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Perpetrator and Victim Gender Patterns for 21 Forms of Youth Victimization in the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence

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Most interest in violence and gender has focused on certain types of victimization such as sex offenses and relational aggression. This study examined gender patterns across numerous forms of youth victimization. The data are from the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV), a nationally representative U.S. sample of 4,549 children ages 1 month to 17 years obtained through a telephone survey of caregivers and youth. For 18 of 21 victimization types, male perpetration was significantly more common than female perpetration. Perpetrator-victim patterns revealed that most forms of physical assault and bullying showed a predominantly male-on-male pattern. All forms of sexual assault, plus kidnapping, showed a predominantly male-on-female pattern. Nonphysical maltreatment showed a mixed pattern, with fairly similar rates across all four gender configurations. Many violence types were more severe when perpetrated by males versus females as indicated by higher injury rates and greater victim fear. Higher order analyses by victimization type indicated, among other findings, that victimization types with more stranger perpetrators had more male perpetrators, victimizations with higher percentages of male-on-female and female-on-male incidents were more likely to be sexual offenses, and higher percentages of female-on-female incidents were associated with verbal victimizations. Results also suggest that males are more likely to aggress in more impersonal contexts compared to females. Gender socialization, physical power, and social power appear to intersect in ways that create gendered patterns of violence. These factors, versus a focus on skills deficits, need more attention in prevention and intervention.

Keywords: gender differences; youth violence; physical assault; sexual assault; relational aggression

There is keen interest in the gender patterns of violence, particularly concerning whether or when females' participation in violence deserves clinical and policy attention. Most research, however, focuses only on one or two specific forms of violence (e.g., child abuse, sex offending, bullying), which can give a mistaken impression

regarding broader gender patterns (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2007). A more systematic approach to gender patterns across types of violence can advance our understanding (Hamby & Grych, 2013). Furthermore, much research has been on help-seeking, criminal justice, or other unrepresentative samples. Nationally representative data, from the United States or any other country, are lacking for many violence types. We propose that gender differences in violence emerge from multiple factors—a perfect storm of biological and social differences—that combine to produce one of the largest and most problematic gender differences in behavior yet identified. Using concepts of power and gender socialization as an organizing framework, we examine gender patterns for 21 different types of youth victimization in a nationally representative U.S. sample. We explore the association of gender with variations in physicality, severity, and impersonality of violence because there are large gender differences in the perpetration of some offenses, such as sexual assault, that are perpetrated primarily by males, and smaller gender differences for others, such as relational aggression and the source of this variation has received almost no empirical attention.

GENDER PATTERNS IN THE PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE

Hyde's (2005) "Gender Similarities Hypothesis" proposes that women are similar to men on most characteristics. In her review of meta-analyses, violence was one of the very few exceptions to the overall pattern of gender similarities. Hyde found a moderate average effect size for physical aggression, indicating that males perpetrate somewhat more violence than females. The size of the gender difference for physical aggression was surpassed only by some psychomotor skills, such as throwing distance, that can largely be explained by physiological differences in muscle mass and bone size, and a few—but not all—sexual behaviors. Frequency of masturbation and attitudes about casual sex showed very large differences, with males reporting more frequent masturbation and more positive attitudes about casual sex than females, but there were no gender differences in other aspects of sexuality such as sexual satisfaction. Even though violence had an unusually large effect size in Hyde's analysis, gender differences in violence are probably larger than she found, because her review did not include sexual violence.

Criminology data find large gender differences, with greater male perpetration recorded in reports to police (Snyder & McCurley, 2008), arrests (FBI, 2011), victim surveys (Rand, 2008), and homicide data (FBI, 2002). Most data suggest that more than 90% of sex offenders are men (for reviews, see Hamby, 2005; Hamby, 2009). Counter to some stereotypes emphasizing female perpetration of verbal and relational aggression, meta-analyses find trivial gender differences in the perpetration of indirect forms of aggression, such as verbal aggression and social exclusion (Card, Stucky, Sawalani, & Little, 2008; Hyde, 2005). Several factors are thought to account for greater male perpetration across multiple forms of violence. Rather than type-specific effects, a few key mechanisms likely explain patterns across types of violence (Hamby & Grych, 2013).

PHYSICAL POWER, SOCIAL POWER, GENDER, AND VIOLENCE

Power advantages, both physical and social, are thought to increase the likelihood of all types of perpetration (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Olweus, 1993), and gender-based differences in power are hypothesized to be the reason male perpetrators are more common than

female perpetrators (Hamby, 2009). Just as the source of males' greater throwing ability and grip strength is physical differences in muscle mass and bone size (Hyde, 2005), biological differences favor male over female perpetration. Few crimes involve a weaker perpetrator targeting a stronger victim. The average U.S. male is approximately 30 lb heavier and 5 in. taller than the average U.S. female (McDowell, Fryar, Ogden, & Flegal, 2008). Greater injury rates and greater victim fear are consistent with males' greater ability to physically overwhelm a victim, particularly in incidents that do not involve a weapon. Across forms of violence, males also tend to perpetrate more physical forms of victimization than females, in comparison to verbal aggression or property crimes that do not involve a direct confrontation with the victim.

Other forms of power can also create opportunities for offending, such as role authority. Social power is more similarly distributed among males and females in U.S. society and can create circumstances and access that give the average female the power necessary to perpetrate (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Hamby, 2004). Caregiving is one such role, and official statistics suggest that gender differences are smaller for offenses with a higher percentage of relative perpetrators, such as some forms of maltreatment (Hamby, 2005).

GENDER SOCIALIZATION AND VIOLENCE

Adherence to cultural scripts such as the "boy code" also promotes greater male aggressiveness (Pollack, 2006). Gender stereotypes and social norms in the United States and many other cultures often create environments in which males are reinforced for aggression and penalized for signs of weakness or even expressions of distaste for others' aggressive behavior (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000). Favorable attitudes toward impersonal and uncommitted relationships and casual sex are more common among males than females (Hyde, 2005) and contribute to sexual perpetration (Mouilso & Calhoun, 2012). Males also engage in more instrumental, versus expressive, aggression (Hamby & Sugarman, 1999), and this may also increase males' tendency to aggress in multiple settings, including impersonal ones, and against multiple victims, including strangers. Other motivations for aggression, such as increasing social status, may be more similar for males and females, creating more similarity for verbal and relational forms of aggression (Card et al., 2008). Close personal relationships may create triggers for aggression, such as perceived rejection, that act similarly for both males and females (Finkel, 2008).

THE INTERPLAY OF PERPETRATOR GENDER AND VICTIM GENDER

The interplay between perpetrator gender and victim gender also proves to be important. Neither males nor females randomly target victims for most offenses (Card, 2011). Data on adults indicate that the most common pattern for physical assaults is male-on-male (Hamby, 2005). The male advantage in physical strength likely contributes to relatively low rates of female-on-male physical violence in comparison to other gender patterns because that combination would most likely involve a weaker perpetrator targeting a physically stronger victim. Taking advantage of socially weaker peers and striving for social status are also important motives for aggression (Olweus, 1993). It has been suggested that

these dynamics are also one reason that female-on-male violence is relatively rare because most youth are more focused on within-gender social status (Faris & Felmlee, 2011). Same-gender targeting is assumed in many analyses of relational aggression, where “queen bees” or “mean girls” are identified as targeting other girls (Wiseman, 2009). Thus, in addition to male-on-male dyads, female-on-female dyads may also be common for some types of physical and relational violence.

