

*Media Portrayals of Intimate Partner Violence
Against Men: Do They Reflect Reality? How Do
They Impact Helpseeking Experiences?*



Denise A. Hines, Ph.D., Clark University
Emily M. Douglas, Bridgewater State College
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Background: Male Victims of Partner Violence

- Best population-based studies show that 25%-50% of all PV victims in a given year are men.
- Existence of male victims has been source of much controversy.

Background: Male Victims of Partner Violence

Intimate Terrorism versus Common Couple Violence

- **Common Couple Violence** -- low-level, low-frequency violence in a couple where both members are about equally violent; this IPV is not part of an overall pattern of control of one partner over the other.
- **Intimate Terrorism** -- violence is one tactic in a general pattern of control of one member of the couple over the other; IPV is frequent, the controlling and violence is not mutual = *helpseeking sample*.

Purpose of Today's Presentation:

- Provide empirical data on the aggressive behaviors that occur in the men's relationships, the injuries they sustain, and their mental health status.
- Provide examples of how male IPV victimization is portrayed in the media and contrast that to the experiences of the men in this study.
- Show how those media portrayals may have an impact on the men's experiences when they seek help.

Methods: Helpseeking Sample

- Criteria:
 - Heterosexual men
 - Ages 18-59
 - In a relationship lasting at least one month in the previous year
 - Physically assaulted by female partner within previous year
 - Sought outside assistance/support
 - Lived in U.S.
- N = 302

Methods: Survey

- Data collected through Internet and phone survey
 - Demographics
 - Conflict Tactics Scales
 - PTSD Checklist
 - Helpseeking Questions

Demographics

	Helpseekers M (SD) or %	Female Partners M (SD) or %
Age	40.49 yrs (8.97)	37.91 yrs (8.61)
Approximate Income	\$50.4K (25.7K)	\$30.1K (24.3K)
White	86.8%	74.2%
African American	6.0%	7.3%
Hispanic	5.0%	7.6%
Asian American	4.3%	9.3%
Native American	2.0%	2.6%

Relationship Characteristics

	M (SD) or %
Relationship Length	8.16 yrs (6.84)
% Currently in a Relationship	56.3%
Time Since Relationship Ended	6.10 mths (7.69) (n = 112)
% of relationships with minor children	73.2%

Q1: Types & Frequency of Aggressive Behaviors Sustained

	% Who Sustained	Frequency of Acts Sustained in Previous Year	
		M (n)	SD
Severe Psychological Aggression	96.0%	28.90 (290)	26.20
Controlling Behaviors	93.4%	42.62 (282)	36.25
Minor Physical Aggression	98.7%	32.01 (298)	34.33
Severe Physical Aggression	90.4%	16.74 (273)	22.06
Any Physical Aggression	100.0%	46.72 (302)	53.48

Q1: Injuries Sustained

	% Who Sustained	Frequency of Injuries Sustained	
		M(n)	SD
Minor	77.5	9.73 (234)	12.75
Severe	35.1	4.64 (106)	7.50
Any	78.5	11.68 (237)	15.61

Q1: Mental Health Issues: *PTSD*

	Mean (SD)
Total PCL Score	46.56 (14.22)
Re-Experiencing	14.98 (5.15)
Avoidance/Numbness	17.25 (6.01)
Hyperarousal	14.32 (5.04)

- % Scoring Above Clinical Cut-Off for PTSD: 58%

Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Domestic Violence Against Men is NOT Domestic Violence*

- Newspaper Headlines of Female Victims
 - Domestic violence murder suspect caught
 - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; Murder Charge Issued In New Cassel Case
 - Police Blame Economy In Surge Of Violence Against Women
 - Man arrested in suspected domestic abuse

Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Domestic Violence Against Men is NOT Domestic Violence*

- Newspaper Headlines of Male Victims
 - Steve McNair homicide investigation: 20-year-old-girlfriend purchased pistol found beneath her body
 - Maine woman set fire that burned husband
 - Wellesley student accused of stabbing former boyfriend at MIT
 - His death is classified as a homicide, the first of the year in Maine

Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Domestic Violence Against Men is NOT Domestic Violence*

- Jersey Shore
 - Outrage when “Snooki” got punched by a man in a bar
 - MTV pulled scene
 - PSA were run
 - Sponsors threatened to pull ads
 - No reaction when “J-Woww” punched Mike “The Situation” in the face because he made her leave the club: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTjESswuhO8>

Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Male Victimization is Funny*

- Famous Family-Centered Sitcoms

- *Roseanne*

- *Home Improvement*

- *King of Queens:*

- http://media.photobucket.com/video/king%20of%20queens/86tina/KABEL1_20070528_2142.flv?o=4

- *Everybody Loves Raymond*

Everybody Loves Raymond

- Calls him "Pathetic" when he tries to be romantic - All I Want For Christmas
- Threatens to bite his nose off; tells Robert to punch him - Ally's Birth
- Hits him; calls him Stupid - Alone Time
- Calls him an Idiot - Anniversary
- Threatens to "Hurt" him - The Author
- Denies to people that she knows him; calls him a "goofball" - A Vote For Debra
- Shoves him into a bookcase; hits him; threatens to "Smack" him; threatens to get Marie to "Smack the crap out of [him]"; calls him a "Gigantic Ass", "Insensitive Durfwad", "Jerk"; shoves him away when he tries to hug her - Bad Moon Rising (the PMS episode)
- Elbows him in the ribs - Baggage
- Grabs his hair and jerks his head back - The Ball
- Calls him an Idiot - Be Nice
- Hits him - Blabbermouths
- Pretends to get plastic surgery, then calls him an Idiot when he's stimulated by her breasts. Tells him he's gone soft in the middle and has a concave ass - Boob Job
- Calls him a "Talking pig who lies" - Boy's Therapy
- Calls him a "Stupid, stupid man" - The Breakup Tape
- Hits him; calls him an Idiot - Bully On The Bus
- Hits him repeatedly with a pillow - Call Me Mom

Everybody Loves Raymond

- Tells him he makes her sick; calls him a "big phony" – Counseling
- Threatens to "Crack [him] across the chops"; Calls him an Idiot - Dancing With Debra
- Pours hot tomato sauce in his lap - Debra Makes Something Good
- Threatens to "Bite [his] nose really hard" - Debra's Sick
- Calls him an Idiot - Debra's Workouts
- Grabs his nipple and twists it - The Disciplinarian
- Tells him that making love with him is a "chore [she doesn't] like to do" - Father Knows Least
- Elbows him in the ribs - Frank, The Writer
- Calls him an Idiot – Golf
- Calls him an Idiot - Good Girls
- Sprays him with furniture cleaner – Hackidu
- Hits him - Home From School
- Pokes him in the kidney – Homework
- Calls him a "Pig"; throws him into the couch; twists his foot - Humm Vac
- Calls him a "Jerk" - In-Laws
- Tells him he's Dumb - Italy, part 1
- Elbows him in the testicles and gut - Jealous Robert
- Calls him an Idiot - Left Back
- Calls him a "Bastardo" - Let's Fix Robert

Everybody Loves Raymond

- Calls him a "Freak" - Look Don't Touch
- Calls him an Idiot - Marie's Sculpture
- Hits him on the side of the head; shoves him away and says "get off of me" when he tries to hug her - Meant To Be
- Hits him in the leg, forcing him to fall to his knees - Meeting The Parents
- Removes all the linens from the bed and turns the thermostat down, forcing him to sleep in a sweat suit on a bare mattress - Net Worth
- Hits him repeatedly on the arms - Not So Fast
- Grabs his finger and twists it up behind his back; tells him he makes her sick - Older Women
- Calls him an Idiot - Peter On The Couch
- Hits him on the head with a box of cereal - Pet The Bunny
- Hits him; shoves him; stamps on his foot; calls him Idiotic - The Plan
- Bites his ear; Says his stomach "looks like a deflated clown balloon" - Power of No
- Says he "wallows in [his] own filth" - P.T. & A.
- Calls him an "Ass Jack" - Ray's Journal
- Throws all his clothes out the window - Ray's Ring
- Calls him a "Freak" - Recovering Pessimist
- Hits him repeatedly; calls him a "Jerk"; calls him an Idiot - The Ride Along
- Grabs his face to stop him from talking - Robert Needs Money
- Calls him a "Jerkwad" - Robert's Wedding
- Calls him an Idiot - Separation
- Calls him an Idiot - The Sitter
- Calls him an Idiot - Six Feet Under
- Calls him an Idiot - The Skit

