

# Defining Domestic Violence: Future Implications from a University Police Perspective

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## *Abstract*

*The similarities between relationship violence on college campuses and domestic violence in society in general were compared, as were empirical studies of campus dating violence compared to the actual cases experienced by campus victim advocates. Interviews with the representatives of the victim advocacy services from 6 major universities in the State of Florida University System indicated a commonality of problems with under-reporting and unique relationships that are domestic by nature, but not by statute definition. Other states' domestic violence law language is provided for comparison. Future demographic projections in campus populations that will exacerbate this issue and have an impact on campus law enforcement are discussed, as are strategies for proactivity in the face of these changes.*

## Introduction

Law enforcement, the courts, and state and federal lawmakers have recently recognized domestic violence as a definitive and measurable form of criminal violence. Historically, domestic violence was considered to be a private matter that really didn't carry the same weight in the eyes of the responding police officers and the courts as did clear cut cases of battery or rape. Within the past few years, the societal implications of this crime, both behavioral and monetary, have come to the forefront of current family issues within the media and academia. As with any issue that we as a society have had to come to grips with, such as the realities of rape, acquaintance rape, stalking, etc., the contemporary changes are initially rooted in traditional beliefs. Such is the case of domestic violence as it pertains to the college and university campuses.

The original statutes across the nation included definitions of a domestic relationship as one that was based in a legal marriage, or a relationship that closely resembled a marriage, such as cohabitation or having a child in common. The behavioral dynamics within these relationships, once again, were considered to be predicated upon the marriage-like relationship between the batterer and the victim.

Campus law enforcement professionals many times have to deal with the misconception that campus life exists within a vacuum and does not suffer the criminal consequences of society in general. The reality is that campus crime mirrors that of our society in general, and is very interactive with the surrounding communities. This is the case with domestic violence, usually referred to as relationship violence on the college campus. There has been significant research in the areas defined as dating violence, intimate violence and relationship violence. This research has been done within the disciplines of psychology, family counseling and social services. Little has been done to view this data as it pertains to the campus forms of domestic violence from a law enforcement perspective, or from the impact this interactive behavior has in driving the occurrence of crimes against persons on campus.

With problem solving and community oriented policing philosophies inherent in campus policing, gleaned some of the data from the research within the behavioral sciences on the issue of relationship violence may provide insights into preventative measures and victim assistance strategies, as well as providing stronger approaches to

arresting and prosecuting batterers within the domestic violence guidelines. How does a campus relationship violence compare to domestic violence occurring elsewhere in our society? What are the future implications of relationship/domestic violence for campus law enforcement? What opportunities within the university community can occur for early intervention and detection? It is the purpose of this paper to examine the data that has been produced through existing research on relationship violence within the behavioral sciences and compare it to the victimization data available through the State University System of Florida. This information, coupled with the demographic changes in the structure of serious dating relationships, will provide an insight as to where we stand in having a positive impact on this crime. Future implications in campus law enforcement may also be gleaned from this information to provide those in management a framework for targeting future campus populations with awareness and enforcement strategies.

### Literature Review

Traditionally, the college or university campus has been viewed as an island of academic endeavors that was not subjected to the behavioral or criminal ills of society that affected those who resided in the general population. Not only was this a false belief, but the distinction between the campus populations and society in general, in terms of criminal activity and victimization, has become more obscure than ever. To campus law enforcement officers, the presence of this criminal activity and victimization has been a reality for decades. The public realization of this campus reflection of society in general has been late in coming, and is still evolving. Today's campuses have to deal with many of the same crime problems experienced by the rest of society (USA Today, 1990; Sellers & Bromley, 1995). One of these issues is domestic violence.

The problem with addressing domestic violence on campus is that the relationships of the partners usually do not meet the criteria one would envision fitting a domestic relationship. The courts and the laws reflect this limited perspective as well. For the purposes of this paper, the domestic relationship that is found on campus which does not reflect the typical expectations of being or having been married, living or having lived together, or having a child in common, will be referred to as relationship violence.

The issue of dating violence is a relatively new phenomenon to our society. Prior to World War I, most dating was in the form of chaperoned courtship leading up to marriage at a young age. After the war, with the newfound mobility and ability for privacy resulting from the mass distribution of automobiles in conjunction with the liberated mores of the 1920's, dating became an end unto itself. In other words, relationship violence had been restricted for the most part to married couples (Riggs & O'Leary, 1989). This changed with the inception of the broad occurrence of non-committal dating.

The propensity for violence to occur in a dating relationship increases commensurately with the level of similarity to a marriage relationship (Carlson, 1987). Currently people are dating at earlier ages. More serious relationships, such as going steady and being sexually active, are occurring at younger ages. Additionally, the age at which people marry is slowly increasing (McCabe, 1984). The lengthening period of

dating has resulted in the dating relationship becoming a freestanding relationship, with no expected goal of closure in marriage. Because people are dating longer before marriage, an increasing number of individuals may be at risk of physical and sexual abuse while dating (Burke, Stets, & Pirog-Good, 1988). Today's dating relationships are more marriage-like than those of previous generations. This is the result, in part, of changing sexual norms (Carlson, 1987).

College campuses are a part of society and are subject to the same forces that permeate contemporary culture (Roark, 1987). Ironically, the very venue where cutting edge thinking and discovery occurs is usually the last to come in line with the rest of society in terms of the victimization of its own population. Violence between strangers, among acquaintances, and in relationships occurs on the university and college campus across the nation (Carlson, 1987). Recognizing the dynamics of relationship violence within these violent episodes has been, from what this researcher has seen, fairly restricted to the behavioral sciences with the goal of therapeutic application. Little has been done to bring this issue to law enforcement for logistical and preventative strategy development.

