

Gender disparities in self-reported fear of an intimate partner

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2007 Annual Meeting and Exposition

APHA

November 4, 2007



Presentation Objectives

1. Describe prevalence of fear of an intimate partner among women and men in NYC
2. Examine gender-specific profiles of sociodemographic characteristics and health-related behaviors associated with fear
3. Consider implications for health care response to intimate partner violence (IPV)

NYC Community Health Survey

- **Citywide annual RDD telephone survey**
 - ◆ Based on BRFSS, NHIS
 - ◆ Multiple languages
 - ◆ Demographics, health care access, health behaviors, and health outcomes
- **Pooled data: 2002, 2004 and 2005**
 - ◆ Cooperation rates: 64%; 59%; 71%
 - ◆ Weighted for unequal selection probabilities and non-response
 - ◆ Post-stratification weights to Census 2000 NYC population

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Fear of an intimate partner

In the past 12 months, have you been frightened for the safety of yourself, your children or friends because of the anger or threats of an intimate partner?

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Independent Variables

- **Demographics:** Gender, age, race/ethnicity, marital status, interview language, country of birth
- **SES proxies:** Household income, education, employment, health insurance
- **Health-related behaviors:** Binge drinking in past month, multiple sex partners (3+) in past year, condom use at last sex
- **Other:** Self-reported health status, past-year same-sex partner

Data Analysis Methodology

- **Final sample: 23,590**
(9,687 men; 13,903 women)
 - ◆ Ages 18-64; excluded those missing outcome
- **Bivariate associations tested first**
 - ◆ Age-adjusted; Student's t-tests
- **Multivariate logistic regression**
 - ◆ Two models – men and women
- **SAS-callable SUDAAN**

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Prevalence of fear of a partner

% reporting fear
(95% confidence interval)

Women	Men	Overall
2.7% (2.4, 3.1)	2.2% (1.9, 2.7)	2.5% (2.2, 2.8)

- **No significant difference between women and men**

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Higher prevalence of fear among:

- Younger adults
- Black, Hispanic adults
- Separated adults
 - ◆ Divorced and never-married adults
- Lower educational attainment, lack of health insurance, lower income
- Binge drinkers and those with multiple past-year sexual partners
- Women with same-sex partner

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Multivariate Logistic Regression

- Two models: Men and Women
- Outcome: “Fear of a partner”
- Forward stepwise modeling
- Independent variables retained at $p < 0.05$
- Tested for confounding, interactions
 - ◆ Age included to control for confounding in both models