Gender plays out very differently for offenses with a sexual element. For rape, almost all perpetrators are male, resulting in opposite-gender perpetrators for women and same-gender perpetrators for men (Black et al., 2011). For less severe sexual offenses, however, opposite-gender offending is more common for both male and female victims (Black et al., 2011). Furthermore, male-on-male rape often involves preadolescent victims (Black et al., 2011), supporting the role of physical power in sexual assaults. Social factors also contribute to opposite-gender patterns for sexual assault. Although most scholarly analyses of sexual assault emphasize power and the violent nature of sexual assaults, prevalent rape scripts and sexual scripts (Ryan, 2011) support the targeting of female victims by male perpetrators. Although rarer, these same sexual scripts would also promote the targeting of male victims by female perpetrators.

SEVERITY OF INCIDENTS AS A FUNCTION OF PERPETRATOR GENDER

Another element missing from many analyses, especially in research on youth, is a consideration of the differential severity of male-perpetrated and female-perpetrated violence. Greater physical power is one reason that males are more likely to inflict injury than females (e.g., Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Recent studies of sexual assault have carefully defined rape and have found, using gender neutral language for penetrative assault, that both male and female perpetrators of rape exist but male perpetrators are far more common (Black et al., 2011; Larimer, Lydum, Anderson, & Turner, 1999; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Many studies of sexual assault, however, including most studies with youth, have not adequately distinguished between rape (forced penetration) and other sexual offenses, making it difficult to identify severity differences. Finally, fear has been suggested as a marker of severity, but some have noted that fear is gender stereotyped in the United States, with males encouraged to suppress expression of fear (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010). A comparison of reports of fear across different types of victimization would allow a further investigation into how fear is related to gender.

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE ON GENDER AND VIOLENCE

Most research on gender and violence is still remarkably piecemeal. One key purpose of the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence is to develop a comprehensive approach to the study of violence and victimization (Finkelhor, Turner, Ormrod, & Hamby, 2009). A compartmentalized approach, wherein most research focuses on only one or two forms of violence, slows scientific progress by restricting the flow of information, exacerbating tendencies to reinvent similar models for different forms of violence, and reducing communication among professionals in different subdisciplines (Hamby & Grych, 2013).

Studying the interconnections of different violence types can lead to more accurate and comprehensive models and more effective approaches to reducing the number of people who become victims or perpetrators.

As noted earlier, it is often pointed out that males perpetrate “more” sexual aggression and more physical assault than females. Seldom has there been a focus on the variations across victimization types. Males perpetrate 90% or more of the homicide and sexual aggression that comes to the attention of authorities (Hamby, 2005) but only offend at moderately higher rates for offenses such as simple (minor) physical assault and bullying (Card et al., 2008; Hamby, 2005). Factors associated with differences in male and female offending might also explain why some offenses have much larger gender differences than others. In addition to a greater willingness to perpetrate offenses using physical or sexual force in a direct confrontation with the victim, males may be willing to aggress in more impersonal settings and to offend against strangers in more instrumental use of aggression (e.g., Hamby & Sugarman, 1999). Close relationships may create conditions of access, role authority, and strong emotions (Finkel, 2008; Hamby, 2004) and victimization types with higher rates of relative perpetrators may also have higher rates of female-on-female and female-on-male violence. We propose to investigate whether these factors are associated with the size of gender differences.

HYPOTHESES

1. We predict that males perpetrate more physical and sexual violence than females.
2. For physical and other forms of nonsexual violence, we predict that male-on-male violence will be the most common perpetrator–victim pattern.
3. For sexual violence, we predict that male-on-female violence will be the most common perpetrator–victim pattern.
4. We predict that reports of injury, penetration (for sexual offenses), and fear will be higher for male-perpetrated than female-perpetrated violence.
5. We predict that the variability in the overall percentage of male perpetrators and male-on-male dyads will be associated with more physical, severe, and impersonal acts (stranger perpetrated or taking place in the community, away from home or school). We also hypothesize that crimes with a sexual component will be more associated with higher percentages of opposite-gender perpetrator–victim patterns. We anticipate that female-on-female variability will be associated with verbal, less severe, and more relative-perpetrated acts.

METHOD

Participants

The data are from the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV), which is a nationally representative sample of 4,549 children ages 1 month to 17 years living in the continental United States. The sample was 50% male and 50% female. The racial and ethnic composition of the sample was as follows: 53% White, non-Hispanic; 20% Black, non-Hispanic, 5% other race, non-Hispanic; and 21% Hispanic, any race. There were no gender differences in race, age, or household income, $p > .10$.

Procedure

Most of the sample (67%) was acquired through random digit dialing (RDD) from a nationwide sampling of residential telephone numbers that took place between January and May 2008. The other 33% of the sample was obtained through an oversampling of U.S. telephone exchanges that included 70% or more African American, Hispanic, or low-income households. The computer-assisted interview began with an adult caregiver to attain consent and family demographic information. The child with the most recent birthday was selected to participate. If the selected child was younger than 10 years, the interview was conducted with the caregiver who was “most familiar with the child’s daily routine and experiences.” If the child was 10–17 years old, the main telephone interview was carried out with the child, which comprises 46% of the completed interviews. To maximize response rates, up to 13 telephone callbacks were initially made to contact a respondent and up to 25 callbacks made to complete the interview. Confidentiality was promised to respondents and they were provided \$20 for participation. The interviews were offered in English and Spanish. Nearly all adolescents chose to be interviewed in English; 6% of caregivers chose to be interviewed in Spanish.

If respondents revealed a serious threat, caregiver-perpetrated victimization, or suicidal ideation, they were recontacted by a clinical member of the research team trained in telephone crisis counseling. Their responsibility was to stay in contact with the respondent until the situation was resolved or brought to the attention of appropriate authorities. All respondents were offered the contact information for the Girls and Boys Town hotline. All procedures were authorized by the Institutional Review Board of the University of New Hampshire.

The cooperation rate was 71% for the RDD cross-section portion of the survey and 63% for oversample. To further analyze the representativeness of the sample, we compared parent reports of adolescents who completed the interview to parent reports for adolescent nonresponders for the 10- to 17-year-old participants. There were only three differences among 34 tests, none of which suggested any serious bias in victimization risk (see Finkelhor et al. [2009] for more details on these and other sample characteristics).

Measurement

Victimization. An enhanced version of the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire (JVQ; Hamby, Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2005) was used for this survey, which covers five general areas of youth victimization: conventional crime, maltreatment, victimization by peers and siblings, sexual victimization, and witnessing and indirect victimization across 44 items. The purpose of the JVQ is to provide a comprehensive picture of victimization. Across each major violence area, several “screeners” questions are asked about specific forms of victimization, using a yes/no response format. After completing all screeners, incident characteristics such as perpetrator identity (“Who did this?”) are obtained in a follow-up portion of the interview.

