



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada



# Abuse in Gay Male Relationships: A Discussion Paper

Canada

*Abuse in Gay Male Relationships: A Discussion Paper* was prepared by Kevin Kirkland, Ph.D., for the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence.

The author expresses his appreciation to the following for their input and supportive advice:

**Jerry Arthur-Wong, RCC**  
B.C. Men's Resource Centre  
Vancouver, BC

**Kathleen Mackay, MSW**  
Social Worker and Program Planner  
Domestic Violence Programs:  
Vancouver General Hospital & St. Paul's Hospital  
Vancouver, BC

Également disponible en français sous le titre : *La violence des gais dans leurs relations intimes : Un document de travail.*

The opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Public Health Agency of Canada.

Contents may not be reproduced for commercial purposes, but any other reproduction, with acknowledgements, is encouraged.

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request.

For more information, please contact:

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence  
Family Violence Prevention Unit  
Public Health Agency of Canada  
(Address Locator: 1907D1)  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Jeanne Mance Bldg., Tunney's Pasture  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1B4

Telephone: 1-800-267-1291 or (613) 957-2938  
Fax: (613) 941-8930  
TTY: 1-800-561-5643 or (613) 952-6396  
Web Site: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/nc-cn>  
E-mail: [ncfv-cnivf@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:ncfv-cnivf@phac-aspc.gc.ca)

---

# Abuse in Gay Male Relationships: A Discussion Paper

---

*By Kevin Kirkland, Ph.D.*





## Table of Contents

Introduction . . . . .	1
What is Intimate Partner Abuse in Gay Relationships? . . . . .	2
The Effects of Abuse . . . . .	4
Cultural Issues . . . . .	4
Myths Relevant to Gay Male Partner Abuse . . . . .	5
Obstacles to Gay Men Escaping Abusive Relationships . . . . .	6
Potential Co-existing Factors. . . . .	8
Recognizing Abusive Patterns . . . . .	8
Taking Action. . . . .	9
How Helping Professionals Can Respond. . . . .	10
Conclusion. . . . .	11
Relevant Services and Contacts in Canada. . . . .	12
Additional Readings . . . . .	12
Web Sites. . . . .	14
Sources Cited . . . . .	15
Endnotes . . . . .	18



## Introduction

The full extent of intimate partner abuse in gay male relationships is unknown, given that there has been so little research on it and that, as with all forms of intimate partner abuse, it is believed to be underreported.<sup>1</sup> However, although few research studies have been done on gay partner abuse, there is consensus among those who have studied the issue that it occurs at least as often as abuse in opposite-sex and lesbian relationships. Some researchers believe that it affects as many as one in every five couples.<sup>2-4</sup> After AIDS and substance abuse, intimate partner abuse is considered the third most important health crisis among gay men.<sup>5,6</sup>

According to Lehman (1997), when gay men were asked what they thought were the factors contributing to abuse in gay relationships, they suggested a variety of possible explanations.<sup>7</sup> So, whether or not it is openly acknowledged to an adequate degree, it seems that intimate partner abuse is recognized within the gay community.

Whether perpetrated by men or women, and whether it occurs between gay, straight, bisexual, or transgendered individuals, intimate partner abuse crosses all categories – including age, socio-economic status, religious belief, racial and cultural grouping, and educational level.<sup>8,9</sup> However, even though gay men and women may recognize that the problem does exist, it is this author's opinion that gay men (and women) have a low awareness of the extent of its occurrence. They also have little knowledge about relevant resources and support services, and in fact have fewer avenues by which to find help than is the case with regard to abuse in opposite-sex relationships. Given the discrimination they still experience from both individuals and institutions, gay men may have even greater concerns than would other victims of violence about how the relevant agencies and their individual representatives might respond to their disclosure of intimate partner abuse.

This discussion paper is intended to make accessible the information available on abuse in gay male relationships to a variety of audiences engaged in addressing this issue: gay men who are experiencing abuse, their friends, colleagues and family members, and relevant professionals (especially therapists, counselors, health care providers and educators). It also provides suggestions on how to identify and deal with unique aspects of this issue.

## What is Intimate Partner Abuse in Gay Relationships?

For the purpose of this discussion paper, intimate partner abuse between gay men involves abusive behaviour within an intimate relationship in which one partner strives for control and power over the other. Farley (1985) refers to it as an “act of aggression, either psychological or physical, that is an attempt by the perpetrator to intimidate or harm another in an intimate relationship.”<sup>10</sup>

### Types of Abuse

#### Physical Abuse

*Physical abuse* is a deliberate act, or pattern of such acts, that results in bodily harm. This includes behaviour ranging from shoving, slapping or hitting, to punching, choking, kicking and biting, to stabbing, burning and shooting.<sup>11</sup> Locking the victim out of the home or abandoning him in a dangerous place would also fall within the spectrum of physical abuse.<sup>12</sup> A physically disabled man may be even more at risk of abuse and less able to defend himself. His partner could, for example, abuse him by controlling his medications, restricting his access to assistive devices, or destroying his prosthetics.<sup>13,14</sup>

#### Sexual Abuse

*Sexual abuse* involves forcing another person to engage in sexual acts. It can include sexual assault (including sex on demand) and the forcing of sexual acts with third parties. The abuser may also refuse to practise safe sex and thereby endanger the partner to exposure to sexually transmitted diseases.

