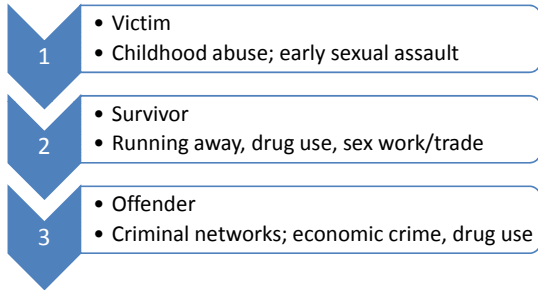


Incarcerated Women Convicted of Violent Offenses: Prevalence, Characteristics and an Intervention.

Sheryl Kubiak
Woo Jong Kim
Echo Rivera
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY,
spk@msu.edu

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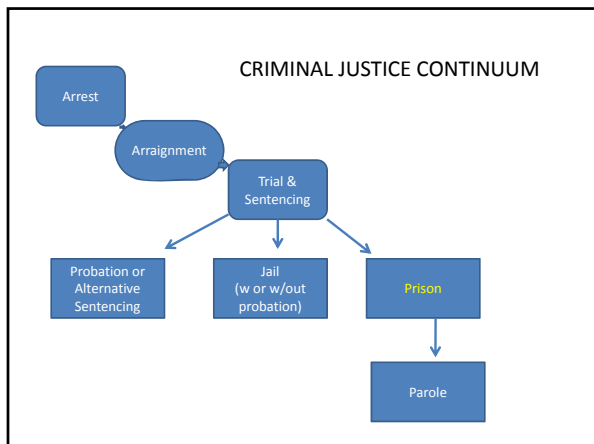
Women's Trajectory into CJ



Gilfus, 2005

Women Involved in the CJ system:

- Similar to males:
 - Disproportionally minority status;
 - Likely to be impoverished prior to incarceration.
- Dissimilar to males:
 - Higher proportion of mental health and/or substance use disorders;
 - More likely to have minor children and to be a 'single' parent prior to incarceration.
- Histories of childhood and adult victimization greater than incarcerated males and other low income women.



Incarcerated Women

- Past 10 years, growth rate of incarceration for women (5%) has surpassed the rate for men (3%);
- Women represent 7% of those incarcerated;
- Majority property and/or drug offenders (60%) – however 35% *sentenced* for violent offenses.

(Harrison & Beck, 2006)

What are Violent Offenses?

- Robbery
 - personal contact between the offender and victim with actual or threatened violence.
- Assault
 - wide range, from simple assault to assault with a deadly weapon causing great bodily injury;
 - many gradients of violence in between.
- Homicide
 - Manslaughter, vehicular homicide, 1st degree murder
- Sex offenses with force

Who do women commit violence against?

- Homicides
 - 44% spouse or intimate partners;
 - 32% acquaintance; someone they know
 - 10% child/stepchild
 - 7% another member of the family
 - 7% strangers

Violence Among Women Increasing?

- Women 14% of violent crime – stable over time.
- Isolated increases in aggravated assault offenses among women.
- Increases misunderstood? (Pollock, Mullings & Crouch, 2006)
 - rates are dramatically sensitive to criminal justice system response
 - changes in the law, police enforcement, and criminal justice policy
 - ‘charge up’ on lesser offenses.

Relationships between violent offending and victimization?

- Research has demonstrated a relationship between perpetration of violence and:
 - Childhood neglect/physical/sexual abuse (Widom & Maxfield, 2003);
 - Mental Health issues (Silver et al., 2008);
 - Drug involvement (Chermack & colleagues, 2007; 2010).

Understanding Violence: Typologies

- One theory regarding use of violence by women posits that women belong to one of three groups (Miller & Melroy, 2006):
 - Self defense: Violence during the event
 - Protective violence: Prevention of perceived threat
 - Aggressor: Women using violence w/out provocation.
- Previous studies of women with violent offenses have used a violent/non-violent taxonomy that may restrict nuances among women.