In the JVQ, victimizations are operationalized behaviorally. For example, the item on nonsexual genital assault reads, “At any time in your life, did any kids try to hurt your private parts on purpose by hitting or kicking you there?” The items on nonphysical aggression include a threshold of distress to minimize the inclusion of joking around or other false positives. For example, the item on relational aggression reads, “At any time in your life, did you get scared or feel really bad because kids were calling you names, saying mean things to you, or saying they didn’t want you around?” Some items prompt respondents to think about specific types of assaults, such as the one on bias-motivated attack, which reads, “At any time in your life, have you been hit or attacked because of your skin color, religion, or where your

family comes from? Because of a physical problem you have? Or because someone said you were gay?" NatSCEV includes many victimization forms that have received little previous study, such as custodial interference, which reads, "Sometimes a family fights over where a child should live. At any time in your life, did a parent take, keep, or hide you to stop you from being with another parent?" See tables for a description of the other victimizations and Finkelhor et al. (2009) or <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/jvq/> for exact wording of all questions, which are freely available for use by others. The test–retest reliability and construct validity of the JVQ were established in a previous national sample (Finkelhor, Hamby, Ormrod, & Turner, 2005). Construct validity was established with significant, moderate correlations with trauma symptoms and test–retest reliability showed an average kappa of .63 with 95% agreement across administrations, which indicate substantial reliability especially given the very low base rate for some items. Reporter bias was assessed by comparing caregiver reports of 9- and 10-year-old youth reports and no major inconsistencies were found in two different national samples (Finkelhor et al., 2005, 2009). Lifetime data are used to maximize the number of cases available for analyses. The current analyses focus on direct forms of victimization, that is, conventional crime, maltreatment, victimization by peers and siblings, and sexual victimization.

The JVQ includes 11 types of direct physical violence: assault with weapon, assault without weapon, nonsexual genital assault, kidnapping, threatened assault, bias-motivated assault, attempted assault, physical intimidation by a peer (bullying), robbery, physical abuse by a caregiver, and peer/sibling assault. Sexual offenses include sexual assault (by any perpetrator), flashed (sexual exposure by perpetrator), sexual harassment, and statutory rape/sexual misconduct. Nonphysical victimizations include vandalism, theft (stealing something from victim without directly confronting victim, such as by breaking into car or locker), relational aggression by a peer, psychological abuse by a caregiver, custodial interference, and neglect.

Perpetrator Gender. To identify the perpetrator, respondents were asked, "Who did this?" This and other incident characteristics were collected for the most recent event, which maximizes memory and provides a representative snapshot of victimization patterns. Fathers and brothers were recorded as males and mothers and sisters were recorded as females. For others (e.g., "neighbor"), youth were asked, "Was this a man, woman, boy, or girl?"

Incident Severity. Incident severity was assessed by injury, penetration, and fear. For physical and sexual assaults, injury was assessed by a follow-up item that asked whether a youth was "physically hurt when this happened." At the first assault report, "hurt" was defined: "Hurt means you could still feel pain in your body the next day. You are also hurt when you have a bruise, a cut that bleeds, or a broken bone." Sexual assaults were followed by a question on penetration, "Did this person(s) put any part of [his/her] body inside you." For all victimizations, respondents were asked "how afraid" youth felt (not at all, a little, or very afraid).

Demographics. Characteristics of the youth including their gender, age, race, and ethnicity were gathered in the demographic section of the survey.

Second-Order Analyses of Victimization-Level Characteristics

Incident data are only available for youth who have sustained a certain type of victimization. There are no perpetrator data for nonvictims. Although we have in many reports emphasized the overlap among forms of victimization (e.g., Turner et al., 2010), which is indeed distressingly high, no youth sustained all 21 forms of direct victimization we assess—or even close. From a human perspective, this is good, but from a statistical perspective, it creates problems with comparing incident characteristics across individuals,

because even including three or four forms of victimization reduces the sample size to near zero. To address this, we used second-order analyses with victimization type as the unit of analysis. A new dataset was created with an overall value for the following characteristics for each victimization type.

Overall Gender Patterns. We used five indicators of gender patterns, similar to those used in the individual-level analyses. The first is the percentage of male perpetrators for each type of victimization. We then also created variables for the percentage of each of the four perpetrator–victim gender patterns: male-on-male, male-on-female, female-on-female, and female-on-male.

Overall Rate of Violence. We use the overall rate as an indicator of the extent to which an incident is a violation of social norms, hypothesizing that more common acts, such as peer and sibling assault or bullying, are more normatively acceptable than rarer incidents such as sexual assault or kidnapping. Note that the percentage of male perpetrators is orthogonal to the overall rate because the percentage of male perpetrators can range from 0% to 100% regardless of the overall rate (this is likewise true for all perpetrator gender–victim gender combinations).

Physical Assault or Not. A dichotomous rating of whether the offense involves direct bodily force. This excludes verbal abuse or harassment, theft, and vandalism, but does include sexual assault (which is both a sexual and physical crime). In addition to sexual assault, this category includes nonsexual genital assault, assault with a weapon, assault without a weapon, kidnapping, bias-motivated assault, attempted assault, bullying/physical intimidation, robbery (unlike theft, robbery involves a direct confrontation with the victim), caregiver physical abuse, and peer and sibling assault.

Sexual Element or Not. A dichotomous rating, with one assigned to sexual assault by any perpetrator, flashing (unwanted exposure) and verbal sexual harassment and zero to all others. This category also includes statutory rape or sexual misconduct with a minor, which is a criminal exploitation of a youth but does not involve explicit force.

Verbal Element Essential. Although verbal aggression can be a component of most offenses, for some, it is the central element to the victimization. This dichotomous coding includes caregiver psychological abuse, relational aggression, threatened assault, bias-motivated assault, and verbal sexual harassment.

We also recorded the percentage of incidents involving a *stranger perpetrator* and the percentage involving a *relative perpetrator*. Together, these two variables make acquaintance perpetrators the referent category. Location was represented by two variables: the percentage of incidents that occurred at *school* and the percentage that occurred in the *community*. Together, these two variables make home the referent category. Finally, as indicators of victimization severity, we have used the *average victim fear* and the percentage of *incidents known to police*.

RESULTS

Weights

All rates and statistics shown are adjusted for the following: (a) differing probabilities of household selection, including the oversampling of Black, Hispanic, and low-income respondents; (b) variations in the within-household probability of selection because of different numbers of eligible children across households; and (c) differences in sample proportions of gender, age, and race/ethnicity, and income relative to Census Population Projections for 2008 of each strata.

Gender Differences in Perpetration of Violence: Hypothesis 1

For 18 of 21 forms of victimization (86%), chi-square analyses indicated that males were identified as the perpetrator more often than females, generally supporting Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 was supported for all types of direct physical assault. Hypothesis 1 was supported for all types of sexual offenses except for statutory rape/sexual misconduct (a question about voluntary sexual relationships with an adult who was at least 5 years older), for which no gender difference was found. Although classified as a sexual offense, statutory rape/sexual misconduct can also be considered a more indirect form of aggression because the victim often defines that as a consensual, nonviolent experience. The other victimizations that did not show greater male perpetration were also less physically violent: custodial interference and neglect by caregivers. In contrast to Hypothesis 1, these two forms of maltreatment were significantly more often described as female-perpetrated. Other forms of indirect, nonphysical aggression had significantly more male than female perpetrators, including relational aggression by peer, sexual harassment, and psychological abuse by caregiver (see Table 1).

