

Home Office Research Study 276

Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey

Sylvia Walby and Jonathan Allen

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Foreword

Inter-personal violence comprises crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. These are important forms of crime and the government is engaged in a major series of policy initiatives in order to deal with them. However, only a small fraction of these cases are reported to the police and recorded by them, and even interview based surveys have difficulty in getting people to disclose such events. This report presents the findings of an innovative computerised self-completion questionnaire included in the British Crime Survey (BCS) which encourages wider reporting of experiences than the main face-to-face part of the BCS. It builds on previous use of this methodology in the BCS, and provides the most reliable findings to date on the extent and nature of inter-personal violence in England and Wales.

The results from this survey reveal that inter-personal violence is widespread, affecting approximately one third of the population at some time in their lives. One in twenty women have experienced serious sexual assault, while one in five women and one in ten men have been victims of domestic violence. The levels of sexual assaults and other violence reported here will make for disturbing reading. No society can be complacent in the face of evidence of such widespread experience of violence, assault and harassment.

Inter-personal violence is also a concentrated phenomenon, in that there are cases of extremely high levels of repeat victimisation, in particular of domestic violence. For instance, a third of female victims were subject to more than three incidents of domestic violence by the person who victims described as committing the worst incident they experienced.

Information in the survey was also gathered on the over-lap between domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, repeat victimisation, survivors' perceptions of their experiences, associated risk factors, and patterns of seeking help from the police and other agencies. The results will provide policy makers, practitioners and criminal justice system professionals with information to develop the policies needed to challenge and reduce these forms of violence.

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The 2001 British Crime Survey included a detailed self-completion questionnaire designed to ascertain:

- the most accurate estimates of the extent and nature of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking for England and Wales.

The question set also enabled first ever provision at a national level of:

- estimates of sexual assault against men;
- the most detailed distinctions between different forms of sexual assault; and
- the overlaps between domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

A nationally representative sample of 22,463 women and men aged 16-59 were asked, via a computerised self-completion questionnaire, whether they had been subject to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking during their lifetime and during the preceding year. Those who had been subject to such incidents were asked details about their experiences, enabling distinctions to be made between levels and overlaps of the three forms of violence, the identification of risk factors associated with such violence, the impact it had on people's lives, and the manner in which people sought help.

Previous self-completion modules on domestic violence (1996 BCS), sexual victimisation (1998 & 2000 BCS) and stalking (1998 BCS) have been included in the British Crime Survey. These studies show prevalence rates for domestic violence, rape and stalking of the same order of magnitude as those reported here.

The extent of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking

- Inter-personal violence is both widely dispersed and it is concentrated. It is widely dispersed in that some experience of domestic violence (abuse, threats or force), sexual victimisation or stalking is reported by over one third (36%) of people. It is concentrated in that a minority, largely women, suffer multiple attacks, severe injuries, experience more than one form of inter-personal violence and serious disruption to their lives.

Experience of inter-personal violence in the 12 months prior to interview

- The BCS estimates that thirteen per cent of women and nine per cent of men had been subject to domestic violence (abuse, threats or force), sexual victimisation or stalking in the twelve months prior to interview.
- Four per cent of women and two per cent of men were subject to domestic violence (non-sexual domestic threats or force) during the last year. Extending the definition to include financial and emotional abuse increases these figures to six and five per cent respectively. If the definition of domestic violence is narrowed to non-sexual domestic force only, then three per cent of women and two per cent of men were affected.
- Among women subject to domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force) in the last year, the average number of incidents was 20, while 28 per cent experienced one incident only. Of men subject to domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force) in the last year, the (mean) average number of incidents was seven, while one incident was experienced by 47 per cent.
- There were an estimated 12.9 million incidents of domestic violence acts (non-sexual threats or force) against women and 2.5 million against men in England and Wales in the year prior to interview.
- Two per cent of women were subject to less serious sexual assault, 0.5 per cent to serious sexual assaults (and 0.3% to rape) during the last year. This equates to an estimated 190,000 incidents of serious sexual assault and an estimated 47,000 female victims of rape (or attempted rape, using the 1994 definition). Among men, 0.2 per cent were subject to any form of sexual assault (less and more serious combined), during the year prior to interview. (Figures for serious sexual assaults include attempts throughout).
- Eight per cent of women and six per cent of men were subject to stalking during the last year. This means that over 1.2 million women and almost 900,000 men were affected.

Lifetime and since age 16 experience of inter-personal violence

- Overall, 45 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men aged 16-59 could recall being subject to domestic violence (abuse, threats or force), sexual victimisation or stalking at least once in their lifetimes (domestic violence since 16; sexual victimisation or stalking at any point in a respondent's lifetime).

