Retzinger, 1991; deTurck, 1987; Winstok, 2008, 2013). However, despite acknowledging its importance, the dynamics of both social and partner violent conflicts have received little theoretical and empirical attention (Collins, 2008; Eckert & Willems, 2003; Winstok, 2013). My research addresses the need in the IPV literature for more context-inclusive and interaction-based research on IPV, employs for that a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach, and advances previous studies in three main ways.

First, given dynamic and deeply intertwined ties between intimate partners, my work focuses on the *couple's violent interaction* rather than the isolated *individual behavioural acts* by each of the partners. By drawing on a micro-sociological (Collins, 2008) and an interactional perspective (Winstok, 2007, 2013), both of which provide the analytical basis for conceptualizing and measuring the couple's violent interaction, my research further develops this approach and uses the incidents of partner violence as the unit of analysis. Theoretically, interactional dynamics of IPV incidents can be examined *within* as well as *across* IPV incidents. Due to the exploratory goals of my work and the novelty of my approach, my thesis examines only the interactional dynamics *within* IPV incidents.

Because studies of the interactional dynamics of the IPV incident are still in their infancy (e.g., Gondolf & Beeman, 2003), my thesis develops and applies an approach to coding the dependent variables that can be used for measuring couples' violent interactions. I have created a coding scheme and applied it to the 295 narratives of IPV incidents to identify whether male and female partners used violence in the entire incident, who initiated physical violence, what the partner's reaction to the initial violence was, i.e., escalation or deescalation, and if either partner was injured as a result of the violence. The qualitative method that I used for coding interactional dynamics within an IPV

incident is discussed below in the section explaining the measurement of the outcome variables.

Second, my study focuses on the contextual dimensions of the interaction within an IPV incident in addition to creating a categorization of IPV interactions. This focus on dimensions besides typologies – which often have mutually exclusive and fixed categories -- provides a more realistic reflection of reality where observed variables are often continuous rather than fixed characteristics that fit into the theorized categories (Ross & Babcock, 2012). In addition to well-studied categories of symmetry (i.e., gender symmetry in prevalence of IPV perpetration) and severity (i.e., static categories capturing the prevalence of minor and severe forms of IPV perpetrated by men and women), my study extends analysis to the dynamic aspect of intimate interactions, e.g., who started violence and whether it was escalation/deescalation of violence in response within the IPV incident.

Finally, my research draws on a violent events perspective (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b; Wilkinson & Fagan, 2001) and ecological models (Heise, 1998) to address the call in the IPV literature for the contextual examination of IPV (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Gabora et al., 2007; Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin, & Petrie, 2004; Swan & Snow, 2002). To achieve this, in addition to the qualitative method described before, my study uses descriptive and inferential statistics.

First, it examines the bivariate relationships between discrete dependent variables that represent patterns of the interactional dynamics within the IPV incidents and relevant individual, relationship, and situational variables by using the method of cross-tabulation. Next, I use the latent class analysis in order to identify the classes of the unobserved latent variable that represent specific patterns of violent dynamics. This approach produces a latent variable that defines the relevant classes of incidents and the types of violent dynamics that characterize them; and it permits examination of whether all forms of violent dynamics cohere in distinct patterns or whether distinct patterns exist for specific types of incidents. Finally, I run a series of binary logistic regressions to examine

the contribution of three groups of independent variables (individual, relationship, and situational) to the outcome variables.[12] It is important to note that although my analysis seeks to identify the *contribution* of various factors to the understanding of the different interactional patterns, the design of my study does not allow me to examine the direct *causes* of different interactional patterns.

## 3.5 Principles of coding the dimensions of violent dynamics

*General principles of coding the discrete dependent variables*

The narrative accounts provide raw data from which the dependent variables for this study were coded. The coding process proceeded in this way. First, I read all narratives focusing on the evolution of the violence within the incident in order to familiarize myself with the data and to develop a set of decision-rules for the coding scheme. Combining this with a review of the approaches described in the research literature, I then developed some basic rules for the coding scheme. The resulting coding scheme, which contains four basic and two additional variables to measure the interactional IPV pattern, is described below. Next, a graduate student with training in coding qualitative data and I separately read and coded ten of the narratives and I assessed inter-rater reliability; our coding agreed 80-100% of the time for all variables. We then discussed the discrepancies in our coding and reached agreement on the appropriate codes. Then we independently coded the next ten incidents, which resulted in 95 - 100% agreement. After we resolved these discrepancies, the coder continued coding the rest of the incidents, consulting with me whenever she had questions about a coding decision.

In developing the coding scheme for partners' interaction in the IPV incident, I used elements of the approach first described by Winstok (2007, 2008, 2013). However, unlike

[12] Because I am interested in comparing two patterns of IPV incidents at a time, binary logistic regression is suitable for this type of analysis. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) is also a suitable method for dealing with the nested nature of my data; i.e. violent incidents are nested within women, raising the potential problem of non-independence of observations. However, because most women in my data set report a maximum of three or fewer incidents, non-independence is unlikely to affect the results and therefore HLM is not necessary for this analysis (personal communication with Wayne Osgood).

Winstok (2013), who measured an individual escalatory pattern in a violent incident (i.e., how the aggressive actions of an individual become increasingly severe), I focus on an interpersonal or dyadic interactional IPV pattern, which begins with one party's act and ends with the subsequent act of the other party. Specifically, I measured who initiated violence[13] and what the reaction of the partner was, use of violence by each partner in the incident, injuries to each partner, and additionally, psychological aggression prior to the first violence and the motives for the reactive violence (see the summary of the dependent variables in Table 3.1).

One criterion for evaluating interactional dynamics within IPV incidents is to designate a severity level for each violent action. We coded the dynamic interactional patterns based on the presupposition that there is a continuum of violent behaviour from psychological aggression, which can be minor or severe, to minor and then severe physical violence, including sexual violence. The rationale for this approach stems from the consideration of the potential harm inherent in the various forms of attack. For instance, physical injury is often accompanied by psychological harm, but the opposite is not always the case. It allows some to argue that results of physical violence (psychological and physical) are more severe than those of psychological aggression only (Winstok, 2007). Moreover, originally developed in the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus et al., 1996), the distinction between minor and severe physical assaults has been supported by factor analyses and by many studies that suggest that the aetiology and treatment of occasional minor violence may be different from the aetiology of chronic severe assaults (e.g., Johnson, 2008).

[13] In my dissertation, violence designates physical and sexual violence and aggression means verbal and psychological aggression.

Table 3.1. *Discrete dependent variables that represent the observed indicators of violent dynamics in IPV incidents*

| Discrete dependent variables | Categories |
|---|---|
| ***Basic variables*** | |
| *Initiation of violence** | 1) Man initiated<br>2) Woman initiated |
| *Reactive violence* | |
| Man's reaction to initial female violence | 1) No violence (deescalation)<br>2) Any violence (escalation) |
| Woman's reaction to initial male violence | 1) No violence (deescalation)<br>2) Any violence (escalation) |
| *Use of violence*** | |
| Man's use of violence in the incident | 1) No violence<br>2) Any violence |
| Woman's use of violence in the incident | 1) No violence<br>2) Any violence |
| *Injuries* | |
| Any injuries to the man | 1) Not injured<br>2) Injured |
| Any injuries to the woman | 1) Not injured<br>2) Injured |
| ***Additional variables*** | |
| Psychological aggression before the first physical violence | 1) no prior aggression<br>2) was prior aggression |
| Women's motives for the reactive violence | 1) retaliation/anger<br>2) self-protection<br>3) power contest<br>4) restraining violence |

* For the descriptive purposes, I also coded the severity of the initial violence as 1) minor and 2) severe.
** Alternatively, this variable can have three categories to represent mutual/unilateral type of IPV, i.e., 1) male-only violence, 2) female-only violence, 3) mutual violence.

The advantage of applying this continuum of violent behaviour similar to the CTS is that it makes the methodology in my study partially consistent with more than 400 studies that use the CTS as a tool to measure IPV. At the same time, my study addresses some of the criticism associated with the CTS and puts these behavioural acts into an interactional and situational context. However, this approach is still open to criticism. For example, from the perspective of many people, minor physical violence may seem to be more

common than severe psychological aggression and hence can be coded as less severe. At the same time, consideration of a potential gender dimension -- i.e., a slap or a shove by a female partner is less severe than the same behaviour by a male partner -- complicates the issue. Moreover, I concur with Foshee et al. (2007) who criticised the act scales for not adequately corresponding to the complexity of violence perpetration. For example, the act "pushed or shoved a partner", listed as a minor act on the CTS, would not be minor if a partner fell and broke his or her leg or lost consciousness. Hence, taking into consideration the context and consequences of violence in the process of coding the IPV narratives in my study can arguably address some of this criticism.

The continuum of violent behaviour, which I use in my work, is the following:
- *minor psychological aggression* (e.g., insulted, swore, or shouted at a partner*;* insulted partner with put-downs, blamed a partner for the problem; laughed at partner's accusations);
- *severe psychological aggression*[14] (e.g., threatened to hit or throw something at a partner, destroyed something of a partner; *did* something to spite partner, e.g., spit in partner's face; *did* something to make a partner feel jealous; called partner humiliating words, such as fat, ugly, dumb, and ridiculed or made fun of a partner in front of others);
- *minor physical violence* (e.g., threw something at a partner that could hurt, twisted partner's arm or hair, pushed, shoved, slapped, or grabbed);
- *severe physical and sexual violence* (e.g., used a knife or gun on a partner, punched or hit partner with something that could hurt (e.g., a broom), choked, slammed a partner against a wall, kicked, beat up a partner, burned or scalded partner on purpose; including sexual abuse, e.g., forced or coerced to have sex, including oral and anal contact).

As discussed above, the sequence of categories for coding the severity of behavioural acts of IPV is consistent with many other studies in the IPV literature (e.g., Palmetto et al., 2013; Whitaker et al., 2007; Winstok, 2013).

[14] The term 'psychological' aggression is more preferable than 'verbal' aggression in my thesis because some of the acts in the IPV narratives are nonverbal aggressive acts.

## 3.6 Key Measures

***Discrete Dependent Variables***

As an exploratory study, my thesis seeks to develop a measure of the interactional dynamics within IPV incidents that captures the dynamic interaction between two partners rather than isolated single violent acts of each of the partners. My approach captures violent interaction by disaggregating it into four separate dimensions: who started violence, what the reaction to violence was, injuries, and use of violence in the entire incident. The focus on physical violence in these variables can be explained by its potential to produce the most harmful consequences for partners (and their children), as was discussed above. Moreover, the shift from psychological aggression to physical violence tends to make these couples targets for social service and criminal justice interventions. In addition, each IPV incident described at least one form of violence, which made the coding fairly straightforward. At the same time, I additionally document if the initial physical violence was preceded by psychological aggression and also the motives for any reactive violence. This information can allow a more nuanced understanding of the violent dynamics, including their gendered aspects.

*Dependent variable I: Initiation of violence*

The issue of initiation of violence in a conflict between intimate partners deserves special attention because partners often attribute their own violence to the allegedly initial violence of the other partner, thus considering their own violence as less serious or justifiable. Moreover, some research suggests that the opening interaction within a violent incident – and, in particular, escalation of psychological aggression to physical violence -- may capture the most important part of a violent event (Lloyd, 1996; Winstok, 2013). Despite this, initiation of violence has been understudied, poorly operationalized, and rarely assessed in a clear or deep manner (Olson & Lloyd, 2005). Studies that pose one or two questions on initiation of violence are likely to underestimate the complexity of initiation. Moreover, respondents may be confused when asked about the “first” act of aggression or violence.

Because the WEV study allowed female respondents to freely narrate their experiences, it appears to compensate for the shortcomings of other surveys. In my coding, I differentiate between "psychological aggression," "physical violence," and "conflict" and code physical violence as an initiation of violence. However, given the exploratory goals of my study, the supplementary dependent variable measures the initiation of IPV if it starts with psychological aggression as well. Although the conflict may have its origin in something that happened many years ago in the relationship (and this is true for many couples; see Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977), in my research I am interested in the situational or event circumstances of a particular violent incident. The research questions in regards to this variable are whether males or females initiate violence more often, what are the prevalent forms/manifestations of initial conflict escalation to violence, and what are the individual, relationship, and situational correlates of the initial violence.

In reading through the descriptions for each of 295 IPV incidents, I noted two possibilities. First, when women described themselves as the sole enactor of the physical violence, the violence was coded female-initiated. Second, if the partner was described as the sole enactor of violence, the incident was coded partner-initiated. That is, this is a dichotomous variable, where 1 = man initiated violence and 2 = woman initiated violence. Even when IPV narratives started with the words "we were fighting about something", almost always it was followed by a clear indication of who initiated a physical attack. For instance, in the narrative below, the female partner started physical violence:

> What we were fighting about was our lifestyle. I couldn't handle it no more really. I was scared, frightened, confused. I didn't want that lifestyle any more… He said something to me and I hit him, I punched him in the face… (ID 112/31)

In some IPV narratives, physical violence started without any prior psychological aggression, for example:

> He was drunk so I was driving and he decided it would be funny to pull my head back while I was driving. He grabbed me on the back of my head by my hair and he yanked my head back, I'd say 3 times within a 2-minute period. It hurt very badly and I started to cry… (ID 101/5).

In cases that describe both psychological aggression and physical violence, I coded which partner started physical violence.[15] In the narrative below, it was a male partner.

> We were in Toronto in our apartment and he didn't come home that night so I got angry at him. I yelled at him and kept yelling and he gets very violent when I yell at him. It was just sort of push and shove for a bit. That's when he kicked me really hard… (ID151/74).

This coding was relatively straightforward, for in all IPV instances, the respondent indicated whether she had started violence or the partner had started it. Hence, there is no category for mutually initiated violence in this dependent variable.

In studies that measure the initiation of an IPV event with psychological aggression in addition to physical violence, women appear to report initiation of aggression or violence in the majority of conflicts (54%), followed by partner-initiated aggression or violence (36%) and mutually initiated aggression or violence in 10% of the IPV incidents (Olson & Lloyd, 2005). These findings are in line with some studies that indicate women initiate aggression more often than men do (Archer, 2000; Straus, 1999). In my study, then, I also expect that women will initiate psychological aggression more often than their partners.[16] However, it is difficult to predict who will initiate physical violence more often. Hence, I abstain from any predictions about this question.

---

[15] However, for the additional variable "Initial psychological aggression" I coded that the woman initiated psychological aggression in this incident.

[16] The additional variable that measures initial psychological aggression is discussed below.

*Dependent Variable II: Reaction to initial violence*

This variable measures the partner's immediate reaction to the initial violence by the other partner. This dimension of IPV dynamics has also been neglected in the literature, except for studies that have examined self-protective violence perpetrated predominantly by women who are victims of IPV.

Given my interest in the evolution of the IPV event, with the focus on escalation and deescalation of violence, this variable measures a violent versus non-violent response to the initiator of the violence. Hence, this dependent variable is a dichotomous variable, with 1 = no violence (deescalation), 2 = any violent response (reciprocation and escalation). Below I describe the approach to coding this dependent variable and illustrate the coding with the excerpts from the IPV narratives. I have drawn on the concept of the three prevalent ways of the evolution of a violent conflict, i.e., deescalation, reciprocation (or stable reaction), and escalation described by Winstok (2007, 2013). To identify the violent response in the narratives, escalation can be meaningfully combined with reciprocation based on the findings of recent studies of neural processes that suggest that reciprocation to violence in fact is an escalation of the violence (Shergill et al., 2003). Coding of this variable was also relatively straightforward, for in nearly all IPV instances, the respondent clearly indicated what the immediate reaction of the other partner was, e.g., trying to leave the house, crying for help, or hitting back. Below I describe non-violent and violent responses to the initial partner's violence and explain my decision rules for coding.

*Non-Violent Response: Deescalation*

Deescalation refers to a partner's reactive behaviour in the interaction, which is a non-violent response to the preceded violent action of the other partner. The manifestations of deescalation in my coding scheme are the following: psychological aggression in response to partner's physical violence; negotiation, verbal reasoning, crying; toleration or doing nothing or remaining silent and passive; leaving the scene or attempting to

withdraw from the situation; complying or agreeing with the accusations; and not resisting due to injury.

Although combined under the single category of deescalation, these strategies do not necessarily lead to the resolution of the violent incident. For example, agreement with the accusation can be seen as acceptance of the potential violent partner's definition of the situation and in fact can precipitate a violent reaction (Dobash & Dobash, 1979: 103); screaming or crying can also lead to even greater violence (Dobash & Dobash, 1979: 109); leaving the room during the conflict as a conflict avoidance behaviour in fact can increase relationship violence (Messinger, Davidson, & Rickert, 2011), and actually has been seen as a form of a psychological aggression in the first version of the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus et al., 1996). Literature on psychotherapy seems to reflect the existing disagreements about the effects of conflict avoidance strategies on the ensuing violent escalation in an IPV incident. Even though cooling-down periods often have been recommended as constructive solutions for battered women, current literature discusses special rules for the time-out to be an effective de-escalatory strategy (Stith, McCollum, & Rosen, 2011).

If respondents reported complying with partners' violent demands, I considered it a form of deescalation. For example, a respondent reported that she agreed to have sex under coercion because she believed that it would have been worse otherwise (ID13/103). In another example, a woman did not fight back because she had the baby in her hands and also believed that "it would just get worse…" (ID 144). Some respondents could not resist due to injuries.

One of the difficulties in coding this variable was the lack of a clear indication in some IPV narratives of what the respondent's reaction to partner's violence was, given that respondents continued describing the rest of the incident in detail. It was clear from the narratives that these cases differ from the cases in which information is simply missing. These "passive and silent" responses to partner's violence can arguably be characterized as "toleration or doing nothing". In their analysis of a violent event, Dobash and Dobash

(1979: 109) discovered very similar behaviour, i.e., some respondents "remained silent and passive" or "remained physically passive" because this is what they learnt was best at reducing their risk of further violence and injury.

*Violent response: Reciprocation or Escalation*

One of the violent responses to the initial partner's violence was in the form of the action that was equally severe to the action that started it, i.e., reciprocation. One of the salient examples of reciprocation is fighting back in response to physical violence. In this study, I recognise the various motives for fighting back, e.g., for the purposes of self-protection or retaliation.[17] In some narratives, however, partner's response to the initial violence was even more severe (increasing) than this initial violence itself (e.g., severe physical violence in response to minor physical violence). For example:

> He was supposed to pay the hydro bill and when I came home he was sitting with a candle because there was no hydro on. So I got mad and yelled at him and I slapped him in the face once. He had been drinking so he pushed me to get me out of his way. He didn't realize how hard he had pushed me. He pushed me into the table. …On the corner of the table my arm hit and it got cut open. The table didn't break, but the corner of the table ripped my arm (ID144/63)

*Dependent Variable III: Use of violence*

One of the essential dimensions of the couple's interaction in the violent incident is the use of violence by one or both partners at any point in the incident. For that, I documented whether a woman and a man used any violence in the described incident, including minor violence (e.g., slap or grab the partner) as well as self-protective violence. Coding each partner's use of violence in the incident can also represent whether violence is mutual or unilateral, which is a key aspect of intra-incident violent dynamics. Mutuality indicates perpetration of violence by both partners within the IPV incident whereas unilateral or one-sided violence means that only one partner is solely violent

[17] The additional variable that documents the motives for the reactive violence is discussed below.

(i.e., female only or male only) and the other one avoids using force. Both types constitute the interactional patterns of violence that deserve scholarly attention.

In order to identify the use of violence in the IPV incident in my study, including mutuality, we read the narratives and coded "mutuality" in each IPV incident where women reported about their partners' and their own physical violence, even if it was in self-defence. [18] We chose to code self-protective violence as a violent behaviour for two reasons. First, many emerging studies suggest that pure self-defence in fact accounts for a minority of violent acts (e.g., Gabora et al., 2007; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006; Straus, 2011) and in most of the cases self-defence is coupled with anger and rage and cannot be clearly distinguished from retaliation (Bair-Merritt et al., 2010; Foshee et al., 2007; Saunders, 1988). Second, self-protective violence is still a violent behaviour and we should learn more about its role in the evolution of the IPV event. Cases in which respondents reported that only they or only their partners used violence we coded as a sole perpetrator - woman or a man- accordingly. Thus, the variable "use of violence" has three codes: 1) man as a sole perpetrator, 2) woman as a sole perpetrator, and 3) mutual violence. At the same time, this variable can be transformed into the variable with two categories: 1) any use of violence by a male partner and 2) any use of violence by a female partner, both of which include cases of sole perpetration of violence and of mutual violence.

Drawing on the broad IPV literature, it would be expected that more incidents will describe men who use violence than women who use violence against the partner. Because many studies find that most IPV is mutual and because of the nature of my sample (i.e. incarcerated women), I expect mutual violence to represent one of the prevalent group of IPV incidents.[19] Regarding female-only perpetration of IPV, several

[18] For the purposes of this study, mutuality is measured in each IPV incident. However, some other studies define mutuality as occurring in a given relationship and not necessarily within each violent episode (e.g., Palmetto et al., 2013).
[19] Because the data for my study comes from a Canadian sample and I analyse the IPV narratives that describe violence between heterosexual partners, my findings cannot be generalized to non-Western countries and to same sex intimate partner relationships.

studies find that the prevalence of IPV perpetrated solely by women ranges from 12% among young women in dating relationships (Palmetto et al., 2013) and in a community sample of violent couples (Ross & Babcock, 2012) to 15.4% among female perpetrators of IPV in federal prison in Canada (Gabora et al., 2007). Given these findings, I expect that women will be solely violent against a partner in about 15% of the IPV incidents in my sample.[20]

*Dependent Variable IV: Injury*

Previous research generally has neglected the importance and complexities of the aftermath phase of a violent incident. However, the few studies that examine these issues (for a review, see Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005) convey the profound role that different outcomes of violent events may play in subsequent incidents given the serial nature of violence between intimates. Injury by any means reflects the most detrimental outcome and aftermath of IPV. That is why the potential to inflict injury on a person involved in a violent conflict reflects in my study the severity of acts in the IPV incident.

Regarding conflict escalation to violence and its association with injuries, research literature suggests two dominant types of violence that seem to be associated with more injuries (to one or both partners) than any others types. First, studies demonstrate high chances of injuries to a partner (often a woman) whose interactional dynamic with a partner resembles intimate terrorism (Johnson, 2008), Cobra couples (Jacobson & Gottman, 1998), clinically abusive relationships (Ehrensaft, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2004), generally violent (Babcock et al., 2003; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994), and violent and abusive couple types (Olson, 2004), or a tension-culmination stage in a cycle of violence described by battered women in Walker's study (1979, 2009). Despite the demonstrated association of greater injuries with unilateral violence in a couple, other studies, however, find that reciprocal or bi-directional rather than non-reciprocal IPV tends to be associated with greater injuries (Whitaker et al., 2007). There are two

[20] However, it is worth noting that 15% of the IPV incidents (in our study the IPV incident is the unit of analysis) is different from 15% of women perpetrating sole violence in a relationship.

dichotomous variables in the WEV study that measure whether the respondent and her partner were injured in the IPV incident, i.e., 1= no, 2 = yes.

***Additional dependent variables***

*Dependent variable I.a: Psychological aggression prior to the first violence*

Measuring psychological aggression in addition to physical violence may provide a more nuanced picture of the dynamics of IPV. The IPV and communication literature consistently suggests the important role that psychological aggression can play in the dynamics of IPV by serving as a catalyst or a precipitating factor for physical violence (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Infante et al.,1990; Roloff, 1996; Sabourin, Infante, & Rudd, 1993; Stets, 1990).

Two models in particular provide a useful framework for explaining the process and the factors associated with the escalation of psychological aggression into physical violence, i.e., the negative reciprocity model (Infante & Rancer, 1996) and general aggressive model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). The negative reciprocity (or communication) model states that by increasing negative emotions and cognitions, verbally aggressive messages may escalate into negative reciprocity that will act as a catalyst for physical aggression (Martin & Anderson, 1995; Sabourin, 1995). Anderson and Bushman's (2002) general aggressive model argues that whenever a situation of psychological aggression is interpreted as a provocation, it will evoke an aggressive script, which in the absence of restraining factors will result in violent behaviour.

However, psychological aggression may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for producing physical violence (Infante et al., 1990; Stets & Henderson, 1991). Escalation to physical violence may not occur when, for example, a verbally abusive message is perceived as non-malevolent, not meant to harm, or "done for fun", or when the price of retaliation seems to be too high based on victims' past experiences (Gieger & Fischer, 2006). The chances of retaliation and escalation to physical violence increase if the person was ridiculed or verbally attacked in the presence of friends, the provocateur "has gone too far", touched a "sensitive spot", and/or threatened the sense of identity.

Studies also suggest that there are gender differences in the prevalence of using psychological aggression and the type of reactions to it. Some studies suggest that women are more likely than men to use mild forms of aggression, including psychological and indirect aggression, as a survival strategy (Bjorkqvist, 1994; Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992). On the other hand, studies that consider coercive control as a form of psychological aggression would suggest that men predominantly commit this type of aggression against women (e.g., Stark, 2007). Regarding the reaction to psychological aggression, shame theory, for example, argues that traditionally socialized men are particularly vulnerable to humiliation and shame because it exposes their dependency needs, threatens their masculine self-concept, and reveals the limits of their power (Jennings & Murphy, 2000). In order to save face, enraged men, particularly those without good skills to find constructive solutions, may be more likely to react to humiliation with violence against an intimate partner (Retzinger, 1991).

A dichotomous variable in my study documents whether the first physical violence in the IPV incident was preceded by psychological aggression: 1 = no prior aggression, 2 = prior aggression. I also coded who seemed to initiate the psychological aggression, a male or a female partner.

*Dependent Variable II.a: Women's motives for the reactive violence*

An additional categorical variable capturing the different motives for reacting with violence is also included in the study because it can enhance our understanding of the dynamics of IPV. For example, studies suggest that victims' resistance in the form of retaliation is often associated with increased aggression on the part of the offender and increased likelihood of death for the victim (Felson & Steadman, 1983). Furthermore, it is sometimes claimed by shelter workers and advocates that most of women's violence against an intimate partner can be explained mainly by the self-defence. However, emerging IPV studies that impartially investigate the motives for female and male violence in response to perceived aggression, provocation, or threat to the relationship by a partner suggest that retaliation, punishment, and violent resistance prevail among the

explanations for reactive violence committed by either partner (for a review, see Flynn & Graham, 2010), and that self-defence is not consistently a leading motive for female-perpetrated violence (e.g., Gabora et al., 2007; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006; Straus, 2011). Moreover, studies find that accounts of self-defensive aggression even in samples of highly victimized women often are more consistent with retaliation, retribution, and vigilantism (Bair-Merritt, et al., 2010; Dasgupta, 1999; Dobash & Dobash, 1984, 2004; Felson, 2002).

Reading through the narratives suggests that there are at least four main reasons for reacting to the initial violence with violence, i.e., retaliation (anger response), self-defence, contests over power, and restraining violence. At the same time, one of the caveats of coding the motives for the violent reaction is that the motives are not always clearly stated and in fact often are fused together (e.g., self-protection and retaliation). In these cases, we focused on the main reported or implied motive for the reactive violence.

*Retaliation or anger response.* In the IPV literature, retaliation has been highlighted (along with self-defence) as one of the prominent motives for female's violence (Caldwell et al., 2009; Feld & Felson, 2008; Goldenson et al., 2009; Miller & Meloy, 2006; Saunders, 1988). At the same time, self-defence coupled with extreme rage cannot always be clearly distinguished from retaliation (Bair-Merritt, et al., 2010; Saunders, 1988) or what Foshee et al. (2007) identify as the "fed-up" motive and "anger response". In my study, I understand by retaliation an anger-motivated attempt to hurt the other, to intentionally cause harm to the partner, and to make him or her feel the pain for the experienced violence or offense. Violence motivated by retaliation does not typically have any other instrumental goals but the emotional discharge. Retaliatory violence is rarely associated with fear but rather is spurred by a "tit-for-tat" attitude and anger.

In the IPV narratives respondents often mentioned such negative emotions as anger, rage, being mad, and frustration when they described violence out of retaliation. The following excerpt from an IPV narrative in my study describes how the respondent appeared to retaliate in response to her partner's attempt to pick a fight and his violent behaviour.

> I was talking on the phone and he hit me with the phone, i.e., he grabbed it out of my hand and hit me with the receiver in the ear. Then I said, "Do you want to hit with the phone? - OK, we'll hit with the phone". I picked up the phone and smashed it on his head. Blood started pouring out. He was knocked the f… out and had to get staples in his head (ID 249/264)

*Self-protective behaviour.* Some studies suggest that it is not always easy to distinguish between two motives for females' and males' IPV, i.e., self-defence and retaliation. However, in reading the IPV narratives, it became clear that women often indicated that the primary goal of their violence was self-protection or "to make him let me go". For example,

> … I had gone out with the girls and I hadn't come back when I was 'supposed' to. He interpreted that that I was messing around on him… he told me that he was going to teach me a lesson - then he just kind of snapped and started punching me everywhere. I was trying to defend myself - verbally and a little bit physically… I started punching him back but then it turned to me defending myself and trying to block the shots - - and then he just kept beating on me and telling me that maybe this would teach me not to mess around…[21] (ID535/183)

*Power contest.* The other common theme regarding the motives for the reactive violence is what I term a power contest. *Power contest* refers to instrumental violence that partners use to get what they want, to insist on their opinion or will, and/or to continue doing something against the other partner's will. For example, several narratives describe situations when partners fight over property and most often female partners strike back in order to stay in the house or apartment:

[21] Because I keep the language used in the narratives intact, the excerpts can contain some mistakes and inappropriate usage of words.

> …Basically he wanted me out [of the house] and I needed some time to secure a place … He wanted to throw me out of the house but I stood my ground and said, "No, I'm not leaving". That's when it became really physically violent… I was in the bedroom. He grabbed me and sort of physically hit me… Prior to getting physically thrown out there was huge verbal abuse. I would dig my heels in and say that I had a right to stay here. When I did dig in my heels it was brutal - biting, hitting, knocked down and dragged out of my house. (ID 107/22)

*Restraining violence.* Finally, I identified an additional theme associated with motives for reactive violence, which is what I term the restraining violence (or escalation prevention) motive. In the IPV narratives, most often male partners attempted to prevent the escalation of female physical fighting by restraining women while they were using violence against them or attempted to harm them with a weapon, or pre-empting an impending violent act against them. The acts that were used by the male partners to prevent escalation of physical fighting were primarily grabbing the respondent's arms and restraining her, shoving her away from him, or pushing her down on the floor and holding her there until she quit trying to hit him or until she calmed down. This motive for (typically) male reactive violence is identified by Foshee et al. (2007) who created a typology of perpetration events in dating relationship. The following excerpt from the IPV narratives in our study illustrates this motive:

> It started because I wanted him to buy more dope - I knew he had money - he didn't want to but I pushed and pushed him - It started into a big argument - he wanted to go to bed because it was 2 o'clock in the morning - he said something to me and I got really violent and I pushed him onto the bed - he knows that I get violent so he tried to stop me - he grabbed me, but not in a hurtful way - so I punched him - and then I walked out of the room… (ID 314/141).

Thus, the variable measuring motives for the reactive violence in my study is a nominal variable with four categories, i.e., 1 - retaliation, 2 - self-protective behaviour, 3 - power contest, and 4 - restraining violence. For IPV incidents that appeared to have more than

one motive for the reactive violence (this has been documented in other studies often in relation to retaliation and self-protective behaviour), we coded what seemed to be the dominant motive.

To sum up, the discrete dependent variables described above measure several important aspects of IPV interactional dynamics, i.e., initiation of violence by a woman or a man, violent or non-violent reaction to the initial partner's violence, use of violence in the incident, and the injury to each partner. Additional variables that measure motives for the reactive violence and any psychological aggression that preceded the first physical violence in the IPV incident can provide a more nuanced understanding of IPV dynamics.