Everybody Loves Raymond

- Calls him a "Little Weasel"; dumps ice cream in his crotch - Standard Deviation
Hits him repeatedly - Super Bowl
- Hits him; Shoves him - The Tenth Anniversary
- Pushes him away when he tries to hug her and growls "get out of here!" - Thank You Notes
- Hits him - The Thought That Counts
- Threatens to feed him his "last meal" - Tissues
- Whips him repeatedly with a towel; grabs his shoulder and digs in with her fingers, causing him pain - The Visit
- Calls him "Insane"; says he does "jerky" things - The Walk To The Door
- Hits him; shoves him; calls him a Moron - The Wedding, part 2
- Elbows him in the eye - Who Am I?
- Places bets with their kids that Ray will do stupid things - Whose Side Are You On?
- Tells him he has a "dorky" face; calls him stupid - Who's Next?
- Grabs his ear and drags him across the room; implies that he may "die tomorrow" - Young Girl
- Hits him on the head with a stuffed rabbit - Your Place Or Mine
- Demeans him with "Let's get this over with" as they're preparing to make love; hits him with a carton of milk; calls him a "Jerk"; calls him a "Baby" - The Can Opener
- Throws chocolate in his face; threatens to end his life - Christmas Present
- Calls him an Idiot - Civil War
- Force feeds him meatloaf - Confronting the Attacker
- Hits him repeatedly on the head - The Letter
- Grabs his arm and throws him into a chair - The Lone Barone

Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Male Victimization is Funny*



Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Male Victimization is Funny*



Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Male Victimization is His Fault*

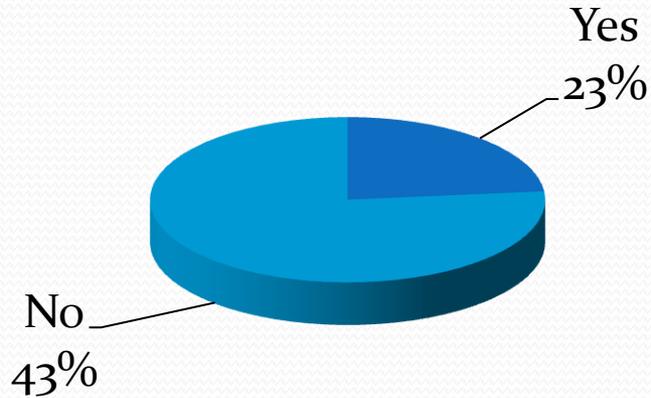
- There is no too far for Tiger Woods.
- Woods deserves to be pilloried for both his attitude and his actions. People made a hero out of this lout and he rewarded them with ugly behavior. The skit is right on target.
- Get a real life journalists you can see this was greatly exaggerated and besides by the way he behaved for than once i think its excellent to poke fun at him. Next time hell definitely keep his pants up and stop chasing other women specially since his wife is drop dead gorgeous .