- The BCS estimates that one in five (21%) women and one in ten (10%) men have experienced at least one incident of non-sexual domestic threat or force since they were 16. If financial and emotional abuse are included, then 26 per cent of women and 17 per cent of men had experienced domestic violence since the age of 16.
- Twenty-four per cent of women and five per cent of men had been subject to some form of sexual victimisation at least once in their lifetimes and seventeen per cent of women and two per cent of men had been sexually victimised in some way at least once since they were 16.
- Seven per cent of women had suffered a serious sexual assault at least once in their lifetime (five per cent of women had been raped and three per cent had suffered another type of serious sexual assault involving penetration of the body). The equivalent figures for such assaults since 16 were five per cent, four per cent and two per cent.
- Overall, 1.5 per cent of men had suffered a serious sexual assault at some point in their lives with 0.9 per cent reporting rape. The equivalent figures since 16 were 0.5 per cent and 0.4 per cent.
- Nineteen per cent of women and twelve per cent of men had experienced stalking or harassment at some point in their lifetimes.

The most heavily abused

- While some experience of inter-personal violence is quite widespread, a minority is subject to extreme levels of violence, consistent with exceptional degrees of coercive control. The intensity of abuse for this group encompasses the frequency of attacks, the range of forms of violence and the severity of the injury.
- Women are the overwhelming majority of the most heavily abused group. Among people subject to four or more incidents of domestic violence from the perpetrator of the worst incident (since age 16), 89 per cent were women. Thirty-two per cent of women had experienced domestic violence from this person four or more times compared with only 11 per cent of men.

- 3.3 per cent of women and 0.3 per cent of men were subject to all three forms of inter-personal violence (domestic violence, sexual victimisation and stalking, by one or more perpetrators) at some point in their lives.

The experience of inter-personal violence: impact and meaning

The following findings refer to the worst incident (victim defined) experienced in the time period specified.

- Injuries were often sustained as a result of domestic violence, especially among women. During the worst incident of domestic violence experienced in the last year, 46 per cent of women sustained a minor physical injury, 20 per cent a moderate physical injury, and six per cent severe injuries, while for 31 per cent it resulted in mental or emotional problems. Among men, 41 per cent sustained a minor physical injury, 14 per cent a moderate physical injury, one per cent severe injuries and nine per cent mental or emotional problems.
- Among women who had been subject to serious sexual assault (that is rape and other forms of unwanted penetration of the body) since 16, for 52 per cent the worst incident led to depression or other emotional problems, attempted suicide by five per cent, and pregnancy for four per cent.
- Domestic violence has a detrimental impact on employment. Among employed women who suffered domestic violence in the last year, 21 per cent took time off work and two per cent lost their jobs. Among men in this situation, six per cent took time off work and two per cent lost their jobs.
- 64 per cent of women and 94 per cent of men subject to domestic violence in the last year did not think that what had happened to them was a crime. However two-thirds of women who had been victimised many times did think it was a crime. These women were also more likely to think that what had happened to them was 'domestic violence'. There was a greater likelihood of applying the concepts of domestic violence and crime to the incident if injuries were sustained and the acts were severe and repeated.
- Among women subject since 16 to an act that met the 1994 legal definition of rape, only 43 per cent thought of it as rape.

Offenders and relationships

- The rapist was an intimate in 54 per cent of (worst) cases suffered since the age of 16, being a husband or partner in 45 per cent and former husband or partner in 9 per cent. A further 29 per cent of the rapists were known to the woman, while only 17 per cent were strangers. Only four per cent were cases of date rape.
- Thirty seven per cent of cases of aggravated stalking (with violence additional to the stalking) against women were by an intimate, 59 per cent by other known persons and seven per cent by strangers. In such cases among men, eight per cent were by an intimate, 70 per cent from other known persons and 30 per cent by strangers.
- Leaving their violent partner led to the cessation of the domestic violence for the majority (63%) of women, for a significant minority (18%) it continued in another form, such as stalking or harassment. For 78 per cent of men who left the violent partner the violence stopped.
- Of the female victims of domestic violence who had seen the perpetrator since they had split up because of their child/ren, 29 per cent had been threatened, 13 per cent had been abused in some way, two per cent had had their children threatened, and in one per cent of cases the perpetrator had hurt the children.

Risk factors

- Women were more at risk than men of inter-personal violence, and especially of sexual assault. Younger people were more at risk of all forms of inter-personal violence than older people.
- During the last year women in households with an income of less than £10,000 were three and a half times more likely to suffer domestic violence than those living in households with an income of over £20,000, while men were one and a half times more likely. The nature of the links between poverty and risk of inter-personal violence is unclear. It may be that poverty is associated with the onset of domestic violence, or it may be that in fleeing domestic violence women are reduced to poverty.