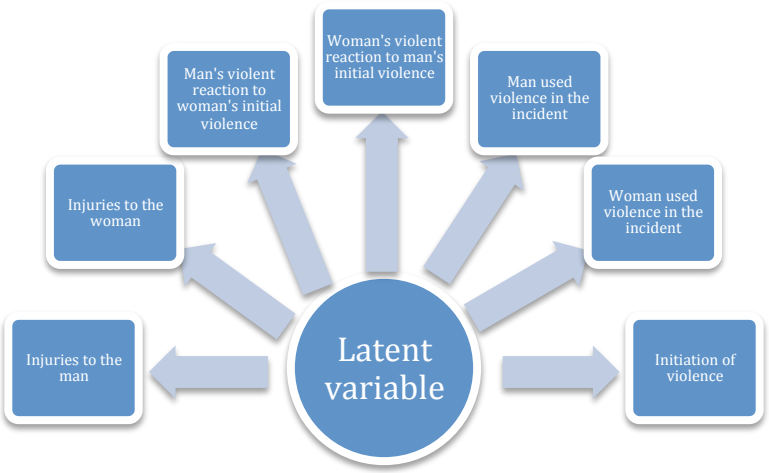
***Latent dependent variable***

*Dependent variable V: Classes of IPV incidents based on patterns of violent dynamics*

Guided by the objective to capture the patterns of violent dynamics in IPV incidents, the discrete dependent variables described above are used to identify an unobserved latent variable that indicates the underlying subgroups of IPV incidents based on observed characteristics (Figure 3.1).

Position in the subgroup or class is said to be "latent" because this position in a class cannot be directly observed. To carry out this analysis, I use Latent Class Analysis (LCA), a statistical method for identifying the unmeasured class membership among the IPV incidents using categorical observed variables. This approach permits examination of whether all forms of violent dynamics cohere in distinct patterns or whether distinct patterns exist for specific types of incidents. In mathematical terms, latent class analysis relies on a contingency table created by cross-tabulating all indicators of the latent class variable. This analysis is completed using MPlus Version 7.11 software, which is easy to use and requires minimal syntax.

*Figure 3.1*. Discrete dependent variables as observed indicators of the latent variable, which represents classes of IPV incidents based on patterns of violent dynamics




There are several steps in the course of LCA analysis. First, one needs to select the proper number of classes in the latent variable by specifying and running a model with different numbers of classes, usually from two to five classes. From the results, information about fit (including log likelihood, degrees of freedom, $G^2$, AIC, BIC, etc.) are compared to identify the optimal model. This model reveals the classes, which can be interpreted and labeled. The basis for this analysis is output that shows the probability of a response to each violent dynamics item in the inventory for each latent class. I provide descriptive statistics for each class of IPV incidents in chapter 5.

### *Independent Variables*

There is a consensus in the IPV literature on the importance of studying violence in context (for a review of risk factors, see Capaldi et al., 2012; Medeiros & Straus, 2007). My thesis focuses on the selected individual, relationship, and situational factors that have been found to be related to the onset of relationship violence. My study tests whether these factors are also relevant to understanding the interactional dynamics of IPV events.

### *Individual Correlates of the Dynamics of IPV Events*

Although I have labeled these 'individual correlates', it should be kept in mind that some of the individual characteristics of partners engaged in IPV can in fact reflect contextual and socio-cultural characteristics on a broader scale. For example, race, educational level, attitudes to violence, and exposure to violence in the family of origin can represent the norms and accepted modes of behaviour in certain socio-economic layers of society and cultures.

*Sex of the respondent*

The IPV literature appears to reach a consensus on the effect of gender on the frequency, prevalence, and severity of IPV perpetration (Capaldi et al., 2012). Overall, it seems there are more similarities than differences between male's and female's perpetration of IPV (for a review, see Archer, 2000; Capaldi et al., 2012; Straus, 2011) and in the causal mechanisms for offending in general (for a review, see Kruttschnitt, 2013). Moreover, in nonclinically abusive relationships, women are likely to use more acts of violence and to use them more often than men (Ehrensaft, Moffitt & Caspi, 2004). In clinically abusive relationships, both men and women use physical violence, but men are more likely to inflict injury and perpetrate sexually violent acts (Archer, 2000; Ehrensaft, Moffitt & Caspi, 2004; Straus, 2011).

Emerging studies of the much neglected areas in IPV research of female offending and male victimisation suggest that, similar to males, females who engage in IPV are a heterogeneous group (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003; Conradi et al., 2009; Gabora et al., 2007; Goldenson et al., 2007; Goldenson et al., 2009; Hines & Douglas, 2010b; Ross & Babcock, 2012; Swan & Snow, 2002, 2003) and male partners also are targets of IPV (Hines, 2013; Hines & Douglas, 2010a; Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001).

Given these findings, as well as studies of bidirectionality/mutuality of IPV and female perpetrators of IPV, I expect that one of the prevalent types of IPV will be mutual violence and that women will be sole perpetrators in about 12-15% of IPV incidents. In addition, I expect most – although certainly not all -- of those who are injured in these incidents will be women.

*Sex of the partner*

Most of the research that has been done on IPV and most of the literature that I review in my dissertation in relation to the interactional aspects of IPV incidents refer primarily or solely to heterosexual partners. However, some IPV studies that focus on IPV in homosexual relationships suggest that the prevalence and the dynamics of IPV appear to be similar to those in heterosexual couples (e.g., Ristock, 2002). Respondents in our study reported the sex of their partner(s). However, because there are only 3% (n=9) of IPV incidents in which the respondents' partners were females, I excluded these cases from the analysis. However, this issue clearly deserves further research.

*Age of the respondent and the partner*

IPV studies consistently find age to be a protective factor against IPV, i.e., IPV declines with age (for a review, see Capaldi et al., 2012; Palmetto et al., 2013). Extending these findings to the patterns of interactional dynamics of IPV, I expect that older women and men will be less likely to initiate violence and to react violently to partner's behaviour in the IPV incident. In my study, age of respondents and their partners is measured in years as continuous variables.

*Race/ethnicity of the respondent and the partner*

Being a member of a marginalized racial or ethnic group has been consistently found to be related to IPV; e.g., African American ethnicity in the USA (for a review, see Capaldi et al., 2012) and Aboriginal ethnicity in Canada (Gabora et al., 2007) are associated with higher levels of IPV.[22] Moreover, regarding the interactional dynamics of IPV, some studies suggest that gender roles in African American couples are not as rigid and polarized as the gender roles of Whites and other ethnic groups and this may explain greater mutuality and reactive escalation of violence by women in these couples (Caetano et al., 2005; Palmetto et al., 2013; Swan & Snow, 2002). It is possible that the balance of power can also differ in Aboriginal couples from other ethnic groups in Canada and it can affect the interactional dynamics of IPV, however, I cannot predict exactly how due to a

[22] However, Asian ethnicity can be a protective factor for IPV.

lack of pertinent studies. The nominal variable of race/ethnicity in the WEV study has four categories, i.e., African Canadian, Caucasian, Aboriginal, and Other/Mixed.

*Respondent's education*

The level of education as one of the indicators of socioeconomic status (SES) appears to be a significant predictor of IPV, and in some studies even a more significant predictor than employment status (for a review, see Capaldi et al., 2012). Arguably, the highest level of education reported by the respondents in the WEV study can in fact reflect the broader socio-economic position of these women in modern society, in which education is valued very highly. I expect that women with a lower level of education will initiate violence and escalate in response to partners' behaviour more often than those with a higher level of education. One possible explanation for this prediction comes from Black's concept of self help (Black, 1983), according to which women with low socioeconomic status develop distrust of the police and are likely to take the situation in their own hands. Other studies suggest that a reduction in IPV risk is associated primarily with secondary education for the woman and her partner and show less consistent evidence of a protective effect of primary education (e.g., Abramsky et al., 2011). In my study, I will use the dichotomous variable for education, i.e., 0 = did not complete high school, 1= high school and higher. Because at-risk incarcerated women often come from disadvantaged backgrounds, a dichotomous variable for education should be sufficient to differentiate between those with higher and lower socioeconomic status.

*Attitudes to violence*

Social learning theories suggest that attitudes to violence acquired in the family of origin can be an important predictor of IPV (Conradi et al., 2009; Palmetto et al., 2013). Moreover, the norms learnt in the family can, arguably, reflect the norms and cultural scripts about violence that characterise the broader society. Two variables in the WEV study allow me to measure attitudes to violence expressed by father and mother, i.e., if respondent physically attacked a child after being insulted, how would her mother and father have reacted: approved or disapproved. Presumably, those women whose parents

approved their reactive violence will escalate in response to partners' behaviour more often than those whose parents disapproved of their violent behaviour.

*Respondent's experience of child abuse*

Research literature suggests there may be a connection between involvement in violence in current relationships and past traumatization and abuse in the family of origin, particularly for women (Baskin & Sommers, 1998; Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003; Capaldi et al. 2012; Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin, & Petrie 2004; Miller & Mullins 2006; Swan & Snow, 2003). One of the mechanisms linking experience of violence in the past with patterns of violence in current relationships consists in learning when, where, and how to use violence (Hepburn, 1973). Also, rage and violence perpetrated especially by women toward male partners may represent a coping mechanism with a trauma that was caused by violence in the past and triggered by various situational factors in the current relationship (Flemke, 2009).

Arguably, exposure to violence in the family of origin can also affect the interactional dynamics of the IPV incident, i.e., those women who were victims of child abuse at home are expected to initiate violence and escalate in response to partners' behaviour more often than women who were not abused at home. Also, it is expected that women who were victims of child abuse are more likely to be the dominant perpetrators of IPV. In the WEV study, five items drawn from the CTS2 measure the primary caregiver's physical violence against a respondent when she was a child. I summed these items in order to compute a scale of child abuse with the reliability of 0.82.

*Respondents' physical violence against a non-partner*

Studies of female offenders suggest that two basic types of female perpetrators of IPV can be differentiated based on their violent behaviour outside of intimate relationships, i.e., partner-only (PO) and generally violent (GV) women (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003). I hypothesise that GV women will initiate psychological aggression and violence and will escalate in response to partners' behaviour more often than PO women. Also, PO women may be motivated by self-defence in their violent response more often than GV

women. There is a dichotomous variable in my study that measures whether respondent physically attacked a non-partner during the calendar period; women who report having done so are coded 1 on this variable.

*Respondent's early onset of crime*

Developmental theories of crime suggest that the age at which crime is first committed is an important factor for understanding criminal behaviour. Specifically, the early onset of crime is associated with greater prevalence of criminal behaviour later in life (e.g., Sweeten, Piquero, & Steinberg, 2013). Some studies find evidence of this in regard to the perpetration of IPV; namely, the early onset of crime is associated with an increased probability of assaulting a partner by both males and females (Straus & Ramirez, 2004). In my study, I expect that women's early onset of crime (measured as the age at first arrest) can be associated with higher prevalence of initiative and reactive violence.

*Association with criminal friends (Criminal subculture)*

Violent response as a mechanism of problem-solving and threat-reduction is more likely to occur in a subculture of violence (Hepburn, 1973). IPV studies also suggest that involvement with violent friends is a strong predictor of IPV perpetration (for a review, see Capaldi et al., 2012). Hence, respondents' involvement with a criminal subculture in the form of association with criminal friends may increase their sensitivity to insults and various provocations in the context of intimate relationships and hence foster their initiative and/or reactionary, and mutual violence. In the WEV study, there is a variable that measures the number of respondent's friends who have spent time in prison. This variable serves as a crude proxy for involvement in a criminal subculture.

***Relationship Correlates of the Dynamics of IPV Events***

In the WEV study, women were allowed to report on relationship characteristics for up to three different intimate relationships during the three-year period; so even if women changed relationships and experienced violence in different relationships, I am able to link relationship characteristics to the specific violent incident.

*Length of relationships*

Some studies suggest that the length of the relationship is strongly related to partner violence, i.e., the longer a couple is together, the greater the probability of assault (Straus & Ramirez, 2004). However, some other studies document no overall change in the amount of violence from pre-marriage to 30 months of the relationship (O'Leary et al., 1989). Moreover, studies that distinguished unilateral/mutual types of IPV by marital status (i.e., dating, cohabiting and married relationship) suggest that female-only violence is more likely to happen early in the relationship, i.e., in dating relationship, whereas male-only violence is more common at later stages of the relationship (marital and cohabiting relationships) (Stets & Straus, 1999). Quite consistently, O'Leary et al. (1989) found a significant reduction over time in the prevalence of spousal violence perpetrated by women. There are also studies that report that mutual or bidirectional assault is associated with longer intimate relationships (Palmetto et al., 2013). Although it is also possible that an abusive couple may try to end the relationship early, doing so may be difficult for economically disadvantaged partners, who may feel entrapped in abusive marriages. Because my data come from incarcerated women, I expect that length of the relationships will be associated with somewhat greater violence in the relationship. However, due to a dearth of studies on interactional dynamics of IPV, I cannot predict more specific associations.

*Relationship dissatisfaction (frequency of quarrels)*

IPV and communication studies suggest that relationship dissatisfaction and distress is a necessary condition for violence (for a review, see Capaldi et al., 2012; Lloyd, 1996). Couples that score high on relationship dissatisfaction experience high levels of antagonism and alienation and are likely to hurt, attack, and blame each other more often than happy couples (for a review, see Cahn, 1990). Incarcerated women tend to have unstable and unsatisfactory relationships with their intimate partners (Richie, 2006). Given these findings, it is expected that partners in relationships with more frequent arguments and lower levels of happiness would be more likely to reciprocate or escalate in response to the initial violence rather than deescalate as partners in happy relationships are expected to do. In other words, I expect that for partners who experience frequent

quarrels in their relationship, mutual violence will be the dominant interactional pattern in IPV incidents. In addition, because each IPV incident in my sample contains some violence, it would be interesting to explore the gender of the initiator of violence depending on the level of dissatisfaction in a couple. In the WEV study the ordinal variable measured how often women argued with their partners, i.e., 1 = almost never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, and 4 = almost always.

*Control/dominance*

Power struggles between intimate partners can affect the violent dynamic in a relationship (Jacobson & Gottman, 1998; Johnson, 2008; Olson, 2004, 2004; Stark, 2007; Walker, 2009). My research will test some aspects of the association between power/control in relationships and the dynamics within the IPV incident. In the WEV study, respondents reported on the frequency of their interactions with friends and family when they were in a relationship with the partner. Arguably, less frequent contacts between respondents and their family and friends after they established the relationship with the partner can serve as a proxy for the partner's controlling behaviour in the relationship. In fact, IPV studies suggest that controlling behaviour can be expressed in the form of severing the partner's ties with their families and friends. Moreover, since violence is often used to establish and maintain control over the partner in the relationship, I expect that the controlling partner will be more likely to initiate violence and to use one-sided violence against the respondent in IPV incidents. Unfortunately, the WEV study did not collect data on the respondent's controlling behaviour in the relationship and thus it prevents me from examining the link between it and intra-incident IPV dynamics.

***Situational Correlates of the Dynamics of IPV Events***

*Motivations and reasons*

Many studies demonstrate that the motivations or justifications for IPV are critical in understanding why IPV happens in the first place (for a review, see Bair-Merritt et al., 2010; Caldwell et al., 2009; Capaldi et al., 2012; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). Arguably, specific themes over which IPV usually sparks are also important for

explaining escalation to violence. Given the findings on the humiliation-anger link and discussed in Chapter 2, it is expected that the themes that touch the most sensitive issues in relationships, such as sexual jealousy/ possessiveness and challenges to authority, will be associated with escalation to violence in an IPV incident, whereas other motives or themes will be more situationally specific (e.g., Caldwell et al., 2009; Eisikovits & Buchbinder, 2000; Retzinger, 1991).

I will further explore the association of each motive for IPV conflicts with different escalatory patterns. There are six dummy variables for each of the six prevalent motives for IPV incidents in the WEV study, i.e., 1) disputes over sex and sexual jealousy; 2) challenge to authority; 3) disputes over children, property, and household tasks; 4) disputes over alcohol or/and drug abuse; 5) disputes over money; and 6) unjust or inappropriate behaviour, including physical affront and/or predatory physical attack, verbal insult(s) / physical gesture(s). The additional dummy variable "others" was viewed as a "catch-all" category for all other miscellaneous offensive behaviour, including disputes over partner's criminal behaviour, challenge over territory/turf and robbery.

*Alcohol use by respondent and opponent before the incident*

Intoxication may be viewed as a situational factor because it "characterizes a person's engagement with a particular setting – i.e., [it is] an action process" (Wikström & Treiber, 2009: 82). Alcohol use has been shown to be associated with initiation of IPV as well as with patterns of relational dynamics (for a review, see Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005; Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977). However, the association of indicators of alcohol use with IPV perpetration and victimisation is not strong or consistent across different studies (for a review, see Capaldi et al., 2012). Moreover, whether drinking at the time of the violent incident is an immediate and direct cause of violence and how exactly it is associated with the evolution of a violent conflict is an open question. There are two major implications of alcohol intoxication. First, alcohol seems to contribute to the participants' identity threat by challenging the taken-for-granted patterns of accountability and eventually violating the relational rules of the dyad. Second, by reducing cognitive skills, alcohol may narrow appropriate threat-reducing tactics, and

may thus intensify the encapsulation process and lead to the tactic of violent retaliation (Hepburn, 1973). There are three dummy variables in the WEV study that measured if only the respondent, only the opponent, or both were drinking alcohol before the incident, each of which were coded: 1 = yes or 0 = no.

*Presence of bystanders*

Although the role of third parties in IPV is often neglected, existing studies suggest that the presence of a social audience may significantly contribute to the evolution of interpersonal disputes and hence should be considered when examining escalation to violence in IPV incidents (for a review, see Bell & Naugle, 2008; Hepburn, 1973; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). At the same time, results regarding the role of third parties in the evolution of the IPV incident are inconsistent. On the one hand, the presence of bystanders may threaten intimate partners' social identity and provide implicit or explicit support for face-saving tactics that escalate to violence (Hepburn, 1973; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). On the other hand, third parties, if present at the domestic disturbance, may attempt to calm down the opponents and stop the violence, thus exerting a deterrent effect on escalation of the IPV incident. This is consistent with the finding that IPV is likely to happen in the privacy of the home behind closed doors. The potential effects of the presence of children during violent episodes at home have not been thoroughly studied. Given the conflicting predictions and the overall dearth of studies in this area, my research will explore the association between third parties and the chances of escalation of violence in an IPV incident without putting forth specific hypotheses. There is a dichotomous variable in the WEV study that measures the presence of bystanders in each IPV incidence, i.e., 0 = no bystanders were present and 1 = bystanders were present.[23]

*Weapon used in the incident*

Criminological research suggests that the availability of a weapon, type of weapon, and weapon use can affect the development, including escalation, and the outcome of the

[23] There was no a separate measure indicating whether the bystander(s) was/were children.

violent incident (for a review, see Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). In the majority of IPV incidents that are not lethal, however, intimates rarely use any weapon. When intimate partners do use a weapon, women are likely to use sharp objects (most often a knife) while male partners tend to use blunt objects. My study will further explore the association between weapon-related variables and the likelihood of violent conflict escalation in the IPV incident. Respondents in our study reported if any weapon was used by the respondent and by the opponent (two dichotomous variables, where 0 = no, 1 = yes).

**Relevant variables not in my analyses**

Although the WEV data provide necessary variation in the dynamics of the IPV interactions and information about many relevant variables found significant for understanding IPV, data on several correlates were not collected. Most of the missing information is background characteristics for respondents' partners that match information for the respondent (e.g., exposure to violence in the family of origin, number of friends in prison). This partly explains my focus on the characteristics of women that are associated with different interactional patterns in IPV incidents. Despite the importance of dominance and control in understanding IPV dynamics, unfortunately, data were not collected about the woman's controlling behaviour in the relationship. This prevents me from examining the link between the respondent's control and intra-incident IPV dynamics.

## 3.7 Conclusion

I began this chapter by discussing the data for my study, including the requirements for the data to address my research questions, its existing strengths and limitations. I provided a detailed explanation for why the data collected as a part of the WEV study is relevant and appropriate for my study. Then I briefly described the sample and analytic strategies used in my research. A substantial part of this chapter discussed the principles of coding the dimensions of violent dynamics and the key measures, i.e., dependent and independent variables in my study. In the course of it, I illustrated my approach to coding the main aspects of violent dynamics with the narratives from the WEV data. Also,

drawing on the existing studies, I put forward expectations about the characteristics of various aspects of violent dynamics in the IPV incidents in my study and their associations with independent variables. I turn now to Chapter Four in which I describe the characteristics of the respondents, IPV incidents, and the dependent variables in my study. Also, this chapter will provide the results of the bivariate analysis of the associations between independent and dependent variables

# Chapter 4. Dimensions of Violent Dynamics and Their Bivariate Associations with the Independent Variables

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results from my analyses of the main dimensions of violent dynamics in IPV incidents and their relationships with independent variables. The questions that guide this chapter are: 1) what are the associations of the main dimensions of violent dynamics (i.e., initiation of violence, use of reactive violence, use of violence in the entire incident, and injuries to partners) with the independent variables in my study, and 2) how consistent are these findings with the existing research. I begin by briefly discussing the characteristics of the respondents and the IPV incidents in my study. Then I present descriptive statistics on all dependent and independent variables in my study, and also document the results of the bivariate analysis. To conclude, I discuss the main findings from my analyses in the context of the literature on interactional dynamics of IPV and female offending.

## 4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents and the IPV Incidents

***Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents***

Although the IPV incident is the unit of analysis in my study, it is important to consider the characteristics of the women who provided data for the WEV study in order to put my findings into context and assist in their interpretation. A total of 261 women incarcerated in a provincial correctional facility in Ontario (Canada) agreed to participate in the WEV study. As discussed in Chapter 3, these women were not selected for the larger study based on whether or not they had experienced intimate partner violence. This explains why only 135 (52%) of these 261 women reported at least one incident of severe violence in their intimate relationships during the three years prior to their incarceration. That over half the women in the larger study were involved in IPV is consistent with other studies

of female offenders that suggest IPV is often a part of women's lives prior to their incarceration (Daly, 1988; Gilfus, 1992; Richie, 1996, 2003).

Table 4.1 presents socio-demographic characteristics of the 135 women who provided the narratives of 295 IPV incidents, which, in turn, constitute the sample in my study. Over two thirds of these women were less than 40 years old and their mean age was 33 years. Three quarters of the respondents were Caucasian, 15% Aboriginal, and 5% Afro-Canadians. In general, respondents' socio-economic status is quite low. For example, more than one half of the women had not graduated from high school and over two thirds had earned illegal income in the three years prior to their incarceration. In addition, a majority of the respondents had never been married; nevertheless, the women had been in intimate relationships in the three years prior to their incarceration that lasted on average 55 months. As is the case with many samples of incarcerated women, the vast majority reported experiencing either physical or sexual abuse during childhood. Respondents had been imprisoned for a variety of crimes, including property crimes (31%), violent crimes (24%), and drug-related crimes (15%).

Thus, based on these backgrounds and socio-demographic characteristics, this group of women is similar in important respects to those in other research on incarcerated women (Gabora et al., 2007; Graham-Kevan, 2009; Richie, 1996); but by no means can this be considered a representative sample of incarcerated women. The respondents in my study are distinct in a number of ways from the population of provincially sentenced women (Government of Ontario, 2003-2004) and female perpetrators of IPV who are serving their time in federal prison in Canada (Gabora et al., 2007). Specifically, a larger proportion of women in my study had been sentenced to prison for violent crime (24.4%) compared to the population of provincially sentenced women (13.5%) (Government of Ontario, 2003-2004). This suggests that women with histories of violence were more inclined to volunteer for the WEV study (perhaps because the study's name referred to violence) while those with minimal or no histories of violence may have been more likely to dismiss the study on the basis that it was irrelevant to them.

*Table 4.1.* Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (N=135) who reported 295 IPV incidents

| Characteristics | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Age* | | | |
| 18-29 | | 51 | 37.7 |
| 30-39 | | 44 | 33.3 |
| 40-49 | | 34 | 25.2 |
| 50-52 | | 5 | 3.7 |
| Age (mean) (s.d.) | 33.4 (8.6) | | |
| *Race/Ethnicity* | | | |
| Black | | 7 | 5.2 |
| White | | 103 | 76.3 |
| Aboriginal | | 20 | 14.8 |
| Other/Mix | | 5 | 3.7 |
| *Education* | | | |
| Less than high school | | 78 | 57.8 |
| High school graduate | | 57 | 42.2 |
| *Marital status* | | | |
| Never married | | 79 | 58.5 |
| Ever married | | 56 | 41.5 |
| *Committing offence* | | | |
| Violent crime[24] | | 33 | 24.4 |
| Property crime | | 42 | 31.1 |
| Drug crime | | 20 | 14.8 |
| Technical violation | | 13 | 9.6 |
| Other crime | | 27 | 20.0 |
| | | | |
| *Illegal income 3 yrs before prison* | | | |
| Yes | | 92 | 68.1 |
| No | | 41 | 30.4 |
| Refused to answer | | 2 | 1.5 |
| *Age at first arrest* (mean) | | 19.9 (s.d. = 8.5) | |
| *Length of IPR* (in months) (mean) | | 55, (s.d.=61), range 1-376 | |

In addition, this group of women appears to be distinct from samples used in other IPV studies because women in my study were not selected based on their IPV offending or victimization. This may partly explain some salient differences between women in my study and female perpetrators of IPV serving time in federal prison in Canada. For instance, in the early 2000s, 44% of federal female offenders convicted of IPV offenses

[24] Unfortunately, we cannot determine if any of these violent crimes were IPV. Moreover, other crime categories, as well, might be IPV-related (e.g., destroying a partner's car).

were Aboriginal (Gabora et al., 2007), whereas only 15% of the women in my study were Aboriginal. There are several possible explanations for this difference, including the fact that my sample came from a provincial prison in southern Ontario where Aboriginals make up a lower proportion of the population than in other regions of the province as well as other provinces.

To sum up, the distinctive nature of the sample of incarcerated women in my study suggests that the results of IPV studies that used community samples, clinical samples of women who are victims of IPV, and samples of incarcerated women who are perpetrators of IPV should not be directly compared to the findings in my study. Using the IPV incident rather than the individual woman as a unit of analysis complicates the direct comparison between the findings even further.

***Characteristics of the IPV Incidents***

Because the IPV incident is the unit of analysis in my study, Table 4.2 below outlines the key characteristics of these 295 incidents, which were provided by the 135 women who reported at least one incident of violence in their relationships in the three years prior to their incarceration. Forty six percent of the incidents were reported by women who reported only one incident of violence; 24% of 295 incidents were reported by women who reported only two incidents of violence; and 30% of the incidents were reported by women who reported three or more IPV incidents in the 3 years prior to incarceration. The predominant reasons for the incidents were conflicts over sex and sexual jealousy, inappropriate behaviour of a partner, drugs and/or alcohol, and challenges to authority. As expected, most of the violent incidents occurred indoors and without any law enforcement involvement.

In almost one quarter of all incidents, respondents' partners sustained some injuries; respondents, on the other hand, reported being injured in almost 60% of the incidents, which makes this sample akin to the clinical victimisation samples, in which the rate of injuries is much higher than in general population samples.

Table 4.2. *Characteristics of the IPV incidents reported by 135 women (n=295)*

| Characteristics | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| *Number of incidents per woman* | | |
| 1 | 135 | 45.8 |
| 2 | 72 | 24.4 |
| 3 | 44 | 14.9 |
| 4+ | 44 | 14.9 |
| *Primary issue of incident* | | |
| Dispute over sex and sexual jealousy | 58 | 19.7 |
| Behaviour judged unjust/inappropriate | 61 | 20.7 |
| Challenge to authority | 38 | 12.9 |
| Dispute about drugs and /or alcohol | 46 | 15.6 |
| Dispute about money | 23 | 7.8 |
| Dispute over kids, property, household tasks | 15 | 5.1 |
| Others | 54 | 18.2 |
| *Where incident occurred* | | |
| Indoors | 246 | 83.4 |
| Outdoors | 49 | 16.6 |
| *Any law enforcement involvement* | | |
| Yes | 98 | 33.2 |
| No | 197 | 66.8 |
| *Respondent caused injury to Opponent* | | |
| Yes | 67 | 22.7 |
| No | 228 | 77.3 |
| *Respondent was injured by Opponent* | | |
| Yes | 176 | 59.7 |
| No | 119 | 40.3 |

## 4.3 Descriptive Statistics for the Dependent Variables

*Dependent variable I: Initiation of violence*

Descriptive statistics on the dependent variables in the study (except of the latent dependent variable, which will be discussed in Chapter 5) are shown in Table 4.3. Women admitted initiating physical violence in one third of the incidents, whereas their partners were described as initiating physical violence in the remainder of the incidents. Additional analysis suggests that most of the initial physical violence (68%) by both

partners was in the form of severe violence (e.g., used a knife or gun on a partner, kicked, and beat up a partner). However, men's first physical violence was more likely to be in the form of severe violence (74%) than females' initial violence, which was severe in 57% of the cases ($\chi^2$=8.2, p<.01). On the other hand, this indicates that in almost one half of the initial violent attacks by females the violence was minor (e.g., slapping, grabbing, and pushing the male partner).

*Dependent Variable II: Reaction to initial violence*

In almost two thirds of the incidents the recipient of the initial violence attempted to deescalate or responded non-violently to the first physical violence in the incident, and women deescalated more often than men did (69% and 49% respectively) (Table 4.3). This finding is consistent with studies that suggest violent escalation is an unlikely characteristic of most incidents/couples (Feld & Straus, 1989). When deescalation occurred, it was largely because the recipient of violence was unable to resist due to injuries (34%), passively accepted or tolerated the violence (25%), attempted to reason with the partner (15%), or escaped the scene (14%). Although in these incidents women refrained from using force due to injuries more often than men did (37.5% and 22.9% respectively), the differences in deescalation strategies employed by men and women are not statistically significant.

In the rest of the incidents (38%), however, the recipient of the initial violence reacted with violence. Importantly, male partners were significantly more likely than female respondents to react to their partners' initial violence with escalation. That is, when women initiated physical violence, men responded violently in over half of these cases (51%), whereas women escalated in response to male's violence in less than one third of the incidents (31%, $\chi^2$=11.2, p≤.001). This finding highlights the potential danger to women of initiating even minor violence toward their partners (Straus, 2005). Two examples below illustrate how the minor violence initiated by a woman can increase the chances of men's retaliation.

Table 4.3. *Descriptive statistics on the dependent variables in the study*

| **Discrete dependent variables** | Categories | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Basic variables*** | | | |
| *Initiation of violence** | 1) Man initiated | 197 | 66.8 |
| | 2) Woman initiated | 98 | 33.2 |
| *Reactive violence* | | | |
| Man's reaction to initial female violence (n=98) | 1) No violence (deescalation) | 48 | 49.0 |
| | 2) Any violence (escalation) | 50 | 51.0 |
| Woman's reaction to initial male violence (n=197) | 1) No violence (deescalation) | 136 | 69.0 |
| | 2) Any violence (escalation) | 61 | 31.0 |
| *Use of violence*** | | | |
| Man's use of violence in the incident | 1) No violence | 43 | 14.6 |
| | 2) Any violence | 252 | 85.4 |
| Woman's use of violence in the incident | 1) No violence | 143 | 48.5 |
| | 2) Any violence | 152 | 51.5 |
| *Injuries* | | | |
| Any injuries to the man | 1) Not injured | 227 | 77.3 |
| | 2) Injured | 67 | 22.7 |
| Any injuries to the woman | 1) Not injured | 119 | 43.0 |
| | 2) Injured | 176 | 59.7 |
| ***Additional variables*** | | | |
| Any psychological aggression before the first physical violence | 1) no prior aggression | 131 | 44.4 |
| | 2) was prior aggression | 164 | 55.6 |
| Motives for the reactive violence (n=184) | 1) retaliation/anger | 60 | 54.1 |
| | 2) self-protection | 21 | 18.9 |
| | 3) power contest | 18 | 16.2 |
| | 4) restraining violence | 12 | 10.8 |

* For the descriptive purposes, I also coded the severity of the initial violence as 1) minor (31.9%) and 2) severe (68.1%).
** Alternatively, this variable can have three categories to represent mutual/unilateral type of IPV, i.e., 1) male-only violence (48.5%), 2) female-only violence (14.6%), 3) mutual violence (36.9%).

> We were drinking at home, he had friends of his there, … he mentioned something about if he wanted to get laid he was going to pay $20 bucks for the girl outside. I slapped him in the face. He grabbed me around the throat and he

> said, “If you ever slap me like that again I'll kill that”. I got the hint. I never touched him again (ID 113/34).