Interventions for Women with Violent Offenses

- Within the criminal justice system, women often receive interventions that are developed for men (e.g. Assaultive Offender Program; Batterer Intervention).
- Motivation for, and use of, violence by women may differ and thus, interventions also need to differ.

Current Study

- Survey Assessment
 - Random selection of women within Michigan prisons
- Purpose:
 - Differences among women.
 - Determine characteristics associated with violence.
 - Inform intervention development and clinical practice.
 - Validation of instruments / risk tools.

Sample

Security Level	Women w/ SUD	Women w/out SUD	TOTALS
Low (1/2)	342	189	531
High (4)	32	17	49
TOTAL	374	206	580

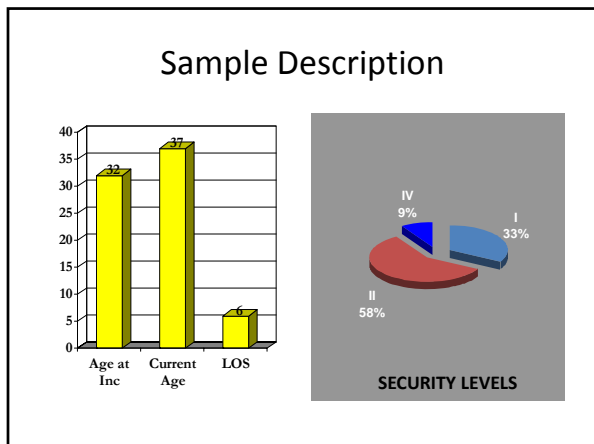
SUD = Substance Use Disorder

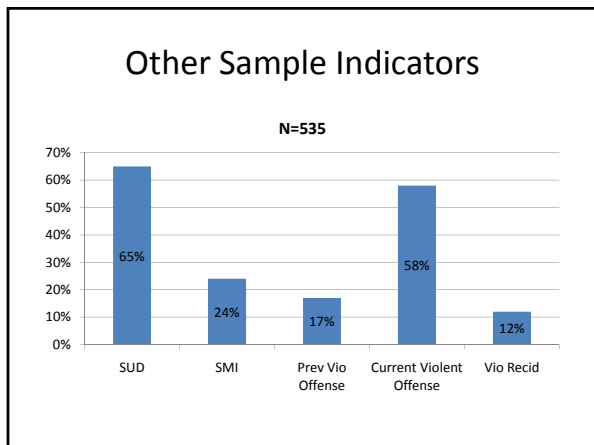
Measures

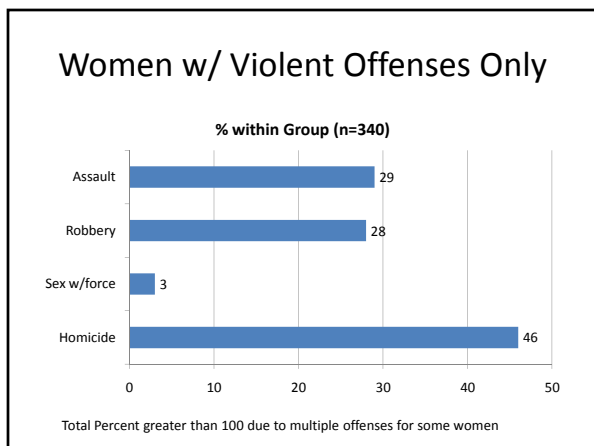
- Criminal History
 - Current/past offenses
- Mental Health
 - History and assessment of Serious Mental illness (SMI)
- Personality/Behavior
 - Inhibition, Anger (multiple), Impulsivity
- Victimization/Perpetration
 - Partner /Other

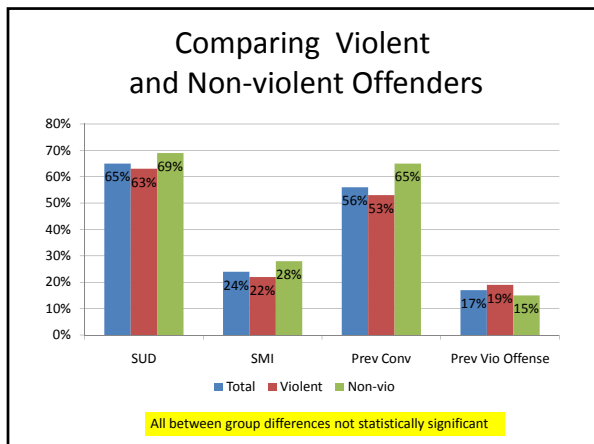
What we didn't ask...