Young college students are exiting their adolescent years when they enter into the campus culture. To believe that these people have arrived from some sanitized community free of violence is as naive as believing that college campuses are free of crime. Many are bringing with them a history of relationship violence that is a result of an already extensive dating career. Adolescent dating violence, like adult domestic violence, is prevalent in all communities. It is not unique to one class, race, or culture (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1986; Sellers & Bromley, 1995). This form of violence occurs across the full spectrum of society regardless of class, race, age, marital status, education or religion (Chez, 1995). Surprisingly high levels of interpersonal aggression are occurring between high school and college students who come from lower to upper middle class families (Carlson, 1987). Evidence shows that interpersonal violence is more common among the young and that it peaks in the 18 to 24 year old group, the age group that comprises the largest part of the traditional student body (Carlson, 1987).

As evidenced so far, there is a confluence of societal, demographic, and behavioral factors that portend that the campus population is at great risk for relationship violence. Violence is as much a part of the lives of college students as it is a part of life in the American marriage within the general public (Bernard & Bernard, 1983). Courtship violence, premarital abuse, or dating violence has recently been recognized as a type of family violence (Carlson, 1987). Furthermore, the rate of violence appears to be greater outside of marriage than within, which flies in the face of traditional beliefs. Using the term "intimate violence" to encompass both dating and married relationships, a 1992 National Center for Victim Studies study found that 51% of the victims were attacked by boyfriends or girlfriends, 34% were attacked by spouses, and 15% were attacked by ex-spouses (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1994).

The similarities between serious dating relationships and marriage have been the subject of several studies. The relationships that occur on the college campus exacerbate the risks of the serious dating relationships because they are usually occurring in the absence of an immediate network of family, or long term friends. Dating relationships are similar to marriages in terms of privacy, intensity of emotional

involvement, and the perceived right of the partners to exert influence or control on each other (Riggs & O'Leary, 1989). Serious relationships are characterized by the partners knowing each other for a longer period of time, seeing each other more frequently, developing and experiencing a deeper level of commitment, each knowing what is expected of himself and of the other, and having knowledge of the other's insecurities and weaknesses (Burke, et al., 1988; Carlson, 1987).

Having noted the interpersonal and relational similarities between married people and people who are seriously dating, the similarities of violence within in each group is quite striking. Relationship violence within the dating context includes battering and emotional abuse and is the campus equivalent of domestic violence (Roark, 1987). Like marital violence, dating violence is more common than observers and the general public could have predicted (Carlson, 1987). Among those who experienced relationship violence, the mean number of violent incidents was 9.6, which is similar to the mean frequency of violent episodes of 8.8 within a national sample of married persons (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). A review of 82 women clients at domestic violence shelters in Michigan found a "remarkable similarity" between courtship (relationship) violence and marital violence (Roscoe & Benaske, 1985). The incidence of relationship violence among students is similar to the shelter study (Rouse, Breen, & Howell, 1988). Overall, it is estimated that one in six couples, married and unmarried, will be involved in a violent incident (Carlson, 1987).

The rate of occurrence of these violent episodes within the relationship violence context is significant in that such data can be used as a predictor of dangerous propensities, and give us a window into the violence that is occurring behind closed doors. The length of the relationship (i.e. how marriage-like) appears to be a strong indicator for the occurrence of relationship violence. In a study of college students, 12% of those in relationships for 6 months or less reported using violence. The proportion increases steadily to 42% of those in relationships of 5 years or more. The longer the relationship exists, the more likely there is to be sexual intimacy, which also increases the likelihood of violence. Of that same group of students, the proportion of sexually active partners using violence (28.5%) is more than twice that of partners who are not sexually active (12.6%) (Sellers & Bromley, 1995).

In a study of 47 women battered in relationship violence, it was found that the violence began within the first 26 weeks of the relationship for 26 of the women. The remaining 21 women were battered after the first 26 weeks. In isolating frequency and duration of the batteries within this group, it was found that the abuse lasted 2-90 days for 9 of the women, and more than 90 days for 11 of the women (Follingstad, 1988). In another study, approximately 1/3 of all women under 20 years of age experienced violence in dating relationships as reported in the magazine USA Today (1990). Given the frequency of this relationship violence, it is not surprising that physical injury is a common outcome of dating violence (Makepeace, 1981).

More specific studies have been conducted with college groups to measure the rate of occurrence of relationship violence. The results are similar, and alarming. Measuring awareness of such incidents, one study found that 61.5% of the respondents had personally known someone who had been involved in relationship violence. Of that same group, 21.2% had been involved in at least one incident personally (Makepeace, 1981). Recent research shows that dating violence is also pervasive and is a hidden,

serious problem. About 20% of college students have been physically assaulted by a dating partner (Stets & Straus, 1989). In a study of college students in current relationships, it was found that 17% of the men admit to having used physical aggression during disagreements with their partners, while 30% of the women admitted the same (Sellers & Bromley, 1995).

The rate and scope of the injuries that the victims of campus relationship violence suffer is of particular concern to campus law enforcement. In all probability, a portion of reported accidental injuries or simple battery injuries may be the manifestations of a violent relationship that is being covered up by the victim and the battering partner, as is found in the traditional domestic violence situations in society in general.

Although the majority of violent incidents that occur in dating relationships appear to be relatively mild, as many as 1/3 to 1/2 result in physical injury. This is augmented by the consumption of alcohol, a main social component of campus life (Carlson, 1987). Within a college population of relationship violence victims, it was found that more than 10% were being slapped, having something thrown at them, hit with an object, being kicked, bitten, or punched with a fist (Sellers & Bromley, 1995). As the seriousness of the violence escalates, there are a smaller percentage of those in relationship violence situations represented. Those resulting in physical injury, where there was the threat of a weapon, or the use of a weapon, range between 1% and 4%. Although low in percentage, when the real numbers from a campus population are attached to these percentages, it indicates a large group of students who may be at risk.

