Men's Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Deviant Behavior

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Men's Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Deviant Behavior

Men's physical violence against women in the context of a married or cohabiting relationship (referred to in this paper as domestic violence) is a significant social problem. According to national surveys, approximately 11% to 14% of married women in the U.S. are victims of domestic violence each year (Schafer, Caetano, & Clark, 1998; Straus & Gelles, 1990; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998), and the prevalence of domestic violence among young couples is approximately double that of the general population (Magdol, Moffitt, Caspi, Newman, Fagan, & Silva, 1997; O'Leary, Barling, Arias, Rosenbaum, Malone, & Tyree, 1989). Most domestic violence is confined to slaps, pushes, grabs and shoves, which may occur several times over the course of a year (Johnson, 1995; Straus & Gelles, 1990). Beatings and the use of weapons are also sometimes reported, but only among a very small proportion of couples surveyed in community samples. Nonetheless, women who experience domestic violence in any form (slaps, pushes, grabs, and shoves, as well as beatings and the use of weapons) report greater levels of physical injury, depression, and trauma symptoms, than women who have not (Holtzworth-Munroe, Jouriles, Smultzer, & Norwood, 1998; Stets & Straus, 1990). In short, domestic violence is widespread and is associated with a variety of negative outcomes for women. Understanding and identifying the precursors to such violence need to be important societal goals.

A number of theories have been put forth to explain why men are domestically violent. One hypothesis is that domestic violence is part of a general tendency to engage in deviant behavior (e.g., Simons, Wu, Johnson, & Conger, 1995). This hypothesis is rooted in general theories of crime and deviance (e.g., Donovan & Jessor, 1985; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Moffitt, 1993; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985), which suggest that *deviant individuals* are

responsible for committing most deviant acts. These theories hypothesize that most individuals who engage in a particular deviant act engage in other deviant activities as well. That is, deviant individuals do not tend to specialize in particular forms of deviance. These theories also suggest that most adults who engage in deviant behavior will have also engaged in deviant behavior during their youth, with the *persistence* of youth deviance hypothesized to be particularly important in the prediction of adult deviance.

The notion that domestic violence is part of a broader pattern of deviance implies that most, if not all, domestically violent men will be found to engage in other deviant behaviors as well. In addition, deviant behavior during youth should predict domestic violence in adulthood, with a persistent pattern of deviance during adolescence/young adulthood being especially important in the prediction of domestic violence. Although a large body of research is consistent with hypotheses derived from general theories of crime and deviance (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), these theories have not yet been systematically applied to the phenomenon of domestic violence, nor, more specifically, to men sampled from the general community who engage in domestic violence.

Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Deviance

Most research investigating whether domestically violent men also engage in other deviant behavior is based on samples of clinic- or court-referred men. In general, the results of this research indicate that a substantial proportion of domestically violent men (often over 50%) engage in other specific deviant behaviors, such as violence toward non-family members or illicit substance abuse (e.g., Gondolf, 1988; Shields, McCall, & Hanneke, 1988; Fagan, Stewart, & Hansen, 1983). In addition, retrospective and archival data reveal that many of these men have pasts marked by deviant behavior (Dunford, Huizinga, & Elliott, 1990; Sherman, Schmidt,

Rogan et al., 1991). Thus, findings with clinic- or court-referred men are consistent with general theories of crime and deviance. However, the results of these studies cannot be readily generalized to *most* domestically violent men. The violence perpetrated by clinic- and court-referred domestically violent men is typically much more frequent and severe than the violence perpetrated by their counterparts sampled from the community (Johnson, 1995; Straus, 1990a), and only about 1% of men who engage in domestic violence are likely to be clinic- or court-referred (Hotaling, Straus, & Lincoln, 1990).

Research investigating links between domestic violence and other deviant behaviors in community samples is rare, and the results of such research are inconclusive. Data from the 1985 National Family Violence Survey (Straus & Gelles, 1990), a large representative sample of United States couples, indicate that only about 10% of men who engaged in domestic violence during the previous 12 months also engaged in violence toward non-family members during that same time period (i.e., were "pan-violent" or generally violent; Hotaling, Straus, & Lincoln, 1990; Kandel-Englander, 1992). Similarly, data from a large representative community sample from Dunedin, New Zealand, indicate that 38% of men who engaged in *severe* domestic violence also engaged in violent behavior toward a stranger during the same 12-month period (Magdol, Moffitt, Caspi et al., 1997). Interestingly, 72% of the men in the Dunedin study who engaged in severe domestic violence also reported polydrug use (Magdol et al., 1997). In these two studies, the other forms of deviance (violence and polydrug use) were more prevalent among domestically violent men than among men who had not engaged in domestic violence, as general theories of crime and deviance would predict. However, the small proportion of domestically violent men who engaged in violence toward non-family members in the 1985 National Family Violence Survey was interpreted to suggest a *specialization in victims* among domestically

violent men (Kandel-Englander, 1992, p. 468). That is, the majority of domestically violent men were not generally violent (i.e., violent toward individuals outside of their families as well as toward their wives).

A few prospective studies with community samples have linked relatively broad measures of deviance during childhood/adolescence to domestic violence. For example, in a study based on the Dunedin sample, a composite measure of childhood/adolescent problem behavior (which included juvenile police contacts, conduct problems, aggressive delinquency and substance abuse) predicted men's domestic violence at age 21 (Magdol, Moffitt, Caspi, & Silva, 1998). In a sample of rural families living primarily on farms and in small towns, a construct labeled "antisocial behavioral trait" – defined by a variety of deviant acts including fighting, traffic violations, lying, gambling, and arrests occurring during childhood and adolescence – was associated with frequent and persistent domestic violence in adulthood (Simons, Wu, Johnson, & Conger, 1995). In a sample of males at risk for delinquency, a broad measure of antisocial behavior obtained at grade 12 predicted men's physical and psychological aggression toward female partners during early adulthood (Capaldi, Dishion, Stoolmiller, & Yoerger, 2001). In a modified probability sample of adolescents living in a Midwestern city, a broad measure of delinquent behavior over a 12-month period predicted involvement in relationship violence 10 years later (Giordano, Millhollin, Cernkovich, Pugh, & Rudolph, 1999). In short, there is evidence for a link between deviance during childhood/adolescence and later domestic violence.

The Present Research

The goal of this research is to enhance our understanding of the link between domestic violence and other forms of deviance in a community sample of young men who are married or

cohabiting with a female partner. Specifically, we attempt to extend knowledge on the link between deviance and domestic violence by: (1) assessing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and a wide variety of other forms of contemporaneous deviant behavior, (2) examining links between deviance during adolescence/young adulthood and later domestic violence, considering the roles of violent deviance, in particular, and the persistence of deviant activity, and (3) evaluating specific pathways by which early deviance may be linked to men's domestic violence.

Co-occurrence of domestic violence and other forms of contemporaneous deviant behavior. As noted in the review above, general theories of crime and deviance suggest that domestically violent men are more likely than men who are not domestically violent to engage in other forms of deviant behavior. Moreover, according to these theories, *most, if not all,* domestically violent men are likely to engage in other deviant activity. Although a number of investigators have found an association between domestic violence and other forms of deviance, it remains unclear whether *most, if not all,* domestically violent men engage in other, contemporaneous deviant activities. This gap in our knowledge is due, in part, to researchers' reliance on clinic- or court-referred samples of domestically violent men (i.e., samples not representative of most domestically violent men) to address questions pertaining to the co-occurrence of domestic violence and other deviant activities. In addition, co-occurrence rates of domestic violence with other forms of deviance are typically reported for only a few, specific deviant acts (e.g., violence toward non-family members, illicit substance use). A broad assessment of deviant behavior is necessary to maximize the chance of identifying individuals who engage in deviance, regardless of its specific form.