Perpetrator–Victim Patterns: Hypotheses 2 and 3

To further explore gender patterns, the four possible perpetrator–victim combinations were then examined. Chi-square analyses on weighted rates were again used. Standardized residuals were calculated to identify which cells contributed to significant chi-squares. Standardized residuals use a Z-metric, so that residuals >3.29 show rates that are much higher than would be expected by chance, $p < .001$, and residuals <-3.29 indicate rates that are much lower than would be expected by chance.

Physical assault showed a pattern in which male-on-male violence was far more common than would occur if perpetrators and victims were randomly distributed, as can be seen in Table 2, providing support for Hypothesis 2. In full support of Hypothesis 3, all forms of sexual victimization had higher rates of male-on-female incidents than any other pattern (including statutory rape/sexual misconduct when victim gender and not just perpetrator gender was included in the analysis). Unexpectedly, kidnapping was also observed to most often involve a male perpetrator and a female victim.

There were three other exceptions to the preceding patterns, all involving forms of maltreatment that do not involve physical or sexual assault. All three showed a generally mixed pattern, with no dominant perpetrator–victim combination. For psychological abuse, a significant effect was found, but this was largely caused by a relatively low rate of female-on-male perpetration, whereas the other three perpetrator–victim combinations were observed at similar frequencies. Custodial interference, despite a significant effect, had no especially large standardized residuals, although the largest cell was for female-on-male custodial interference. Neglect occurred at statistically similar frequencies for all four gender combinations (see Table 2).

Severity as Assessed by Injury, Penetration, and Fear: Hypothesis 4

Injury. Because rates of injury were fairly low for many forms of victimization, these analyses were done with perpetrator gender only to maximize cell sizes. Providing partial support for Hypothesis 4, injury rates were higher for male perpetrators than female perpetrators for some victimizations: assault without weapon, physical abuse by caregiver, peer/sibling assault, and custodial interference. Interestingly, comparing Table 3 to Table 1 shows that many gender differences for injury were for victimizations with relatively higher percentages

TABLE 1. Gender of Perpetrator for Different Forms of Youth Victimization

Victimization	<i>N</i>	% Female (<i>n</i>)	% Male (<i>n</i>)	χ^2
Sexual assault	156	19.9 (31)	80.1 (125)	55.44****
Genital assault	342	21.2 (73)	78.8 (269)	111.18****
Assault with weapon	372	23.8 (89)	76.2 (283)	100.14****
Kidnapping	70	25.1 (18)	74.9 (52)	15.56****
Assault without weapon	934	25.2 (235)	74.8 (699)	229.52****
Threatened assault	649	26.8 (174)	73.2 (475)	138.68****
Bias attack/hate crime	129	27.4 (35)	72.6 (94)	26.08****
Attempted assault	527	27.5 (145)	72.5 (382)	105.68****
Flashed	196	28.6 (56)	71.4 (140)	35.14****
Physical intimidation by peer	908	29.4 (267)	70.6 (641)	153.22****
Robbery	589	33.5 (197)	66.5 (392)	63.90****
Vandalism	959	33.6 (322)	66.4 (637)	102.82****
Physical abuse by caregiver	314	34.5 (108)	65.5 (206)	29.96****
Relational aggression by peer	1,224	36.0 (441)	64.0 (783)	95.00****
Theft	648	37.2 (241)	62.8 (407)	42.02****
Peer/sibling assault	2,057	37.4 (769)	62.6 (1,288)	130.44****
Sexual harassment	169	40.5 (68)	59.5 (101)	6.06*
Psychological/emotional abuse	481	41.0 (197)	59.0 (284)	15.38****
Statutory rape/sexual misconduct	83	41.9 (35)	58.1 (48)	1.74 <i>ns</i>
Custodial interference	180	60.2 (108)	39.8 (72)	6.80**
Neglect	134	61.0 (82)	39.0 (52)	6.28*

Note. Chi-squares shown are corrected for continuity. All rates are weighted to match census estimates for key demographics and other adjustments for sampling frame; see text for details. *ns* = nonsignificant.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. **** $p < .0001$.

of female perpetrators. Injury rates for physical abuse were notably high, including more than half of incidents involving male caregivers. The largest gender difference in injury was observed for custodial interference (more than 4 times higher for male perpetrators).

For the remaining forms of victimization for which physical injury was assessed, there were no significant gender differences, contrary to Hypothesis 4. In many cases, this was partly caused by very low injury rates overall (such as for peer harassment and robbery). Notably, however, this was also true for the victimization with the highest injury rate, assault with weapon, which had injury rates exceeding 50% for both male and female perpetrators. No forms of victimization had higher injury rates when perpetrated by females (see Table 3).

TABLE 2. Perpetrator–Victim Gender Patterns for Different Forms of Youth Victimization

Victimization	<i>n</i>	Male-on-Male % (std resid)	Male-on-Female % (std resid)	Female-on-Female % (std resid)	Female-on-Male % (std resid)
<i>Male-on-male is most common pattern</i>					
Genital assault	342	69.7 (16.49)	9.0 (-5.89)	6.1 (-6.98)	15.2 (-3.62)****
Bias attack	129	59.7 (7.88)	13.2 (-2.69)	24.0 (-0.22)	3.1 (-4.97)****
Attempted assault	527	58.8 (15.53)	13.7 (-5.21)	22.0 (-1.37)	5.5 (-8.95)****
Assault without weapon	934	56.0 (18.95)	18.7 (-3.83)	19.5 (-3.37)	5.8 (-11.75)****
Threatened assault	649	53.9 (14.74)	19.3 (-2.92)	21.1 (-1.98)	5.7 (-9.83)****
Assault with weapon	372	53.4 (10.99)	22.9 (-0.83)	17.3 (-3.01)	6.5 (-7.15)****
Theft	648	48.8 (12.10)	14.0 (-5.58)	32.4 (3.77)	4.8 (-10.29)****
Robbery	589	45.7 (10.03)	20.9 (-2.00)	21.9 (-1.50)	11.6 (-6.53)****
Physical intimidation by peer	908	45.0 (12.08)	25.6 (0.33)	19.2 (-3.52)	10.2 (-8.89)****
Vandalism	959	44.3 (11.96)	22.0 (-1.86)	25.3 (0.21)	8.3 (-10.32)****
Relational aggression by peer	1,224	42.4 (12.16)	21.7 (-2.30)	30.3 (3.70)	5.6 (-13.56)****
Physical abuse by caregiver	314	40.8 (5.59)	24.8 (-0.06)	17.8 (-2.54)	16.6 (-2.99)****
Peer/sibling assault	2,057	37.7 (11.47)	24.9 (-0.12)	22.5 (-2.28)	15.0 (-9.07)****

(Continued)

TABLE 2. Perpetrator–Victim Gender Patterns for Different Forms of Youth Victimization (Continued)

Victimization	<i>n</i>	Male-on-Male % (std resid)	Male-on-Female % (std resid)	Female-on-Female % (std resid)	Female-on-Male % (std resid)
<i>Male-on-female is most common pattern</i>					
Sexual assault	156	15.4 (-2.40)	64.7 (9.93)	5.8 (-4.80)	14.1 (-2.72)****
Statutory rape/sexual misconduct	83	0.0 (-4.56)	57.8 (5.98)	0.0 (-4.56)	42.2 (3.13)****
Kidnapping	70	26.1 (0.12)	49.3 (4.18)	8.7 (-2.75)	15.9 (-1.55)****
Sexual harassment	169	13.0 (-3.12)	46.7 (5.65)	27.2 (0.58)	13.0 (-3.12)****
Flashed	196	25.0 (0.00)	46.4 (6.00)	4.6 (-5.71)	24.0 (-0.29)****
<i>Mixed gender pattern</i>					
Psychological/emotional abuse	481	28.1 (1.35)	31.0 (2.62)	27.7 (1.16)	<i>13.3 (-5.13)****</i>
Custodial interference	180	20.4 (-1.19)	19.4 (-1.49)	27.2 (0.60)	33.0 (2.09)*
Neglect	134	18.7 (-1.47)	20.1 (-1.12)	28.4 (0.78)	32.8 (1.81)