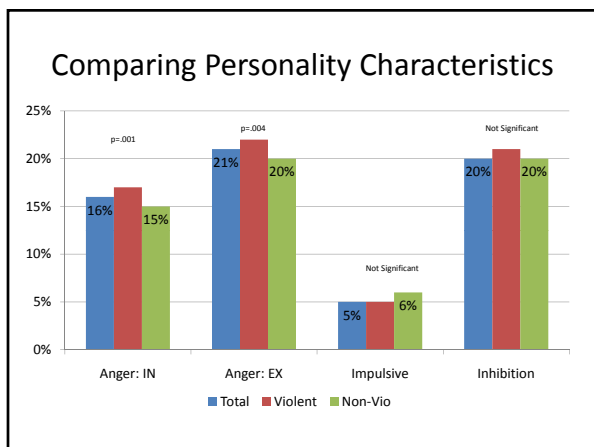
- No identifying information
 - No Name, MDOC #, DOB, Race
- Anonymous and Confidential
- No way to tie the women to MDOC file

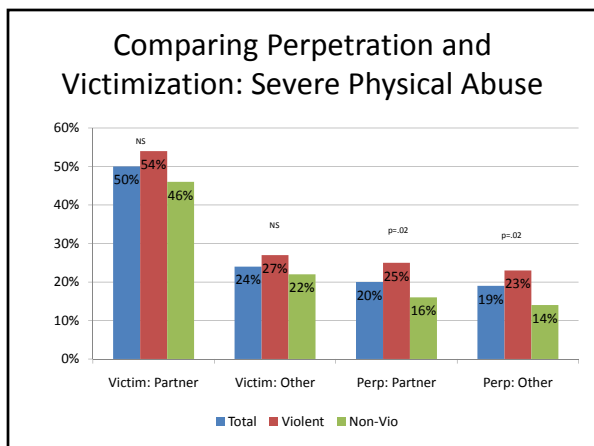












Greater nuances among women with violent offenses

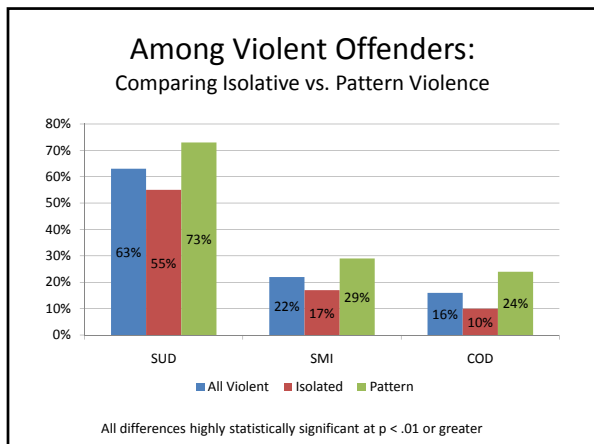
**MORE COMPLEX
CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF VIOLENCE**

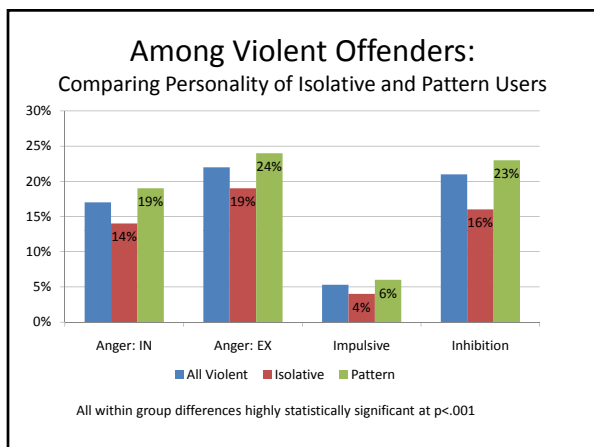
Among women w/ violent offenses...