Q2: Media Portrayals of Male Victims of IPV: *Male Victimization is His Fault*

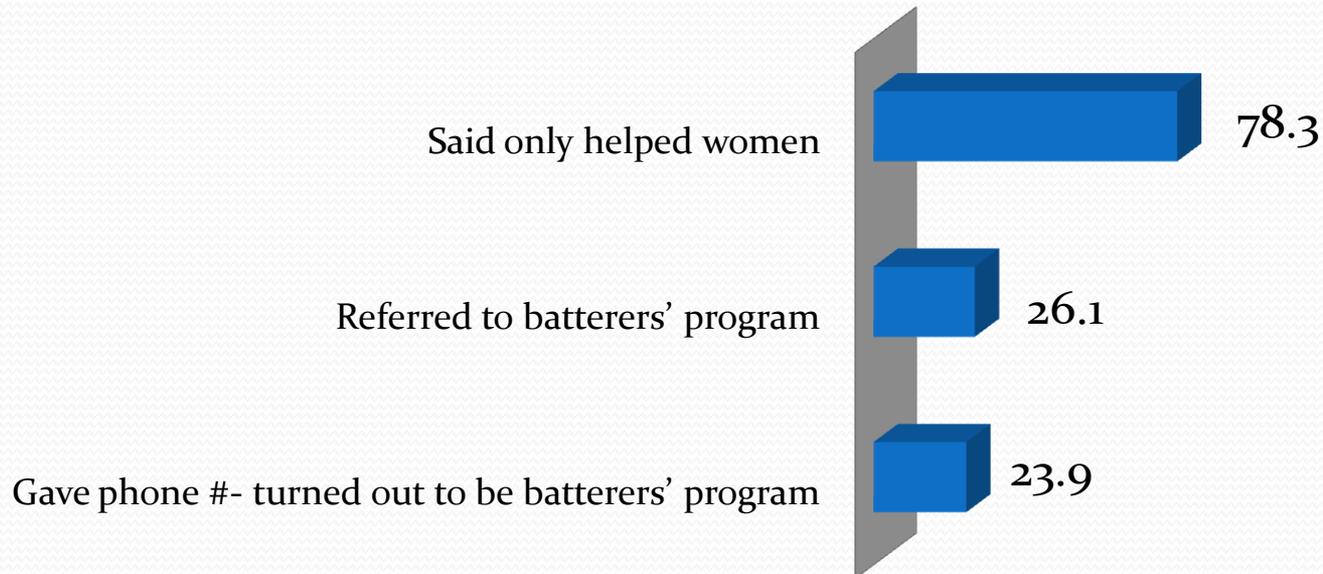
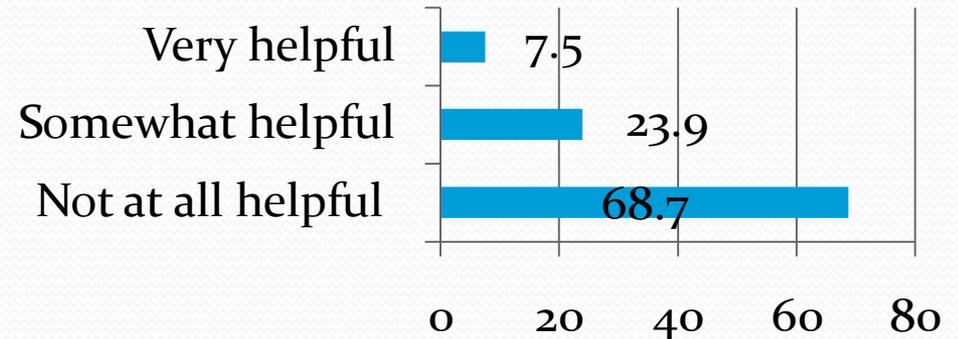
- Girls can hit guys, and that is OK. Guys should never hit girls. Way it is and stop your crying like a little girl.
- THought the skit was spot on. He is a public person acting indiscrimetly and has to accept responsibility.
- It was Great Skit. Very Funny!!! You reap what you sow.
- I'm guessing that there's a lot of married women out there who are thinking that this is exactly what should have happened to him.

