



## Men's Perceptions About Relationship Violence

February 2003

### Purpose

This survey, for the most part, addresses men's perceptions about relationship violence behaviors reported on in a study done last spring with women students. (Penn State Pulse, February 2002)

### Implications/Highlights

Men were less likely than women to agree that there was a serious problem on campus with stalking, relationship violence, and sexual assault. At the same time, they were more likely to report knowing women who have experienced specific relationship violence behaviors. Nine percent of both men and women said they themselves had been a victim of relationship violence.

### Participation Rate

N = 1104

Phone: N = 815 of 1398 contacted (58%)

Web: N = 289 of 2000 contacted (14%)

### Findings

Men were less likely than women to feel there was a serious problem on campus with stalking, relationship violence, and sexual assault.

Men and Women Differed in Feeling Problems Were Serious

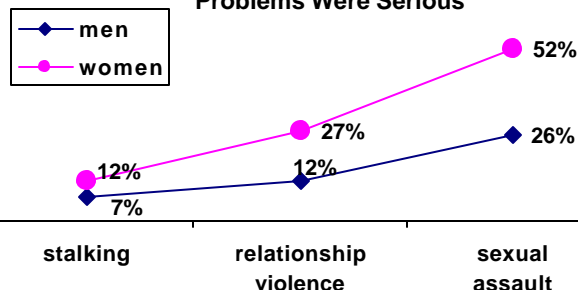


Figure 1. Men were less likely to think there was a serious problem on campus with stalking, relationship violence, or sexual assault

Minority men were more likely than non-minority men to recognize stalking \* and relationship violence \* as serious problems. Seniors and sophomores were more likely than juniors or first year students to state that stalking and sexual assault were serious problems.\*

\*Statistically significant at the .05 level

An equal proportion of men and women reported they had personally been victims of relationship violence.

Personally Experienced Relationship Violence

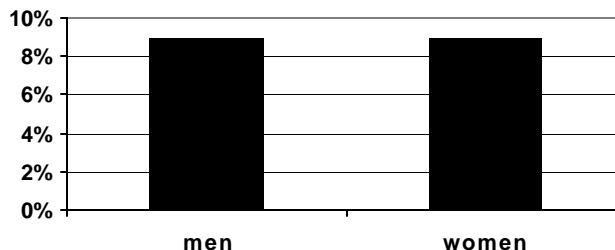


Figure 2. An equal proportion of men and women reported personally experiencing relationship violence

Four percent of the men said they themselves initiated some of the behaviors described in the survey.

Respondents reported they themselves:

- coerced girls with alcohol
- overused persuasive language
- checked up on the person too much
- were over-controlling
- feared girlfriend hanging out with other guys
- felt strongly jealous

Men were more likely to say that they were aware of women friends who had experienced specific relationship violence behaviors than women in the 2002 study reported.

Men and Women Report Incidents of Behaviors

|                                    | 2003 Men | 2002 Women |
|------------------------------------|----------|------------|
| been followed                      | 48%      | 26%        |
| sent unwanted personal email notes | 38%      | 26%        |
| sent unwanted personal gifts       | 22%      | 6%         |
| sent unwanted personal letters     | 22%      | 6%         |
| pursued without encouragement      | 61%      | 47%        |
| frightened by someone showing up   | 39%      | 20%        |

Seniors were more likely to report knowing women who had been frightened by someone showing up at their residence, classroom, or work place.\*

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A majority of men knew of women friends whose partners constantly checked up on where they were and what they were doing, used extreme jealousy as a means of control, and who prohibited the women from hanging out with other friends/guys.

**Knew Women Whose Partners Controlled Them**

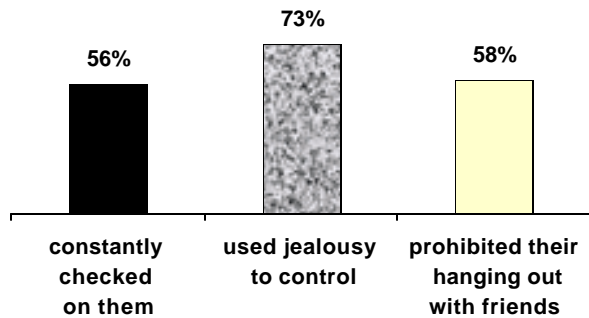


Figure 3. Respondents who knew women whose partners controlled their relationships

|                           | Men Knew Women Who Experienced | Women Personally Experienced |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| being verbally belittled  | 63%                            | 35%                          |
| being verbally threatened | 32%                            | 11%                          |
| pushed/shoved             | 28%                            | 13%                          |
| slapped/punched           | 14%                            | 4%                           |
| kicked                    | 7%                             | 1%                           |
| used weapon to coerce     | 4%                             | 1%                           |

Men were asked if they were aware of women who had someone try to force sexual interaction. Women were asked how often had someone tried to make them have sexual interaction with them.

