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ANGER, CONTROL, AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD

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ANGER, CONTROL, AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD

ABSTRACT

This research examines the association between relationship-specific emotional processes and control dynamics and self-reports of intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetration. While prior research has focused either on respondents' or partners' controlling behaviors, an interactionist perspective provides the basis for hypothesizing that both respondent and partner control will be significantly related to the odds of reporting perpetration. Further, recent developments in the interactionist tradition suggest the utility of incorporating emotional processes (anger) as integral to rather than distinct from more strategic conceptualizations of IPV experiences. Thus, models included a character-based measure of anger (anger identity), as well as a relationship-specific measure of angry emotions. Analyses rely on interview data collected at waves 1 and 5 of a longitudinal study (Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study) (n = 928) of adolescent and young adult relationships. Results indicate that after controlling for traditional predictors such as exposure to coercive parenting practices, residing in a disadvantaged neighborhood and affiliating with violent peers (assessed at wave 1), both respondent and partner control attempts are associated with higher risk of young adult IPV. Further, anger identity and the relationship-specific measure of negative emotions contributed significantly to the odds of reporting perpetration. Supplemental models exploring various combinations of anger and control suggested that a pattern of mutual control and high levels of anger appeared especially risky, and interactions of gender were not significant. The latter finding indicates some areas of similarity in the relationship and emotional processes associated with variations in men's and women's IPV reports.

ANGER, CONTROL, AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN YOUNG ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

In spite of recent calls for integration, theories of intimate partner violence (IPV) have tended to develop along distinct paths, and are often considered opposing frameworks (Bell & Naugle, 2008; Langer & Lawrence, 2012). One tradition has focused on the importance of risk factors such as early exposure to violence within the family (Mihalic & Elliott, 1997; Shook, Gerrity, Jurich, & Segrist 2000). A variation of this social learning perspective emphasizes significant associations between IPV and other forms of antisocial behavior such as delinquency and crime (e.g., Felson & Lane, 2010). Such perspectives are thus consistent with the idea of a general propensity for angry expression that carries over into the romantic context. Feminist theorizing more often centers on unique features of this form of violence, suggesting that broad-based gender inequalities and patriarchal attitudes influence conduct within the realm of intimate relationships. Thus, research and prevention/intervention efforts based on the latter tradition foster a view of IPV as not so much about anger as about power and control (Anderson, 2005; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Komter, 1989; Smith, White, & Moracco, 2009; Yllö, 1993). The emphasis is on the ways in which violence is part of a larger constellation of strategies male partners use to assert or maintain a position of dominance within their intimate relationships (Pence & Paymar, 2006). This control focus thus tends to highlight the strategic rather than emotional basis of intimate partner violence. Accordingly, anger is a concept that fits more readily with social learning or propensity arguments, and control is a centerpiece of the feminist perspective. While not fundamentally incompatible emphases, anger and control have not been fully linked conceptually, nor often examined within the context of the same study designs. This bifurcation of theory and associated research is potentially limiting to the development of a comprehensive understanding of mechanisms underlying IPV, and has influenced the direction of policy and program efforts. Thus, a key objective of the current study is to examine empirically the associations between anger, controlling behaviors and IPV perpetration.

A related objective is to develop a more localized view of both anger and control as emotions and behaviors that unfold within specific relationship contexts. While feminist perspectives have moved the lens somewhat closer to the world of male-female relationships, a criticism of both social learning or propensity arguments and feminist theories is that they can be considered theories of importation. That is, such theories, as typically described, focus on what is brought into the relationship either by virtue of early family exposure, personality traits, or the spillover effects of one's antisocial lifestyle on the one hand or to effects of patriarchal arrangements and associated gender role socialization on the other. However, numerous scholars have called for greater attention to dynamics within the relationship itself (e.g., Bartholomew & Cobb, 2010; Capaldi & Kim, 2007; Giordano, Soto, Manning, & Longmore, 2010; Winstok, 2007), a perspective that is most compatible with interactionist theories (Felson, 2002; Stets, 1992). The value of including attention to relationship context is suggested by studies documenting greater variability in IPV across relationships with different partners than within a given relationship, and by findings indicating that the delinquency of the partner as well as that of the individual contributes to the odds of IPV (Herrera, Wiersma, & Cleveland, 2008). The latter line of inquiry takes an important step toward understanding relationship-specific dynamics, but also emphasizes what individuals bring into the relationship, albeit recognizing a role for both partners' behavioral repertoires. In the current study, we consider whether emotions linked to the partner (relationship-based anger) and relationship specific behaviors (partners' attempts to control one another's actions) make a difference for understanding variations in IPV perpetration, once controls such as family exposure and the delinquency of both members of the couple have been taken into account. Consistent with an interactionist perspective, we move beyond consideration of one partner's control attempts in assessing empirically the controlling behaviors of respondents as well as their partners.

A final objective of the current study is to contribute to current debates about the role of gender as an influence on these relationship-specific processes, and in turn reports about IPV. The interactionist perspective in general and the issue of women's perpetration in particular have been the source of considerable controversy. While it is generally acknowledged that consequences of men's perpetration

are often more serious relative to effects of women's perpetration, there is less consensus about the level of similarity or difference in the processes leading to men's and women's use of violence within their relationships. Thus, as a final step in the analysis, we estimate interactions of gender and the focal variables (anger, partner control, respondent's control) as influences on self-reports of IPV perpetration. This will allow us to assess whether men's and women's reports of relationship-based anger and about their own and partners' controlling behaviors have a similar or distinct relationship to variations in the odds of self-reporting IPV perpetration.