Notes. For one-way chi-square tests of the null hypothesis that expected frequency in each cell is 25%. Std resid = Standardized residual for the deviation of frequencies from their expected value on a Z-metric. For residuals $> \pm 3.29$, $p < .001$. Frequencies in bold show which cell is most (significantly) higher than expected frequency; frequencies in italic show those most lower than expected frequency. Psychological abuse is described as “mixed” because its significant finding is caused by a low rate of female-on-male abuse, with no cells markedly higher than others.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; **** $p < .0001$.

TABLE 3. Severity of Assault Victimization by Perpetrator Gender: Injury and Penetration

Item	Perpetrator	
	Male	Female
Physical Injury		
Sexual assault	9.7%	5.3%
Genital assault	41.1%	44.3%
Assault with weapon	54.9%	55.7%
Kidnapping	4.1%	12.5%
Assault without weapon	39.3%	27.9%**
Bias attack	42.0%	27.3%
Physical intimidation by peer	8.7%	6.9%
Robbery	9.8%	7.2%
Physical abuse by caregiver	57.3%	41.5%**
Peer/sibling assault	17.4%	11.5%***
Custodial interference	8.3%	1.9%*
Penetration		
Sexual assault	24.0%	3.2%**

Note. Physical injury reports are available for physical and sexual assaults involving direct confrontations (not asked, e.g., about psychological abuse or vandalism). Penetration was asked about sexual assaults only. Rates are weighted to match Census Population Projections for 2008 and to adjust for sampling frame (see text).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Penetration. Penetration rates were more than 7 times higher for sexual assaults with male perpetrators than with female perpetrators, supporting Hypothesis 4 (see Table 3).

Fear. Fear ratings were significantly higher for numerous acts when perpetrated by males compared to females, providing partial support of Hypothesis 4. As seen in Table 4, these include physical abuse by a caregiver, assaults with a weapon, robbery, and physical intimidation by peer. For other forms of victimization, fear ratings were statistically equivalent. Some of these were apparently caused by floor effects because very few youth reported any fear to incidents such as statutory rape/sexual misconduct and flashing. Male-perpetrated and female-perpetrated incidents were also rated similarly for some more serious offenses, however, including neglect and kidnapping. No violence forms had higher fear rates for female perpetrators.

Fear scores are shown in rank order to highlight additional similarities and differences (note that fear ratings are only available for youth who experienced that particular form of victimization). The most fear-inducing incidents were similar regardless of perpetrator gender and even though, in some cases, the mean rating was statistically higher for females.

TABLE 4. Male-Perpetrated and Female-Perpetrated Incidents Rank Ordered by Victim Fear (Means and Standard Deviations)

Male-Perpetrated Incidents	Ranked by Victim Fear	Female-Perpetrated Incidents	Ranked by Victim Fear
Kidnapping	2.40 (0.80)	Physical abuse by caregiver	2.05 (0.82)*
Sexual assault	2.35 (0.74)***	Neglect	2.05 (0.88)
Physical abuse by caregiver	2.27 (0.80)*	Kidnapping	2.00 (0.75)
Neglect	2.22 (0.92)	Threatened assault	1.99 (0.79)*
Custodial interference	2.16 (0.76)*	Bias attack	1.97 (0.90)
Threatened assault	2.11 (0.76)*	Attempted assault	1.91 (0.72)
Assault with weapon	2.00 (0.78)**	Psychological/emotional abuse	1.85 (0.78)
Psychological/emotional abuse	1.94 (0.80)	Custodial interference	1.83 (0.88)*
Attempted assault	1.90 (0.72)	Assault with weapon	1.67 (0.82)**
Bias attack	1.84 (0.79)	Assault without weapon	1.64 (0.70)
Assault without weapon	1.73 (0.78)	Sexual assault	1.62 (0.82)***
Robbery	1.67 (0.72)***	Robbery	1.42 (0.66)***
Sexual harassment	1.60 (0.70)*	Physical intimidation by peer	1.41 (0.61)**
Physical intimidation by peer	1.56 (0.66)**	Relational aggression by peer	1.40 (0.57)
Relational aggression by peer	1.48 (0.64)	Vandalism	1.36 (0.60)
Flashed	1.45 (0.77)	Sexual harassment	1.35 (0.60)*
Theft	1.41 (0.62)*	Genital assault	1.34 (0.56)
Vandalism	1.41 (0.62)	Theft	1.33 (0.56)*
Peer/sibling assault	1.37 (0.61)**	Peer/sibling assault	1.28 (0.50)**
Statutory rape/sexual misconduct	1.35 (0.72)	Flashed	1.26 (0.70)
Genital assault	1.33 (0.57)	Statutory rape/sexual misconduct	1.09 (0.38)

Note. This table present fear ratings based on gender of perpetrator. Fear was rated on a scale from 1 (*not afraid*) to 3 (*very afraid*). All significant differences indicate incidents perpetrated by males were more frightening than the same type of incident perpetrated by females.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

These include many forms of maltreatment, notably physical abuse and neglect, and kidnapping. At the other end of the spectrum, many of the least fear-inducing were similar, too, including theft and peer/sibling assault in addition to the aforementioned statutory rape and flashing. Only two victimizations differed by five or more spaces in the rank ordering. Bias attack had the 5th highest rating for female perpetrators but the 10th for male perpetrators. Sexual assault had the 2nd highest rating for male perpetrators and the 11th for female perpetrators.

Second-Order Analyses With Victimization Type as the Unit of Analysis: Hypothesis 5

The preceding individual-level analyses indicate that males perpetrate most forms of violence more than females and that male-on-male and male-on-female are generally the most common patterns of violence. The individual-level analyses do not, however, shed light on the variability within this overall pattern. The total percentage of male perpetrators ranged from 39% for neglect to 80% for sexual assault (see Table 1). The average across all 21 victimizations was 66% male perpetrated. As can be seen in Table 3, the percentage of incidents that were male-on-male ranged from 0% for statutory rape to 70% for nonsexual genital assault. This produces a mean of 38%. Male-on-female incidents ranged from 9% for nonsexual genital assault to 65% for sexual assault, with a mean of 28%. Female-on-female incidents ranged from 0% for statutory rape to 32% for theft, with a mean of 19%. Female-on-male incidents ranged from 3% for bias-motivated assaults to 42% for statutory rape, with a mean of 14%.

Analytic Design of Second-Order Analyses. Why are some forms of violence predominantly perpetrated by males, whereas others approach gender parity? What characteristics are associated with increasing rates of male-on-male, male-on-female, female-on-female, and female-on-male incidents? This next set of analyses explores that question. We first present the bivariate correlations. Next, we conduct five multiple regressions using the percentage of male perpetrators and the four different perpetrator–victim gender dyads as the outcome variable and victimization-level characteristics as the predictor variables. When using victimization type as the unit of analysis, we have only 21 cases and 10 predictors. Thus, although we present the full model, we employed backward step regression to identify the smallest set of predictors that accounted for a statistically similar amount of variability as the full model. We discuss these findings in the following text. Adjusted R^2 include a correction for the number of terms in the equation.