In the present research, we evaluate the co-occurrence of domestic violence and other deviant behavior in a community sample of married or cohabiting young men using a broad measure of deviant activity. Consistent with hypotheses derived from general theories of crime and deviance, as well as prior research on domestic violence and other forms of deviance, we expect a greater proportion of domestically violent men to engage in other forms of deviant behavior than men who are not domestically violent. We also expect most (> 70%) domestically violent men to report engaging in other deviant activities (similar to the finding in the Dunedin sample that 72% of the men who engaged in severe domestic violence also reported polydrug use).

Deviance during adolescence/young adulthood. Most individuals engage in deviant activity during adolescence; in fact, such activity may characterize "normal" teen development (Moffitt, 1993, p. 675). However, there is considerable variability in the nature of adolescent deviant acts, perhaps with implications for the risk of later domestic violence. One potentially important distinction is whether or not an adolescent engages in deviance that includes interpersonal violence (often defined as physical aggression directed toward another person). This distinction is frequently made in the empirical literature on delinquency and appears to have some predictive utility. For example, adolescents who engage in interpersonal violence, compared to those who do not, have poorer outcomes on a number of variables, including recidivism and response to certain interventions (Henggeler, 1989; Quay, 1987).

Most general theories of crime and deviance do not predict continuity in specific deviant acts over time (e.g., adolescents who steal are not necessarily predicted to be at greater risk for stealing as adults, as compared to other forms of deviance). Rather, deviance, broadly conceived, is predicted to be stable. However, there are reasons to believe that physical aggression during

adolescence/young adulthood may be different with respect to the prediction of domestic violence. For example, physical aggression appears to be a specific type of deviant activity that is stable over time, at least for males (Olweus, 1979). In fact, physical aggression appears to be more stable over time than other forms of youth deviance (Elliott, Huizinga, & Morse, 1985). In addition, deviant activity that involves physical aggression is often considered more serious than other forms of deviant activity (Henggeler, 1989), and the seriousness of youth deviance has been linked to the continuity of antisocial behavior into adulthood (Kazdin, 1985). It should also be noted that several investigators have explicitly hypothesized domestic violence to be an expression of a general pattern of male aggression (e.g., O'Leary, 1988), as opposed to a broader pattern of deviant behavior. In fact, the notion of *general* violence has garnered considerable interest in the literature on male batterers, independent of the more inclusive variable of deviance (e.g, Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Herron, Rehman, & Stuart, 2000; Waltz, Babcock, Jacobson, & Gottman, 2000). In short, it is conceivable that youth *violence*, rather than youth *deviance*, is important in the prediction of domestic violence.

Other potentially important dimensions of deviance during adolescence/young adulthood include its seriousness (this would include the seriousness of nonviolent acts as well as violent acts), frequency (the number of times various deviant acts were performed), and persistence (the extent to which deviant acts were performed across multiple years). Each of these dimensions of youth deviance has been linked to antisocial behavior in adulthood (Kazdin, 1985) and might, consequently, be expected to predict domestic violence as well. Longitudinal research linking youth deviance with later domestic violence has considered the seriousness and frequency of deviant acts (e.g., Giordano et al., 1999). However, the persistence of youth deviance has not yet been directly examined as a predictor of domestic violence.

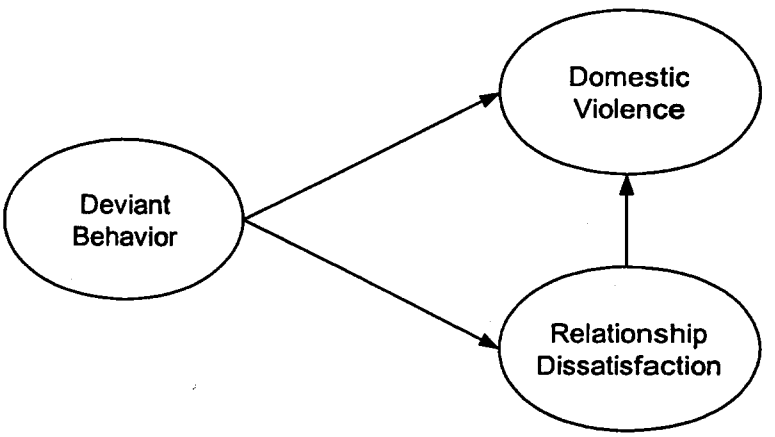
The persistence of youth deviance may contribute in the prediction of domestic violence, even after accounting for the seriousness and frequency of deviance. For most individuals, the likelihood of deviant behavior peaks during early-to-middle adolescence and then declines through late adolescence (see Moffitt, 1993, for a review). During these peak periods, which often span one or two years, many adolescents engage in serious and frequent deviant activity. However, relatively few persist in such activities over long periods of time (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Deviant activity that persists beyond the typical developmental course could be conceptualized as adolescent development gone awry, and may perhaps signal later deviance, including domestic violence. Persistent deviant activity essentially defines a longstanding pattern of antisocial behavior (i.e., a behavioral trait; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992), and such patterns may be particularly important in the prediction of later domestic violence, even within community samples (Crowell & Burgess, 1996).

In the present research, we attempt to replicate prior longitudinal findings linking youth deviance to domestic violence. Specifically, in prior research, deviance was indexed by aggregating a broad array of deviant activities (violent as well as nonviolent), with the seriousness and frequency of deviant acts explicitly considered in several of these studies (e.g., Giordano et al., 1999). Such operationalizations of youth deviance have been linked repeatedly to later domestic violence. In the present research, we attempt to replicate such findings by examining whether an index that considers the seriousness and frequency of youth deviance predicts domestic violence. We then attempt to extend knowledge on the link between early deviance and domestic violence by examining the contributions of violent and nonviolent forms of deviance, as well as the contributions of the *persistence* of deviance, in the prediction of domestic violence.

Specific pathways by which early deviance may be linked to men's domestic violence. Even if early deviance is linked to men's domestic violence, it may not be deviance *per se,* but rather concomitant or ensuing situational or social variables that predict domestic violence. For example, the domestic violence typically documented in survey research with community samples (infrequent slaps, pushes, grabs and shoves) is sometimes described as a product of relationship dissatisfaction – conflict between partners that has simply gotten *out of hand* (Johnson, 1995; Straus & Smith, 1990). This conceptualization is consistent with impressions formed from interviews with community couples, as well as with research linking men's marital dissatisfaction with domestic violence (O'Leary, 1988). In short, relationship dissatisfaction is often thought to be a key precursor to domestic violence in non-clinical samples.

