

**Intimate Partner Homicides:
Trends, Risk Factors and Killer Types**
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Who Do Killers Target?

**Massachusetts Intimate Partner Homicides
2005-2007**

105 Deaths (75 incidents)

- **53 adult women**
 - **23 adult men**
 - **9 children**
 - **20 suicides**
- 105 total**

Downward Trend Nationally; 1976-2005
Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Justice

<u>Year</u>	<u>Female Victims</u>	<u>Male Victims</u>
1976	1,587	1,304
1986	1,581	946
1996	1,299	476
2000	1,232	382
2005	1,181	329

Homicides of Women by Men Since 2000: No Decrease

	<u>Total Women</u>	<u>Intimate Partners Only</u>
2000	1,803	963
2001	1,899	970
2002	1,880	963
2003	1,817	952
2004	1,807	966
2005	1,858	976
2006	1,836	949
2007	1,865	990
2008	1,817	997
2009	1,818	989

Gender of the perpetrators

Massachusetts Intimate Partner Homicides

	<u>Incidents</u>	<u>Male perpetrator</u>
2006	24	24 (96%)
2007	31	28 (90%)
2008	18	17 (94%)
2009	16	14 (87%)
2010	25	23 (92%)
2011	20	16 (80%)
2012	10	10 (100%)
Total	144	132 (92%)

Who are the perpetrators?

Massachusetts Intimate Partner Homicides

	<u>Incidents</u>	<u>Male perpetrator</u>
2005	14	11 (79%)
2006	24	23 (96%)
2007	37	35 (95%)
<u>2008</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>28 (100%)</u>
Total	103	97 (94%)

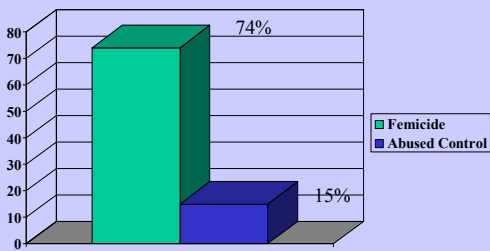
**Risk factors for homicide:
Which is best predictor?**

- A. Past threats to kill
- B. Past threats of suicide
- C. Access to a gun
- D. History of serious domestic violence
- E. Sexual Violence
- F. Stalking
- G. Substance Abuse
- H. Estrangement
- I. Strangulation

**Risk factors for homicide and
serious abuse**

- A. Past threats to kill**
- B. Past threats of suicide
- C. Access to a gun**
- D. History of serious domestic violence
- E. Sexual Violence
- F. Stalking
- G. Substance Abuse
- H. Estrangement
- I. Strangulation**

A. Prior threats to kill



Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

Multiple threats to kill

In Emerge study of 20 attempted homicides:

- 19 victims said perpetrator had made at least one prior threat to kill
- 18 reported more than one threat
- 10 said monthly or more
- 5 said weekly or more
- 2 said daily threats

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Examples of threats prior to homicide attempts

- To maim her, to kill daughter, to make her watch him raping new partner
- To kill her with ax he kept under the bed
- To make her watch as he killed her parents
- To shoot her in head and cut her to pieces
- To chop fingers and then arms off
- To have his daughter kill her

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Threats

Threats serve two purposes for the serious abuser:

- 1) To intimidate and deter partner
- 2) To 'test the waters', psych himself up to carry out threats

Quote from one killer:

"The more I said it, the more real it became that I could actually do it"

Threats

- Never ask as a yes/no question
- Ask:
 - How many threats have been made?
 - When, including the most recent?
 - What were the exact words and actions?
 - Have the threats escalated or changed?

B. Suicide

**30% of femicides are
murder/suicides**

Source: National Institute of Justice Journal, Intimate
Partner Homicide, Issue # 250, November 2003

IP Murder Suicides Unique Factors

Prior Threats of Suicide

Murder/Suicide Perpetrators 50%

Murder Only 14%

Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

**IP Murder Suicides
Unique Factors**

Older than Murder Only Perpetrators
Murder/Suicide Perpetrators over age 50: 11%
Murder Only Perpetrators over age 50: 7%

Age Difference with Victims
Murder/Suicide Perpetrators 6 years older, on average
More likely than Murderers to be significantly older or younger
Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

**IP Murder Suicides
Unique Factors**

Perpetrator More Likely Married to Victim
Murder/Suicide Perpetrators 51%
Murder Only 33%
Abused Control Group 29%