Q3: Helpseeking: *Contacting Hotlines*

% Who Called Hotline

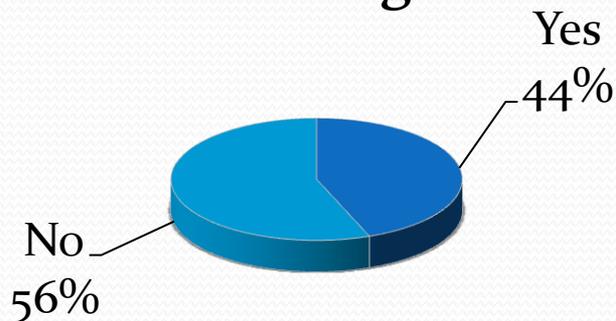


How helpful was this hotline?

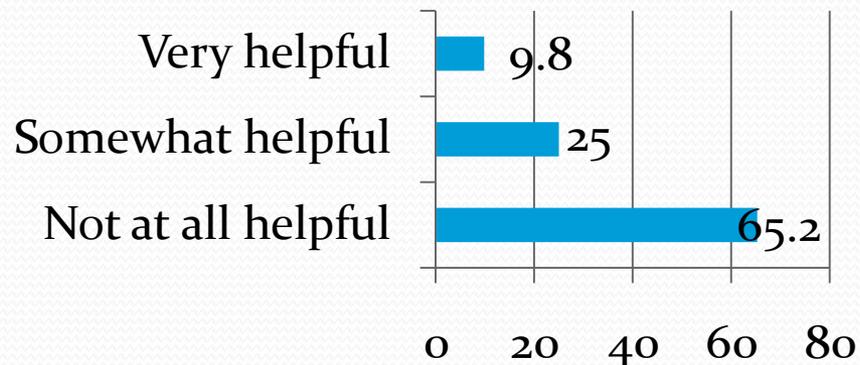


Q3: Help-seeking: *Local DV Programs*

% Who Contacted a Local DV Program



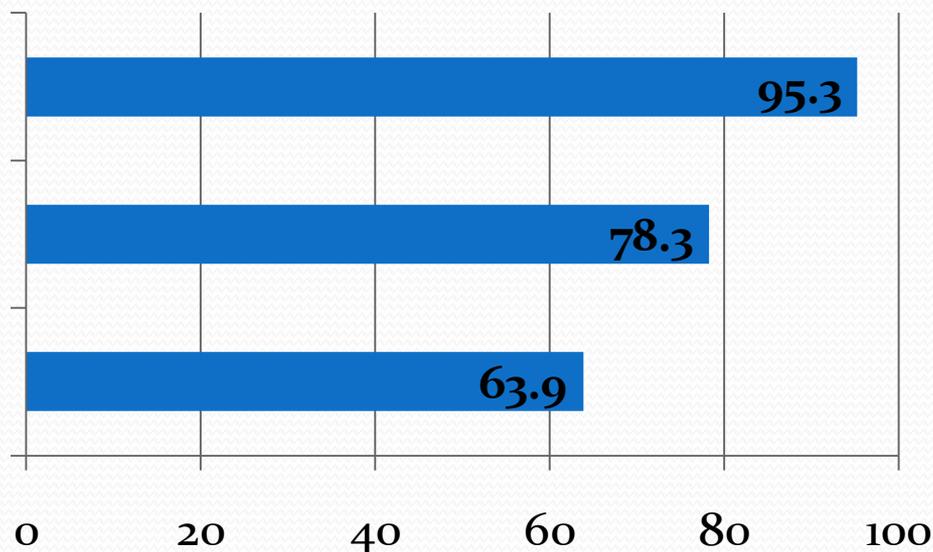
How Helpful was the DV Program?