#### Psychological Abuse

*Psychological or emotional abuse* takes many forms. The spectrum includes withholding affection, being excessively critical and derisive, uttering threats or behaving in such a way as to intimidate or humiliate the partner, and making statements meant to induce guilt and shame.<sup>15</sup> In gay relationships, intimidation may also take the form of threats to “out” the partner – to make public his homosexuality if he has restricted its disclosure. If there are children or pets involved, the abuser may injure or threaten to injure them or threaten to bar the partner from access to them.



An abusive partner may use various forms of manipulation to constantly “get his way,” such as employing “mind games” to villainize his partner or distorting the recounting of past arguments and conflicts so as to further his control. He may even threaten to commit suicide if his partner leaves. Psychological abuse may also take the form of ridiculing and demeaning the partner’s religious or spiritual beliefs and preventing him from participating in spiritual activities. Some writers have referred to this as a form of *spiritual abuse*. An abuser may also use his partner’s religious, spiritual or moral values to manipulate him into staying in the relationship.

Psychological abuse can also take the form of deriding the victim’s sexuality, which has sometimes been called sexuality abuse.<sup>16</sup> Applied to gay male partner violence, it can include criticizing and demeaning the partner’s sexual orientation, sexual performance, body image, clothing style or physical appearance. It can also include making or threatening to make false claims about the victim – for example, alleging the partner’s misconduct with others.

Psychological abuse can extend as far as imposing a state of social isolation on the victim,<sup>17</sup> a situation that can reinforce all of the other forms of abuse. A partner is prevented from having contact with his friends, colleagues, children and other family members. An abuser may monitor his partner’s activities or maintain surveillance of his visitors, conversations, phone calls and mail. He may “make a scene” in public so that social gatherings are eventually avoided entirely. A victim of these forms of abuse is often forced to increasingly rely on his abuser. The abuser may, in turn, prevent him from access to outside contacts who might threaten the relationship or lead to public revelation of the abuse.

Many gay men may be especially vulnerable to imposed social isolation, given that, because of their sexual orientation and the social discrimination that it can generate, they may be isolated from their family and lack a wide network of supportive contacts.<sup>18</sup>

## **Financial Abuse**

*Financial abuse* can involve denying one’s partner access to monetary and property resources to keep him economically dependent. Conversely, an abuser may overspend and accumulate debts, causing financial hardship for his partner.<sup>19</sup> He may also demand full accounting of his partner’s spending habits and bank records. An abusive partner may forbid him from working and/or harass him about working, which can jeopardize his employment.

## The Effects of Abuse

Enduring intimate partner abuse can result in chronic fear, anxiety and depression. It may make the victim feel incompetent, emotionally numb, helpless, and even suicidal.<sup>20</sup> Long-term physical and mental health problems – such as debilitating anxiety and agitation, heart palpitations, tension headaches, high blood pressure – can result.<sup>21, 22</sup> Symptoms may include those of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – including nightmares, depression, avoidance of others, intrusive negative thoughts and images, sleeplessness, and panic attacks. PTSD can result from both childhood experiences and adult experiences such as intimate partner abuse.<sup>23</sup>

## Cultural Issues

Dictionaries define “culture” as the totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, beliefs, norms and attitudes characterizing a population group. The dominant or mainstream culture reflects certain attitudes and assumptions about homosexuality that influence how many members of our society respond to intimate partner abuse in gay relationships. Those responses affect the options open to victims of such abuse. To understand abuse in gay relationships, it may be helpful to situate it within this full cultural context.

“Heteronormativity” is a view that sees heterosexuality as the norm and as the basis for family life and personal identity.<sup>24</sup> One reflection of this view is the presumption that only straight men are abusive to their partners. To some observers, heteronormativity is also reflected in the fact that few resources are currently available to address the needs of gay men regarding intimate partner violence. As well, men in our society, in contrast to women, are not generally viewed as victims.

All of these aspects of mainstream culture are seen to perpetuate many misconceptions about homosexuality and a variety of myths that are relevant to abuse in gay male relationships.

