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Gender and Ethnicity in the Perception and Acceptance of
Domestic Violence Towards Men: African-American, Caucasian
and Hispanic

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Ramon Sanchez and Adriana Caballero, whose unwavering support and sacrifices have enabled me to reach my dreams and accomplish my personal and academic goals.

Dedicación

Esta tesis es dedicada a mis padres, Ramon Sanchez y Adriana Caballero. Su apoyo total y sus sacrificios me han ayudado a lograr todos mis sueños y cumplir con mis metas personales al igual que académicas.

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Abstract

The current study investigated ethnicity and gender as factors affecting the perception and acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women in these populations: African-Americans, Caucasians and Hispanics ($N=308$). Male and female participants completed an online study involving: a) a demographic questionnaire, b) ratings of three different scenarios depicting physical and psychological domestic violence towards men by women and a healthy relationship, c) an adaptation of Foshee, Fothergill, & Stuart's (1992) *Acceptance of Couple Violence* and their *Attitudes Toward Women Scale*, d) and Zung's (1971) *Self-Rating Anxiety Scale*. The results showed that women perceived significantly greater psychological domestic violence towards men by women than did men. Significant differences were found between the genders and acceptance of domestic violence towards men in that women were less accepting of domestic violence towards men than men were. Significant correlations were found between: 1) women's acceptance of domestic violence towards men and women's perception of physical and psychological domestic violence towards men, and 2) women's perception of the occurrence of psychological domestic violence towards men and their acceptance of it. Significant correlations were also found for: 1) men's acceptance of domestic violence towards men and their perception of physical and psychological domestic violence towards men, and 2) men's perception of the occurrence of physical domestic violence towards men and men's acceptance of it. Significant differences were also found between Hispanic, African-American and Caucasian men in the perception of psychological violence towards men by women. Significant differences were found in the perception of physical domestic violence towards men by women across Hispanic, African-American

and Caucasian women. Significant differences were found between Caucasian and Hispanic women in the perception of psychological domestic violence towards men by women. No significant differences were found in the level of acceptance of domestic violence towards men among men of the three ethnicities. Caucasian women were found to be significantly more accepting of domestic violence towards men than Hispanic and African-American women. There were no significant differences found across gender or ethnicity for gender stereotyping. Additionally, there were no significant differences found in levels of anxiety across the three ethnicities and genders. In conclusion, women, regardless of ethnicity, are more likely than men to perceive that violence has occurred. Further research should be conducted to investigate the reliability and validity of the scenarios used in the study.

Gender and Ethnicity in the Perception and Acceptance of Domestic Violence Towards
Men: African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic

In recent years, awareness of domestic violence has received increased attention in the media and in governmental policy. Rates of domestic violence remain high (35%), up to five million women and three million men report being the victims of domestic violence (Centers for Disease Control, 2012). Rates could also be higher as some cases go unreported, less than one-quarter to one-half of physical abuse cases are reported (Sampson, 2007). According to the *National Violence Against Women Survey* (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998), conducted in 1995 and 1996 using 16,000 participants, almost one in four women and one in 13 men surveyed had been raped or physically assaulted by a current or former intimate partner at some time (Sampson, 2007). In the *National Crime Victimization Survey* (Department of Justice, 1972) it was found that rates were one-third lower for women and two-thirds lower for men than what was found in the *National Violence Against Women Survey* (Sampson 2007).

While domestic violence has been heavily underreported in the past, and remains so to some extent, there has been a recent (2007) increase in reporting for several reasons (Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson, & Johnson, 2007). First, due to the development of protective service programs for victims of domestic abuse, and second, because of the advent of the restraining order (Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson, & Johnson, 2007). Additionally, it has been suggested that the decline in homicides as a result of domestic violence may be due to the development of legitimate ways for domestically abused individuals to leave the relationship: divorce, shelters, police, and courts (Sampson, 2007). There is also evidence that within minorities the occurrences of domestic violence

have also decreased. Sampson (2007) suggested that black male victims of intimate partner homicide fell by 81% as of 2002 when compared to the 56% decrease in homicide rate due to domestic violence for Caucasian men during the same period. Similar results were suggested for black female victims of domestic violence homicide, incidences fell by 49% in 2002 as compared to 9% decrease for their Caucasian counterparts (Sampson, 2007). Although a trend of decreasing domestic abuse rates exists, the U.S. Department of Justice (Justice Programs Fact sheet, 2011) reported that in 2007 alone there were an estimated 2300 fatalities resulting from domestic violence of which 700 were male victims and 1640 were female victims. This same report noted that nearly three million men are physically assaulted each year by an intimate partner.

Research suggests that there are various factors influencing attitudes toward domestic violence. In a study conducted cross-culturally in Brazil and Turkey using both male and female participants, Glick, Sakalli-Ugurlu, Ferreira, and Aguiar de Souza (2002), found that sexism, particularly what they termed hostile sexism, was the single greatest predictor of attitudes toward wife abuse in their sample. They defined hostile sexism as overt acts or demonstrations of prejudice against members of the opposite gender, in this case, women. Glick et al (2002) further concluded that hostile sexism acted to legitimize abuse, making the behavior more likely in men and more acceptable by women. Moreover, another finding of this study was that ambivalent sexism also impacted attitudes toward domestic abuse; ambivalent sexism being defined as more covert behaviors and actions against the opposite sex. In the case of ambivalent sexism, higher scores on either the Brazilian adaptation of the *Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating* (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) and the *Blaming the Wife for*

Violence Against Her Scale (Haj-Yahia, 1998) or the Turkish adaptation of the *Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse Scale* (Briere, 1987), denoted greater acceptance and legitimization of abuse for both men and women. However, because their sample was from a population with generally higher socio-economic status in both countries it was unclear if these results would be found in lower SES populations (Glick et al., 2002).

Jasinski, Asdigian, and Kantor (1997) found another factor which impacts attitudes toward domestic violence. In their study, stress was found to correlate with instances of spousal abuse. Jasinski, Asdigian and Kantor (1997) found that stressors like lower SES, drinking and unemployment problems, as well as education drop-out rate all increased the likelihood that abuse in the home would occur. The researchers focused primarily on work, alcohol drinking, and the combination of these and how these variables affected the occurrence of domestic violence in Anglos versus Hispanic families. Jasinski, Asdigian and Kantor (1997) concluded that the differences encountered in the workplace by Anglo and Hispanic Americans, such as long-term unemployment for the former and problems with the employer for the latter, would show themselves in the home. Hispanic Americans would turn to violence and increased drinking behaviors immediately while Anglo Americans would only turn to these after an extended period of unemployment. The researchers found that there was a high correlation between increased drinking and violence. The basic conclusion of this study was that stress from work caused an increase in drinking behaviors which increased the occurrence of violence in the home. Furthermore, among the factors found to impact attitudes toward domestic violence, ethnicity and culture have been found to confer their own effect on the perceptions of domestic violence. For example, Locke and Richman

(1999) found that within ethnic groups, individuals tend to have different attitudes toward domestic abuse.

Domestic Violence

The United States Department of Justice defines domestic violence in several ways and definitions include both psychological as well as physical abuse (Justice Programs Fact sheet, 2011). Generally, they define domestic violence is a pattern of behavior in an intimate relationship used by one partner to gain control or influence over the other partner. It can include: physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions. Behaviors used by the abusive partner can include: intimidation, manipulation, humiliation and isolation, coercion, and terror tactics (Justice Programs Fact sheet, 2011). Physical domestic abuse may incorporate any type of: hitting, slapping, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting, hair-pulling, and also includes denying a partner medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use. Psychological abuse can be defined as the creation of fear by: intimidation, threatening physical harm to self, a partner, children, or a partner's family or friends, as well as, the destruction of pets and property (Justice Programs Fact sheet, 2011). Furthermore, forcibly isolating a partner from family, friends, or school and/or work are also examples of psychological abuse.

The State of Florida further specifies what constitutes domestic violence (FL. Gen. Laws Ann. ch. 741, § 28, 1994) though there is no differentiation between the various forms of violence (i.e., physical, psychological, verbal, etc.). The statute defines domestic violence as “any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death of one family or household

member by another family or household member” (FS: 741.28). Additionally, both federal and state level governmental bodies have in place punishment for perpetrators of domestic violence. In Florida State law, the minimum incarceration time for an individual found guilty of domestic violence is five days, though a specific court can order a longer period of incarceration, probation and community service time (Florida State Statutes, Chapter 741.283).

There is a substantial body of research examining domestic violence, including the causes of domestic violence as well as the long term physical and emotional consequences for the victims, perpetrators and child witnesses (Fusco & Fantuzzo, 2009; Kim-Goh & Baello, 2008; Owen, Thompson, Shaffer, Jackson, & Kaslow, 2009). A large majority of the focus of the research has been conducted in cases of domestic violence toward a female by a male perpetrator. This may be due to the statistics available on domestic violence in which women are overrepresented and men are underrepresented; for example, according to the U.S. Department of Justice (Sampson, 2007) women experience 4.8 million intimate partner physical assaults and rapes each year while men reportedly experience 2.9 million intimate partner physical assaults per year.

Risk Factors

Domestic violence can happen to anyone at any time regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender and age. However, there are several risk factors which do account for greater percentages in the statistics of domestic violence (Sampson, 2007), being between the ages of 16 and 24 accounts for the greatest risk among the factors described. The socioeconomic status (Sampson, 2007) which includes a greater frequency of domestic violence reports is the lower income brackets. Wealthier individuals, those

with an income bracket between \$50-74,000, tend to be victims of domestic abuse much less often than individuals with an income of less than \$7,500. Race is another risk factor, African-Americans have been found to experience greater rates, over 62%, of victimization (Sampson, 2007).

In addition to one's demographics as a risk factor, rates for domestic violence appear to increase after the first offense. That is, the incidence of repeat victimization contributes to a greater risk for further victimization (Sampson, 2007). About 42% of domestic violence incidents were repeat offenses within the same year (2007). It has been suggested that the period of greatest risk for repeat victimization is after and within the first four weeks since the last assault. There is also an increased risk for recidivism after release from incarceration. Sampson (2007) suggests that over 70% of offenders who have been incarcerated for domestic violence have prior history of convictions for other violent crimes.

Pregnancy also accounts for some of the risk for domestic violence. This is especially true when the abuse occurred before pregnancy and if the couple is poor or young. Additionally, there is a greater risk for domestic violence with unintended pregnancies (Sampson, 2007). Divorce and separation as well as living in a rental home or in an urban area also account for greater risk of domestic violence for both men and women (Sampson, 2007). Moreover, a history of aggressive delinquency in the teen years as well as cohabitation at a young age also accounts for a higher risk.

The Cycle of Violence

The cycle of violence (Walker, 1979), also known as the intergenerational transmission of violence, occurs throughout the lifespan; it begins with victimization and

ultimately ends in perpetration. The cycle is made up of three cyclical phases in physically abusive intimate relationships. In the beginning there is a tension-building phase which includes minor physical and verbal abuse. This is then followed by an acute battering phase wherein the actual violence occurs. Finally, there is a makeup or honeymoon phase where the perpetrator expresses remorse and asserts that the violence will no longer occur. This final phase serves to lull the abused party into staying with the perpetrator and the cycle then begins anew (Sampson, 2007).

There is great debate over the effects of witnessing and being the victim of violence during childhood. Children who grow up witnessing domestic violence are seriously affected by this crime (Sampson, 2007). Their intimate and frequent exposure to violence in the home both predisposes them to numerous social and physical problems and also teaches them that violence is a normal way of life; thus increasing children's risk of becoming victims and abusers (Sampson, 2007). Proponents argue that violence will beget violence (Fang & Corso, 2007; Heyman & Smith Slep, 2002), and opponents argue that research results are not conclusive enough to make such concrete claims because not all abused children become criminals upon reaching adulthood. Fang and Corso (2007) posit that there is a link between experiencing violence as a child and later perpetration of intimate partner violence.

The effects of childhood violence have been the focus of more recent research, especially foci concerning indirect and direct involvement in violence. In their 2007 study, Fang and Corso used previous data as well as a current sample to investigate the effects of childhood violence on young adults in intimate relationships. Participants had endured either neglect, physical, or sexual abuse as children. Of interest to the researchers

was whether a history of abuse would impact participants' perpetration of youth violence and/or adult intimate partner violence. Additionally, Fang and Corso (2007) examined the indirect effects of childhood maltreatment on perpetration or victimization in adulthood. The researchers examined what role gender and socio-economic status had in effecting the occurrence of violence. Essentially, the researchers analyzed how childhood abuse affected young adult perpetration or victimization and what impact SES and gender had on domestic violence, as well as, how individual personality variables would affect perpetration or victimization of domestic violence.

Fang and Corso (2007) found that gender did not interact significantly with other variables, in either perpetration or victimization. However, they found that physical abuse and neglect in childhood were predictors of youth violence perpetration and that socio-economic status predicted violence perpetration. Furthermore, they found that women were more likely to be perpetrators of intimate partner violence when they had been physically abused and neglected as children as well as when they had been violent themselves as adolescents. Men were violent after childhood sexual abuse and a violent adolescence. Men were found to be victims of violence following a history of childhood neglect. Moreover, they were at greater risk for violence due to living in economically disadvantaged areas. Interestingly, Fang and Corso (2007) found that men were more likely to be victims of intimate partner violence when they had a history of victimization as adolescents and, indirectly, when they had a history of neglect as children. Overall, the researchers concluded that childhood violence was predictive of violence and intimate partner violence perpetration.