Deviance during adolescence and young adulthood might lead to relationship dissatisfaction. Specifically, deviance, especially persistent deviance, may mark the presence of certain interpersonal skills deficits (e.g., poor conflict-resolution skills, impulse-control problems) that predict relationship dissatisfaction (Heavy, Shenk, & Christensen, 1994; Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Lewis, 1986). Men with a history of deviance may also be more likely to have partners with similar histories and skills deficits (O'Leary & Murphy, 1999), increasing the likelihood of relationship dissatisfaction. Consistent with these ideas, longitudinal research indicates that adolescent deviance predicts a range of troubling adult outcomes, including relationship dissatisfaction (Huesmann, Eron, Lefkowitz, & Walder, 1984; Sampson & Laub, 1993). While it seems plausible that youth deviance leads directly to domestic violence (i.e., domestic violence is simply a continuation of deviant activity), it may also lead indirectly to domestic violence by increasing risk for relationship dissatisfaction (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Relationship Dissatisfaction Mediation Model



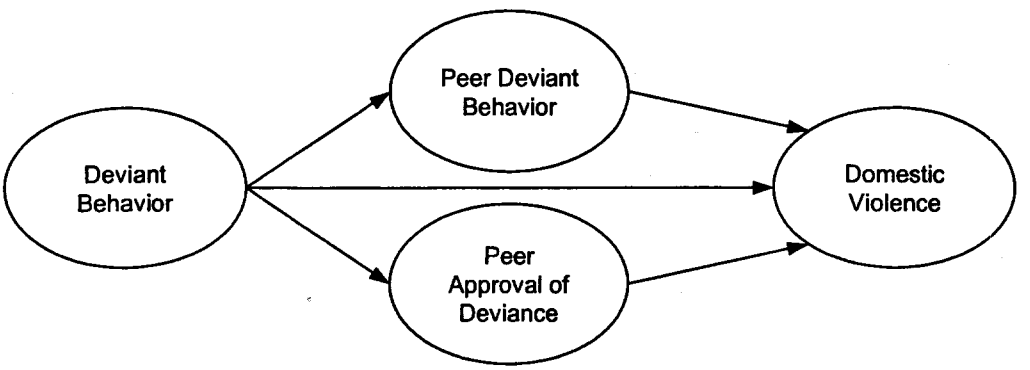
Theory and data also suggest that deviant activity sometimes forms the basis for peer affiliation during adolescence and young adulthood (see Farrington, Loeber, Elliott et al., 1990; Loeber & Hay, 1997; Patterson, Reid, Dishion, 1992, for reviews). That is, adolescents who engage in deviant behavior tend to affiliate with like-minded – and like-behaving – peers who, in turn, are thought to reinforce and perpetuate the performance of deviant behavior. Consistent with the latter part of this hypothesis, Thornberry and colleagues (1994) found that association with delinquent peers led to increased delinquency through the reinforcing environment of the peer network. Moreover, deviant peer affiliation has repeatedly been found to predict later delinquency and criminal activity; in fact, deviant peer affiliation appears to be among the strongest and most consistent predictors of violence in adulthood (see Farrington et al., 1990; Loeber & Hay, 1997; Patterson et al., 1992, for reviews).

There has been considerable speculation that deviant peer affiliation may be important in understanding the development and maintenance of domestic violence (e.g., Bowker, 1983; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Unfortunately, systematic research evaluating the contribution of deviant peer affiliation to domestic violence is virtually non-existent. Capaldi, Dishion, Stoolmiller and Yoerger (2001) provide a notable exception.

With a sample of males originally recruited as children (9-12 years) at risk for antisocial behavior, these investigators tested a series of models involving male deviance, deviant peer affiliation, observed hostile talk about women, and male aggression toward female partners in young adulthood. Deviant peer affiliation during mid-adolescence was associated with male aggression toward a female partner in young adulthood. However, deviant peer affiliation did not relate to domestic violence independent of adolescent antisocial behavior.

The present research builds upon the work of Capaldi and colleagues (2001) in evaluating contributions of general deviance and deviant peer affiliation in the prediction of men's domestic violence. As displayed in Figure 2, we expect deviant peer affiliation, as well as perceptions of peer approval of deviant behavior, to partially mediate the link between deviance in adolescence and domestic violence in adulthood. Importantly, deviant peer affiliation and perceptions of peer approval of deviant behavior are conceptualized as components of the process through which deviance is sustained, not simply other manifestations of deviance. In other words, deviant peer affiliation and peer approval of deviance are expected to increase the likelihood of domestic violence, beyond the risk associated with men's own earlier deviant behavior. This hypothesis is consistent with the results of studies indicating that deviant peer affiliation contributes in the prediction of adolescent antisocial behavior, independent of early antisocial behavior (Elliott, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985; Fergusson & Horwood, 1996; Quinton, Pickles, Maughan, & Rutter, 1993). In this research, we also explore whether the particular type of deviant activity exhibited by peers is important in the prediction of men's domestic violence. It seems plausible that peers whose deviant behavior includes violence may be more likely to reinforce and, consequently, perpetuate violence, as compared to peers who engage only in nonviolent deviance. Similarly, perceptions of peer approval of violence may function to perpetuate violent behavior.

Figure 2. Peer Deviance and Approval of Deviance Mediation Model



Methods

Participants

The National Youth Survey (NYS) data set was used for this research. The original objectives of the NYS research included developing a comprehensive description of the prevalence and psychosocial risk factors for delinquency in American youth. The NYS sample is a national probability sample of households in the continental United States in 1976. All youths between the ages of 11 and 17 (inclusive) on December 31, 1976 were eligible for the NYS. Among the 2,375 youths selected for participation in the original survey, 27.5% did not participate (due to either an inability to contact the respondent or parent/youth refusal). Thus, the initial survey sample consisted of 1,725 youths interviewed in 1976. There were approximately equal numbers of participants across the age groups, and 52% (918) of the initial survey respondents were male. Additional details about the NYS sampling strategy are presented in other reports (Huizinga, 1978). Follow-up interviews, for which data were in the public domain at the time we began this report, were conducted in 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1983 and 1986. Although the NYS data have been researched extensively, to our knowledge the domestic violence data has been the focus of only two other studies (Mihalic & Elliott, 1997; Morse, 1995).

Data for the present research were obtained from male participants who reported being married or cohabiting with a female partner at Wave VI (1983). We use data from Waves I through VI for these participants, excluding Wave II (because only a sub-sample of the participants were administered all of the deviant items at Wave II). Of the 918 males who participated at Wave I, 770 (84%) participated at Wave VI. Participants at Wave VI did not

differ from nonparticipants on indices of family socioeconomic status, income, or ethnicity collected at Wave I.

Of the 770 men in the sample at Wave VI, 176 (22.9%) were married or cohabiting with a partner of the opposite sex and completed the measure of domestic violence. However, one of the men did not provide usable data on deviance at the earlier waves and was not included in subsequent analyses. Of these 175 men, 77.1% were married to their partners, and the average length of the marriages was 25.1 months (SD = 18.60). The mean age for participants was 21.9 years (SD = 1.62). The ethnic breakdown for these 175 men was as follows: 82.3% were Caucasian, 13.1% were African American, 4.0% were Latino, and 0.6% reported "other" as their ethnicity. The mean Duncan Socioeconomic Index (Duncan, 1961) score was 29.3 (SD = 21.0). A score of 30 on the Duncan is the mean socioeconomic index value of all U.S. occupations among the male experienced civilian workforce. Typical occupations with this score include craftsmen and foremen. The average individual income for participants was reported to be $6.97/hour (range $3 - $58).

Men who were married or cohabiting with a partner of the opposite sex were older than those who were not married or cohabiting, t (337) = 9.55, $p < .01$. They also had a higher score on the Duncan, t (703) = 2.36, $p < .05$, and higher income, t (362) = 2.61, $p < .01$.

Measures

Domestic violence. Men's violence toward their female partners was measured with eight items from the physical violence subscale of the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979). The CTS, or versions of it, has been used in numerous studies documenting the prevalence of domestic violence (e.g., Magdol et al., 1997; O'Leary et al., 1989; Schafer et al., 1998; Straus & Gelles, 1990; Tjaden & Thoemmes, 1998). As in previous research, domestic violence was

considered present if any of the following eight items were endorsed: threw something; pushed, grabbed or shoved; slapped; kicked, bit, or hit; hit with something; beat up; threatened with a knife or gun; used a knife or fired a gun. Participants were asked to report the frequency of occurrence of each of these acts during the 12 months preceding the Wave VI assessment.