## Myths Relevant to Gay Male Partner Abuse

- ▶ **“Men do not need help.”** A common belief within mainstream culture is that men cannot be victims, that men do not suffer, and that “big boys don’t cry.” The ideal of masculinity has traditionally connoted independence, self-reliance, strength, power, dominance and emotional restraint. A gay man may attempt to assert his notion of what it means to be manly, while at the same time feeling inadequate and less than manly because of his sexual orientation. He may resist seeking therapy to address his victimization in an intimate relationship because it may seem equivalent to surrendering control to another.<sup>25</sup>
- ▶ **Gay couples assume “male and female” roles.** Some people assume that a battered gay man must be in the “female” role, that he must be the effeminate or weaker spouse. This perspective obscures the fact that abuse can occur in any relationship, without regard for one’s sex or sexual orientation. As well, the abusive partner is not necessarily the *bigger* or more masculine of the two.<sup>26</sup> The use of physical force does not necessarily have any relationship to relative size or strength. Moreover, many forms of abuse do not involve the use of physical force at all.
- ▶ **“Boys will be boys.”<sup>27</sup>** Society sanctions violence between men in many contexts. It may be assumed that a fistfight between two men is a fair fight. (“You’re a man. Hit him back!”) This is also a common reaction to disclosure of abuse between gay partners. “He was asking for it” or “He had it coming to him” are similarly inappropriate reactions. The notion, held by some, that men are violent by nature contributes to the perpetuation of male violence.<sup>28</sup>
- ▶ **“Gay men are sexually aroused by violence.”** “Isn’t it just sadomasochism?” This is a common perception that is based on misconceptions about the nature of homosexuality. In reality, sadomasochism – which may be practiced by females as well as males, and heterosexuals as well as homosexuals – involves consent. Abuse does not.<sup>29, 30</sup>
- ▶ **“Leaving is easier for people who are not married.”** Gay relationships (whether married or otherwise) are likely no easier to leave than any other conjugal relationship, as they are often established in love and supported by emotional commitment. Moreover, if the victim of an abusive relationship is alienated from his family and other social circles, the relationship may hold even greater importance in his life.

## Obstacles to Gay Men Escaping Abusive Relationships

### Homophobia

Homophobia is a negative attitude toward gay people or people who are perceived as gay or who exhibit behaviour stereotypically associated with homosexuality. The negative attitude can range from strong discomfort to fear, dislike, and hatred.<sup>31</sup> Discrimination, harassment and other forms of prejudicial treatment of gay people and others, based on perceptions of homosexuality, are manifestations of homophobia. The phenomenon is so pervasive in most cultures that gay males can grow up internalizing it. The notion of not being good enough, not male enough, and not valued, or of being innately flawed, equates with a diminished self-concept and lowered self-esteem and results in social exclusion. Resulting efforts to act straight or “normal” reflect a conditioned or learned desire to blend in with the heterosexual majority. This may lead the victim of abuse to lack the confidence and will to leave an abusive relationship (or to avoid one in the first place).

As well, moral and religious attitudes against homosexuality may cause a sense of shame which, in turn, can contribute to a greater likelihood that even the existence of the relationship will be kept hidden, and especially the abuse that occurs within it. The notion that he is committing a sin may support the view that the abused man deserves punishment for being gay.

### Being in the Closet

For any number of reasons, such as those already described, some gay men may attempt to pass as heterosexual. A study by Berger (1990) found a link between relationship dissatisfaction and living a secret gay life.<sup>32</sup> Opening up about the violence may mean having to come out of that closet – to disclose one’s sexual orientation to police, health practitioners, colleagues, friends and family. Remaining in the abusive relationship may seem preferable.

### Lack of Family Support

If a gay man has not publicly disclosed his sexual orientation, his family may not know that he is gay, even if it is known that he is sharing living space with another man. If his relatives do know of his sexual orientation, they may be skeptical when told about the violence. The abusive partner may be well liked by his partner’s relatives, and they may minimize or not understand the situation when it is revealed to them. In some cases the members of the victim’s own family may be unsupportive because of their negative attitude

toward homosexuality, but he may be supported by his abusive partner's family. This can make it more difficult for him to disclose the violence and leave the relationship, given that it can mean losing both his partner and his adopted family.

## The Small Size of the Gay Community

Given the relatively small social network and the limited selection of social venues enjoyed by many gay men, even in larger cities, there could be greater difficulty in avoiding a former partner than would be the case for most opposite-sex couples.

## Long-term Illnesses

If an abuse victim suffers from a long-term illness, such as AIDS, health and financial burdens resulting from the cost of health care can add stress to personal coping mechanisms. In particular, HIV/AIDS may contribute to and support an abusive dynamic in the relationship, exacerbating underlying conditions pre-disposed to abusive behaviour. One partner may blame the other for being HIV positive or for transmitting the infection to him, and this could contribute to abuse. An abusive man may not protect his partner from HIV infection. He may even want to infect his partner to make him undesirable to others,<sup>33</sup> or he may threaten to reveal his partner's HIV status to others. He may bar his partner from access to medical care and counseling. As well, illness can render a man weaker and more vulnerable to abuse.

HIV status can influence a person's tolerance of abuse. Fear of illness, of death, and of dying alone can be strong motivations for staying in a relationship even if it is abusive.<sup>34</sup> As well, the still common negative attitudes toward gay people and people with AIDS may make a man feel more depressed and undesirable and thus more likely to stay. If the abusive partner is HIV positive, the abuse victim may stay with him because of a sense of moral obligation to provide care.