Seeking help

- Thirty-one per cent of female victims and 63 per cent of male victims had not told anyone other than the survey about the worst incident of domestic violence that they had suffered during the last year.
- Forty per cent of women told no one about their worst experience of rape suffered since the age of 16.
- Twenty-five per cent of those women that were raped in their worst incident (since age 16) and classified it as such, told no one about this incident.
- Among victims of stalking last year, nine per cent of women and 17 per cent of men had told no one.
- In less than one in four (23% women; 8% men) of the worst cases of domestic violence in the last year did the police come to know.
- In cases of sexual assault the police came to know in less than one in seven of the worst cases (15% completed rape; 12% any serious sexual assault; 13% less serious sexual assault).
- Stalking was the most likely to be reported of these forms of inter-personal violence, but even for this, in only one in three (31% women last year; 30% men) cases did the police come to know.
- Asked why they did not report the worst incident of domestic violence in the last year, 41 per cent of women and 68 per cent of men replied they thought that it was too trivial, 38 per cent of women and 39 per cent of men that it was a private family matter, seven per cent of women and five per cent of men that they did not want any more humiliation, and 13 per cent of women, but no discernible percentage of men, that they feared more violence or that the situation would get worse as a result of police involvement.
- In the worst cases of domestic violence against women during the last year where the police had been informed, as far as the women were aware, the police had arrested the perpetrator in 21 per cent of cases, sent him to court in 10 per cent, spoken to him in 42 per cent of cases, and, in 29 per cent of cases, not found the

person, nor spoken to or arrested him, nor sent him to court. Of that minority of women who used the police service, 68 per cent were fairly or very satisfied and 31 per cent a bit or very dissatisfied.

- Of those who suffered injuries in the worst incident of domestic violence in the last year, 27 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men sought medical assistance on that occasion. Of the women who sought medical assistance, 94 per cent were asked the cause of their injuries by the attending doctor or nurse, 74 per cent disclosed a cause, and only 26 per cent were referred on to someone else who could help them.

The 2001 British Crime Survey (BCS) self-completion module on inter-personal violence was designed to measure the experience of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. The findings reported here provide the most reliable national-level picture of the extent and nature of inter-personal violence in England and Wales. By including domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking in the same questionnaire, it makes possible for the first time analysis of comparisons and linkages between them. Further innovations were the development and use of a detailed scale making distinctions between different forms of sexual violence as well as the reporting of findings about sexual assaults on men. The method of self-completion by computer provides a level of confidentiality that facilitates disclosure of sensitive events that may not be reported during the earlier face-to-face part of the BCS questionnaire.

What is inter-personal violence?

The term 'inter-personal violence' is used in this report to include non-sexual domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Each of these categories of violence can themselves be defined in different ways, varying in the type of violence included, the severity of the violence and the relationship with the perpetrator. There are varying views between areas of public policy and practice about the thresholds at which such violence is considered to warrant different types and levels of intervention. Therefore this report uses a number of different definitions of violence. Box 1.1 shows the definitions of the various forms of violence within these categories.

Box 1.1 **Types of inter-personal violence**

Inter-personal violence = domestic violence (non-sexual) or sexual assault or stalking
Within inter-personal violence, the report differentiates between the main categories of violence.

Domestic violence (non-sexual)

This includes three types of violence:

Any of codes:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| ● <i>Domestic violence (abuse, threat or force)</i> | <i>a to j</i> |
| ● <i>Domestic violence (threat or force)</i> | <i>c to j</i> |
| ● <i>Domestic violence (force)</i> | <i>d to j</i> |
| - <i>Minor</i> | <i>d</i> |
| - <i>Severe</i> | <i>e to i</i> |

The options (codes) available to respondents were:

Abuse

- a) Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- b) Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives

Threat

- c) Frightened you, by threatening to hurt you or someone close to you

Force – minor

- d) Pushed you, held or pinned you down or slapped you

Force – severe

- e) Kicked you, bit you, or hit you with a fist or something else, or threw something at you that hurt you
- f) Choked or tried to strangle you
- g) Threatened you with a weapon, such as a stick or a knife
- h) Threatened to kill you
- i) Used a weapon against you, e.g. a knife

Other codes

- j) Used some other kind of force against you
- k) None of these
- l) Have never had a partner/been in a relationship
- m) Don't know/can't remember
- n) Don't wish to answer

Data was gathered on relations between intimates and former intimates. It focused on incidents experienced since the age of 16 and also in the last 12 months prior to interview.