One concern about research on men's violence toward their female partners is the accuracy of men's reports of the violence. Based primarily on the results of research conducted within clinical samples, several family violence researchers have suggested that domestically violent men minimize their reports of the occurrence of such violence (e.g., Jouriles & O'Leary, 1985). Other researchers, however, who have focused on samples recruited from the community, have found men's reports of their domestic violence to be very similar to reports provided by their wives (e.g., Jacobson, Gottman, Waltz et al., 1994; Moffitt, Caspi, Krueger et al., 1997). The NYS data set does not include partner reports of domestic violence; thus, it does not allow for a check on agreement between partners. The data, however, were collected in a manner that would help participants feel confident that the information provided would not result in prosecution or referral for treatment (Huizinga, Menard, & Elliott, 1989). Furthermore, all participants had responded to questions about aggressive and illegal behavior in assessments at earlier waves, presumably without experiencing negative consequences due to their participation or self-report of socially undesirable behavior. Moffitt and Caspi (1999) suggest that such methods yield more accurate reporting of violence toward women.

General deviance. Men's general deviance (that is, deviance as indicated by acts other than domestic violence) was measured by 31 items describing illegal or socially proscribed behavior. These items sample an array of deviant behaviors, from relatively minor to more serious deviant acts. Each of these items was available at Waves I through VI. Respondents

indicated how often they had engaged in each act during the previous year on a 9-point scale: (1) Never, (2) Once or twice a year, (3) Once every 2/3 months, (4) Once a month, (5) Every 2/3 weeks, (6) Once a week, (7) 2/3 times a week, (8) Once a day, (9) 2/3 times a day. Illicit substance use was assessed by collapsing questions inquiring about the use of specific substances (e.g., marijuana, hallucinogens, tranquilizers, cocaine, heroin) into a single item. Frequency of substance use was calculated as the mean frequency reported across substances.

It should be noted that there were items included by the NYS authors as indicators of deviance that we did not include in our measure of deviance. We eliminated items that could reasonably be construed as domestic violence. For example, the item "had or tried to have sexual relations with someone against their will" was eliminated as an indicator of general deviance because it was not possible to determine whether the target of such acts was the respondent's intimate partner. We also eliminated items that appeared to include both deviant and non-deviant acts or could not conclusively be said to reflect deviant behavior. For example, we omitted the item "threw rocks, bottles, or snowballs" because throwing snowballs is not (one hopes) inherently deviant. In addition, not all deviance items were included by the NYS investigators at each wave. As an example, acts of deviance related to school, such as truancy or cheating on tests, were not included at the final wave, presumably because the sample was beyond school-age at that point.

We operationalized deviance in three ways in this research. The first involved coding deviant behavior as a dichotomous (present/absent) variable according to whether or not the participant had engaged in at least one deviant act. This is perhaps the simplest and most straightforward method for operationalizing deviance, and we used this method for documenting the co-occurrence of domestic violence and other forms of contemporaneous deviant behavior.

The second definition of deviance assessed the persistence of deviant activity across Waves I through V, excluding Wave II (only a sub-sample of the participants were administered all of the deviance items at Wave II). Specifically, we calculated the number of years during this time span (0-4) in which males engaged in one or more deviant acts. The third definition of deviance assessed the frequency and seriousness of deviant activities across Waves I through V, again excluding Wave II. Each act of deviance was assigned a seriousness score (the assignment of scores was guided by data from the National Survey of Crime Severity; Wolfgang, Figlio, Tracy, & Singer, 1985), and a general deviance score was computed for each respondent by summing the products of each item's frequency and its seriousness weight. Coefficient alpha for the frequency/seriousness scales across Waves I, III, IV, and V ranged from .81 to 87. We computed the mean score across Waves I, III, IV, and V to derive a single frequency/seriousness score for deviant activities throughout adolescence/young adulthood. The 31 items comprising the deviance scale and their corresponding seriousness scores are listed in Table 1.

Violent and nonviolent deviance. For some analyses we subdivided the 31-item deviance scale into one 24-item scale reflecting nonviolent deviance and one 7-item scale reflecting violent deviance.[1] Violent/nonviolent classification status for each item is presented in Table 1. Coefficient alpha for the frequency/seriousness scales across Waves I, III, IV, and V ranged from .75 to .82 for nonviolent deviance and .57 to .82 for violent deviance.

Table 1. The 31 Deviance Items with Seriousness Score and Violent/Nonviolent Classification

		Seriousness	Classification
1.	Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members?	12.7	Nonviolent
2.	Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to a school?	12.7	Nonviolent
3.	Purposely damaged or destroyed other property that did not belong to you (not counting family or school property)?	12.7	Nonviolent
4.	Stolen (or tried to steal) a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle?	8.7	Nonviolent
5.	Stolen (or tried to steal) something worth more than $50?	7.7	Nonviolent
6.	Knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods (or tried to do any of these things)?	5.0	Nonviolent
7.	Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife?	3.5	Nonviolent
8.	Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth $5 or less?	1.5	Nonviolent
9.	Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting or killing him/her?	15.3	Violent
10.	Been paid for having sexual relations with someone?	2.1	Nonviolent
11.	Been involved in gang fights?	11.5	Violent
12.	Sold marijuana or hashish?	8.5	Nonviolent
13.	Hitchhiked where it was illegal to do so?	0.3	Nonviolent
14.	Stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your family	2.6	Nonviolent
15.	Hit (or threatened to hit) a teacher or other adult at school?	12.8	Violent
16.	Hit (or threatened to hit) one of your parents?	11.9	Violent
17.	Hit (or threatened to hit) other students?	1.5	Violent
18.	Been loud, rowdy, or unruly in a public place (disorderly conduct)?	1.1	Nonviolent
19.	Sold hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and LSD?	13.7	Nonviolent
20.	Taken a vehicle for a ride (drive) without the owner's permission?	4.4	Nonviolent
21.	Used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from other students?	12.9	Violent
22.	Used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from other people (not students or teachers)?	12.9	Violent
23.	Avoided paying for such things as movies, bus or subway rides and food?	1.5	Nonviolent
24.	Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth between $5 and $50?	2.0	Nonviolent
25.	Stolen (or tried to steal) something at school, such as someone's coat from a classroom, locker, or cafeteria, or a book from the library?	2.6	Nonviolent
26.	Broken into a building or vehicle (or tried to break in) to steal something or just to look around?	6.9	Nonviolent
27.	Begged for money or things from strangers?	0.3	Nonviolent
28.	Failed to return extra change that a cashier gave you by mistake?	0.3	Nonviolent
29.	Made obscene telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty things?	1.9	Nonviolent
30.	Bought or provided liquor for a minor?	1.6	Nonviolent
31.	Used illicit drugs	2.0	Nonviolent

Relationship dissatisfaction. Relationship dissatisfaction was measured at Wave VI by participants' responses to the following six items: (1) All things considered, how satisfied have you been with your relationship with your wife/girlfriend? (2) To what extent have you and your wife/girlfriend shared the same interests and activities? (3) How much warmth and affection

have you received from your wife/girlfriend? (4) How much support and encouragement have you received from your wife/girlfriend? (5) How much loyalty have you and your wife/girlfriend had for one another? (6) Think of this relationship over the past year. How much stress or pressure has there been in this relationship? Responses were recorded on a 5-point scale, with lower scores reflecting higher relationship dissatisfaction. Relationship dissatisfaction was calculated as the mean response across all six items. Coefficient alpha for the scale is .78.