This is how the woman who reported this incident has explained her behaviour in response to the follow up question: “I was embarrassed - I had to defend me, I had to defend my reputation in front of his friends - he embarrassed me in front of his friends - I have a habit of striking out at people - it's a problem that has to stop”. Another example that demonstrates the similar situation is the following:

> …we got in an argument [over the drugs] and I slapped him in the face. He tried to stop me from hitting him and he got so mad and he didn't mean to do it but he already had a knife in his hand - he was cutting up some dope. The back of the knife wacked me in my eye and my eye got all bust open… (ID 116/37).

Overall, it appears that women who initiated minor violence were at a higher risk of men’s reactive violence than women who initiated severe violence. In other words, male partners escalated to the violence in 64% of the incidents in which women slapped and scratched but in only 41% of the incidents in which women initiated severe violence ($X^2$=5.2, $p<.05$). The narrative below exemplifies situations where a woman initiated severe violence and appeared to have been injured mostly by accident rather than due to her partner’s reactive violence.

> I was beating him (husband) up. I can't remember what the fight was about. I was punching him in the head and I grabbed his hair so I could punch him in the head. He grabbed my shoulders to try to stop me from swinging at him. I yanked back from him and ended up hitting the wall which brought on a seizure… He was trying to catch me as I fell. He wears a really big ring that I bought him and it hit my cheekbone - the side of my face immediately swelled up and went into a goose egg (ID 135/57).

*Dependent variable III: Use of violence*

Both male and female partners used some type of violence, minor or severe, in the majority of the described IPV incidents, however, men used violence in more incidents than women did (85% and 52% respectively) (Table 4.3). Alternatively, identifying whether a woman or her partner was a sole perpetrator or whether both used violence in the incident provides us with information about an important aspect of the interactional dynamics, that is, whether IPV is mutual/bidirectional or one-sided/unidirectional. In almost half of the incidents a male partner was described as a sole perpetrator of physical violence (49%), with mutual physical violence the next most common scenario (37%). In the rest of the narratives (15%), women described themselves as the sole perpetrator of physical violence.

*Dependent variable IV: Injury*

Separate questions in the WEV study asked respondents whether a partner injured them and whether they caused injuries to a partner in the IPV incident. In over half of the incidents women reported that they sustained injuries from their male partners (60%) and in almost a quarter of the incidents (23%) women reported that they inflicted injures on their male partners.

Regarding initiation of violence, it appears that the initial use of violence by women in the IPV incidents is associated with injuries primarily to women rather than to men (Table 4.5). At the same time, violent incidents started by male partners are unequivocally linked to injuries to women (72%). Also, the association between women's reaction to men's violence and injuries to women shown in Table 4.6 suggests that women get injured not only if they escalate in response to partner's initial violence (what is somewhat expected since it leads to a mutual fight) (73%) but also if women refrain from using any violence and attempt to escape the scene or calm the partner down (69%). This may point at the severity of men's violence in the incidents they initiated, which lead to injuries to women who were then unable or too frightened to reciprocate. At the same time, not surprisingly, men were more likely to be injured when women escalated

the violence in response to men's violence rather than when women responded non-violently to men's violence.

In relation to the use of violence by one or both partners in the IPV incident, each partner seems much more likely to be injured in the incidents in which their partner is a sole perpetrator of violence (72% and 54% respectively) (Table 4.7). Additionally, incidents with mutual violence appear to be associated with a greater likelihood of injuries to women than to men (66% and 39% respectively).

**Additional dependent variables**

*Dependent variable Ia: Psychological aggression prior to the initial physical violence*

In over one half of the IPV incidents (56%), some type of the psychological aggression, initiated by either of the partners, preceded the initiation of physical violence. Even though I examined the women's recollections of violent incidents, in which they focused on the occurrence of physical violence, the psychological aggression they described appears to be severe in most of these incidents, e.g., destroying something belonging to the partner, threatening to hit, calling a partner ugly, fat or an idiot. Moreover, analysis of the narratives suggests an overall gender parity in the initiation of psychological aggression with women reporting initiating somewhat more incidents (58% and 42% respectively). These findings are consistent with other studies that find relative gender parity in the initiation of psychological aggression and a positive association between severe psychological aggression and physical violence in the partner relationships (e.g., Hamby & Sugarman, 1999).

Given the focus of my study on women's participation in violent dynamics, below I provide several examples of narratives in which a woman initiated psychological aggression, and which in turn often seemed to activate the violent reaction of her partner. In the narrative below, the woman reported breaking the window of her partner's car, in response to which the male partner retaliated and beat up the respondent; there is an indication that this dynamic happens routinely.

> He was heading out. I asked him to leave me a gram. He wouldn't leave the gram. He said he couldn't afford me. He was attempting to drive away. I grabbed a pepper shaker and threw it at the car and broke his back window. He came into the house, grabbed me and threw me on the floor and began kicking me in the ribs. Then he left. Whenever he beat me he'd just leave (ID 200/203)

In the following incident, a woman admitted getting angry and destroying something that belonged to her partner, to which her partner reacted violently:

> 'Cause I wanted him to buy me a slice of pizza and he didn't want to, because I hadn't been home for a long time - so I got mad at him and smashed his mirrors and he threw me on the bed and my head hit the corner of the bedpost and I was bleeding and he made me clean up the glass. Then he fixed my head - cleaned it up -- bought me pizza and told me to get out. I was saving his ass eh cause he thought that I might go to the police (ID 404/302)

In another narrative, a woman who was apparently under the influence of drugs threatened to destroy her partner's things and also threw a heavy object at her partner that hurt his hand; however, the male partner did not reciprocate or escalate in response to the woman's aggression.

> Tim was downstairs at one of my friend's house - … I didn't approve of him being down there because he was spending a lot of time down there - he was there with a girl - …so I told him that I wanted him to come upstairs that minute or else I would destroy his things - …he came upstairs and I insisted that something was going on - I was high and I was paranoid - I threw an ashtray at him and I told him to get out - the ashtray hit him in his arm… (526/176)

Men were not the only ones to react violently in response to initial psychological aggression. Women described the incidents in which they escalated to physical violence in response to men's psychological aggression. For example,

> he called me dirty dizzard dog - and I was high - and I chased him - but he was running - so I tried to shoot him - he fired back twice (in a parking lot behind a building) - I ran out of bullets - so he hit me with the butt of the gun…(ID 249/263)

*Dependent Variable II.a: Motives for the reactive violence*

Escalation in response to the initial violence for both men and women was predominantly motivated by retaliation/anger (54%), followed by self-defence (19%), contestation of power (16%), and restraining violence (11%). However, examination of the motives for the reactive violence perpetrated by men and women identified salient gender differences. Specifically, men were more likely to use retaliation than women (66% versus 44%, $\chi^2$=22.4, p<.001) whereas women were more likely to react violently for self-protection than men (31% and 4% accordingly). These findings are consistent with studies that suggest that self-defence is a clearly gendered motive for reactive violence. At the same time, these findings also indicate that self-defence is not necessarily a leading motive for female-perpetrated violence (e.g., Gabora et al., 2007; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006; Straus, 2011). The overall high percentage of incidents in which incarcerated women reported reacting violently for the purposes of retaliation or self-protection is in line with other research that finds that incarcerated women were less likely to contact the police and more likely to take justice into their own hands (Dugan & Castro, 2006).

Excerpts from the narratives below illustrate two motives for women's reactive violence, which are often blended in real life situations, but still can be distinguished based on which of these motives seems to dominate, i.e., retaliation or self-protection. In the incidents of retaliation, women often mentioned violent emotions, such as becoming mad or infuriated, and also described using excessive force on the partner. Violence in these incidents is often driven by the intention to cause harm and pain to the partner and is spurred by anger and a "tit-for-tat" attitude rather than by fear.

> We were in a heated argument - I don't remember what about. … He threw a glass he had just finished drinking from but he threw it above the couch at the wall and it shattered and it lightly grazed Trinity's (respondent's daughter) arm. I chased him into the bedroom and kicked the fucking shit out of him. He had tripped over the bed and he had fallen, I was just punching him on the ground. I kept going until he couldn't take it no more… (ID 112/32).

When women used violence to protect themselves from their partner's violence, they often conveyed it by saying that their actions were mainly for "making the partner let me go".

> …He grabbed me by the hair and he tried to pull me through the broken window but I got away. [Neighbour called cops]. I threw shit at him - a big wooden block that has steak knives in it. I threw all kinds of stuff at him but I couldn't get him to stop attacking me. (ID 102/8)

However, as studies suggest, in some cases self-protective behaviour and retaliation are fused together and it can be difficult to distinguish them from each other (Bair-Merritt, et al., 2010; Saunders, 1988). At the same time, the presence of what Foshee et al. (2007) identify as the "fed-up" motive and "anger response" in the excerpt below lends itself to seeing it as retaliation rather than self-defence.

> We were drinking at home, he was insulting me - the same old thing - there was pushing and shoving and slapping - it depended on how drunk he was - as he got more drunk he went from slapping to closed fist punches. We were in the basement and there was a hammer sitting there and I grabbed it and I just smashed him in the head. I split his forehead right open, above his eye. I could have killed him, that was my intention. You get sick of it, beating after beating after beating - I can handle 6 months in jail for it too. After I hit him he called 911. Both the ambulance and the cops came to the house. I just sat there and waited. I knew I was going to jail (312/138)

It is noteworthy that power contestation appears to drive women's reactive violence more than men's reactive violence (21% and 10% respectively). This finding, however, is not surprising given that other IPV studies find no large sex differences in control or dominance motives (Felson & Outlaw, 2007; Laroche, 2005) and a somewhat greater association between female dominance and violence by women (Straus, 2008). In the IPV narratives, the motive for this reactive violence was often conveyed as instrumental; that is, partners used the violence to get what they wanted, to insist on their opinion or will, and/or to continue doing something against the other partner's will. Women often described striking back at the partner in the context of the fights over property and women used force to remain in the house or apartment.

The least prominent motive for women's reactive violence was restraining violence or violence intended to stop further violence by their male partners (3%). However, this was the second most prevalent motive for men's reactive violence (20%).

Taken together, the five basic and two additional dependent variables capture the complexity and heterogeneity of the dimensions of IPV events and both partners' contribution to the dynamics of these events. In chapter 5 I will discuss how these various dimensions of violent dynamics in IPV incidents help differentiate among classes of IPV incidents.

## 4.4 Bivariate Relationships between Dependent Variables and Individual, Relationship, and Situational Variables

***Individual Correlates of IPV dynamics***

Descriptive information on the characteristics of the IPV incidents is shown below in Table 4.4. Note that these are characteristics of incidents (N = 295), not respondents (N = 135), and so the data reported in Table 4.4 may differ from that reported in Table 4.1. Bivariate relationships between each of the dependent variables and the characteristics of

the respondents, their relationships and the violent situations are shown in Tables 4.5 – 4.8 at the end of this chapter and discussed next.

*Age of respondents and partners*

The age of the respondents varies from 18 to 52 years with a mean of 33 years; partners' age varies from 16 to 60 with a mean of 37. This age difference is statistically significant ($t=4.63$, $p<.001$). Although the literature suggests that IPV perpetration declines with age, my analyses fail to identify any statistically significant[25] associations between respondents' or partners' ages and the interactional dynamics in the IPV incidents measured by the dependent variables (see Tables 4.5 – 4.8).

*Race/ethnicity of respondents and partner(s)*

Of the respondents involved in these 295 incidents, 80% were Caucasian or White, 14% were Aboriginal, 3% were Afro-Canadian or Black, and the remainder were from other racial/ethnic groups. The ethnic/racial profile of their partners differs somewhat from that of respondents. That is, compared to respondents, their partners are more likely to be Black (14%) or other ethnicities (6%), and less likely to be Caucasian (73%) or Aboriginal (6%).

[25] All reported associations that I discuss below are statistically significant; if the association is marginally significant I indicate this.

Table 4.4. *Descriptive information about the independent variables (N = 295)*

| Independent variables | Mean or % | S.D. | Range[b] |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Individual Characteristics* | | | |
| Respondent's age, *in years* | 33.1 | 8.8 | 18-52 |
| Opponent's age, *in years* (N=286)[a] | 36.9 | 10.0 | 16-60 |
| Respondent's race | | | |
| Black | 2.7% | | |
| White | 80.3% | | |
| Aboriginal | 14.2% | | |
| Other/Mixed | 2.7% | | |
| Opponent's race (N=285) | | | |
| Black | 14.0% | | |
| White | 73.3% | | |
| Aboriginal | 6.3% | | |
| Other/Mixed | 6.3% | | |
| Respondent's education: high school or higher (1) | 44.4% | | |
| Mother approved of violence (N=285) | 28.4% | | |
| Father approved of violence (N=243) | 31.3% | | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 1.7 | 3.1 | 0-16 |
| Respondent was violent toward a stranger | 48.1% | | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest, *in years* | 20.0 | 8.2 | 10-48 |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 2.0 | 1.2 | 0-4 |
| | | | |
| *Relationship Characteristics* | | | |
| Length of relationship, *in months* (N=286) | 60.6 | 67.6 | 1-376 |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* (N=291) | 2.9 | 0.9 | 1-4 |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* (N=291) | 3.7 | 1.0 | 1-5 |
| | | | |
| *Situational Characteristics* | | | |
| Motive for the violent incident | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture | 20.7% | | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy | 19.7% | | |
| Alcohol or drug use | 15.6% | | |
| Challenge to authority | 12.9% | | |
| Money | 7.8% | | |
| Household, kids, responsibilities | 5.1% | | |
| Drank alcohol before the IPV incident | | | |
| Only respondent | 7.5% | | |
| Only opponent | 15.9% | | |
| Both | 23.7% | | |
| Bystanders were present | 24.1% | | |
| Weapon use in the incident | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Respondent used | 20.3% |
| Opponent used | 14.9% |

[a] Unless otherwise noted, N=295 for each variable.

[b] Unless otherwise noted, variables are dummy coded.

In comparison with other racial groups, Black respondents are more likely to be involved in mutual violence and to be the sole perpetrators of violence and less likely to be solely the targets of their partners' violence (at the marginally significant level; see Table 4.7). Also, Black respondents are much more likely to initiate violence than their partners, which stands out in comparison with other respondents (Table 4.5). In contrast, White respondents are more likely to be the sole targets of their partners' violence than to be the sole perpetrator or involved in mutual violence (Tables 4.7); and they tend to deescalate in reaction to their partners' initial physical attacks (Table 4.6).[26] Aboriginal women, in turn, are more likely to be involved in mutual violence with their partners (Tables 4.7) and to escalate in response to violence initiated by their partners. Moreover, female respondents are much more likely to use violence in response to the first physical attack if their partners are Aboriginal than if their partners are of any other race/ethnicity (Table 4.6).

Overall, these findings are consistent with studies that suggest that Black and Aboriginal women have the highest prevalence of mutual violence in their intimate relationships (Caetano et al., 2005; Gabora et al., 2007; Palmetto et al., 2013). My results suggest that for Black women, mutual violence is a consequence of their initiation of violence against their intimate partners, whereas for Aboriginal women, mutual violence is a consequence of their violent reaction to physical violence by their intimate partners.

*Respondents' education*

Less than half of the respondents in the sample of IPV incidents had graduated from high school (44%). As shown in Table 4.7, respondents with more years of education are

[26] Note that the analysis in Table 4.6 is based only on incidents where the initial violence was perpetrated by the respondents' partners.

significantly more likely to be solely the targets of violence and, as shown in Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.8, are more likely to refrain from both initial (marginally significant association) and reactive violence, and are more likely to be injured compared to respondents with fewer years of education. The bivariate relationships between the latent dependent variable and the respondent's education echo these findings and suggest that a respondent's higher level of education can be seen as a risk factor for victimisation in the incident and a respondent's lower level of education is associated with dominant perpetration of violence in the incident.

*Attitudes to violence*

There are two variables in the WEV study that measure attitudes to violence expressed by a parent, i.e., whether the respondent's mother (or father) would approve or disapprove if the respondent physically attacked another child after being insulted. Because some studies suggest that mothers' and fathers' attitudes and behaviours may have different effects on a child (Foshee et al., 2007; Straus & Michel-Smith, 2012), I will discuss these two variables and their associations with the dependent variables separately.

I created two dichotomous variables for mothers' and fathers' attitudes to violence, where "0" designates the disapproval of respondents' violence and "1" stands for the approval of or a parents' indifference toward respondents' violence. As shown in Table 4.4, almost one third of the respondents in the sample of the IPV incidents reported that their mothers (29%) and fathers (31%) would have approved if they had responded with violence towards a child who insulted the respondent.

As shown in Table 4.7, only mothers' attitudes toward violence are associated with respondents' involvement in IPV. Specifically, these respondents were significantly more likely to be involved in mutual violence and to be the sole perpetrators of IPV than the respondents whose mothers disapproved of a violent response. This suggests that women whose mothers approve of their violent behaviour are less likely to become targets of unidirectional male violence. In addition, respondents whose mothers approved of violence were more likely to escalate in response to their partners' violence (marginally

significant) (Table 4.6).

*Experiencing violence as a child*

In the WEV study, questions similar to the items used in the CTS2 measure the frequency of different types of minor and severe physical violence perpetrated by the primary caregiver against a respondent when she was a child. Specifically, five questions, which I selected for computing a scale of child abuse, asked a respondent how often a primary caregiver threw something at the respondent; slammed a respondent against the wall; burned or scolded a respondent; threatened to hit or throw at the respondent, and destroyed something of the respondent. Response options for these questions were: 0 = never, 1 = once or twice, 2 = sometimes, 3 = frequently, and 4 = most of the time. I summed these variables to compute a scale of child abuse, which has the reliability coefficient of 0.82. This is a continuous variable ranging from 0 to 16 with a mean of 1.7.

As shown in a Table 4.7, incidents that involve women who were subjected to more frequent abuse in the family of origin are more likely to involve mutual violence and women's perpetration of unidirectional violence against their partners than incidents that involve women who experienced less frequent child abuse. Consistent with these findings, Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show that in the incidents in which respondents scored higher on the scale of child abuse victimization, women were significantly more likely to initiate violence and to escalate in response to violence initiated by their partners compared to the incidents in which respondents scored lower on this scale.

*Respondents' physical violence against a non-partner*

A dichotomous variable in my study measures whether (1) or not (0) the respondent physically attacked a non-partner during the calendar period. Almost one half of the women in the sample of IPV incidents reported attacking a non-partner in the calendar period. I call such respondents in these incidents generally violent (GV) women.

Cross-tabulations suggest that GV women in these incidents are much more likely to initiate violence, to escalate in response to partners' violence (Tables 4.5 and 4.6), and to

get involved in mutual and unidirectional violence against their partners than are non-GV women (Table 4.7). It is not surprising then that GV women appear less likely to be injured in these incidents than non-GV women (marginally significant, Table 4.8). Overall, these findings are consistent with other studies that differentiate between different types of female offenders based on their general violent behaviour (Babcock, Miller, & Siard, 2003; Conradi et al., 2009; Goldenson et al., 2009).

*Respondents' early onset of crime*

The respondents' age at first arrest in the sample of IPV incidents varies between 10 and 48 years, with a mean of 20 years. As expected, women who were arrested earlier in life are more likely to be the sole perpetrators of violence and to be involved in mutual violence with a partner rather than to become a target of the partner's one-sided violence (Table 4.7); they are also more likely to initiate violence and react violently to male partners' initial attacks in these incidents compared to women who were arrested later in life. Consistent with these findings, early onset of crime is marginally associated with lower injuries to respondents in these incidents.

*Association with criminal friends (Criminal subculture)*

In the WEV study, there is an ordinal variable that measures the number of the respondent's friends who have spent time in prison; it has the following response options: 0 = none, 1 = a few, 2 = half, 3 = most, and 4 = all. As this variable ranges from 0 to 4 and has a mean of 2, I treat it as a continuous variable. A comparison of means shows a marginally significant association of this variable only with the dependent variable that measures injuries to a woman in the IPV incident. That is to say, in incidents involving women who reported having more friends in prison, the women were more likely to be injured than in incidents involving women with fewer criminal friends (Table 4.8).

***Relationship Correlates of IPV Dynamics***

*Length of relationships*

Length of the relationships in the sample of IPV incidents ranges from 1 to 376 months with a mean of 61 months (about 5 years). Comparison of means suggests that incidents involving people in shorter relationships are characterized predominantly by mutual and female-only violence, while incidents involving people in longer relationships appear to be associated with male-only violence (Table 4.7). In incidents between partners in shorter relationships, women seem more likely to react violently in response to the first attack than in incidents between those in longer relationships (Table 4.6). This implies that in incidents involving partners in longer relationships women are likely to put up with their partners' violence, i.e., deescalate rather than use violence in response to partners' initial violent attack. It is also possible that mutually abusive relationships do not last long, particularly if partners have the opportunity to end this relationship (e.g., are not constrained by serious economic issues). These findings seem not to be consistent with a recent study of bidirectional violence, which found bidirectional violence to be associated with a longer relationship (Palmetto et al., 2013). However, they may be partially consistent with a study that suggests that relationship length is associated with the increased odds of IPV perpetration separately for males and females; however, this study does not specify the type of IPV (Straus & Ramirez, 2004).

*Relationship dissatisfaction (frequency of quarrels)*

Partners in unhappy and unsatisfactory intimate relationships often experience frequent antagonism and quarrels. In the WEV study women were asked about how often they argued with their partners, i.e., 1 = almost never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, and 4 = almost always. In most of the incidents, respondents reported that they had frequent arguments with their partners, i.e., in over 70% of the incidents respondents reported they argued almost always or often. In contrast, in less than 7% of the incidents respondents reported they almost never argued with their partners.

Incidents, in which women reported frequent quarrels are likely to be characterized by violence perpetrated solely by the male partner rather than by mutual and female-only violence (Table 4.7). In addition, in these incidents, violence is likely to be initiated by male partners (Table 4.5) whereas women's reaction to the initial violence appears to be

deescalation rather than further violence (Table 4.6). Consistent with these findings, relationship dissatisfaction is associated with more injuries to women in these incidents (Table 4.8).

*Control/dominance*

As argued in the previous chapter, in relationships where respondents' contacts with their family and friends are rare, this may indicate that their partners engage in highly controlling behaviour. In the WEV study, respondents were asked about the frequency of their interactions with friends and family after they entered the relationship with the partner (compared to when they were not in that relationship). Response categories were 1 = much more often, 2 = somewhat more often, 3 = no change, 4 = somewhat less often, and 5 = much less often. In about one third of the IPV incidents, respondents reported there were no differences in their frequency of contact and in 10% of the incidents they reported they had more frequent contact while in the relationship. However, in the majority of incidents, respondents had less frequent contacts with family and friends once they established a relationship with their partners (58%). I treat this variable as a continuous variable and interpret it in the following way: a higher score designates greater controlling behaviour by the partner.

As expected, incidents involving controlling male partners tend to be those in which the partner is a sole or dominant perpetrator of the violence or is involved in mutual violence (Table 4.7) often initiated by him (Table 4.5). In addition, women are more likely to be injured in the incidents associated with men's controlling behaviour (Table 4.8). Overall, these findings seem to be consistent with many studies suggesting that violence can be used as a tool for maintaining control and dominance in the relationship.

***Situational Correlates of IPV Dynamics***

*Motivations and reasons*

The primary motive for each of the incidents is measured as a nominal variable. The majority of incidents occurred over some unjust or inappropriate behaviour of the partner

or due to a dispute over sex and/or sexual jealousy. Disputes over alcohol or/and drug abuse and challenges to authority represent the next most prevalent motives for the violence. The remainder of the incidents occurred over money, household, children, and property, and other more incident-specific issues (Table 4.4).

I created dichotomous variables for each of the aforementioned motives, where "1" indicates the presence of the motive and "0" indicates its absence. Two of the six prevalent motives (challenge to authority and unjust behaviour of the partner) appear to be associated with most of the dependent variables. Specifically, challenge to authority tends to be associated with the initial violence by male partners (Table 4.5) and greater injuries to women (Table 4.8). On the other hand, unjust behaviour is more likely to be the motive for initial violence, reactive violence, and violence mainly perpetrated by female respondents, and at the same time, fewer injuries to women (all these associations are marginally significant). Additionally, it appears that incidents about alcohol or drug use are likely to be associated with women's efforts to deescalate the fights (Table 4.6). Contrary to expectations, the IPV incidents started over sexual behaviour or sexual jealousy are not likely to be associated with injuries to women (Table 4.8).

*Alcohol use by respondent and opponent before the incident*

There are two dummy variables in the WEV study that measured if the respondent and the opponent were drinking alcohol before the incident. Based on these variables, I constructed three dichotomous variables that measure whether only the respondent, only the opponent, or both consumed alcohol before the incident. Table 4.4 shows that in 8% of the incidents only respondents drank alcohol and in almost 16% of the incidents only opponents drank alcohol. Both partners drank alcohol in almost one quarter of the incidents.

In incidents in which both partners had consumed alcohol the woman was more likely to have been the only one to use violence and her male partner, on the contrary, was less likely to be a sole perpetrator of violence (Table 4.7). In addition, the incidents in which only the male partner drank alcohol before the incident appear to be associated with

violence against a female partner and mutual violence (initiated by a male partner) rather than female-only violence. Although further analysis failed to identify any significant association between alcohol intake and initiation of violence in the incident, the findings suggest that if the woman was the only one to drink alcohol before the incident she was more likely to escalate in response to her partner's violence (marginal significance, Table 4.6).

*Presence of bystanders*

There is a dichotomous variable in the WEV study that measures the presence of bystanders in each IPV incidence. In almost one quarter of the incidents (24%) bystanders were present. The presence of bystanders during the incident is more often associated with mutual violence (Table 4.7) more often started by women than men (Table 4.5). On the other hand, the presence of third parties seems to deter male-only violence against the female partner (Table 4.7), which is consistent with many studies that suggest that male partners are more likely to perpetrate unilateral violence against their female partners behind closed doors, i.e. with no one else present.

*Weapon use*

The WEV study contains questions about whether a weapon was used by the respondent or the opponent to attack a partner during the incident. Respondents who used weapons primarily used some kind of sharp weapon, e.g., knife, scissors, ice pick, axe, bottle or glass. Consistent with other studies, knives were the most prevalent type of weapon that women used to attack a partner, i.e., knives were mentioned in almost half of all incidents (45%) in which respondents used weapons. Most of the other weapons used by women were some type of blunt object, e.g., rock, club, and blackjack. Opponents who used weapons, on the other hand, used knives only in 19% of the incidents. The other types of weapon used by men were also mainly blunt objects; in only one incident did the opponent use a gun. Two dichotomous variables that I included in the study as independent variables are that respondents (20%) or their male partners (15%) used weapons in the IPV incident.

As shown in Table 4.7, respondents' use of a weapon is more often associated with mutual violence and unilateral violence against male partners. Further analyses identify several significant associations between these variables but the temporal order between the use of weapons and the interactional dynamics of the incidents is not always clear. Each partner seems to be more likely to use a weapon in incidents in which they initiate violence (Table 4.5); what is not known is whether partners were likely to initiate violence more often if they had and were ready to use a weapon. Regarding reactive violence, use of a weapon appears to be associated with the women's escalation of the men's initial violence (Table 4.6). As expected, incidents involving men's use of a weapon are associated with much greater injuries to women than those in which male partners do not use a weapon (Table 4.8).

## 4.5 Discussion

In this section, I focus on several distinct findings in relation to various dimensions of IPV dynamics and a female's part in it in particular. Because the next chapter will distinguish among broader classes/types of IPV incidents, based on different patterns of violent dynamics, it will provide further explanation for some of these findings.

First, the results of the analysis described above highlight *the serious consequences of women's initiation of violence*. Women admitted initiating physical violence in one third of the incidents; and in over half of the incidents (57%) in which women initiated violence, the violence was severe (e.g., women reported using a knife on a partner, kicking, or beating up a partner). At the same time, this also indicates that in almost half of the initial violent attacks by females their violence was minor (e.g., women most often reported slapping, grabbing, and pushing a male partner). Contrary to the expectations drawn from other research suggesting that male partners are likely to ignore or laugh rather than reciprocate women's initial, in particular, minor violence (e.g., Miller & White, 2003), my study shows that male partners responded violently in over half of these cases (51%). Moreover, this violent dynamic resulted in injuries to women in 41% of the incidents in which women initiated minor violence, and in 32% of the incidents in

which women used severe violence (difference is not significant). These findings highlight the potential danger to women of initiating even minor violence toward their partners (Straus, 2005). Nevertheless, women's violence, in particular minor or "ordinary" forms, such as slapping or pushing, is often seen as an innocuous way for women to express their anger and frustration and not as an element of violent dynamics that increases their chances of injury and death (Straus, 2005).

Second, these results also reveal several *salient motives for violence in IPV incidents*. Some of these motives are gender-specific and some are similar for both male and female partners. The motives that are associated with violence initiated by women are unfair or unjust treatment (e.g., men ignored women' needs and laughed at their concerns), issues about housing (e.g., women became violent if partners tried to evict them from the property), fear of losing custody of their children or that a partner will take or hurt their children. The women's emotions that appeared to prevail in these incidents were anger and fear. For example, a woman reported yelling at a partner who was laughing in response, so that she got very angry and "…just grabbed the knife and tried to stab him in the chest, but he hopped over the couch and I got his foot". It is noteworthy, that this motive often has been associated with homicide perpetrated by men (e.g., Katz, 1988; Polk, 1994). At the same time, this gender-specific motive for women's violence in this study, i.e., perceived disrespect and humiliation from a male partner, has also been documented in other studies of women's violence (e.g., Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006; Miller & White, 2003). Incidents in which men initiated violence against a female partner were most often associated with a challenge to their authority, especially if a woman challenged a partner's decision in the presence of his friends. However, in many incidents the motives were similar for both women's and men's initiation of violence, e.g., sexual jealousy, issues about alcohol and drugs, and issues about money.

Third, this chapter reveals *a diversity of the motives for women's reactive violence*. Women reported reacting with violence in response to men's initial violence in almost a third of the incidents (31%). In the majority of these incidents (74%) men's first attack was in the form of severe violence, i.e., women reported that their partners punched them

in the head, kicked, pushed them off the stairs resulting in injuries, etc. Until recently, it was commonly believed that most of women's violence against an intimate partner was explained by self-defence. However, reading through the narratives suggests that there are at least four main reasons for women reacting to men's initiation of violence with violence, i.e., retaliation/anger response (44%), followed by self-defence (31%), contestation of power (21%), and restraining violence (3%). These findings are consistent with other studies that have identified the diversity of motives for women's use of violence against an intimate partner (e.g., Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006).

Next, findings in this chapter suggest that one of the salient characteristics of the incidents described by incarcerated women in my study is a prevailing sense of the normality of violence by women engaged in it or what I term *habituation to violence*. The incident below illustrates it.

> We were just drinking and arguing [I don't remember what the argument was about] and I just threw a beer bottle at his head. I just threw it and it went in the wall - got stuck there in the wall…it was just kinda hanging there. We laughed, though…that's when we got along (ID 103/17).

In another incident, a woman describes attacking her partner with a knife and actually cutting his hand in response to her partner's violence. But injuries to a partner and the potential danger to the woman do not seem to restrain the partners from having another beer together.

> I was in the hospital for 2 weeks for psych care. I come home and got my welfare cheque for $490. We (respondent and partner) bought some beer, we were sitting around drinking. He called me names - fat and ugly - he was drunk and he gets assholish when he's drinking and he close fist punched me. I got an instant black eye. So I hit him back and then he just kept it up and I just grabbed the knife and I stabbed him. I'd had enough. That's it that's all. The knife was on the TV. We were outside on the carport - there was an empty TV- there was no guts in it. He

> saw me coming with the knife and he put his arms up and I stabbed him in the forearm. He called me a fucking bitch and he wrapped his arm up and then he sat back down and had another beer with me… (ID 312/136)

The sense of normality of violence also emerged from the incidents in which women, after incidents of severe violence, would continue relationships with their male partners. The incident below illustrates this situation.

> We were verbally arguing and then I smacked him in the face and then I ran. He got me so I sat down on the couch in the living room. He threw a full bottle of root beer at me. I remember seeing stars so I think it almost knocked me out. I went to the phone and he jumped in the truck and left. I told him never to come back. We stayed broken up for two weeks and then I took him back like a fucking idiot (ID 159/86)

One of the explanations for the apparent normality of violence in women's intimate relationships stems from what is known as assortative mating, according to which women seem to be likely to date and get into relationships with the men who are similar to them in their attitudes to violence. Hence, risk factors in common to both partners can increase the likelihood of mutual violence in these couples (Carbone-Lopez & Kruttschnitt, 2010; Palmetto et al., 2013).