Gave impression that they were biased against men

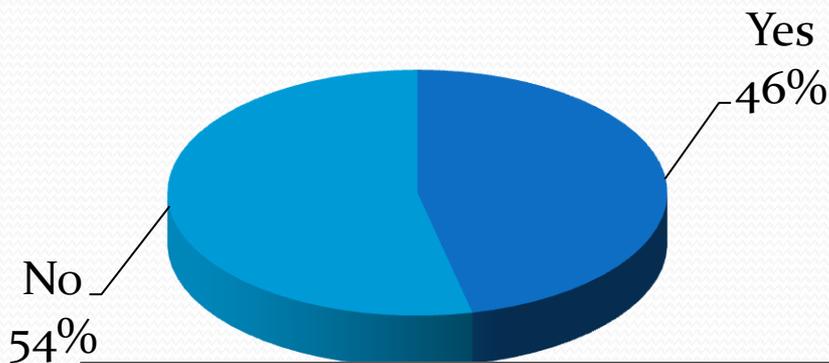
Said they don't help male victims

Suggested that he's the batterer

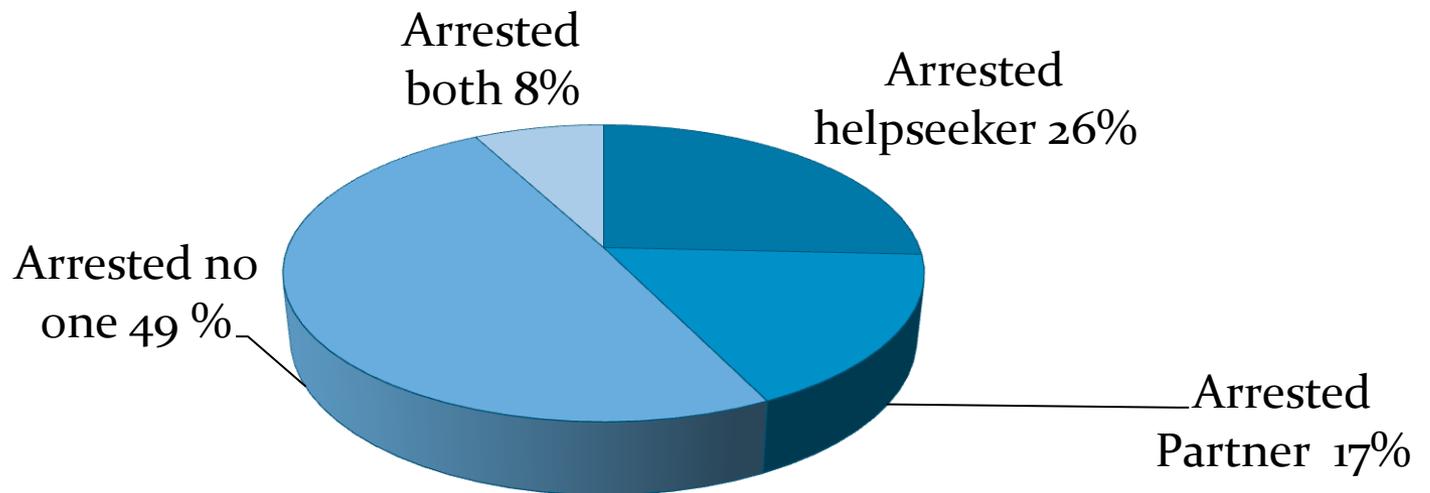
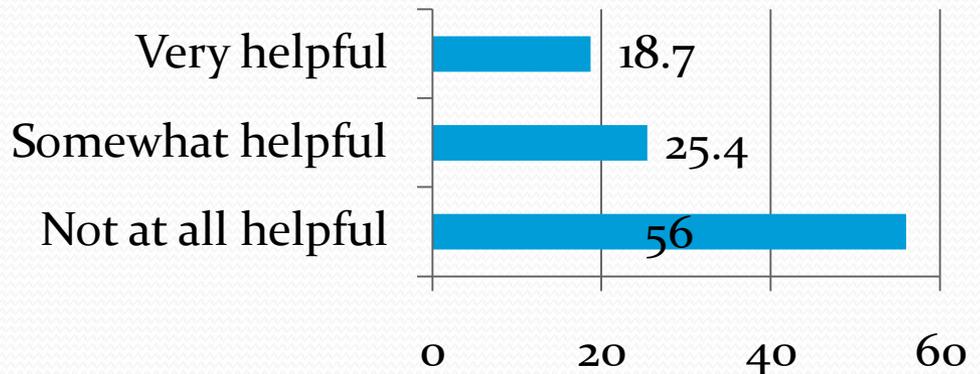


Q2: Help-seeking: *Police*

% Who Contacted the Police



How Helpful were the Police?