Deviant peer affiliation. Deviant peer affiliation was measured at Wave V by eight items concerning friends' involvement in deviant behavior during the previous 12 months. Participants reported how many of their friends: cheated on school tests, purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to them, used marijuana or hashish, stole something worth less than $5, hit or threatened to hit someone without any reason, broke into a vehicle or building to steal something, sold hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and LSD, and stole something worth more than $50. Responses were recorded on a 5-point scale ranging from "none" to "all," and deviant peer affiliation was calculated as the mean response across all eight items (coefficient alpha = .79).

Peer approval of deviance. Peer approval of deviance was measured at Wave V by eight items concerning perceptions of how close friends would react if participants: cheated on school tests, purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to them, used marijuana or hashish, stole something worth less than $5, hit or threatened to hit someone without any reason, broke into a vehicle or building to steal something, sold hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and LSD, and stole something worth more than $50. Responses were recorded on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly approve" to "strongly disapprove," and peer approval of deviance was calculated as the mean response across all eight items (coefficient alpha = .89).

Results

Preliminary Analyses with Domestic Violence

Of the 175 married or cohabiting men in our sample, 66 (38%) reported one or more acts of physical violence against a female partner on the CTS during the Wave VI assessment. The one-year prevalence rate for domestic violence obtained in this sample is comparable to rates obtained from other large samples of *young* couples (e.g., Magdol et al., 1997; O'Leary et al., 1989). Table 2 presents information on the prevalence of specific acts of domestic violence.

Table 2 Prevalence of Domestic Violence (Wave VI)

Items	*Prevalence (%) (n = 175)*
1. Threw something at your spouse/partner?	9
2. Pushed, grabbed or shoved your spouse/partner?	35
3. Slapped your spouse/partner?	16
4. Kicked, bit, or hit your spouse/partner with a fist?	3
5. Hit or tried to hit your spouse/partner with something?	4
6. Beat up your spouse/partner?	2
7. Threatened your spouse/partner with a knife or gun?	0
8. Use a knife or fired a gun?	0.5

Note: Percentages rounded to nearest 1%

As can be seen in Table 2, most of the domestic violence was confined to slaps, pushes, grabs and shoves. This is consistent with the results of other studies on domestic violence in community samples (Johnson, 1995; Straus & Gelles, 1990).

Frequency scores on the CTS in non-clinical samples are typically very low, with a distribution of scores that is positively skewed (Johnson, 1995; Straus, 1990a). We expected, and obtained, a similar pattern for the NYS sample, ($\underline{M}$ = 1.19, Median = 0, Skewness = 2.50). Based on this finding, we used a dichotomous (present/absent) variable for domestic violence in analyses.

In other research involving national samples, prevalence rates for domestic violence have been found to covary with certain demographic variables, such as age and socioeconomic status (e.g., Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). To evaluate the need to control for demographic variables in subsequent analyses of the relation between deviance and domestic violence, we assessed whether domestically violent men differed from non-domestically violent men on marital or cohabiting status, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or income. The two groups of men did not differ on any of these variables. Thus, these demographic variables were not used as controls in tests of our hypotheses.

Co-occurrence of Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Contemporaneous Deviant Behavior

At Wave VI, when domestic violence was assessed, 64% of the sample reported engaging in one or more deviant acts. A greater proportion of domestically violent men (74%) engaged in other forms of contemporaneous deviant behavior than men who were not domestically violent (58%), χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 4.82, $p < .05$, $\phi = .17$. Table 3 presents the proportion of domestically violent men and non-domestically violent men who engaged in specific deviant acts during the Wave VI assessment period.

Table 3. Prevalence of Deviant Acts at Wave VI.

	Prevalence (%)		
	All men n = 175	Domestically Violent Men n = 66	Non-Domestically Violent Men n = 109
1. Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members?	4	8	2
2. Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to a school?	1	2	0
3. Purposely damaged or destroyed other property that did not belong to you (not counting family or school property)?	5	11	2
4. Stolen (or tried to steal) a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle?	1	2	0
5. Stolen (or tried to steal) something worth more than $50?	5	9	2
6. Knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods (or tried to do any of these things)?	11	18	7
7. Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife?	17	21	14
8. Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth $5 or less?	8	9	7
9. Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting or killing him/her?	10	18	6
10. Been paid for having sexual relations with someone?	0	0	0

11. Been involved in gang fights?	5	6	4
12. Sold marijuana or hashish?	11	11	12
13. Hitch-hiked where it was illegal to do so?	6	9	5
14. Stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your family	1	3	0
15. Hit (or threatened to hit) a teacher or other adult at school?	0	0	0
16. Hit (or threatened to hit) one of your parents?	4	5	4
17. Hit (or threatened to hit) other students?	0	0	0
18. Been loud, rowdy, or unruly in a public place (disorderly conduct)?	25	35	18
19. Sold hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and LSD?	4	6	3
20. Taken a vehicle for a ride (drive) without the owner's permission?	1	3	0
21. Used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from other students?	0	0	0
22. Used force (strong-arm methods) to get money or things from other people (not students or teachers)?	1	2	0
23. Avoided paying for such things as movies, bus or subway rides and food?	4	3	5
24. Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth between $5 and $50?	5	8	4
25. Stolen (or tried to steal) something at school, such as someone's coat from a classroom, locker, or cafeteria, or a book from the library?	1	2	0
26. Broken into a building or vehicle (or tried to break in) to steal something or just to look around?	1	3	0
27. Begged for money or things from strangers?	0	0	0
28. Failed to return extra change that a cashier gave you by mistake?	19	32	11
29. Made obscene telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty things?	1	0	1
30. Bought or provided liquor for a minor?	19	32	11
31. Used illicit drugs	49	53	47

Note: Percentages rounded to nearest 1%

It is noteworthy that 49% of the sample reported using illicit drugs. Given the high prevalence of this specific deviant act, we evaluated the co-occurrence of domestic violence and other forms of deviance without using the illicit drug item. When *illicit drug* use was not included as an indicator of deviance, 55% of the sample reported engaging in one or more deviant acts, and, again, a greater proportion of domestically violent men (67%) engaged in other forms of deviant behavior than men who were not domestically violent (49%), χ^2 (1, $\underline{n}$ = 175) = 5.42, $\underline{p} < .05$, $\phi = .18$.

In light of theory and interest in general violence among domestically violent men, we also assessed the co-occurrence of domestic violence with other forms of violence. Eighteen percent of the sample reported engaging in one or more acts from the 7-item violent deviance scale, and a greater proportion of domestically violent men (23%) engaged in other violence

compared to men who were not domestically violent (10%), χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 5.19, p < .05, ϕ = .17.

Deviance During Adolescence and Young Adulthood

The correlation between the persistence of deviant activity during adolescence and young adulthood (Waves I, III, IV, and V) and the frequency/seriousness of deviance was $r = .41, p < .05$. The persistence of deviant activity correlated positively with domestic violence, $r = .19, p < .05$. Similarly, the frequency/seriousness of deviant activity correlated positively with domestic violence, $r = .18, p < .05$. Separate logistic regression analyses indicated that the persistence of deviance did not reach traditionally accepted levels of statistical significance in the prediction of domestic violence, after accounting for the frequency/seriousness of deviance, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 3.14, p = .08. The frequency/seriousness of deviance also did not predict domestic violence after accounting for the persistence of deviance, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 2.07, *ns*.