Finally, this chapter contributes to the literature on the dimension of IPV incidents related to the *unilateral versus mutual violence*. First of all, my study identifies the prevalence of IPV incidents with unilateral violence against the female partner, i.e., 49% of all incidents in my study. The incidents with the mutual physical violence presented the next most common scenario (37%); and in the rest of the narratives (15%) women described themselves as the sole perpetrator of physical violence. Contrary to evidence from a growing number of studies discussed in chapter 3, mutuality of IPV was not the most prevalent pattern of interactional dynamics in this sample of IPV incidents. The explanation for this discrepancy likely lies in the nature of the WEV sample. That is to

say, incarcerated women who self-selected for the WEV study were instructed to report incident(s) of the severe violence that they could remember distinctly as individual episodes; they were not told to focus specifically on incidents in which they perpetrated IPV. Given the propensity of individuals to see the source of their own aggressive behaviour in the violent behaviour of their partners (Winstok, Eisikovitz, & Gelles, 2002) and given that people are more likely to remember incidents in which they experience injuries and insults compared to incidents in which they inflict harm on others, women in the WEV study might have been prone to remember and report incidents in which their partners (predominantly men) were solely and/or initially violent. In addition, in a "clinical" sample (the one I have in my study), the gender balance consistency usually favours men as perpetrators and women as victims. However, because my study aims to examine the intra-incident dynamics of IPV and the factors that contribute to different types of violent incidents, it does not require the sample of incidents to be representative of IPV across the relationship over time. At the same time, additional analysis of the items of the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al., 1996) in the WEV study, in fact, suggests that mutual violence is the predominant pattern across the respondents' relationships over time, which is consistent with other IPV studies. Please see Appendix 1 for a detailed description of these findings.

In addition, findings in this chapter suggest a fairly complex set of associations between unilateral or mutual violence in IPV incidents and injuries to partners. First, one-sided violence can be fairly dangerous to the other partner, a man or a woman. These findings seem to be in line with studies that suggest that unilateral violence (i.e., where only one partner, male or female, is violent) is associated with more severe consequences for the involved parties than bidirectional violence (Swan & Snow, 2003; Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994). At the same time, our study points at the danger of mutual or bidirectional violence for both partners, especially for women; i.e., in 66% of incidents with mutual violence women were injured compared to 39% of incidents of mutual violence in which men were injured. This finding seems consistent with other set of studies (Caetano et al., 2005; Capaldi, Kim, & Shortt, 2007; Palmetto et al., 2013; Whitaker et al., 2007). A large proportion of cases in which women used violence to

protect themselves can explain this finding. Moreover, forceful physical self-protective behaviours have been found to increase the probability of injury to women (Powers & Simpson, 2012).

## 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter described all variables in this study and also reported and discussed statistically significant bivariate relationships between the dependent variables that measure the dimensions of IPV dynamics in the incident and individual, relationship, and situational variables. However, first, I described characteristics of the women in my sample and, in particular, characteristics of the IPV incidents, because the IPV incident is the unit of analysis in my study. Then I presented descriptive statistics for all dependent and independent variables in my study and discussed the bivariate relationships among them in the light of the existing IPV literature. My study revealed some salient characteristics of the IPV incidents and especially women's part in them through the analysis of the main dimensions of violent dynamics. I discussed these findings at the conclusion to this chapter. In the next chapter, I will use the separate dimensions of violent dynamics in IPV incidents (identified in Chapters 3 and 4) to differentiate among main classes of IPV incidents based on the patterns of violent dynamics. By doing this, I hope to identify more general or aggregate types of violence in the intimate relationships of at-risk incarcerated women that can advance future research and be relevant for more nuanced and evidence-based policy responses.

Table 4.5. *Bivariate relationships between the dependent variable "Initiation of violence" and independent variables*

| Independent variables | Initiation of violence | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Man N=197 | Woman N=98 | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 33.4 | 32.4 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 37.2 | 36.1 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 25.0% | 75.0% | ** |
| Not Black | 67.9% | 32.1% | |
| White | 68.8% | 31.2% | *ns* |
| Not White | 58.6% | 41.4% | |
| Aboriginal | 61.9% | 38.1% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 67.6% | 32.4% | |
| Other/Mixed | 75.0% | 25.0% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 66.6% | 33.4% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 65.0% | 35.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 68.2% | 31.8% | |
| White | 66.5% | 33.5% | *ns* |
| Not White | 71.1% | 28.9% | |
| Aboriginal | 72.2% | 27.8% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 67.4% | 32.6% | |
| Other/Mixed | 83.3% | 16.7% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 66.7% | 33.3% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 62.8% | 37.2% | , |
| High school and higher | 71.8% | 28.2% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 64.2% | 35.8% | *ns* |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 68.1% | 31.9% | |
| Father approved of violence | 69.7% | 30.3% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 67.7% | 32.3% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 1.4 | 2.3 | * |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 60.6% | 39.4% | * |
| No violence toward a stranger | 72.5% | 27.5% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in years) | 20.6 | 18.7 | * |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 2.1 | 2.0 | *ns* |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 63.9 | 53.8 | *ns* |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 -* | 3.0 | 2.8 | ** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *almost always)* | | | |
| Respondent's frequency of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.8 | 3.6 | * |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 57.4% | 42.6% | ' |
| (0) | 69.2% | 30.8% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 68.3% | 31.7% | *ns* |
| (0) | 65.6% | 34.4% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 67.4% | 32.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 66.7% | 33.3% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 92.1% | 7.9% | *** |
| (0) | 63.0% | 37.0% | |
| Money (1) | 60.9% | 39.1% | *ns* |
| (0) | 67.3% | 32.7% | |
| Household, kids, responsibilities (1) | 53.3% | 46.7% | *ns* |
| (0) | 67.5% | 32.5% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 54.5% | 45.5% | *ns* |
| (0) | 67.8% | 32.2% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 76.6% | 23.4% | *ns* |
| (0) | 64.9% | 35.1% | |
| Both (1) | 61.4% | 38.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 68.4% | 31.6% | |
| Bystanders were present | 59.2% | 40.8% | ' |
| Bystanders were not present | 69.2% | 30.8% | |
| *Injuries*[a] | | | |
| Respondent was injured (1) | 71.6% | 35.7% | *** |
| (0) | 28.4% | 64.3% | |
| Opponent was injured (1) | 12.2% | 43.9% | *** |
| (0) | 87.8% | 56.1% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used weapon (1) | 13.7% | 33.7% | *** |
| (0) | 86.3% | 66.3% | |
| Opponent used weapon (1) | 17.8% | 9.2% | * |
| (0) | 82.2% | 90.8% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

[a] For variables "Injuries" and "Weapon use in the incident", percentages have been calculated based on each of the categories of the dependant variable taken for 100% because they are likely to be endogenous to the situation.

Table 4.6. *Bivariate relationships between women's reaction to initial violence and independent variables (n=197)*

| Independent variables | Women's reaction to partners' initial violence | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Deescalation (no violence) N=136 | Escalation (any violence) N=61 | *Sig* |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 34.0 | 32.1 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 37.4 | 36.7 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 100% | 0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 68.7% | 31.3% | |
| White | 73.8% | 26.2% | ** |
| Not White | 47.1% | 52.9% | |
| Aboriginal | 38.5% | 61.5% | *** |
| Not Aboriginal | 73.7% | 26.3% | |
| Other/Mixed | 66.7% | 33.3% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 69.1% | 30.9% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 69.2% | 30.8% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 70.1% | 29.9% | |
| White | 71.2% | 28.8% | *ns* |
| Not White | 66.7% | 33.3% | |
| Aboriginal | 46.2% | 53.8% | * |
| Not Aboriginal | 71.7% | 28.3% | |
| Other/Mixed | 80.0% | 20.0% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 69.1% | 30.9% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 61.2% | 38.8% | ** |
| High school and higher | 77.7% | 22.3% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 59.6% | 40.4% | , |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 72.7% | 27.3% | |
| Father approved of violence | 64.2% | 35.8% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 66.4% | 33.6% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 1.1 | 2.3 | ** |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 54.7% | 45.3% | *** |
| No violence toward a stranger | 80.2% | 19.8% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in years) | 21.5 | 18.8 | * |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 2.0 | 2.2 | *ns* |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Length of relationship (in months) | 72.3 | 46.2 | ** |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 3.1 | 2.8 | * |
| Respondent's frequency of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.9 | 3.8 | *ns* |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 57.1% | 42.9% | ' |
| (0) | 71.6% | 28.4% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 69.2% | 30.8% | *ns* |
| (0) | 69.0% | 31.0% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 87.1% | 12.9% | * |
| (0) | 65.7% | 34.3% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 60.0% | 40.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 71.0% | 29.0% | |
| Money (1) | 71.4% | 28.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 68.9% | 31.1% | |
| Household, kids, responsibilities (1) | 62.5% | 37.5% | *ns* |
| (0) | 69.3% | 30.7% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 50.0% | 50.0% | ' |
| (0) | 70.3% | 29.7% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 69.4% | 30.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 68.9% | 31.1% | |
| Both (1) | 62.8% | 37.2% | *ns* |
| (0) | 70.8% | 29.2% | |
| Bystanders were present | 59.5% | 40.5% | *ns* |
| Bystanders were not present | 71.6% | 28.4% | |
| *Injuries*[a] | | | |
| Respondent was injured (1) | 72.8% | 68.9% | *ns* |
| (0) | 27.2% | 31.1% | |
| Opponent was injured (1) | 0.7% | 37.7% | *** |
| (0) | 99.3% | 62.3% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used weapon (1) | 5.9% | 31.1% | *** |
| (0) | 94.1% | 68.9% | |
| Opponent used weapon (1) | 17.6% | 18.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 82.4% | 82.0% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

[a] For variables "Injuries" and "Weapon use in the incident", percentages have been calculated based on each of the categories of the dependant variable taken for 100% because they are likely to be endogenous to the situation.

Table 4.7. *Bivariate relationships between the dependent variable "Use of violence" and the independent variables (N = 295)*

| Independent variables | Use of Violence | | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Man sole perpetrator (48.5%) | Woman sole perpetrator (14.6%) | Both used violence (36.9%) | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 34.1 | 32.8 | 31.9 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 37.3 | 37.6 | 36.9 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | | |
| Black | 12.5% | 25.0% | 62.5% | |
| Not Black | 49.5% | 14.3% | 36.2% | ' |
| White | 52.3% | 14.3% | 33.3% | |
| Not White | 32.8% | 15.5% | 51.7% | * |
| Aboriginal | 31.0% | 14.3% | 54.8% | |
| Not Aboriginal | 51.4% | 14.6% | 34.0% | * |
| Other/Mixed | 62.5% | 12.5% | 25.0% | |
| Not Other/Mixed | 48.1% | 14.6% | 37.3% | *ns* |
| *Opponent's race* | | | | |
| Black | 50.0% | 12.5% | 37.5% | |
| Not Black | 49.4% | 14.3% | 36.3% | *ns* |
| White | 49.8% | 13.9% | 36.4% | |
| Not White | 48.7% | 14.5% | 36.8% | *ns* |
| Aboriginal | 27.8% | 16.7% | 55.6% | |
| Not Aboriginal | 50.9% | 13.9% | 35.2% | *ns* |
| Other/Mixed | 66.7% | 16.7% | 16.7% | |
| Not Other/Mixed | 48.3% | 13.9% | 37.8% | *ns* |
| *Respondent's education* | | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 40.2% | 17.1% | 42.7% | |
| High school and higher | 58.8% | 11.5% | 29.8% | ** |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 37.0% | 16.0% | 46.9% | |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 53.4% | 13.7% | 32.8% | * |
| Father approved of violence | 44.7% | 15.8% | 39.5% | |
| Father disapproved of violence | 50.3% | 11.4% | 38.3% | *ns* |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 4.1 | 5.6 | 7.1 | ** |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 36.6% | 16.9% | 46.5% | |
| No violence toward a stranger | 59.5% | 12.4% | 28.1% | *** |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in years) | 21.3 | 18.3 | 18.9 | * |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 2.0 | 1.8 | 2.2 | *ns* |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 72.8 | 55.6 | 47.1 | ** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 3.1 | 2.9 | 3.0 | *** |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.7 | * |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 36.1% | 18.0% | 45.9% | ' |
| (0) | 51.7% | 13.7% | 34.6% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 46.6% | 20.7% | 32.8% | *ns* |
| (0) | 48.9% | 13.1% | 38.0% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 56.5% | 8.7% | 34.8% | *ns* |
| (0) | 47.0% | 15.7% | 37.3% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 60.5% | 5.3% | 34.2% | *ns* |
| (0) | 46.7% | 16.0% | 37.4% | |
| Money (1) | 56.5% | 13.0% | 30.4% | *ns* |
| (0) | 47.8% | 14.7% | 37.5% | |
| Household, kids, responsibilities (1) | 33.3% | 13.3% | 53.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 49.3% | 14.6% | 36.1% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 40.9% | 9.1% | 50.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 49.1% | 15.0% | 35.9% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 53.2% | 4.3% | 42.6% | ' |
| (0) | 47.6% | 16.5% | 35.9% | |
| Both (1) | 37.1% | 21.4% | 41.4% | * |
| (0) | 52.0% | 12.4% | 35.6% | |
| Bystanders were present | 33.8% | 15.5% | 50.7% | ** |
| Bystanders were not present | 53.1% | 14.3% | 32.6% | |
| *Injuries*[a] | | | | |
| Respondent was injured (1) | 72.0% | 2.3% | 66.1% | *** |
| (0) | 28.0% | 97.7% | 33.9% | |
| Opponent was injured (1) | 0.7% | 53.5% | 39.4% | *** |
| (0) | 99.3% | 46.5% | 60.6% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | | |
| Respondent used weapon (1) | 5.6% | 30.2% | 35.8% | *** |
| (0) | 94.4% | 69.8% | 64.2% | |
| Opponent used weapon (1) | 18.9% | 7.0% | 12.8% | *ns* |
| (0) | 81.1% | 93.0% | 87.2% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

[a] For variables "Injuries" and "Weapon use in the incident", percentages have been calculated based on each of the categories of the dependant variable taken for 100% because they are likely to be endogenous to the situation.

Table 4.8. *Bivariate relationships between injuries to a woman and independent variables*

| Independent variables | Injures to a woman | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | No injuries N=119 (40.3%) | Was injured N=176 (59.7%) | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 32.6 | 33.4 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 37.1 | 36.7 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 25.0% | 75.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 40.8% | 59.2% | |
| White | 40.9% | 59.1% | *ns* |
| Not White | 37.9% | 62.1% | |
| Aboriginal | 35.7% | 64.3% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 41.1% | 58.9% | |
| Other/Mixed | 62.5% | 37.5% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 39.7% | 60.3% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 35.0% | 65.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 40.8% | 59.2% | |
| White | 40.7% | 59.3% | *ns* |
| Not White | 38.2% | 61.8% | |
| Aboriginal | 50.0% | 50.0% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 39.3% | 60.7% | |
| Other/Mixed | 33.3% | 66.7% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 40.0% | 59.6% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 44.5% | 55.5% | , |
| High school and higher | 35.1% | 64.9% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 40.7% | 59.3% | *ns* |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 39.7% | 60.3% | |
| Father approved of violence | 39.5% | 60.5% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 38.3% | 61.7% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 1.8 | 1.6 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 45.8% | 54.2% | , |
| No violence toward a stranger | 35.3% | 64.7% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in years) | 19.0 | 20.6 | ' |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 1.9 | 2.1 | ' |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 61.5 | 60.0 | *ns* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 2.7 | 3.1 | *** |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.6 | 3.8 | ' |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 49.2% | 50.8% | ' |
| (0) | 38.0% | 62.0% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 51.7% | 48.3% | * |
| (0) | 37.6% | 62.4% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 32.6% | 67.4% | *ns* |
| (0) | 41.8% | 58.2% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 26.3% | 73.7% | * |
| (0) | 42.4% | 57.6% | |
| Money (1) | 34.8% | 65.2% | *ns* |
| (0) | 40.8% | 59.2% | |
| Household, kids, responsibilities (1) | 26.7% | 73.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 41.1% | 58.9% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 50.0% | 50.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 39.6% | 60.4% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 38.3% | 61.7% | *ns* |
| (0) | 40.7% | 59.3% | |
| Both (1) | 44.3% | 55.7% | *ns* |
| (0) | 39.1% | 60.9% | |
| Bystanders were present | 45.1% | 54.9% | *ns* |
| Bystanders were not present | 38.8% | 61.2% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used weapon (1) | 48.3% | 51.7% | *ns* |
| (0) | 38.3% | 61.7% | |
| Opponent used weapon (1) | 20.5% | 79.5% | ** |
| (0) | 43.8% | 56.2% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

# Chapter 5
# Classes of IPV Incidents Based on Different Patterns of Violent Dynamics: Descriptive Statistics, Bivariate Associations and Multivariate Analyses

## 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the results from my analyses that aimed to identify classes of IPV incidents based on patterns of violent dynamics. For this, I build upon the findings from the previous chapters, which described dimensions of violence in an IPV incident.

Evidence suggests that IPV is a dynamic and heterogeneous phenomenon, as opposed to a static and unitary type of violence (e.g., Johnson, 2008). However, to date, most scholarship on different types of IPV has focused on violent couples (Olson, 2004) or violent individuals (Dutton, 2007; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994) rather than on the internal dynamics of violent events or IPV situations (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Collins, 2008; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). Therefore, the questions that guide this chapter are whether and how many classes of IPV incidents can be identified based on an analysis of interactional and situational dynamics; and, if so, to what extent these classes correspond to the types of violence found in earlier studies.

I begin by introducing the latent class analysis used to distinguish among salient types of partner violence. I then provide descriptive statistics for each of the four classes of IPV incidents identified by the latent class analysis, as well as examples of narratives that illustrate these classes of incidents. This is followed by a discussion of bivariate relationships and multivariate models for each latent class to identify their association with different aspects of women's lives, relationships and characteristics. To conclude, I discuss the main findings from my analysis in the context of the literature on various types of IPV.

## 5.2 Latent Class Analysis and Descriptive Statistics for the Classes of IPV Incidents

***Latent Class Analysis (LCA)***

In order to capture the patterns of violent dynamics in IPV incidents, I used the LCA. The discrete dependent variables that I used to identify the classes of IPV incidents are the initiation of violence by the woman or the man, violent or non-violent reaction to the initial partner's violence, use of violence in the incident, and the injury to each partner. First, I specified and ran a 2-class model and repeated it with models based on 3, 4 and 5 classes. The goodness of fit statistics, which are used to identify the optimal model, are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. *Goodness of fit statistics of the models in the latent class analysis.*

| Number of classes | $L^2$ | df | P-value | BIC | Bootstrapped LRT, p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| II | 365.783 | 111 | 0.0001 | 1892.145 | 0.0001 |
| III | 163.108 | 104 | 0.0002 | 1699.598 | 0.0001 |
| **IV** | **21.638** | **96** | **1.0000** | **1578.254** | **0.0001** |
| V | 14.1410 | 88 | 1.0000 | 1590.883 | 0.2667 |

Based on these statistics, the model with four classes presents the best model. Specifically, this model has a non-significant likelihood ratio chi-square statistic ($L^2$) ($p>.05$) (the larger the indicator the poorer the model fits the data), the lowest BIC (in MPlus this indicator is typically positive), and a significant p-value of the bootstrapped LRT (which indicates the improvement of a model over a previous model). Additionally, the model with four classes seems to be useful (the second criterion for the optimal model) because the classes it identifies make sense and are consistent with my expectations. MPlus also produced a table of item-response probabilities, which indicates the likelihood that IPV incidents in a given class reflect a particular type of violent dynamics (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2. *Latent class and conditional probabilities*

| Observed indicators | Classes of IPV incidents based on patterns of violent dynamics | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | II | III | IV |
| *Initiation of violence* | | | | |
| Man initiated | 0.994 | 0.000 | 1.000 | 0.000 |
| Woman initiated | 0.006 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 1.000 |
| *Man's reaction to initial violence* | | | | |
| No violence (deescalation) | 1.000 | 0.976 | 1.000 | 0.025 |
| Any violence (escalation) | 0.000 | 0.024 | 0.000 | 0.975 |
| *Woman's reaction to initial violence* | | | | |
| No violence (deescalation) | 0.948 | 1.000 | 0.040 | 1.000 |
| Any violence (escalation) | 0.052 | 0.000 | 0.960 | 0.000 |
| *Man's use of violence in the incident* | | | | |
| No violence | 0.000 | 0.872 | 0.036 | 0.000 |
| Any violence | 1.000 | 0.128 | 0.964 | 1.000 |
| *Woman's use of violence in the incident* | | | | |
| No violence | 0.957 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.143 |
| Any violence | 0.043 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 0.857 |
| *Injuries to the man* | | | | |
| Not injured | 1.000 | 0.464 | 0.571 | 0.644 |
| Injured | 0.000 | 0.536 | 0.429 | 0.356 |
| *Injuries to the woman* | | | | |
| Not injured | 0.279 | 0.973 | 0.310 | 0.327 |
| Injured | 0.721 | 0.027 | 0.690 | 0.673 |
| Latent Class Probability | 0.485 | 0.159 | 0.186 | 0.169 |

In addition, it indicates the size of each latent class, in terms of the proportion of incidents expected to fit within the class. These probabilities provide the basis for labeling the classes, which will be discussed below. Table 5.3 describes the four identified classes of IPV incidents. Below I present descriptive information for each of these four classes of IPV incidents.

Table 5.3. *Descriptive statistics of the latent variable with four classes of IPV incidents (N=295)*

| Classes of IPV incidents | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| I. Incidents with men as dominant perpetrators | 143 | 48.5 |
| II. Incidents with women as dominant perpetrators | 47 | 15.9 |
| III. Incidents with mutual violence initiated by men | 55 | 18.6 |
| IV. Incidents with mutual violence initiated by women | 50 | 16.9 |
| Total | 295 | 100.0 |

***Descriptive Statistics on the Classes of IPV Incidents***

*Class 1: Violent incidents in which women are targets of violence*. This class, in which men tended to be dominant perpetrators and women primarily targets of violence, contains almost half of all IPV incidents in my study (49%). Based on the conditional probabilities (Table 5.2), almost all IPV incidents in this class were initiated by men (99%), in response to which women typically attempted to deescalate and refrained from violence; however, despite this, women sustained injuries in over two thirds of the incidents (72%) in this class. Additional analysis suggests that in Class 1 incidents the men's initial violence was severe (i.e., punching, kicking, beating) in 76% of the cases, and women needed medical treatment in almost half (40%) of these cases. The majority of the injuries that women reported in this class of incidents were broken bones and teeth knocked out (23%), being knocked unconscious (10%), and stab wounds (6%). Internal injuries and injuries to breasts and genitalia were reported in four incidents. All of these injuries appear to occur simultaneously with other less severe injuries, i.e., bruises, cuts, scratches and black eye. Women did not use any violence in this class of incidents and, not surprisingly, men were not injured.

Most of Class 1 incidents started with conflicts over alcohol/drugs (20%), sex/jealousy (19%), and challenges to authority (17%). In the majority of these incidents men were likely to use physical force rather than a weapon to attack the female partner. In terms of alcohol intake before the incident, in 20% of the incidents both partners consumed alcohol and in 18% of the incidents only male partners were likely to drink before

violence occurred. Only in seven incidents (5%) women were drinking solely before violence happened. In Class 1 incidents, violence mainly occurred indoors (79%) during the day and in the evening hours with bystanders present in 18% of cases. Law enforcement was involved in 20% of cases. The following two narratives illustrate the type of incidents in this class:

> We had been separated and were talking about getting back together. He was drinking and we started discussing his ex-girlfriend. I said that if he wanted her as a part of his life that he should introduce me to her. Well, he just lost it … So he started punching me in the head. He was boxing my head. I thought he was going to knock me unconscious he hit me so many times. Then he pulled a knife out… He held it to my throat and he said that he was going to kill me, I begged him to stop and he did. He would calm down and I thought it was over with, but then he would start again. This went on for about three hours… (ID 198/125)

> I told him that I wasn't getting my morphine any more - he had asked me to sell it - he came into the house one day and I was sleeping. He shouted at me to get the fuck out of bed and he asked me if there was anything that I wanted to tell him. Somehow I knew that he knew about the morphine. I told him that I was getting the morphine and that I had lied to him before about not getting it. Then he punched me and I fell down and I went to cover my head with my hands and he just kicked the shit out of my fingers - 2 of them got broken - after a while of getting kicked in the head it ended. He took my morphine (ID 185/110).

*Class 2: Violent incidents in which women are dominant perpetrators*. Class 2 IPV incidents mirror those in Class 1, in that women unilaterally perpetrated violence against their male partners. This class contains 16% of the IPV incidents in my sample. Not only did women initiate the violence, they also did so by using severe violence most of the time (70% of incidents in this class). Women reported using a knife in 13% of these incidents, other sharp objects (e.g., scissors, ice pick, axe) in 6% of these cases, and in the

rest of the incidents they kicked, pushed, and threw things that injured their male partners.

Men deescalated in almost all of the incidents (98%) in this class by trying different strategies; e.g., in 26% of the incidents, male partners passively endured beatings, in 24% of the cases they were injured and could not resist, in almost 20% of the incidents men tried verbal reasoning with the female partner, and in 7% of the incidents men called for help. Although men refrained from using any violence during the entire incident (not just in the beginning of the incident) in 87% of the cases in this class, in over one half of these incidents men were injured (54%). Most of the injuries were bruises, black eyes, cuts and scratches (72%), broken bones or teeth (24%), and stab wounds (20%), and these injuries often overlapped. In two incidents women reported inflicting internal injuries on their male partners and in the one incident the respondent knocked her partner unconscious. In one third of the incidents in which men were injured, they received medical help or were hospitalized.

The descriptive analysis of the situational characteristics associated with Class 2 of IPV incidents suggests that in a third of these cases both partners had consumed alcohol before the incident; in two cases only the woman consumed alcohol and in two other cases only male partners consumed alcohol. The analysis of the motives for these incidents suggests that a quarter of these cases were about sex and sexual jealousy (28%), followed by the unjust behaviour of the partner (19%), issues over alcohol or drugs (11%), and conflicts over household issues, children and property (9%). Almost half of these incidents occurred in the evening time (43%) with bystanders present in a third of these cases (32%). Law enforcement became involved in just a quarter of these incidents (23%). The following two narratives describe the violent dynamics in this class of IPV incidents.

> I knew he was lying (about talking back with his ex-girlfriend) so I decided to take his cell phone and hide it and he was supposed to be leaving to go to work and he was late looking for his cell phone … I was really furious… I went to turn

> on the power on the phone then the phone proceeded to ring… I could see from the call display that it was the ex-girlfriend's number. I started shoving him and pushing him and asking him how could he do this to me. Then he started laughing. I felt very offended… I went into the kitchen and I took a knife out of the knife block… He put his hands up to block the knife and that's when I stabbed him with the knife in his hand. His hand started to bleed … Then I ran out of the house. I just took off. I didn't feel any compassion when I seen him bleeding …I was so angry. I could have done a lot more damage. I knew that he wouldn't retaliate. If I were a man, he would retaliate. If he were with any other woman he wouldn't have to put up with abuse. I'm just really abusive (ID 153/76).

> I believe we had been having a drink or two and I think my brother had called … and hung up the phone on Tim (my partner). So I think I got mad at Tim wondering what he had said that would make my brother hang up the phone. I got angry because Tim was kind of teasing and sarcastic about my brother. We had some back and forth conversation (Tim and respondent). I turned into a Jekyll and Hyde - I started shouting and then insults and swearing. We had been drinking. Tim might have said something mean about my brother, but he wasn't leading the verbal fight - I was getting worked up on my own. Tim had been putting up a light fixture and there was a screwdriver there. The next thing Tim knew I was attacking him with a screwdriver. There were 2 puncture wounds on this left shoulder. Tim grabbed the screwdriver. I was still yelling and the neighbours called the police. Tim was telling me to shut up and calm down. That was the 2nd incident. I didn't end up with any bruising or anything like that. Tim didn't fight back (ID 540/197).

*Classes 3 and 4: Incidents with mutual violence*. The two remaining classes of IPV incidents, which comprise a similar number of incidents, are characterized by mutual violence in which both partners appear to be actively engaged. The difference between these two classes reflects who initiates violence, the man or the woman. In Class 3, which contains 19% of IPV incidents, men initiate violence, to which women reciprocate or

escalate in almost all of these cases (96%). These incidents of violence are associated with injuries to both men (43%) and women (69%). The remaining class of mutual violence -- Class 4 -- contains 17% of the incidents, in which women initiated the violence and men responded to it with violence. Notably, in about two thirds of these incidents women received injuries (67%) and in one third of cases men were injured (36%). Therefore, regardless of who started the violence in these cases of mutual violence, women were substantially more likely to be injured than men.

These two classes of incidents share many situational characteristics. For example, incidents in both classes are likely to happen indoors and mainly in the evening hours with bystanders present in one third of the incidents. However, there were also some important differences between the classes in the situational characteristics of the incidents. Specifically, women were much more likely to drink alcohol before the incidents of mutual violence that they started (16% and 9% respectively), whereas no such differences were found when men consumed alcohol or when both partners had been drinking. Another salient difference is that the police were much more likely to be involved in the incidents of mutual violence started by men rather than by women. This may be due to the fact that women were more likely to be severely injured in these incidents.

The conflict that precedes the majority of the incidents in both classes appears to be about the unjust behaviour of the other partner; this suggests that anger plays an important role in men's and women's involvement in mutual violence. However, the other prevalent motives indicate gender differences between these two classes of mutually violent incidents. That is, men were likely to initiate violence in these incidents because of sex/jealousy or challenges to their authority, whereas women were likely to start violence in these incidents because of conflicts over drugs/alcohol and money.

The following two narratives illustrate the violent dynamics typical of the class of incidents that involve mutual violence initiated by male partners.

> We were using cocaine and he wouldn't give me any more but he was sitting there doing it in front of me. So I took 2 grams from him and he went to choke and hit me. We had been drinking and so I just grabbed a beer bottle and stabbed him in the head. He stood there yelling and looking at the blood (ID 103/14)

> We were at his (boyfriend) place … It could've been over jealousy on his part ...about another guy that was living in that house. When we were broken up, someone had told him that I had been to that house before. We had both been drinking, so it's hard to remember. I know that he bit me in the arm, because I've got a scar from that. I had a hard time breathing, so I don't know if he kicked me in the chest or if I fell against something. I had a sore chest for a month. I probably punched him a couple of times and pushed him around. I usually fight back. I had bruises on both my arms, from him grabbing me. Pictures were taken of my face, and I had a black eye (ID 109/25).

The next two narratives exemplify mutually violent incidents in which women initiated the violence.

> We were in bed watching tv. He has a thing for Asian women. He thinks they're very exotic. There was this semi-nude movie on tv with some Asian women and he said something like nice teenage tits… So I said shut up and poked at him and shoved him with my elbow. I just kept doing that. I said, "Can you please keep it to yourself". Finally he got fed up and he belted me in the face. All of a sudden blood kept streaming out and I said "you asshole" … I had a huge black eye so didn't go to work for four days (ID 231/246 )

> It started about money (he was paying hefty support payments to an ex-wife), but then everything came up. He had festered all evening about the things that were going on in his head. I slapped him because he started laughing about something that I was pretty serious about and it was just basically a slap on the shoulder. He

> was acting worse than a kid. He was really drunk. He fell down coming up the stairs. When he saw me, he didn't look at me, he looked through me - he knocked me for a loop - I almost lost my balance - when I lifted my hand up and saw the blood, I couldn't believe it - I think he was just as stunned as I was - when he hit me, everything that was in him, came through in that punch - full force - I'd never been hit like that - it was all his frustrations building up (ID 150/70).

## 5.3 Class 1 Incidents (men as dominant perpetrators): Bivariate relationships and results of the multivariate analyses

***Consistency of IPV incidents within individuals***

The unit of analysis in my dissertation is the IPV incident, and the following analyses in this chapter examine the associations of each class of IPV incidents with relevant individual, situational and relationship correlates. However, it is important to discuss how much consistency there is within women with more than one IPV incident in the classes of their incidents. This information will assist in the interpretation of my findings and inform a discussion of the benefits and challenges of different approaches to IPV (i.e., individual- and incident-based approaches).