Sexual assault

This includes:

Serious sexual assault – assault involving penetration of the body without consent.

Within this are the following sub-categories:

	Any of codes:
● <i>Rape</i> (1994) – penetration of the vagina or anus by the penis without consent (legal definition in 1994)	<i>a,c,f,h</i>
● <i>Rape</i> (2003) – in addition to the 1994 definition penetration of the mouth by penis without consent (extension to the definition of rape in 2003)	<i>a,c,e,f,h,j</i>
● <i>Assault by penetration</i> (2003) – penetration of the vagina or anus by other body parts or objects (new offence)	<i>b,d,g,i</i>

The options (codes) available to respondents were:

- a) [Women only] Penetrated your vagina with a penis, even if only slightly
- b) [Women only] Penetrated your vagina with an object (including fingers) even if only slightly
- c) Penetrated your anus with a penis even if only slightly
- d) Penetrated your anus with an object (including fingers) even if only slightly
- e) Penetrated your mouth with a penis even if only slightly
- f) [Women only] *Attempted* to penetrate your vagina with a penis, but did not succeed
- g) [Women only] *Attempted* to penetrate your vagina with an object (including fingers) but did not succeed
- h) *Attempted* to penetrate your anus with a penis but did not succeed
- i) *Attempted* to penetrate your anus with an object (including fingers) but did not succeed
- j) *Attempted* to penetrate your mouth with a penis but did not succeed
- k) Some other forced sexual act, e.g. made you perform masturbation, or other humiliating sexual acts
- l) None of these
- m) Don't know/can't remember
- n) Don't wish to answer

Less serious sexual assault – incidents of flashing, sexual threats or touching that cause fear, alarm or distress

Information was collected on sexual assaults experienced 'ever' (i.e. including those experienced as a child), since the age of 16 and in the last year. It includes incidents by any perpetrator (i.e. includes incidents by strangers, acquaintances or other family members as well as by intimates). The sub-categories of serious sexual assault all include attempts at acts.

Stalking

Defined as a course of conduct involving two or more events of harassment causing fear, alarm or distress, of three types: phone calls or letters; loitering outside home or work; damaged property.

Information was collected on stalking experienced ever (i.e. including incidents prior to the age of 16) and in the last year. It includes incidents by any perpetrator, not just by intimates.

Attempts

This report follows the Home Office (2002) Rules for Recorded Crime practice of including attempts to commit a crime within the crime count, where this is relevant. The only place where the survey asked for attempts to commit an act in addition to a completed act was in the case of serious sexual assault. Here a distinction is sometimes made between acts that were attempts and those that were completed. If no qualification is noted, then the figure for serious sexual assaults includes attempts.

Intimates

Information was collected on violence by intimates and by other perpetrators. An 'intimate' was defined as any partner (boyfriend/girlfriend as well as husband or wife), either current or previous. Some definitions of domestic violence, including that used by the police, include violence from any family member. This reports concentrates on violence by partners and ex-partners.

Information on sexual assaults and stalking was also collected on incidents committed by other people including dates, parents, step-parents, other relatives, work or school colleagues, neighbours, friends or acquaintances. In Chapter 4, the report distinguishes between known non-intimates and those who are unknown.

Domestic violence

The Home Office defines domestic violence as:

Any violence between current or former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever the violence occurs. The violence may include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse.

(Government Policy on Domestic Violence at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimpol/crimreduc/domviolence/domviol98.html#defining>)

This definition means that the category 'domestic violence (non-sexual)' should be interpreted as an incomplete account of the full extent of violence from intimates and former intimates as it does not include either sexual violence or stalking by intimates. The 2001 BCS included information on the relationship between the victim and perpetrator only for the incident of sexual assault or stalking that the victim described as their worst incident, so it is not possible to estimate the incidence and prevalence of this wider definition of domestic violence. However, the proportion of worst incidents of less serious and more serious sexual assault that involve partners is discussed in Chapter 4.

Sexual assaults

A new scale was developed to capture differences between different forms of sexual assaults. These included various forms of unwanted penetration of the body, including but not only rape, that were grouped together as serious sexual assaults, as well as a three-fold category of less serious sexual assaults, which, while causing fear, alarm or distress, did not involve penetration.

Stalking

Stalking and harassment were defined as a series, that is, of two or more, incidents that amounted to a course of action causing fear, alarm or distress.

Policy development

Current government strategy to address domestic violence is based on three elements: 'prevention – preventing violence happening in the first place, and preventing its recurrence; protection and justice – ensuring that the justice system provides adequate protection for victims and brings more offenders to justice; support – providing adequate housing and financial support to help victims and their children rebuild their lives' (Home Office 2003: 58).