The victimization level characteristics include several that are percentages in addition to the dichotomous codings described in Measures. The overall prevalence rate ranged from 1.2% for statutory rape to 63.0% for peer and sibling assault. The percentage of incidents involving a stranger perpetrator ranged from 0.3% for neglect to 47.0% for kidnapping, and averaged 8.8%. The percentage involving a relative perpetrator ranged from 2.0% for bias-motivated assault to 84.0% to custodial interference (less than 100.0% because of cohabiting partners of biological parents and other nonrelative caregivers), with a mean across victimizations of 36.0%. The percentage of incidents occurring at school ranged from 0.0% for neglect to 71.0% for verbal sexual harassment, with an average of 28.0%. The percentage occurring in the community ranged from 0.0% for neglect to 59.5% for statutory rape, with a mean of 23.5%. The percentage of incidents known to the police ranged from 0.8% for bullying to 71.0% for kidnapping, with an average of 15.6%.

Bivariate Analyses. Table 5 shows the bivariate correlations among our victimization-level variables, with correlations higher than .40 appearing in bold. Several characteristics

TABLE 5. Bivariate Correlations of Higher Order Victimization-Level Characteristics

	Male perpetrator %	Male-on-male perpetrator %	Male-on-female perpetrator %	Female-on-male perpetrator %	Female-on-female perpetrator %	Overall prev-alence rate	Physical contact or not	Sexual element or not	Verbal element essential	Stranger perpetrator %	Relative perpetrator %	School-based incidents	Community incidents	Average victim fear	Police know
Male perpetrator %	1	.530* .013	.085 .715	-.478* .029	-.626** .002	.101 .662	.605** .004	.053 .820	-.023 .920	.469* .032	-.514* .017	.356 .113	.239 .297	.020 .933	-.131 .573
Male-on-male perpetration %		1	-.800** .000	.219 .340	-.747** .000	.346 .124	.469* .032	-.676** .001	.037 .872	.066 .775	-.108 .640	.488* .025	-.455* .038	-.072 .756	-.256 .262
Male-on-female perpetration %			1	-.593** .005	.432 .050	-.337 .136	-.121 .601	.830** .000	-.056 .808	.259 .257	-.236 .303	-.320 .158	.703** .000	.102 .659	.213 .354
Female-on-female perpetration rate				1	-.386 .084	.299 .187	-.310 .171	-.540* .011	.407 .067	-.341 .130	.331 .143	.268 .241	-.752** .000	-.008 .973	-.068 .770
Female-on-male perpetration rate					1	-.366 .103	-.360 .109	.422 .057	-.340 .131	-.199 .386	.248 .278	-.613** .003	.412 .063	-.019 .934	.188 .415
Overall prevalence rate						1	.216 .348	-.382 .088	-.049 .834	-.340 .131	.340 .131	.045 .846	-.541* .011	-.332 .142	-.430 .052
Physical contact or not							1	-.266 .244	-.362 .106	.339 .132	.037 .873	-.054 .816	.020 .930	.267 .242	.073 .754
Sexual element or not								1	.014 .953	-.003 .989	-.457* .037	.012 .957	.658** .001	-.206 .370	-.121 .602
Verbal element essential									1	-.030 .898	-.258 .259	.544* .011	-.151 .514	.035 .879	-.137 .554
Stranger perpetrator %										1	-.417 .060	.061 .794	.453* .039	.422 .057	.685** .001
Relative perpetrator %											1	-.658** .001	-.443* .044	.249 .277	.105 .650
School-based incidents												1	-.221 .335	-.332 .141	-.326 .150
Community incidents													1	.094 .686	.261 .253
Average victim fear														1	.760** .000
Police know															1

Note. n = 21 victimization types. Correlations exceeding .40 appear in bold. p value appears under correlation coefficient.

are highly associated with perpetrator gender and perpetrator–victim gender patterns. The percentage of male perpetrators was positively associated with the percentage of stranger perpetrators and a physical assault component to the crime, and inversely associated with relative perpetrators. Male-on-male perpetration was also positively associated with physical force. It was positively associated with the percentage of incidents occurring at school and inversely associated with the percentage occurring in the community. Victimization with high rates of male-on-male offenses were less likely to have a sexual component. Male-on-female percentages, however, were correlated .83 with the sexual element variable and were also strongly associated ($r = .70$) with the percentage of incidents occurring in the community, away from home or school. Female-on-female incidents were more likely to be victimizations with an essential verbal element and less likely to have a sexual component to the crime or take place in the community. Finally, female-on-male offenses, like male-on-female, were more likely to have a sexual element and to occur in the community. They were less likely to be school based.

Multiple Regression Analyses With Victimization Type as Unit of Analysis

Percentage of Male Perpetrators. Only three variables explain a fairly remarkable 68% (adjusted R^2) of the variability in the percentage of offenders who are male. See Table 6 for regression coefficients and R^2 . Victimization types that had a higher percentage of stranger perpetrators also had a higher percentage of male perpetrators. Male perpetration percentage was also associated with incidents that provoked a higher average level of victim fear. Unexpectedly, reports to the police were inversely associated with male perpetration percentage. At the bivariate level, police knowledge about an incident has strong direct associations with both stranger perpetration percentage ($r = .69$) and average victim fear ($r = .76$), and a small, nonsignificant association with the percentage of male perpetrators ($r = -.13$). Police do also know about a high percentage of incidents involving caregiver perpetrators, however, which have a lower percentage of male perpetrators, and this may be the unique variance explaining this association after accounting for stranger perpetrators and victim fear.

Male-on-Male Incidents. Victimization types with a higher percentage of male-on-male incidents had seven characteristics that together explained 89% of the variability in incidents that involved a male perpetrator and male victim in comparison to other gender patterns. Three characteristics increased in tandem with the percentage of male-on-male incidents: the percentage of stranger perpetrators, the percentage of school-based incidents, and average victim fear. In contrast, sexual and verbal victimizations were less likely to involve male-on-male dyads. Police were also less likely to know about incidents with a high percentage of male-on-male incidents, perhaps because many of these involve peer assault.

Male-on-Female Incidents. The percentage of male-on-female incidents was associated with three victimization characteristics, together accounting for 86% of the variability. Victimization involving a sexual element have a higher percentage of male-on-female incidents. This was the strongest predictor of the overall percentage of male-on-female incidents. The percentage of stranger perpetrators was also positively associated with the percentage of male-on-female incidents. Finally, victimization types with a higher percentage of male-on-female incidents had a lower percentage of school-based incidents.

