

Offenders of Intimate Partner Violence

Aggressive antisocial behavior and mental health

Akademisk avhandling

Som för avläggande av medicine doktorsexamen vid Sahlgrenska akademien, Göteborgs universitet kommer att offentligens försvaras i sal Torgny Segerstedt, Vasaparken, den 27 oktober, klockan 13.00

av Anna-Kari Sjödin

Fakultetsopponent:

Marie Torstensson-Levander, professor

Malmö Högskola

Avhandlingen baseras på följande delarbeten

- I. Söderström, H., Sjödin, A-K., Carlstedt, A., Forsman, A. 2004, Adult psychopathic personality with childhood onset hyperactivity and conduct disorder: a central problem constellation in forensic psychiatry. *Psychiatry Research*, 121(3); 271-280.
- II. Sjödin, A-K., Wallinius, M., Billstedt, E., Hofvander, B., Nilsson, T. 2017, Dating violence compared to other types of violence: similar offenders but different victims. *European Journal of Psychology Applied to The Legal Context*, 9(2); 83-91.
- III. Sjödin, A-K., Wallinius, M., Billstedt, E., Hofvander, B., Nilsson, T. 2017, Evidence for two levels of partner abuse and aggression in incarcerated young male violent offenders. *Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* (in press).
- IV. Sjödin, A-K, Nilsson, T. Radovic, S. 2017, Situational Action Theory Applied to the Context of Intimate Partner Violence: A case vignette study (manuscript).

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Abstract

Background: Studies on the impact of mental disorders on aggressive antisocial behaviors constitutes an extensive body of literature. What patterns of mental disorders that contribute the most to the development of such behaviors are being debated. Aggressive behaviors towards an intimate partner (IPV) are often studied as a unique form of violence while offender characteristics have not been in focus. Equally important are studies of immediate situational causes of IPV crime. The Situational Action Theory (SAT) focuses on the interplay between the offender and the setting in which the crime takes place thus being of potential value for research of immediate causes of IPV.

Aim: The aim of this thesis is to identify offender characteristics related to aggressive antisocial behaviors, and with special reference to IPV. We also aim to examine to what extent the SAT explanatory framework can be applied to IPV.

Methods and results: The investigated samples were derived from clinical samples consisting of individuals undergoing court ordered forensic psychiatric investigations in connection with a violent crime and young male offenders imprisoned due to violent criminality. Results showed that for both samples childhood onset conduct disorder was the strongest predictor for the development of aggressive antisocial behaviors. Considerable similarities between the groups of young violent offenders regardless of victim relation were found, and there was a strong association between aggressive antisocial behaviors and IPV. The tools of SAT showed to be potentially valuable with regard to the understanding of IPV. However, one of its fundamental concepts was found to be in need of further theoretical adaptations before becoming useful to the IPV context.

Conclusion: The impact of early onset of behavioral problems for the development of aggressive antisocial behavior including IPV among young men is extensive. There is a potential gain in viewing IPV as a part of violent crime at large since there was a considerable overlap of offender characteristics. The tools provided by SAT are suggested to be of interest for future research of IPV, especially with regard to causality and the situational factors imminent to the crime situation.

Keywords: Mental Health, Intimate Partner Violence, Dating Violence, Violent Offenders, Early Onset Behavioral Problems, Situational Action Theory