There is active policy development in the area of inter-personal violence including:

Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence

This group has identified five action areas: early intervention by health practitioners; enhanced criminal and civil jurisdiction interface; increasing safe accommodation choices for women and children; education and raising awareness; ensuring an appropriate and consistent police response.

Inter-departmental Ministerial Group on Sexual Offending

The remit of this group is to ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the Sexual Offences Act (2003), and to co-ordinate and promote action to tackle sexual offending and provide appropriate support to victims.

Crime Reduction Programme (CRP)

The Crime Reduction Programme Violence Against Women Initiative, launched in 2000, aimed to find out which approaches and practices are effective in providing support and services to female victims of violence. The findings from the 34 multi-agency, victim-focused projects and their evaluations will be published from 2004 onwards.

Sexual Offences Review and Act

The Sexual Offences Review was published as Home Office (2000) *Setting the Boundaries: Reforming the Law on Sex Offences*. A Sexual Offences Bill (House of Lords 2003) completed progress through the House of Lords in June 2003 and gained Royal Assent in November 2003. Changes to the law in the Act included: the extension of the definition of rape so as to include penetration of the mouth by penis without consent, the creation of a new offence of 'assault by penetration' of incidents involving the penetration of the vagina and anus by body parts and objects without consent, the redefinition of consent with a 'reasonable person' test, the redefinition of old offences of indecent assault as a new offence of sexual assault defined as unwanted sexual touching, and a new offence of causing another person to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Domestic Violence Consultation Paper and Bill

A Consultation Paper on domestic violence, *Safety and Justice*, was produced in 2003 (Home Office 2003). Issues on which the government was seeking views include: the best way of measuring the incidence of domestic violence and of the effects of strategy to reduce it; how to raise awareness about domestic violence among the general public, particular groups and key professionals; the nature of improvements in procedures within the criminal and civil justice systems; the nature of improvements in other public services including health and housing for the homeless. A Domestic Violence Bill was introduced into Parliament in Autumn 2003.

Benchmarking in public services

There is ongoing development of benchmarks and performance indicators so as to better measure the impact of policies to reduce inter-personal violence (Home Office 2003). Best value performance indicators (BVPIs) for the police service 2002/3 include: BVPI 153: percentage of reported domestic violence incidents where there was a power of arrest, in which an arrest was made relating to the incident (both 'family' and 'partner on partner'). There are three further performance indicators to which inter-personal violence makes a contribution: BVPI 127 number of recorded violent crimes per 1,000, and the percentage of these that were detected; BVPI 120 level of crime; BVPI 121 fear of crime.

Previous research

International research

Conventional crime surveys have long been criticised for underestimating the extent of inter-personal violence, especially that by intimates, and in response there has been a series of national surveys of different types of inter-personal violence taking place in several countries (Walby and Myhill 2001a). One of the key issues was that of developing a vocabulary for the questionnaires that was sufficiently sensitive to popular terminology, while avoiding the more heavily stigmatised terms that may lead to non-disclosure. Strategies to address this included that of using behavioural descriptions and avoiding shorthands (Smith 1994) such as might be used in screener questions. A key scale, frequently replicated at least in part, is the Conflict Tactics Scale developed by Straus and Gelles (1990) in order to provide a scaling for forms of domestic violence. However, this has been subject to criticism (Dobash *et al.* 1992) on the grounds that it produced spurious gender symmetry as a consequence of paying insufficient attention to the context and to the impact of the acts (Nazroo 1995; Schwartz 1987). Later surveys have attempted to take these criticisms on board, especially those by Statistics Canada (Johnson 1996), Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996), those in Iceland (Gislason 1997) and Finland (Heiskanen and Piispa 1998), and those in the field in Germany and Ireland. Despite these developments, many of the surveys lack much nuanced reporting on sexual assaults and stalking.

Home Office research

The Home Office produced a distinctive response to these methodological problems, developing a series of specialised modules on particular forms of inter-personal violence that were asked after the main crime survey had been completed and which used the more confidential self-completion procedure made possible by the development of lap-top

computers and appropriate software. This more confidential method of data collection facilitates greater levels of disclosure of sensitive events than during the earlier face-to-face question and answer part of the interview. While the 'main' part of the BCS questionnaire does ask about domestic violence, the levels reported here are substantially lower than those using the self-completion methodology. This new self-completion methodology produces the more complete estimates. This method has been used for studies on rape and sexual assault in 1994 (Percy and Mayhew 1997), domestic violence in 1996 (this was restricted to threats and actual physical assaults, Mirrlees-Black 1999), stalking in 1998 (Budd *et al.* 2000), and rape and sexual assault in 1998 and 2000 (Myhill and Allen 2002). Findings from these studies and from the main 'face-to-face' part of the BCS are reported in Chapter 7, where they are compared with the current study. This study builds on these earlier ones.