Couple Has Children
Just as likely to have children
More likely to be living with biological children
More likely to be living with step-children
Murder/Suicide 45%
Abused Control Group 17%
Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

**IP Murder-Suicides
Unique Factors**

Estranged from Partners
Estranged in past year:
Murder Suicides 39%
Abused Control Group 12%
Source: Koziel-McLain, 2006

**IP Murder Suicides
Unique Factors**

Perpetrator's Substance Abuse

Alcohol

Murder/Suicide Perpetrators	52%
Murder Only	33%
Abused Control Group	32%

Perpetrator's Illicit Drug Use

Murder/Suicide Perpetrators	50%
Murder Only	50%
Abused Control Group	31%

Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

**IP Murder Suicides
Unique Factors**

Use of Gun to Kill

Murder/Suicide Perpetrators	61%
Murder Only	28%

Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

19 of 20 murder/suicides in Arizona involved guns

Source: Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2002

Gun Availability in Home

Killers (including murder/suicide)	52%
Abused Control Group	16%

Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

**IP Murder Suicides
Unique Factors**

History of Depression

Murder/Suicide Perpetrators	75%
Murder Only	0%

Source: Rosenbaum, 1990

Poor Mental Health

Murder/Suicide Perpetrators	38%
Murder Only	28%

Source: Koziel-McLain, et al, 2006

IP Murder Suicides Unique Factors

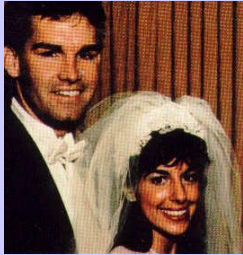
Perpetrator Traits:

Possessive Jealousy and Abusive Control
Depression/other mental illness
Substance abuse

Situational Factors:

Estrangement
Isolation
Unemployment
Despondency/Sense of Failure

Chuck Stuart and Carol Dimaiti



Chuck Stuart

No known history of domestic violence
No known history of depression/suicidality
Suicide was one month after homicide
Chuck fit profile of Materially Motivated
killer; motive was to destroy wife so he
could start new life with someone else

Henry and Karen Trudeau



Henry Trudeau

Prior history of domestic violence
Prior history of depression, suicide attempts
Prior history of alcohol abuse
Situational Factors:
Karen had obtained Protective Order, filed for divorce
Henry was obsessively stalking Karen
Henry was subject to civil commitment for alcohol

Michael (69) and Joyce Khoury (66) Spencer



Michael (69) and Joyce Khoury (66)
Spencer



Picaro, 22 years old

Perpetrators of Familicide

Some engage in **Righteous Slaughter** (Jack Katz)
Self righteous act associated with defense of communal
values last stand in defense of his basic worth
Humiliation from loss of status and respectability, leading
to rage
Wish to obliterate the source of humiliation
Also reflects paternalistic wish to 'protect' partner
children from 'evil' or projected humiliation/loss

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Weapon Use in Femicides since 2000, (Nationally)

- 52 % **Shooting***
- 22 % **Stabbing**
- 13% **Bodily Force**
- 7 % **Blunt Object**
- 6% **Other**

* 69% of shootings are with handgun

Weapons used in intimate partner homicides 2007-2011 (Massachusetts)

Among all adults Method

35%	shooting
36%	stabbing
13 %	strangulation
14%	blunt object
1%	use of car
1%	fire
2%	arson/bomb

Source: Adams, 2012

Gun Ownership in USA Compared to Other Nations

<u>Nation</u>	<u>Guns per 100 residents</u>
1) USA	90
2) Yemen	61
3) Switzerland	46
4) Iraq	39
5) Serbia	37.5
17) Australia	15.5
25) Russia	11
28) Columbia	7.2
29) Great Britain	5.6

Source: Small Arms Survey, 2007 Geneva Graduate Institute of International Studies

Perpetrator Access to Gun

Femicides	65%
Abused Controls	24%

Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

Study of killers at Emerge

In-depth interviews with 31 men who killed partners (recruited in MA prisons)

In-depth interviews with 20 victims of attempted homicide (recruited from prosecutor case files)

Choice of Weapon Emerge study of 31 killers

14 Shooters:

11 of these (78%) said they wouldn't have used another weapon

Shooters' reasons for not using other weapons

"I was intoxicated... didn't have the strength to stab or choke her"

"It happened so fast...I would have come to in the time it took to take out a knife"

"A gun depersonalizes... I wouldn't have gone through with it if I had time to think about it"

"I hate knives. I've been stabbed"