Like society in general, it is convenient to prepare for the stranger attacker rather than face the reality that a woman is at greater risk of being assaulted by someone she already knows. The Violence Against Women study defined an "intimate" as a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, or ex-spouse. The results were startling, yet bear a relevance to what has been found on the college campuses. Women suffering violent victimizations were almost twice as likely to be injured if the offender was an intimate (59%) compared to offenders who were strangers (27%). Women were more likely to receive injuries requiring medical attention if the attacker was an intimate (27%) compared to a stranger (14%). Three percent of the women who were victimized by intimates received serious, but nonfatal injuries. About 54% of the women victimized by intimates received minor injuries (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1994).

As with domestic violence victims in the general population, relationship violence victims on campus are reluctant to report violent episodes to an official of any kind. Physical and sexual abuse in dating relationships is grossly underreported to officials by the victims. Among men and women who perceived themselves as having been physically abused, only 11.4% of the women and none of the men turn to criminal justice authorities for assistance. The underreporting of domestic violence discussed in the marital violence literature is also very apparent among the dating population (Pirog-Good & Stets, 1989). Almost 6 times as many women victimized by intimates did not report their violent victimization to the police as compared to those who were victimized by a stranger (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1994). In the dating situation, as reported in the magazine USA Today (1990), women believe that if they are patient, things will get better. While a good deal of dating violence involves severe force, dating partners rarely seek professional help. On average about 1 in 25 talks to a teacher, counselor,

member of the clergy or a law enforcement officer. Other data indicates that a high percentage of dating violence victims do talk to someone about violent episodes, but usually to a friend, not someone in an official capacity (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989).

Some of the reluctance to report the violent episodes may be that victims fear that the police will hold them partially responsible for the abuse, especially if they are still dating the abusive partner (Pirog-Good & Stets, 1989). Some individuals may fear retaliation from their partners if the abuse is reported to the police, or may fear that such a report may end the relationship (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1994; Pirog-Good & Stets, 1989). The issue of underreporting is as problematic for campus law enforcement as it is for the municipal agencies.

As was mentioned earlier, the longer a relationship flourishes, the greater the chances of it becoming violent. Once the violence begins, there are risks that the level of violence will escalate. The use of violence increases with the frequency of contact between the batterer and the victim (USA Today). Also, if violence occurs once in a dating relationship, it is likely to occur again (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). As the relationship continues to more closely resemble that of a marriage, the violence will likely increase as well (Rouse, et. al., 1988; Carlson 1987). The seriousness of the relationship has some bearing on predicting the use and victimization of violence for both men and women (Stets & Pirog-Good, 1987).

When and where relationship violence does occur, it once again closely resembles the domestic violence model that comes to the lay person's mind. It usually occurs on weekends in private settings. Seventy to ninety-three percent occur outside the view of third parties. Relationship violence most often takes place in the residence of one of the partners, or parents of the partners. The next most frequent location of occurrence is in personal vehicles, followed by out of doors. If the violent event does take place in public, attempts by others to intervene on behalf of the victim occur less than half of the time (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989).

The demographic and behavioral contributors that cause the relationship violence abuser to batter closely resemble those of the batterer in traditional domestic violence situations. However, there are some unique distinctions that should be recognized. When discussing what issues led to the violent episodes in relationship violence, jealousy and uncontrollable anger were listed as the primary causes by both males and females (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). But a significant factor in the college culture is the consumption of alcohol. It is interesting to note how often alcohol is cited as a component of this violent behavior. In one study of college students involved in relationship violence, 1/3 of the respondents reported that they had been drinking, whereas half indicated that the other person had been drinking (Makepeace, 1981). In another, both the batterers and the victims attributed their aggression to alcohol consumption. Increased alcohol consumption prior to or during an argument should increase the likelihood that aggression will occur (Carlson, 1987; Riggs & O'Leary, 1989).

There are some differences though between traditional domestic violence issues of contention and those issues of conflict within the dating relationship. In spouse abuse, disagreement over children is followed by financial problems, sex conflicts, housekeeping, and social activities as precursors to the violence. Of these conflicts, the relationship violence couple shares only one conflict in common with the spousal

example, and that is about sex. Jealousy and drinking behavior more commonly lead to violence in dating couples (Carlson, 1987). Another conflict in the dating relationship that may lead to violence occurs when one of the partners feels that the relationship is threatened by the other, and he or she does not control the availability of the other (Maysseless, 1991).

...Control and domination were cited by many victims as the reasons for their partner's use of violence (Lloyd, 1991; Stets & Pirog-Good, 1987). As has been found in batterers in domestic violence cases, there is strong possibility that the behavior was learned from exposure to previous episodes of family violence. Some studies have found a positive relationship between the incidence of courtship (relationship) aggression and witnessing aggression between one's parents (Riggs & O'Leary, 1989). A violent family background and the general acceptance of violence by our society were also considered contributors (Carlson, 1987).