To accomplish our research objectives, we draw on structured interviews conducted in connection with the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS). The TARS is a longitudinal investigation of the intimate relationships of 1,092 respondents interviewed five times, first as adolescents (ages 12-17), and subsequently as they have entered the phase of young adulthood (average age 25). We focus here on variations in IPV perpetration reported in connection with the interviews at wave 5, as self-report and official statistics show that this is a life course stage with especially high prevalence rates of IPV (Capaldi, Knoble, Shortt, & Kim, 2012; Catalano, 2012; Rennison, 2001). In addition, the wave 5 protocol includes the most extensive measures of anger and control processes, including measures of partner and respondent use of intrusive methods of control, a character-based anger assessment, and a relationship-specific measure of angry emotions. Thus, these data from a large, diverse sample of young adult respondents are well-suited to addressing the research questions outlined above.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional risk factors: A focus on anger

Prior research on etiological factors associated with IPV has emphasized the role of early exposure to violence within the family, and researchers have focused considerable attention on risk factors such as witnessing parents' violence as well as being abused as a child (see also Cui, Ueno, Gordon, & Fincham, 2013; Gomez, 2011). Although many studies rely on retrospective reports, some longitudinal investigations have documented the impact of these family dynamics on subsequent IPV (e.g., O'Donnell et al., 2006; Simons, Lin, & Gordon, 1998). Wolf and Foshee (2003) explicitly suggested a role for anger

as a mediator of these family experiences, concluding that children exposed to family violence may "develop different anger expression styles than children who are not exposed to family violence" (p. 311).

Other research studies connecting anger and IPV have documented a general association, but have not always been explicit about the meaning of anger or its place in the etiology of IPV (for a recent meta-analysis, see Norlander & Eckhardt, 2005). Although researchers such as Wolf and Foshee (2003) have suggested a link to family history, other studies conceptualize anger as an individual difference or personality trait (Agnew, Brezina, Wright, & Cullen, 2002; Eckhardt, Samper, & Murphy, 2008; Follingstad, Wright, Lloyd, & Sebastian, 1991; Moffitt, Krueger, Caspi, & Fagan, 2000; Swan, Gambone, Fields, Sullivan, & Snow, 2005). A variant of this approach focuses on the antisocial tendencies of the individual (e.g., delinquency involvement), which further supports the idea of a general propensity toward violence. And indeed, prior research has consistently shown that delinquency and other risky behaviors are significantly associated with IPV (Capaldi et al., 2012; Herrera et al., 2008; Lussier, Farrington, & Moffitt, 2009; O'Donnell et al., 2006; Theobold &Farrington, 2012). Some studies in this tradition have moved toward a dyadic framework, as they have considered the personal characteristics of both members of the couple. For example, Moffitt, Robins, and Caspi (2001), in a study of 360 couples, demonstrated that the negative emotionality of both partners contributed to the odds of IPV perpetration. Similarly, Herrera et al. (2008), relying on data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) data, found that the delinquency of respondent and partner contributed to odds of perpetrating IPV.

In spite of these significant associations, longitudinal research on patterns of IPV has also documented that even when risk is elevated (based on family history, delinquent background), individuals frequently exhibit significant variability in behavior across time and different relationships (Capaldi, Shortt, & Crosby, 2003; Smith, Ireland, Park, Elwyn, & Thornberry 2011). Drawing on the current longitudinal data set, for example, (authors, 2013) recently showed that even among those reporting serious delinquency at an earlier wave, a majority do not go on to report intimate partner violence within the time frame covered by the study (13 years). Further, of respondents who report IPV at wave 5, 25%

of the total sample had not reported IPV at a previous wave (authors, 2013). Such observed patterns of variability suggest the utility of including attention to relationship-specific processes, as well as family background and other traditional risk factors.

Feminist perspectives—A focus on control

The feminist perspective has emphasized the degree to which macro-level gender inequalities tend to be replayed at the couple level (Komter, 1989). A central theme is that violence against women can best be understood as a means of maintaining control over female partners (Boonzaier, 2008; Jackson, 1999; Larkin & Popaleni, 1994). Traditional gender socialization prepares young men to want and expect that they will hold a position of dominance, and thus controlling behaviors, including violence, are used to assert or maintain a favorable power position within their relationships. In placing central attention on men's controlling actions, this has had the effect of shifting the focus away from emotional processes. As Felson (2002, p. 28) noted, conceptualizing men's actions as stemming from an emotional 'outburst' may serve to mitigate the seriousness and indeed the intentionality of men's violent actions. This turn away from emotional processes is potentially consequential, as some scholars and practitioners have argued against the strategy of offering anger management as a treatment option for male perpetrators (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002; Gondolf & Russell, 1986). Also in line with the focus on men's control, women's emotions, controlling behaviors, and use of violence are not often explored within a traditional feminist framework, and at the applied level, couples counseling is also generally considered a counterproductive intervention option (Maiuro & Eberle, 2008).

A frequent criticism of the feminist perspective is that the focus on broad-based societal level processes does not provide a basis for understanding systematic patterns of variation within a given sample in men's or women's use of violence (Archer, 2000; Capaldi, Kim, & Shortt, 2007; Hettrich & O'Leary, 2007; Holtzworth-Munroe, 2005). In further exploring specific pathways, some researchers have suggested that because traditional gender socialization fosters these negative relationship dynamics, men who hold more traditional beliefs about gender roles should be more likely to engage in controlling actions and violence within their relationships. However, empirical support for this association has been

mixed (Coleman & Straus, 1986; Dutton, 1995; Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). Further, this general approach is not sensitive to observed life course and relationship-specific variations in men's patterns of IPV, nor comprehensive as an explanation for women's controlling actions or use of aggression within their relationships. Thus, feminist theories have developed the basic notion that IPV has unique characteristics associated with the intimate couple context, but have tended to bracket off consideration of dyadic and emotional processes that may be implicated in the full range of IPV experiences.