The focus of recent research has been placed on what types of influences are exerted on the adult by their exposure to violence as children. Heyman and Smith Slep (2002) provided some of the definitions available from research on the cycle of violence; for example, that the cycle of violence can begin with forms of childhood maltreatment leading to violent behaviors in adulthood and childhood maltreatment leading to partner abuse perpetration in adulthood. The researchers wished to examine whether childhood exposure to or victimization of violence would lead to child maltreatment in adulthood, partner abuse perpetration in adulthood or partner abuse victimization in adulthood. Heyman and Smith Slep (2002) analyzed data previously collected for a national family violence survey to test their hypotheses. The researchers found support for the cycle of violence hypothesis in that participants who had been exposed to family of origin violence could be used to predict probabilities of adulthood family violence.

Heyman and Smith Slep (2002) found that women who had been victims of family violence and who had witnessed inter-parental violence had a greater risk of victimizing their partners and children, as well as, being victims themselves of intimate partner violence. Men were found to have even more risk than women for partner abuse victimization after exposure to violence in the family of origin, though only with exposure to inter-parental violence or childhood victimization would they be more likely to be perpetrators of violence but not with both forms. Additionally, a finding of interest in the Heyman and Smith Slep (2002) study was that women exposed to a violent mother, that is a mother who was abusive to them, were more likely to engage in partner abuse.

The exposure of children to domestic violence has been extensively studied and it is generally recognized that it may be as harmful to the child as direct contact and

involvement with violence (Fusco & Fantuzzo, 2009). Children exposed to domestic violence suffer from emotional, cognitive, and social problems more so than children who are not exposed to violence. Fusco and Fantuzzo (2009) looked at children's involvement in cases of domestic violence and obtained their data from police reports of substantiated domestic violence events with children involved. They also hypothesized on factors which determined the exposure of children to domestic violence such as differences in age, sex and race.

To determine the extent of the involvement of children in the cases of domestic violence researched, Fusco and Fantuzzo (2009) employed the *Domestic Violence Event Protocol-Child Enhanced* questionnaire, derived from domestic violence literature and national surveys on domestic violence (National Research Council 1998, in Fusco & Fantuzzo, 2009). The researchers found that nearly all the children who had been present in a situation of domestic violence had direct sensory exposure to it. Furthermore, they found that there was a high likelihood that children who were present to witness situations of domestic violence where physical injuries resulted had increased likelihood of developing PTSD symptoms.

The researchers found that children in general were more likely to be exposed to domestic violence perpetrated by both parents, rather than just one or the other parent. Fusco and Fantuzzo (2009) also documented the subtypes of children's involvement in cases of domestic violence; these included: 1) a child as the direct precipitators of an event, 2) a child calling for help during or after the event and 3) a child's direct physical involvement in the event. The researcher's findings of the effects on the children caused by the subtypes indicated several things. First, children feel guilt for causing the

argument or situation which precipitated the instance of violence. Second, children who are physically affected by violence are more seriously stressed because the child is exposed to direct physical harm and danger.

Gender Differences in Domestic Violence

A great deal of literature exists concerning the abuse of women by men; however, there is support for the theory that women are also perpetrators of domestic violence. Hamberger, Lohr, and Tolin (1997) reported that about as many women, or even a greater number of women, are as abusive to their partners as are men. Though they confirm that violence affects each gender differently, men are more physically dangerous than women and women may experience greater fear of violence. The authors further point out that there are several differences in why men and women engage in intimate partner violence. For example, some women may engage in violent behaviors in response to their partners use of violence or from fear of escalating conflict; while men report that they are violent toward a partner for reasons of control.

Hamberger, Lohr, and Tolin (1997) conducted a factor-analysis to determine what other motivations existed behind women's use of intimate partner violence besides those of fear and retaliation. They found that women also perpetrate intimate partner violence to punish, coerce or as attention seeking behaviors. For men, they found that intimate partner violence existed for reasons of punishment, coercion, control, and dominance. Additionally, whereas men reported that they blamed instances of intimate partner violence on substance use and anger; women reported that they were violent for purposes of self-defense, retaliation and escape. For their study, Hamberger, Lohr, and Tolin (1997) assessed to what degree the motivation of a perpetrator of aggression was affected

by gender. They hypothesized that women's motivations would be more related to self-deference and retaliation while men's motivations would be related to dominance, control and punishment.

Hamberger, Lohr, and Tolin (1997) examined several men and women who had been court referred to domestic violence counseling programs through the use of a verbal interview. They then asked male and female sorters to place the motivations into several categories, such as Response to Verbal Abuse. They found that sorters of both genders agreed that women were motivated by anger expression, tension release, retaliation, self-defense, attention, and coercion; men were found to be motivated by coercion, dominance, punishment, physical control, tension release, and ignorance. Furthermore, female sorters gave an additional motivation to male perpetrators than male sorters did that, that of self-defense (Hamberger, Lohr, & Tolin, 1997). This latter category of motivation is interesting because it shows that men and women have different views concerning intimate partner violence. While a man may not see that there is a need to defend one-self from a violent woman, women are more likely to recognize this. Ultimately, however, from the self-reported responses of intimate partner violence perpetrators, the researchers concluded that their hypotheses were supported. Generally men are violent for control and punishment purposes while women are violent in response to partner violence.

Assistance for the Victims of Domestic Violence

Federal and state governments have in place several means by which individuals who are victims of domestic violence may seek assistance. Federal laws and programs have been established to help victims of domestic abuse (U.S. Dept. of Justice), including

the Violence Against Women Act (1994) and the Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (1998).

Because domestic violence is a global phenomenon, which ignores race, age, social class, nationality, and economic standing as well as being linked to several health issues, researchers have attempted to create programs which could benefit persons victimized by domestic violence. The Ahimsa Project for safe families, developed by Pan, Daley, Rivera, Williams, Lingle, and Reznik (2006) in San Diego, California, is such a program. It specifically targets immigrant and refugee families because of the increased risks for domestic violence associated to the shifts in values and gender role differences. The Ahimsa project was developed to address the issues just discussed as well as to increase awareness of domestic violence in the Latino, Vietnamese and Somali communities. The project is concerned with culture and its interaction with domestic violence. It serves to identify norms and stigmas attached to domestic violence. The developers of the project recognized that a need for community dialogue as well as culturally appropriate interventions existed; thus, they identified six core issues underlying domestic violence in the three target communities. They analyzed the varying definitions of violence, gender roles, varying conflict resolution strategies, and cultural identity. In addition, the researchers' assessments identified common barriers to accessing services, including: lack of trust of social service providers, language, transportation, beliefs about family/culture, and lack of bilingual/bicultural staff in order to develop the most effective program (Pan, Daley, Rivera, Williams, Lingle, & Reznik, 2006).

Theoretical Perspectives

Attachment theory

Although women have high rates of domestic violence perpetration, little research has focused on causal factors behind these rates in this population. Previous research has concluded that female offenders in domestic violence cases: 1) experienced more anxiety in their romantic relationships, 2) had a greater fear of being abandoned, 3) had poorer emotional regulation, and 4) were involved in relationships that were fraught with more jealousy, distress, and poor communication (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). According to attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) the psychological functioning of adults is greatly determined by childhood relationships with caregivers. Goldenson et al. (2007) thus examined whether the theoretical variables implicated in domestic violence, like attachment, trauma-related symptoms, and personality disorder related patterns would be empirically demonstrated with female offenders.

Goldenson et al. (2007) investigated whether correlates of those variables found to be implicated in domestic violence were specific to the actual perpetration of the violent act or whether they were part of a pattern of clinical distress. To this end, the researchers compared female offenders with a clinical comparison group composed of women who were seeking treatment for depression, relationship issues and anxiety. This controlled for involvement in treatment and the presentation of clinical symptoms (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). The authors predicted, compared to a non-offending comparison group, that the female offender group would report higher rates of attachment related anxiety and avoidance, trauma symptom scores, and features characteristic of personality disorders. The study examined these variables in 33 female

offenders receiving mandated treatment for domestic violence and compared the results to 32 non-offending women receiving psychological treatment for depression. The women in both these groups met criteria such as having been in a married or cohabiting relationship with their partner within the last two years. For the offender group, partner referred to the person with whom they had the domestic violence incident that precipitated mandated treatment. Participants were all within their first 16 weeks of treatment and did not present with symptoms of an active thought disorder (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). The researchers utilized the *Experiences in Close Relationships Revised Scale* (Waller & Brennan, 2000) to examine adult attachment which assesses attachment related anxiety and attachment related avoidance. Attachment related anxiety is defined as the extent to which people are secure versus insecure regarding their partners' availability. Conversely, attachment related avoidance is defined as the extent to which people are uncomfortable depending on others (Waller & Brennan, 2000).

To measure trauma, Goldenson, Gefner, Foster and Clipson (2007) examined participant scores on the *Trauma Symptom Inventory* (Briere, 1995). The *Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory III* (Millon, 1994), was used to examine cluster B personality traits. The researchers found that female domestic violence offenders reported less attachment security, more trauma related symptoms, and more personality psychopathology such as Antisocial and Borderline Personality Disorders, than did the non-offender clinical comparison group of women. As the researchers had hypothesized, the domestic violence offender group of women had higher scores on attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance as well as higher mean of scores on the *Trauma Symptom*

Inventory. The researchers concluded that the female offender group experienced less attachment security in their relationships with intimate partners than the clinical comparison group. Specifically, Goldenson, Gefner, Foster and Clipson (2007) concluded that women in the offender group perceived their partners as less available to them and that these same women were also less likely to feel comfortable depending on their partners. The researchers argued that these factors along with possible deficits in communication could have led the offending women to become more predisposed to act out aggressively. Several limitations were extant in this study, for example, their measures relied solely on self-report where interviews and/or partner reports would also have been useful. An additional finding was that female offenders were not a homogeneous group and should not be treated as such (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007).

Like Goldenson, Gefner, Foster and Clipson (2007), Gormley (2005) reviewed adult attachment theory with a specific relation to men's and women's intimate partner violence. The researcher proposed that two different intimate partner violence patterns, predicted by individual differences in adult attachment orientations, would explain gender similarities in violence perpetration. Gormley (2005) posited that men and women perpetrated equal amounts of intimate partner violence, a phenomenon called gender symmetry in interpersonal partner violence. He further posited that individual differences in how men and women approached intimate relationships would be able to explain why some women abuse their romantic partners. Adult attachment theory describes individual differences in expectations, affect regulation strategies, and behavior within romantic relationships (Hazel & Shaver, 1987, as referenced in Gormley, 2005).

Unhealthy adult attachment styles have been associated with men's and women's intimate partner violence (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). Thus, Gormley (2005) suggests that research which is driven by adult attachment theory can be used to describe not only individual differences in who might become abusive in romantic relationships but also which behaviors might be anticipated under a variety of conditions. Furthermore, adult attachment may aid in providing information regarding what consequences to perpetrators, their romantic partners, and their relationships might be expected and help researchers and others understand why abusive people act as they do. Adult attachment theory illustrates the various ways romantic partners respond during times of distress, separation, or interpersonal conflict (Hazel & Shaver, 1987). With unhealthy attachment styles, coping responses may include misperceptions of relational cues and difficulties regulating affect (Gormley, 2005); whereas healthy adult attachment orientations are secure and suggestive of a flexible and satisfactory approach in autonomously and cooperatively responding to stressful situations. Specifically, adults with secure adult attachment were more able to independently regulate affect, elicit support from a romantic partner when needed, and to rely on offered support.

Gormley (2005) posited that most intimate partner violence would occur with unhealthy adult attachment orientations, which were described as insecure and were suggestive of increased difficulties with responding to stressful situations. Furthermore, individuals with secure adult attachment orientations were expected to demonstrate low levels of anxiety and avoidance, while those with insecure adult attachment orientations would have higher levels of anxiety and/or avoidance (Gormley, 2005; Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). As suggested by Goldenson, Gefner, Foster and Clipson

(2007) attachment anxiety was posited to be suggestive of difficulties with independence that would impinge upon the ability to be intimate and attachment avoidance would be suggestive of difficulties with intimacy that impinged upon independent functioning (Gormley, 2005). Additionally, anger amongst adults could be viewed as a manipulative attempt to maintain their romantic relationships in reaction to real or perceived threats to those relationships, and violent behavior may result when attachment orientations are insecure (Gormley, 2005; Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). Psychological abuse was found to be associated with: the proximity seeking, separation protest, feared loss, and compulsive care seeking. Interpersonal partner violence driven by adult attachment anxiety was found to be motivated by a desire to preserve the relationship in order to avoid abandonment. Real or perceived separations constitute threats, because the anxious person depends heavily on the relationship for assistance with affect regulation (Gormley, 2005).

The researcher concluded that those interventions that include strategies aimed at enhancing the client's support system (e.g., positive self-esteem derived from a support group) and independent regulation of affect would be helpful in addressing the negative pattern of behavior associated with unhealthy attachment. Gormley (2005) suggested a treatment strategy for intimate partner violence driven by adult attachment avoidance. The perpetrator's cooperation in intervention was obtained by helping them discover what they wanted out of the relationship (e.g., sexual gratification) rather than urging them to consider their relationships as important or encouraging empathy toward their partners. A perpetrator with adult attachment avoidance would be motivated by a desire to maintain self-sufficiency and avoid closeness as this orientation relies on separateness

from others for stable functioning. Gormley (2005) found that these individuals engaged in behaviors, such as devaluing their partner and psychological abuse, which would gain a desired result without the individual having to achieve intimate connections. Finally, the researcher suggested that although work with those individuals who have the avoidance attachment orientation may need to be done slowly in individual sessions with someone prepared to minimize demands for relatedness, developing those skills related to emotional expression would be useful (Gormely, 2005).