When separating out the categories of intimate relationships into dating, cohabitation, and marriage, it is interesting to note that dating is the most likely category to be excluded from an official definition, such as a state statute (Suarez, 1994). However, the relationship of cohabitation is by far the greatest risk for intimacy violence. In a group comparison of cohabiting and engaged couples there was a 41.3% occurrence of physical aggression, compared to a 14.5% rate of occurrence with the casual dating partners (Sellers & Bromley, 1995). Even more conclusive was a study done by (Stets & Straus, 1989) of cohabiting, dating, and married couples. Thirty-five out of every 100 cohabiting couples experienced physical assault compared to 20 per 100 dating couples, and 15 per 100 married couples. It is interesting to note that the relationship category that is usually excluded from domestic violence definitions (dating) had a higher rate of occurrence than did the most traditional group (married). Furthermore, the rates of violent episodes for each of the three specific types of violence were the highest for the cohabiting couples - male on female assault, female on male assault, and cross violence. The cohabiting couples had twice the cross violence rate as the dating or married couples.

While most cohabiting couples are younger, the violence decreases with age, as it does in marriage. Another contributor to the stress in cohabitation that may lead to the violence is that of isolation. Whether isolated by choice, or because of the stigma attached to this type of a relationship, physical violence may not be as readily recognized or challenged. Isolation from the family network is more likely for the cohabiting couple than it would be for a married or dating couple.

When looking at the three categories of relationships in terms of propensity for violence, the college dating relationship, as it grows more serious, actually starts to resemble the cohabitation relationship more than it does the married relationship. The rate of violence may approximate that found in cohabiting relationships. This can be predicted based on the increased level of conflict and low investment by the partners in the relationship, as well as the more frequent use of control (Stets & Straus, 1989).

## Method

The data for this study were gathered by means of a series of interviews with victim advocacy offices at universities within the state of Florida University System. The decision to use the state university system as a standard was based on the factors that all nine universities operate under the same guidelines as set forth by the Board of Regents in Tallahassee Florida, and all have state sworn law enforcement officers assigned to the university police departments at each institution as the agencies of primary law enforcement jurisdiction. Also, each of the nine state universities has a victim advocacy program, which acts as an impartial clearinghouse and conduit for the victim services specifically for their respective student and staff populations.

The victim advocacy programs allow victims of violence to seek assistance anonymously if they so choose, to include not reporting the incident to the police. The police, however, are afforded the statistical data from the advocacy programs.

Telephone and/or site interviews were conducted at the institutions where the victim advocacy programs had been well established so as to provide insight and perspective on this issue. This was necessitated by the fact that the victim advocacy programs at the campuses had only been in existence for one or two years and lacked hard data for a multi-year period of time. However, these interviews revealed trends as observed by the advocates who contributed to this study; Appendix A lists the questions used in the interviews with the victim advocates.

Because "relationship violence" in terms of the typical university student cases does not fall within the Florida Domestic Violence law as a reportable category for law enforcement under the Uniform Crime Reports Guidelines (Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Division of Criminal Justice Information Systems, 1995), information on such cases had to be obtained from the victim advocacy programs at the universities where tracking of this classification does exist. Case studies of relationship violence were utilized to illustrate specific examples of the relationship violence situations that are occurring within the student populations. All of the listed victim advocacy programs provided cases to be used as examples. The names of the parties involved in each case have been excluded and the identities of the universities at which each was reported are not revealed. This was done to provide the maximum level anonymity for the victims who sought the services of the victim advocacy programs. The examples come from the different campuses with the purpose of showing that there are indicative behaviors demonstrated by the batterers that show a similarity to those batterers within the relationships that are specifically defined in the Florida State Statute. The universities where the victim advocates provided the examples are from the Florida State University System. As to which specific campus each case was originated is not revealed. The purpose of this was to show that the problem of relationship violence is not unique to any one campus, and should be viewed as a system-wide phenomenon.

The annual statistics for relationship violence and stalking were obtained from the victim advocates who shared in this research. Also, the Uniform Crime Report statistics from each of the police agencies of the universities involved in this study were obtained to show the activity levels in the categories of crimes against persons, and to illustrate a comparison of data from the victim advocates and the police report generated cases (Appendix B and Appendix C).



There is a problem in continuity of the locations of the victim advocacy offices that may have a bearing on the level of reporting to those programs. Ideally, the victim advocacy office should be independent from any other department within the university. This would enhance the assurance of anonymity and of access. The victim advocacy offices at the responding universities were located in different administrative areas within their respective universities. The victim advocates themselves voiced concern over this as well. The locations of the respondents ranged from totally independent and remotely located on campus, to being part of a woman's concerns group, and being located within the campus police department. The effect of these locations on the level of reporting is not part of this research, but should be taken into consideration when reviewing the data. The commonality of concerns gleaned through the interviews with the victim advocates is more pertinent than the raw numbers generated in their annual statistics.

Ronald A. Chez, MD, is a nationally recognized educator and spokesperson on behalf of strengthening domestic violence laws. He is also a member of the Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic Violence, and is at the forefront of having obstetricians and gynecologists include domestic violence questions as part of routine examinations. His goal is to provide reporting opportunities to help overcome the underreporting problem. A telephone interview was conducted with Dr. Chez on possible relationship violence notification strategies on college campuses.

## Results

The problem of relationship violence on campus directly parallels the domestic violence found in society in general, as do the behaviors of the batterers and the victims. The relative infancy of the campus Victim Advocacy Programs, while providing limited hard data, have revealed an area of violence against persons that heretofore had been going unaddressed. University police departments, while having been trained in domestic violence in the general sense, do not reflect the indicators of relationship violence in their annual reports. This is because the relationship violence cases have been grossly under-reported to the police. Also, the battery situations usually encountered by the officers on campus do not meet the domestic violence definition, and therefore are not reflected as such in the Uniform Crime Reports.