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

**How guns are obtained:
14 shooters**

- 7 had legal possession of gun
- 4 had illegally purchased gun
- 3 had failed to surrender gun

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Multiple victims

- Murderers using guns are more likely to have multiple victims

Stabbers' choice of weapon

- 4 of the 6 stabbers said they would have used gun if available
- 2 said they would not have used gun since it would have made too much noise

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Stranglers' choice of weapon

- Only 1 of the 8 stranglers said he would have used a gun.
- This man said:
“If I’d had a gun, I would have used it earlier; that’s why I didn’t keep one in the house”

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

D. Past Serious Violence: Victims of Attempted Murder

- 90% had been punched in face or stomach
- 63% had been choked or gagged
- 31% had gun used against them
- 26% said they’d been knocked out
- 26% had been hit by car or pushed out of car
- 15% had been stabbed

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Past Violence/Threats

- When inquiring about past violence, ask about:
- Injuries?
- Use of weapons?
- Escalation?
- Context (estrangement?, substance use?, jealousy?, depression?)

Prior arrest for domestic violence

Femicides 26%
Abused Controls 14%

Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

Prior Arrests

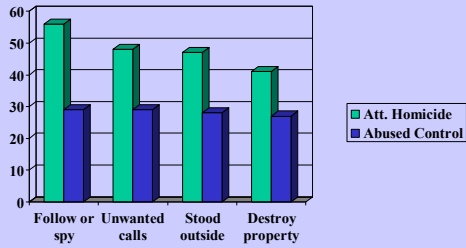
- Never assume that there's no history of violence just because there have been no prior arrests
- Some of the most dangerous situations have no prior police/court involvement

E. Prior Forced Sex

Femicides 46%
Abused Controls 15%

Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

F. Stalking



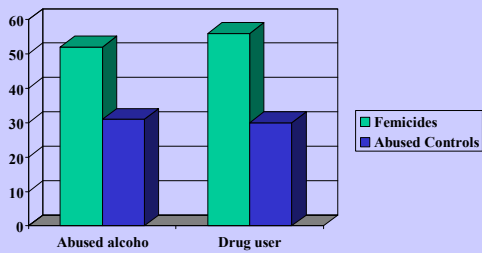
Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

Extreme Jealousy

Femicides 39%
Abused Controls 17%

Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

G. Perpetrators' Substance Abuse



Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

Substance Abuse

Don't ask about substance abuse as yes/no question.

Also ask.....

- What drugs are used?
- How often are drugs/alcohol used?
- Have there been any recent changes in use?

I. Prior Strangulation Attempt

Femicides	56%
Abused Controls	10%

Source: J. Campbell, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA156

Extreme Dominance

- Usually consists of extreme possessive beliefs and actions
- Control and monitoring of victim's daily activities
- Statements that the relationship can't end or that the victim can't leave.
- Rigid 'right or wrong' thinking

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Types of killers

- 1) Jealous
- 2) Substance Abusers
- 3) Depressed, Suicidal
- 4) Materially Motivated
- 5) Career Criminals

Source: David Adams, in *Why Do They Kill? Men Who Kill Their Intimate Partners*, Vanderbilt University Press, 2007

1) Jealous Type (65-90%)

Description:

Paranoid, obsessive

Can be controlled or impulsive

Often highly dependent on victim

Behavior:

Control over daily activities

Jealous questions and monitoring

Stalking

Lots of past threats and accusations

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Jealous type

Common triggers:

- Estrangement
- Divorce
- Infidelity or suspected infidelity

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Jealous type

Potential Deterrents:

- Mandated batterer intervention program
- Clerical intervention (for some)
- Screening for substance abuse
- Lack of access to victim following estrangement
- Strict monitoring

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

2) Substance Abuser (50-65%)

Description:

- Can be functioning or nonfunctioning
- Relationship revolves around drugs
- Emotionally unstable and grandiose

Behavior:

- Daily drug abuse or frequent bingeing
- Unstable employment and finances
- Criminal behavior
- Short courtships
- Violence is more severe

Short Courtships

Proportion of Killers and Attempted Killers with short courtships:

Less than 6 months	54%
Less than 3 months	50%
Less than 2 months	46%
Less than 1 month	31%
One or two days	12%

Substance abusers were most likely to have short courtships and short relationships.