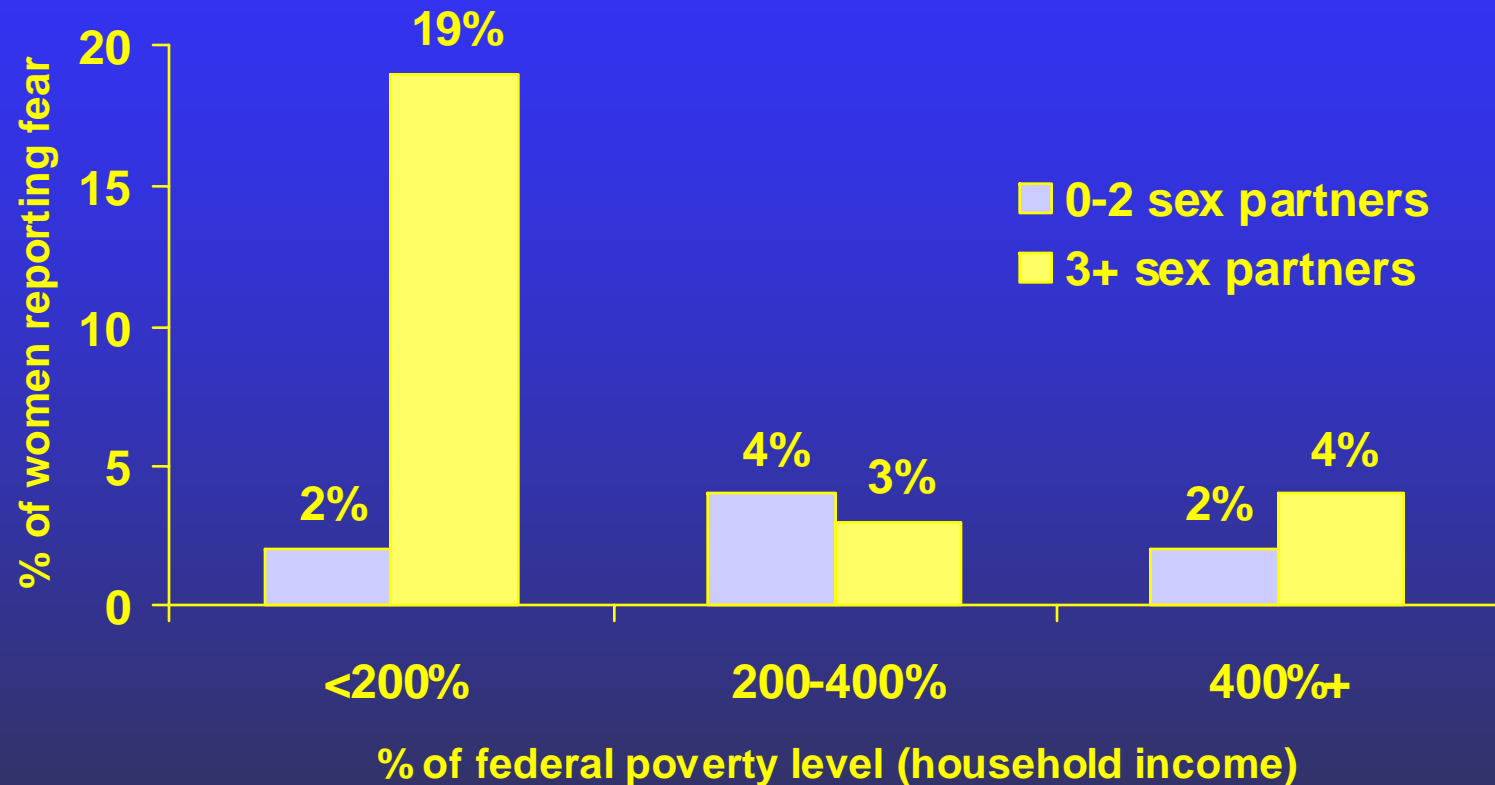
Women: Fear of a partner

	<u>OR</u>	<u>95% CI</u>
■ Separated	2.1	(1.2, 3.6)
■ Not insured	1.9	(1.1, 3.1)
■ Interview not English	0.4	(0.2, 0.8)
■ Poor health	4.3	(2.2, 8.4)
■ Fair health	1.9	(1.1, 3.2)
■ Binge drinker	2.0	(1.3, 3.4)

INTERACTION: Income x Multiple Sex Partners

■ Low income- multiple sex partners	11.1	(5.2, 23.6)
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Among women, reported fear by income and number of sex partners



- Adjusted for age, marital status, insurance, language, health status and binge drinking.