During the interviews with the victim advocates, several common concerns surfaced. These are:

- 1) The rate of underreporting is very high. Very few victims ever alert the police unless the immediate situation escalates to the point where they feel their life is threatened, or a neighbor calls the police.
- 2) Several suggestions for language that would best describe the types of campus relationship violence cases they were encountering were voiced. These suggestions included "dating violence", "intimate violence", "sexual partners", and "voluntary community which necessitates a close proximity."
- 3) Many of the victims who had never reported to the police, had previous contacts with the police who were checking up on them because of disturbance calls or suspicious situations with their batterers. In these situations, victims

defended their batterers to the responding officer by saying there was no problem and that the call was a mistake.

4) Part-time cohabitation in the residence halls, or in off-campus apartments, appears to be a factor in elevating the level of violence in some cases. Part-time cohabitation was described in terms of one partner living in the dwelling of the other for certain days of the week, such as Thursday through Saturday, to actually secretly living within the residence hall room of the partner.

5) Some of the batterers in the campus situations had histories of battering other women.

6) Immediate identification of these batterers as domestic batterers would enhance the chances of higher bond, immediate arrest, inclusion in court-ordered batterer's intervention programs and judicial tracking of the batterers.

7) Relationship violence is a major problem being handled by the campus victim advocates. They would include the majority of their stalking cases as relationship-violence-generated (or related).

The similarities between the relationship violence cases at the universities and the domestic violence cases found in the general public cannot be reflected in numbers on charts. The interviews with the victim advocates revealed that they were all surprised by the increasing numbers of these cases that they were handling. The significance of each of these cases where the domestic violence dynamics were present was also discussed.

Various victim advocacy offices have provided the following case studies from the Florida State University System. The purposes of looking at the individual cases are to fully illustrate the "domestic violence" dynamics present in the relationship violence situations occurring within the student populations, and also to demonstrate that these cases are not unique to any one university or campus. It is important to recognize the fear that college and university administrators have in acknowledging that such events happen at their institutions because of the stigmatizing sensationalism that often occurs in the press. It is with this concern in mind that all of the participating universities are represented as contributors of these case studies, but none of the scenarios are linked with any one campus. Hopefully this will aid the concerned administrators with their responses to such inquiries so as to redirect the focus on the issues of inter-personal violence, instead of the institution where it occurred.

### Case Number 1

A male student was living in on-campus housing. His girlfriend's apartment was not ready to move into yet, so she stayed in his dormitory room for a few days. During the girlfriend's stay, the boyfriend accused her of flirting with his roommate. He became enraged and started screaming at her and eventually threw her to the ground and hit her. The investigation revealed that she was not living with her boyfriend and thus did not meet the criteria for domestic violence. A sworn complaint was filed and later dropped.

A year later, this same couple, while not dating, were still involved as friends. The male still had very strong feelings for the female and was very jealous of her

involvement, or potential involvement, with anyone else. The two of them got into an argument. The female had a friend drive her to the location of her class. As she got out of the car, she realized that her ex-boyfriend had followed her to campus. He came up behind her, and without a word, hit her in the back of the head with his fist, knocking her to the ground. He then fled the scene.

#### Case Number 2

The woman had been dating her boyfriend for some time and stated that he was jealous and controlling, but not violent. She then moved in with him and within a few weeks was experiencing physical violence from him. She continued to live with him because he would apologize, which would then be followed by an episode of increasing violence. She eventually moved back into the residence halls. He pursued her in the residence hall, forced his way into her room and beat her.

#### Case Number 3

The woman had been involved in a four-year relationship with her boyfriend that had begun in high school. She and her boyfriend attended University A. The relationship became violent during the first year they were dating when he slapped her because he thought she was looking at another boy. The violence progressed steadily from that point. She was beaten regularly during her first year at University A. Typical of violent relationships, the woman made multiple excuses to the family and friends about the bruises they saw on her body, and didn't tell them about the many marks hidden under her clothing. Her personality underwent a dramatic change - she was so afraid of incurring his wrath that she became submissive and dependent. He repeatedly threatened to kill her if she left him, and she believed these threats.

During the last month they were together, he broke her arm and nose. When her parents confronted her, she finally told them what had happened. She dropped out of school in the middle of the semester, losing credits for the classes she had partially completed. She transferred to University B after skipping an additional semester in an attempt to emotionally heal. The ex-boyfriend harasses her through the mail, over the telephone, and through friends. She is unwilling to press charges or file for an injunction due to her fear of his retaliation. She feels the only reason she remains safe is her ex-boyfriend's fear of her father.

#### Case Number 4

The woman had been dating her boyfriend and began to experience violence on and off campus. When she tried to end the relationship, the boyfriend stopped her from exiting his residence several times by blocking the door. He then demanded sex, and when she refused, he punched and bruised her face. The following day the boyfriend came into the victim's classroom and threatened to, "take her to the bridge tonight", a reference to an earlier violent episode in which he held her over the edge of a bridge and threatened to kill her by dropping her. Five months later, the victim filed a police report with an off campus agency. This was in response to the boyfriend having rammed the woman's car with his.

### Case Number 5

A woman was being physically abused by her boyfriend with whom she had a dating relationship. Although they had never lived together, the dynamics of domestic violence were present. The woman decided to press charges, but a few days later decided to drop the charges when she learned that her now ex-boyfriend could be deported if convicted. Apparently he had previous charges of false imprisonment, burglary, and domestic battery with another victim.

### Case Number 6

The woman and her boyfriend were riding in his car and became involved in an argument. The boyfriend then started violently pulling the woman's hair. He brought his vehicle to a stop in the middle of an intersection of a known high-crime area and then pushed the woman out of the car. He then drove off, leaving the woman to fend for herself. She stopped a passing vehicle and was given a ride to her residence hall on campus. Once she was in her room, the boyfriend arrived and attempted to force his way into her room, creating a disturbance and prompting a police response. He fled prior to the arrival of the police.