Of the 135 women in my study, 72 reported more than one incident. Almost two thirds (n = 46) of these 72 women described incidents that fell into a single class of IPV incident or two closely related classes. Most of these women had incidents that all fell into either Class 1 (n = 16 women) or Class 4 (n = 6 women). For women with incidents in more than one class, their incidents often were distributed between two classes with similar dynamics. For example, 13 women reported incidents that were distributed between Classes 1 and 3, a pattern of male-dominant perpetration; and 3 women reported incidents were distributed between Classes 2 and 4, a pattern of female-dominant perpetration. This within-woman consistency in classes of IPV incidents suggests that, despite the potential for considerable variability in the dynamics of IPV incidents, individuals are likely to be involved in IPV incidents that follow a specific pattern.

At the same time, of the women who reported more than one incident of violence, about one third (n = 26) described cases that did not follow the same or a highly consistent pattern. For example, some of these women (n = 16) reported incidents that fell into Class 1 and Class 2 and some other Classes. Although this appears to run counter to my findings about specific patterns of violent dynamics in IPV incidents, it does not and I explain why. First, an examination of violence in these women's relationships measured by the Conflict Tactics Scales (Appendix 1) suggests that all these women experienced mutual or bidirectional violence. As already demonstrated, mutual or bidirectional violence is a characteristic of more than one of the four classes of incidents. These women may still mainly experience one specific type of violent dynamic, while also being involved occasionally in incidents with somewhat different violent dynamics.

Second, lack of perfect within-individual consistency in incident class likely reflects the reality of violent relationships and adds a layer to and helps embrace the complexity of IPV. It suggests that the individual-level analysis of IPV should be supplemented by the incident-level analysis because these two approaches seem to capture somewhat different although overlapping patterns of violent dynamics. Moreover, it would be naïve to think that the four classes of IPV incidents identified here can neatly represent the entire heterogeneity of IPV dynamics. At the same time, these four classes have considerable face validity, are consistent with research on IPV, and appear to represent the most salient forms of IPV dynamics.

***Bivariate relationships***

Before conducting multivariate analyses to identify the individual, relationship, and situational characteristics that are significantly associated with Class 1 incidents, i.e., incidents with men as dominant perpetrators, I first examined the bivariate relationships between this class of incidents, all other classes of IPV incidents combined, and the independent variables. Table 5.4 shows the results of the bivariate analysis and Table 5.5 the results of the binary logistic regression analyses predicting the effect of independent variables on Class 1 IPV incidents, in which women are targets of men's violence.

In Class 1 IPV incidents, at the individual level, women were much more likely to be White and much less likely to be Aboriginal compared to the other three classes of IPV incidents. In addition, women in this class of IPV incidents tended to have higher levels of education and experienced much less violence when they were children than those in the other incidents; their mothers tended to disapprove of violence also more often than mothers of women in other classes of incidents. Moreover, in Class 1 incidents, women who were primarily victims of male partners' violence appeared generally less violent than women in three other classes of IPV incidents, that is, they tended not to be violent toward a stranger and were arrested for the first time at much older ages than women who reported all other classes of IPV incidents.

Relationship characteristics also appear to differentiate the class of IPV incidents in which men are dominant perpetrators from the other three classes of incidents. Specifically, these relationships seem to last longer and women characterize them as more unsatisfactory with a higher frequency of quarrels than the relationships that characterize other classes of IPV incidents. Also, male perpetrators in these relationships seem to exert greater control over women's lives compared to males in the other classes of IPV incidents.

Finally, there are some situational characteristics associated with the class of IPV incidents in which men are unilaterally violent against their female partners. First, these incidents are less likely to happen about unjust behaviour and more likely to occur because of perceived challenges to authority. Also, women in these incidents are much less likely to use a weapon; and they also are more likely to consume alcohol before the incident (either on their own or with their male partners). In addition, these incidents are likely to happen behind closed doors without bystanders, and men are more likely to use a weapon than in other IPV incidents.

Table 5.4. *Bivariate relationships between Class 1 incidents (incidents with men as dominant perpetrators) and all classes of incidents (incidents in which women used violence), and the independent variables (N = 295)*

| Independent variables | Types of violent dynamic in IPV incidents | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Class 1 Incidents with men as dominant perpetrators (48.5%) | Classes 2, 3, and 4 Incidents in which women used violence (51.5%) | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 33.9 | 32.4 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 37.2 | 36.5 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 25.0% | 75.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 49.1% | 50.9% | |
| White | 53.2% | 46.8% | *** |
| Not White | 29.3% | 70.7% | |
| Aboriginal | 23.8% | 76.2% | *** |
| Not Aboriginal | 52.6% | 47.4% | |
| Other/Mixed | 62.5% | 37.5% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 48.1% | 51.9% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 50.0% | 50.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 49.8% | 50.2% | |
| White | 49.8% | 50.2% | *ns* |
| Not White | 50.0% | 50.0% | |
| Aboriginal | 33.3% | 66.7% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 50.9% | 49.1% | |
| Other/Mixed | 66.7% | 33.3% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 48.7% | 51.3% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 42.1% | 57.9% | * |
| High school and higher | 56.5% | 43.5% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 40.7% | 59.3% | ' |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 52.0% | 48.0% | |
| Father approved of violence | 46.1% | 53.9% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 48.5% | 51.5% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 1.2 | 2.2 | ** |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 35.2% | 64.8% | *** |
| No violence toward a stranger | 60.8% | 39.2% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest | 21.1 | 18.9 | * |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (in years) | | | |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 1.9 | 2.1 | *ns* |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 72.1 | 49.9 | ** |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 3.1 | 2.8 | *** |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.9 | 3.6 | * |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 32.8% | 67.2% | ** |
| (0) | 52.6% | 47.4% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 46.6% | 53.4% | *ns* |
| (0) | 48.9% | 51.1% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 60.9% | 39.1% | *ns* |
| (0) | 46.2% | 53.8% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 63.2% | 36.8% | * |
| (0) | 46.3% | 53.7% | |
| Money (1) | 52.2% | 47.8% | *ns* |
| (0) | 48.2% | 51.8% | |
| Household, children responsibilities (1) | 33.3% | 66.7% | *ns* |
| (0) | 49.3% | 50.7% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 31.8% | 68.2% | ' |
| (0) | 49.8% | 50.2% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 53.2% | 46.8% | *ns* |
| (0) | 47.6% | 52.4% | |
| Both (1) | 40.0% | 60.0% | ' |
| (0) | 51.1% | 48.9% | |
| Bystanders were present | 36.6% | 63.4% | * |
| Bystanders were not present | 52.2% | 47.8% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used (1) | 11.7% | 88.3% | *** |
| (0) | 57.9% | 42.1% | |
| Opponent used (1) | 61.4% | 38.6% | ' |
| (0) | 46.2% | 53.8% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

***Multivariate analysis: Binary logistic regression***

I conducted a binary logistic regression analysis to examine the relationships between the independent variables that were found to be significantly related to the dependent variable at the bivariate level and Class 1 IPV incidents in which men are dominant perpetrators of violence (1) versus all other incidents (0). Logistic regression calculates changes in the log odds of the dependent variable. Unlike OLS regression, however, logistic regression does not assume a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, does not require normally distributed variables, does not assume homoscedasticity, and in general has less stringent requirements. It does, however, require that observations are independent and that the independent variables be linearly related to the logit of the dependent variable. Tables with the results of the binary logistic regression for each class of IPV incidents (i.e., Tables 5.5, 5.7, 5.9 and 5.11) show odds ratios (ExpB) and standard errors (S.E.).

***Results of the binary logistic regression for Class 1 IPV incidents***

The results of the binary logistic regression for Class 1 IPV incidents are shown in Table 5.5. In the multivariable analyses, the risk factors were entered in blocks to develop progressively more comprehensive models mirroring their temporal ordering. Block 1 adjusted for the individual, including demographic, variables. Block 2 adjusted for the significant individual variables and relationship risk factors. Block 3 adjusted for the significant individual and relationship risk factors and situational variables. Overall, the explanatory power of the final model improved from Model 1 to Model 3 as indicated by the increase in Nagelkerke's R squared. However, it should be noted that R-squared in logistic regression does not represent an actual percent of variance explained (as $R^2$ in OLS), but as a measure of effect size can still be used to measure the strength of an association.

Independent variables in each block predict the occurrence of Class 1 IPV incidents in which men unilaterally perpetrate violence against their female partners. Among the individual characteristics of women, those who experienced less violence in their lives, both as victims of child abuse and perpetrators of violence against a stranger, were at

greater risk of involvement in incidents in which men unilaterally perpetrated IPV. However, in the final model, only women's experience of abuse in childhood remains statistically significant.[27] The exponentiation of the B coefficient for childhood abuse equals .88, which suggests that each one point increase on the 16 point child abuse victimisation scale reduces the probability that an IPV incident will involve unilateral male violence (as opposed to any of the other three latent classes of IPV incidents) by 12%, controlling for other variables in the model. In other words, women coming from less violent families of origin seem to be at a higher risk for unilateral male's violence, if incidents of violence take place in their relationships.

Among the relationship characteristics, length of relationship is significantly associated with the occurrence of Class 1 incidents in which men are predominant perpetrators of violence. That is, the odds ratio of 1.01 indicates that for each additional month of a relationship's duration, the odds of Class 1 IPV incidents increases by 1%. This may seem like a small odds ratio but it is statistically significant and, for long-standing relationships such as one of 70 months, it would mean a 1% increase for each month, or a total of a 70% increase in the odds of Class 1 IPV incidents compared to a just established relationship.

The coefficient for the frequency of quarrels, which may reflect the women's satisfaction with the relationship, reaches statistical significance in the Model 2, but becomes non-significant in the final model. This may mean that women's lower satisfaction with the relationship is somewhat related to a higher probability of Class 1 incidents, but factors at the situational level mediate this effect.

---

[27] There are several possible explanations for why other individual characteristics did not reach significance in the regression model. First, incarcerated women in my study represent a relatively homogeneous sample compared to women in general population samples. Second, of the 72 women who reported two or more incidents in my study, 45 women reported incidents that were distributed across different classes of IPV incidents, including classes with similar dynamics. Finally, individual characteristics of women can represent a more general propensity to violence rather than a specific type of violent dynamics. The fact that some individual characteristics predict differences between classes of IPV incidents warrants further research.

Finally, several factors at the situational level reduce the probability of Class 1 IPV incidents, i.e., unjust behaviour as a motive for violence (a 51% reduction in the odds ratio), women's use of a weapon (a 93% reduction), and women's sole consumption of alcohol before the incidents (a 65% reduction). In contrast, the odds for men's use of a weapon over the odds for men not using a weapon in Class 1 incidents are 2.94. In terms of percent change, this suggests that the odds for men's use of a weapon in Class 1 incidents are 194% higher than the odds for men not using a weapon. Although some of these associations are not significant at the 0.05 level, the relatively small number of cases means standard errors are larger, thus making it more difficult to find a significant difference between classes of the incidents even when the increases in these characteristics are fairly substantial. Thus, these characteristics may deserve closer scrutiny in future research.

Table 5.5. *Multivariate logistic regression predicting the relationship between Class 1 incidents and independent variables, relative to Classes 2, 3, and 4 incidents*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) |
| *Individual Characteristics* | | | |
| Woman's race: White | 0.93 (.55) | 0.75 (.56) | 0.66 (.64) |
| Woman's race: Aboriginal | 0.37 (.64) | 0.32 (.65)' | 0.54 (.74) |
| Woman's high school and higher | 1.31 (.29) | 1.24 (.30) | 0.93 (.34) |
| Woman's mother approved of violence | 0.88 (.29) | 0.83 (.30) | 1.74 (.35) |
| Frequency of woman's abuse victimisation in childhood | 0.89 (.05)* | 0.89 (.05)* | 0.88 (.06)* |
| Woman was violent toward a stranger | 0.59 (.28)' | 0.76 (.30) | 0.62 (.33) |
| Woman's age at first arrest | 1.01 (.01) | 1.01 (.01) | 1.02 (.02) |
| *Relationship Characteristics* | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | | 1.00 (.002) | 1.01 (.002)** |
| Frequency of quarrels (1- almost never, 4 - almost always) | | 1.42 (.16)* | 1.11 (.18) |
| Woman's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship (1- more often, 5 – much less often) | | 1.05 (.13) | 1.12 (.15) |
| *Situational Characteristics* | | | |
| About unjust behaviour/physical gesture | | | 0.49 (.37)' |
| About challenge to authority | | | 0.93 (.44) |
| Only woman drank alcohol | | | 0.35 (.63)' |
| Both drank alcohol | | | 0.88 (.35) |
| Bystanders were present | | | 0.83 (.38) |
| Women used weapon | | | 0.07 (.52)*** |
| Man used weapon | | | 2.94 (.46)* |
| *Pseudo R Squared* | 0.13 | 0.16 | 0.35 |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

## 5.4 Class 2 Incidents (women as dominant perpetrators): Bivariate relationships and results of the multivariate analyses

***Bivariate relationships***

Table 5.6 provides results of the bivariate analysis of the relationships between Class 2 IPV incidents, in which women were the dominant perpetrators, and the independent variables. In Class 2 IPV incidents women were less likely to complete high school, were arrested first time at an earlier age, and had mothers who approved of violence, compared to the other three classes of IPV incidents. At the same time, in Class 2 incidents, women reported fewer quarrels with their male partners (which may reflect a higher satisfaction with the relationship) and maintained more contacts with their families and friends compared to all other incidents. Finally, these incidents appeared to happen more often over issues around sex or sexual jealousy and not over challenges to authority. In addition, in Class 2 incidents, men were less likely to be the only partner to drink alcohol before the incident than in other incidents. Also, in these incidents women were much more likely whereas their male partners much less likely to use a weapon than in other classes of IPV incidents.

Table 5.6. *Bivariate relationships between Class 2 incidents (where women were the dominant perpetrators) and all other incidents, and the independent variables (N = 295)*

| Independent variables | Types of violent dynamic in IPV incidents | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Class 2 Incidents with women as dominant perpetrators (15.9%) | Classes 1,3, and 4 (84.1%) | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 31.4 | 33.4 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 35.9 | 37.0 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 25.0% | 75.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 15.7% | 84.3% | |
| White | 16.0% | 84.0% | *ns* |
| Not White | 15.5% | 84.5% | |
| Aboriginal | 14.3% | 85.7% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 16.2% | 83.8% | |
| Other/Mixed | 12.5% | 87.5% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 16.0% | 84.0% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 12.5% | 87.5% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 15.9% | 84.1% | |
| White | 16.3% | 83.7% | *ns* |
| Not White | 13.2% | 86.8% | |
| Aboriginal | 16.7% | 83.3% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 15.4% | 84.6% | |
| Other/Mixed | 11.1% | 88.9% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 15.7% | 84.3% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 20.1% | 79.9% | * |
| High school and higher | 10.7% | 89.3% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 21.0% | 79.0% | , |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 13.7% | 86.3% | |
| Father approved of violence | 15.8% | 84.2% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 12.6% | 87.4% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 2.1 | 1.6 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 19.0% | 81.0% | *ns* |
| No violence toward a stranger | 13.1% | 86.9% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in years) | 17.6 | 20.4 | * |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 1.8 | 2.1 | *ns* |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 50.9 | 62.4 | *ns* |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 2.6 | 3.0 | ** |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.5 | 3.8 | * |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 14.8% | 85.2% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.2% | 83.8% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 22.4% | 77.6% | ' |
| (0) | 14.3% | 85.7% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 10.9% | 89.1% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.9% | 83.1% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 5.3% | 94.7% | * |
| (0) | 17.5% | 82.5% | |
| Money (1) | 13.0% | 87.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.2% | 83.8% | |
| Household, children, responsibilities (1) | 26.7% | 73.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 15.4% | 84.6% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 9.1% | 90.9% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.5% | 83.5% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 4.3% | 95.7% | * |
| (0) | 18.1% | 81.9% | |
| Both (1) | 21.4% | 78.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 14.2% | 85.8% | |
| Bystanders were present | 21.1% | 78.9% | *ns* |
| Bystanders were not present | 14.3% | 85.7% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used (1) | 28.3% | 71.7% | ** |
| (0) | 12.8% | 87.2% | |
| Opponent used (1) | 4.5% | 95.5% | * |
| (0) | 17.9% | 82.1% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

***Results of the binary logistic regression for Class 2 IPV incidents***

Results of the multivariate analyses in Table 5.7 suggest that relationship and situational characteristics are more likely than individual characteristics to predict the occurrence of Class 2 IPV incidents. Specifically, more frequent quarrels in the relationships, as reported by female respondents, reduce the odds of this class of incidents by 32%. At the same time, these incidents were significantly more likely to be motivated by conflicts over household issues, children and property, compared to other incidents. Finally, Class 2 incidents were less likely to be characterized by the consumption of alcohol (Exp(B)=0.19) and the use of a weapon (Exp(B)=0.18) by male partners.

Table 5.7. *Multivariate logistic regression predicting the relationship between Class 2 incidents and independent variables, relative to Classes 1, 3, and 4 incidents*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) |
| *Individual Characteristics* | | | |
| Woman's high school and higher | 0.72 (.38) | 0.84 (.39) | 0.83 (.42) |
| Woman's mother approved of violence | 1.31 (.35) | 1.45 (.37) | 1.08 (.40) |
| Woman's age at first arrest | 0.97 (.02) | 0.97 (.02) | 0.96 (.02) |
| *Relationship Characteristics* | | | |
| Frequency of quarrels (1- almost never, 4 - almost always) | | 0.65 (.20)* | 0.68 (.21)' |
| Woman's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship (1- more often, 5 – much less often) | | 0.88 (.17) | 0.97 (.19) |
| *Situational Characteristics* | | | |
| About sex/sexual jealousy | | | 1.50 (.42) |
| About challenge to authority | | | 0.39 (.78) |
| About household, children, property [a] | | | 3.89 (.77)' |
| Only opponent drank alcohol | | | 0.19 (.75)* |
| Women used weapon | | | 1.63 (.43) |
| Man used weapon | | | 0.18 (.79)* |
| *R Square* | 0.03 | 0.08 | 0.19 |

' p ≤ 0.10, * p≤0.05, ** p≤0.01, *** p≤0.001

[a] I included this variable in the multivariate analysis because it seemed to be thematically related to other independent variables, which were found significantly related to the class of incidents, in which women were dominant perpetrators of violence, i.e., quality of relationships (frequency of quarrels) and a lack of interactions with family.

## 5.5 Class 3 Incidents (mutual violence initiated by men): Bivariate relationships and results of the multivariate analyses

***Bivariate relationships***

Results of the bivariate analyses in Table 5.8 suggest that in Class 3 incidents the women were more likely to be Aboriginal and less likely to be White. In addition, women in these incidents tended to be more violent toward a stranger and had more friends in prison than women engaged in other classes of IPV incidents. Concerning the relationship characteristics, these incidents were more likely to occur in shorter relationships (44 months for Class 3 incidents compared to 65 months for all other incidents). Finally, certain situational variables were also associated with this class of IPV incidents. That is it say, these incidents were more likely to be motivated by challenges to authority and less likely to be motivated by issues relating to alcohol and drugs. Moreover, women were more likely to use weapon in this class of violent incidents than in all others incidents.

Table 5.8. *Bivariate relationships between Class 3 incidents (incidents of mutual violence initiated by men) and all classes of incidents, and the independent variables (N = 295)*

| Independent variables | Types of violent dynamic in IPV incidents | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Class 3 Incidents with mutual violence initiated by men (18.6%) | Classes 1,2, and 4 (81.4%) | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 32.4 | 33.2 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 37.4 | 36.7 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 0% | 100% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 19.2% | 80.8% | |
| White | 16.0% | 84.0% | * |
| Not White | 29.3% | 70.7% | |
| Aboriginal | 38.1% | 61.9% | *** |
| Not Aboriginal | 15.4% | 84.6% | |
| Other/Mixed | 12.5% | 87.5% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 18.8% | 81.2% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 15.0% | 85.0% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 18.8% | 81.2% | |
| White | 17.2% | 82.8% | *ns* |
| Not White | 21.1% | 78.9% | |
| Aboriginal | 38.9% | 61.6% | ** |
| Not Aboriginal | 16.9% | 83.1% | |
| Other/Mixed | 16.7% | 83.3% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 18.4% | 81.6% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 21.3% | 78.7% | *ns* |
| High school and higher | 15.3% | 84.7% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 23.5% | 76.5% | *ns* |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 16.7% | 83.3% | |
| Father approved of violence | 23.7% | 76.3% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 19.8% | 80.2% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 2.2 | 1.6 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 26.1% | 73.9% | ** |
| No violence toward a stranger | 11.8% | 88.2% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in years) | 19.3 | 20.2 | *ns* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 2.4 | 1.9 | ** |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 43.6 | 64.7 | * |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 2.8 | 3.0 | *ns* |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.7 | 3.8 | *ns* |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 24.6% | 75.4% | *ns* |
| (0) | 17.1% | 82.9% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 22.4% | 77.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 17.7% | 82.3% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 6.5% | 93.5% | * |
| (0) | 20.9% | 79.1% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 28.9% | 71.1% | ' |
| (0) | 17.1% | 82.9% | |
| Money (1) | 8.7% | 91.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 19.5% | 80.5% | |
| Household, children, responsibilities (1) | 20.0% | 80.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 18.6% | 81.4% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 22.7% | 77.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 18.3% | 81.7% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 23.4% | 76.6% | *ns* |
| (0) | 17.7% | 82.3% | |
| Both (1) | 22.9% | 77.1% | *ns* |
| (0) | 17.3% | 82.7% | |
| Bystanders were present | 21.1% | 78.9% | *ns* |
| Bystanders were not present | 14.3% | 85.7% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used (1) | 33.3% | 66.7% | *** |
| (0) | 14.2% | 85.1% | |
| Opponent used (1) | 20.5% | 79.5% | *ns* |
| (0) | 18.3% | 81.7% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

***Results of the binary logistic regression for Class 3 IPV incidents***

Results of the multivariate analyses in Table 5.9 suggest that in Class 3 incidents women are more likely to be generally violent (i.e., have a history of violence toward a stranger) and to have a greater number of friends in prison, which may reflect women's involvement in a criminal violent subculture. However, the latter relationship is only marginally significant in Model 1 and becomes non-significant in Model 3.

Regarding relationship characteristics, Class 3 incidents are less likely to occur among those in longer relationships. Among situational variables, challenges to the authority increase and conflicts over alcohol or drugs decrease the probability of Class 3 incidents relative to the other classes. Additionally, an odds ratio for women's use of a weapon in this class of incidents is 2.42, which suggests that women's use of a weapon increases the probability of engagement in this type of violent dynamics.

Table 5.9. *Multivariate logistic regression predicting the relationship between Class 3 incidents and independent variables, relative to Classes 1, 2, and 4 incidents*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) |
| *Individual Characteristics* | | | |
| Woman's race: White | 3.37 (1.06) | 3.94 (1.06) | 3.99 (1.08) |
| Woman's race: Aboriginal | 5.04 (1.11) | 5.52 (1.11) | 4.87 (1.15) |
| Man's race: Aboriginal | 1.99 (.56) | 2.03 (.57) | 1.60 (.61) |
| Woman's violence toward a stranger | 2.18 (.34)* | 1.84 (.35)' | 2.08 (.38)* |
| Number of woman's friends in prison | 1.24 (.14)' | 1.25 (.14)' | 1.22 (.15) |
| *Relationship Characteristics* | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | | 0.99 (.004)' | 0.99 (.004)* |
| *Situational Characteristics* | | | |
| About alcohol or drugs | | | 0.28 (.64)* |
| About challenge to authority | | | 3.49 (.47)** |
| Woman used weapon | | | 2.42 (.40)* |
| *R Squared* | 0.10 | 0.12 | 0.22 |

' p ≤ 0.10, * p≤0.05, ** p≤0.01, *** p≤0.001

## 5.6 Class 4 Incidents (mutual violence initiated by women): Bivariate relationships and Results of the Multivariate Analysis

***Bivariate relationships***

At the bivariate level, Class 4 IPV incidents are associated mainly with individual and situational characteristics rather than with the relationship characteristics (Table 5.10). Black women are much more likely and White women are much less likely to engage in incidents of mutual violence initiated by women. Also, in Class 4 incidents women with more frequent experiences of child abuse victimisation are much more likely to initiate violence that turns to mutual violence.

Situationally, this class of violent incidents is more likely to be motivated by unjust or unfair behaviour and less likely to be motivated by conflicts over sex or sexual jealousy and challenges to authority. Moreover, in these incidents, women are more likely to be the only one to have consumed alcohol and to use a weapon compared to other incidents.

Table 5.10. *Bivariate relationships between Class 4 incidents (incidents with mutual violence initiated by women) and all classes of incidents, and the independent variables (N = 295)*

| Independent variables | Types of violent dynamic in IPV incidents | | *Sig* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Class 4 Incidents with mutual violence initiated by women (16.9%) | Classes 1,2, and 3 (83.1%) | |
| ***Individual Characteristics*** | | | |
| Respondent's age (in years) | 33.1 | 33.1 | *ns* |
| Opponent's age (in years) | 36.1 | 37.0 | *ns* |
| *Respondent's race* | | | |
| Black | 50.00% | 50.0% | ** |
| Not Black | 16.0% | 84.0% | |
| White | 14.8% | 85.2% | * |
| Not White | 25.9% | 74.1% | |
| Aboriginal | 23.8% | 76.2% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 15.8% | 84.2% | |
| Other/Mixed | 12.5% | 87.5% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 17.1% | 82.9% | |
| *Opponent's race* | | | |
| Black | 22.5% | 77.5% | *ns* |
| Not Black | 15.5% | 84.5% | |
| White | 16.7% | 83.3% | *ns* |
| Not White | 15.8% | 84.2% | |
| Aboriginal | 11.1% | 88.9% | *ns* |
| Not Aboriginal | 16.9% | 84.6% | |
| Other/Mixed | 5.6% | 94.4% | *ns* |
| Not Other/Mixed | 17.2% | 82.8% | |
| *Respondent's education* | | | |
| Did not complete high school | 16.5% | 83.5% | *ns* |
| High school and higher | 17.6% | 82.4% | |
| *Attitudes to violence* | | | |
| Mother approved of violence | 14.8% | 85.2% | *ns* |
| Mother disapproved of violence | 17.6% | 82.4% | |
| Father approved of violence | 14.5% | 85.5% | *ns* |
| Father disapproved of violence | 19.2% | 80.8% | |
| Frequency of respondent's child abuse victimisation | 2.5 | 1.6 | , |
| *Respondent's general violence* | | | |
| Violence toward a stranger | 19.7% | 80.3% | *ns* |
| No violence toward a stranger | 14.4% | 85.6% | |
| Respondent's age at first arrest (in | 19.7 | 20.0 | *ns* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| years) | | | |
| Number of respondent's friends in prison *(0 - none, 4 - all)* | 2.1 | 2.0 | *ns* |
| ***Relationship Characteristics*** | | | |
| Length of relationship (in months) | 56.3 | 61.5 | *ns* |
| Frequency of quarrels *(1- almost never, 4 - almost always)* | 2.9 | 3.0 | *ns* |
| Respondent's lack of interactions with friends/relatives in relationship *(1- more often, 5 – much less often)* | 3.6 | 3.8 | *ns* |
| ***Situational Characteristics*** | | | |
| *Motive for the violent incident* | | | |
| Unjust behaviour/physical gesture (1) | 27.9% | 72.9% | ** |
| (0) | 14.1% | 85.9% | |
| Sex and /or sexual jealousy (1) | 8.6% | 91.4% | * |
| (0) | 19.0% | 81.0% | |
| Alcohol or drug use (1) | 21.7% | 78.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.1% | 83.9% | |
| Challenge to authority (1) | 2.6% | 97.4% | ** |
| (0) | 19.1% | 80.9% | |
| Money (1) | 26.1% | 73.9% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.2% | 83.8% | |
| Household, children, responsibilities (1) | 20.0% | 80.0% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.8% | 83.2% | |
| *Drank alcohol before the IPV incident* | | | |
| Only respondent (1) | 36.4% | 63.6% | ** |
| (0) | 15.4% | 84.8% | |
| Only opponent (1) | 19.1% | 80.9% | *ns* |
| (0) | 16.5% | 83.5% | |
| Both (1) | 15.7% | 84.3% | *ns* |
| (0) | 17.3% | 82.7% | |
| Bystanders were present | 18.3% | 81.7% | *ns* |
| Bystanders were not present | 16.5% | 83.5% | |
| *Weapon use in the incident* | | | |
| Respondent used (1) | 26.7% | 73.3% | * |
| (0) | 14.5% | 85.5% | |
| Opponent used (1) | 13.6% | 86.4% | *ns* |
| (0) | 17.5% | 82.5% | |

' $p \leq 0.10$, * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

***Results of the binary logistic regression for Class 4 IPV incidents***

Results of the multivariate analyses in Table 5.11 suggest that Class 4 incidents are less likely to involve White respondents (Exp(B)=0.46). In addition, three types of motives, i.e., unjust/unfair behaviour, challenges to authority, and issues around sex and sexual jealousy increase the probability of incidents of mutual violence initiated by women. Moreover, women's use of a weapon also increases the odds of this class of IPV incidents (Exp(B)=2.80).

Table 5.11. *Multivariate logistic regression predicting the relationship between Class 4 incidents and independent variables, relative to Classes 1, 2, and 3 incidents*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|---|---|---|
| | ExpB (S.E.) | ExpB (S.E.) |
| *Individual Characteristics* | | |
| Woman's race: Black | 0 | 0 |
| Woman's race: White | 0.37 (.34)** | 0.46 (.37)* |
| Woman's frequency of child abuse victimization | 1.06 (.31) | 1.05 (.04) |
| *Situational Characteristics* | | |
| About unjust behaviour/physical gesture | | 2.28 (.42)* |
| About sex/sexual jealousy | | 2.15 (.43)' |
| About challenge to authority | | 4.05 (.47)** |
| Only woman drank alcohol | | 1.25 (.57) |
| Woman used weapon | | 2.80 (.36)** |
| *R Square* | 0.07 | 0.15 |

' p ≤ 0.10, * p≤0.05, ** p≤0.01, *** p≤0.001

## 5.7 Discussion

The results presented in this chapter indicate that there are distinct types of violent dynamics in my sample of IPV incidents. Specifically, my analyses distinguished four main classes of IPV incidents based on various dimensions of violent interaction, i.e., who started violence, what the reaction of the partner was, use of violence in the incident and injuries to each partner. These findings are consistent with a mounting body of evidence that suggests that IPV is a heterogeneous and complex rather than a unitary

phenomenon. Moreover, this study contributes to the research literature in two major ways. First, drawing on a violent events perspective, this study sheds light on IPV as a violent event by focusing on both a couple's interaction (rather than individual behaviours of only male or female partners) and a combination of risk factors at the individual, relationship, and situational levels. Second, this study reveals the heterogeneity of violent dynamics in intimate relationships experienced by a relatively homogeneous group of high-risk incarcerated women. I now discuss each of these findings in light of my expectations (as presented in chapter 2) and in the context of the literature on types of IPV and the theories of violent dynamics discussed in chapters 1 and 2.

Consistent with my *first expectation*, I identified four main classes of IPV incidents, which seem to represent distinct patterns of violent dynamics in intimate relationships. By employing a relatively comprehensive measure of dyadic violent interaction (composed of several dimensions) and latent class analysis, which helped capture the unobserved patterns of violent dynamics, this finding is an important step towards elucidating the distinct forms of violent interaction that take place in violent relationships, especially among an understudied group of high-risk incarcerated women. My results correspond with other studies that suggest these discrete types of IPV events are likely to represent relatively stable patterns of violent dynamics or the spin processes, which are associated with specific individual, relationship and situational risk factors (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Collins, 2008; Johnson, 2008; Olson, 2004; Ronel, 2011; Winstok, 2008). At the same time, my findings contribute to the existing literature on the heterogeneity of IPV by first elaborating on the forms of IPV identified in the past studies, and second providing insight into novel forms of violent dynamics, which are part of the IPV experiences of high-risk incarcerated women. The distinct types of IPV incidents identified in my study are discussed below.