## Poverty

As is the case for many women in abusive opposite-sex relationships, a gay man may stay in an abusive relationship because he is financially dependent on his partner. For example, he may have basic health care coverage but not an extended health care plan, receiving medication coverage only through an abusive partner's plan. If there are costs associated with health care, such as HIV drug treatment, poverty can be a barrier to both health and personal independence. Being abused may seem like a minor inconvenience compared with not having food and shelter. Without money, a man may feel trapped and believe he is better off staying than being homeless.

In addition to these obstacles, common reasons why abused men stay in abusive relationships include the following:

- ▶ non-recognition that what is happening is actually abuse,
- ▶ self-denial that the abuse is a recurring pattern, and
- ▶ belief or hope that the situation will improve or that the problem can be “worked out.”<sup>35</sup>

## Potential Co-existing Factors

A number of risk factors related to intimate partner abuse have been identified. These risk factors should not be considered definitive indicators of violence; nor should they be considered excuses for the abusive behaviour. Rather, research indicates that the following circumstances and characteristics tend to co-exist with the occurrence of abuse and therefore can be taken as possible warning signs.

- ▶ evidence that one partner displays an extreme need to exert power and control over the other <sup>36</sup>
- ▶ alcohol abuse<sup>37, 38</sup> and use of illicit drugs<sup>39</sup> by the possible abuser
- ▶ exposure to family violence in childhood (leading to the abuser repeating behaviours witnessed and learned in childhood from parents who were abusive toward each other and/or to their children<sup>40-43</sup>). A history of childhood abuse has been linked to adult domestic violence for either the abuser or the victim later in life.<sup>44,45</sup>

## Recognizing Abusive Patterns

The following list captures some common patterns and characteristics of the abusive man.

- ▶ Regularly criticizes and says hurtful things to his partner
- ▶ Has destroyed and damaged his partner’s property or belongings
- ▶ Seems unable to control his anger
- ▶ Says he reacts with physical violence because his partner *makes* him angry and provokes him
- ▶ Justifies his behaviour by reference to that of his partner or his own life circumstances, drug use, or drinking
- ▶ Avoids discussing his own behaviour

- ▶ Minimizes or denies his abusive treatment of his partner
- ▶ Is always suspicious about his partner's friends, family, whereabouts and activities
- ▶ Has no patience with or tolerance for his partner's needs and feelings
- ▶ Tends to ask, after each abusive episode, for a second chance, and vows the violence won't happen again <sup>46</sup>

Conversely, the following list captures some characteristics of the abused man.

- ▶ Feels nervous around his partner all the time, afraid to say or do something that will set him off, afraid to disagree with what his partner says or wants
- ▶ Often feels criticized and humiliated by his partner
- ▶ Focuses on his partner's needs rather than his own
- ▶ Feels he can never do enough to please his partner, that he's not good enough for him
- ▶ Is fearful because his partner threatens that he will kill him if he leaves
- ▶ Has left in the past and then returned, only to be beaten or otherwise abused again<sup>47</sup>

## Taking Action

Change is possible. The abused partner should first realize that *he* cannot change *his partner's* behaviour. Similarly, that behaviour will not likely change "by itself," simply with the passage of time or without significant external intervention or some form of an externally imposed change. Intervention can come through the action of a friend, a counseling therapist, a support group, a health care professional, or family members. Until the abuser accepts responsibility for his behaviour, there will not likely be any change in his abusive pattern. Should attempts to seek help through early intervention not succeed, leaving the relationship may be the only healthy choice.<sup>48</sup>

A victim may still be at risk of attack from his former partner during and soon after a separation. Physical and sexual assault, uttering threats, criminal harassment, and forcible confinement are all criminal offences<sup>49</sup> and grounds for contacting the police.

## How Helping Professionals Can Respond

Professionals who may find themselves providing service to victims of abuse in gay relationships should educate themselves thoroughly about the topic of intimate partner abuse and what constitutes a healthy intimate relationship (whether same-sex or opposite-sex). They may also need to critically examine their own beliefs and attitudes about gay people and about intimate partner violence. Questions about abuse should be included in the list of queries regularly posed to all clients or patients. (To help normalize the issue, professionals can indicate that they routinely ask everyone about interpersonal abuse as part of the initial assessment.)

It is important to recognize that abuse is a significant health issue and one deserving of the attention of professionals in any health and social service agency. Similarly, its criminal dimensions make it of obligatory concern to professionals in the criminal justice system.

Professionals who suspect that their client or patient is in an abusive relationship should let the client know of their safety concerns for him.<sup>50</sup> Some victims may be more ashamed about it because of their level of education, as if they should know better. Many victims will deny the reality of their life circumstances and defend their abuser. They may be evasive or uncooperative on the topic of interpersonal abuse. If the partner is always in attendance, the professional may note how they interact with one another and, if abuse is suspected, seek to speak to the client in private. Even if the client is not forthcoming about the abuse, the health professional should document his or her suspicions if the injuries are more consistent with trauma resulting from another probable cause (for example, the patient reports that he fell down stairs but has only a black eye).