Six weeks later, the now ex-boyfriend approached the woman at a social event and said he was too intoxicated to drive and asked if she would drive him home. She agreed. When they arrived at his apartment, he pulled her from the car, beat her to the ground and kicked her. He then forced her into his apartment where he tied her up and gagged her. He deprived her of food and water for 2 days while repeatedly raping her, and threatening and raping her with a knife.

He then brought her back to her residence hall where they coincidentally encountered the mother of the woman. The mother had driven to the campus to find out the whereabouts of her daughter. The woman tried to flee, but the boyfriend tackled her and a physical fight ensued involving the mother and 2 other people against the ex-boyfriend.

The ex-boyfriend then fled the scene, stole a gun and drove over 100 miles to the woman's house, broke into the house and took her 16-year-old brother hostage during a high-speed police pursuit. He eventually shot the woman's brother in the head, causing serious and debilitating injuries, and then fatally shot himself in the head.

During the research for this paper, it was discovered that several states have relationship or dating violence included within their domestic violence law definitions. These definitions are included for the purpose of providing a comparison of the various criteria used to establish a domestic relationship within the domestic violence laws of other states and the suggestions voiced by the victim advocates. It should be noted that at the time that the victim advocates provided what language would best describe the campus relationship violence situations they were experiencing, they had not been made aware of other state definitions of relationship/domestic violence. They are as follows:

*"... a person who is a spouse or former spouse of the respondent, but who previously lived in a spousal relationship with the respondent or is in or has been in a dating, courtship, or engagement relationship with the respondent."*  
Alaska Statute 25.35.200(4) (1992)

*"... A spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, any other adult person related by consanguinity or by affinity within the second degree, or person with whom the respondent has had a dating or engagement relationship."*

California Civil Procedure Code 542(b)(1) (West Supplement 1993)

*"...dating relationship" defined as " frequent, intimate associations primarily characterized by the expectation of affectional or sexual involvement, independent of financial considerations."*

California Penal Code 243(f)(11)(West Supplement 1993)

*"... upon a person with who the actor is involved in an intimate relationship." Intimate relationship includes, "past or present unmarried couples."*

Colorado Revised Statute 18-6-800.3(1)(Supplement 1993)

*"... persons who have or who have had a dating or engagement relationship..." The statute notes that, "neither a casual acquaintanceship nor ordinary fraternization between two individuals in business or social contexts shall be deemed to constitute a dating relationship."*

Illinois Annotated Statute Chapter 750, paragraph 60/103(6) (Smith-Hurd Supplement 1993)

*"... are or have been in a substantive dating or engagement relationship." Section 1(e)1 requires that the relationship be judged by the following factors: (1) the length of time of the relationship, (2) the type of relationship (3) the frequency of interaction between the parties, and (4) if the relationship has been terminated by either person, the length of time elapsed since the termination of the relationship.*

Massachusetts General Laws Annotated 209A, 1(e) (West Supplement 1993)

*"... current or former sexual or intimate partners." "Intimate partners" is defined as, "persons currently or formally involved in a romantic relationship, whether or not such relationship was ever sexually consummated."*

New Hampshire Revised Statute Annotated 173-B\;1(1)(Supplement 1992)

*"... person[s] with whom the petitioner has had a continuing personal relationship."*

New Mexico Statutes Annotated 40-13-2(D)(amended 1993)

*"... persons who are in a dating relationship."*

North Dakota Central Code 14-07, 1-01(4)(1991)

*"... family or household members, sexual or intimate partners or persons who share biological parenthood."*

23 Pennsylvania Statutes Annotated 6102(a)(Supplement 1992)

*"... persons sixteen years of a age or older with whom a respondent sixteen years of age or older has or has had a dating relationship." The statute describes a "dating relationship" as a social relationship of romantic nature as determined by the length of time the relationship has existed, the nature of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the parties.*

Washington Revised Code Annotated 26.50.010(2)(West Supplement 1993)

*"... current or former sexual or intimate partners."*

### Discussion

The research on relationship, or dating violence, that was reviewed for this paper was done from within the disciplines of the behavioral sciences. Much of what was discovered established the existence of relationship violence on college campuses, what forms of violence occurred and the profiles and relationships of the batterers and victims.

The phenomenon of date/acquaintance rape on college campuses was slow in coming to be recognized as a legitimate category of sexual battery because of the culturally-based beliefs that rape only occurred between strangers. Empirical studies and surveys validated the fact that these events were occurring on college campuses, gave this behavior a name, and slowly permeated the consciousness of the college community with this information. It is now part of law enforcement training to address the issue of acquaintance rape, and it is the accepted fact that it is the most frequently occurring form of rape, not only on college campuses, but also in our society in general.

There appears to be a direct parallel to the discovery, empirical validation, naming, and acceptance of relationship violence on college campuses as to that which occurred with date/ acquaintance rape. The threshold of acceptance of the relationship violence occurring on college campuses is just now being reached. The studies and surveys have been done in the realms of academic research, with the focus on recovery for the victims, and in some cases, the batterers. The inception of the victim advocacy offices in the Florida State University System has provided the first real time window into this world of violence against persons. The implications for campus law enforcement in the future fall within the areas of responses to calls, policing efforts, training and public education.

With the research indicating that cohabitation relationships are the most volatile in terms of relationship violence, followed by dating and then marriage in order of propensity for violence (Sellers & Bromley, 1995; Stets & Straus, 1989), the on-site perspective of campus dating relationships as viewed by police officers and campus housing officials brings forth a fourth and disturbing category. That is the part-time cohabitation relationships. While the researchers looked at dating, the real time view of these relationships, as indicated by the victim advocates, was that the extent of the part-time cohabitation appeared to be a contributor to the relationship violence cases to which they have responded.