In accordance with my *second expectation*, this study identified a large class of IPV incidents (49%) characterized by men's unilateral and often severe violence against their female partners, who sustain serious injuries in the majority of these incidents (72%). As

expected, these incidents are more likely to happen in longer than in shorter intimate relationships (Stets & Straus, 1999; Straus & Ramirez, 2004), perhaps because women are reluctant to leave violent partners for various reasons, including a sense of responsibility about maintaining the relationship, a desire to "fix" their abusers, their financial dependence or to benefit their children. Furthermore, as expected, women involved in Class 1 incidents are not likely to be abusive or have characteristics associated with violent behaviour, such as experiences of abuse in childhood or women's general violence against others. Consistent with other studies (Panuzio & DiLillo, 2010), women seemed generally dissatisfied with these relationships because they reported high frequency of relationship quarrels in this class of incidents.

Consistent with the clinical literature on severe forms of violence (e.g., Dutton, 2007; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Jacobson & Gottman, 1998), male partners in Class 1 incidents seem to experience high levels of uncontrolled anger because in 76% of these incidents the initial violence was severe (i.e., punched, kicked, beat up) and these incidents were less likely to be preceded by their partners' psychological aggression compared to all other classes of incidents (46% versus 64% respectively, $X^2=8.59$, $p<.01$). Also, men's use of a weapon against women who were not likely to use any weapon also predicts this type of IPV dynamics and suggests the presence of antisocial traits in male perpetrators. Moreover, women's behaviour immediately before and after the attack in Class 1 incidents seemed to have little effect on the batterer's course of action, who appeared to be responsive only to their own bodies' internal clues. For example, female partners were unlikely to have consumed alcohol before the incidents in this class, which might have increased the likelihood of violence, and attempted to refrain from any violence in response to the first male's attack.

Based on these characteristics, Class 1 of IPV incidents appears to represent what some other studies term "intimate terrorism" (Johnson, 2008), the "abusive" or "violent couples" in the violent couple typology (Olson, 2004), general violence (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994), or the type of situations known as "attacking the weak" (Collins, 2008). However, it is not clear if control of a female partner is the overarching

goal of these incidents because, although significant at the bivariate level, the motive of challenges to authority and women's reduced frequency of contacts with her family and friends do not predict these incidents in the multivariate model.

At the same time, indicators of generally unsatisfactory relationships (i.e., high frequency of quarrels and women's lack of interactions with family and friends) along with the previous studies of the demand-withdraw interactional pattern in couples with a violent male partner (Babcock et al., 1993; Berns et al., 1999; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1998) suggest that violent male partners may have more intensive and frequent demands on various topics, in response to which their female partners tend to withdraw. In other words, motives for this class of IPV incidents are diverse and can relate to almost anything in the relationship. At the same time, the extensive pressures to change that violent male partners place on their female partners can represent a more general pattern of emotional abuse and men's need to control and dominate their female partners (Berns et al., 1999).

The identification of this class of IPV incidents also suggests that some IPV may be more than just a result of a rational choice (i.e., violence as a means to control the partner and get what one wants) or psychopathology of a perpetrator (i.e., antisocial and borderline traits), but can represent a specific spin process, in which the acts of both partners seem to be guided by the inertia of the process itself (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012; Ronel, 2011). According to the victim-perpetrator chronic interactive spin dynamic (discussed in chapter 1), a batterer's behaviour in Class 1 incidents is characterised by his self-centeredness, a narrowed perception, and inability to empathize with his partner. Women, on the other hand, seem to be reluctant to leave violent partners for various reasons. However, only if these are not empowered decisions, and women's acts are guided by sense of powerlessness, a victim's behaviour can somewhat contribute to violent dynamics. In this case, both partners are likely to be entrapped in a situation shaped by their shared feelings of threat and helplessness, and each, as other studies suggest, uses the other for their own needs (Bensimon & Ronel, 2012). This observation may have important policy implications, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Echoing "the criminal spin" concept discussed above, Collins' (2008) pattern of the violent situation "attacking the weak" also appears to be consistent with Class 1 of IPV incidents in my study. The weakness appears to reflect a situational and interactional stance rather than simply a physical weakness. Escalation and entrainment (being pulled or drawn along) of victim with perpetrator seem central micro-processes that give abusive episodes their situational momentum. Consistent with a microsociology of violent confrontations, the situational confrontational tension appears to largely hinge on the prior establishment of emotional dominance, and the partners seem to become accustomed to acting out the roles of strong and weak parties in particular situations.

Finally, what is also relevant for this discussion is that despite severe injuries to women in this class of IPV incidents, law enforcement services were involved only in 20% of the cases, which may suggest that the relative impunity of male partners may lead to repeated attacks against their female partners in the future.

Consistent with my *third expectation*, my analyses identified a large group of IPV incidents that represent mutual or bidirectional violence, i.e., 36% of all incidents in my study. However, an unexpected finding is that the IPV incidents with the mutual violent dynamics split into two distinct classes of incidents. Specifically, Class 3 incidents with mutual violence initiated by men comprise 19% of all incidents and Class 4 incidents of mutual violence initiated by women comprise 17% of all incidents in my study. However, these are not the only differences between these two types of violent dynamics. As I discuss in detail below, Class 3 incidents are likely to represent a blend of what Johnson (2008) called severe situational couple violence, violent resistance and mutual violent control and which I collectively term "habituation to violence" or "a violent way of life". The other type of incidents (i.e., with mutual violence initiated by women) (Class 4) resembles Johnson's (2008) situational couple violence type, in which women's initiation of violence appears to become a risk factor for inciting further violence in the IPV incident. Each of these violent types is discussed below.

Incidents with the mutual violence initiated by men (Class 3) are likely to occur over challenges to men's authority, which may reflect a man's controlling motive. Unfortunately, my study cannot effectively differentiate between coercive and situational control. However, supplemented with the information that initial men's violent was severe in two thirds of the cases (66%), it appears that women's violent response in these incidents may fit what Johnson (2008) called violent resistance. Additional evidence for this type of violent dynamics comes from the examination of injuries to women, which occurred in 69% of the cases in this class of incidents; furthermore, these injuries were serious enough in 26% of these incidents to lead to hospitalization or other medical attention. These numbers are close to the injuries to women in Class 1 of IPV incidents, in which women were victims of men's unilateral violence, i.e., women sustained injuries in 72% of those cases and in 29% of the incidents they were hospitalized or received other medical attention. In addition, consistent with many studies, which examine female perpetrators as victims (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2013; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Johnson, 2008; Moe, 2004; Richie, 1996; Stark, 2007; Swan & Snow, 2006), women had experienced severe violence from the intimate partners prior to these incidents in 93% of the cases.

There are, however, strong indicators that a violent resistance type does not characterize most of the incidents in this class (Class 3), which suggests that other types of violent dynamics may be at play here as well. According to a violent resistance type, women are expected to perpetrate violence mainly in order to protect themselves. However, in my study, in almost half of these incidents (46%) the motive for the women's reactive violence was more likely to be retaliation and/or anger; in contrast, in less than one third of the incidents women's violence was primarily self-protection (30%). This finding is consistent with studies suggesting that self-defence is not consistently a leading motive for female-perpetrated violence (e.g., Gabora et al., 2007; Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006; Straus, 2011). The narrative below exemplifies the motive of retaliation or anger for women's use of violence in this class of PV incidents:

> That's when he was seeing his girlfriend. I must have made some comments about his girlfriend. He admits I didn't do anything to trigger it. He admits to this day that he went ballistic. So I guess he was attempting to leave and I was asking him to stay and talk and he took the electric guitar and hit me over the face and then when he was attempting to leave. I hit him with the guitar and then he attacked me. I went running into bedroom and he attacked me with the lamp. He broke it over my head and then he broke a drinking glass on my head. I'm onto the bedroom floor, I crawl to the dining room, and that's when he starts kicking me… (200/201).

In this incident, the respondent's violence seems more likely to be motivated by the desire to express anger and frustration and to hurt her partner for his refusal of her demand rather than to defend herself. In fact, the woman's reactive attack possibly instigated further violence by her partner. However, we should be careful about separating self-defence from retaliation because self-defence is often coupled with extreme rage and, hence, cannot always be clearly distinguished from retaliation (Bair-Merritt, et al., 2010; Dasgupta, 1999; Saunders, 1988). Although Johnson (2008) also suggested that revenge/retaliation or violence with the intention to hurt could be a part of the communication for a few women in a violent resistance type of dynamics, my study suggests that this motive for women's violence in this class of incidents may be much more prevalent than was estimated in earlier studies. This finding has important policy implications, because it suggests interventions with victims should not only focus on empowerment but also provide skills and strategies to avoid using violence as a primary method of expression of anger and self-protection. I will discuss this further in the next chapter.

The other motives for women's reactive violence in Class 3 incidents are contestation of power (20%) and restraining violence (4%). If women reacted with violence mainly to get what they wanted, I ascribed the contestation of power motive to women's use of violence. Other studies find that contestation of power or violent resistance provides one of the explanations for reactive violence committed by women (for a review, see Flynn &

Graham, 2010). The situations that typically demonstrate this motive for women's violence in this class of incidents in my study are when respondents attempted to free themselves from partners who grabbed or held them in order to prevent women from doing something or when women fought with the partner for something they also wanted, e.g., to stay in the apartment.

That a considerable number of Class 3 incidents were characterized by women using violence to struggle with the partner for power suggests that this class of incidents contains the elements of violent dynamics which Johnson (2008) called mutual violent control. However, since my study is not able to identify whether control is coercive or situational in this type of incident, this pattern of violence may also represent severe type of situational couple violence (Johnson, 2008). In either case, both partners in this class of incidents are likely to be particularly violent.

Indeed, women's individual characteristics, as well as some relationship and situational characteristics associated with Class 3 of IPV incidents, point to women's high level of aggression within as well as outside of intimate relationships. One of the distinct characteristics of this class of the incidents compared to others is that women's general violence, i.e., violence against a stranger in the past, predicts the odds of this class of IPV incidents. Also, these women are likely to have more friends in prison, although this association becomes non-significant in the third model of the multivariate analysis. In addition, women are likely to use a weapon in these incidents, and, as suggested above, not always for self-protection. Additional analysis also suggests that in 73% of Class 3 incidents women reported that they perpetrated severe violence against their intimate partners at least once in their relationships (compared with 56% of Class 1 incidents in which women were victims of unilateral men's violence). Notably, the shorter length of women's relationships with their partners predicts the class of incidents of mutual violence initiated by men, which may suggest that these women are less likely to put up with their partners' violence than women in longer relationships. It is also possible that mutually abusive relationships do not last long.

The aforementioned characteristics of Class 3 incidents, including contestation of power, exceptionally high levels of severe violence and injuries sustained by both partners (especially women), and women's propensity for general violence, are not consistent with any specific type of violence identified in other studies. For this reason, I suggest labeling this type of violent dynamics a "habituation to violence" or "violent way of life". In other words, by using violence to establish domination and to stop a partner's violence, partners seem to be entrapped in an endless vicious circle of violence, which, arguably, represents the dangerous spin of a violent way of life described by some scholars (Brockner & Rubin, 1985; Eisikovits & Buchbinder, 2000; Ronel, 2011). The identification of a relatively large group of incidents (19%) in which both partners seem to be engaged in this highly dangerous pattern of violent dynamics contributes to the criminological and IPV literatures because it provides a deeper understanding of the reality that many marginalized and disadvantaged women and their partners face in Canadian society.

The other type of mutual violence (Class 4; 17% of IPV incidents) differs substantially from the one discussed above. First of all, women initiated violence and, although in over one half of the incidents (54%) the initial violence was minor, women sustained injured in 67% of Class 4 incidents. Moreover, in 20% of these incidents women required hospitalization or other medical attention due to their injuries. This suggests that women's initial violence, although mainly minor, can be a substantial risk factor for women's ensuing victimisation and severe injuries.

These incidents of mutual violence initiated by women appear to be associated mainly with situational factors. That is to say, Class 4 incidents tend to happen about a range of different motives, i.e., unjust behaviour (which indicates the issue of anger and a lack of skills to cope with this), about sex and sexual jealousy, and challenges to authority. Moreover, women seem likely to drink alcohol before these incidents (but the significant bivariate association disappears in the multivariate model) and tend to use weapons in these incidents. In addition, some studies suggest that one of the factors for women's initial violence is victim precipitation, i.e. the male partner perpetrated violence against

the female partner prior to this incident (Swatt & He, 2006). Indeed, in 86% of these incidents, male partners perpetrated severe violence against the respondents at some point in their relationships. Also, women in this class of IPV incidents were not likely to be White and seemed to have experienced violence in their childhood.

Taking all these characteristics together, Class 4 incidents with mutual violence initiated by women appear very different from Class 3 incidents with mutual violence initiated by men. The situationally driven violence in Class 4 of IPV incidents seems to fit what Johnson (2008) terms common couple violence and Collins (2008) calls a normal limited conflict. None of the partners is a weak victim, and venting emotion leads to violence, which may be viewed as an accepted routine or even a form of excitement and entertainment in these couples. However, serious injuries to women in these incidents and initial women's violence, including minor forms of violence in almost half of these incidents, call for a better understanding of this pattern of violent dynamics and the development of relevant preventive strategies, which will be discussed in chapter 6.

Finally, according to my *fourth expectation* based on studies of female perpetrators of partner violence, my analyses have identified 16% of IPV incidents in which women reported that they unilaterally perpetrated physical violence against their male partners (Class 2). Women engaged in this class of IPV incidents seem to come from even more disadvantaged background than women who reported other classes of incidents, e.g., they tend to have fewer years of education, their mothers supported violence as a means to solve problems, and they seem to have experienced criminalization at an earlier age. However, only relationship and situational risk factors remained significant in the multivariate analyses and predicted the probability for this type of violent dynamics.

Specifically, unilaterally violent women in Class 2 incidents do not seem to be suppressed by their male partners, e.g., the frequency of women's interactions with family and friends had not declined after they began their intimate relationships and they reported fewer quarrels with the partner overall in their relationships. At the same time, the incidents in this class seem more likely to happen over gender-specific issues, i.e.,

conflicts over household responsibilities, children and property as opposed to other motives. Moreover, women's unilateral violence in these incidents is not explained by men's intoxication immediately before the incidents or by men's use of the weapon.

Studies suggest that female-perpetrated violence -- in particular, severe violence and homicide -- tend to involve the element of victim precipitation, which means that female intimate homicide is likely to occur in a retaliatory fashion in response to previous abuse. For example, Ogle et al. (1995) provide a distinct theoretical link between patriarchal terrorism and female homicide offending and suggest that women in relationships with controlling partners develop high levels of physiological arousal that can be released in a single uncontrolled violent episode. Swatt & He (2006) empirically tested this hypothesis and found that females were more likely to be the offenders if they had experienced injury within the past year prior to the homicide incident.

Contrary to these studies, women in Class 2 incidents in my study are much less likely to have ever experienced severe violence in their relationships than women who reported other classes of IPV incidents (44% of Class 2 incidents versus 91% of the other Classes of incidents, $X^2=59$, $p<.001$). Additional analysis, in which I included the variable of any previous experience of severe partner violence (0 = no, 1 = yes) as a predictor in the logistic regression model, suggests that having experienced the partner's severe violence in the past in fact substantially decreases the probability of incidents in which women unilaterally attack male partners. This indicates that women's violence in this class of IPV incidents does not appear to be a retaliatory violence in response to the previous abuse.

Moreover, drawing on studies of female violent offenders, it can be argued that some of these women are "intimate terrorists" because in most of Class 2 incidents (70%) women initiated severe violence, including use of a knife and other sharp objects, kicking and throwing things that hurt their partners. Men were injured in over the half of these incidents, but refrained from the use of any violence in this class of incidents.

At the same time, because women in Class 2 incidents do not tend to show more general propensity to violence (e.g., hurting the stranger or having more friends in prison), some of them may be classified as partner-only rather than generally violent perpetrators (Babcock, Miller & Siard 2003; Monson & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2002). Violence of these women may result from poor skills in managing interpersonal conflicts and also from a belief that violence is an appropriate way of dealing with conflict with their partners.

Another possible explanation for Class 2 of IPV incidents comes from family communication researchers who often find that women are more likely to demand and that men are more likely to withdraw during marital interactions (Christensen & Heavey, 1990). Furthermore, if the discussed topic is initiated by a female partner and is more relevant for a female partner (as in my study, issues around children, property and household responsibilities), then women, especially those who support violent norms and who were criminalized earlier in life, seem more likely to escalate to a pattern of coercive efforts, including violence, against the withdrawing male partner.

According to a microsociology of violent confrontations (Collins, 2008), this class of IPV incidents seems to constitute a pattern that, similar to Class 1 IPV incidents (when men unilaterally attacked women), can be termed "attacking the weak". The difference with Class 1 of incidents is that the emotionally weak here are male partners in a sense that they do not initiate violence and do not fight back whereas women use severe violence to overcome confrontational tension/fear.[28] The identified pattern of violent dynamics can also fit what Johnson (2008) called intimate terrorism, but my study does not contain a good measure of coercive control employed by women in intimate relationship and, therefore, this suggestion cannot be tested.

[28] As a reminder, men were injured in 54% of Class 2 incidents comparing to 43% of Class 3 incidents and 36% of Class 4 incidents; women were injured in 72% of Class 1 incidents.

## 5.8 Conclusion

The results presented in this chapter focused on the types of violent dynamics reflected in the four classes the IPV incidents or violent events. Drawing on various dimensions of a violent interaction in IPV incidents (described in previous chapters), my analyses in this chapter differentiated between four distinct types of IPV incidents that had specific interactional dynamics and were associated with particular correlates at the individual, relationship, and situational levels. By documenting these classes of IPV incidents, this chapter confirmed an inherent heterogeneity and complexity of patterns of violent dynamics in intimate relationships and revealed some new aspects of violent interaction in the intimate relationships of incarcerated women.

In other words, the results presented in this chapter raise issues that both corroborate and challenge extant research. More specifically, my analysis suggests that the classes of IPV incidents I identified generally fit other types of violence uncovered in earlier studies. For instance, intimate terrorism or attacking the weak correspond to the class of incidents in my study in which male partners unilaterally perpetrated violence against female partners. However, because this class of incidents represents almost one half of all incidents in my study (rather than just a fraction as expected in the population surveys), this suggests that incarcerated women who provided narratives of violent incidents in their intimate relationships are likely to constitute a clinical sample of women who experienced exceptionally high levels of violence.

Consistent with other studies, my findings suggest that the second most prevalent type of IPV is mutual or bidirectional violence, when both partners engage in violence. However, quite unexpectedly, my analyses differentiated between two types of incidents with mutual violence. One class of incidents, in which women initiated violence that turned to mutual violence, seems to fit the type of common couple violence. However, my findings of the women's initial minor violence in almost half of these incidents and women's severe injuries in the majority of these incidents raise questions for future research about this association and the relevant policy implications.

Another class of incidents with mutual violence in my study represents a pattern of violent dynamics which does not fit any of the known types of violence. Rather, this is a blend of various types of severe mutual violence, known as violent resistance, mutual violent control and severe forms of situational couple violence. I term this novel pattern of violent dynamics a habituation to violence or violent way of life and argue that it requires further examination in order to enhance existing strategies of prevention and treatment.

Finally, my results advance what is known about the type of violence in which only women are likely to be violent against their partners. Findings in this chapter suggest that while some of the women in these incidents are likely to be intimate terrorists, others seem to lack appropriate skills to deal with the dysfunctional communication with their partners about some gender-specific issues.[29]

In the next chapter, I summarize my findings on the dimensions and patterns of violent dynamics contained in the IPV incidents in my study. This synthesis of the findings from chapters 4 and 5 will allow me to (1) fill in gaps in the empirical literature regarding the patterns of violent dynamics in an IPV event, (2) review the major theoretical implications of drawing on violent incidents or events for information on types of violent dynamics, and (3) consider the relevance of these findings for future research and policy enhancements to improve prevention and treatment of cases of IPV especially among a high-risk group of incarcerated women and their partners.

[29] Please note that these incidents are not necessarily mutually exclusive, at least from the data that I have.

# Chapter 6 – Discussion and Conclusions

## *6.1 Introduction*

In this final chapter, I discuss the relevance of my research on the dimensions and types of violent dynamics in IPV incidents for both academic and policy audiences. I begin by reviewing the central issues that motivated my specific research questions. Next, I summarize the main findings of my study by describing salient dimensions of violent dynamics and the resulting four classes of IPV incidents. Although focusing on the interaction of both partners in the violent event, I highlight women's part in the violent dynamics and women's use of violence against an intimate partner. I then provide an overview of the theoretical and policy implications stemming from this research. Finally, I outline the key limitations of my study and offer recommendations for how future research can extend work on this topic.

## *6.2 Violent dynamics in IPV incidents between intimate partners*

While violence in intimate relationships has received considerable attention in the last 40 years, our understanding of various types of violence, on the one hand, and the contextual and interactional aspects -- including the roles of both partners engaged in violent incidents -- on the other, is still very limited (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Johnson, 2008; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005). Most of the IPV scholarship to date has focused on violence perpetrated by male partners against female partners; also, factors that have often been used to explain this phenomenon are the socio-structural factors of gender inequality, women's oppression, and patriarchy. Thanks to IPV typology studies initiated, among others, by Michael Johnson in the mid-1990s, IPV has come to be considered as a nuanced and heterogeneous phenomenon comprised of several different types (Johnson, 2008; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010; Olson, 2004). Among these different types, violence against a female partner by a domineering and controlling male partner is just one type of violence. Despite this important breakthrough in IPV research, more studies that both elaborate on the existing typologies and examine the types of violence in other

populations in addition to general/community and shelter populations are desperately needed. Moreover, incident-based analyses of violent dynamics in addition to individual- and relationship-based studies are a promising direction for IPV research, including IPV typology scholarship.

This dissertation has made a distinctive contribution to IPV research by addressing five features of the extant literature. First, my research expands upon recent studies of the context-inclusive, interaction-based and dyadic research on IPV as opposed to individual-based and non-contextual studies. Drawing on an interactional perspective on IPV (Eckert & Willems, 2003; Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles, 2002; Hepburn, 1973; Luckenbill, 1977; Winstok, 2008, 2013), I identify prevalent dimensions in the intra-incident evolution of violence, i.e., who started violence, what the partner's reaction was, the use of violence in the entire incident, and injuries to both partners. This measure of violent dynamics allows me to identify patterns of violent interaction in IPV incidents.

Second, my study draws on data that provide detailed descriptions of violent situations as opposed to the cross-sectional and survey data of many current studies of IPV, which lack information about the context and the interaction in particular violent incidents. Incarcerated women in my study provided detailed accounts of what happened during IPV incident(s) that took place during the three years prior to their incarceration. This allows me to concentrate on violent situations, including the partners' interactions, their individual and relationship characteristics, and the immediate environment, and to apply the violent events perspective in my study (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b).

Third, I use a sample of violent incidents, instead of a sample of criminalized women, in order to move away from a focus on "types" of batterers or victims and to examine the incident-based dimensions of violence (Ross & Babcock, 2010), which then can be used for creating a typology of violent patterns within IPV incidents. Moreover, my comparison of results on types of IPV provided by an incident-based approach (which is employed in my dissertation) and by a relationship-based approach (as measured by the Conflict Tactics Scales, Appendix 1) suggests a unique contribution of an incident-based

approach to a deeper understanding of violent dynamics. That is to say, although the CTS can shed light on the prevalence of IPV perpetrated solely by men, women, and mutually by both partners, an incident-based approach goes beyond the CTS. Specifically, in my study, although most of the women experienced mutual violence with their partners, as suggested by the CTS, these mutually violent relationships included many violent incidents perpetrated solely by men, as suggested by the incident-based analysis.

Fourth, my study contributes to literature on IPV typologies by extending the analysis to incarcerated women who represent an extremely high-risk population (Chesney-Lind and Pasko, 2013; Gabora et al., 2007; Richie, 1996). Apart from other studies, the women in my study are not necessarily victims (as in shelter samples) or perpetrators of IPV (as in IPV offender programs) and were not asked to identify themselves or their partners as 'victims' or 'perpetrators' per se. As such, their narratives allowed me to explore a wide range of violent situations and experiences. Finally, my study focuses on and elucidates the role of women in violent dynamics, without labeling them as exclusively victims or perpetrators of IPV. As a consequence, my findings provide a more nuanced understanding of women's roles in different types of violent situations.

Using a sample of 295 violent episodes reported by 135 incarcerated women in the WEV study in Ontario, Canada, I addressed two research questions related to the dimensions and the types/classes of violent dynamics in IPV incidents. First, I asked: What are the dimensions of violent dynamics in the IPV event? This question also considers whether and to what extent individual, relationship and situational factors shape intra-incident patterns of IPV dynamics. It involves empirically identifying and describing various aspects of the IPV event, e.g., how violence starts, evolves and ends, and whether the characteristics of the intimate partners, of their relationship or of the situation contribute to various dimensions of IPV dynamics. Second, I asked: What are the salient patterns or classes of violent dynamics in IPV events and how are individual, relationship and situational characteristics associated with them? By identifying the distinct classes of violent dynamics in IPV events and characteristics associated with them, the goal of this

study is to bring a better understanding of the complexity and heterogeneity of IPV as experienced by a group of high-risk incarcerated women.

## *6.3 Contributions to an incident-based approach in the IPV research*

One of the major contributions of my dissertation research relates to the application and advancement of an incident-based approach to IPV. While most IPV theory and research tend to conceptualize the main components of IPV separately as discrete units of analyses (i.e., offenders, victims, and the social situations within which violence takes place) and to focus on individual-based aspects of violence, my study drew on perspectives that provide a useful framework for analysing IPV as an event-based, contextualized and dynamic process in which all components are interrelated. A violent events perspective (VEP) (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001b) provided a principal framework for my study. Along with exogenous risk factors at the individual, relationship and social levels, it incorporates a microsociology of violent confrontations and a "criminal spin" theory, which focus on the IPV situation, and an interactional perspective, which emphasizes the interaction between two partners. To put it differently, my study conceptualized IPV in this way: at the heart of the violent event lies interaction, which is embedded in a specific situation, and both are functions of broader individual, relationship and social factors (Figure 1.1).

My study has contributed to incident-based IPV research in several major ways. First, it emphasised the interaction between intimate partners in an IPV incident and developed an approach to measuring intra-incident violent dynamics. In doing this, I focused on escalation as an essential part of many violent conflicts. Because escalation has not been an independent field of basic sociological and criminological research, my dissertation research provided a comprehensive review of various theoretical approaches from social sciences, social and clinical psychology, and communication studies that are relevant for explaining conflict escalation and dynamics. My analysis suggested that escalation to violence in the IPV incident can be treated either as an aspect of rational conflict

strategies (e.g., relational approach, rational choice theory) or as an expression of irrationality due to various reasons, e.g., as a part of human nature (psychopathology and psychophysiology of escalation) and/or due to problems during the attribution and communication processes in a couple (i.e., interactionist and various social psychological explanations). The review of these approaches identified specific correlates of IPV dynamics at the individual, relationship, and situational levels that I further examined in my study. Moreover, focus on the interaction between intimate partners in an IPV incident allowed me to bring together theoretical perspectives on IPV that are often treated as distinct and competing, e.g., feminist and family violence perspectives.

Second, drawing on previous studies (e.g., Eisikovits, Winstok, & Gelles, 2002; Winstok, 2013), I developed a measure of violent dynamics that allowed me to identify the patterns of violent interaction in IPV incidents. My study went beyond previous approaches and systematically measured not only the initial violent interaction between intimate partners but also subsequent stages in the violent dynamics of an IPV incident, such as use of violence by the partner who did not initiate the violence and injuries to either partner. I also measured motives for reactive violence and psychological aggression prior to the initial violence. Focusing on various dimensions of violent dynamics in the IPV incident allowed me to distinguish distinct classes of IPV incidents. Future studies can replicate this approach on different populations and also revise it by including additional relevant dimensions of violence.

Third, my study addressed a call made by some scholars for more context- and event-based studies of IPV (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Kruttschnitt, McLaughlin & Petrie, 2004; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005) and examined the context of violence in the IPV incident. Specifically, my findings identified relevant individual, relationship, and situational correlates associated with various patterns of IPV dynamics. Among the individual correlates were women's experiences of child abuse, women's level of education, and their previous involvement in crime. Length of relationship was found to differentiate classes of IPV incidents as a relationship characteristic. Finally, motives for the violent incident, drinking alcohol before the incident, and using a weapon appeared

the best predictors of different types of violent dynamics at the situational level.

Taken together, the application of an incident-based approach in my study both enriches our understanding of the interaction-based and context-inclusive aspects of IPV and contributes to the theoretical and methodological development of VEP and the microsociology of violence in general.

## *6.4 Summary of findings*

My findings reveal some salient characteristics of IPV incidents, and especially women's part in IPV, through the analysis of the main dimensions of violent dynamics. Moreover, my study identifies four main types/classes of violent dynamics in the IPV incidents that were reported by my sample of incarcerated women. While my analyses suggest that these classes of IPV incidents generally fit other types of violence uncovered in earlier studies (e.g., intimate terrorism or situational couple violence), my study elaborates on each of the previously identified violent types and also detects a novel type of violent dynamics in the relationships of high-risk incarcerated women. These findings reinforce claims about the complexity and heterogeneity of IPV experiences and prompt further consideration of the violent types within different populations.

In analyses of the main dimensions of violent dynamics in Chapter 4, I focused on initiation of violence, reaction to initial violence, the use of violence in the entire incident, and injuries to partners. Additionally, I examined psychological aggression prior to the initial physical violence in the incident and motives for the reactive violence. Analyses of the bivariate relationships between various dimensions of violent dynamics and individual, relationships, and situational variables identified several distinct findings. First, my results point to potentially serious consequences of women's initial violence in IPV incidents. Contrary to the expectations drawn from other research suggesting that male partners are likely to ignore or laugh rather than reciprocate women's initial, in particular, minor violence, my study shows that male partners responded violently in over half of these cases (51%). Moreover, this violent dynamic resulted in injuries to women

in 41% of the incidents in which women initiated minor violence, and in 32% of the incidents in which women used severe violence.

Second, these results also revealed several salient motives for violence in IPV incidents. Incidents in which men initiated violence against a female partner were most often associated with a challenge to their authority, especially if a woman challenged a partner's decision in the presence of his friends. However, in many incidents the motives were similar for both women's and men's initiation of violence, e.g., sexual jealousy, issues about alcohol and drugs, and issues about money. Third, this chapter revealed a diversity of motives for women's reactive violence. Until recently, it was commonly believed that most of women's violence against an intimate partner was explained by self-defence. However, reading through the narratives suggested that there are at least four main reasons for women reacting to men's initiation of violence with violence, i.e., retaliation/anger response (44%), followed by self-defence (31%), contestation of power (21%), and restraining violence (3%).

Next, findings in Chapter 4 also suggest that a salient characteristic of the incidents described by women in my study is a prevailing sense of the normality of violence by women engaged in it, or what I term habituation to violence. Women described incidents of severe violence against their partners and by their partners, which ended by having a beer together or with the intention to continue the relationships with their male partners. I offered assortative mating as one of the explanations for the apparent normality of violence in some women's intimate relationships. Finally, findings in this chapter suggest a fairly complex set of associations between unilateral or mutual violence in IPV incidents and injuries to partners. By bridging a gap between two opposing sets of studies, my study suggests that both one-sided violence and mutual violence can be fairly dangerous for both partners, especially for women.

In Chapter 5, I shifted my focus from the separate dimensions of violent dynamics in IPV incidents to more general or aggregate types of violence in the intimate relationships of incarcerated women. My study identified a large class (Class 1) of IPV incidents (49% of

the total incidents) characterized by men's unilateral and often severe violence against their female partners, who sustain serious injuries in the majority of these incidents (72%). Based on individual, relationship and situational characteristics, Class 1 incidents appear to represent what some other studies term "intimate terrorism" (Johnson, 2008), the "abusive" or "violent couples" in the violent couple typology (Olson, 2004), generally violent type (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994) or the type of situations known as "attacking the weak" (Collins, 2008).

My analyses also identified a large group of IPV incidents that represent mutual or bidirectional violence (36%). However, unexpectedly, the IPV incidents with mutually violent dynamics split into two distinct classes. The incidents with mutual violence initiated by men (Class 3) are likely to represent a blend of what Johnson (2008) called severe situational couple violence, violent resistance and mutual violent control and which I suggest labeling a "habituation to violence" or a "violent way of life". The other type of incidents (i.e., mutual violence initiated by women) (Class 4) resembles Johnson's (2008) situational couple violence type, in which women's initiation of violence appears to become a risk factor for inciting further violence in the IPV incident.