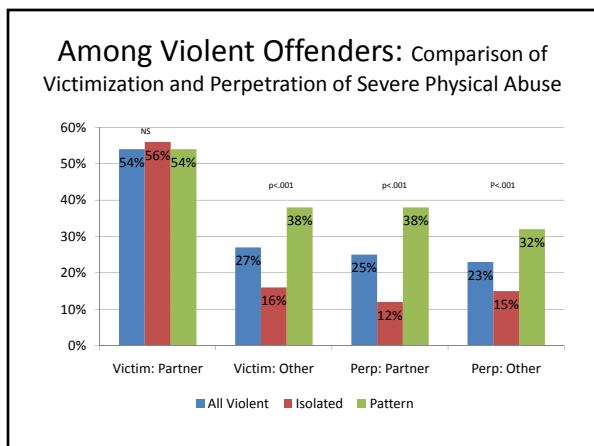
- Using self reported 'uncaught' behaviors in the year prior to incarceration to differentiate within group (Pollock, Mullings & Crouch, 2006)
 - Robbery w/ gun knife (8%)
 - Injured or killed someone (21%)
 - Threatened someone w/ gun (14%) or knife (15%)
 - Shot a gun at someone (10%)
 - Cut someone w/ knife (12%)
 - Sexually assaulted someone (2%)
 - Beat up another person (35%)

For purposes of this study...

- Using the self reported 'uncaught' behaviors we created two groups:
 - Isolative violence
 - Violent conviction but no engagement in other violence
 - Patterned violence
 - Violent conviction WITH other violent behaviors







Thinking about intervention

WHY THESE DIFFERENCES MATTER

Within Group Variation

- Women's use of violence differs
 - Self defense, protective, aggressor??
- Context for violence, particularly self-reported 'uncaught' behavior may vary
 - Drug world, neighborhood, partner, other ...?

Correlates of Violence

- Betw Violence and No-Violence
 - No difference in SUD, SMI, CJ history
 - No difference in victimization history
 - Differences in measures of anger
 - Differences in perpetration of violence
- Between Isolative and Pattern use of violence:
 - Differences in SMI, SUD, COD
 - Differences in anger, impulsivity, inhibition
 - Differences in victimization by others
 - Differences in perpetration of violence

Interventions for Women w/ Violent Offenses

- Outcomes of an intervention for 'violent offenders' may differ based upon the differences within group;
 - Masking 'success' by collapsing across differences
- Important to understanding
 - Multiple context for violence (i.e., relational, community, societal).
 - Multiple expressions of anger
 - Trauma Theory

Beyond Violence

- New intervention designed specifically for women with violent offenses
- Developed by Dr. Stephanie Covington
- Twenty-session curriculum
 - Uses feminist ecological model
 - Trauma informed
 - Substance misuse treatment and prevention

Beyond Violence

- Currently inaugural pilot in MI
 - Huron Valley Women's Facility
- Larger testing of the intervention planned
- Outcomes, differentiated by groups:
 - Decreased violence w/in institution
 - Decrease in anger, hostility
 - Decrease in recidivism, violent recidivism

Conclusion

- Although a great deal of women’s use of violence is directed at partners – that is not the only target.
- Theories of dominant / subordinate relationships in use of violence (ie. Mary Jackman)
- Intervention demands understanding
 - The role of early sexual assault
 - Cumulative trauma over the life course
 - The environmental; social context

Conclusion

- Differentiation within group, among women with violent offenses is important in terms of intervention within the facility and support services upon exit into the community.
- Violence exists across relationships and across context’s in women’s lives...