Substance Abuser

Common triggers:

- Conflicts over drug use and finances
- Infidelity or imagined infidelity
- General deterioration
- Pending criminal charges
- Complaints by victim
- Petty arguments

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Substance Abuser

Potential Deterrents:

- Mandated substance abuse treatment/detox
- Mandated batterer intervention
- Removal of weapons
- Lack of access to victim

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

3) Depressed/Suicidal (20-40%)

Description:

- Depressed
- Highly dependent
- Emotionally unstable
- Older and more stable than other killers

Behavior:

- Suicide and homicide threats
- Frequent violence
- Isolation (of self and/or family)
- Substance abuse

Depressed/Suicidal

Common triggers:

- Estrangement
- Loss of job
- Loss of children
- Nothing to live for

Depressed/Suicidal

Potential Deterrents:

- Counseling for depression
- Monitoring of meds
- Batterer intervention program
- Screening for substance abuse

4) Materially-Motivated Type (20-25%)

Description:

- Obsessed with money and possessions
- Contempt for women
- Financially exploitative or possessive
- Some fit anti-social personality profile
- Exhibits less jealousy than normal

Behavior:

- Level of violence varies
- Frequent acts of vengeance, stealing
- Keeps secrets from victim

Materially-Motivated type

Common triggers:

- Financial loss or pending loss
- Criminal charges
- Being “bothered” by victim

Materially-Motivated type

Potential deterrents:

- Incarceration for domestic violence or other crimes
- Close monitoring
- Mandated batterer intervention program

5) Career Criminal (15-20%)

Description:

- Problems with authority
- Anti-social personality
- Exploitative in relationships
- Are criminal justice system savvy

Behavior:

- Supports self via crime
- Level of violence varies a great deal

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Career Criminals

Common Triggers:

- Financial loss
- Victim fighting back or defying him
- Arrest or attempted arrest
- Incarceration
- Being “bothered” by victim

Career Criminals

Potential deterrents:

- Incarceration
- Arrest for other crimes
- Strict monitoring
- In-house treatment for domestic violence and substance abuse

Double and Triple Threats

- Frequent overlap among killer types (most killers are more than one type)
- Common overlaps include:
 - Substance abuser and Jealous
 - Substance abuser and Materially-motivated
 - Career criminal and Materially-motivated
 - Depressed and Substance abuser
 - Depressed and Jealous

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Jealous Substance Abusers

Interviewer: What would make you jealous?

James: To be honest, I'm not that jealous. I guess if I was drinking, that would make me more so. You know, the insecurity would kick in and then I'd be saying some real shit.

Interviewer: Are you saying that when you were drinking that you would think things that you'd normally not think?

James: You could say that. I'd be thinking a lot of things, yes. Sick shit.

Interviewer: Like what?

James: Like her (Corinne) and her father.

Interviewer: You mean, you'd be thinking Corinne was sexually involved with her father?

James: I might have accused her of that a couple times when I had alcohol in me.

Interviewer: Did you really believe that?

James: Nah! Not regularly, no. But again, if I'd been drinking, yes.

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Jealous Substance Abusers

Lydia said: He seemed more paranoid. I think it was the drugs.

Interviewer: What do you mean by "paranoid"?

Lydia: He'd always be thinking people was out to get him. Towards the end, he'd be saying people was coming into the house to steal his money. He'd accuse me of crazy things.

Interviewer: Like what?

Lydia: Hiding things from him. He'd accuse me of taking his clothes if he couldn't find them.

Interviewer: Was his jealousy getting worse?

Lydia: Oh God, yes! It was always bad but when he'd be drinking, he'd think I had something going on with every person I met.

Source: D. Adams, Emerge

Significance of Killer Types

When doing danger assessment:

- Ask about relationship history, looking for abuser's longstanding grievances and past responses to victim resistance/defiance
- Ask abuser if he accepts separation and if he can recognize life beyond the relationship

When doing safety planning with victims:

- Anticipate perpetrator's actions in response to estrangement and other steps she's taking
- Look for patterns of escalation and deterioration on abuser's part

Fighting Terrorists

Better Intelligence = better prediction and prevention

What is his history of terror tactics?

What are his grievances?

How is the situation changing?

What are the differences?

*Any abuser can kill,
But the odds are greater for some:*

Most abusers accept separation and move on with their lives
Potentially lethal abusers:
Are more likely to have used extreme violence, eg.
Weapons, Strangulation
The multiplicity of factors increases the odds
Look for the recentness of tactics post or pending
separation: increasing surveillance, jealous threats,
increased alcohol, drug use, mounting depression

**Why Do They Kill?
Men Who Murder Their
Intimate Partners**
David Adams, Ed.D.

Vanderbilt University Press
September, 2007
www.VanderbiltUniversityPress.com