Interactionist views of control processes and violence

Interactionist theories stress that while one's role in conflicts may vary (i.e., whether as perpetrator, victim, or participant in mutual violence), interaction and communication are nevertheless generally important to understanding the sequences that eventuate in violent action (Athens, 2005; Felson, 2002; Stets, 1992). This idea accords with a substantial body of research that has documented a link between verbal and physical conflict (Jacobson et al., 1994; Murphy & O'Leary, 1989; Schumacher & Leonard, 2005). As Stets noted, citing Peterson (1983, p. 365), conflict is "an interpersonal process that occurs whenever the action of one person interfere with the actions of another." Even where the focus is on a very one-sided act of violence, then, a level of disagreement or contestation generally precedes the violent action. This differs from the idea that men's controlling behaviors and violent acts represent a straightforward extension of male privilege. Indeed, if men had achieved a clearly dominant position within their relationships, violence would not be necessary and partner compliance would always be forthcoming.

Felson (2002) has developed a more gender-neutral theory of instrumental aggression that nevertheless emphasizes the strategic basis of control and violence, and the general idea that "people use aggression to get what they want" (p. 16). This idea is consistent with the broader view that all human behavior can be considered purposive on some level, or at a minimum in line with the individual's 'definition of the situation' (Thomas, 1924). This more ecumenical approach suggests that women as well as men, upon encountering obstacles to their own relationship and personal goals, may also engage in controlling behaviors, and in some instances resort to the use of violence. In a series of studies, Stets

examined control processes within dating relationships and found higher levels of the use of control by female relative to male respondents (Stets, 1993; Stets & Hammons, 2002; but see Stets & Pirog-Good, 1990). Similarly, relying on the TARS data, researchers found that adolescent male respondents reported higher levels of partner control attempts and 'actual' partner influence (as perceived by respondents) (authors, 2006). Further, male respondents on average continued to report higher levels of partner control attempts and a less favorable power position within their relationships, as they completed subsequent waves of interviews across the transition to adulthood (authors, 2012). Stets' research also documented a link between these control dynamics and IPV, as male and female respondent reports about their own controlling actions were associated with aggression inflicted and sustained (Stets, 1992; Stets & Pirog-Good, 1990). Relying on victimization data, Felson and Outlaw (2007) focused on partner control rather than respondents' reports about their own use of controlling behaviors, and also found that male and female reports of partner control were related to violent victimization.

Taken together, the above studies suggest that a comprehensive view of the dynamics within intimate relationships as well as an understanding of control-violence connections will likely necessitate attention to the role of control attempts on the part of female as well as male partners. We contribute beyond prior work in the interactionist tradition by measuring respondents' own use of control as well as that of partners as influences on the odds of experiencing violence within the relationship. We hypothesize that; a) both respondent and partner control will contribute to the odds of reporting violence, and b) combinations that include higher than average levels of controlling behaviors on the part of respondent and partner will be an especially risky pattern. The expectation is that a relationship characterized by high levels of mutual control reflects a very unstable, conflictual set of interactive situations in which there is reciprocal and potentially escalating negative feedback.

Toward a 'localized' perspective on controlling behaviors and angry emotions

The interactionist perspective suggests additional considerations related to the roles of anger and control, and the impact of gender on these processes. First, a potential limitation of prior theorizing is that dominance over the other partner is often conceptualized as an overarching goal or endpoint. Although

violence and even controlling behaviors are on some level dominance moves (Athens, 2005), this suggests that the individual's primary concern is for acquiring and maintaining a favorable power position within the intimate relationship. Although research suggests that young men are often socialized to be competitive with their peers, early on Sullivan (1953) pointed out that each form of relationship constitutes a 'new ball game' from a developmental standpoint, with its own features, expectations, and meaning(s). This is also consistent with a life course perspective, which recognizes that new contexts require change and reorganization. This life course lens thus suggests some limitations of the importation perspective, whether the referent is early family history or men's dominant interaction style.

Interactionist theories highlight to a greater extent that specific actions tend to be 'situated,' that is responsive to the immediate circumstances individuals confront. Yet focusing primarily on a " control motive" or even dissatisfaction with one's power position (Anderson, 1997; Mason & Blankenship, 1987), may continue to foster the view that the goal of such actions is to have greater control or greater power (Whitaker, 2013). Thus, it is potentially useful to further situate or localize the discussion (and our understanding of mechanisms) around specific 'domains of contestation' that may become important sites of conflict during specific points in the life course. As we focus in the current analysis on young adulthood, examples of this more localized agenda are concerns related to the desired level of commitment that will characterize the relationship, or how much time to spend with one's partner relative to time spent with friends.

During young adulthood both women and men are in the process of changing their style of socializing from a heavy emphasis on peers to a more concentrated focus on romantic relationships, developing a greater level of commitment to a particular partner, and attempting to solidify their present and future economic prospects (Arnett, 2004; Settersten & Ray, 2010; Zimmer-Gembeck, 2002). Across the transition to adulthood, relationships increase in average duration and significance, but often lack the cultural and legal weight of marriage bonds. Thus, during this period of flux and changing expectations, partners may not be on the same timetable or hold the same perspective regarding these important transitions. Further, if we consider that control attempts are often linked to such domains of contestation,

previous findings documenting relatively high scores of young men on partner control attempts and women's own self-reports about their controlling actions are rendered more intuitive and understandable. For example, research has shown that young men are more likely to engage in problem behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, and in the contemporary economic climate may face difficulties securing steady employment (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva, 2001; Settersten & Ray, 2010). And perhaps most importantly, young men report higher levels of cheating or 'concordance' (Ford, Sohn, & Lepkowski, 2002; Miller, 2008). Consistent with the implications of this more localized perspective, in a recent analysis, we found that male and female respondents who scored higher on contested domains such as infidelity and disagreements about time spent with friends were significantly more likely to report IPV perpetration (authors, 2013).