**Men Were More Likely to note Pressure for Sex**

|  | 2003 men | 2002 women |
|--|----------|------------|
| continued pressure or pestering                      | 37%      | 30%        |
| verbal threats                                       | 18%      | 5%         |
| physical threats                                     | 11%      | 3%         |
| causing them to feel afraid                          | 26%      | 9%         |
| using alcohol or other drugs to get what they wanted | 47%      | na         |

Seniors were more likely to know women whose partners pressured them \* or used alcohol/drugs to get what they wanted. \*

Minority students were more likely to know women whose partners caused them to feel afraid. \*

Men were asked what they did when they observed or heard about these situations.

- 59% encouraged victim to discuss situation
- 27% pursued perpetrator
- 25% confronted perpetrator
- 7% retaliated against perpetrator
- 30% ignored the situation

Men were more likely to report their women friends discussed these situations than the women reported in the 2002 study.

| Discussed Situation With: | 2003 men | 2002 women |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|
| on or off campus police   | 11%      | 4%         |
| CAPS counselor            | 9%       | 4%         |
| Health Services staff     | 5%       | 2%         |
| Center for Women Students | 2%       | 1%         |
| Women's Resource Center   | 2%       | 1%         |
| Judicial Affairs          | 2%       | 1%         |
| friends                   | 71%      | na         |

Students in both surveys were asked to what extent each specific factor acted as obstacles in seeking help or discussing relationship violence experiences. Men (2003 survey) were similar in their responses to women (2002 survey) in identifying specific factors that acted as obstacles in seeking help.

**Obstacles to Seeking Help (part one)**

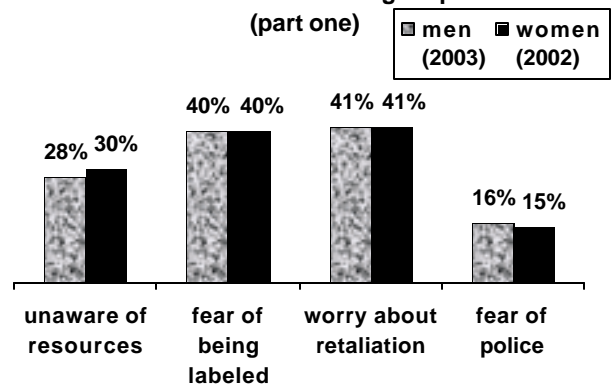


Figure 4. A similar proportion of men and women identified specific factors which acted as obstacles in seeking help

Men were less likely than women to identify 'concern about being taken seriously' or 'prior bad experience' as obstacles in seeking help.

**Obstacles to Seeking Help (part two)**

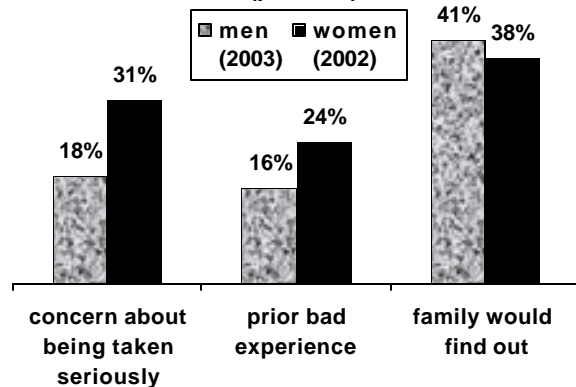


Figure 5. Other obstacles to seeking help

**Other Obstacles Identified by Respondents**

- feeling embarrassed, guilty, or uncomfortable
- not important enough to pursue
- don't think they deserve help
- no one likes a snitch
- wallow in sorrow instead of working on it
- don't want to get guy in trouble

\*Statistically significant at the .05 level.