Intimate partner violence, from an attachment theory perspective, may be examined as an attempt to establish or preserve a level of personal security within a relationship (Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, & McKinley, 2008). For example, if the perpetrating partner was to perceive a threat to the attachment relationship, he/she may become anxious and respond in a way designed to preserve the attachment system. The resulting behaviors per se may be negative or positive. Attachment theory also implies that intimate partner violence may be used as an attempt to manage conflict created by opposing needs for closeness or distance ((Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, & McKinley, 2008; Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007; Gormley, 2005). In their study, Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, and McKinley (2008) addressed several limitations noted in previous studies by collecting both self and partner violence data from both partners and using the higher of the two reports to measure male and female violence. They also used a continuous measure of physical violence.

The researchers hypothesized that the highest levels of violence would be evident in couples in which one partner was highly anxiously attached and the other partner had high levels of attachment avoidance. Additionally, they hypothesized that high levels of

violence would also be found in couples in which partners had opposite levels of attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance (Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, & McKinley, 2008). Seventy couples participated in the study and their attachment styles, as well as the interaction of the partners' attachment styles, were examined as predictors of intimate partner violence. Results indicated that a mis-pairing of an avoidant male partner with an anxious female partner would have an association with both male and female violence. The researchers also suggested that their findings support their assumption that intimate partner violence was associated with closeness versus distance struggles in the attachment dyad. Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, and McKinley (2008) found that when they controlled for partner violence, the relationship between attachment and violence was significant for men only. They also found that female attachment predicted male violence, even after they controlled for partner violence; however, the opposite was not found in their sample. The researchers did find that the relationship between female attachment anxiety and female violence was mediated by the male partner's use of violence. This may indicate that avoidant males respond to anxious females with violence and the females then respond with violence as a self-protective behavior.

The researchers concluded that it was likely that the relationship between attachment and violence was bidirectional or part of a feedback loop, with the closeness-distancing pattern leading to violence. Thus, the avoidant male's need for separation may have reinforced the anxious female's need for reassurance about abandonment and her need reinforced the avoidant male's need for separation. Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, and McKinley (2008) posited that the discrepancies between needs for closeness and distance served as catalysts for intimate partner violence, with violence used to regulate the socio-

emotional distance within the couple. The researchers suggested that in terms of treatment for intimate partner violence, the results of their study could be used to create a focus on the discrepancy between partners' needs for intimacy and distance within the couple.

Based on research demonstrating the existence of an association between insecure attachment and personality disorders (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007), Mauricio, Tein and Lopez (2007) hypothesized that relationships between adult attachment orientations and intimate partner violence would be mediated by personality disorders. Specifically, they posited that Borderline Personality Disorders would mediate the relationship between anxious attachment and intimate partner violence, whereas Antisocial Personality Disorder would mediate the relationship between avoidant attachment and violence. A total of 192 court-mandated male batterers were asked to complete measures examining: adult attachment orientations, such as anxious and avoidant; personality disorders, such as borderline and antisocial; types of violence perpetrated, such as psychological and physical; as well as social desirability (Mauricio, Tein & Lopez, 2007). Their findings indicated that personality disorders mediated the relationships between adult attachment orientations and were predictors of physical and psychological violence. The researchers' hypotheses that an Antisocial Personality Disorder and a Borderline Personality Disorder functioned as mechanisms through which avoidant adult attachment was related to both physical and psychological violence were supported. However, they found that a relationship between anxious attachment and psychological violence was only partially mediated by personality disorders (Mauricio, Tein & Lopez, 2007). The researchers found that avoidant attachment did not have a

direct effect on physical or psychological violence, whereas anxious attachment was found to have a direct effect on psychological violence but not physical violence.

Personality theory

A plethora of research indicates that violence is perpetrated by both men and women (Mauricio, Tein & Lopez, 2007; Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007; Doumas, Pearson, Elgin, & McKinley, 2008; Gormley, 2005) for various reasons. These studies have also shown that the prevalence of female-perpetrated aggression is equal to, or greater than, that of men. Thus, Shorey, Brasfield, Febres, and Stuart (2010) examined the risk factors for female-perpetrated physical and psychological aggression against intimate partners. They also examined the effect of impulsivity as a correlate of intimate partner violence perpetration. Impulsivity was conceptualized as lack of care, a lack of planning, and rapid decision making and taking action (Shorey, Brasfield, Febres, & Stuart, 2010). A secondary goal of the researchers was to examine a proposed model for general aggression which they hoped would provide information on whether the risk factors for general and partner specific aggression were similar.

The researchers posited that both impulsivity and trait anger would be positively associated with the perpetration of psychological and physical aggression as well as general violence (Shorey, Brasfield, Febres, & Stuart, 2010). Participants consisted of a sample of 80 women arrested for domestic violence in a batterer intervention program. The researchers found that both trait anger and impulsivity were associated with physical and psychological intimate partner violence and the perpetration of general aggression. Shorey, Brasfield, Febres, and Stuart (2010) suggest that, because they found that impulsivity was related to psychological and physical intimate partner violence and

general aggression, violence intervention programs should focus their efforts on treating and modifying women's tendencies to act impulsively.

Men and women both use intimate partner aggression at approximately equal rates. However, there is a gap in the knowledge base on whether the predictors of intimate partner aggression are the same for men and women. Hines (2008) evaluated whether Borderline Personality traits were a significant predictor of physical, psychological, and sexual intimate partner aggression among men and women in a non-clinical population. He posited that the association between Borderline Personality traits and intimate partner aggression would be equal or close to equal for men and women. Hines (2008) investigated whether Borderline Personality traits predicted the use of intimate partner aggression for men and women across 67 university sites, around the world, providing for a total of 14,154 student subjects.

Results of the study demonstrated that Borderline Personality traits predicted several forms of intimate partner aggression but that gender did not moderate between intimate partner aggression and Borderline Personality traits (Hines, 2008). Thus, the study supported the researcher's hypothesis that Borderline Personality traits positively predicts physical, psychological, and sexual intimate partner aggression for both men and women in non-clinical samples. Additionally, results indicated that there was gender symmetry in the prediction of physical, psychological, and sexual intimate partner aggression by borderline personality due to the lack of moderation by gender found. Thus, for both genders, Hines (2008) concluded that features consistent with Borderline Personality, such as instability of self and relationships, manipulation, self-harm, fear of abandonment, impulsivity, and emotional volatility, were risk factors for the perpetration

of intimate partner aggression. Hines (2008) also found that for physical intimate partner aggression, participants with higher levels of intimate partner aggression showed a stronger association between this and Borderline Personality traits. The same was found for psychological intimate partner aggression.

Coolidge and Anderson (2002) conducted a study to examine the psychopathology and backgrounds in samples of women who had been in a single abusive relationship versus in multiple abusive relationships. They hypothesized that women in multiple abusive relationships would exhibit a higher prevalence rate of Axis I and Axis II psychopathology than women in a single abusive relationship. Finally, it was predicted that women in multiple abusive relationships would have a higher prevalence of childhood victimization, physical and/or sexual abuse, than women in single abusive relationships. Forty-two women were given personality measures and their profiles were compared to either abused women with one abusive relationship or a control sample on the *Coolidge Axis II Inventory* (Coolidge & Merwin, 1992), this measure is a self-report questionnaire based on the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV-TR* (2000).

Coolidge and Anderson (2002) found that women with multiple abusive relationships had higher rates and greater levels of dependent, paranoid, and self-defeating personality disorders than women in the other two groups. Furthermore, women in multiple abusive relationships reported more depression. Those women in the multiple relationship group who also had posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) had significantly more personality disorders than women with single abusive relationships with PTSD (Coolidge & Anderson, 2002). Another finding of this study was that childhood

victimization, as defined by a self-reported history of physical or sexual abuse, was not a factor in the number of personality disorders the participant had or in the likelihood of her being in multiple abusive relationships. In actuality, both the sample and the control group were equally likely to have experienced abuse as a child which the researchers posited as support for the contention that an early history of abuse may be a risk factor for later physically abusive relationships (Coolidge & Anderson, 2002). The researchers suggested that women in abusive relationships might adopt personality disorder features as coping mechanisms in responses to the abnormal circumstances of the abusive relationship.

Intergenerational theory

Intergenerational transmission of violence theorists propose that exposure to violence within families is a strong predictor of relationship violence later in life (Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010; Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning & Coffey, 1999; Coolidge & Anderson, 2002; Gover, Kaukinen & Fox, 2008; Black, Sussman & Unger, 2009). This position is derived from the social learning theory (Bandura, 1963) which posits that children observe and then imitate those behaviors that they see being rewarded from those who are close to them such as their parents and siblings (Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010). Thus, those who witness violence in their parents' relationship are more likely to perpetrate or imitate the same behaviors when involved in a similar relationship. The researchers examined the relationships among exposure to interparental conflict, anger expression, acceptance of violence beliefs, and perpetration of teen dating violence in a sample of 204 Mexican adolescents. They hypothesized that anger expression styles would mediate the relationship between exposure to interparental conflict and dating

violence perpetration. Additionally, the researchers hypothesized that acceptance of violence would mediate the relationship between exposure to interparental conflict and dating violence perpetration (Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010).

The results from surveys indicated that anger control, exposure to interparental conflict, and dating violence perpetration all related to each other. Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa (2010) found that acceptance of violence, exposure to interparental violence, and dating violence perpetration were also related to each other. They found that anger control did mediate the relationship between exposure to interparental violence and dating violence perpetration. This suggests that adolescents exposed to family violence may learn anger expression styles which later place them at risk for dating violence. Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa (2010) also found support for their hypothesis regarding the acceptance of violence as a mediator in the relationship between exposure to interparental conflict and dating violence perpetration. Researchers concluded that when comparing individuals who inflicted or received dating violence to those who did not, those who witnessed high levels of interparental violence and accepted the use of violence in their dating relationships were more likely to be involved in dating violence themselves. Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa (2010) suggested that the use of family-based interventions that challenge those beliefs accepting violence and teach anger control techniques in Mexican teens would be effective in reducing the occurrence of the intergenerational transmission of intimate partner violence.

Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning and Coffey (1999) examined the association between witnessing interparental violence as a child and the risk for perpetrating and being the victim of dating aggression as an adult. The researchers tested a modeling

hypothesis whereby witnessing a same sex parent versus an opposite sex parent exclusively in the aggressor role would be more highly associated with risk for perpetrating dating aggression in a sample of 1576 undergraduates from a New England university, 95% of which were Caucasian. They hypothesized that observing a same sex parent versus an opposite sex parent exclusively as a victim of marital aggression would be associated with an increased risk for being a victim of dating aggression (Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning & Coffey, 1999). Using modeling and gender identification theory, they further predicted that children who witnessed only their same sex parent perpetrate violence would be more likely themselves to perpetrate violence in relationships than those children who witnessed their same sex parent in the role of victim or as both perpetrator and victim.

Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning and Coffey (1999) found that a same sex modeling effect existed for perpetration of dating aggression; that is, those participants who witnessed their same sex parent as the perpetrator were more likely to report having themselves perpetrated physical aggression against a dating partner. These findings were opposite to the results for those who observed their opposite sex parent as sole perpetrator, or those who had never witnessed any marital violence. Witnessing both parents engaged in marital violence was associated with perpetrating dating aggression (Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning & Coffey, 1999). Therefore, the researchers concluded that observing a same-sex parent in the roles of both victim and aggressor did not annul the transmission of aggression effects. In contrast, Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning and Coffey (1999) found that the sample that witnessed their opposite sex parent in only the role of perpetrator showed no greater likelihood of engaging in dating violence

themselves. Thus, the researchers suggested that witnessing one's same sex parent engaged in violence was possibly a necessary precursor for finding an intergenerational transmission of violence effect. Finally, Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning and Coffey (1999) concluded that transmission of the perpetrator role was related to witnessing a same sex parent or both parents as the perpetrator of marital aggression and that transmission of the victim role was associated with witnessing both parents engaged in marital violence. This may be because the correlation between witnessing marital violence between caregivers and being the victim of dating aggression as an adult may be explained by the development of an acceptance of violence as a method of addressing conflict in intimate relationships.

Research has established that violence in dating relationships is a serious social problem among adolescents and young adults as exposure to violence during childhood has been linked to both dating violence victimization and perpetration (Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning & Coffey, 1999; Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010). Gover, Kaukinen and Fox (2008) examined relationships separately for men and women because prior research has indicated that there are gender differences among factors that place men and women at risk for dating violence (Coolidge & Anderson, 2002). The researchers specifically looked at gender differences in the relationship between exposure to violence during childhood and physical and psychological abuse perpetration and victimization later in life. From the results obtained from a sample of approximately 2,500 college students, the researchers found that women reported physical violence perpetration in dating relationships more often than did men which may be ascribed to women behaving in a reactive manner in which physical violence is used against a dating partner in self-

defense. The culture surrounding men as victims and women as abusers is often portrayed by the media in a comical and trivial way and the inappropriateness of aggression perpetrated by women is often overlooked (Gover, Kaukinen & Fox, 2008).