This 'situated' or localized perspective also provides a basis for including attention to emotional processes. Scholars of emotion have increasingly positioned against the idea of reason and emotion as opposing forces, instead forging a variety of interconnections (Lively & Heise 2004; Seeburger, 1992). More fundamentally, sociology of emotions theorists have argued that emotions have clarifying and motivational significance. In short, according to this theoretical perspective, emotions should not be considered a residual byproduct of action, but are integral to it. As Mead (1934) noted, routine, habitual behaviors occasion little reflection or emotion. In those situations in which actions are blocked, however, the individual cannot move forward relying solely on previously taken-for-granted repertoires. It is within situations involving blocked action, then, that thoughts (cognitions) and feelings (emotions) arise. Thus, the presence of control attempts itself, and particularly the use of strident or intrusive control, signals a previous failure to control, manage, or complete action relating to specific contested domains. These domains have been rendered problematic through the process of communication that occurs within the relationship. Further, if we accept the general notion that control attempts derive from the perception that desired actions are blocked, then it follows that emotions should also come to the fore within these same situations. This leads to our second hypothesis, namely that control attempts and anger often coexist as dynamic processes associated with IPV, and should not be opposed conceptually (i.e., the

notion that it is not about anger, but about power and control). Violence extends the control attempt to a new level, but is likely to be understood as evolving from one or more failure (to control) experiences. Emotions are integral to this set of experiences.

Incorporating anger into the sequences of action and reaction associated with IPV is intuitive, and provides a conceptual bridge between traditional predictors (e.g., violence within the family, growing up in a disadvantaged context) and concerns that are specific to a given intimate relationship. In the current study, we thus consider two dimensions of anger. First, as research such as that of Wolf and Foshee (2003) suggest, and emotion scholars have noted, the emotional self is a recognized feature of one's identity (Engdahl, 2004; Lupton, 1998). Although *anger identity* is likely to be shaped by earlier experiences, it represents a unique crystallization and interpretation of those experiences. However, a second dimension of anger is further situated in light of the specific concerns within a given relationship. In the current study, then, we focus not only on anger identity but also *relationship-based feelings of anger*.

This localized interactionist perspective also provides a conceptual basis for understanding women's actions within their relationships, and possible reactions to specific areas of discord. As relationships are considered central to women's lives and development (Gilligan, 1982), it is unlikely that they are inured to 'blocked action' within intimate contexts, as partners resist their desired goals, intentions, and preferred ideas about the direction of the relationship. This in turn suggests that women's feelings of anger and attempts to control their partners may also be present, heighten discord, and significantly associated with the odds of experiencing violence. This provides a theoretical rationale for an empirical assessment to determine whether anger and control are similarly related to male and female self-reports of perpetration in a current/most recent intimate relationship.

DATA AND METHODS

This research draws on data from the TARS, which is based on a stratified random sample of 1,321 adolescents and their parents/guardians. The TARS data were collected in the years 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2011. The analyses rely on structured interviews conducted at the first (2001) and fifth (2011)

interviews, and a parent questionnaire administered at the first interview provided information about sociodemographics and parenting practices. The sampling frame of the TARS study encompassed 62 schools across seven school districts, but school attendance was not a requirement for inclusion in the study. Most interviews took place in respondents' homes. The stratified, random sample includes over-samples of Black and Hispanic adolescents. The initial sample included 1,321 respondents and wave 5 retained 1,021 valid respondents, or 77% of wave 1.[1] Wave 1 also included the administration of a questionnaire to a parent/guardian (typically the mother), and these responses were used to assess parental coercion, neighborhood disadvantage and other sociodemographic information described in more detail below. The analytic sample includes all those who participated in the wave 5 interview, but individuals who were not identified as Black, White, or Hispanic were excluded (n = 23), as were those respondents who did not report about a current or most recent relationship (n = 70). The final analytic sample thus consists of 928 respondents (422 males and 506 females).

Measures

Appendix Table A1 presents descriptive statistics for all study variables for the total sample and IPV status (whether or not the respondent self-reported IPV perpetration).

Dependent Variables

Our analyses explore variations in *self-reported IPV perpetration* as reported at wave 5, and is based on responses to 12 items from the revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) (alpha = .91). However, we also estimated all models focusing on similar items indexing victimization, a measure of "any violence" (whether as perpetrator or victim), and various measures of severity. Results are similar, regardless of the form of the dependent variable.

Key Independent Variables

We note that while traditional predictors and other sociodemographic factors are all measured at wave 1,

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[1] Attrition analyses indicate that subjects retained did not differ significantly on most dimensions (e.g., wave 1 IPV report, parental coercion, and delinquency), but were somewhat more likely to be female, and to report a non-traditional (step-parent, single-parent, and 'other') family structure. Additionally, Black respondents and those reporting low levels of parental education (less than high school) were less likely to be retained.

control, anger, and IPV are all assessed at wave 5. This approach is appropriate within the context of the current study, as our goal is to provide a descriptive portrait of dynamics within these relatively fluid dating and cohabiting relationships. It is thus critical that the reports about relationship dynamics and emotional reactions reference the same partner who is the focus of the IPV reports. However, this limits our ability to firmly establish a causal order in relation to what may be best characterized as a package of interrelated and dynamic relationship processes.

Controlling behaviors within the relationship are indexed by questions focusing on actions of the respondent as well as those of their partner. *Partner control* includes 6 items from a series of questions asking respondents how often their partners engaged in behaviors including "try to control you" and "monitored my time and made me account for my whereabouts" (alpha=.85). In addition a similar set of questions index *respondent control* (alpha = .75), referencing the respondent's own use of such tactics.