As on-campus housing is faced with increasing competition by off-campus housing opportunities for traditional aged students, relaxation of visitation rules and regulations within the on-campus residence halls will probably occur, making it easier for cohabitation-like relationships to take place. A growing number of colleges and universities are responding to gay, lesbian, and bisexual advocacy groups to avoid the issue of discrimination by sexual preference in on-campus housing facilities. As a result, some institutions are using titles such as "domestic partner housing", "family housing", or "apartment housing" to allow cohabiting couples, regardless of their sexual orientation, to occupy domiciles on campus. The criteria being used to establish that the relationship of the partners is substantial ranges from owning joint property, sharing

banking accounts, to a notarized declaration that the two individuals are partners (Cohen, Bauwin & Fritz, 1993).

The immediate future will be a period of profound demographic changes on college campuses, particularly in the average age of college students. More students who will be involved in something other than what was previously considered to be a traditional family relationship will be residing on campus (Cohen, et al., 1993). The part-time and full-time cohabitation relationships, which are the most problematic in terms of relationship and domestic violence, will be moving onto campus with the relaxation of rules, and with the sanctions of the institutions. The incidents of domestic or relationship violence will most likely increase commensurately as these relationships increase in number on campus, or displace traditional student housing and married student housing. Policy blue prints, or exemplars, for campus housing offices to use to facilitate the incorporation of these cohabitation relationships are already in existence (Appendix D).

Campus police officers will need to be equipped to respond to these emerging relationship violence issues. Beyond the general domestic violence training required for all police officers, an enhanced version of awareness, prosecution and intervention strategies aimed specifically at these on-campus relationships will probably have to be developed. A higher level of cognizance should be fostered by the officers as to what the indicators are of a potential relationship violence situation.

Relationship violence resulting from the part time cohabitation situations should be tracked as a form of domestic violence for several reasons, as indicated by the victim advocates. These would include identifying the batterer as a domestic batterer for intervention programs, immediate arrest with an automatically elevated bond, being bound over until arraignment, and the immediate filing for an injunction on behalf of the victim. When unauthorized cohabitants are discovered within the residence halls, no matter what the circumstances, the seriousness of this person's presence should be conveyed to the housing officials charged with enforcing visitation and general housing policies.

The frequency of relationship violence and battery within the student population is alarmingly high (Makepeace, 1981; Sets & Straus, 1989; Sellers & Bromley, 1995). As indicated by the victim advocates in this study, very few of the victims of relationship violence seek assistance through the police, yet some of these cases wind up in the hands of the police when they reach the level of grave violence. It is important that every opportunity be afforded to the battered student populations to address, or even acknowledge, the issue of their victimization.

Ronald A. Chez, MD, and Richard F. Jones III, MD speak to medical groups on the topic of women battering. They have recognized the unique opportunity based on the special relationship between a woman and an obstetrician - gynecologist to address the issue of battered women. Dr. Chez and Dr. Jones III have developed a protocol of predesignated questions to be asked by the obstetrician-gynecologist during every routine exam with each woman. The privacy of the setting and the confidentiality of the doctor-patient relationship provide the ideal non-threatening setting for the battered woman to respond affirmatively. The goal of this process is to provide every benefit for the woman. It has been highly successful (Chez & Jones, 1995).

Every state university in the Florida State University System has a student health program and center. Within these centers are gynecological services for the women. The opportunity for the battered woman question protocol, developed and used by Dr. Chez and Dr. Jones III in the practices in the general public, could occur for every female student in the university system who visits one of the campus health care facilities. Dr. Chez concurred in an interview that this would be a great opportunity to help women break the cycle of violence before it would have to escalate higher to warrant action by the victim. In terms of pro-activity and true community involvement, there exists here a great opportunity for the campus police to suggest, endorse, and participate in such a training endeavor for the campus health service providers.

The issue of underreporting relationship or domestic violence on campus to the police or student affairs is a major concern that needs to be addressed. Students' awareness of the issue and the institutional support for them, should they fall victim to this form of abuse, must be made clear. This should be a concerted effort done in conjunction by the police departments, health services, student judicial affairs, counseling centers, victim advocacy programs and housing departments. This could be achieved through the student handbooks, a values statement requiring student signatures, housing orientation programs, classroom curriculum infusion when appropriate, etc.

Campus police crime prevention programming is a two-edged sword. On one side is the benefit of large contained audiences. On the other, is the constant matriculation rate that brings new faces to their communities several times a year. The public education efforts as to relationship violence should be a continuous effort. Educating the student populations as to what this violence is, how to seek remedy, and how to recognize it in others, could have a major effect on the lives of many individuals by opening a door to early intervention. Altruistically, this could also intercede in relationships headed for violent marriages that will be affecting municipal police agencies in the future, considering that the majority of married domestic violence situations were rooted in prior relationship battery situations as mentioned in the magazine USA Today (1990).

Training for all university staff members who may be the first point of contact for a victim of relationship or domestic violence will be the foundation for any appropriate response. To have university judicial affairs officers hearing simple dispute cases without the training to spot the indicators of an abusive relationship could result in a punitive action based on a symptom of a much larger problem with far graver consequences in the future. Without the proper training in what domestic violence injuries look like, student health care providers may deny a domestic battery victim an excellent opportunity to share his or her dilemma or to initiate the process of remedy. Campus housing officials and resident assistants, in the absence of domestic violence training, could be dismissing as horseplay or accidental injuries within their student populations indicators of violent relationships. Police officers responding to simple disturbance calls should be equipped to recognize the cues of an abusive situation without placing the victim in a situation of denying such an activity as a matter of self preservation in the presence of the batterer. Housing and police officials should also be equally concerned about the potential for violence presented by the part-time cohabitor.