Female-on-Female Incidents. Variation in the rate of female-on-female incidents across victimization types was also well explained in these analyses, although somewhat less so than male-on-male and male-on-female variability. Two characteristics accounted

TABLE 6. Multiple Regression Analyses of Factors Associated With Perpetrator Gender and Perpetrator-Victim Gender Patterns Using Victimization Type as Unit of Analysis

Predictor	Male Perpetration %		Male-on-Male %		Male-on-Female %		Female-on-Female %		Female-on-Male %	
	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β
<i>Full model</i>										
Stranger perpetrator %	.96 (.38)	.90*	.55 (.41)	.31	.43 (.37)	.28	-.23 (.39)	-.25	-.75 (.40)	-.73 [†]
Relative perpetrator %	-.01 (.14)	-.03	.04 (.15)	.06	-.05 (.14)	-.08	.05 (.15)	.14	-.04 (.15)	-.11
Community-based %	.13 (.20)	.19	.26 (.21)	.22	-.13 (.19)	-.13	-.24 (.20)	-.41	.11 (.21)	.17
School-based %	.17 (.16)	.34	.54 (.17)	.67**	-.37 (.15)	-.54*	.10 (.16)	.24	-.27 (.17)	-.57
Sexual element	.01 (.06)	.02	-.37 (.06)	-.81***	.37 (.06)	.96***	-.05 (.06)	-.23	.05 (.06)	.18
Physical contact	.01 (.05)	.06	-.09 (.06)	-.03	.02 (.05)	.07	-.03 (.05)	-.19	.02 (.06)	.10
Verbal element essential	-.08 (.06)	-.32	-.16 (.06)	-.39*	.09 (.06)	.24	.05 (.06)	.24	.03 (.06)	.11
Overall prevalence rate	.22 (.20)	.22	-.00 (.14)	.00	.15 (.13)	.15	.02 (.13)	.03	-.16 (.14)	-.25
Average victim fear	.23 (.10)	.70*	.25 (.11)	.45*	-.02 (.10)	-.04	-.03 (.10)	-.11	-.20 (.10)	-.63 [†]
Police know	-.78 (.27)	-1.17*	-.89 (.29)	-.81*	.11 (.26)	.12	.22 (.27)	.39	.56 (.28)	.88 [†]
R ²	.84		.93	.93	.93	.93	.77	.77	.81	.81
Adjusted R ²	.67		.86	.86	.85	.85	.53	.53	.61	.61
Model F	5.05**		13.76***	13.76***	12.34***	12.34***	3.26*	3.26*	4.14*	4.14*

(Continued)

TABLE 6. Multiple Regression Analyses of Factors Associated With Perpetrator Gender and Perpetrator-Victim Gender Patterns Using Victimization Type as Unit of Analysis (Continued)

Predictor	Male Perpetration %		Male-on-Male %		Male-on-Female %		Female-on-Female %		Female-on-Male %	
	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β
Stranger perpetrator %	1.24 (.19)	1.16***	.69 (.21)	.39**	.43 (.13)	.28**	-.53 (.21)	-.51*		
Relative perpetrator %										
Community-based %							-.42 (.08)	-.71***		
School-based %			.45 (.09)	.56***	-.24 (.06)	-.35***			-.23 (.07)	-.49**
Sexual element			-.31 (.04)	-.69***	.32 (.03)	.84***			.11 (.04)	.42**
Physical contact										
Verbal element essential			-.15 (.04)	-.37**			.06 (.03)	.30*		
Overall prevalence rate										
Average victim fear	.18 (.07)	.55*	.23 (.07)	.43**					-.15 (.07)	-.49*
Police know	-.89 (.16)	-1.34***	-.89 (.17)	-.80***					.51 (.18)	.80*
R ²	.73		.92		.88		.65		.74	
Adjusted R ²	.68		.89		.86		.61		.65	
Model F	15.20***		27.01***		40.68***		16.94***		8.54***	

Note. n = 21 for number of victimization types. Adjusted R² includes a correction for the number of variables in the model. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001. †p < .10.

for 61% of the variability (adjusted R^2) in female-on-female incidents. Victimization types with a higher percentage of female-on-female incidents were more likely to be verbal forms of aggression. A higher percentage of female-on-female victimizations was also associated with a lower percentage of community-based incidents. This is probably caused by the maltreatment variables, which had higher rates of female perpetrators and generally take place in the home.

Female-on-Male Percentage. Variation in the percentage of incidents involving female-on-male aggression was also less well explained than male-on-male and male-on-female variability, although five variables did account for 65% (adjusted R^2) of the variability. Victimization types with high rates of female-on-male incidents, like those with more male-on-female incidents, were more likely to have a sexual component. Unlike male-on-female incidents, however, higher rates of female-on-male were associated with lower rates of stranger perpetration and lower victim fear. All of these findings may be caused by the relatively high rate of female-on-male incidents for statutory rape (42% of incidents), a sexual victimization with few stranger perpetrators and the lowest average victim fear out of all 21 victimizations. Female-on-male violence was less likely to take place at school, which may also be partly caused again by statutory rape, which had a very high rate (60%) of community-based incidents, and also partly caused by the relatively high rate of female-on-male incidents for the various forms of maltreatment, which tend to take place in the home. This may also be why police knowledge was higher for victimization types with more female-on-male incidents (see Table 6).

DISCUSSION

The results showed that, in this nationally representative U.S. sample, gender is closely connected to youth victimization. For 18 of the 21 forms of victimization we examined, violence was more likely to be perpetrated by male than female perpetrators. Furthermore, for most victimizations, neither male nor female perpetrators randomly offended against male and female victims. We found evidence suggesting that numerous indicators of physical power, social power, and gender socialization are associated with the size of the gender difference in the levels of male versus female perpetration and also with variability in perpetrator–victim gender patterns. To our knowledge, this is the first study that has attempted to uncover possible explanations for why male perpetrators vastly outnumber female perpetrators for some crimes, such as sexual assault, whereas others approach the gender similarity that is noted in most other aspects of cognition, personality, and behavior (Hyde, 2005).

Although much has been learned about gender and violence through the specialized study of subtypes, much is also lost by an overly exclusive reliance on a siloed approach. As can be seen in the data presented here, there are marked similarities in the patterns across many different types and subtypes of violence. This is consistent with a unified, integrated approach to the study of violence (Hamby & Grych, 2013). We were able to summarize the gender patterns for more than 20 different types of victimization into three basic categories: predominantly male-on-male, male-on-female, and a mixed pattern. This indicates that the potential for integration is considerable. Our ability to account for relatively high percentages of statistical variability in gender patterns with few variables also underscores both the ability and the importance of a more unified approach. Our understanding of violence will be incomplete if we do not recognize that virtually all forms of violence can be grouped into a few basic patterns.

Physical & Emotional Violence: Same-Gender Perpetrators and Victims

The most common pattern for most forms of physical and emotional violence was for males to selectively target other males. Males and females tended to offend against females less often but at fairly similar rates, and female-on-male violence was generally the least common pattern. These patterns held for diverse categories of victimization, including not only physical assault but also physical intimidation by peer, relational aggression by peer, and physical abuse by a caregiver. The greater proportion of male perpetrators and the low rate of female-on-male violence are consistent with theories emphasizing physical and social power as the driving forces behind most violence (Hamby, 2009; Olweus, 1993). These findings are reinforced by similar findings showing that physical assaults by males often resulted in more injury and fear and emotional violence by males often generated more fear in victims than the same forms of violence perpetrated by females. In other cases, however, it is clear that the patterns were quite similar. Perhaps most notably, using a weapon in an assault proved to be a great equalizer in terms of females' ability to inflict injury, and the injury rates for such assaults were distressingly high for both female and male perpetrators, exceeding 50%.