We next evaluated relations among violent deviance, nonviolent deviance, and domestic violence. Specifically, we used the scales created from the subsets of deviance items reflecting violent and nonviolent deviance. Correlations among these variables are presented in Table 4. The persistence of violence correlated positively with domestic violence, $r = .26, p < .05$, as did the frequency/seriousness of violence, $r = .20, p < .05$. Similarly, the persistence of nonviolent deviance, $r = .21, p < .05$, and the frequency/seriousness of nonviolent deviance, $r = .16, p < .05$, correlated positively with domestic violence. Separate logistic regression analyses indicated that the persistence of violence contributed in the prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the frequency/seriousness of violence, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 5.46, p < .05; but not the converse, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 0.30, *ns*. Similarly, the persistence of nonviolent deviance contributed in the

prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the frequency/seriousness of nonviolent deviance, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 4.50, p < .05; but not the converse, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 0.69, *ns*.

Table 4. Correlations among violent deviance, nonviolent deviance and domestic violence.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Persistence of violent deviance	–				
2. Persistence of nonviolent deviance	.52	–			
3. Frequency/seriousness of violent deviance	.63	.35	–		
4. Frequency/seriousness of nonviolent deviance	.48	.48	.79	–	
5. Domestic violence	.26	.21	.20	.16	–

Note: $p < .05$ for all correlations

We then evaluated the independent contributions of violent and nonviolent deviance in the prediction of domestic violence. Logistic regression analyses indicated that the persistence of violence contributed in the prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the persistence of nonviolent deviance, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 5.17, p < .05; but the persistence of nonviolent deviance did not contribute in the prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the persistence of violence, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 1.76, *ns*. The frequency/seriousness of violence did not contribute in the prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the frequency/seriousness of nonviolent deviance, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 2.26, *ns*; nor did the frequency/seriousness of nonviolent deviance contribute in the prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the frequency/seriousness of violence, χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 0.01, *ns*.

Given our findings regarding the persistence of violence, we examined this variable in more detail. Table 5 presents the proportion of domestically violent men and non-domestically violent men who engaged in violence during adolescence/young adulthood (and the number of years they reported doing so). A greater proportion of domestically violent men (86%) engaged in other violence than men who were not domestically violent (72%), χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 5.11, p < .05, ϕ = .17. Similarly, a greater proportion of domestically violent men (67%) engaged in

violence for two or more years during adolescence/young adulthood than men who were not domestically violent (44%), χ^2 (1, n = 175) = 8.44, p < .05, ϕ = .22.

Table 5. Persistence of Violence during Adolescence/Young Adulthood by Domestic Violence Status at Wave VI.

	Number of Years Violence Occurred				
Domestic Violence Status	0	1	2	3	4
Not Domestically Violent	28%	28%	16%	22%	6%
Domestically Violent	14%	20%	24%	14%	29%

Note: Percentages rounded to nearest 1%

Pathways Linking Youth Deviance to Domestic Violence

To examine our models linking early deviance to domestic violence (those including relationship dissatisfaction and affiliation with deviant peers, depicted in Figures 1 and 2), we conducted path analyses (using M-Plus, Muthen & Muthen, 2001). We used a model-building approach, considering relationship dissatisfaction and affiliation with deviant peers, first, in separate models. If appropriate, we would then build a final model based on the results of the initial models. In addition, based on our earlier findings that the persistence of violence contributes uniquely in the prediction of domestic violence after accounting for the persistence of nonviolent deviance, as well as the frequency/seriousness of violence, we opted to use persistence of violence (as opposed to other operationalizations of deviance) in testing our models. Bivariate correlations among the variables included in the path models are presented in Table 6.

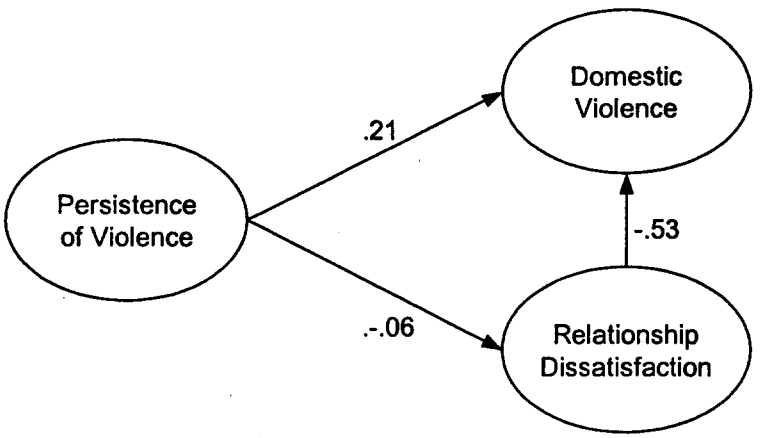
Table 6. Correlations Among Variables in the Models.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Persistence of violence	–						
2.	Peer deviance (Wave V)	.56	–					
3.	Peer approval of deviance (Wave V)	.40	.59	–				
4.	Peer violence (Wave V)	.46	.57	.25	–			
5.	Peer approval of violence (Wave V)	.44	.47	.74	.48	–		
6.	Relationship dissatisfaction (Wave VI)	-.14	-.22	-.28	-.14	-.23	–	
7.	Domestic violence (Wave VI)	.26	.17	.11	.25	.17	-.27	–

Note: $p < .05$ for all correlations $\geq .17$

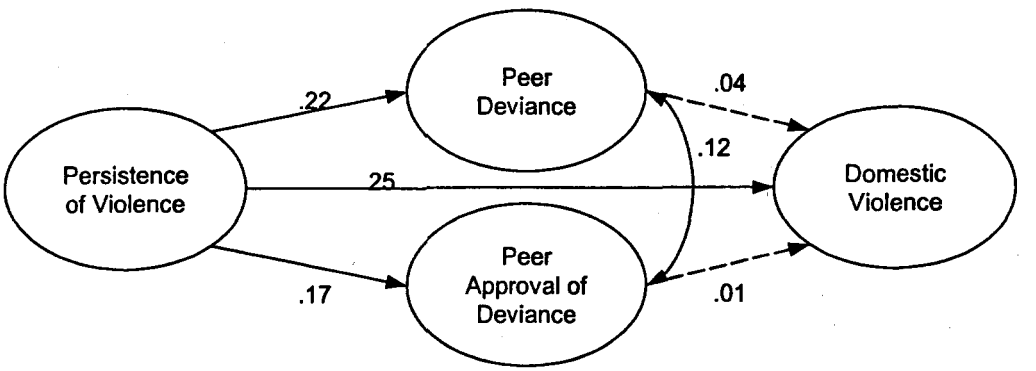
Relationship dissatisfaction. As noted earlier, deviant behavior may increase the likelihood of dissatisfaction within intimate relationships, which, in turn, increases the risk that couples' conflicts will escalate to include domestic violence. To evaluate this theorized pathway, we specified a model with paths from the persistence of violence to relationship dissatisfaction and domestic violence, and a path from relationship dissatisfaction to domestic violence. This model is saturated; thus, it does not allow a test of fit; however, results provide an indication of whether the pattern of relationships is consistent with the theory being tested and informs subsequent steps in the model-building process. A Z-test was used to evaluate the statistical significance of path coefficients and one-tailed tests of significance were used to test directional hypotheses. As Figure 3 indicates, persistence of violence was associated with domestic violence, path coefficient (PC) = .21, $p < .05$, and with relationship dissatisfaction, (PC) = -.06, $p < .05$, at Wave VI. Relationship dissatisfaction was also associated with domestic violence, PC = -.53, $p < .05$. Thus, persistence of violence during adolescence/young adulthood and relationship dissatisfaction both relate to domestic violence when considered in the same model, and relationship dissatisfaction partially mediates the relation between persistence of violence and domestic violence.