The helping professional should, of course, respond in an empathetic and supportive fashion, never assuming that the person can just leave the situation if he wishes. The client or patient should be informed about his options and assisted to develop a safety plan and a plan for follow-up care. Referrals should be made to appropriate supportive agencies and therapists. With the abused person's consent, the professional can talk to the abuser about seeking help for his behaviour.

The professional should also document these discussions carefully. Evidence of assault or other forms of abuse may be of assistance in later legal proceedings. With the patient's permission, doctors can photograph bruises and other signs of abuse and attach the photos to the patient's chart. Physical evidence (such as torn or bloodied clothing) should be preserved.



If the patient has HIV, professionals should beware of any tendency on their part to minimize the interpersonal abuse by placing the focus solely on the health and psychological needs arising from his HIV status.<sup>51</sup> It is not appropriate to feel that he has enough to handle without having to also address the issue of domestic violence. Moreover, because negative stress activates HIV replication in the body, any abuse will have an impact on HIV health.

## Conclusion

Although studies on the prevalence of abuse in gay male relationships are few, there are strong indications that it is at least as common as abuse in heterosexual relationships. Some researchers have concluded that it occurs in as many as 20% of gay relationships. It is therefore an issue of significance to both the public health and the criminal justice systems. Its effects are similar to those caused by abuse in opposite-sex relationships and they can be amplified by the realities of the cultural contexts of both the gay community and the wider society of which it is a part. Mainstream culture is imbued with many myths about the nature of homosexuality and gay relationships. Those myths, together with the personal histories and social realities of gay men, serve to create barriers to their ability to disclose abuse or to seek help to deal with it.

In order to increase the visibility of abuse and develop effective responses, there is a need to diminish the shame and consequent silence still associated with the problem. Approaches to intimate partner abuse prevention and response must become gay male inclusive. Professionals should become both sensitized to the realities of abuse in gay male relationships and educated about the practical forms of supportive intervention they can offer. Many gay men continue to lack awareness about intimate partner abuse and effective resources that they can access;<sup>52</sup> consequently, they remain in abusive situations.<sup>53</sup>

Gay communities and representatives of health, police and social services should address this serious issue by creating and promoting appropriate programs, bringing education and awareness of it to others, and engaging in outreach. Community services, education, awareness and outreach are all integral components of addressing the issue.

## Relevant Services and Contacts in Canada

Victims may use the services of a health care provider, social service agency, police department, legal aid or private lawyer, distress centre or other community service organizations that provide counselling on interpersonal issues. Many of these organizations and services are listed in the emergency telephone numbers on or near the first page of local telephone directories. Some people may find such agencies and services to be intimidating and should feel free to have a friend or relative with them for support when they attend appointments or have teleconferences.

In some communities assistance may be obtained from an agency providing services or referral information for the lesbian/gay/transgendered/bisexual community. In Toronto, for example, there is the Gay Partner Abuse Project – (416) 925-9872, ext. 2288 or (416) 876-1803 ([info@gaypartnerabuseproject.org](mailto:info@gaypartnerabuseproject.org) <http://www.gaypartnerabuseproject.org>). In Ottawa there is The Men’s Project/Le projet pour hommes – [counsellingservices@themensproject.ca](mailto:counsellingservices@themensproject.ca) <http://www.themensproject.ca>; (613) 230-6179, ext. 400; fax: (613) 230-6173 – a counselling service for straight, gay and bisexual men, with a particular focus on trauma recovery, sexual assault, and ending abuse.

As well, 911 should be called for immediate assistance in dangerous intimate partner violence situations.

## Additional Readings

Allen, C., Leventhal, B. “History, culture, and identity: What makes GLBT battering different.” In *Same-sex domestic violence: Strategies for change*. Edited by B. Leventhal and S. E. Lundy. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.

Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence. *2001 report on DV in LGBT relationships*, [Online]. Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2002. [cited 20 Feb. 2003]. Available on Internet: <URL: <http://pages.ivillage.com/samuel10011/domesticviolence/id19.html>>

Enns, G., Black, J. *It’s not okay anymore: Your personal guide to ending abuse, taking charge, and loving yourself*. New Harbinger Press, 1997.

Herman, J. *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence - from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York: Basic Books, 1992.