Developing explanations

A number of vigorous theoretical debates with significant policy implications have developed. The 2001 British Crime Survey self-completion module on inter-personal violence is intended to provide evidence as to the extent and nature of inter-personal violence and to assist in the assessment of alternative causal pathways leading to the onset and desistance from inter-personal violence. Some of the major debates are outlined below.

Is inter-personal violence widely dispersed or is it concentrated (Johnson 1995)? What is the relationship between social exclusion and inter-personal violence? Poverty and unemployment have sometimes been associated with both the propensity to commit and vulnerability to property crime (Witt *et al.* 1999), but does this apply to inter-personal violence? What are the factors that are associated with resilience and vulnerability to inter-personal violence?

Is inter-personal violence gender asymmetrical? Some surveys, especially those utilising the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Straus and Gelles 1990), have produced findings that have been interpreted as suggesting gender symmetry in the use of violence in the home. Others have contested this on the grounds that this measurement instrument (CTS) is inherently flawed in that it does not measure the impact of the actions, which may be different for men and women (Dobash and Dobash *et al.* 1992), and that it ignores sexual violence which is overwhelmingly from men to women. The 2001 BCS investigates the impact of acts as well as the actions themselves and a fuller range of forms of inter-personal violence.

Is it a crime? Are domestic violence and other forms of inter-personal violence unique in their coercive and gendered characteristics, or are they just crimes like any others? There are complex issues of contested definition, both within the legal system and also among the

public, as to whether particular actions constitute crimes and how they might otherwise be described. The 2001 BCS IPV investigates the varied definitions of these events held by the public, especially by those who are survivors of inter-personal violence, including whether or not they are conceived as crimes. Further, the 2001 BCS IPV investigates the association of the severity of inter-personal violence with the criminal career of the perpetrator, so as to contribute to debates in this area (see Farrington 1992).

Desistance. A key question is that of desistance; what makes the violence stop (Feld and Straus 1989; Horton and Johnson 1993). Much early analysis especially of domestic violence was concerned with the onset of the violence, rather than its cessation. Yet, far more people have experienced inter-personal violence at some point in their lives than currently experience it. The 2001 BCS IPV asks about the process of ending violence in a relationship and about the use and non-use of services in this regard and asks those who managed to get the violence to stop why they think this happened.

The 2001 inter-personal violence module

The sample design was intended to provide, after appropriate weighting, a representative sample of the population aged 16 or over living in private households in England and Wales. It is possible that the exclusion of individuals not living in private households might affect some findings since some of the most recently and heavily abused population may be more likely to be living in refuges, hostels or other temporary accommodation, be staying with friends or be homeless.

Respondents aged 16-59 were asked about incidents of violence that they had experienced at any stage in their lifetime, those since they are aged 16 and also about incidents experienced in the last year. More detailed information was requested from respondents in relation to the nature and consequences of acts of inter-personal violence during the previous year. Respondents were asked about any incidents of sexual assault and stalking that they had ever experienced (i.e. including those before age 16). The questions about non-sexual domestic violence were only asked about incidents occurring since the age of 16 and in the last year. Table 1.1 shows the time periods over which data is available from the study.

Where the respondent had experienced an incident (whether one or more), they were asked detailed questions about the incident that they considered the worst. Although these questions were asked of all respondents saying that they had experienced one or more incidents of inter-personal violence, the number disclosing some types of violence is sometimes too small for this detailed information to be analysed. Further details about the methodology may be found in Appendix A.

Table 1.1 Recall periods for different types of violence

	BCS		
	Ever	Since 16	Last year
Domestic violence (non-sexual)	x	✓	✓
Sexual assault	✓	✓	✓
Stalking	✓	x	✓

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. X – unavailable in this study.

Structure of the report

Chapter 2 reports on the extent of the different forms of inter-personal violence and the extent to which they overlap.

Chapter 3 explores the experience of the violence, its impact on people’s lives and the terms they prefer to use in order to make sense of it, including whether or not they think it is a crime.

Chapter 4 examines the timing of the violence in the context of a relationship; when it starts, when it stops, and why people thought it stopped.

Chapter 5 investigates the factors associated with vulnerability to inter-personal violence, including socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

Chapter 6 looks at the different ways in which people sought help, whether they used voluntary or statutory agencies, including the police, and what they thought of them.

Chapter 7 compares the findings of the 2001 BCS self-completion module on inter-personal violence with other BCS studies.