Figure 3. Persistence of Violence, Relationship Dissatisfaction, and Domestic Violence



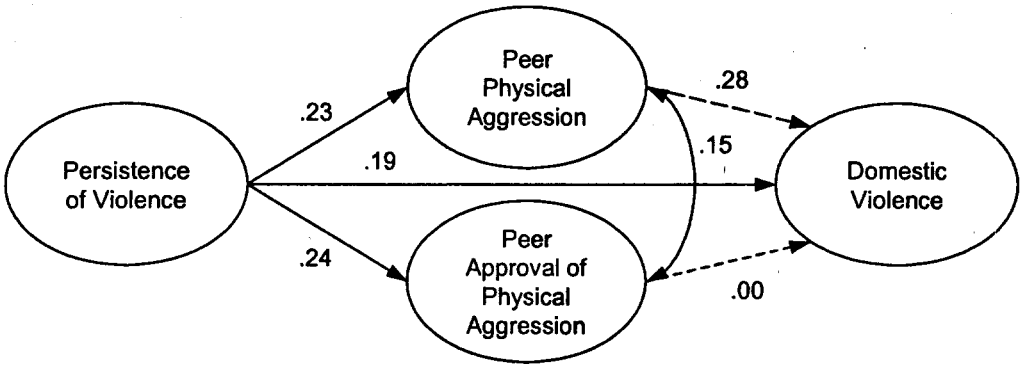
We next considered the role of affiliation with deviant peers in the relation between the persistence of violence and later domestic violence. We specified a model (Figure 4) with pathways from the persistence of violence to affiliation with deviant peers (Wave V), peer approval of deviant behavior (Wave V), and domestic violence (Wave VI), and from the two Wave V peer variables to Wave VI domestic violence. The peer deviance variables were allowed to covary. This model is saturated, again not allowing a test of fit, but providing an indication of the pattern of relations among the variables for use in later model development. Results indicated that the persistence of violence was associated with domestic violence, PC = .25, $p < .05$, as well as with affiliation with peers who engaged in deviant behavior, PC = .22, $p < .05$, and with peer approval of deviant behavior, PC = .17, $p < .05$; however, neither of the peer deviance variables was associated with later domestic violence. Thus, peer deviance and peer attitudes about deviance do not appear to mediate the association between the persistence of deviance and later domestic violence. Figure 4 depicts the relations among these variables.

Figure 4. Persistence of Violence, Peer Deviance, and Domestic Violence *(Note: dashed lines indicate paths that are not statistically significant).*



We reasoned that peers' physical aggression and their attitudes toward aggressive behavior might be better predictors of domestic violence than the more global measures of peer deviance. We thus evaluated a model with pathways from the persistence of violence to affiliation with physically violent peers (Wave V), peer approval of violent behavior (Wave V), and domestic violence (Wave VI), and from the two Wave V peer violence variables to Wave VI domestic violence. The peer variables were again allowed to covary. In this model, the persistence of violence was associated with peers' physical aggression, PC = .23, $p < .05$, peer approval of physical aggression, PC = .24, $p < .05$, and with domestic violence, PC = .19, $p < .05$. Again, neither peer physical aggression nor peer approval of physical aggression was associated with domestic violence. Figure 5 depicts the relations among these variables.

Figure 5. Persistence of Violence, Peer Physical Aggression, and Domestic Violence *(Note: dashed lines indicate paths that are not statistically significant).*



Discussion

This research was designed to enhance our understanding of the link between domestic violence and other forms of deviance. We attempted to replicate earlier findings on domestic violence and deviance in a large, general community sample and, then, to extend knowledge in this area by testing specific hypotheses about links between deviance and domestic violence. This research is one of the first studies to directly test hypotheses about domestic violence, derived from general theories of crime and deviance, in a general community sample. It is also one of only a handful of longitudinal studies to examine relations between deviance in adolescence/young adulthood and domestic violence, and one of the first to evaluate hypothesized pathways by which youth deviance might be linked to men's domestic violence. As such, we believe this research contributes to our understanding of men's domestic violence and other forms of deviance in several important ways.

First, as predicted by general theories of crime and deviance (e.g., Donovan & Jessor, 1985; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Moffitt, 1993; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985), our cross-sectional results (Wave VI) indicate that a greater proportion of domestically violent men engaged in other forms of deviant behavior than men who were not domestically violent. Notably, most of the domestically violent men (74%) engaged in other forms of deviant behavior. That is, most men who engage in domestic violence, even within the general community, perform other acts of deviance as well. An important caveat, however, is that the base rate of deviance, at least as operationalized in this study, is very high. That is, even though a greater proportion of domestically violent men engaged in other forms of deviant behavior compared to men who were not domestically violent, the majority of young men in married or cohabiting relationships reported engaging in deviant activity.

Second, our results are consistent with, and build upon, those of other investigators who have linked youth deviance with domestic violence (e.g., Capaldi et al., 2001; Giordano et al., 1999; Magdol et al., 1998; Simons et al., 1995). As in prior research, we found an index of youth deviance, which takes into account the frequency and seriousness of a variety of deviant acts, to predict later domestic violence. Our results, however, point to the potential importance of youth violence, rather than deviance broadly conceived, in the prediction of domestic violence. In particular, our results suggest that the persistence of youth violence (the extent to which violent acts were performed across multiple years) is important. That is, the more years in which violence is present during adolescence/young adulthood, the greater the likelihood of domestic violence. This is true even after accounting for the frequency and seriousness of violent acts, as well as the persistence of nonviolent acts of deviance.

Third, our longitudinal results also suggest that relationship dissatisfaction plays a role in the development of domestic violence. Specifically, a number of investigators have conceptualized certain types of domestic violence, particularly the types of domestic violence commonly found in community samples, to be a product of relationship dissatisfaction (Johnson, 1995; O'Leary, 1988; Straus & Smith, 1990). Our results are consistent with this notion; in addition, our findings suggest that violence during adolescence/young adulthood increases the likelihood of relationship dissatisfaction in young adulthood. Although the present research was not designed to test specific hypotheses about how violence during adolescence/young adulthood influences later relationship dissatisfaction, we noted several hypotheses. Persistent violence may mark the presence of certain interpersonal skills deficits (e.g., poor conflict-resolution skills, impulse-control problems) that predict relationship dissatisfaction (Heavy et al., 1994; Markman et al., 1986). It is also possible that men with a history of persistent violence may be more likely

to have partners with similar histories and skills deficits (O'Leary & Murphy, 1999), increasing the likelihood of relationship dissatisfaction.

We also hypothesized that youth violence might lead to domestic violence by increasing the likelihood of deviant/violent peer affiliation, as well as affiliation with peers who approve of deviance/violence. Consistent with prior research findings, our results suggest that youth violence increases the likelihood of affiliation with deviant and violent peers. However, our findings suggest that the information contained in our measures of deviant/violent peer affiliation and affiliation with peers who approve of deviance/violence was redundant with the information contained in our measure of males' own violence, with respect to the prediction of domestic violence. These findings are consistent with those reported by Capaldi et al. (2001).