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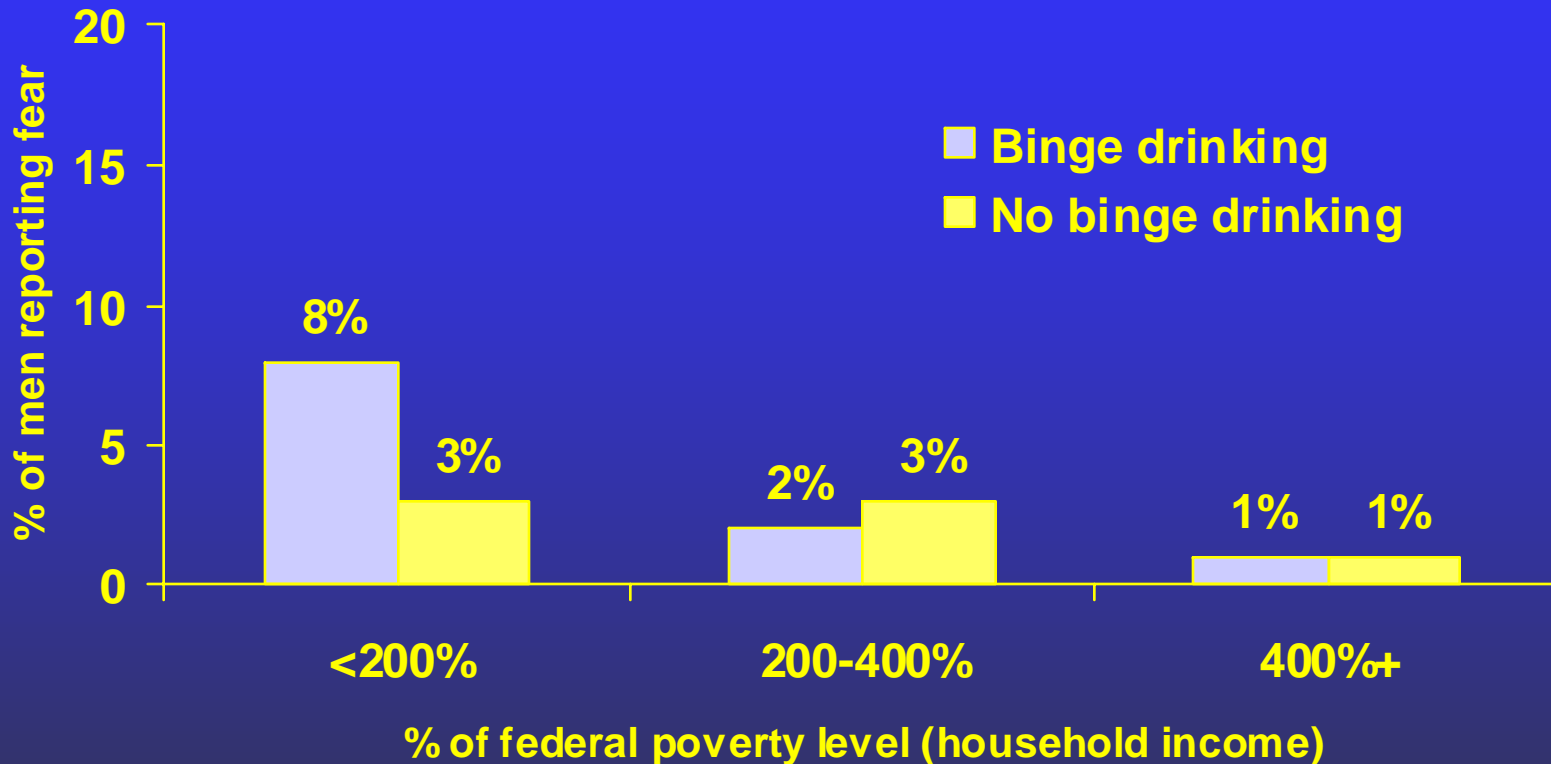
Men: Fear of a partner

	<u>OR</u>	<u>95% CI</u>
■ Divorced	2.2	(1.0, 4.8)
■ Separated	4.2	(1.8, 9.5)
■ Multiple sex partners	1.9	(1.0, 3.4)

INTERACTION: Income x Binge Drinking

■ Low income- non-binge drinker	2.2	(1.2, 4.1)
■ Low income- binge drinker	7.4	(3.1, 17.4)

Among men, reported fear by income and binge drinking



- Adjusted for age, marital status, and number of sex partners.

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Limitations

- **Cross-sectional data**
- **Measurement Error**
 - ◆ Single question about fear
 - ◆ Self-report
- **Gender differential in perceptions of what constitutes fear**
- **Low prevalence among non-English speaking women – possible need for specialized, culturally appropriate measures**

Impact of poverty on health and violence

- Fear and risky behaviors more closely linked among poor men and women
- Possible mechanisms:
 - ◆ Lack of support on both fronts:
 - ◆ To deal with negative consequences of behavior
 - ◆ To cope with violence from partner
- Further research:
Concurrence of violence and risk behaviors among low-income adults

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Implications for health care response to IPV

- Both women and men report fear of a partner
- Clinicians may find it easier to introduce topic of IPV with questions about safety/fear of a partner
- Among women, sexual risk behaviors appears to be a good marker for IPV assessment
- Among men, identification of alcohol misuse indicates a need for discussion of possible IPV experience

Thank you!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Have you tried EpiQuery?
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CHS Weighting

- To account for unequal selection probabilities and nonresponse
- Primary weight: inverse of selection probability
 - ◆ #adults in household / #residential phone lines
 - ◆ Loss of phone service in past year
- Post-stratification:
 - ◆ Adjusted to age, race/ethnicity, and gender of each sampling stratum (neighborhood)