- Hunter, M. *Abused boys: The neglected victims of sexual abuse*. New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1990.
- Island, D; Letellier, P. *Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men & Domestic Violence*. Harrington Park Press, Binghamton, NY, 1991.
- Jackson, N., Oates, G. *Violence in Intimate Relationships: Examining Sociological and Psychological Issues*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998.
- Lehman, M. *At the End of the Rainbow: A Report on Gay Male Domestic Violence and Abuse* (1997) Available: [www.lgbt-dv.org/copy\\_final/end\\_rainbow.pdf](http://www.lgbt-dv.org/copy_final/end_rainbow.pdf)
- Leventhal, B., Lundry, S., eds. *Same-Sex Domestic Violence: Strategies for Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.
- Mars, D. "A case of mother-son incest: Its consequences for development and treatment," *Journal of Clinical Psychoanalysis* 7, 3 (1998).
- McLennen, J., Gunther, J. *A professional guide to understanding gay and lesbian domestic violence: Understanding practice interventions*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999.
- Merrill, G., Wolfe, V. *Battered gay men: An exploration of abuse, help seeking, and why they stay*. *Journal of Homosexuality* 39, 2 (2000): 1-30.
- Renzetti, C., Miley, C., eds. *Violence in Gay and Lesbian Domestic Partnerships*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996.
- Salber, P., Taliaferro, E. *The Physician's Guide to Domestic Violence: How to Ask the Right Questions and Recognize Abuse*. Volcano, CA: Volcano Press. 1995.
- Scarce, M. *Male on Male Rape*. New York: Corporate Plenum Press, 1997.

## Web Sites

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/nc-cn](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/nc-cn)

Domestic violence in gay and lesbian couples

<http://www.psychpage.com/learning/library/gay/gayvio.html>

Abuse in Same-Sex Relationships

[http://www.womanabuseprevention.com/html/same-sex\\_partner\\_abuse.html](http://www.womanabuseprevention.com/html/same-sex_partner_abuse.html)

Gay Canada Resource Directory (listing of counselors and therapists)

<http://www.gaycanada.com/index.php>

Gay Male Domestic Violence Project

<http://www.gmdvp.org>

*Gay-on-gay Violence*

<http://www.web.apc.org/~jharnick/violence.html>

Community United Against Violence

<http://www.xq.com/cuav/domviol.htm>

Gay Domestic Violence

<http://pages.ivillage.com/samuel10011/domesticviolence/id7.html>

Domestic Violence in Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Relationships

[http://www.lambda.org/DV\\_background.htm](http://www.lambda.org/DV_background.htm)

Coming Out

<http://www.psychpage.com/learning/library/gay/comeout.html>

## Sources Cited

- Barnes, P. G. "It's just a quarrel". *American Bar Association Journal*, 84 (February 1988).
- Burke, T. "Male-to-male gay domestic violence: The dark closet." In *Violence in intimate relationships: Examining sociology and psychological issues*. Edited by N. A. Jackson & G. C. Oates. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998.
- Burke, T., Michael L. Jordan, and Stephen Owen. "Cross-national comparison of gay and lesbian domestic violence." *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 18, 3 (2002).
- Byrne, Dan. "Clinical models for the treatment of gay made perpetrators of domestic violence." In *Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships*. Edited by C. Renzetti and C. Miley. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996.
- Champion, J. D. "Family violence and mental health," *Nursing Clinics of North America*, 33, 1 (1998).
- Crossley, T. "Sexuality abuse: Paper written for the World Children's Forum, 2000." (presented at the International Forum for Child Welfare Annual World Conference, Sydney Australia, August 2000). Available: <URL: <http://www.acwa.asn.au/wf2000/Friday.html> > .
- Cruz, J. M., and Juanita Firestone. "Exploring violence and abuse in gay male relationships," *Violence and Victims*, 13, 2 (1998)
- Farley, N. "A survey of factors contributing to gay and lesbian domestic violence." In. *Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships*. Edited by C. Renzetti & C. Miley. New York, NY: Harrington Park Press, 1996.
- Ferri, R. S. "Domestic violence in same-sex couples: Epidemiology, assessment, and intervention". *Topics in Emergency Medicine*, 20, 4 (1998).
- Herman, J. *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence - from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York: Basic Books, 1992.
- Island, D., and Patrick Letellier, *Men who beat the men who love them*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1991.

- Klitzman, R., J. Greenberg, L. Pollack, and C. Dolezal, "MDMA ('ecstasy') use, and its association with high risk behaviors, mental health, and other factors among gay/bisexual men in New York City," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 66, 2 (2002).
- Lehman, M. (1997). *At the end of the rainbow: A report on gay male domestic violence and abuse* (Unpublished), [Online]. (Hold tight, tight hold: same sex domestic abuse: 1997) [accessed 10 Mar. 2003]. Available: < URL: [http://www.lgbt-dv.org/copy\\_final/end\\_rainbow.pdf](http://www.lgbt-dv.org/copy_final/end_rainbow.pdf) >.
- Lehman, M. (2002). *Are you being abused?* [Online]. Gay Partner Abuse Project. [cited 10 Feb. 2003]. Available on Internet: <URL: <http://www.gaypartnerabuseproject.org/html/articles.html>>.
- Letellier, P. "Twin epidemics: Domestic violence and HIV infection among gay and bisexual men." In *Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships*. Edited by C. Renzetti & C. Miley. New York, NY: Harrington Park Press, 1996.
- Levy, M. S. "A conceptualization of the repetition compulsion," *Psychiatry*, 63, 1 (2000).
- Margulies, J. "Coalition building 'til it hurts: Creating safety around S/M and battering." In *Same-sex domestic violence: Strategies for change*. Edited by B. Leventhal and S. Lundy. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.
- Martin, A., and E. Hetrick, "The stigmatization of the gay and lesbian adolescent," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 17(1998).
- McGraw-Hill. *Sexual lives: Glossary*. [Online]. McGraw-Hill. [cited March 11 2003]. Available on Internet: <URL: [http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007249364x/student\\_view0/glossary.html](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007249364x/student_view0/glossary.html) >.
- Merrill, G., and Valerie Wolfe, "Battered gay men: An exploration of abuse, help seeking and why they stay," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 39, 2 (2000).
- Munson, C. Michael, ed. "Issue on domestic violence," *FORGE*, 5, 10 (Nov. 1999): 1-9. [Online]. [cited 28 Feb. 2003]. Available on Internet: <URL: <http://my.execpc.com/~dmmunson/forge.htm> >.
- Niolon, R. (1989). *Domestic violence in gay and lesbian couples*, [Online]. [cited 4 Mar. 2003] Available on Internet: <URL: <http://www.psychpage.com/learning/library/gayvio.html> >.