Appendices:

A Survey design and methodological issues. Sampling, response rate, analysis of the implications of methods including the sex of the interviewer and assistance from them in completing the questionnaire; and how frequently someone else was in the room.

B Tests for statistical significance of risk factors.

2.

The extent of inter-personal violence

This chapter provides estimates of the extent of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking in England and Wales. As there are several definitions of the forms of inter-personal violence in active use in public policy, we report the extent of such using a range of definitions. Attention is also paid to the extent of multiple victimisation and overlaps between different forms of inter-personal violence experienced by victims.

Prevalence of inter-personal violence

Inter-personal violence is both widely dispersed, in that some experience is reported (at some time in their lives) by over one third (36%) of people, and concentrated, in that a minority, largely women, suffer multiple attacks and are subject to more than one form of inter-personal violence.

Lifetime

The 2001 BCS estimates that 45 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men aged 16 to 59 had experienced at least one incident of inter-personal violence in their lifetimes, using the broadest definition¹.

Twenty-four per cent of women and five per cent of men had been subject to some form of sexual assault at least once in their lifetimes.

Five per cent of women had been raped and three per cent had suffered another type of serious sexual assault involving penetration of the body at least once in their lifetimes, so that altogether seven per cent of women had suffered a serious sexual assault. The proportion of men reporting rape was 0.9 per cent, and altogether those men who had suffered a serious sexual assault at some point in their lives was 1.5 per cent.

¹ This figure includes any sexual assault and stalking at any point in a respondent's lifetime, and domestic violence (abuse, threats or force) only since 16 (refer to Box 1.1 for further detail).

Since 16

The BCS estimates that one in four (26%) women and 17 per cent of men aged 16 to 59 have experienced at least one incident of non-sexual domestic abuse, threat or force since they were 16. If financial and emotional abuse are excluded, limiting the violence to the use of non-sexual threats or force, then 21 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men had experienced domestic violence since age 16.

Figure 2.1 Prevalence of domestic violence (non-sexual since age 16)

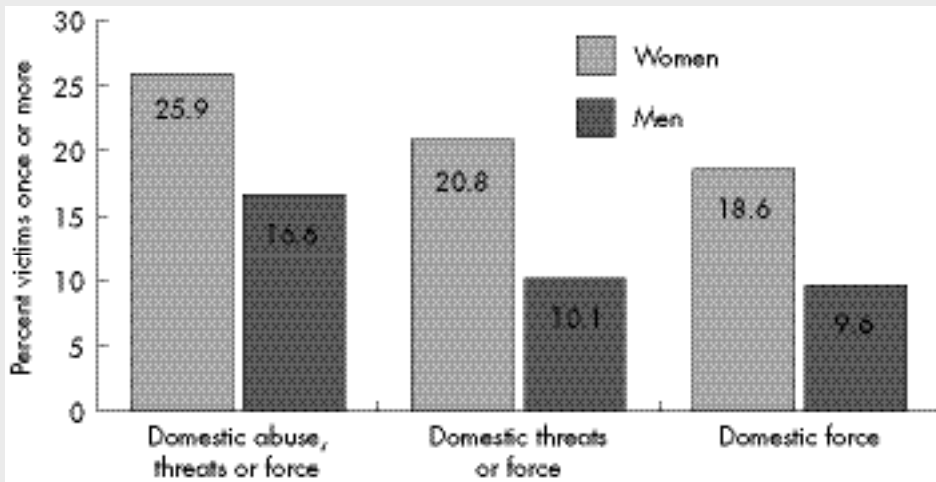
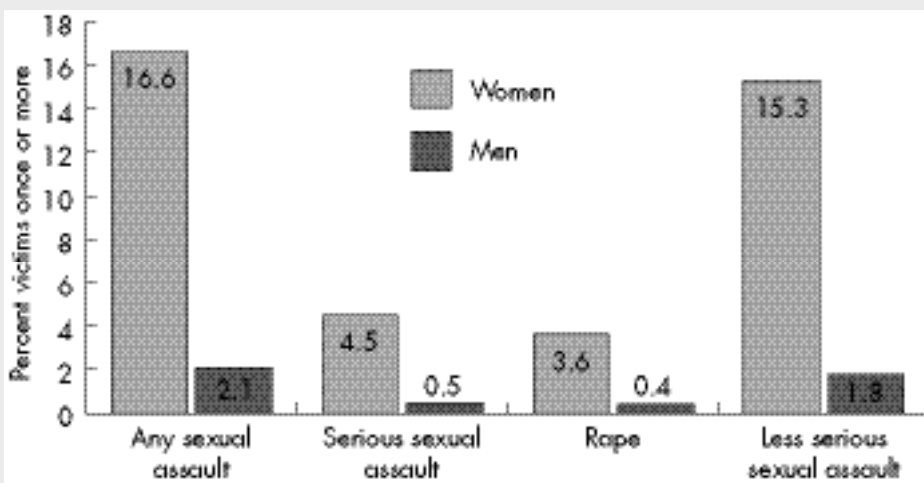