Sexual Violence: Opposite-Gender Perpetrators and Victims

Sexual violence followed a different pattern, with most cases involving a male perpetrator and a female victim. Another victimization that somewhat unexpectedly fell into this category was kidnapping. Although our follow-ups for this item unfortunately do not include questions about whether there was a sexual component to this crime, we speculate that there may have been enough cases of kidnapping with intent to commit a sexual crime to produce the pattern observed here. The second most common pattern for several forms of sexual violence was a female perpetrator and a male victim. This was especially notable for the least violent of the sexual victimizations included in NatSCEV, statutory rape/sexual misconduct, which is a largely nonaggressive form of youth exploitation. The rate of female perpetrators for that offense was one of the highest in the study. The high rate of male-on-female perpetration also probably relates to physical power differences (Hamby, 2009) and to rape scripts and sexual scripts that are prevalent in U.S. society (Ryan, 2011). The role of power in sexual violence was also supported by the finding that sexual violence perpetrated by males was more likely to involve bodily penetration of the victim, with a penetration rate almost 8 times higher for males than for females.

The patterns observed here are consistent with patterns also observed for adults in both self-report and crime data (Hamby, 2005; Snyder & McCurley, 2008; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Recent analyses of bullying have concluded that bullies do not offend equally against everyone in a classroom or other peer group, but rather specific bully-victim dyads often develop (Card, 2011). We propose that gender-based targeting may partly account for nonrandom patterns in perpetrator-victim dyads for many forms of victimization. Although this has been suggested in other research, these are the first nationally representative data to support the premise that victims are partly targeted on the basis of gender for virtually all known forms of youth victimization.

Child Maltreatment: A Mixed Pattern

The primary exceptions to the preceding gender patterns were for nonphysical forms of maltreatment: psychological abuse, custodial interference, and neglect, all of which had

modest gender differences compared to most other victimizations. Furthermore, neither male nor female perpetrators showed a marked tendency to offend against either same-gender or opposite-gender children. This pattern might best be understood by considering that our survey randomly identifies one child in a household, but in many cases that child has siblings. A parent who is neglectful of one child, or who perhaps commits custodial interference after losing a custody battle, is probably treating all children in the household similarly, regardless of gender. These findings are also consistent with research that generally shows that female perpetration rates are higher for offenses that involve less directly aggressive attacks on the victim (Hamby, 2005).

Characteristics Associated With Variations in Gender Patterns Across Types of Violence

Results from our higher order analyses, using victimization type as the unit of analysis, can be largely explained by males' greater ability to use physical force (Hamby, 2005), greater willingness to aggress in more impersonal situations, and adherence to sexual scripts. In support of our hypothesis that male perpetrators are often involved in more serious offenses, male perpetration rates are higher for offenses that, on average, induce greater fear in victims, and male-on-male perpetration comprises a higher percentage of the total for more fear-inducing victimization types as well. Victimization types with a higher rate of female-on-male offenses had a lower average victim fear score, possibly because of statutory rape/sexual misconduct having the highest rate of female-on-male offending and the lowest fear score (many youth do not experience statutory rape as a victimization). Female-on-female aggression is more common for primarily verbal victimizations, and male-on-male aggression comprises a smaller percentage of primarily verbal incidents, such as caregiver psychological abuse and peer relational aggression.

Regarding willingness to aggress in more impersonal situations, the percentage of stranger perpetrators, although relatively low for most types of youth victimization, has a direct, unique association with the percentage of total male perpetrators, the percentage of incidents that are male-on-male, and the percentage of male-on-female offenses and an inverse, unique association with the percentage of female-on-male violence. Stranger perpetration proved to be a better marker of gender patterns than relative perpetration. The percentage of school-based incidents was associated with gender patterns. Although more impersonal than the home setting, the connection of schools and gender also suggests the importance of social status to male-on-male perpetration. Finally, whether victimization had a sexual element had a strong unique association with gender patterns. The presence of a sexual component to the crime was positively associated with higher percentages of both male-on-female and female-on-male incidents, and inversely associated with the percentage of male-on-male victimization.

Limitations

Limitations of this study should be noted when considering the results. Interview length considerations prevented us from asking follow-up data about every incident. These data provide a representative, random sample of the most recent incident. Our telephone survey method may miss some of the most vulnerable members of the population. Despite the overall comprehensiveness of the JVQ in comparison to other available data, it is possible that some victimizations were omitted. Even in our large sample, some nonsignificant

findings may be partly caused by lack of statistical power, either because the form of victimization was rare or because injury rates were very low for both males and females. Still, despite these limitations, these data provide the most comprehensive overview available of gender patterns across a variety of different forms of victimization that affect youth.

Implications

More attention needs to be paid to gender in youth victimization. This applies not just to forms where gender has received considerable attention, such as sexual assault and relational aggression, but also to physical violence, bullying, and most other forms of youth victimization. The role of gender in many of these phenomena has been largely ignored. Youth victimization is not randomly distributed among the population, but particular aggressor–victim relationships tend to form (Card, 2011). Gender is one characteristic that contributes to these nonrandom patterns, particularly for physical and sexual victimizations. These data also suggest that gender-related power patterns and gender socialization contribute to gender patterns in violence, largely through the mechanism of males' greater willingness to aggress in more impersonal situations and to aggress more severely, and both males' and females' adherence to sexual scripts.

Antibullying and conflict resolution programs might be able to improve their (currently modest) effectiveness by focusing on the role of gender socialization and power in youth aggression. Clinical analyses of peer interactions among boys (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000) indicate that demonstrating their “manhood” is an important motive for peer aggression. For both boys and girls, empirical and qualitative analyses suggest that establishing within-gender hierarchies appears to be a central cause of peer conflict (Faris & Felmlee, 2011; Pipher, 1994). Aggression and toughness are not central components of female identity, even in this day and age, and this may be one reason why male-on-male aggression is more common than all other patterns.

Many prevention programs focus on attitudes and skills deficits and include “zero-tolerance” policies for peer harassment. It is not clear, however, whether a basic misapprehension about whether physical and relational aggression are “nice” or are perceived positively by teachers and other adults is a main cause of peer victimization. Recent research has shown that bullying is positively correlated with popularity, and that bullying is more strongly correlated with popularity for boys than for girls (e.g., de Bruyn, Cillessen, & Wissink, 2010). Gender-based social motives for peer victimization need further exploration and perhaps greater weight in prevention and intervention programs. For example, Pöyhönen, Juvonen, and Salmivalli (2010) have shown that, under some circumstances, being perceived as a defender of bullied children is also associated with social power. Defending behavior, and several predictors of defending, including perceived self-efficacy and affective empathy, was more common among girls in their study. Their findings suggest that boys might particularly benefit from interventions to increase bystander efficacy and affective empathy, although how these skills relate to social status among boys needs further study.

CONCLUSIONS

Youth victimization has strong gender patterns. Violence is not randomly distributed across genders. The greater rates of male perpetrators are probably multiply determined. Males are more aggressive than females in most contexts (Hyde, 2005). Social competition

and the need to demonstrate masculinity and establish oneself in the social hierarchy probably contribute to male-on-male violence. Males' greater size and strength than females makes it much easier for males to offend against females than the other way around, which is why male-on-female rates are higher than female-on-male rates for virtually all forms of aggression (Hamby, 2005, 2009). Prevention and intervention programs should address the gendered nature of victimization.

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