Anger. Anger is conceptualized as including an identity component as well as being an emotion potentially linked to interactions with the romantic partner. *Anger identity* is based on nine questions tapping trait-based anger taken from the STAXI-CA (del Barrio, Aluja, & Spielberger, 2004) and our own prior work (authors, 2007) including "I get annoyed easily," "I get angry very quickly," and "I can be a pretty mean person" (alpha = .85). *Relationship-based anger* includes three items from a larger list of emotions experienced "the last time you were with your partner." Of the possible responses (e.g., excited, afraid, comforted, etc.), we included in this index respondents' levels of agreement that they had felt "hostile," "frustrated," and "upset" the last time they were with the partner (alpha = .84). In the interest of parsimony, supplemental models that construct dummy variables referencing a large number of anger and control combinations (shown in Table 2) rely on a composite index of anger that includes both of these dimensions.

Traditional Predictors

Witnessing parental violence is a 4-item revised version of the CTS2 (alpha = .78) based on the respondent's wave 5 retrospective report, but referencing the parent's behavior. *Coercive parenting* is measured using a single item from the wave 1 adolescent report asking respondents: "When you and your

parents disagree about things, how often do they push, slap, or hit you?" *Disadvantaged neighborhood* is a 10-item scale (alpha = .91) from the wave 1 parent questionnaire in which parents were asked about 10 potential problems in their neighborhoods (e.g., rundown buildings, fights, unemployment). Responses were first dichotomized to indicate whether these items posed a problem (1 = yes), and then summed. *Violent peers* is a single wave 1 item asking respondents: "In the last 12 months, how often have your friends attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them?" Responses range from 1 (never) to 9 (more than once a day). *Respondent delinquency* is measured at wave 1 (alpha = .84) and *criminal involvement* at wave 5 (alpha = .71) using a 10-item version of Elliott and Ageton's (1980) self-report instrument. *Partner's criminal involvement* (alpha = .78) is measured at wave 5 using a 10-item scale identical to the delinquency scale described above, referencing the partner. Delinquency scales were constructed as variety scores, which possess high reliability and validity and lessen the relative influence of less serious items (Sweeten, 2012). In order to control for the effects of *traditional gender role attitudes*, we rely on a single item assessing respondents' level of agreement with the following: "In most relationships the guy should be in charge."

Sociodemographic Variables, Adult Status Characteristics, and Basic Relationship Indices

We include a series of sociodemographic indicators: *gender* (male is the contrast category), *age*, *race/ethnicity* including non-Hispanic White (contrast category), non-Hispanic Black, and Hispanic, *family structure* including two biological parents (contrast category), step-family, single-parent family, and any "other" family type, and *socioeconomic status* as measured by the highest level of education reported in the wave 1 parent questionnaire. Additionally, we include measures of the respondent's adult status characteristics. Three dummy indicators, *full-time, part-time,* and *unemployed* (contrast category), are used to account for respondent's employment status at wave 4, and status as a *parent* is determined by a question asking whether the respondent has any children.

We include a series of basic relationship variables in the models. To control for relationship status, three dummy indicators indicate whether the relationship of interest is *dating* (contrast category), *cohabiting*, or *married*. Additionally, a dummy variable is used to denote whether responses reference a

current relationship or their most recent romantic relationship (1 = current).[3] *Relationship duration* is measured by asking how long respondents have/had been with their current or most recent partners. The range is from less than a week (1) to a year or more (8).

Analytic Strategy

We estimate zero-order logistic regression models predicting IPV perpetration. Next we estimate a model that includes all of the traditional predictors of IPV (parental coercion, disadvantage neighborhood, violent peers, early and current delinquency/criminal involvement and current partner's criminal involvement) along with other relevant controls. Subsequently, models examine the associations between the two indices of control (respondent and partner) followed by a model that introduces the two anger indices (anger identity, relationship-based anger). In addition to the violence predictors and sociodemographic characteristics, these models also include controls for basic characteristics of the relationship (duration of the relationship, cohabitation/marital status, whether the report references a current or most recent relationship), traditional gender role attitudes, as well as adult status characteristics indicators (marital and employment status). Similar models are estimated focusing on victimization or 'any violence' as the dependent variable, and OLS models explore a range of seriousness levels. Next we estimate models that include interactions of gender and each of the focal relationship variables. Finally, we include dummy variables indexing various combinations of control dynamics and anger, to explore whether, as predicted in the above discussion, anger and mutual control attempts are associated with especially high levels of risk for IPV.

RESULTS

Descriptive results included in Appendix A indicate that approximately 16% of the sample report IPV perpetration within the context of their current/most recent relationship. This includes 12.09% of males and 18.38% of female respondents. Table 1 presents the zero order associations between the focal variables (indices tapping anger and control), the traditional violence predictors and other covariates. As shown in the first column, the zero order models indicate significant associations for each of the focal variables (respondent's control attempts, partner's control attempts, anger identity, relationship-based

anger), and other traditional predictors. Of the traditional predictors assessed, witnessing parental violence, coercive parenting, residing in a disadvantaged neighborhood, and affiliation with violent peers (all wave 1 predictors) were significantly related to later IPV perpetration as reported at wave 5. Further, the respondent's initial (wave 1) self-report of delinquency and subsequent (wave 5) criminal involvement, and partner's (wave 5) criminal involvement were significantly related to reports of IPV perpetration. Endorsement of traditional gender roles was not significant at the zero order.

Of the sociodemographic and other control variables, gender (female) is positively related to self-reports of IPV perpetration, as is single parent or 'other' household family background relative to two-parent family background. Mother's education (less than high school) is related to higher risk, while having a mother with college or greater is associated with reduced odds. Among the adult status characteristics, being employed part-time or full-time are also related at the zero order in the expected directions. Having one or more children is associated with higher odds of IPV perpetration. Finally, respondents who are cohabiting, relative to dating, and those in longer relationships are also significantly more likely to report IPV perpetration.