To educate one of these service departments on domestic and relationship violence and not another not only denies the victims of one more resource, it also frustrates the effort of trying to achieve a holistic approach to the issue. Because of their interactions with all of these official entities, the university police departments are in a position to galvanize such an effort. Not only would the service levels delivered to the campus citizens be enhanced, a proactive approach to what appears to be a future demographic inevitability will have been set in place as well.

**Captain Bob Staehle** is the operations commander for the University of South Florida Police Department in Tampa. A veteran of 23 years of law enforcement, Captain Staehle is a nationally acclaimed speaker and trainer on sexual battery and is the creator of the first university victim advocacy program in Florida. He has been recognized for groundbreaking work in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), a subject which he teaches throughout the state for the Florida Attorney General's Office. Captain Staehle is a recent recipient of the Outstanding Public Service Award presented to him by Governor Lawton Chiles. His interest in victim services and secondary victimization led him to research on the issue of domestic violence on the university campus.

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## Appendix A

### Victim Advocate Interview Questions

1. Do you find relationship violence to be a problem on your campus?
2. Do you feel that the ability of the police to act by arresting the batterer, even against the wishes of the victim, as applicable to some of the relationship violence situations you have seen on your campus?
3. Since the inception of your program, have you seen an increase or decrease in the number of relationship violence cases?
4. In reference to question number 3, if a trend is indicated, to what would you attribute it?
5. Historically, have you encountered difficulties in addressing student relationship violence as a form of domestic violence?
6. Based on your experience as a university victim advocate, what language or terminology do you feel would best encompass the uniqueness of college student relationship violence as a form of domestic violence?
7. As compared to the definition of domestic relationships as stated in Florida State Statute 741,28(2) - "Family or household member means spouses, former spouses, persons related by blood or marriage, persons who are presently residing together as if family or who have resided together in the past as if a family, and persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they have been married or have resided together at any time." - what dynamics or behaviors do you see as contributors to the student relationship violence cases you have dealt with?
8. What strategy or change in the system would best help you in dealing with the student relationship violence problem in general?

## Appendix B

### University Victim Advocate Relationship Violence and Stalking Case Totals

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	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>
Florida International University		
Relationship Violence	2 *	18
Stalking	0 *	3
Florida State University		
Relationship Violence	5	48
Stalking	16	22
University of Central Florida		
Relationship Violence	11	7
Stalking	10	8
University of Florida		
Relationship Violence	72	70
Stalking	32	25
University of North Florida		
Relationship Violence	2 *	7
Stalking	1 *	2
University of South Florida		
Relationship Violence	66	51
Stalking	10	13

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Note. \* Indicates that these figures were available for July through December 1994 only, because of the start up dates of the victim advocacy programs at those campuses.

## Appendix C

### University Police Assault Cases. Totals for years 1994 and 1995

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	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>
Florida International University Police		
Aggravated Assault	7	2
Simple assault	24	32
Reported as Domestic Violence	4	2
Florida State University Police		
Aggravated Assault	20	7
Simple assault	42	25
Reported as Domestic Violence	3	3
University of Central Florida Police		
Aggravated Assault	3	1
Simple assault	24	14
Reported as Domestic Violence	1	1
University of Florida Police		
Aggravated Assault	24	24
Simple assault	92	83
Reported as Domestic Violence	21	16
University of North Florida Police		
Aggravated Assault	7	4
Simple assault	1	6
Reported as Domestic Violence	0	0
University of South Florida Police		
Aggravated Assault	23	13
Simple assault	55	60
Reported as Domestic Violence	8	1

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Note. Provided by Florida Division of Criminal Justice Information Systems, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Tallahassee, Florida.

## Appendix D

### Housing Policy Blueprint

1. For the purpose of campus housing eligibility, we suggest defining a domestic partnership as: Two people, neither of whom is in another recognized partnership or marriage, who have chosen to share one another's lives in a monogamous, intimate, and committed relationship of mutual caring. This relationship is based on financial, personal, and social interdependence.
2. Domestic partners should be permitted to reside in campus housing designated for married couples and/or families.
3. Consistent with most married and family housing policies, verification of a domestic partnership should be required.
4. The campus should establish an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership that can be used by partners for the purpose of housing eligibility in lieu of a Certificate of Marriage. This affidavit should be witnessed and signed by a notary public and submitted along with an application for campus housing. Students who fraudulently sign this official campus document could be subject to campus judicial charges as well as civil charges.
5. In addition to an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership, verification also should include a combination of other evidence satisfactory to the campus that a domestic partnership has been established and that an interdependent relationship exists. The list of forms of verification included above can be used as a resource.
6. Proof of prior cohabitation (e.g., leases, utility bills, joint bank account) should not be used, by either the housing applicants or the campus housing office, as a single determining factor for domestic partner verification. Cohabitation by itself does not define the nature of the relationship between two people.
7. Notification of termination of domestic partnership status should be required. No individual who has filed an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership should be able to file another such affidavit until six months after the statement of termination has been received by the campus. This may help prevent individuals from falsely presenting themselves as domestic partners and place significance on the longevity of relationships once established.
8. Discounted housing rates offered to married couples and families only should be extended to domestic partners.
9. If future changes in housing policy permit married couples and families to live in other residential settings outside of current accommodations, these same benefits should be extended to nonmarried domestic partners.
10. All references to "married" housing or rates should be stricken from campus and housing literature. The more inclusive "family housing" or "apartment housing" could be used.

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Note. From "Housing Domestic Partners on Campus," by C. R. Cohen, R. Bauwin and S. Fritz, 1993, The Journal of College and University Housing, 23, p. 3.