The researchers also found that men and women who experienced abuse during childhood were more likely to perpetrate dating violence. However, they also found that childhood abuse was associated with the likelihood of dating violence victimization among women but not men. Gover, Kaukinen and Fox's (2008) found that while witnessing violence between parents does not have a considerable impact on dating violence perpetration, witnessing paternally perpetrated abuse was significantly related to physical dating violence for women. However, they found that young women were more likely than men to be the perpetrators and victims of psychological abuse. Gover, Kaukinen and Fox (2008) concluded that childhood exposure to violence was consistently a predictor of involvement in violent relationships for men and women.

The intergenerational transmission of violence has been a main theoretical consideration to explain the link between interparental aggression in the family of origin and intimate partner violence in subsequent intimate relationships. Several studies have examined this theoretical link based on self-reports of interparental violence witnessed during childhood and adolescence (Gover, Kaukinen & Fox, 2008; Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010; Coolidge & Anderson, 2002). Black, Sussman and Unger (2009) went a step further and examined the effects of current observation of interparental violence on emerging adult relationship violence. The researchers identified the percentage of psychological and physical intimate partner violence reported in emerging adulthood and compared it to the percentage of adults that witnessed interparental psychological and

physical violence within the previous year. They posited that there would be a positive correlation between observing either psychological or physical interparental aggression and both psychological and physical intimate partner violence experienced within emerging adult relationships (Black, Sussman & Unger, 2009). Additionally, they hypothesized that emerging adults who witnessed both physical and psychological interparental violence would be more likely to experience violence within their own intimate relationships than those experiencing a lone type of interparental violence.

Following an analysis of data from 223 undergraduate students, the researchers found that observing interparental violence in the emerging adulthood stage was a prevalent occurrence, indicating that parents attempted to hide spousal violence during the child's youth but this lessened as their child became an emerging adult. The researchers found that over half of their samples had experienced physical violence in the previous year alone. Additionally, the researchers found that emerging adults engaged in the same type of violent acts they had been exposed to through interparental violence, something that was less in evidence when the participant reported witnessing more than one type of violence, i.e., evidence of specific modeling of violence (Black, Sussman & Unger, 2009).

This study supported the idea that the family is a major socializing institution and that witnessing interparental violence plays a role in the use and receipt of violence in emerging adult intimate relationships (Black, Sussman & Unger, 2009). The researchers suggested that there is a need to develop a greater awareness of intimate partner violence regarding intimate partner violence prevention and the resources available to those seeking help. Furthermore, Black, Sussman and Unger (2009) suggested that counselors

should assist students to develop positive emotions within dating relationships to protect against intimate partner violence.

Socio-Cultural Theory of Violence

Researchers have proposed several reasons as to why domestic violence occurs. The socio-cultural theory suggests that there are higher rates of intimate partner abuse within the lower income subcultures as violence may be a more acceptable form of problem-solving in these subcultures (Sampson, 2007). According to the sociocultural theory of violence, violence against women reflects the attitudes shared by members at the larger, societal level. These attitudes thus influence interpersonal interactions in multiple areas of an individual's social life (Griffith, Negy, & Chadee, 2006).

Griffith, Negy, and Chadee (2006) described attitudes of under appreciation of women, a belief in the inferiority of women as well as a general ambivalence toward their abilities and accomplishments. Research suggests that domestic violence occurs more among Hispanic peoples and African Americans and that individuals at the lower SES levels are more likely to be domestically victimized by their partners (Griffith, Negy, & Chadee, 2006; Locke & Richman, 1999).

Griffith, Negy, and Chadee (2006) found that in the Caribbean there is a lack of help seeking in cases of domestic violence. Individuals were unlikely to use available services. Griffith, Negy, and Chadee (2006) offered the explanation that this may have been due to cultural norms which call for the separation of the personal and larger societal strata. Furthermore, he posited that the cultural attitudes of several Caribbean islands could foster the acceptance of domestic violence, perhaps due to the history of slavery in that area (Griffith, Negy, & Chadee, 2006).

Sociological theories usually suggest that intimate violence emerges through learned behavior (Sampson, 2007). One suggestion is that violence begins within a family and a victim stays caught up in the cycle of violence and forgiveness. Because the victim does not leave, the domestic abuser attains the view that violence is effective in producing desired positive results. Children in these families then may learn the abusive behaviors from their parents; there is a possibility for becoming either batterers or victims (Sampson, 2007).

Domestic Violence and Men

It has been estimated from the scarce data available that 3% of all non-fatal crimes against men are inflicted by intimate partners (Callie Marie Rennison, U.S. Dep't of Justice, 2003). This same survey found that African American men experienced intimate partner violence at a rate about 62% higher than that of Caucasian men and about 22 times the rate of men of other races (Callie Marie Rennison & Sarah Welchans, U.S. Dep't of Justice, 2000). In a study conducted in Texas which had a majority of Hispanic respondents, it was found that 50% of all participants believed that domestic violence was due to circumstances beyond the batterer's control, leading to the conclusion that there exists a need for the implementation of better domestic violence education programs for Hispanics (Texas Council on Family Violence, Statistics, 2002). Research looking into domestically abused men is scarce. However, from what is known as a result of research into domestically abused women, it can be concluded that Caucasian individuals have more positive views of victims and stronger disapproval of wife beating (Locke & Richman, 1999). Moreover, Locke and Richman (1999) found that individuals of different ethnicities rated the seriousness of the abuse perpetrated on a

woman differently. Their findings also suggest that African Americans are the least likely to disapprove of violence in the home.

Reitzel-Jaffe and Wolfe (2001) found that violence in the family of origin predicted abuse in men's intimate relationships as well as the development of negative beliefs about gender and intimate partner violence. The negative beliefs in turn caused men to associate with peer groups that were conducive to developing more violent tendencies and also to their own use, and acceptance of violence. An association with negative peers was also found by the researchers to predict greater instances of violence toward dating partners.

Research has suggested that violence against men is seen as more acceptable than violence against women by both men and women (Merten & Williams, 2009). This trend may be due to public assistance programs being geared more exclusively towards ending violence against women. Merten and Williams (2009) hypothesized that current relationship status may have had an impact on the possible attitudes that could be adopted toward intimate partner violence. They posited that relationship status could be indicative of the level of commitment and seriousness of a relationship of an individual, this could also have affected an individual's attitudes toward intimate partner violence. Merten and Williams (2009) were interested in differentiating between the acceptability of violence in marriage versus other relationship types because of the meanings imbued in the concept of marriage as well as in the greater frequency of longer acceptance of abuse in marital relationships versus other relationships. After analyzing previous research findings showing that though adolescent men are more accepting of violence, adolescent women say they will be perpetrators of violence in the future, they hypothesized that the

rate to which aggression in a relationship received acceptance would better predict violence, especially in longer relationships. This was in an effort to determine if individuals could be predisposed toward violence.

Merten and Williams (2009) examined men and women students from the Midwest using a 51-item questionnaire that was designed to assess attitudes toward marital violence and current relationship status. They found that, in general, woman to man violence is seen by both genders as more acceptable than man to woman violence. Men reported being more accepting of violence toward a man from a woman if the man initiated the violence. However, they found that, regardless of the existence of an intimate partner, women students were less accepting of marital violence than men students. Furthermore, Merten and Williams (2009) found that current relationship status did not predict levels of acceptance of violence. However, women currently in a relationship were found to be less accepting of woman perpetrated violence than women not currently engaged in an intimate relationship. The researchers posited that this lack of acceptance could change as a function of having a partner on whom they could contemplate perpetrating violence.

Yoshioka, DiNoia, and Ullah (2001) included gender role stereotyping in an analysis of domestic violence. They found that individuals are expected to conform to pre-determined roles because of the pressures exerted over them. These individuals act in ways that are considered correct by members of their group. In situations of domestic abuse, many individuals perceive that the abuse is to be accepted.

Consequences of Abuse for Men

Although research consistently shows that men can maintain intimate partner violence (Hines, 2007; Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010), there have been few studies that investigate the possible consequences of maintaining intimate partner violence among men. Hines (2007) investigated the association between sustaining intimate partner violence and posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTS) in a sample of 3461 male university students around the world. The study examined the association between PTS symptoms and sustaining intimate partner violence. Hines hypothesized that increased severity of intimate partner violence would be associated with increased levels of PTS symptoms among men and that these symptoms would be stronger in sites with greater levels of hostility toward men.

Results showed that sustaining intimate partner violence was a predictor of PTS symptoms (Hines, 2007). Additionally, it was found that lower levels of violent socialization and higher levels of hostility toward men increased the links between sustaining intimate partner violence and PTS. Hines (2007) also found that the greater the severity of sustained partner violence, the more symptoms of PTS that were displayed by men. Thus, the researcher concluded that PTS symptoms were associated with sustaining intimate partner violence among men in cultures around the world though it was unclear whether sustaining intimate partner violence could have caused PTS symptoms or if the inverse was true. Hines (2007) further suggested that the higher the level of hostility toward men in a society, the more likely it would be that a man who sustained intimate partner violence would feel isolated due to it seeming as if it was his fault that he was abused.

Research has shown that men can and do sustain intimate partner violence from their female partners (Hines, 2007; Black, Sussman & Unger, 2009; Gover, Kaukinen & Fox, 2008; Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010; Coolidge & Anderson, 2002). Hines and Douglas (2011) systematically investigated the help seeking experiences of men who have sustained intimate partner violence from their female partners. They sampled 302 men and sought to answer where men who have sustained woman-to-man intimate partner violence seek help, how they rate these resources, and the nature of their abusive experiences.

Hines and Douglas (2011) found that men who sustained intimate partner violence sought help from a variety of resources, most typically from informal resources such as family and the Internet. Formal resources included a mental health professional. The researchers found that family and friends, as informal resources, were reported as being the most helpful, and mental health and medical professionals were rated as being among the most helpful of the formal resources. Furthermore, the researchers found that the men reported that other service providers often failed to take action; for example, police did not respond to calls for help, and men's accounts of abuse were not believed (Hines & Douglas, 2011). The researchers thus concluded that men help seekers through formal resources had twice as many negative as positive experiences when searching for assistance. The quality of both the positive and the negative experiences had lasting implications for their mental health (e.g., an increased probability of not seeking psychological help through formal means after experiencing negative results with law enforcement). Hines and Douglas (2011) reported that with increased positive experiences as opposed to negative experiences with service providers, the odds of the

men suffering from PTSD would decrease and their chances of abusing substances would subsequently decrease.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is best understood as a dynamic, constantly evolving property of both individual identity and group organization (Nagel, 1994). Ethnicity may be regarded as the product of actions undertaken by ethnic groups as they shape and reshape their self-definition and culture; however, ethnicity is also constructed by external social, economic, and political processes (Nagel, 1994).

Ethnicity and Domestic Violence

Researchers have long found that within collectivistic cultures, it is the norm to value group harmony above the individual's needs so that any conflicts which may interrupt group relations are avoided (Yoshioka, DiNoia, & Ullah, 2001). Moreover, nationality has been found to influence beliefs regarding domestic violence (Nayak, Byrne, Martin, & Abraham, 2003). Yick and Oomen-Early (2008) found that many theories of domestic violence are unidimensional and uncultural. When these theories are applied to ethnic minority groups, they fail to extrapolate specific historical, cultural, political, and economic implications as well as to address important intragroup differences.

In their study, Griffith, Negy, and Chadee (2006) found that Hispanics reported being more willing to intervene in domestic violence involving extended family than Caucasian and African Americans. However, both Hispanics and Caucasian reported being more willing to intervene in abusive situations, such as physical altercations,

involving a friend than did African Americans. This suggests that people of different ethnicities value domestic violence differently.

Reed, Silverman, Welles, Santana, Missmer, and Raj (2009) posited that the African-American community has been disproportionately affected by rising rates of violence and that African-American women have been disproportionately affected by intimate partner violence, with the greatest abuse stemming from members of their own race. These statistics led the researchers to study the disparities in violence due to race and ethnicity. Reed et al (2009) hypothesized that involvement in street violence, involvement in gangs, perception of level of neighborhood violence and perception of the need to fight to survive in the neighborhood would be associated with perpetration of intimate partner violence. African-American men from an urban setting were recruited and given the *Folstein Mini-mental Exam* (Folstein, Folstein, & McHugh, 1975), which screens for cognitive ability, and later an audio computer-assisted survey interview. The researchers analyzed survey responses to demographic questions as well as questions from the *Conflict Tactics Scale* (Straus, 1979) to measure intimate partner violence.

Reed et al (2009) found that there were high rates of intimate and neighborhood violence among African-Americans and that within neighborhoods where individuals perceived high rates of violence, men were more likely to report perpetration of intimate partner violence. The researchers explained that perhaps there are socio-economic factors which influence the occurrence of greater amounts of violence. Men with lower SES would be more likely to be disenfranchised and unemployed, and thus, more likely to victimize others because of the perceived lack of control over their own situations and their desire to recover this lost control.

Kim-Goh and Jon Baello (2008) examined domestic violence within the Asian-American community. Asian-Americans have traditionally been viewed as emotionally healthy leading to a paucity of research dedicated to this population as a result of few reports of domestic violence. However, the authors reported that new research has suggested that a problem with domestic violence within the Asian-American community does exist. They placed further consideration on the hypothesis that the underreporting may due to the attitudes held by Asian-American individuals toward violence, for example, their acceptance of violence in certain contexts and their adherence to traditional cultural/sexist values. Kim-Goh and Jon Baello (2008) hypothesized that all women of Asian descent would have more negative attitudes toward domestic violence, that Korean-Americans would have more negative attitudes toward domestic violence than Vietnamese-Americans, that more acculturated participants would have more negative attitudes toward domestic violence than less acculturated individuals, that younger participants would have more negative attitudes toward domestic violence than older counterparts and, finally, that the higher the education level of a participant the more negative their attitudes toward domestic violence would be.