- Paul, J. P., Catania, J., Pollack, L., & Stall, R. "Understanding childhood sexual abuse as a predictor of sexual risk-taking among men who have sex with men: The Urban Men's Health Study," *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 25, 4 (2001).
- Richard, D. J. "The therapeutic status of the mythopoetic approach: A psychological perspective." In *Mythopoetic perspectives of men's healing work: An anthology for therapists and others* Edited by E. R. Barton. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2000.
- Salber, P. R., and E. Taliafero, *The physician's guide to domestic violence: How to ask the right questions and recognize abuse*. Volcano, CA: Volcano Press, 1995.
- Taff, M., and L. Boglioli, Gay homicides and "overkill" [Letters to the editor]. *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*, 18, 4 (1997).
- Toro-Alfonso, J. "Domestic violence among same-sex partners in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities in Puerto Rico: Approaching the issue." In *Same-sex domestic violence: Strategies for change*. Edited by B. Leventhal & S. E. Lundy. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.
- U.S.A. U.S. Department of Justice. *Extent, nature, and consequences of intimate partner violence*. [Online]. U.S. Department of Justice. [cited 1 Feb. 2003]. Available on Internet: <URL: [http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/doclist?\\_m=5723d71a0ee2c8b5aa40245a1c26017b&wchp=dGLbVzz-lSlzV&\\_md5=d6c5a5d12ffb2614a3df6e3cc1985ef4](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/doclist?_m=5723d71a0ee2c8b5aa40245a1c26017b&wchp=dGLbVzz-lSlzV&_md5=d6c5a5d12ffb2614a3df6e3cc1985ef4)>.

## Endnotes

1. M. Taff and L. Boglioli, "Gay Homicides and 'Overkill'" (Letters to the Editor), *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology* 18, 4 (1997): 411-12.
2. Richard S. Ferri, "Domestic violence in same-sex couples: Epidemiology, assessment, and intervention," *Topics in Emergency Medicine* 20, 4 (1998): 32.
3. Patrick Letellier, "Twin epidemics: Domestic violence and HIV infection among gay and bisexual men," in *Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships*, edited by C. Renzetti and C. Miley (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996), pp. 69-81.
4. P.G. Barnes, "It's just a quarrel," *American Bar Association Journal* 84, (February 1998): 24-25.
5. Michael Lehman *At the end of the rainbow: A report on gay male domestic violence and abuse* [Online] (Hold tight, tight hold: same sex domestic abuse: 1997) [accessed 10 Mar. 2003]. Available: <URL: [http://www.lgbt-dv.org/copy\\_final/end\\_rainbow.pdf](http://www.lgbt-dv.org/copy_final/end_rainbow.pdf) >.
6. Tod Burke, "Male-to-male gay domestic violence: The dark closet," in *Violence in intimate relationships: Examining sociology and psychological issues*, edited by N. A. Jackson & G. C. Oates (Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998), pp. 161-179.
7. Lehman, *At the end of the rainbow*, 1997, p. 39.
8. Burke 1998, pp. 161-79.
9. N. Farley, "A survey of factors contributing to gay and lesbian domestic violence," in *Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships*, edited by C. Renzetti and C. Miley (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996), pp. 35-42.
10. N. Farley, "Not a Myth, a Fact: An Overview of Same-Sex Domestic Violence" (Master's thesis, Norwich University, 1985), cited in Tod Burke, "Male-to-male gay domestic violence: The dark closet," in *Violence in intimate relationships: Examining sociology and psychological issues*, edited by N. A. Jackson & G. C. Oates (Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998): p. 162.
11. Michael Lehman, *Are you being abused?* [Online] (Toronto: Gay Partner Abuse Project, 2002). [accessed 10 February 2003]. Available: <URL: <http://www.gaypartnerabuseproject.org/html/victim.html> >