Q3: Helpseeking Experiences Linked to Media Portrayals?

IPV against Men is NOT IPV

- *They were confused, belligerent, patronizing, offended, indifferent. Thought I was making up a story.*
- *When I called to explain that I had been hit, they kept misunderstanding me and asking me who I hit. It was frustrating.*
- *Told me that "men can not be abused, and women can not be abusers."*
- *They determined she was the aggressor but said since I was a man it was silly to arrest her.*
- *They do not believe a man of my stature could be abused by a woman.*
- *They asked how much I weighed and how much she weighed and hung up on me...I was told by this agency I was full of BS.*
- *They saw me as a large male and my girlfriend is a very attractive woman so they immediately took her side. I was at the hospital with bruising and burned eyes from hot coffee thrown in them. They didn't believe that she did this to me and refused to arrest her instead they listened to her saying she was defending herself and did not press any charges.*

Q3: Helpseeking Experiences Linked to Media Portrayals?

IPV against Men is Funny

- *They just laughed and hung up.*
- *Would incinuate that I was a wimp, made humiliating comments.*
- *Laughed at me and told me I must have done something to deserve it if it happened at all.*

Q3: Helpseeking Experiences Linked to Media Portrayals?

IPV against Men is HIS Fault

- *Turned out they could not believe I was being abused and mentioned it must have been my fault for her attacks.*
- *Told me that women don't commit domestic violence -- it must have been my fault.*
- *They tried to talk me into admitting I was the problem in the relationship.*
- *Told me that I must be the cause of the problem.*
- *They said that men are the problem.*
- *Told me because I am a man I am the loser*
- *They accused me of trying to hide my "abuse" of her by claiming to be a victim, and they said that I was nothing more than a wimp.*
- *They didn't really listen to what I said. They assumed that all abusers are men and said that I must accept that I was the abuser.*
- *The first response they arrested me, even after she turned on them.*

Conclusions

- Male helpseekers sustained substantial levels of physical and psychological PV from female partners.
 - Also injured on a monthly basis.
 - Suffered high levels of PTSD.
- Media portrayals of male victims
 - IPV against men is not really IPV
 - IPV against men is funny
 - IPV against men is his fault
- These themes are reflected in the male victims' responses when they sought help.

Implications

- Because IPV against men can be just as serious as IPV against women, we need to be careful about portraying it accurately and seriously in media.
- Education is necessary for:
 - General public
 - First responders/treatment providers
- Media can have an important role in providing this education.

Contact Information

Denise A. Hines, Ph.D.

Clark University Department of Psychology

508-793-7458

dhines@clarku.edu

<http://www.clarku.edu/faculty/dhines>

Publications from Dataset

- Hines, D.A., & Douglas, E.M. (2009). Women's use of intimate partner violence against men: Prevalence, implications, and consequences. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma*, 18, 572-586.
- Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. (in press). Intimate terrorism by women towards men: Does it exist? *Journal of Aggression, Conflict, and Peace Research*.
- Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. (in press). A Closer Look at Men Who Sustain Intimate Terrorism from their Female Partners. *Partner Abuse*.
- Douglas, E. M., & Hines, D. A. "The Helpseeking Experiences of Men Who Sustain Intimate Partner Violence: An Overlooked Population and Implications for Practice." Manuscript submitted to the *Journal of Family Violence*.
- Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. "Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in men who sustain intimate partner violence: A study of helpseeking and community samples." Manuscript submitted to *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*.
- Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. "Symptoms of alcohol and substance abuse in men who sustain intimate partner violence" Manuscript submitted to *Psychology of Violence*.
- Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. "Understanding the use of violence among male victims of intimate terrorism." Manuscript submitted to *Partner Abuse*.