Kim-Goh and Jon Baello (2008) assessed Korean and Vietnamese participants using the *Revised Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse Scale* (Yoshioka and DiNoia 2001, unpublished manuscript) and the *Marin and Marin Acculturation Scale* (Marín, Sabogal, Marín, OteroSabogal, et al., 1987). The researchers found support for their first hypothesis in that gender was a predictor of attitudes toward domestic violence. The researchers also found that the more acculturated individuals viewed domestic violence more negatively, with acculturation increasing the likelihood that a woman would avoid

the cultural norm of silence in cases of abuse and seek outside help. Finally, Kim-Goh and Jon Baello (2008) found that education predicted more negative attitudes toward domestic violence.

Pan, Daley, Rivera, Williams, Lingle, and Reznik (2006), using an African population, found that in the Somali culture the definition for domestic violence was limited to physical abuse and included violence to all family members. For Somalis, domestic violence is seen as a means to maintain the patriarchal structure of the family. To these individuals physical violence is justified when it occurs in response to a woman's defying her husband's wishes, beatings actually serve to signify a man's love for his wife and family. Pan et al. (2006) found that for Vietnamese families, domestic violence was a private matter and sharing the experience was seen as inappropriate. The woman's role was described as that of maintaining peace in the family by obeying and attending to her husband. Domestic violence was thus explained as occurring largely because of economic troubles.

Within the Latino community, researchers found that domestic violence was resolved through communication within the family. Problem solving occurred within the family through family traditions, trust, and helping behaviors. Physical violence was reported as unacceptable. However, Pan et al. (2006) found that immigration was causing changes in gender roles within the Latino community. Women had begun to ask for equal distribution of labor in and out of the home, which is why immigration was one of the causes of domestic violence along-side economic issues and substance use. Additionally, the researchers found that in each of the three communities studied (Latino, Vietnamese and Somali), a fear of deportation, language barriers and a lack of understanding

regarding the use of help programs were the primary reasons women remained in an abusive situation.

People of different ethnicities place different value on different factors, especially when considering domestic violence. The Portuguese culture stresses the value of family, respect and the notion of shame. Barata, McNally, Sales, and Stewart (2005) examined the gap in existing research regarding Portuguese speaking women's perceptions and attitudes toward wife abuse. They emphasized Portuguese women's definitions of wife abuse and their beliefs regarding appropriate responses to abuse. The researchers also wanted to measure what Portuguese women believed a woman should do as opposed to what they believed women actually did in situations of abuse. Additionally, the researchers wanted to determine if the stereotypes held by Portuguese speaking women about their gender and wife abuse would impact how they perceived wife abuse. Participants were 80-first generation and 54-second generation Portuguese speaking women who were asked about their histories with abuse.

Barata, McNally, Sales, and Stewart (2005) found that Portuguese women defined abuse much like women of other cultures, including both physical and psychological abuse in their definitions; however, they found that Portuguese women also included financial, patriarchal, and sexual abuse in their definitions. The researchers found that Portuguese women's perceptions of what a woman should do differed in their perceptions of what she would actually do, for example, escape the situation versus remain with the abuser. What the researchers gave the most significance to, however, was the answer the majority of the participants gave for staying in an abusive relationship. They would

remain with an abusive partner because it was dictated by their cultural norms that they should do so.

Domestic Violence, Men and Ethnicity

African American participants tend to sympathize more with victims of their own ethnicity, while European-Americans may not make as much of a distinction between victim ethnicities (Locke, 1999). Sexism among Hispanics may predict the attitudes taken toward violence against a partner (Glick et al., 2002). Certain types of societies (e.g. patriarchal vs. matriarchal) may be more conducive to the acceptable use of domestic violence (Doe, 2000).

U.S. citizens and women of all nationalities have been hypothesized as less accepting in their attitudes toward domestic violence compared to Asians and men in general (Yoshioka, Dinoia & Ullah, 2001). However, Griffith, Negy, and Chadee (2006) found that in the case of Trinidadians versus United States citizens, there was no significant difference in their tolerance of domestic violence. Trinidadians were found to hold a concealing attitude towards personal family matters. Thus, the researchers reported Trinidadian victims of domestic violence may not reveal their victimization due to shame or embarrassment, more so than the average U.S. citizen (Griffith, Negy, & Chadee, 2006). Additionally, Trinidadians were found to have experienced domestic violence in their childhood families more than U.S. citizens. This allows for the possibility that Trinidadians perceived domestic violence to be relatively more normative than would a U.S. counterpart (Griffith, Negy, & Chadee, 2006).

Summary and Rationale

Research examining the domestic abuse of men is rare. A review of the literature on domestic violence demonstrates an even greater paucity of research examining the perception and acceptance of domestic violence towards men. A number of theories (e.g., attachment, personality and intergenerational) have attempted to explain the reasons why domestic violence occurs. However, few researchers have attempted to link the theories to the acceptance and perception of domestic violence towards men. Acknowledging that abuse has occurred in a given situation is vital to achieve a reduction in the rates of domestic abuse towards men. The known proportion of abused men is significant enough that this facet of domestic abuse requires further investigation.

The purpose of the current study was to assess the perceptions of multi-ethnic individuals with regards to domestic violence against men and to investigate the possible role played by their cultural backgrounds in their acceptance of domestic violence against men. Previous cross-cultural research has shown that individuals become more violent themselves and desensitized to domestic violence with increased exposure to it and that they are more likely to develop ambivalent attitudes towards witnessing and performing violent acts (Clarey, Hokoda, & Ulloa, 2010; Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning & Coffey, 1999; Coolidge & Anderson, 2002; Gover, Kaukinen & Fox, 2008; Black, Sussman & Unger, 2009). However, there is a lack of current research on the perception and acceptance of domestic violence towards men.

Hypotheses

For the purposes of this study, the comparison groups will involve individuals who reside in Miami, Florida but who are of varied cultural backgrounds. Results from a

survey presented to Hispanic, African-American and Caucasian individuals will be assessed. The perceptions and degree of acceptance of the two most common dimensions of domestic violence will be assessed in this study, physical and psychological domestic violence. The perception and acceptance of a healthy relationship will also be assessed. The perception that an act of domestic violence has occurred, as well as the acceptance of the act, are of great interest to research in the area of forensic psychology and to this current study.

Research has demonstrated that Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic women are more likely to be seen as blameless of acts of domestic violence, more often than are men (Sampson, 2007). The same researcher (2007) suggested that women are more likely to be perceived as the victim in a situation of domestic violence rather than a perpetrator. Therefore, it can be postulated that both men and women observers would be more likely to report that no or minimal domestic violence occurred if the perpetrator was a woman.

Hamberger, Lohr, and Tolin's (1997) study revealed that about as many women are as abusive to their partners as are men. The researchers further point out that violence affects each gender differently, men are more physically dangerous than women and women may experience greater fear of violence. This explanation may also aid in understanding why women may be less likely to perceive that an act of domestic violence has occurred when presented with one. Men are more often than not physically superior to women, thus, a woman may argue that another woman could not have caused any harm by hitting a man or otherwise physically assaulting him as she is the weaker of the two.

Based on the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H₁: a. Women, regardless of ethnicity, will significantly underestimate the degree of physical domestic violence towards men by women compared to men of all ethnicities.
- b. Women, regardless of ethnicity, will significantly underestimate the degree of psychological domestic violence towards men by women compared to men of all ethnicities.
- H₂: Women of all ethnicities will have significantly higher acceptance scores of domestic violence towards men by women compared to men of all ethnicities.
- H₃: a. Regardless of ethnicity, there will be a negative correlation between women's perception of physical domestic violence towards men by women, and their acceptance of it.
- b. Regardless of ethnicity, there will be a negative correlation between women's perception of psychological domestic violence towards men by women, and their acceptance of it.
- H₄: a. Regardless of ethnicity, there will be a negative correlation between men's perception of physical domestic violence towards men by women, and their acceptance of it.
- b. Regardless of ethnicity, there will be a negative correlation between men's perception of psychological domestic violence towards men by women, and their acceptance of it.

Griffith (2006) reported that there is a lack of help seeking behaviors in the Caribbean for domestic violence. This may be due to the extant cultural norms which may foster the

acceptance of domestic violence, perhaps due to the history of slavery and long-standing colonialism. Locke and Richman (1999) found that people of different cultures rated the seriousness of abuse differently. They suggested that African Americans would be likely to accept violence in the home as they were unlikely to disapprove of it. Locke and Richman (1999) found similar results for Caucasian individuals who demonstrated more positive views of victims and stronger disapproval of physical assault. Therefore:

H₅: a. Hispanic men will significantly underestimate the degree of physical domestic

violence towards men by women compared to African-American men then compared to Caucasian men who will underestimate physical domestic violence towards men by women the least.

b. Hispanic men will significantly underestimate the degree of psychological domestic violence towards men by women compared to African-American men then compared to Caucasian men who will underestimate psychological domestic violence towards men by women the least.

H₆: a. Hispanic women will significantly underestimate the degree of physical domestic

violence towards men by women compared to African-American women then compared to Caucasian women who will underestimate physical domestic violence towards men by women the least.

b. Hispanic women will significantly underestimate the degree of psychological domestic violence towards men by women compared to African-American women then compared to Caucasian women who will underestimate psychological domestic violence towards men by women the least.

H₇: Hispanic men will report significantly higher acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women versus African American men then compared to Caucasian men who will report the lowest acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women.

H₈: Hispanic women will report significantly higher acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women versus African American women then compared to Caucasian women who will report the lowest acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women.

In a report to the Bureau of Justice, Rennison and Welchans (2000) stated that approximately half of all male victims did not report their victimization to the police. In terms of race, African-American women (67%) reported their victimization to police at much higher percentages than African-American men (48%), Caucasian men (45%), and Caucasian women (50%). Half of the male victims who did not report their victimization to the police failed to do so because of a belief that it was a private or a personal matter (Rennison & Welchans, 2000).

Regardless of ethnicity, men are expected to have certain patterns of sexist behaviors, such as not admitting to feeling pain or to being emotionally or physically weaker than their female counterparts. They are less likely to report being abused by their female partners due to feelings of shame or simply because they have not been raised to believe that being physically or psychologically injured by a woman is truly considered a form of abuse. As a result of this type of gender stereotyping, men may not even perceive that any abuse is occurring, much less accept that they are being abused. Women may similarly be blind to any abuse being perpetrated by themselves or by another woman

towards a man. They may also have been raised to view the physical and psychological assault of a man as acceptable behavior. Gender stereotyping is greater in Hispanic ethnicities and less present in African American and Caucasian ethnicities. Therefore, we predict:

- H₉: a. Hispanic men will report significantly greater gender stereotyping compared to African-American men compared to Caucasian men who will report the lowest levels of gender stereotyping.
- b. Hispanic women will report significantly greater gender stereotyping compared to African-American women compared to Caucasian women who will report the lowest levels of gender stereotyping.

Goldenson, Gefner, Foster and Clipson (2007) found that anxiety is experienced at a high level by individuals involved in domestically abusive relationships. In their study, the researchers also found that the offender in a domestic violence case had higher scores on attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance as well as higher mean of scores on the *Trauma Symptom Inventory* (Briere, 1995). Individuals in this offender group perceived their partners as less emotionally available to them and that they were also less likely to feel comfortable depending on their partners. The researchers argued that this, along with possible deficits in communication, could have led the offenders to become more predisposed to act out aggressively (Goldenson, Gefner, Foster & Clipson, 2007). Gormley (2005) found similar results. Individuals with insecure adult attachment orientations had higher levels of anxiety. He found that interpersonal partner violence driven by adult attachment anxiety was motivated by a desire to preserve the relationship in order to avoid abandonment. Thus, a negative feedback loop would begin in which one

partner would push for closeness in the relationship due to their insecure attachment and the other partner would become frustrated and act out aggressively. The insecure partner would then try harder to preserve the relationship and create greater friction and aggression from the other partner. Domestic violence against men may be a product of intrapersonal anxiety. Individuals of Hispanic ethnicity may tend to be more anxious as there is a greater incidence of hysterical behavior and personality traits. Therefore, we predict:

- H₁₀: a. Hispanic men will report significantly higher levels of anxiety compared to African-American men then compared to Caucasian men who will report the lowest levels of anxiety.
- b. Hispanic women will report significantly higher levels of anxiety compared to African-American women then compared to Caucasian women who will report the lowest levels of anxiety.

Methods

Participants

A sample of 308 adults (150 men and 158 women) older than 18 years participated in the study. With 308 participants, the main analysis had a power of .80 to detect a medium effect size (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007).

Measures

Demographics Questionnaire The seven items on the demographics questionnaire included basic information about: nationality, ethnicity, age, gender, education, marital status, involvement with the Department of Children and Families, and living situation. See Appendix B for the demographic questionnaire.

Vignettes Three vignettes were provided in which two situations of domestic violence and one healthy situation was described. In the first vignette, a woman was described as physically abusing her male partner. In the second, a woman was described as psychologically abusing her male partner. In the third, a control vignette, the man and woman were described as having a healthy interaction. The ethnicities of the individuals described in the vignettes will be kept ambiguously neutral to control for cultural biases. There was no description of the economic status of the couples. The perception of domestic violence was assessed using a five-point Likert scale. See Appendix C for the three vignettes and rating scales used.