12. Lehman, *At the end of the rainbow*, 1997, p. 12.
13. P.R. Salber, and E. Taliafero, *The physician's guide to domestic violence: How to ask the right questions and recognize abuse* (Volcano, CA: Volcano Press, 1995), p. 28.
14. Patrica Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, *Extent, nature, and consequences of intimate partner violence* [Online] (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, 2000). [accessed 1 Feb. 2003]. Available: <URL: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/181867.htm> >.
15. Lehman, *Are you being abused?* 2002.
16. Tina Crossley, "Sexuality abuse: Paper written for the World Children's Forum, 2000," (presented at the International Forum for Child Welfare Annual World Conference, Sydney Australia, August 2000). Available: <URL: <http://www.acwa.asn.au/wf2000/Friday.html> >.
17. Judith L. Herman, *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror* (New York, Basic Books, 1992), p. 74.
18. Burke 1998, pp.165-66.
19. Lehman, *Are you being abused?* 2002.
20. Herman, *Trauma and recovery*, p. 35.
21. Herman, *Trauma and recovery*, p. 86.
22. J. D. Champion, "Family violence and mental health," *Nursing Clinics of North America* 33, 1 (1998): 201-15.
23. Lehman, *Are you being abused?* 2002.
24. Robert Heasley and Betsy Crane, "Glossary" in *Sexual Lives: A reader on the theories and realities of human sexuality* [Online]. (McGraw-Hill: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality Website, Student Center, 2003). [accessed March 11, 2003]. Available: <URL: [http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007249364x/student\\_view0/glossary.html](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007249364x/student_view0/glossary.html)>.
25. Daniel J. Richard, "The therapeutic status of the mythopoetic approach: A psychological perspective," in *Mythopoetic perspectives of men's healing work: An anthology for therapists and others*, edited by E. R. Barton (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2000), pp. 157-8.

26. Burke 1998, pp. 161-179.
27. Burke 1998, pp. 161-179.
28. David Island and Patrick Letellier, *Men who beat the men who love them* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1991), p. 103.
29. Ferri, pp. 30-39.
30. J. Margulies, "Coalition building 'til it hurts: Creating safety around S/M and battering," in *Same-sex domestic violence: Strategies for change* edited by B. Leventhal and S. Lundy (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999), pp. 135-45.
31. Dan Byrne, "Clinical models for the treatment of gay male perpetrators of domestic violence," in *Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships*, edited by C. Renzetti and C. Miley. (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996), pp. 109-10.
32. R.M. Berger, "Passing: Impact of the quality of same-sex couple relationships" *Social Work*, 35, 4 (1990): 328-332 cited in, R. Niolon, *Domestic violence in gay and lesbian couples*, [Online]. (Psychpage.com) [cited 4 Mar. 2003] Available: < URL: <http://www.psychpage.com/learning/library/gay/gayvio.html> >
33. Letellier, p. 69-81.
34. Letellier, p. 76-79.
35. Lehman, *At the end of the rainbow*, 1997, p. 37-8.
36. J. M. Cruz and Juanita Firestone, "Exploring violence and abuse in gay male relationships," *Violence and Victims* 13, 2 (1998): 159-171.
37. J. P. Paul, J. Catania, L. Pollock and R. Stall, "Understanding childhood sexual abuse as a predictor of sexual risk-taking among men who have sex with men: The Urban Men's Health Study," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 25, 4 (2001): 557-584.
38. J. Toro-Alfonso, "Domestic violence among same-sex partners in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities in Puerto Rico: Approaching the issue," in *Same-sex domestic violence: Strategies for change*, edited by B. Leventhal and S. E. Lundy (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999), pp. 157-163.

39. R. Klitzman, J. Greenberg, L. Pollack and C. Dolezal, "MDMA ('ecstasy') use, and its association with high risk behaviors, mental health and other factors among gay/bisexual men in New York City," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 66, 2 (2002): 115-125.
40. M. S. Levy, "A conceptualization of the repetition compulsion," *Psychiatry*, 63, 1 (2000): 45-53.
41. Farley, pp. 35-42.
42. Toro-Alfonso, pp. 157-163.
43. Tjaden.
44. A. Martin and E. Hetrick, "The stigmatization of the gay and lesbian adolescent," *Journal of Homosexuality* 15, 1-2: (1988): 163-183.
45. Paul, pp. 557-584.
46. Salber, p. 34.
47. Michael C. Munson, ed., "Issue on domestic violence," *FORGE*, 5, 10 (Nov 1999): 1-9. [Online] [accessed 05 Feb. 2003]. Available: <URL: <http://my.execpc.com/~dmmunson/forge.htm> >.
48. Island, pp. 127-41.
49. Lehman, *At the end of the rainbow*, 1997, p. 48.
50. Ferri, pp. 30-39.
51. Letellier, p. 97.
52. T. Burke, M. L. Jordan and S. Owen, "Cross-national comparison of gay and lesbian domestic violence," *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 18, 3 (2002): 231-257.
53. G. Merrill and Valerie Wolfe, "Battered gay men: An exploration of abuse, help seeking and why they stay," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 39, 2 (2000): 1-30.