Model 2 presents results of a logistic regression model that includes traditional predictors and other covariates. In this model, witnessing parental violence, parental coercion, and the respondent and partner's criminal involvement remain significant predictors. Model 3 introduces the variable indexing respondent control attempts. Results indicate that higher levels of respondent control are associated with greater odds of IPV perpetration. Model 4 adds the measure of partner control, which is also significantly related to IPV, and contributes to model fit. Results are thus consistent with our hypothesis that both respondent and partner control attempts are significantly related to IPV perpetration, after taking into account traditional violence predictors and other relevant covariates. Parallel multivariate models are tested that rely on measures of male and female control attempts and we observe similar findings. In these models, male and female control attempts are related to higher odds of IPV perpetration (results not shown). In Model 4, of the traditional predictors, only witnessing parental violence and partner's criminal involvement remain significantly related to perpetration. Parental coercion is no longer significant, which

suggests that some of the effects of parental coercion are indirect, through an increased likelihood of being in relationships characterized by higher levels of control, as well as greater likelihood of involvement with an antisocial partner. Model 5 adds the two anger indices. Results reveal that both forms of anger are significantly associated with IPV perpetration, net of the other covariates, including respondent and partner control. Adding the anger indices contributes to model fit, when contrasted with models including only the traditional predictors and measures of control attempts. These results suggest that, consistent with our hypothesis, both anger and control processes are significantly related to self-reports of IPV perpetration. In addition, that relationship-based anger is significantly tied to IPV net of the "characterological" measure (i.e., anger identity) supports the interactionist perspective on the situated nature of emotional experiences.

To determine whether gender influences the significant associations described above, we also estimated a series of interactions. These interactions are not significant, indicating that both male and female respondents' reports about control dynamics are similarly linked with self-reports of IPV perpetration. We also find that both dimensions of anger assessed are similarly associated with IPV perpetration for male and female respondents. The lack of gender interactions across multiple predictors, including the relationship dynamics and anger indices, suggests that some processes may operate similarly across gender as influences on violent actions within the relationship. Supplemental analyses indicate that results shown in Table 2 and those including gender interactions are similar when models are estimated focusing on victimization rather than perpetration, a composite index that reflects "any violence" (whether as perpetrator, victim, or both) or in OLS models, on variations in the severity of violence.

The results of analyses show similar effects across gender in the influence of the traditional violence predictors on IPV (results not shown). While not the primary focus of our analyses, these findings are potentially important as they indicate that each of these forms of early social exposure (witnessing parental violence, coercive parents, residing in a disadvantaged neighborhood, and affiliation with violent peers) are similarly linked to variations in female and male respondents' reports of IPV perpetration. In

addition, interactions of gender and the individual's own and partner's criminal involvement are not significant, suggesting the general importance of taking into account the individual and partner's antisocial histories (Herrera et al., 2008).

The above findings suggest generally that controlling behaviors and anger are associated with IPV perpetration reported by male and female respondents. Yet the traditional variable-centered approach does not provide a window on how these factors combine within the life course experiences of particular individuals. Theoretically, we hypothesized that where both respondents and their partners are engaged in high levels of control attempts and respondents experience feelings of anger, this combination may pose a particularly high level of risk. We explore this notion more directly via analyses that include dummy variables indexing the various combinations. As shown in Table 2, the combination of mutual control and higher than average scores on the composite anger index is associated with 1781% greater odds of violence as a contrast to individuals reporting lower levels of each of the control dimensions and lower agreement with the items comprising the anger index. Consistent with the interactionist perspective, these analyses control for variations in early exposure to violence and coercive parenting, suggesting the utility of including attention to more localized relationship and emotional processes. Further, in a model changing the reference category, results show that anger with mutual control is tied to greater relationship violence relative to respondents who report mutual control but do not agree with the angry self-descriptions (results not shown). However, as the results of Table 2 reveal, other combinations of control and anger are also significantly associated with reports of violence. These results suggest that neither the ideal type emphasized in many theoretical discussions and prevention programs (high levels of partner control, limited attention to feelings of anger) nor our own emphasis here (mutual control attempts accompanied by anger) are comprehensive as portraits of all of the scenarios that may be linked to elevated IPV risk. Supplemental models (not shown) examine interactions of these combinations with gender, and none of these interactions are statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

The results of our analyses indicate that for many of the respondents who participated in this study,

emotional processes and relationship dynamics ‘matter’ for understanding variations in the likelihood of reporting IPV perpetration in a current/most recent relationship. Relying on a large, heterogeneous sample of young adult respondents, logistic regression analyses showed that higher levels of reported anger and respondent and partner control attempts were significantly related to greater odds of IPV. The supplemental analyses indicate that various combinations of control and anger were observed and linked to heightened risk, relative to relationships that were characterized by low anger and control. Such findings suggest the need to temper the general assertion that “it’s not about anger,” as well as to broaden the discussion of control attempts to include attention to women’s as well as men’s attempts to control the partner’s behavior or aspects of the relationship.

These findings challenge some key emphases of traditional theoretical perspectives. The focus on relationship dynamics adds to prior treatments based on social learning arguments, which have necessarily emphasized what is brought into the relationship by virtue of early modeling/social exposure. And while traditional feminist theorizing has drawn attention to the unique dynamics involved in male-female relationships, the current findings add a layer of complexity to the prior emphasis on male controlling actions and the tendency to bracket off emotional processes. The interactionist perspective we relied upon as motivation for the analyses highlights the situated or ‘grounded’ nature of human behavior, particularly the role of relationship-specific processes. The current results show that reports of control attempts and anger (including relationship-based anger) are significantly associated with IPV, net of partner and respondent levels of criminal involvement and other relevant covariates (e.g., parental coercion). The interactionist lens and our findings highlight that one’s background experiences or broad-based conceptions of gender role requirements are incomplete as guides to action.