Questionnaires Participants responded to questions adapted from the *Acceptance of Couple Violence* and the *Attitudes Toward Women* questionnaires developed by Foshee, Fothergill, and Stuart (1992). Additionally the *Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale* (Zung, 1971) was used to assess symptoms of anxiety.

Acceptance of Couple Violence (Foshee, Fothergill and Stuart, 1992) - The measure has 11 items and assesses three types of acceptance of violence. The first is male towards female violence, the second is female toward male violence, and finally, the third is acceptance of general male on female violence. In the present study, only those questions related to female on male domestic violence were analyzed. Each item is scored on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Sample questions include “Girls sometimes deserve to be hit by the boys they date,” “A girl angry enough to hit her boyfriend must love him very much,” and “Sometimes violence is the only way to express your feelings.” To account for the older age range of the participants of the current study, all instances in which the words “boy” and “girl” appear

in the measure were changed to “man” and “woman” so as to better resonate with the population age of the current study. For example, the original question “A girl angry enough to hit her boyfriend must love him very much,” was altered to “A woman angry enough to hit her boyfriend must love him very much.” In their study, Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa (2010) also adapted questions from Foshee, Fothergill and Stuart to fit into their sample’s age range.

Attitudes Toward Women Scale (Foshee, Fothergill & Stuart, 1992) - This measure has 12 items and assesses gender stereotyping. In their study, Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa (2010) also adapted questions from Foshee, Fothergill & Stuart to fit into their sample’s age range. The *Attitudes Toward Women Scale* measures unsophisticated and blatant sexist beliefs. The *Attitudes Toward Women Scale* is scored so that high scores indicate a pro-feminist, egalitarian attitude. Each item is scored on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The Cronbach alphas for the original English version range from .71 to .74. Sample questions include “More encouragement in a family should be given to sons than to daughters to go to college,” “It is alright for a girl to ask a boy out on a date,” and “If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.” To account for the older age range of the participants of the current study, all instances in which the words “boy” and “girl” appear in the measure were changed to “man” and “woman” so as to better resonate with the population age of the current study. For example, the original statement “It is alright for a girl to ask a boy out on a date,” is altered to “It is alright for a woman to ask a man out on a date.”

Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (Zung, 1971) - The *Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale* (SAS) is a brief, self-report questionnaire which measures the presence and degree of anxiety-based symptoms. The SAS contains 20 items, based upon DSM criteria, that assess physiological (e.g., muscle tremors, physical pain, sweating, face flushing, insomnia) and psychological (e.g., nervousness, alarm, mental disintegration, panic, uneasiness, agitation, nightmares) symptoms which are frequently associated with anxiety. Each item is scored on a four-point Likert scale in relation to whether each specific symptom has been experienced “none or a little of the time”, “some of the time”, “a good part of the time”, or “most or all of the time” during the past two weeks. Items are positively and negatively worded to decrease response bias and discover inconsistencies in responses. Raw scores range from 20 to 80 with high scores reflecting greater anxiety. The SAS correlates 0.75 with the *Hamilton Anxiety Scale* (Hamilton, 1959) – rated by an interviewer - (Zung, 1971) and has been shown to significantly discriminate between normal adult samples and patients with anxiety disorders (Zung, 1971). Reliability data is 0.71 (split half: Zung, 1971). Zung set a cutoff point raw score of 36, above which was described as having anxiety that was clinically significant (Zung, 1980).

Procedure

Participants were recruited through the psychology department list serve via an e-mail and via a flyer distributed throughout the Barry University campus and through the social media websites www.facebook.com and www.twitter.com. The participants entered the survey on SurveyMonkey.com by clicking the link attached to the email used to contact them (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CW72CSK>). After completion,

participants logged-out of the survey without providing any identifying information. SurveyMonkey.com does not allow for the ability to obtain any individual's identifying information.

Results

All analyses for the current study used SPSS for Windows, version 21. The data used for the analyses consisted of responses from 308 participants who completed an online survey containing a: 1) a demographics questionnaire, 2) three different vignettes to rate depicting physical and psychological domestic violence and a healthy relationship, 3) two questionnaires adapted from the *Acceptance of Couple Violence* and the *Attitudes Toward Women Scales* (Foshee, Fothergill, & Stuart, 1992), and 4) the *Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale* (Zung, 1971). Independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted for each gender group and each domestic violence scenario to determine whether men and women of African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic ethnicities demonstrated significant differences in their perception of domestic violence. Correlational analyses were conducted on the association of acceptance and the perception of domestic violence across gender and ethnicity. Finally, analyses of variance were conducted using gender and the three ethnicities to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the perception and acceptance of domestic violence.

Sample Demographics

Table 1 provides the distribution of respondent demographics. The sample was comprised of: 308 adults, 158 women (51.3%) and 150 men (48.7%). The sample consisted of 27.6% African-Americans, 20.5% Caucasians and 51.9% Hispanics. A total of 71.1% of the participants identified themselves as: single, 21.4% as married, 3.6% as

separated, and 1.9% each as divorced and/or in a domestic partnership. Participant's ages ranged from 18-31 years (n=276), 32-47 (n=27), 48-55 years (n=3) and 56-64 years (n=2). The sample consisted of individuals born: in the United States (64.9%), in South America (5.5%), Central America (9.4%), Canada (1%) and the Caribbean (19.2%). Participants resided: with family (36.4%), by themselves (16.9%), with a significant other (23.7%), or with a roommate (23.1%). A majority of the sample had no involvement with the Department of Children and Families (99.7%) with just 0.3% having some involvement within the past three years. Additionally, participants either saw their romantic partners on a daily basis (48.4%) or a minimum of three days per week (30.5%). More than half of participants identified themselves as having attained some college education (36.0%) or a bachelor's degree (19.8%).

Table 1a. *Sample Demographics (N = 308)*

	n	%
Age		
18-31	276	90.1
32-47	27	8.4
48-55	3	0.9
56-64	2	0.6
Gender		
Men	150	48.7
Women	158	51.3
Race/Ethnicity		
African-American	85	27.6
Caucasian	63	20.5
Hispanic	160	51.9
Marital Status		
Single	219	71.1
Married	66	21.4
Separated	11	3.6
Divorced	6	1.9
Domestic Partnership	6	1.9
Completed Education		
High School	55	17.9
Some-College	111	36.0
Vocational	42	13.6
Bachelor's	61	19.5
Masters	31	10.1
Doctoral	6	1.9
Professional	2	0.6

Table 1b. *Sample Demographics (N = 308)*

	n	%
Time Spent with Sig. Other		
None	42	14.2
Yearly	23	7.6
Monthly	16	5.3
Weekly	72	23.8
Daily	148	48.8
DFC Involvement		
None	307	99.7
Over 5 Years	1	0.3
Living Situation		
With Family	112	36.4
Self	52	16.9
With Sig. Other	73	23.7
Roommate	72	23.1
Place of Birth		
USA	200	64.9
South America	17	5.5
Central America	29	9.4
Caribbean	59	19.2
Canada	3	1.0

Hypothesis One

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the effects of gender on the perception of domestic violence. Scores were obtained from the three domestic violence scenarios (physical, psychological, control) presented to the participants. Results revealed a statistically significant difference in scores, $t(306)=6.35$, $p<0.001$, for men

($M = 2.83$, $SD = 0.75$) versus women ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.86$) perceiving physical domestic violence, with women having higher scores. See Table 2. There was a statistically significant difference, $t(306)=5.66$, $p<0.001$, in the scenario scores for men ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 0.72$) versus women ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.97$) in the perception of psychological domestic violence, with women having higher scores. See Table 2. There was no significance found between men versus women, $t(306)=-3.62$, ns), on the control scenario. See Table 2. Results indicate that women perceive both physical and psychological domestic violence more so than men do. Additionally, results indicated that both men and women perceived physical domestic violence as greater violence than psychological domestic violence.

Table 2. *Independent Samples t-Test Results for the effects of Gender on the Perception of Domestic Violence*

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Test
Physical Domestic Violence			6.35**
Men	2.83	0.75	
Women	3.42	0.86	
Psychological Domestic Violence			5.66**
Men	2.47	0.72	
Women	3.02	0.97	
Control Condition			-3.62
Men	1.79	0.41	
Women	1.55	.072	

Notes: ** $p<0.001$

Hypothesis Two

Using the scores obtained from the *Acceptance of Couple Violence Questionnaire* (Foshee, Fothergill, & Stuart, 1992), independent samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the effects of gender on the acceptance of domestic violence. Results indicate a statistically significant difference in scores for men ($M = 24.55$, $SD = 7.04$) versus

women ($M = 15.98$, $SD = 6.88$) accepting couple violence, with men having higher acceptance scores of domestic violence, $t(306) = -10.80$, $p < 0.001$, than women excluding ethnicity. This indicates that men, excluding culture accept domestic violence more so than do women.

Hypothesis Three

Pearson product moment correlational analyses on women's scores were computed for the following variables: 1) *Acceptance of Couple Violence* scores, 2) physical domestic violence scenario scores, and 3) psychological domestic violence scenario scores, to evaluate the relationship between women's acceptance of domestic violence and the perception of physical and psychological domestic violence. The analyses show that, for women, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between accepting couple violence and the variables: physical domestic violence scenario ($r(156) = -0.46$, $p < 0.01$), and psychological domestic violence scenario ($r(156) = -0.53$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that, for women, there is a negative relationship between accepting couple violence and perceiving both physical domestic violence and psychological domestic violence.

Hypothesis Four

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed on men's scores for the following variables: 1) *Acceptance of Couple Violence* scores, 2) physical domestic violence scenario scores, and 3) psychological domestic violence scenario scores, to evaluate the relationship between men's acceptance of domestic violence and perception of physical and psychological domestic violence. The analyses show that, for men, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between accepting couple violence and the

variables: physical domestic violence scenario ($r(148) = -0.82, p < 0.01$), and psychological domestic violence scenario ($r(148) = -0.86, p < 0.01$). This indicates that, for men as with women, there is a negative relationship between accepting couple violence and perceiving physical and psychological domestic violence.

Hypothesis Five

Scores from the domestic violence scenarios among ethnicities were calculated for men. Table 3 indicates that Hispanic men perceived the highest level of physical domestic violence in our vignettes and African-American men perceived the lowest level of physical domestic violence. A 3 (African-American, Caucasian, Hispanic) \times 2 (physical and psychological domestic violence) ANOVA was conducted on the scores of perception of domestic violence obtained from the three domestic violence scenarios presented to the participants. Results revealed a statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and the perception of physical domestic violence, $F(2,147) = 5.98, p < 0.001$. See Table 4. These results suggest that ethnicity has a relationship with the perception of physical domestic violence. Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test revealed statistically significant differences between Hispanic men and African-American men at the $p < 0.001$ level. Additionally, post hoc comparisons revealed a statistically significant difference between Caucasian men and Hispanic men at the $p < 0.05$ level. No statistically significant differences were found between African-American men and Caucasian men. This indicates that Hispanic men report the highest perception of physical domestic violence when compared to Caucasian men and to African-American men. See Table 3.

Table 3. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Men's Perception of Physical and Psychological Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence	N	Physical	Psychological
		\bar{x} SD	\bar{x} SD
African-African	53	2.62 (0.69)	2.38 (0.69)
Caucasian	31	2.71 (0.64)	2.52 (0.68)
Hispanic	66	3.06 (0.78)	2.52 (0.77)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; scores: 1 = low, 4 = high. N = 150.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance for Men's Perception of Physical and Psychological Domestic Violence

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Physical Domestic Violence	6.24	2	3.12	5.98	0.001
Psychological Domestic Violence	0.65	2	0.33	0.62	0.54

Note: N = 150.

Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and perception of psychological domestic violence, $F(2,147) = 0.33$, ns. See Table 4. These results suggest that ethnicity does not have a relationship with the perception of psychological domestic violence. Further testing with post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test revealed no statistically significant differences between Caucasian men, African-American men or Hispanic men. This indicates that there is no difference in the perception of psychological domestic violence among African-American men, Caucasian men and Hispanic men. See Tables 3 and 4.

Hypothesis Six

Scores from the domestic violence scenarios among ethnicities were calculated for women. Table 5 indicates that Hispanic women perceived the highest level of physical domestic violence and Caucasian women perceived the lowest level. A 3 (African-American, Caucasian, Hispanic) \times 2 (physical and psychological domestic violence) ANOVA was conducted on women's scores of the perception of domestic violence obtained from the three domestic violence scenarios presented to the participants. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and perception of physical domestic violence, $F(2,155) = 1.16$, ns. Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test revealed no statistically significant differences between Caucasian women, African-American women or Hispanic women.

Table 5. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Women's Perception of Physical and Psychological Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence	N	Physical	Psychological
		\bar{x} SD	\bar{x} SD
African-African	32	3.34 (0.90)	2.94 (0.84)
Caucasian	32	3.25 (0.98)	2.72 (0.99)
Hispanic	94	3.50 (0.80)	3.15 (0.98)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; scores: low = 1, high = 4. N = 158.

Results revealed no statistically significant relationship across ethnicity and perception of psychological domestic violence, $F(2,155) = 2.55$, ns. These results suggest that ethnicity does not have a relationship with the perception of psychological domestic violence. Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test revealed statistically significant differences between Caucasian women and Hispanic women at the $p < 0.05$ level,

indicating that Hispanic women perceived psychological domestic violence significantly greater than Caucasian women.