Our findings regarding domestic violence and the persistence of violence during adolescence/young adulthood are interesting to consider from the perspective of theory on the development of domestic violence. Although much of this research was guided by general theories of crime and deviance (e.g., Donovan & Jessor, 1985; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Moffitt, 1993; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985), it is important to keep in mind that domestic violence has also been hypothesized to be an expression of a general pattern of male *aggression* (O'Leary, 1988), which is not necessarily part of a broader pattern of *deviance*. Several of our findings were consistent with this idea that male aggression, and not necessarily male deviance broadly conceived, is key with respect to the prediction of domestic violence. For example, as we noted above, the persistence of violence during adolescence/young adulthood predicted domestic violence, even after accounting for nonviolent deviant behavior, but nonviolent deviance did not predict domestic violence after accounting for the persistence of violence. In addition, the proportion of domestically violent men who engaged in general violence (24%) at Wave VI was

comparable to or higher than co-occurrence rates reported in other research with community couples (Hotaling et al., 1990; Kandel-Englander, 1992; Magdol et al., 1997) and was significantly greater than the proportion of non-domestically violent men who engaged contemporaneously in general violence (10%). Although it could be argued that this proportion is much lower than what might be expected if domestic violence is to be interpreted as expression of a general pattern of male aggression, when one considers violence during adolescence/young adulthood, it becomes clear that most domestically violent men (86%) have a history of violence toward others. In short, our results are arguably consistent with the idea that domestic violence is an expression of a general pattern of male aggression.

It should also be noted that our findings are consistent with those of other investigators, which suggest a desistance of male violence during the transition to adulthood (Loeber & Hay, 1997). Most of the married or cohabiting young men in our sample (77%) had histories marked by at least one violent incident (i.e., violent behavior was reported to have occurred during at least one of the assessments conducted at Waves I, III, IV, and V). However, at the Wave VI assessment (conducted three years following the Wave V assessment), only a few of these men (18%) reported acts of violence occurring outside of the marriage or cohabiting relationship. This stands in stark contrast to the prevalence rate for domestic violence at Wave VI (38%) – over twice that of the prevalence rate for other violence. One interpretation for this pattern of results is that the violent behavior of some adolescents does not desist during adulthood, nor is it recorded in official arrest statistics. Rather, their violence becomes directed at spouses/girlfriends, as opposed to individuals outside of the immediate family, and does not often come to the attention of the criminal justice system (Loeber & Hay, 1997).

Policy Implications

Knowledge of the overlap between domestic violence and other types of deviant behavior can have important implications for policy and practice. If domestic violence is etiologically and phenomenologically distinct from other types of deviant or violent behavior, specialized programs may be necessary to prevent domestic violence. On the other hand, if domestic violence is part of a more general pattern of deviance or violence, then programs that successfully prevent deviance in general should similarly prevent domestic violence. Our findings suggest that, in comparison to men who are not domestically violent, domestically violent men are more likely to be deviant, and more specifically to be violent. This suggests that programs designed to prevent or reduce adolescent antisocial behavior, and perhaps especially adolescent violent behavior, may be useful in disrupting the processes by which domestic violence emerges. Indeed, it is possible that programs designed to reduce specific deviant behaviors will have an impact on other forms of deviance, including domestic violence. There is already evidence in the substance abuse treatment literature that successful treatments for alcohol abuse can reduce domestic violence as well (O'Farrell & Murphy, 1995).

Although it is clear from our research that the persistence of violent behavior during adolescence/young adulthood is associated with later domestic violence, violence alone – especially violence during middle and late adolescence – is likely to be insufficient to identify future perpetrators of domestic violence. Most of the participants in the present research engaged in violent behavior at one time or another, and many who engaged in violence did not go on to perpetrate domestic violence. Similarly, many who did not engage in persistent violence went on to engage in domestic violence. It is possible that additional efforts directed at conceptualizing and measuring violence during adolescence may increase the specificity and utility of early

violence as a predictor of domestic violence, but the high base rates of such behavior that typify adolescent samples are likely to yield a high rate of false negatives when violence is used as a sole predictor of domestic violence.

Limitations

This research should be interpreted in light of several limitations. Our conclusions are limited by the fact that all information was obtained from a single source, the men who were questioned. It is possible that men who disclose engaging in domestic violence are also more likely to disclose engaging in other forms of deviance, perhaps inflating the magnitude of associations between these behaviors. The use of multiple informants for data on domestic violence and general deviance would increase confidence in our findings. The men also reported on domestic violence within the 12 months preceding the assessment, which raises the possibility that some men who were domestically violent in the more distant past were classified as nonviolent. Such classification errors, however, would have functioned to reduce the likelihood of obtaining significant results in our tests of hypotheses. Nonetheless, this issue is worth noting.

Given that this study involved secondary data analyses, this research was limited by the measures available to us in the NYS data set. This data set included a broad range of deviant acts; however, the assessment of violent deviance was arguably limited. In addition, the assessment of domestic violence was limited to the commonly used physical aggression subscale of the CTS (Straus, 1979). The CTS has been criticized because the aggressive acts are assessed without regard for the context or consequences of the aggression (see Straus, 1990b, for discussion of the criticisms). In addition, domestic violence can be conceptualized to include a broader array of aggressive acts than those included on this scale (e.g., acts of sexual coercion). It is unclear how the measurement of such acts would have affected the documented associations

(see Jouriles, McDonald, Norwood, & Ezell, 2001; O'Leary, 2000, for pertinent discussion). Furthermore, conclusions from this research should be limited to the domestic violence displayed by young men between the ages of 18 and 24 who are married or cohabiting with a female partner. This group, however, may be especially important because men between 18 and 24 appear to be at the highest risk for domestic violence. Some scholars argue that the prevalence of domestic violence peaks during this period and begins to decline shortly afterwards (O'Leary, 1999).

Concluding Remarks

In sum, the results of this research contribute to our knowledge about the association between domestic violence and other types of deviant behavior and have potentially important implications for theory, policy and practice. It is clear from our results that a large number of domestically violent men engage in other forms of deviant behavior, and that past deviance, especially the persistent of past violence, contributes in the prediction of domestic violence. The ability to predict domestic violence, even – perhaps especially – at the levels at which it is most commonly manifest, offers opportunities for early identification and prevention. We believe that continued research in the application of general theories of deviance and aggression to domestic violence will likely contribute to our understanding of the development of such behavior, and to our ability to prevent it.

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Footnotes

1 On the basis of follow-up questions about the victim, we were able to determine that items did not include incidents of domestic violence and retained them for our measure of violent variables.

Men's Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Deviant Behavior

Abstract

The primary goal of this research is to build upon our understanding of the link between men's domestic violence and other forms of deviance. We do this by: (1) assessing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and other forms of contemporaneous deviant behavior in a large community sample, (2) examining links between deviance during adolescence/young adulthood and later domestic violence, considering in particular the roles of violent deviance and the persistence of deviant activity, and (3) evaluating specific pathways by which early deviance may be linked to men's domestic violence. The National Youth Survey (NYS) data set was used for this research. The NYS sample is a national probability sample of households in the continental United States in 1976. The participants for this study were 175 men who were married or cohabiting with a female partner at Wave VI of data collection. The first six waves of data were used in this research, and these data span a period of eight years. At Wave VI, 38% of the sample reported engaging in domestic violence, and, as expected, a greater proportion of domestically violent men had engaged in other forms of contemporaneous deviant behavior than men who were not domestically violent. Also, as expected, deviance during adolescence/young adulthood predicted domestic violence, with the persistence of violence during adolescence/young adulthood emerging as an especially important aspect youth deviance in the prediction of domestic violence. Models evaluating pathways by which the persistence of violence during adolescence/young adulthood might be linked to later domestic violence indicated that the association between these two variables was partially mediated by relationship dissatisfaction. These findings contribute to our

knowledge about the association between domestic violence and other types of deviant behavior in a number of ways. It is clear from our results that a large number of domestically violent men engage in other forms of deviant behavior, and that past deviance, especially the persistence of past violence, contributes in the prediction of domestic violence. The ability to predict domestic violence, even – perhaps especially – at the levels at which it is most commonly manifest, such as those in this community sample, offers opportunities for early identification and prevention.