Finally, analyses in Chapter 5 have identified 16% of IPV incidents in which women reported that they unilaterally perpetrated physical violence against their male partners (Class 2). Based on the characteristics of these incidents and drawing on clinical studies of female violent offenders, it can be argued that some of these incidents involve women who are "intimate terrorists". At the same time, incidents of violence perpetrated by some women seem to result from poor skills in managing interpersonal conflicts and also from a belief that violence is an appropriate way of dealing with conflict with their partners.

Taken together, these findings question a 'one size fits all' approach to address such a complex and multidimensional phenomenon as IPV and suggest carefully tailored interventions for different violent types/incidents. Moreover, the context-based and interaction-based approach in my study allowed me to shed light on the heterogeneity of women's behaviour in a violent situation. While in many situations women are solely the

victims of a male partner's violence, women do not take violence passively, instead using various strategies to stop men's violence. At the same time, some women unabashedly described the situations in which they were the sole perpetrators of violence against the male partner. Similarly to violent men, however, these women seem to represent not only those who use violence to exert power over the partner, but also those who believe that violence is an appropriate means to achieve their goals or do not have appropriate skills to cope with violent emotions. These findings also point to the need for differentiation among different types of women's engagement in IPV incidents.

## *6.5 Implications of key findings for policy and research/theory*

My dissertation research was premised on the idea that it is important to explore both men's and women's contributions to violence in intimate relationships because it is increasingly recognized that to ignore or deny women's capacity for and men's vulnerability to violence limits our understanding of IPV and reduces our ability to protect women and men from injury and death at the hands of their intimate partners. By identifying the heterogeneity of IPV incidents and their dynamic development, the findings from my thesis advance a dimensional approach and the typological literature on IPV. In addition, they question and provide an alternative to prevailing single-gender approaches in the areas of prevention and offender treatment programs.

*Theoretical implications*: My findings demonstrate that research on IPV needs to be designed so that distinctions among types of violence can be captured (Johnson, 2008). From a violent events perspective, the consistency of my results with those from studies of individual differences in IPV, typologies of IPV and violent couples provides additional evidence for the importance of conceptualizing IPV as according to different types and dimensions of violence. In practical terms, my study emphasizes the importance of collecting information about both women's and men's perceptions and meanings of violence, including data on perpetration of and victimization from violence for both partners (Straus, 2013).

In addition, the results of my study highlight the need to examine the range of IPV classes within different populations. Consistent with past research, my findings suggest that violent patterns among high-risk incarcerated women include a combination of what is known as violent resistance, severe situational couple violence, and mutual violent controlling type. This warrants more theorizing on the issue of IPV incident types among different populations.

Moreover, my study has identified both similarities and differences in women's and men's engagement in violence. This suggests that although our understanding of IPV may benefit from an integrated theoretical approach (i.e., one that combines traditional theories of crime and violence, such as, life-course, situational and personality theories, and gender perspectives), gender-specific approaches are also important.

Finally, my study suggests that it is theoretically viable to continue incident-based research on IPV typology. Moreover, it implies the value of complementing the use of the CTS, which identify basic dyadic types of violence, such as female-only, male-only and both violent, with an incident-based analysis to help determine more specific types of violence in particular intimate relationships.

*Policy Implications*: Prevention and treatment of IPV have received considerable attention in the industrialized world as well as globally. Despite this, our knowledge of how to predict and prevent the most dangerous incidents of violence, including lethal cases of IPV, is still limited (Kieselbach & Butchart, 2012). Moreover, evaluations of nearly universal policies implemented in many industrialized countries in the criminal justice system (e.g., court-mandated treatment programs, mandatory arrest and no-drop prosecution policy) and in treatment (e.g., gender-specific groups for male offenders) provide mixed results (e.g., Babcock, Green & Robbie, 2004; Buzawa, Buzawa & Stark, 2012). Although relying heavily on criminal justice interventions to limit domestic violence has transformed societal perceptions of IPV as a crime and increased the willingness of individuals to accept responsibility for dealing with abuse in their lives, growing evidence suggests that criminal justice interventions alone have limited effects

on IPV (Buzawa, Buzawa & Stark, 2012). Instead, the most effective approaches seem to involve cross-agency and cross-community alliances and coordination (e.g., Butchart, 2011) and those that rely on scientifically grounded observations about which elements of which interventions are effective for which subgroups (e.g., Miller, Gregory & Iovanni, 2005).

Findings in my study suggest that a more comprehensive understanding of various patterns of IPV not only at the societal or macro-level but also at the micro-level of social ecology, including situational and interactional risk factors, can help us develop more nuanced strategies to reduce IPV. Because a 'one size fits all' approach does not seem to work for addressing such a complex and multidimensional phenomenon as IPV, carefully tailored interventions for different types of violence should be considered.[30] Therefore, interventions need to start with an initial screening to identify the severity (risk) and the prevalent type of violent dynamics in a particular relationship. This can be accomplished in three to five minutes through use of the short-form of the CTS (Straus & Douglas, 2004) and the initial interview with partner(s) and/or examination of the case. This step is especially important to identify when only one partner is a victim. When that is the case, there is a need to empirically determine which partner is the sole victim, rather than the current practice of assuming it is the female partner. Each type of violent dynamics shares risk factors and harmful effects with the others, but also has distinctive characteristics that need to be taken into account. Drawing on IPV prevention and treatment literature, below I link each of the classes of violent dynamics identified in my study to some policy responses that I argue are relevant in each case.

First, intervention to prevent and treat IPV in the incidents in which one partner, a male or a female, is unilaterally violent against the other (Classes 1 and 2) should be gender specific and focus on abusers' personal issues and attitudes, and also on victims' safety. Therefore, law enforcement approaches, including mandated- or pro-arrest policies and filing a restraining order, and mandated batterer treatments programs for male and female

[30] The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model seems to follow these guidelines in its assessment and treatment of offenders (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

offenders should be in place. Specifically, in terms of offender-specific mandated treatment in cases of unidirectional chronic and severe violence by a male partner against a female partner (i.e. Class 1 incidents), cognitive-behavioural modification programs designed to help men modify and regulate their anger and abusive behaviour and to take personal responsibility for their actions have had some success with male batterers (Dutton, 2003). However, because male partners in this class of incidents tend to be characterized by high levels of uncontrolled anger, life-threatening behaviour, and histories of violence, more intensive and comprehensive treatment, such as dialectical behaviour treatment, may be more relevant (Waltz, 2003). Moreover, since men who engage in this type of violence tend to exert control over their female partners, attitude readjustment towards a more egalitarian view of their relationship, i.e., by challenging patriarchal attitudes, may be appropriate as well. These IPV interventions appear to have a positive but modest effect in reducing IPV (for a review, see Murphy & Ting, 2010).

Treating an abusive male partner, however, does not imply that a female partner who is primarily a victim in this type of violent dynamics should be excluded from the intervention. Because safety should be a main focus of this intervention, women have to be provided with a variety of services, including emergency shelter, support groups, legal advocacy, individual counselling, etc. However, in addition, these services may be particularly critical for empowering clients to make responsible decisions and for enabling them to recognize and interrupt a chain of linked reactions that generate a 'life cycle' or a 'criminal spin' of this type of violent dynamics (Benison & Ronel, 2012). Moreover, my study, consistent with other studies, suggests that some women powerlessly remain in violent relationships, feeling unable to extricate themselves from them. Therefore, providing information and supportive services is important to help women protect themselves and gain psychological and financial independence that would allow them to leave abusive partners if they so choose.

In the three other classes of IPV incidents in my study women used violence against their male partners unilaterally or as a part of mutually violent dynamics. The literature on the evaluation of treatment programs for female perpetrators of IPV is limited. However,

there seems to be an increasing understanding that domestically violent women are not all alike, just as all violent men are not alike, and need different forms of intervention (Swan & Snow, 2002). My findings suggest that in Class 2 IPV incidents women are less likely to have been abused previously in relationships and are prone to use severe violence against male partners more often than women in other incidents. This suggests that treatment programs focused on modulating intense negative affect, including anger, dialectical behavioural treatment and communication skills training interventions that have been used with violent men, may be appropriate for violent women as well.

Moreover, given an indication of a destructive demand/withdrawal interaction in these incidents, i.e., when women demand certain gender-specific issues and men withdraw, both partners can benefit from learning more constructive ways of interpersonal communication. However, in order to prevent any further victimization of male partners that can result from the conjoint therapy of violent women and their partners, these interventions should be held individually. Moreover, some violent female partners may benefit from programs directed at addressing issues with their controlling behaviour and dominance over their male partners (Gillespie Tozer, 2013). While holding women accountable for their violent behaviour, however, it is also important to address their other needs, e.g., as survivors of physical and sexual violence in the family and drug/alcohol addictions.

My study also raises the problem of battered male partners. As with female victims of unilateral men's violence, male victims engaged in Class 2 violent dynamics should first be provided with safety interventions. Because currently men face many barriers to receiving help (e.g., they often report being turned away, ridiculed, accused of being a batterer, and arrested, Douglas & Hines, 2009), it is important to educate and train front-line domestic violence workers and police officers about the existence of male victims and their needs. Moreover, as other studies suggest, male victims experience many substantial barriers to leaving abusive female partners because of their commitment to the marriage and children, love, fear of losing their children and the need to stay to protect them, and also economic reasons (e.g., no place to go and not enough money to leave)

(Hines & Douglas, 2010a). These needs of male victims of IPV require urgent intervention for men who sustain unilateral violence from their female partners to help them address psychological (e.g., mental health conditions), legal (e.g., issues around divorce and child custody) and economic issues (e.g., an emergency place to stay).

Because two other classes of IPV incidents in my study represent very different types of violent dynamics, they require different intervention approaches. Class 4 IPV incidents that represent moderate to severe mutual violence initiated by women can possibly be addressed by using restorative justice approaches (Mills, 2003) and conjoint couple therapy (Harris, 2006; Stith & McCollum, 2011). However, careful consideration should be made to allow this type of intervention only to partners who do not have serious alcohol/drug abuse or mental health issues because that may compromise safety (Antunes-Alves & Stefano 2013; Trute 1998). Conjoint couple therapy has long been debated in the professional and scientific communities in relation to cases of IPV. The major criticism of this approach has been associated with putting victims at greater risk by directing blame at them and in turn reducing or eliminating the legal or moral accountability of perpetrators (Stith & McCollum, 2011). Among the benefits of conjoint therapy, however, is that it appears to address the important issues of relational dynamics, such as dissatisfaction and distress, as well as ineffective interpersonal problem solving skills that other gender-specific interventions, such as batterer intervention programs, have overlooked (for review, see Harris, 2006). Moreover, there are promising results of court-mandated, mutual violence interventions for ethnically diverse couples experiencing IPV in which partners received the same treatment components but in separate, gender-specific settings (Wray, Hoyt, & Gerstle, 2013).

To treat and prevent this type of mutually violent dynamics, interventions should tackle in particular the issue of women's initiation of violence, because this can escalate to severe violence against themselves by their male partners. Also, both partners should be taught that any violence, although minor, should be avoided because it is often associated with an escalation of violence.

Finally, Class 3 IPV incidents that represent a highly destructive type of violent dynamics (i.e., mutual violence initiated by men the results in substantial injuries to both partners, especially women) may require a combination of policy responses, including law enforcement interventions and mandated individual and couple treatment. Some violent women and men in this class of incidents, especially those who perpetrated violence for self-protection, need different interventions than those who are violent for other reasons. Because many of the women in these relationships perpetrate violence within the context of prior victimization, interventions should not only focus on empowerment of women but also provide skills and strategies to avoid using violence as a primary method of expression of anger and self-protection. Moreover, some special interventions for partners engaged in this type of violent dynamics, e.g., treatment of alcohol/drug abuse, mental issues, communication deficiencies, may provide essential conditions for change. Because many violent couples have children, child custody assessments should distinguish among types of violence and evaluate the risks for child abuse in each particular case. Although basically similar to the interventions for Class 1 incidents, interventions for this class of incidents should focus on the safety of both partners (and their children) and mandated couple treatment.

Policy responses should also include activities focused on the prevention of IPV, i.e., deterrence through holding violent partners accountable in the criminal justice system, education about the harms of violence perpetrated not only by men and boys but also by women and girls, and challenging a culture of violence. It is worth mentioning that attention to the interactional and situational aspects of violent dynamics and relevant policies should be seen as supplementary to rather than competing with continuing efforts to bring greater gender equality and economic stability. It is also important to emphasise that any violence against another human being is wrong and agentic views on female perpetration of IPV that highlight women's agency, rationality and decision-making capability in no way represent the liberation of women or acclaim this kind of resiliency. Research on violence generally concur that violence begets violence and support the idea that any violence, whether against a man, woman or a child, should be stopped.

## *6.6 Limitations and directions for future research*

I conclude by discussing the key limitations of the current study, and suggest how these limitations point to important avenues for future research on the dimensions and types of violent dynamics in intimate relationships. The first limitation involves my use of data on a couple's violence that have been provided only by female partners. In other words, I have no couple data to match the reports provided by the women in my sample. An advantage of this, however, is that it represents a valuable account of women's perceptions of what happened in IPV incidents and why (Eisikovits & Winstok, 2002; Enosh & Buchbinder, 2005; Fenton & Rathus, 2010; Flynn & Graham, 2010). Moreover, because women in the study were asked to provide a detailed description of their partners' behaviour in a conflict, there is in fact detailed information on the role of both partners in a violent conflict. Studies comparing couples' reports of violence suggest quite accurate but incomplete assessments of the violence (Heckert & Gondolf, 1997). Archer's (1999) meta-analysis of six studies that assessed correlations between couples' reports of each other's abusive behaviours found significant, moderate-sized correlations between men's and women's reports of women's abuse and men's abuse. Given this limitation of my study, future research on interaction-based aspects of IPV should attempt to replicate the current study using a sample of men who have experienced IPV in their relationships to examine their perceptions and meanings of IPV and also to explore the main types of violent dynamics in IPV incidents, as male partners see them. Doing so will contribute to a growing literature on men's experiences of victimization in intimate relationships (Hines, 2013; Hines & Dougals, 2010a; Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001). In addition, future studies should gather reports from both partners engaged in IPV incidents in order to explore the role of gender in various aspects of violent dynamics.

A second limitation of this study involves the lack of information about some important characteristics of the partners and their experiences in previous relationships. Specifically, most of the missing information is background characteristics for respondents' partners that match information for the respondent (e.g., exposure to

violence in the family of origin, number of friends in prison). This partly explains my focus on the characteristics of women that are associated with different interactional patterns in IPV incidents. Despite the importance of dominance and control in understanding IPV dynamics, unfortunately data about controlling behaviours of men were limited; and information on women's controlling behaviour in the relationship was not collected at all. This prevented me from distinguishing between a control motive and coercive control (Johnson, 2008) and from examining the link between women's control and intra-incident IPV dynamics. Therefore, future research should try to fill this substantial gap in the IPV literature and collect data on controlling behaviour exercised by female partners in intimate relationships as well. However, it is possible that some women may feel uncomfortable reporting that they attempted to exert control and dominance over their male partners and used violence for this. As such, inquiries into women's controlling behaviour need to be approached with appropriate sensitivity. Accounting for other personal and interpersonal characteristics relating to women's previous experiences of violence, especially physical and sexual violence in their families of origin, is also important.

Third, in the current study I had to deal with the lack of attention to categorizing violent incidents in IPV research. In other words, I had to develop an approach to measuring violent dynamics in the IPV incident rather than replicate or build on other research. Despite coding rules and inter-rater reliability, the coding of women's accounts tended to be a subjective process (Gondolf & Beeman, 2003). Future research should focus on developing more systematic methods of investigating the components of physically abusive incidents.

Fourth, future research efforts should also examine violent dynamics across IPV incidents over time in relationships or within individuals across different relationships. This is an especially promising direction for future research, as some studies suggest (e.g., Carbone-Lopez, Rennison & Macmillan, 2012), because IPV is a contextual process in which patterns may develop over time rather than a discrete event with a fixed set of behaviours. Unlike intra-incident violent dynamics that can be measured by the differences in severity

of violent acts perpetrated by each partner, an escalation of violence across IPV incidents can represent itself through the frequency of IPV incidents and the severity of consequences, e.g., injuries across the IPV incidents over time. These studies could contribute to the IPV literature that currently provides rather inconsistent results on the patterns of violent conflict escalation over time. On the one hand, there are studies that suggest that assaults in intimate relationships tend to continue indefinitely and escalate over time (Eisikovits & Buchbinder, 2000; Giles-Sims, 1983; Pagelow, 1981). On the other hand, other studies suggest that the IPV is likely to deescalate over time (Feld & Straus, 1989). Future research on violent dynamics across IPV incident in a longitudinal perspective, which would incorporate knowledge about different types of violence in its design, might be able to bridge the gap between these contradicting findings.

Finally, although having a sample of incarcerated women in my study is a strength, it is also a weakness. As other studies suggest, incarcerated women are more likely to be victims of violence in their families and intimate relationships than non-criminalized women.[31] Also, women who were in same-sex relationships were excluded from the analysis because the number of reported incidents was too small for any meaningful statistical analyses. Given these limitations, types of violent dynamics in same-sex couples deserve special attention (Murray et al., 2007; Renzetti, 1992). Moreover, an important avenue for future research is to examine patterns of violent dynamics on a broader sample of violent couples, e.g., couples from different economic, cultural, and ethnic background. For example, drawing on some previous studies that examined IPV in couples from various cultural contexts (e.g., Malley-Morrison & Hines, 2004; Swan & Snow, 2006), future research should further explore types of violent dynamic among Black and Aboriginal couples in Canada.

This chapter summarized the main findings of my study on the dimensions and patterns of violent dynamics in incidents of IPV. In addition, I identified the gaps in the empirical literature that my study addresses and also proposed directions for future research. Most

[31] It is also a disadvantage that I have no information whether women were incarcerated for IPV-related offences.

importantly, this chapter discussed the relevance of my findings for policy enhancements to improve prevention and treatment of IPV, especially among a high-risk group of incarcerated women and their partners.

# Appendix 1

*The mutuality of IPV measured by the Conflict Tactics Scales*

The WEV study administered the revised version of the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus et al., 1996) to the same sample of incarcerated women who reported detailed incidents of IPV. To identify the mutuality of physical IPV throughout these women's relationships as documented by the CTS, I used the method suggested by Straus and Douglas (2004). The respondents reported how often each of the acts of severe and minor physical violence occurred in the course of their entire relationships with up to three of their most recent intimate partners. The WEV study administered the full version of the CTS2 that includes five items to identify the frequency of minor violence (i.e., threw something at a partner, twisted my partner's arm or hair, pushed or shoved my partner, grabbed, and slapped my partner) and seven items for severe physical violence (i.e., used a knife or gun, punched or hit my partner, choked, slammed against a wall, beat up, burned, and kicked my partner). The CTS2 asks respondents to report, for each item, their own behaviour and the behaviour of the partner. This design makes it possible to create a measure of the mutuality of physical IPV in a relationship (as opposed to within an individual incident, which is the focus of this study).

First, I recoded responses to each item from frequency measures to prevalence measures (i.e., I created dummy variables that represented whether violence by the partner (or violence by the respondent) ever happened in the relationship). This allowed me to determine, for each partner, if they reported engaging in 1) any of the items measuring severe physical violence during the relationship and 2) any of the items measuring any physical violence during the relationship. Then from this, I constructed a variable measuring partner only, respondent only, or mutual violence. The findings listed below are based on a sample of women's relationships. Incarcerated women provided information about up to three of their most recent partners so that the total number of partners in this sample is 156. My decision to use the respondent's relationship as the unit of analysis rather than the IPV incident (as for the rest of my analysis) stems from an interest in presenting data that is comparable to other IPV studies.

First, I identified the prevalence of severe and total violence perpetrated by respondents and their partners in the entire relationship. Over one half of the respondents (64%) and almost three fourth of their partners (72%) perpetrated at least one act of severe violence in the entire relationship. In most of the relationships (58%), severe violence was mutual; in about 26% of the relationships, only the woman's partner engaged in severe violence; and in 16% of the relationships was the respondent the only one to engage in severe violence.

Extending the analysis to include minor as well as severe violence, I found that about equal proportions of respondents (88%) and their partners (86%) were reported to have engaged in at least one act of violence in their relationships. In 80% of the relationships, the violence was mutual. In the remaining relationships, half (11%) experienced violence only by the respondent and half (c. 9%) experienced violence only by the respondent's partner. Cross-tabulation of the mutuality types for any violence did not identify any significant differences in the mutuality types between the relationships the women reported.

Overall, these findings suggest that the most prevalent type of physical violence occurring in these women's relationships is mutual or bidirectional violence; mutuality is particularly pronounced in case of minor and, as a result, total physical violence. Although the rates of IPV perpetration (as measured by the revised CTS) in this sample are generally higher than in other studies, the results are consistent with many IPV studies that find high levels of mutual violence in intimate relationships (Chiodo et al., 2012; Gabora et al., 2007; Goldenson, Geffner, Foster, & Clipson, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Kwong, Bartholomew, & Dutton, 1999; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010; Palmetto et al., 2013; Straus, 2008; Swan & Snow, 2002; Whitaker et al., 2007). Moreover, in my sample, the respondents' partners were more likely than the respondents to be solely violent in cases of severe violence; and perpetration rates of any violence by respondents and their partners' match. This is consistent with other studies that find severe IPV is

perpetrated primarily by male partners, whereas minor violence is perpetrated by both partners nearly at the same rate (Archer, 2000; Chiodo et al., 2012).

To sum up, this analysis of IPV perpetration in the entire relationship, as measured by the CTS2, suggests that in the relationships of this sample of incarcerated women, patterns of mutuality in IPV mirror those in other IPV studies. At the same time, the rates of IPV perpetration in this group of incarcerated women are on average higher than that in other samples, although this is to be expected for a sample of high-risk women. This analysis also suggests that while mutual violence is the most common type of violence in relationships that is identified by the CTS, in individual incidents, mutual violence is not necessarily the common type of violence. In other words, to say a relationship is 'mutually violent' does not mean that the partners engage in mutual violence in most incidents. That is, a mutually violent relationship can still be one in which the male partner is more violent than the female partner, which suggests my study.

# References

Abrams, K. (1995). Sex wars redux: Agency and coercion in feminist legal theory. *Columbia Law Review* 95, 304–76.

Abramsky, T. et al. (2011). What factors are associated with recent intimate partner violence? Findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. *BMC Public Health, 11*,109.

Agnew, R. (2001). Building on the foundation of general strain theory: Specifying the types of strain most likely to lead to crime and delinquency. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency,* 38, 319–361.

Anderson, A., & Bushman, C. (2002). Human aggression. *Annual Review: Psychology, 53*, 27-51.

Archer, J. (2000). Sex differences in aggression between heterosexual partners: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin, 126*, 651–680.

Archer, J., & Graham-Kevan, N. (2003). Do beliefs about aggression predict physical aggression to partners? *Aggressive Behavior, 29 (1),* 41–54.

Athens, L. (2005). Violent encounters, violent engagements, skirmishes, and tiffs. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography,* 34 (6), 631-678.

Babcock, J. C., Costa, D. M., Green, C. E., & Eckhardt, C. I. (2004). What situations induce intimate partner violence? A reliability and validity study of the Proximal Antecedents to Violent Episodes (PAVE) Scale. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 18, 433-442.

Babcock, J. C., Waltz, J., Jacobson, N. S., & Gottman, J. M. (1993). Power and violence: the relation between communication patterns, power discrepancies, and domestic violence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *61*(1), 40.

Babcock, J., Miller, S., & Siard, C. (2003). Toward a typology of abusive women: Differences between partner-only and generally violent women in the use of violence. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 27*, 151–161.

Babcock, J.C., Green, C.E., Robie, C. (2004). Does batterers' treatment work?: A meta-analytic review of domestic violence treatment outcome research. *Clinical Psychology Review,* 23: 1023–1053.

Bair-Merritt, M.H., Crowne, S.S., Thompson, D.A., Sibinga, E., Trent, M., and

Campbell, J. (2010). Why do women use intimate partner violence? A systematic review of women's motivations. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 11*(4) 178-189.

Baskin, D. R., and Sommers, I.B. (1998). *Casualties of Community Disorder: Women's Careers in Violent Crime.* Boulder, CO: Westview.

Bell, K.M. & Naugle, A.E. (2008). Intimate partner violence theoretical considerations: Moving towards a contextual framework. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 28, 1096 - 1107.

Ben-David, S. (1993). The two facets of female violence: The public and the domestic domains. *Journal of Family Violence*, *8* (2): 345-359.

Bensimon, M., & Ronel, N. (2012). The flywheel effect of intimate partner violence: A victim–perpetrator interactive spin. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *17*(5), 423-429.

Berns, S. B., Jacobson, N. S., & Gottman, J. M. (1999). Demand–withdraw interaction in couples with a violent husband. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *67*(5), 666-674.

Bjorkqvist, K. (1994). Sex differences in physical, verbal, and indirect aggression: A review of recent research. *Sex Roles, 30* (3/4), 177-188.

Bjorkqvist, K., Lagerspetz, K. M. J., & Kaukiainen, A. (1992). Do girls manipulate and boys fight? *Aggressive Behavior, 18*, 117-127.

Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M.R. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Repor*t. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Bonta, J., & Andrews, D. A. (2007). Risk-need-responsivity model for offender assessment and rehabilitation. *Rehabilitation*, *6*, 1-19.

Bograd, M. (1988). Feminist perspectives on wife abuse: An introduction (pp. 11-28). In K. Yllo & M. Bograd (eds.) *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bourgois P. (1996) In search of masculinity—violence, respect and sexuality among Puerto Rican crack dealers. *British Journal of Criminology*, 36, 412–427.

Brockner, J., & Robin, J.Z. (1985). *Entrapment in Escalating Conflicts*. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Burke, L.K., & Follingstad, D. (1999). Violence in lesbian and gay relationships: Theory, prevalence, and correlational factors. *Clinical Psychology Review, 19* (5), 487-512.

Buzawa, E.S., Buzawa, C.G., Stark, E. (2012). *Responding to Domestic Violence: The Integration of Criminal Justice and Human Services*. – 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Caetano, R., Ramisetty-Mikler, S., & Field, C. (2005). Unidirectional and bidirectional intimate partner violence among White, Black, and Hispanic couples in the United States. *Violence and Victims, 20(4),* 393–405.

Cahn, D. (2009). An evolving communication perspective on family violence. In Cahn, D. (ed.). *Family Violence: Communication Process*. NY: SUNY Press.

Cahn, D.D. (1990). Intimates in conflict: A research review (pp.1-25). In D. D. Cahn (ed.) *Intimates in Conflict: A Communication Perspective*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, Inc.

Cahn, D.D. & Lloyd, S.A. (1996). *Family Violence from Communication Perspective*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cairns, R.B., Santoyo, C.V., & Holly, K.A. (1994). Aggressive escalation: toward a developmental analysis (pp. 225-253). In M. Potegan and J. F. Knutson (eds.). *The Dynamics of Aggression: Biological and Social Processes in Dyads And Groups*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Caldwell, J.E., Swan, S.C., Allen, C.N., Sullivan, T.P., & Snow, D. (2009). Research examining the motivation of women's use of intimate partner violence. Why I hit him: Women's reasons for intimate partner violence. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma, 18*, 672 – 697.

Capaldi, D. M., Kim, H. K., & Shortt, J. W. (2007). Observed initiation and reciprocity of physical aggression in young, at-risk couples. *Journal of Family Violence, 22,* 101–111.

Carbone-Lopez, K. & Kruttschnitt, C. (2010). Risky relationships? Assortative mating and women's experiences of intimate partner violence. *Crime & Delinquency, 56*

(3), 358-384.

Carbone-Lopez, K., Rennison, C. M., & Macmillan, R. (2012). The transcendence of violence across relationships: New methods for understanding men's and women's experiences of intimate partner violence across the life course. *Journal of quantitative criminology*, *28*(2), 319-346.

Carney, M., Buttell, F. & Dutton, D. (2007). Women who perpetrate intimate partner violence: A review of the literature with recommendations for treatment. *Aggression & Violence Behavior,* 12, 108-115.

Chesney-Lind, M. (1989). Girls' crime and woman's place: Toward a feminist model of female delinquency. *Crime and Delinquency, 35* (1), 5-29.

Chesney-Lind, M. and Pasko, L. (2013). *The Female Offender: Girls, Women, and Crime*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Chiodo, D., Crooks, C. V., Wolfe, D. A., McIssac, C., Hughes, R., & Jaffe, P. G. (2012). Longitudinal prediction and concurrent functioning of adolescent girls demonstrating various profiles of dating violence and victimization. *Prevention Science, 13*, 350–359.

Christensen, A., & Heavey, C. L. (1990). Gender and social structure in the demand/withdraw pattern of marital conflict. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*(1), 73-81.

Collins, R. (2008). *Violence: A Micro-Sociological Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Comack, E., Balffour, G. (2004). *The Power to Criminalize: Violence, Inequality and The Law*. Fernwood Publishing company.

Conn, C., Warden, R., Stuewig, J., Kim, E.H., Harty, L., Hastings, M., & Tangney, J. (2010). Borderline personality disorder among jail inmates: How common and how distinct? *Corrections Compendium, 35* (4), 6-13.

Conradi, L. M., Geffner, R., Hamberger, L. K., & Lawson, G. (2009). An exploratory study of women as dominant aggressors of physical violence in their intimate relationships. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 18* (7), 718–738.

Cordova, J. V., Jacobson, N. S., Gottman, J. M., Rushe, R., & Cox, G. (1993). Negative reciprocity and communication in couples with a violent husband. *Journal of*

*Abnormal Psychology*, *102*(4), 559-564.

Cornish, D.B. and Clarke, R.V. (1998). Understanding crime displacement: An application of Rational Choice Theory. In S. Henry and W. Einstadter (eds.), *The Criminology Theory Reader*. New York: New York University Press.

Cross, C. & Campbell, A. (2011). Women's aggression. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour, 16*, 390-398.

Daly, K. (1997). Different ways of conceptualizing sex/gender in feminist theory and their implications for criminology. *Theoretical Criminology, 1*, 25-51.

Daly, K. (1998). Women's pathways to felony court: Feminist theories of lawbreaking and problems of representation. In K. Daly and L. Maher (eds.), *Criminology at the Crossroads: Feminist Readings in Crime and Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dasgupta, S. D. (1999). Just like men? A critical view of violence by women. In M.E. Shephard & E. L. Pence (Eds.), *Coordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence* (pp. 195–222). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K. (1970). Rules of conduct and the study of deviant behavior: some notes on the social relationship (120-159). In Douglas (Ed.), *Deviance and Respectability*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

DeTurck, M.A. (1985). A transactional analysis of compliance-gaining behavior. *Human Communication Research*, 12, 54–78.

DeTurck, M.A. (1987). When communication fails: Physical aggression as a compliance-gaining strategy. *Communication Monographs*, 54(1), 106-112.

DeVault, M. (1996). Talking back to sociology: Distinctive contributions to feminist methodology. *Annual Review of Sociology, 22*, 29-50.

Devries, K.M., Mak, J.Y.T., Garcia-Moreno, C. et al. (2013) The global prevalence of intimate partner violence against women. *Science 340* (6140), 1527–1528.

Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P (1984). The nature and antecedents of violent events. *British Journal of Criminology, 24*, 269–287.

Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (1979). *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy*. New York: Free Press.

Dobash, R. P., & Dobash, R. E. (2004). Women's violence to men in intimate

relationships: Working on a puzzle. *British Journal of Criminology, 44*, 324–349.

Dobash, R.E. and Dobash, R.P. (1988). Research as social action: The struggle for battered women (pp.51-75). In Yllo, K., & Bograd, M., eds. *Feminist Perspective on Wife Abuse*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Dobash, R.E. and Dobash, R.P. (1992). *Women, Violence, and Social Change*. New York: Routledge.

Downs, D.A. (1996). *More Than Victims: Battered Women, the Syndrome Society, and the Law.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dugan, L., & Castro, J. L. (2006). Predictors of violence victimization: National Crime Victimization Survey women and jailed women. In K. Heimer & C. Kruttschnitt (Eds.), *Gender and crime: Patterns of Victimization and Offending*. New York: New York University Press.

