The Danger Assessment: Assessing Risk of Intimate Partner Homicide

Jacquelyn Campbell PhD RN FAAN
Anna D. Wolf Endowed Chair & Professor
Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

Multi City Intimate Partner Femicide Study
Funded by: NIDA/NIAAA, NIMH, CDC, NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA1156
HOMICIDE IN BATTERING RELATIONSHIPS

- Number one risk factor for intimate partner homicide—whether male or female is killed—prior intimate partner violence (at least 70% of cases)
- Often not known to criminal justice system—arrests only about 10-15% of actual IPV
- Purpose of Danger Assessment—first developed as a clinical instrument to help women accurately assess their own risk
  - Based on original IP homicide study—Dayton, Ohio—Campbell, ‘81
DANGER ASSESSMENT (Campbell ‘86)

www.dangerassessment.org

- Developed in 1985 to increase battered women’s ability to take care of themselves (Self Care Agency; Orem ‘81, 92) – original DA used with 10 samples of 2251 battered women to establish preliminary reliability & validity & refine items

- Interactive, uses calendar - aids recall plus women come to own conclusions - more persuasive & in adult learner/strong woman/survivor model

- Items added with further research with abused women (e.g. choking – Stuart & Campbell ‘89)

- Intended as lethality risk instrument versus re-assault (e.g. SARA, DVSI-R) - risk factors may overlap but not exactly the same
Overlapping Concerns

Similar;
Not the same

Risk Assessment
Lethality Assessment
Safety Assessment
Danger Assessment – Independent
Predictive Validity Studies - Re-assault
– Before ‘03 Revision

(Goodman, Dutton & Bennett, 2001) N = 92; 53% returned; successful prediction of reabuse, DA stronger predictor than CTS2 (4.2 vs. 2.8 OR per 1 SD DA vs. CTS2)

Women’s perception of danger stronger predictor than any of the 10 DA items available in criminal justice records – (Weisz, Tolman, & Saunders, 2000)

Heckert & Gondolf (’02; ‘04) N = 499 – DA- 66% sensitivity but 33% false positives - Women’s perception of risk PLUS DA best model (over SARA & K-SID) but women’s perception of risk by itself not quite as good as DA
Femicide Risk Study – 12 US cities -
(Campbell et al '03; NIH/CDC/NIJ VAWA R01 DA/AA1156)

**Purpose:** Identify and establish risk factors for IP femicide – (over and above domestic violence)

**Significance:** Determine strategies to prevent IP femicide – especially amongst battered women – Approximately half of victims (54% of actual femicides; 45% of attempteds) did not accurately perceive their risk – that perpetrator was capable of killing her &/or would kill her

**Case Control Design:** Actual & Attempted femicides – police records – plus interviews with “proxy informants” for femicide victims – controls – other abused women
DA Revised & Weighted Scoring
Developed with Cutoff Ranges - VISE

Based on sum of weighted scoring place into 1 of the following categories:

- Less than 8 - “variable danger”
- 8 to 13 - “increased danger”
- 14 to 17 - “severe danger”
- 18 or more - “extreme danger”
ROC Curve Analysis – 92% under the curve for Attempted Femicides; 90% for actuals -

Source of the Curve

Diagonal segments are produced by ties.

Campbell et al JIPV ’09
Homicide -suicide - K-McL ’05
Further testing with RAVE study

(Campbell, O’Sullivan & Roehl – NIJ #2000WTVX0011)

- N = 782 abused women in CA & NYC – prospective – random assignment to one of 4 risk assessment methods
- Areas under ROC curve with potential confounders
- Any & severe re-assault – all significant at <.01
  - DA - .67; .697
  - DV-MOSAIC .618; .647
  - DVSI - .60; .616
  - K-SID - .60; .62
  - Victim perception .62; .62
- Instruments/method = to or improved on victim assessment
- DV MOSAIC most accurate for threats & stalking
New Projects with DA

- Alberta Council of women’s shelters – qualitative data
- Glass testing with same sex couples
- Glass computerization with decision aide
- Webster visualization of results
- Testing of LAP in OK – NIJ funded project (Messing & Campbell)
- Lethality Assessment Project – adaptation in MD and other states – Dave Sargent www.mnadv.org
References