Hypothesis Seven

Using men's scores obtained from the *Acceptance of Couple Violence Questionnaire* (Foshee, Fothergill, & Stuart, 1992), descriptive statistics were calculated across the three ethnicities, see Table 6. A one-way ANOVA was also conducted using the scenarios. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between acceptance of domestic violence and ethnicity for men, $F(2,147) = 1.44$, ns. Indicating no differences in the acceptance of domestic violence among African-American men, Caucasian men and Hispanic men. Post hoc tests using Fisher's LSD test revealed no statistically significant differences between Caucasian men, African-American men or Hispanic men.

Table 6. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Men's Acceptance of Domestic Violence

	N	Acceptance of Domestic Violence Scores
		\bar{x} SD
African-African	53	25.87 (6.45)
Caucasian	31	23.84 (4.84)
Hispanic	66	23.86 (8.21)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; higher scores indicate greater acceptance of domestic violence. N = 150.

Hypothesis Eight

Using women's scores obtained from the *Acceptance of Couple Violence Questionnaire* (Foshee, Fothergill, & Stuart, 1992), descriptive statistics were calculated for women's scores across the three ethnicities. See Table 7. A one-way ANOVA was

conducted on the scores. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between acceptance of domestic violence and ethnicity for women, $F(2,155) = 2.83$, ns. Indicating that ethnicity does not have a relationship with the acceptance of domestic violence.

Further analyses of a post hoc comparison using Fisher's LSD test revealed that Caucasian women significantly differed from Hispanic women in greater acceptance of domestic violence at the $p < 0.05$ level. There were no statistically significant differences found between African-American women and Caucasian women, or between Hispanic women and African-American women. These results indicate that Caucasian women report greater acceptance of domestic violence than Hispanic women.

Table 7. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Women's Acceptance of Domestic Violence

Ethnicity	N	Acceptance of Domestic Violence Scores
		\bar{x} SD
African-African	32	15.19 (6.39)
Caucasian	32	18.53 (8.63)
Hispanic	94	15.38 (6.88)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; higher scores indicate greater acceptance of domestic violence. N = 158.

Hypothesis Nine

Using men's scores obtained from the *Attitudes Toward Women Scale* (Foshee, Fothergill and Stuart, 1992), descriptive statistics were calculated for men's scores across the three ethnicities. See Table 8. A one-way ANOVA was conducted using the scores. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and gender stereotyping for men, $F(2,147) = 2.54$, ns. This indicates that ethnicity does not have a

relationship with greater or lesser gender stereotyping. Upon conducting post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test, it was revealed that African-American men differ significantly from Caucasian men in gender stereotyping at the $p < 0.05$ level. There were no statistically significant differences found between African-American men and Hispanic men, or between Hispanic men and Caucasian men. This indicates that African-American men report greater gender stereotyping than Caucasian men.

Table 8. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Men's Gender Stereotyping

	N	Stereotyping Scores	
		\bar{x}	SD
African-American	53	30.43	(1.96)
Caucasian	31	29.48	(0.63)
Hispanic	66	29.92	(2.24)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; higher scores indicate greater stereotyping. N = 150.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for women's *Attitudes Towards Women Scale* scores across the three ethnicities. See Table 13. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between stereotyping and ethnicity for women, $F(2,155) = 2.10$, ns. Indicating that ethnicity does not have a relationship with gender stereotyping. Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test revealed that Hispanic women differed significantly from Caucasian women in greater gender stereotyping at the $p < 0.05$ level. There were no statistically significant differences found between African-American women and Hispanic women, or between Hispanic women and

Caucasian women. These results indicate that Hispanic women report greater gender stereotyping than Caucasian women.

Table 9. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Women's Gender Stereotyping

	N	Stereotyping Scores	
		\bar{x}	SD
African-African	32	28.97	(2.10)
Caucasian	32	27.88	(2.59)
Hispanic	94	29.04	(3.12)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; higher scores indicate greater stereotyping. N = 158.

Hypothesis Ten

Using scores obtained from the *Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale* (Zung, 1971), descriptive statistics were calculated for men's scores across the three ethnicities. See Table 10. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to assess for a relationship between anxiety and ethnicity. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between anxiety and ethnicity. Results revealed no statistically significant relationship between anxiety and ethnicity, $F(2, 147) = 0.57$, ns. This indicates that there is no relationship between ethnicity and anxiety in men. Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test also failed to show any statistically significant differences between ethnicity and anxiety among the three groups.

Table 10. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Men's Anxiety

	N	Anxiety Scores
		\bar{x} SD
African-African	53	42.94 (4.37)
Caucasian	31	44.42 (2.34)
Hispanic	66	43.02 (9.10)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; higher scores indicate greater anxiety. N = 150.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for women's scores on the *Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale* across the three ethnicities. See Table 11. An analysis of women's scores for anxiety revealed no statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and anxiety, $F(2, 155) = 0.97$, ns. This indicates that for women, there is no relationship between anxiety and ethnicity. Post hoc comparisons using Fisher's LSD test also failed to show any statistically significant differences between ethnicity and anxiety for women.

Table 11. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Women's Anxiety

	N	Anxiety Scores
		\bar{x} SD
African-African	32	41.66 (7.41)
Caucasian	32	43.41 (6.10)
Hispanic	94	43.86 (8.33)

Note: Means are provided with standard deviations in parentheses; higher scores indicate greater anxiety. N = 158.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of gender and ethnicity on the acceptance and perception of domestic violence perpetrated against men by women. We first hypothesized that women, regardless of ethnicity, would significantly underestimate the degree of physical and psychological domestic violence towards men by women compared to men. We then hypothesized that women of all ethnicities would have a significantly higher acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women compared to men. We also hypothesized that regardless of ethnicity there would be a negative correlation between women's, and men's, perception of physical and psychological domestic violence towards men by women, and their acceptance of it. Considering the effects of ethnicity, we hypothesized that Hispanic men and women would significantly underestimate the degree of physical and psychological domestic violence towards men by women compared to African-American and Caucasian men and women. We also hypothesized that Hispanic men and women would report significantly higher acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women compared to African American and Caucasian men and women. Furthermore, we hypothesized that Hispanic men and women would report significantly greater gender stereotyping compared to African-American and Caucasian men and women. Finally, considering the role of anxiety in domestic violence towards men we hypothesized that Hispanic men and women would report significantly higher levels of anxiety compared to African-American and Caucasian men and women.

No empirical support was found for hypothesis I(a) that women would underestimate the degree of physical domestic violence towards men when compared to

men. Contrary to what was hypothesized, women perceived significantly greater physical domestic violence towards men as occurring in the scenarios presented than did men.

These results suggest that gender does have an effect on the perception of physical domestic violence towards men, in the opposite direction of our prediction. Specifically, the results suggest that women are significantly more aware of the occurrence of physical domestic violence towards men by women regardless of ethnicity. Past research has shown that women are more likely to report having perceived the occurrence of female towards male violence more often than men do (Caetano, Schafer, Field & Nelson, 2002). In their study, Caetano, Schafer, Field and Nelson (2002) found that women were more willing to identify other women as perpetrators of violence when compared to men, who were less willing to report a woman as the aggressor against a man.

No empirical support was found for hypothesis I(b) that women would underestimate the occurrence of psychological domestic violence towards men by women when compared to men. Contrary to what was expected, women perceived significantly greater psychological domestic violence towards men by women than did men. These results suggest that gender does have an effect on the perception of psychological domestic violence towards men by women. Specifically, the results suggest that women are significantly more aware of the occurrence of psychological domestic violence towards men by women compared to men regardless of ethnicity. Our findings support Fang and Corso (2007) who found similar results with regards to women being more perceptive of the occurrence of domestic violence in general. The interpretation of their results pointed to greater experience with violence during childhood by women as being a possible explanation. In the current study, however, no assessment of exposure to

violence in childhood was conducted. Past exposure remains a variable for future research.

Previous research investigating intimate partner violence among Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic men and women has revealed that regardless of ethnicity women were more likely than men to identify incidences of domestic violence (Caetano, Schafer, Field & Nelson, 2002). This finding can be used to explain our results in that we found no support for hypothesis II that women would accept domestic violence towards men significantly more than men, regardless of ethnicity. Our results indicate that all women reported less acceptance of domestic violence towards men than did all men. Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa (2010) found that exposure to inter-parental violence during childhood greatly impacts the level of acceptance of domestic violence towards men in adulthood.

Empirical support was found for hypothesis III(a) that women's acceptance of domestic violence towards men would be negatively correlated with their perception of physical domestic violence towards men. Women's increased perception of the occurrence of physical domestic violence towards men was associated with a decreased acceptance of it. Thus, regardless of ethnicity, women are both more aware of and less accepting of physical domestic violence towards men by women compared to men. Caetano, Schafer, Field and Nelson (2009) found that women in their sample reported increased awareness of physical domestic violence and demonstrated a greater lack of acceptance of it. They posited that because their sample consisted of more highly educated women, as is the case with our study's sample, that these educated women

would be more perceptive and less accepting of physical domestic violence. Our similar sample yielded similar results. More than half of our sample had some college education.

Empirical support was found for hypothesis III(b) that women's acceptance of domestic violence towards men would be negatively correlated with their perception of psychological domestic violence towards men. Women's increased perception of the occurrence of psychological domestic violence towards men was associated with a decreased acceptance of it. Caetano, Schafer, Field and Nelson (2009) found that women in their sample reported increased awareness of psychological domestic violence and demonstrated a greater lack of acceptance of it. Thus, it may be posited that regardless of ethnicity, all women are more aware of and less accepting of psychological domestic violence towards men by women when compared to men.

Empirical support was found for hypothesis IV(a) that men's acceptance of domestic violence towards men would be negatively correlated with their perception of physical domestic violence towards men. Men's increased perception of the occurrence of physical domestic violence towards men was significantly associated with a decreased acceptance of it. Caetano, Schafer, Field and Nelson (2009) also found that men reported increased awareness of physical domestic violence and demonstrated a greater lack of acceptance of it.

Empirical support was found for hypothesis IV(b) that men's acceptance of domestic violence towards men by women would be negatively correlated with their perception of psychological domestic violence towards men by women. Men's increased perception of the occurrence of psychological domestic violence towards men was significantly associated with a decreased acceptance of it. In their study, Caetano,

Schafer, Field and Nelson (2009), found similar results in that men were likely to identify cases of psychological domestic violence and were able to rate it as an occurrence of domestic violence.

No support was found for hypotheses V(a) that Hispanic men would underestimate physical domestic violence towards men more than African-American and Caucasian men. It was found that Hispanic men perceived significantly greater physical violence towards men than did men of the other two ethnicities. These results indicate that Hispanic men are significantly more likely to perceive physical domestic violence towards men by women than men of Caucasian and African-American ethnicities.

No support was found for hypotheses V(b) that Hispanic men would underestimate psychological domestic violence towards men by women more than African-American and Caucasian men. It was found that Hispanic men perceived significantly greater psychological violence towards men by women than did men of the other two ethnicities. There were no differences among men of African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic ethnicities when perceiving psychological domestic violence towards men by women. These results indicate that, contrary to our hypothesis, Hispanic men do not underestimate psychological domestic violence towards men compared to men of Caucasian and African-American ethnicities. This finding is interesting in that it does not coincide with previous research into psychological domestic violence toward men. It has been found that men in general often underestimate the degree to which psychological abuse towards a man has occurred, even if the violence was directed towards them (Hogan, Hegarty, Ward, & Dodd, 2012).

No support was found for hypothesis VI(a) that Hispanic women would underestimate physical domestic violence towards men more than African-American and Caucasian women. It was found that there were no differences in perception of physical domestic violence towards men by women across Hispanic, African-American and Caucasian women. These results indicate that Hispanic women do not underestimate the perception of physical domestic violence towards men compared to women of the other ethnicities.

No support was found for hypotheses VI(b) that Hispanic women would underestimate psychological domestic violence towards men more than African-American and Caucasian women. It was found that there was a significant difference between Caucasian versus and Hispanic women, in the opposite direction, in the perception of psychological violence towards men. It was found that Caucasian women were significantly less likely to perceive that psychological domestic violence towards men by women had occurred compared to Hispanic women. These results indicate that Hispanic women are significantly more likely than Caucasian women to perceive psychological domestic violence towards men by women.

No support was found for hypothesis VII that Hispanic men would report higher acceptance of domestic violence towards men than African-American and Caucasian men. There were no significant differences found in the level of acceptance of domestic violence towards men among men of the three ethnicities. A study conducted by Caetano, Schafer, Field and Nelson (2002), investigating reports of intimate partner violence among Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic men and women, revealed that men of

all three ethnicities were as likely as the other to report the occurrence of aggression by a woman towards a man.

No empirical support was found for hypothesis VIII that Hispanic women would report higher acceptance of domestic violence towards men than African-American and Caucasian women. It was instead found in a direction that was not expected. Caucasian women were found to be significantly more accepting of domestic violence towards men than Hispanic and African-American women. Caetano, Schafer, Field and Nelson (2002) found that Hispanic women identified incidents of a female aggression towards a man more often than did other women. Caucasian women were found to report domestic violence towards men as having occurred less often than did Hispanic women (Caetano, Schafer, Field & Nelson, 2002).

The results of this study did not support hypothesis IX(a) that Hispanic men would report significantly greater gender stereotyping than both African-American and Caucasian men. Consequently, no claims can be made from the results of this study that Hispanic men would be more likely than Caucasian and African-American men to report gender stereotyping. However, the empirical results of this study did indicate that African-American men were significantly more likely than Hispanic and Caucasian men to use gender stereotypes.

