

## **BETTER TOGETHER**

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### **Differences in Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence Who Sexually Assault**

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Although there is a vast amount of research on intimate partner violence (IPV), little has focused on sexual assault within an intimate relationship. Over time, research has encompassed intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV) as part of IPV, without distinguishing differences between violence by a partner that includes and does not include sexual assault. Furthermore, there are inconsistencies in the literature on what behaviors define IPSV (Bagwell-Gray, Messing, & Baldwin-White, 2015). Past literature has found that high rates of physical violence in a relationship are positively correlated with sexual violence (Bergen & Bukovec, 2006); however, literature has not yet examined similarities and differences of violent perpetrators who physically assault their partners versus those who also sexually assault their partners. The aim of the current study was to examine differences in police reported incidents of IPV in comparison to IPSV. Data came from a larger set of reported IPV occurrences to local law enforcement from 2010 to 2014. The index occurrence was used to categorize perpetrators into IPV and IPSV groups. Analyses were run comparing cases of IPV ( $n = 6804$ ) to cases of IPSV ( $n = 164$ ) on demographic information of perpetrators and victims, criminal history and recidivism of the perpetrator, as well as offence characteristics. Findings revealed significant differences between the two groups. Perpetrators who sexually assaulted their partners at the index offence were more likely to re-offend criminally, violently, and sexually. Furthermore, the latency of reporting intimate partner sexual assaults took five times longer than victim reports of intimate partner physical assault. Implications of these findings suggest that there are significant differences in both victims and perpetrators of sexual assault in comparison to physical assault. In going forward, police may utilize this information in understanding and interpreting sexual violence within an intimate partner relationship.

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