Dutton, D. (2003). Treatment of assaultiveness. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, *7*(1-2), 7-28.

Dutton, D.G. (2005). Foreword. In J. Hamel. *Gender-Inclusive Treatment of Intimate Partner Abuse: A Comprehensive Approach*. New York: Springer.

Dutton, D.G. (2006). *Rethinking Domestic Violence*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia press.

Dutton, D.G. (2007). Thinking outside of box: Gender and court-mandated therapy (pp.27-59). In J. Hamel & T. Nicholls *Family Interventions in Domestic Violence: A Handbook of Gender-Inclusive Theory and Treatment*. New York: Springer.

Eckert, R. & Willems, H. (2003). *Escalation and deescalation of social conflicts: The road to violence* (pp.1181-1199). In W.Heimeyer and J. Hagan (eds.). *International Handbook of Violence Research*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Ehrensaft, M. K., Moffitt, T. E., & Caspi, A. (2004). Clinically abusive relationships in an unselected birth cohort: Men's and women's participation and developmental antecedents. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 113(2),* 258–270

Eisikovits, Z. & Buchbinder, E. (2000). *Locked In a Violent Embrace: Understanding and Intervening in Domestic Violence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Eisikovits, Z. &Winstok, Z. (2002). Reconstructing intimate violence: The structure and content of recollections of violent events. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12 (5), 685-699.

Eisikovits, Z., Winstok, Z., & Gelles, R. J. (2002). Structure and dynamics of escalation from the victim's perspective. *Families in Society*, 83(2), 142−152.

Enosh, G. & Buchbinder, E. (2005). Strategies of distancing from emotional experience: making memories of domestic violence. *Qualitative Social Work, 4* (1), 9-32.

Fagan, J. (1989). *Cessation of Family Violence: Deterrence and Dissuasion*. In L. Ohlin & M. Tonry (eds.). Crime and Justice, Vol. 11, *Family Violence*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 377-425.

Fagan, J., & Browne, A. (1994). Violence between spouses and intimates: Physical aggression between women and men in intimate relationships. In J. A. Roth & A. J. Reiss (Eds.), *Understanding and Preventing Violence: Vol. 3. Social Influences* (pp. 115–292). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Feld, S. L., & Straus, M. A. (1989). Escalation and desistance of wife assault in marriage. *Criminology*, 27, 141-161.

Felson, R. B. (1982). Impression management and the escalation of aggression and violence. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 45,* 245-254.

Felson, R. B. (1993). Predatory and dispute-related violence: A social interactionist approach. In R. V. Clarke & M. Felson (Eds.), *Routine Activity and Rational Choice. Advances in Criminological Theory* Vol. 5, (pp. 103–126). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press.

Felson, R. B. (2002). *Violence and Gender Re-examined*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Felson, R. B., & Outlaw, M. C. (2007). The control motive and marital violence. *Violence and Victims, 22(4),* 387–407.

Felson, R. B., & Steadman, H. J. (1983). Situational factors in disputes leading to criminal violence. *Criminology, 21*, 59-74.

Felson, R. B., and Tedeschi, J.T. (1993). A social interactionist approach to violence: Cross-cultural applications. *Violence and Victims, (*8), 295-310.

Fenton, B. & Rathus, J. (2010). Men's self-reported descriptions and precipitants of

domestic violence perpetration as reported in intake evaluations. *Journal of Family Violence, 25* (2), 149-158.

Fiebert, M. S. (2010). References examining assaults by women on their spouses or male partners: An annotated bibliography. *Sexuality & Culture, 14,* 49–91.

Finkelhor, D. and Yllo, K. (1983). *License to Rape: Sexual Abuse of Wives*. New York: Free Press.

Flemke, K. (2009). Triggering rage: unresolved trauma in women's lives. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 31 (2), 123-139.

Flynn, A. & Graham, K. (2010). "Why did it happen?" A review and conceptual framework for research on perpetrators' and victims' explanations for intimate partner violence. *Aggression and Violent Behavior,* 15, 239–251.

Foshee, V.A., Bauman, K.E., Linder, F., Rice, J. & Wilcher, R. (2007). Typologies of adolescent dating violence. Identifying typologies of adolescent dating violence perpetration. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 22* (5), 498-519.

Gabora, N., Stewart, L., Lilley, K., Allegri, N. (2007). *A profile of Female Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence: Implications for Treatment*. Correctional Service Canada, R-175, 1-10.

García-Moreno C, Riecher-Rössler A (eds) (2013). *Violence against Women and Mental Health*. *Key Issues Mental Health*. Basel, Karger, vol 178.

Garcia-Moreno, C., Jansen, H.A., Ellsberg, M., Heise, L., Watts, C.H. (2006) Prevalence of intimate partner violence: findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. *Lancet 68* (9543), 1260-1269.

Gartner, R., and McCarthy, B. (2006). Maternal infanticide and the dark figure of homicide: Beyond the mad, the bad, and the victim. In *Gender and Crime: Patterns in Victimization and Offending,* eds. K. Heimer and C. Kruttschnitt. New York: New York University Press.

Gartner, R., Griffiths, E., & Yule, C. (2012). *How the nature of violence is affected by the relative status of opponents*. Paper presented at the 68th annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology. 14-17 November, 2012, Chicago, USA.

Gelles, R.J. and Straus, M.A. (1979). Determinants of violence in the family: Toward a theoretical integration. In W. Burr, R. Hill, and I. Reiss, eds., *Contemporary*

*Theories About the Family*. New York: Simon and Shuster.

Gieger, B. & Fischer, M. (2006). Will words ever harm me? Escalation from verbal to physical abuse in sixth-grade classrooms. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 21* (3), 337-357.

Giles-Sims, J. (1983). *Wife Battering: A Systems Theory Approach*. New York: Guilford.

Gilfus, M.E. (1992). From victims to survivors to offenders: Women's routes of entry and immersion into street crime. *Women and Criminal Justice, 4*(1), 63-89.

Gillespie Tozer, D. (2013). *Illuminating Struggles for Gendered Responses: Practice with Women Offenders of Intimate Partner Violence*. Open access Dissertations and Theses. Paper 8240.

Giordano, P.C., Deines, J.A., and Cernkovich, S.A. (2006). In and out of crime: A life course perspective on girls' delinquency (pp.17-41). In *Gender and Crime: Patterns in Victimization and Offending,* eds. K. Heimer and C. Kruttschnitt. New York: New York University Press.

Giordano, P.C., Millhollin, T.J., Cernkovich, S.A., Pugh, M.D. and Rudolph, J.L. (1999). Delinquency, identity, and women's involvement in relationship violence. *Criminology, 37*, 17-37.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*. Illinois: Free Press.

Goldenson, J., Geffner, R., Foster, S., & Clipson, C. (2007). Female domestic violence offenders: Their attachment security, trauma symptoms, and personality organization. *Violence and Victims, 22* (5), 530–543.

Goldenson, J., Spidel, A., Greaves, C., & Dutton, D. (2009). Female perpetrators of intimate partner violence: Within-group heterogeneity, related psychopathology, and a review of current treatment with recommendations for the future. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, & Trauma, 18* (7), 752–769.

Gondolf, E. W. (2002). *Batterer Intervention Systems: Issues, Outcomes and Recommendations*. London: Sage Publications.

Gondolf, E. W., & Beeman, A. K. (2003). Women's accounts of domestic violence versus tactics-based outcome categories. *Violence Against Women*, *9*(3), 278-301.

Gottman, J.M. and Notarius, C.I. (2000). Decade review: Observing marital interaction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 62* (4), 927-947.

Gould, R. (2003). *Collision of Wills: How Ambiguity about Social Rank Breeds Conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Government of Ontario. 2003-04. *Offender Profiles*. Statistical Services. Program Effectiveness, Statistics and Applied Research division of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Grauwiler, P. and Mills, L.G. (2004). Moving beyond the criminal justice paradigm: A radical restorative justice approach to intimate abuse. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 31* (1), 55.

Griffiths, E., Yule, C. and Gartner, R. (2011). Fighting over trivial things: Explaining the issue of contention in violent altercations. *Criminology,* 49, 61-94.

Hamberger, L.K. & Hastings, J.E. (1986). Personality correlates of men who abuse their partners: A cross-validation study. *Journal of Family Violence,* 1 (4), 323– 341.

Hamel, J. (2005). *Gender-Inclusive Treatment of Intimate Partner Abuse: A Comprehensive Approach*. New York: Springer.

Hamel, J. (2008). *Intimate Partner and Family Abuse: A Casebook of Gender Inclusive Therapy*. New York: Springer.

Hamel, J., & Nicholls, T. (Eds.). (2007). *Family Interventions in Domestic Violence: A Handbook of Gender-Inclusive Theory and Treatment*. NY: Springer.

Harris, G. E. (2006). Conjoint therapy and domestic violence: Treating the individuals and the relationship. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 19* (4), 373-379.

Heise, L. L. (1998). Violence against women: An integrated, ecological framework. *Violence Against Women, 4* (3), 262-290.

Henning, K, Jones, A, & Holford, R. (2003). Treatment needs of women arrested for domestic violence: A comparison with male offenders. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 18(8), 839–856.

Henning, K., Jones, A., & Holdford, R. (2005). 'I didn't do it, but if I did I had a good reason': Minimization, denial, and attributions of blame among male and female domestic violence offenders. *Journal of Family Violence, 20* , 131–139.

Henning, K., Renauer, B., & Holdford, R. (2006). Victim or offender? Heterogeneity

among women arrested for intimate partner violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 21*, 351-368.

Hepburn, J. R. (1973). Violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships. *The Sociological Quarterly, 14,* 419-429.

Hines, D. A. & Malley-Morrison, K. (2001). Psychological effects of partner abuse against men: a neglected research area. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 2, 75–85.

Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. (2009). Women's use of intimate partner violence against men: prevalence, implications, and consequences. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 18* (6), 572–586.

Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. (2010a). A closer look at men who sustain intimate terrorism by women. *Partner Abuse, 1* (3), 286–313.

Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. (2010b). Intimate terrorism by women towards men: Does it exist? *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research, 2* (3), 36–56.

Hines, D. A., Brown, J., & Dunning, E. (2007). Characteristics of callers to the domestic abuse helpline for men. *Journal of Family Violence, 22*, 63–72.

Hines, D.A. (2013). The physical and mental health of male partner violence victims. Paper presented at the *American Psychological Association's Annual Convention*, Honolulu, HI, July 31, 2013.

Holtzworth-Munroe, A. (2005). Female perpetration of physical aggression against an intimate partner: A controversial new topic of study, *Violence and Victims, 20*(2), 251-259.

Holtzworth-Munroe, A. & Meehan, J.C. (2004). Typologies of men who are martially violent: Scientific and clinical implications. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 19* (12), 1369-1389.

Holtzworth-Munroe, A. & Stuart, G.L. (1994). Typologies of male batterers: Three subtypes and the differences among them. *Psychological Bulletin,* 116 (3), 476–497.

Holtzworth-Munroe, A., Smutzler, N., & Stuart, G. L. (1998). Demand and withdraw communication among couples experiencing husband violence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *66*(5), 731

Horney, J. (2001). Criminal events and criminal career: An integrative approach to the study of violence (pp. 141-167). In R. F.Meier, L.W. Kennedy, and V.F. Sacco (eds.). *The Process and Structure of Crime: Criminal Events and Crime Analysis*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Infante, D. A., & Rancer, A. S. (1996). Argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness: A review of recent theory and research. *Communication Yearbook, 19*, 319-351.

Infante, D. A., Riddle, B. L., Horvath, C. L., & Tumlin, S. A. (1992). Verbal aggressiveness: Messages and reasons. *Communication Quarterly, 40*, 116-126.

Infante, D. A., Sabourin, T. C., Rudd, J. E., & Shannon, E. A. (1990). Verbal aggression in violent and nonviolent marital disputes. *Communication Quarterly, 38,* 361-371.

Jacobson, N.S. & Gottman, J.M. (1998). *When Men Batter Women: New Insights into Ending of Abusive Relationships*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Jennings, J. & Murphy, C.M. (2000). Male-male dimensions of male-female battering: A new look at domestic violence. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 1* (1), 21-29.

Jewkes, R. (2002). Intimate partner violence: Causes and prevention, *Lancet, 359*, 1423-1429.

Johnson, M. (2011). Gender and types of intimate partner violence: A response to an anti-feminist literature review. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour, 16*, 289–296.

Johnson, M.P. (2008). *A Typology of Domestic Violence: Intimate Terrorism, Violent Resistance, and Situational Couple Violence*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Jones, A. (1980). *Women Who Kill*. New York: Fawcett Columbine Books.

Jones, A. S., Heckert, D. A., Gondolf, E. D., Zhang, Q., & Ip, E. H. (2010). Complex behavioral patterns and trajectories of domestic violence offenders. *Violence and Victims*, *25*(1), 3-17.

Katz J. (1998). *Seduction of Crime: Moral and Sensual Attractions in Doing Evil.* Basic Books: New York.

Komarovskaya, I., Loper, A., & Warren, J. (2007). The role of impulsivity in antisocial and violent behaviour and personality disorders among incarcerated women. *Criminal Justice and Behaviour, 34* (11), 1499-1515.

Kruttschnitt, C. (1996). Quantitative contributions to the study of gender and crime or bootstrapping our way into the theoretical thicket. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology, 12,* 136-193.

Kruttschnitt, C. & Carbone-Lopez, K. (2006). Moving beyond the stereotypes: Women's subjective accounts of their violent crime. *Criminology, 44* (2), 321-351.

Kruttschnitt, C., McLaughlin, B.L., & Petrie, C.V. (2004). *Advancing the Federal Research Agenda on Violence Against Women* /Steering Committee for the Workshop on Issues in Research on Violence Against Women; Committee on Law and Justice, Division of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council of the National Academies. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press.

Kurz, D. (1993). Physical assaults by husbands: A major social problem. In R. J. Gelles & D. R. Loseke (Eds.), *Current Controversies on Family Violence* (1st ed.; pp. 88–103). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kwong, M.I., Bartholomew, K., & Dutton, A. (1999). Gender differences in patterns of relationship violence in Alberta. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 31*, 150-160.

Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J. (2010). Controversies involving gender and intimate partner violence in the United States. *Sex Roles*, *62*(3–4), 179–193.

Laroche, D. (2005). *Aspects of the Context and Consequences of Domestic Violence—Situational Couple Violence and Intimate Terrorism in Canada in 1999*. Quebec: Government of Quebec: Institut de la statistique du Québec

Levi, K. (1980). Homicide as conflict resolution. *Deviant Behaviour, 1,* 281-307.

Lloyd, S. A. (1996). Physical aggression, distress, and everyday marital interaction. In D. C. Cahn & S. A. Lloyd (Eds.), *Family Violence From a Communication Perspective* (pp. 177–198). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Loseke, D.R. and Kurz, D. (2005). Men's violence toward women is the serious social problem (pp. 79-97). In Loseke, D.R., Gelles, R.G., and Cavanaugh, M (eds.). *Current Controversies on Family Violence.* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Luckenbill, D. (1977). Criminal homicide as a situated transaction. *Social Problems,* 25 (2), 176-186.

Maidment, M. R. (2006). Transgressing boundaries: Feminist perspectives in criminology. In W. S. DeKeseredy, & B. Perry (Eds.), *Advancing Critical Criminology: Theory and Application* (pp. 43–62). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Maiuro, R.D. & Eberle, J.A. (2008). State standards for domestic violence perpetrator treatment: current status, trends, and recommendations. *Violence and Victims, 23* (2), 133-155.

Malley-Morrison, K., & Hines, D. (2004). *Family Violence in a Cultural Perspective: Defining, Understanding, and Combating Abuse*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Medeiros, R.A. and Straus, M.A. (2007). Risk factors for physical violence between dating partners: Implications for gender-inclusive prevention and treatment of family violence. In Hamel, J. and Nicholls, T.L. (eds.) *Family Interventions in Domestic Violence.* New York: Springer.

Meier, R.F., Kennedy, L.W., and Sacco, V. (2001a). Crime and criminal event perspective (pp.1-29). In R.F.Meier, L.W. Kennedy, and V.F.Sacco (eds.). *The Process and Structure of Crime: Criminal Events and Crime Analysis*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Meier, R.F., Kennedy, L.W., and Sacco, V. (eds.) (2001b). *The Process and Structure of Crime: Criminal Events and Crime Analysis*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Messerschmidt, J. (1997). *Crime as Structured Action: Gender, Race, Class, and Crime in the Making*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, J. and White, N. (2003). Gender and adolescent relationship violence: A contextual examination, *Criminology, 41* (4), 1207-1248.

Miller, J., and Mullins, C.W. (2006). The status of feminist theories in criminology. In *Taking Stock: The Status of Criminological Theory*, eds. F.T. Cullen, J.Wright, and K. Blevins. *Advances in Criminological Theory,* vol. 15. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Miller, S.L. & Melloy, M.L. (2006). Women's use of force. Voices of women arrested for domestic violence. *Violence Against Women, 12* (1), 89-115.

Miller, S.L., Gregory, C. & Iovanni, L. (2005). One size fits all? A gender-neutral

approach to a gender-specific problem: Contrasting batterer treatment programs for male and female offenders. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 16(3), pp. 336-359.

Mills, L.G. (2003). *Insult to Injury: Rethinking Our Responses to Intimate Abuse.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Moe, A. (2004). Blurring the boundaries: Women's criminality in the context of abuse. *Women's Studies Quarterly, 32* (3/4), 116-138.

Moffitt, T.E, Caspi, A., Rutter, M., & Silva, P.A. (2001). *Sex Differences in Antisocial Behaviour.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.

Morrissey, B. (2003). *When Women Kill: Questions of Agency and Subjectivity.* New York: Routledge.

Murphy, C. M., & Ting, L. A. (2010). Interventions for perpetrators of intimate partner violence: A review of efficacy research and recent trends. *Partner Abuse*, *1*(1), 26-44.

Murray, C. E., Mobley, A. K., Buford, A. P., & Seaman-DeJohn, M. M. (2007). Same-sex intimate partner violence: dynamics, social context, and counseling implications. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, *1*(4), 7-30.

O'Leary, K.D., Barling, J., Arias, I., Rosenbaum, A., Malone, J. and Tyree, A. (1989). Prevalence and stability of physical aggression between spouses: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 57* (2), 263-268.

Ogle, R. S., Maier-Katkin, D., & Bernard, T. J. (1995). A theory of homicidal behavior among women. *Criminology, 33*, 173-194.

Olson, L. (2002a). "As ugly and painful as it was, it was effective:" Individuals' unique assessment of communication competence during aggressive conflict episodes. *Communication Studies, 53* (2), 171-188.

Olson, L. (2002b). Exploring "common couple violence" in heterosexual romantic relationships. *Western Journal of Communication, 66* (1), 104-128.

Olson, L. (2004). Relational control-motivated aggression: A theoretically-based typology of intimate violence. *Journal of Family Communication, 4*, 209-233.

Olson, L.N, Baiocchi-Wagner, E.A., Wilson-Kratzer, J., and Symonds, S.E. (2012). *The Dark Side of Family Communication*. Cambridge. UK: Polity Press.

Olson, L.N. & Lloyd, S.A. (2005). "It depends on what you mean by starting": An exploration of how women define initiation of aggression and their motives for behaving aggressively. *Sex Roles*, 53 (7-8), 603-617.

Pagelow, M. D. (1981). *Woman-Battering: Victims and Their Experiences*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Palmetto, N., Davidson, L., Breirbart, V., & Rickert, V. (2013). Predictors of physical intimate partner violence in the lives of young women: Victimization, perpetration, and bidirectional violence. *Violence and Victims, 28* (1), 103-121.

Panuzio, J., & DiLillo, D. (2010). Physical, psychological, and sexual intimate partner aggression among newlywed couples: Longitudinal prediction of marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family Violence*, 25, 689–699.

Pearson, P. (1997). *When She Was Bad: Women and The Myth of Innocence*. Toronto: Random House.

Powers, R.A. & Simpson, S.S. (2012). Self-protective behaviours and injury in domestic violence situations: Does it hurt to fight back? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 27* (17), 3345-3365.

Renzetti, C. (1992). *Violent Betrayal: Partner Abuse in Lesbian Relationships*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Retzinger, S.M. (1991). *Violent Emotions: Shame and Rage in Marital Quarrels*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Richardson, S.R. (2005). The myth of female passivity: Thirty years of revelations about female aggression. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 29*, 238-247.

Richie, B.E. (2003). *Understanding the Links Between Violence Against Women and Women's Participation in Illegal Activity*. US National Institute of Justice.

Richie, B.E. (1996). *Compelled to Crime: The Gender Entrapment of Battered Black Women.* New York: Routledge.

Ristock, J.L. (2002). *No More Secrets: Violence in Lesbian Relationships*. New York: Routledge.

Robertson, K., & Murachver, T. (2007). It takes two to tangle: Gender symmetry in intimate partner violence. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 29(2),* 109–118.

Robertson, K., and Murachver, T. (2011). Women and men's use of coercive control in

intimate partner violence. *Violence and Victims, 26* (2), 208-217.

Roloff, M.E. (1996). The catalyst hypothesis. Conditions under which coercive communication leads to physical aggression (pp.20-37). In Dudley D. Cahn and Sally A. Lloyd (Eds.), *Family Violence From a Communication Perspective*. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ronel, N. (2011). Criminal behavior, criminal mind being caught in a "criminal spin". *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *55*(8), 1208-1233.

Ross, J. M., & Babcock, J. C. (2010). Gender and intimate partner violence in the United States: Confronting the controversies. *Sex Roles*, *62*(3-4), 194-200.

Ross, J.M. & Babcock, J.C. (2012). Gender differences in partner violence in context: Deconstructing Johnson's (2001) control-based typology of violent couples (pp. 58-76). In Lisa M. Conradi & Robert Geffner (eds.), *Female offenders of Intimate Partner Violence: Current Controversies, Research, and Treatment Approaches*. New York: Routledge.

Sabourin, T.C. (1995). The role of negative reciprocity in spouse abuse: A relational control analysis. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 23,* 271-283.

Sampson, R.S. and Lauritsen, J.L. (1994). Violent victimization and violent offending: Individual-, situational and community-level risk factors (pp.1-115). In J. A. Roth & A. J. Reiss (Eds.), *Understanding and Preventing Violence,* vol. 3. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Saunders, D. G. (1988). Wife abuse, husband abuse, or mutual combat. In K. Yllo & M. Bograd (Eds.), *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse* (pp. 90–113). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Saunders, D.G. (1992). A typology of men who batter: Three types derived from cluster analysis. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry,* 62 (2), 264–275.

Savitz, L.D., Kumar, K.S. & Zahn, M.A. (1991). Quantifying Luckenbill. *Deviant Behavior*, 12(1), 19-29.

Scheff, T.J., & Retzinger, S.M. (1991). *Emotions and Violence: Shame and Rage in Destructive Conflicts*. Lexington, MA: The Free Press.

Schumacher, J.A. & Leonard, K.E. (2005). Husbands' and wives' marital adjustment,

verbal aggression, and physical aggression as longitudinal predictors of physical aggression in early marriage. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 73* (1), 28-37.

Scott, K. L. & Straus, M. (2007). Denial, minimization, partner blaming, and intimate aggression in dating partners. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 22*, 851 -871.

Shergill, S.S., Bays, P.M., Frith, C.D., & Wolpert, D.M. (2003). Two eyes for an eye: The neuroscience of force escalation. *Science, New Series*, 301 (5630), 187.

Simpson, S.S. and Gibbs, C. (2006). Making sense of intersections (pp. 269-303). In Karen Heimer and Candace Kruttschnitt (eds.). *Gender and Crime: Patterns in Victimization and Offending.* New York: New York University Press.

Snider, L. (2008). Criminalizing violence against women: solution or dead end? *Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, 74*, 38-39.

Stark, E. (2007). *Coercive Control: The Entrapment of Women in Personal Life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Stets J.E. (1990). Verbal and physical aggression in marriage. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 52*, 501–514

Stets, J.E., and Straus, M.A. (1999). The marriage license as a hitting license: A comparison of assaults in dating, cohabiting and married couples (pp. 227-245). In Murray A. Straus and Richard J. Gelles (Eds.), *Physical Violence In American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Stith, S.M. & McCollum, E.E. (2011). Conjoint treatment of couples who have experienced intimate partner violence. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour,* 16, 312-318.

Stith, S.M., McCollum, E.E., & Rosen, K.H. (2011). *Couple Therapy for Domestic Violence: Finding Safe Solutions*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Storey, J.E. & Strand, S. (2012). The characteristics and violence risk management of women arrested by the police for intimate partner violence. *European Journal of Criminology, 9* (6), 636-651.

Straus, M. (1992). Sociological Research and Social Policy: The Case of Family

Violence. *Sociological Forum, 7* (2), 211-237.

Straus, M. A. (1990). Injury, frequency, and the representative sample fallacy in measuring wife beating and child abuse. In M. A. Straus & R. J. Gelles (Eds.), *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families* (pp. 75–89). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publications.

Straus, M. A. (1999). The controversy over domestic violence by women: A methodological, theoretical and sociology of science analysis. In X. B. Arriaga & S. Oskamp (Eds.), *Violence in Intimate Relationships* (pp. 17–44). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Straus, M. A. (2005). Women's violence toward men is a serious social problem. In D. R. Loseke R. J. Gelles & M. M. Cavanaugh (Eds.), *Current Controversies on Family Violence* (pp. 55−77). 2nd ed. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Straus, M. A. (2008). Dominance and symmetry in partner violence by male and female university students in 32 nations. *Children and Youth Services Review, 30*, 252–275.

Straus, M. A. (2009). Why the overwhelming evidence on partner physical violence by women has not been perceived and is often denied. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, & Trauma*, *18* (6), 552–571.

Straus, M. A. (2013). Dyadic victimization types: A simple but powerful tool applicable to victimization in family relationships world-wide. Accessed on 16 October 2014 at http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2/DT/Sept-2014%20and%20beyond%20files/DT-A%2006%20DT%20victimization%20-%20Barcelona.pdf.

Straus, M. A., Gelles, R. J., & Steinmetz, S. K. (1980 (2006)). *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in The American Family.* New York: Doubleday/Anchor Books (Re-issued Transaction Publications, 2006 with a new forward by Richard J. Gelles and Murray A. Straus).

Straus, M. A., Hamby, S. L., Boney-McCoy, S., & Sugarman, D. B. (1996). The revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2): Development and preliminary psychometric data. *Journal of Family Issues, 17*(3), 283-316.

Straus, M.A. (2010). Thirty years of denying the evidence on gender symmetry in partner violence: Implications for prevention and treatment. *Partner Abuse*, 1, 332-361.

Straus, M.A. (2011). Gender symmetry and mutuality in perpetration of clinical-level partner violence: Empirical evidence and implications for prevention and treatment. *Aggression and violent behaviour, 16*, 279-288.

Straus, M.A. & Douglas, E. M. (2004). A short form of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales, and typologies for severity and mutuality. *Violence and Victims*, *19*(5), 507-520.

Straus, M.A. & Gelles, R.J. (1999). *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptions to Violence in 8,145 Families*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Straus, M.A. & Michel-Smith, Y. (2012). *Relation of violence between parents of university students to students' criminogenic beliefs, assaults on dating partners, and property crime: A comparison of father-only, mother-only, and mutual parental violence*. Presented at the American Society of Criminology meeting on Nov. 15, 2012.

Straus, M.A. & Ramirez, I. L. (2004). Criminal history and assault of dating partners: The role of type of prior crime, age of onset, and gender. *Violence and Victims, 19* (4), 413-434.

Straus, M.A. & Scott, K. (2009). Gender symmetry in partner violence: the evidence, the denial, and the implications for primary prevention and treatment (pp. 245-271). In D. J. Whitaker & J. R. Lutzker (Eds.), *Preventing Partner Violence: Research and Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Sutton, J.E., Bellair, P.E., Kowalski, B.R., Light, R., & Hutcherson, D.T. (2011). Reliability and validity of prisoner self-reports gathered using the Life Event Calendar method. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology, 27*, 151-171.

Swan, S. C., & Snow, D. L. (2002). A typology of women's use of violence in intimate relationships. *Violence Against Women*, *8*(3), 286-319.

Swan, S. C., & Snow, D. L. (2003). Behavioral and psychological differences among abused women who use violence in intimate relationships. *Violence Against*

*Women*, *9*(1), 75-109.

Swan, S. C., & Snow, D. L. (2006). The development of a theory of women's use of violence in intimate relationships. *Violence Against Women*, *12*(11), 1026-1045.

Swatt, M. L. & He, N. (2006). Exploring the difference between male and female intimate partner homicides revisiting the concept of situated transactions. *Homicide Studies*, *10*(4), 279-292.

Sweeten, G., Piquero, A. R., & Steinberg, L. (2013). Age and the explanation of crime, Revisited. *Journal of Youth and Adolescent, 42* (6), 921-938.

Therborn, G. (2004). *Between Sex and Power: Family in The World, 1900-2000*. London and New York: Routledge.

Tjaden, P. & Thoennes, N. (2000). Prevalence and consequences of male-to-female and female-to-male intimate partner violence as measured by the National Violence Against Women Survey. *Violence Against Women, 6* (2), 142-161.

Tweed, R. & Dutton, D.G. (1998). A comparison of impulsive and instrumental sub-groups of batterers. *Violence and Victims,* 13(3), 217–230.

Vivian, D., & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J. (1994). Are bi-directionally violent couples mutually victimized? A gender-sensitive comparison. *Violence and Victims, 9,* 107–124.

Walker, L. (1979). *The Battered Woman*. New York: Harper & Row.

Walker, L. (2009). *The Battered Woman Syndrome*. (3rd ed). New York, NY: Springer.

Waltz, J. (2003). Dialectical behavior therapy in the treatment of abusive behavior. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, *7*(1-2), 75-103.

Whitaker, D. J., Haileyesus, T., Swahn, M., & Saltzman, L. S. (2007). Differences in frequency of violence and reported injury between relationships with reciprocal and nonreciprocal intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Public Health, 97(5),* 941–947.

Whitaker, D. J., Haileyesus, T., Swahn, M., & Saltzman, L. S. (2007). Differences in frequency of violence and reported injury between relationships with reciprocal and nonreciprocal intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Public Health, 97*, 941-947.

White, J. W., and Kowalski, R. M. (1994). Deconstructing the myth of the nonaggressive woman. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 18* (4), 487–508.

Wikström, P. H., & Treiber, K.H. (2009). Violence as situational action. *The International Journal of Conflict and Violence,* 3, 75-96.

Wilkinson, D.L. and Fagan, J. (2001). A theory of violent events (pp.169-195). In R. F. Meier, L. W. Kennedy, and V. F. Sacco (eds.). *The Process and Structure of Crime: Criminal Events and Crime Analysis*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Wilkinson, D.L. and Hamerschlag, S.J. (2005). Situational determinants in intimate partner violence. *Aggression and Violence Behaviour*, 10, 333 -361.

Winstok**,** Z**.** (2008). Conflict escalation to violence and escalation of violent conflicts in intimate relationships. *Children and Youth Service Review, 30* (3), 297-310.

Winstok, Z. (2011). The paradigmatic cleavage on gender differences in partner violence perpetration and victimization. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour, 16* (4), 303-311.

Winstok, Z. (2013). *Partner violence. A New Paradigm for Understanding Conflict Escalation*. New York: Springer.

Winstok, Z. & Eisikovits, Z. (2008). Motives and control in escalatory conflicts in intimate relationships. *Children and Youth Service Review, 30,* 287-296.

Winstok, Z., & Straus, M. (2011). Gender differences in intended escalatory tendencies among marital partners. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 26* (18), 3599-3617.

Wood, J. (2004). Monsters and victims: Male felon's accounts of intimate partner violence. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 21* (5), 555-576.

Wray, A. M., Hoyt, T., & Gerstle, M. (2013). Preliminary examination of a mutual intimate partner violence intervention among treatment-mandated couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *27*(4), 664-670.

Yllo, K. (1988). Political and methodological debates in wife abuse research (pp. 28-51). In Yllo, K., & Bograd, M. (Eds.) *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Yllo, K., & Bograd, M. (Eds.) (1988). *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Zillmann, D. (1990). The interplay of cognition and excitement in aggravated conflict among intimates. In Dudley D. Cahn (ed.). *Intimates in Conflict: A Communication Perspective*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.