No empirical support was found for IX(b) that Hispanic women are more likely to use gender stereotype than Caucasian women as was predicted. Hispanic women were found to stereotype at similar rates to African-American women. This finding is suggestive of a relationship between stereotyping and ethnicity for Hispanic and African-American women. Research on gender stereotyping and ethnicity demonstrates that women were

consistently typecast to express and experience emotions more so than were men. Durik, Hyde, Marks, Roy, Anaya, Schultz (2006) found that expressing emotions is more consistent with cultural expectations for Hispanic women and men compared to non-Hispanic ethnicities (e.g. the American ethnicity). This indicates that there is a stereotype of the female gender that expects women to be more emotional and demonstrative across an entire culture, regardless of any differences among the women.

Contemporary research on cultural differences in the prevalence rates of common anxiety disorders suggests that there are differences among rates of anxiety between African-Americans, Hispanics and Caucasians (Asnaani, Richey, Dimaite, Hinton, & Hofmann, 2010). Asnaani et al.'s (2010) research demonstrated that Caucasians were more likely than African-Americans and Hispanics to be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. The results obtained from this study yielded no support for hypothesis X(a) that Hispanic men would report greater anxiety than African-American and Caucasian men. Breslau, Kendler, Su, Gaxiola-Aguilar, and Kesler (2005) found that for men, Hispanics and African-Americans were less likely to demonstrate evidence of anxiety while Caucasian men were more likely to report anxiety. No differences in anxiety were found among the three populations in our study.

Finally, no support was found for hypothesis X(b) that Hispanic women would report greater anxiety than African-American and Caucasian women. Breslau et al. (2005) found that Hispanic women demonstrated lower odds of an anxiety disorder than Caucasian women, as did African-American women. Asnaani et al. (2010) similarly found that Hispanic and African-American respondents were less likely to meet criteria for an anxiety disorders than were Caucasians, lending support to the results of the

current study. Larkin, Claassen, Emond, Pelletier, and Camargo (2005) investigated the prevalence rates of emergency department visits due to a mental health disorder and found that, for anxiety, Caucasian women constituted the greatest number of cases, followed by African-American women. The current study and its results may be summarized by concluding that women, regardless of ethnicity are more likely than men of all ethnicities (e.g. Hispanic, African-American, Caucasian) to perceive that violence has occurred.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Although the current study has significant strengths there were several limitations that should be considered in future research. First, it is important to note that the population of this study had no or little personal involvement with domestic violence in general. Research shows that participants' beliefs and perceptions change with exposure to domestic violence. Future research should strive to obtain data from a population with first-hand experience with domestic violence. Perhaps the study could be replicated without the use of internet recruitment which may have limited those respondents with more personal experience with domestic violence from participating.

Second, participants were predominantly well educated individuals who may not be representative of the general population. Future research should take care to include in their recruitment procedures those methods which could make the study materials more readily available to a more diverse population.

Third, a large majority of the Hispanic sample are second generation, US-born individuals. They were raised outside of the general practices of their families' native land and thus more likely to be less influenced by traditional ethnic beliefs and attitudes.

Future studies should attempt to gain a more pure representative sample of the different ethnicities.

Fourth, the scenarios used were non-standardized nor were they rated for inter-rater reliability, therefore our results may have been skewed because the scenarios may not have been valid assessments of domestic violence. The empirical measure assessing acceptance of domestic violence towards men, *Acceptance of Couple Violence* (Foshee, Fothergill and Stuart, 1992) was adapted from a study analyzing an adolescent not an adult population. This may have led to confounding results when assessing for acceptance in an adult population, even though language was adjusted for age. Another limitation of this measure, *Acceptance of Couple Violence* (Foshee, Fothergill and Stuart, 1992), was a greater emphasis on the man's role as the abuser and the woman's role as the victim. Participants may have picked up on this bias and responded in a manner congruent to their beliefs of women being domestically abused rather than men.

Fifth, this study had no way to assess the legitimacy of participant perceptions. Due to the social desirability bias, participants may have answered in the manner in which they believed it would be socially acceptable to do so. The current study is also limited by having a majority of participants with a Hispanic ethnicity. This may mean that the sample is not representative enough of other ethnic populations. Therefore, caution must be exercised in generalizing the current findings to other populations.

Sixth, the average age of the participants was between 18 and 26 years. This age group is more likely to be unmarried or to have less experience with issues of domestic violence than a subject pool with an older age range. Future research should obtain a

population with a greater diversity of ages to ensure greater validity and generalizability.

Finally, the sample size should be increased in order to gain a higher statistical power.

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Appendix A
Cover Letter

Barry University Cover Letter

Dear Research Participant:

Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study Gender and Ethnicity in the Perception and Acceptance of Domestic Violence Towards Men. The research is being conducted by Yaimara Sanchez Caballero, a graduate student in the Psychology Department at Barry University, and it is seeking information that will be useful in the field of Psychology. The aims of the research assess the perceptions of multi-ethnic individuals with regards to domestic violence against men and investigate the possible role played by their cultural backgrounds in their acceptance of domestic violence against men. In accordance with these aims, the following procedure will be used: A fictional vignette, a questionnaire related to the vignette, questionnaires assessing gender beliefs, beliefs about couple violence and anxiety, as well as, a demographic questionnaire follows this letter. I anticipate the number of participants to be 300.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following: Read a vignette and answer a questionnaire related to the vignette on the Likert scale provided, answer questions from the provided questionnaires on a Likert scale. The questionnaires are estimated to take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

Your consent to be a research participant is anonymous and strictly voluntary. Should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects.

The risks of involvement in this study are minimal and include being exposed to vignettes depicting different interpersonal exchanges. The following procedures will be used to minimize these risks: You can chose to not participate in the study or you can skip any questions you do not want to answer. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study; however, your participation will contribute to research in the area of psychology.

As a research participant, information you provide is anonymous, that is, no names or other identifiers will be collected by the researcher. SurveyMonkey.com allows researchers to suppress the delivery of IP addresses during the downloading of data, and in this study no IP address will be delivered to the researcher. If you have concerns about this, before you begin you should review surveyMonkey.com's Security Statement for additional in-depth information of their privacy policy.

By completing and submitting this electronic survey you are acknowledging that you are at least 18-years-old and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation, you may contact Yaimara Sanchez Caballero by email at yaimara.sanchezcaballero@mymail.barry.edu, or Dr. Stephen W, Koncsol, Ph.D. by telephone at (305) 899-3270 or by email at skoncsol@mail.barry.edu. You may also contact the Institutional Review Board point of contact, Barbara Cook, by telephone at (305) 899-3020 or by email at bcook@mail.barry.edu.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Yaimara Sanchez Caballero, B.A.

Appendix B
Survey

*Demographics***Please answer the following demographic questions.**

Please complete the following questions. It is important for you to be completely honest. All questionnaires will be kept confidential.

1. Gender (please check one)
- Male
 - Female

2. Age: _____

For question 3 and 4, please consider the following definition:

Ethnic group: A group whose members identify with each other through a common heritage that is real or presumed. Ethnic identity is further marked by recognition of common cultural, linguistic, religious, or behavioral traits as indicators of contrast to other groups (e.g., Cuban American, Hispanic, European American).

3. Identified Ethnicity:
- Cuban
 - Cuban-American
 - Caucasian
 - Mexican
 - Mexican-American
 - Other Central American
 - South American
 - Other, please specify: _____
4. Parent's identified ethnicity: _____
5. Place of birth (country): _____
6. How long have you lived in the United States? (Please check one)
- Less than one year
- 1-3 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - 10-15 years
 - Lifetime
7. What is the primary language spoken in your home? _____
8. What, if any, is your second language? _____
9. Your current living situation (please check one)
- With both parents
 - With one parent
 - Grandparent(s) and other relatives
 - Self
 - Friend/roommate(s)
 - Romantic partner
10. Marital Status (please check one)
- Single

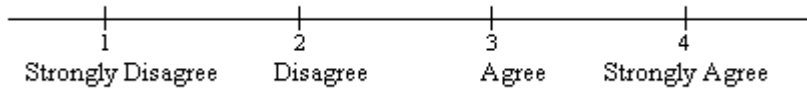
- Married
 - Divorced
 - Separated
 - Other: _____
11. Any DCF involvement for domestic violence? (Please check one)
- Yes
 - less than 1 year ago
 - over 1 year
 - over 5 years
 - No
12. About how often do you see your significant other? (Please check one)
- Daily
- 3-5 days per week
 - 1-2 days per week
 - 2-4 days a month
 - 1 day per month
 - 1 day per year
 - None
13. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- Grammar school
 - High school or equivalent
 - Vocational/technical school (2 years)
 - Some college
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree
 - Doctoral degree
 - Professional degree (M.D., J.D., etc.)
 - Other: _____

Scenarios

Please read the following vignette. Then use the Likert scale, where 1 is strongly disagree and 4 is strongly agree, to indicate a response.

John, 35 year-old man, lives with Jane, his 35 year-old significant other. At least once per day his partner strikes him in different places on his body for different reasons, including not bringing in more money to the home and as a stress reliever for her.

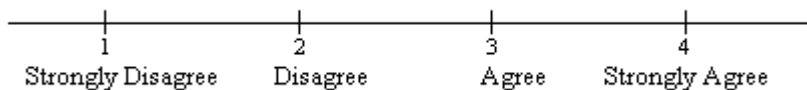
This is an example of domestic violence.



Please read the following vignette. Then use the Likert scale, where 1 is strongly disagree and 4 is strongly agree, to indicate a response.

John, 35 year-old man, lives with Jane, his 35 year-old significant other. At least once per day his partner threatens to leave him for someone else because he is not good enough for her and calls him names such as “moron, incompetent, loser” for not bringing in more money for the home although they have equal pay.

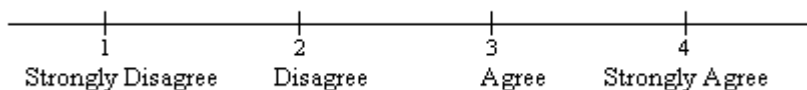
This is an example of domestic violence.



Please read the following vignette. Then use the Likert scale, where 1 is strongly disagree and 4 is strongly agree, to indicate a response.

John, 35 year-old man, lives with Jane, his 35 year-old significant other. At least once per day he and his partner aid each other in finding resolutions to disputes and concerns.

This is an example of domestic violence.



Acceptance of Couple Violence Scale

For each item below, please place a check mark in the column which best describes how often you felt or behaved this way during the past several days.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. A boy angry enough to hit his girlfriend must love her very much.	1	2	3	4
2. Violence between dating partners can improve the relationship.	1	2	3	4
3. Girls sometimes deserve to be hit by the boys they date.	1	2	3	4
4. A girl who makes her boyfriend jealous on purpose deserves to be hit.	1	2	3	4
5. Boys sometimes deserve to be hit by the girls they date.	1	2	3	4
6. A girl angry enough to hit her boyfriend must love him very much.	1	2	3	4
7. There are times when violence between dating partners is okay.	1	2	3	4
8. A boy who makes his girlfriend jealous on purpose deserves to be hit.	1	2	3	4
9. Sometimes violence is the only way to express your feelings.	1	2	3	4
10. Some couples must use violence to solve their problems.	1	2	3	4
11. Violence between dating partners is a personal matter and people should not interfere.	1	2	3	4

Attitudes Toward Women Scale

For each item below, please place a check mark in the column which best describes how often you felt or behaved this way during the past several days.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy.	1	2	3	4
2. On a date, the boy should be expected to pay all expenses.	1	2	3	4
3. On the average, girls are as smart as boys.	1	2	3	4
4. More encouragement in a family should be given to sons than daughters to go to college.	1	2	3	4
5. It is all right for a girl to want to play rough sports like football.	1	2	3	4
6. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions.	1	2	3	4
7. It is all right for a girl to ask a boy out on a date.	1	2	3	4
8. It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school.	1	2	3	4
9. If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.	1	2	3	4
10. Boys are better leaders than girls.	1	2	3	4
11. Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers rather than desiring a professional or business career.	1	2	3	4
12. Girls should have the same freedom as boys.	1	2	3	4

Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale

For each item below, please place a check mark in the column which best describes how often you felt or behaved this way during the past several days.

Place check mark in correct column.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel more nervous and anxious than usual.	1	2	3	4
2. I feel afraid for no reason at all.	1	2	3	4
3. I get upset easily or feel panicky.	1	2	3	4
4. I feel like I'm falling apart and going to pieces.	1	2	3	4
5. I feel that everything is all right and nothing bad will happen.	1	2	3	4
6. My arms and legs shake and tremble.	1	2	3	4
7. I am bothered by headaches neck and back pain.	1	2	3	4
8. I feel weak and get tired easily.	1	2	3	4
9. I feel calm and can sit still easily.	1	2	3	4
10. I can feel my heart beating fast.	1	2	3	4
11. I am bothered by dizzy spells.	1	2	3	4
12. I have fainting spells or feel like it.	1	2	3	4
13. I can breathe in and out easily.	1	2	3	4
14. I get feelings of numbness and tingling in my fingers & toes.	1	2	3	4
15. I am bothered by stomach aches or indigestion.	1	2	3	4
16. I have to empty my bladder often.	1	2	3	4
17. My hands are usually dry and warm.	1	2	3	4
18. My face gets hot and blushes.	1	2	3	4
19. I fall asleep easily and get a good night's rest.	1	2	3	4
20. I have nightmares.	1	2	3	4