Supplemental Slides
U.S. INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE RATE DECLINE 1976-02 FBI (SHR, 1976-02; BJS ’05, ’07)
### Danger Assessment Items Comparing Actual & Attempted Femicide Survivors (N=493) & Abused (Within Past 24 Months) Controls (N=427) (*p < .05*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Att/Actual</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical violence increased in frequency</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical violence increased in severity</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner tried to choke victim</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A gun is present in the house</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner forced victim to have sex</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner used street drugs</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner threatened to kill victim</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim believes partner is capable of killing her</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perpetrator AD Military History (ns.)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalking score</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VICTIM & PERPETRATOR OWNERSHIP OF WEAPON IN FEMICIDE (N = 311), ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE (N = 182), ABUSED CONTROL (N = 427) & NON-ABUSED CONTROL (N = 418) CASES

χ² = 125.6, P < .0001
DANGER ASSESSMENT ITEMS COMPARING ACTUAL & ATTEMPTED FEMICIDE SURVIVORS (N=493) & ABUSED (WITHIN PAST 24 MONTHS) CONTROLS (N=427) (*p < .05)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Att/Actual Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner is drunk every day</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner controls all victim’s activities</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner beat victim while pregnant</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner is violently jealous of victim (says things like “If I can’t have you, no one can”)</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim threatened/tried to commit suicide</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner threatened/tried to commit suicide</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner is violent toward victim’s children</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner is violent outside house</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner arrested for DV* (not criminality)</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner hurt a pet on purpose</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Att/Actual Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner is drunk every day</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner controls all victim’s activities</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner beat victim while pregnant</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner is violently jealous of victim (says things like “If I can’t have you, no one can”)</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim threatened/tried to commit suicide</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner threatened/tried to commit suicide</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner is violent toward victim’s children</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner is violent outside house</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner arrested for DV*</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner hurt a pet on purpose</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant (p<.05) Variables (Entered into Blocks) before Incident (overall fit = 85% correct classification)

- Perpetrator unemployed   OR = 4.4
- Perpetrator gun access    OR = 5.4
- Perpetrator Stepchild     OR = 2.4
- Couple Never Lived Together OR = .34
- Highly controlling perpetrator OR = 2.1
- Estranged X Low control (interaction) OR = 3.6
- Estranged X Control (interaction)   OR = 5.5
- Threatened to kill her       OR = 3.2
- Threatened w/weapon prior    OR = 3.8
- Forced sex                   OR = 1.9
- Prior Arrest for DV          OR = .34
Femicide – Suicide Cases (32% of femicide cases in study – 29% US)

- Significant explanatory power for same femicide – suicide risk factors.
  - Partner access to gun
  - Threats with a weapon
  - Step child in the home
  - Estrangement

- Unique to femicide – suicide:
  - Partner suicide threats – history of poor mental health
  - Married
  - Somewhat higher education levels (unemployment still a risk factor), more likely to be white
**Danger Assessment Certification**

has completed the Danger Assessment Training Program and is **certified** to use the Danger Assessment and Levels of Danger Scoring System to evaluate the level of danger in domestic violence cases.

Jacquelyn C Campbell, PhD, RN, FAAN
Anna D Wolf Chair
Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs
The Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF VICTIM:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Danger Assessment Scoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Danger</th>
<th>Variable Danger</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - 13</td>
<td>Increased Danger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 - 17</td>
<td>Severe Danger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 or more</td>
<td>Extreme Danger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add total number of “Yes” responses, 1 through 19.
Add 4 points for a “Yes” to question 2
Add 3 points for each “Yes” to questions 3 and 4.
Add 2 points for each “Yes” to questions 5, 6 and 7.
Add 1 point for each “Yes” to questions 8 & 9
Subtract 3 points if 3a is checked

Use of this Danger Assessment Scoring system is restricted to ____________________________

Danger Assessment Certified xx/xx/2005
### Comparisons on Cutoffs – Sensitivity/Specificity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Danger Level</th>
<th>Femicides</th>
<th>Attempteds</th>
<th>Specificity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable Danger &lt; 8</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Danger: 8 – 13</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Danger: 14 – 17</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Danger: 18 +</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gun Issues

- Get the gun(s) out!!! Implementation of Brady Bill – judges need to order removal of all guns – specify in search warrants & PO’s.
- MD law – No removal language at incident.
- Only removal with both “permanent” not temporary protective order (TPO – about ½ states) –
- Judges can check “surrender” & can state removal.
- PO information entered into federal data base (most states it is).
- Convictions for DV misdemeanors & felonies are entered & flagged – prohibits purchase (but only at licensed dealer, not gun shows).
- No removal/disarming language - (about 10 states) but judges can still order removal.
- Firearm prohibition on face sheet of PO – (about ½ states).