A significant caveat about these results is that they may well be life-course specific, and relate directly to our focus on the relatively fluid dating and cohabiting relationships that characterize the young adult phase of the life course. We suggested that key transitions that often take place during this time (such as moving away from a heavy emphasis on peer socializing, becoming more seriously committed to a given partner, and solidifying career prospects) may become contested domains within relationships

during this life course stage. The idea that issues of power and control tend to be localized around such contested terrain further situates control attempts within the period, and highlights concerns that are likely to be recognizable to the individuals involved. Some men's actions can best be understood in light of a generalized desire to dominate and control their partners, but others may be interested in control that relates to specific contested areas within the relationship. This situated approach also allows us to interpret the relatively high scores of young women on attempts to control their partners observed across the sample as a whole, and within relationships characterized by IPV. This emphasis on interactive elements within the relationship is thus consistent with a general interactionist perspective on interpersonal violence (Athens, 2005), but highlights that the specific locus of the conflict may vary--based on unique concerns of different stages of the life course, the character of the relationship, as well as gendered socialization processes.

A limitation of the study is that reports about relationship characteristics, anger, and IPV were assessed contemporaneously. Thus, it is not possible to establish a precise causal order regarding processes that are undoubtedly reciprocally related. Although we posited a particular theoretical sequence, to an unknown degree control attempts and anger may follow from the experience of IPV. Young adult relationships are often quite fluid, and IPV itself is associated with relationship 'churning' (breaking up, or breaking up and getting back together (Halpern-Meekin, Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2013)). Thus, it would be difficult to capture a sufficiently large number of intact couples across waves of interviews who report high levels of anger and control but no violence at the initial wave (the pure condition that would enable us to predict IPV from anger and control reports). Yet the content of the in-depth qualitative interviews we also conducted with a subset of these respondents (102 respondents, 50 partners) provide an additional level of confidence regarding the hypothesized sequencing of the focal relationship and emotional processes (see authors, 2013). In addition, even if it were to be established, for example, that angry emotions emerge only as a consequence of IPV, it would be inappropriate to conclude that anger is not associated with these experiences. It is even less intuitive to theorize that control attempts only appear within relationships after acts of violence. Nevertheless, it

would be useful in future research to experiment with methods that permit a more fine-grained assessment of sequencing (e.g., using diary methods, more frequent assessment periods). Future research could also examine other potentially important relationships in more detail, such as the association between coercive parenting and reports of control attempts, or negative cases for intergenerational theories (e.g., individuals who experience coercive parenting but do not develop an angry identity or experience feelings of anger in their own intimate relationships—see e.g., Stith et al., 2000).

As research on IPV has developed, researchers have noted differences in approach and findings based on population-based surveys as contrasted with targeted samples, such as those focused on victims in shelters and perpetrators identified by criminal justice agencies. Johnson and Leone (2005) have proposed that a way to reconcile the two different portraits is to consider that these may be different forms of IPV, which likely have different precursors and characteristics. Accordingly, we recognize that the theoretical discussion and analysis developed may not generalize to the experiences of victims or perpetrators of severe violence. As we focused on young adults in dating and cohabiting relationships, these respondents often do not face as many economic and social dependence issues as married older men and women. Nevertheless, the sampling strategy and follow-up procedures we relied upon (e.g., school attendance was not a requirement for inclusion; those in jail or prison were thoroughly pursued) were designed to capture a large, heterogeneous sample of young adults. Further, as research indicates that adolescence and especially young adulthood represent peak periods of risk, our theoretical framework and findings may be useful in the development of prevention efforts whose objectives are to interrupt these processes before violence patterns become more firmly entrenched. In addition, it would be useful to explore in future research the degree to which these portraits reflect points in a sequence of relationship processes, rather than two discrete patterns or subgroups. Research designs that use common measurement across population-based and criminal justice or victim-services samples would serve to highlight similar and distinctive processes across the full spectrum of IPV experiences.

In spite of these limitations, the current study provides a descriptive portrait that complicates traditional theorizing, and has implications for prevention and intervention efforts targeting IPV within

younger populations. Curricula directed at young people may benefit from increased attention to the variability in relational processes that appear to be associated with heightened risk of experiencing IPV (Capaldi & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2012). Thus, prevention messages that ignore female partners' attempts to control their partners or aspects of the relationship may be limited to the extent that they lead women and men to dismiss prevention messages as not matching the realities of their own relationship circumstances. In addition, further connecting violence to feelings of vulnerability and a lack of control of specific contested domains may serve to construct more uniformly negative meaning(s) around the resort to violence within the context of one's intimate relationships.

It may also be useful to bring anger and other emotions into such discussions, even while delivering messages that clearly communicate that emotions in themselves do not "cause" or excuse injurious actions. There is also a need for additional research on cognitive processes and attitudes that connect to these angry reactions and in turn amplify risk. For example, prior studies of attitudes supporting IPV have often relied on global items (it's ok to hit a partner), and accordingly rates of endorsement of such attitudes are very low (see e.g., Price et al., 1999). Yet consistent with our theoretical discussion, emotional experiences occur in tandem with certain understandings (cognitions) that support the use of violence under what are viewed as extreme circumstances. For example, several of the in-depth interviews we conducted suggested that high levels of anger and associated violence used by women as well as men were related to a partner cheating and then lying about it (see also Miller & White, 2003). Recognizing that there are several areas that challenge the view of gender as a set of "binary oppositions" (Thorne, 1993) could provide a basis for subsequently highlighting that some precursors and consequences (feelings of fear; injury; emotional distress) differ significantly for women and men.

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Table 1. Odds Ratios for the Association between Control, Anger, IPV, and Reports of Perpetration (n = 928)

	Zero Order	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Control Dynamics					
Respondent control	6.014***		4.974***	3.638***	3.181***
Partner control	3.314***			2.166***	1.548*
Anger					
Anger identity	3.097***				1.561*
Relationship-based anger	2.741***				1.908***
Gender Socialization					
Traditional gender roles	1.143	1.132	1.014	0.989	1.034
Traditional Predictors					
Witnessing parental violence	4.867***	3.974***	3.738***	3.455***	3.742***
Coercive parenting	2.027***	1.676*	1.338	1.277	1.290
Disadvantaged neighborhood	1.093**	0.986	1.004	1.003	1.007
Violent peers	1.220***	1.149	1.187*	1.197*	1.136
Respondent and Partner Characteristics					
Respondent's delinquency (Wave 1)	1.110**	1.043	1.022	1.025	1.016
Respondent's delinquency (Wave 5)	1.191***	1.156*	1.045	1.053	1.026
Partner's delinquency (Wave 5)	1.282***	1.195***	1.159**	1.127*	1.132*
Sociodemographic Characteristics					
Gender					
(Male)					
Female	1.638**	1.739*	1.902*	2.491***	2.493**
Age	0.966	0.962	1.003	1.006	1.010
Race					
(White)					
Black	2.186***	1.031	0.724	0.723	0.619
Hispanic	1.915*	1.010	0.870	0.860	0.902
Family Factors					
Family structure					
(Two biological parents)					
Single parent	2.833***	1.761*	1.542	1.469	1.386
Step-parent	1.683	0.791	0.741	0.716	0.683
Other	2.867***	1.582	1.515	1.365	1.470
Mother's education					
Less than HS	1.807*	1.055	0.933	0.861	0.833
(HS)					
Some college	1.013	1.117	1.082	1.000	1.019
College or more	0.465**	0.790	0.832	0.822	0.888
Adult Status Characteristics					
Employment Status					
Part-time	0.519**	0.605	0.437*	0.437*	0.327**
Full-time	0.297***	0.384***	0.316***	0.322***	0.308***
(Unemployed)					
Parent					
(No)					
Yes	2.520***	1.327	1.176	1.143	1.181
Relationship Characteristics					
Relationship status					
(Dating)					
Married	1.306	1.073	0.952	0.890	1.011
Cohabiting	1.848**	1.329	1.494	1.400	1.583
Current relationship	0.993	0.878	1.006	1.404	1.991*
(Most recent relationship)					
Duration	1.388***	1.633***	1.440*	1.388*	1.327
R^2_{MZ}					
Model χ^2		180.76***	259.85***	282.85***	306.57***
Nested χ^2					

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

Table 2. The Association Between Specific Combinations of Anger and Controlling Behaviors and Reports of IPV Perpetration (n=928)[a]

	Model 1	Model 2
Angry, both control	31.547***	18.813***
Not angry, both control	9.876***	9.205***
Angry, respondent control	13.168***	11.251***
Not angry, respondent control	10.036***	7.931***
Angry, partner control	15.545***	14.472***
Not angry, partner control	3.717**	3.216*
Angry, neither control	5.359***	5.045***
(Not angry, neither control)		
Model χ^2	167.76***	271.85***

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

[a] Model 2 includes controls for gender socialization, traditional violence predictors, early and current delinquency/criminal involvement and current partner's criminal involvement, sociodemographic characteristics, family factors, adult status characteristics, and relationship characteristics.

Appendix A. Descriptive Statistics, by IPV Status (n = 928)

Dependent Variable	Means/Percentages	SD	Range	Perpetration (n = 144)		No Perpetration (n = 784)
Perpetration	15.52%			--		--
Independent Variables						
Control Dynamics						
Respondent control	1.67	0.60	1-5	2.25	***	1.56
Partner control	1.76	0.75	1-5	2.43	***	1.63
Anger						
Anger identity	2.26	0.70	1-5	2.71	***	2.17
Relationship-based anger	1.90	0.85	1-5	2.56	***	1.77
Gender Socialization						
Traditional gender roles	2.51	1.01	1-5	2.63		2.49
Traditional Predictors						
Witnessing parental violence	31.25%			62.50%	***	25.51%
Coercive parenting	22.41%			34.03%	***	20.28%
Disadvantaged neighborhood	1.82	2.79	0-10	2.48	**	1.70
Violent peers	1.57	1.27	1-10	1.92	***	1.50
Respondent and Partner Characteristics						
Respondent's delinquency (Wave 1)	1.36	2.06	0-10	1.80	**	1.28
Respondent's delinquency (Wave 5)	1.81	1.51	0-10	2.22	***	1.74
Partner's delinquency (Wave 5)	2.04	1.73	0-10	2.87	***	1.89
Sociodemographic Characteristics						
Gender						
(Male)	45.47%			35.42%		47.32%
Female	54.53%			64.58%	**	52.68%
Age	25.42	1.83	22-29	25.33		25.44
Race						
(White)	67.35%			52.78%	***	70.03%
Black	21.34%			31.94%	***	19.39%
Hispanic	11.31%			15.28%		10.59%
Family Factors						
Family structure						
(Two biological parents)	53.45%			34.72%	***	56.89%
Single parent	21.01%			32.64%	***	18.88%
Step-parent	13.58%			13.89%		13.52%
Other	11.96%			18.75%	**	10.71%
Mother's education						
Less than HS	10.78%			18.06%	**	9.44%
(HS)	32.43%			34.02%		32.14%
Some college	33.41%			35.42%		33.04%
College or more	23.38%			12.50%	***	25.38%
Adult Status Characteristics						
Employment Status						
Part-time	19.18%			20.14%		19.01%
Full-time	55.93%			36.11%	***	59.57%
(Unemployed)	24.89%			43.75%	***	21.42%
Parent						
(No)	74.35%			57.64%		77.42%
Yes	25.65%			42.36%	***	22.58%
Relationship Characteristics						
Relationship status						
(Dating)	44.40%			34.72%	*	46.17%
Married	23.28%			22.92%		23.34%
Cohabiting	32.33%			42.36%	**	30.48%
Current relationship	79.96%			79.86%		79.97%
(Most recent relationship)	20.04%			20.14%		20.03%
Duration	7.15	1.30	1-8	7.50	***	7.08

Source: Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study