Figure 2.2 Prevalence of sexual assault (including attempts) since age 16



Seventeen per cent of women and two per cent of men had been sexually assaulted at least once since they were 16. Four per cent of women had been raped and one per cent had experienced another type of serious sexual assault since the age of 16, so that altogether five per cent of women had suffered a serious sexual assault. The proportion of men reporting rape was 0.4 per cent, and altogether those men who had suffered a serious sexual assault was 0.5 per cent.

Nineteen per cent of women and 12 per cent of men experienced stalking or harassment at some point in their lifetimes.

Prevalence in the 12 months prior to interview

The BCS estimates that thirteen per cent of women and nine per cent of men were subject to some form of inter-personal violence in the 12 months prior to interview (henceforth referred to as 'last year'). Among women, six per cent were subject to non-sexual domestic abuse, threats or force, two per cent to less serious sexual assault, 0.5 per cent to serious sexual assaults (and 0.3% to rape). Eight per cent were subject to stalking. Five per cent of men were subject to non-sexual domestic abuse, threats or force, 0.2 per cent to any form of sexual assault (less and more serious combined) and six per cent to stalking.

Figure 2.3 *Prevalence of inter-personal violence in the last year*

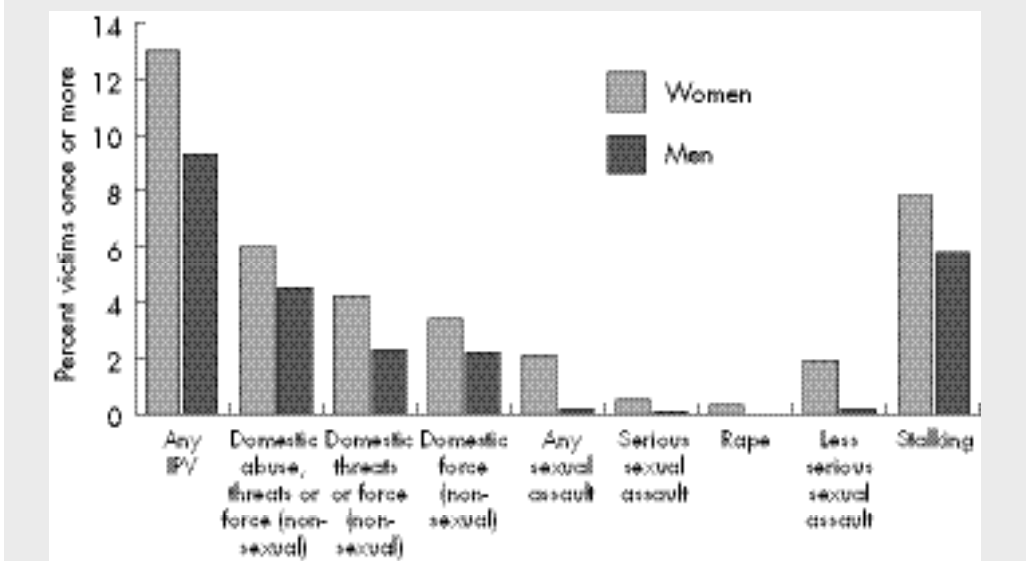


Table 2.1 Prevalence of inter-personal violence

	Percent victims once or more						BCS
	Ever	Women		Ever	Men		
		Since age 16	Last year		Since age 16	Last year	
Any form of Interpersonal violence	13.0	9.3	
Domestic violence (non-sexual)							
- domestic abuse, threat or force	...	25.9	6.0	...	16.6	4.5	
- domestic threat or force	...	20.8	4.2	...	10.1	2.3	
- domestic force	...	18.6	3.4	...	9.6	2.2	
- minor	...	15.4	2.6	...	5.1	1.1	
- severe	...	11.3	1.6	...	6.6	1.2	
Sexual assault (any, including attempts)	24.1	16.6	2.1	4.7	2.1	0.2	
- serious sexual assault (including attempts)	7.0	4.5	0.5	1.5	0.5	0.1	
- serious sexual assault (excluding attempts)	5.6	3.6	0.3	0.9	0.3	0.1	
- rape 1994 (incl. attempts)	5.2	3.6	0.3	0.9	0.4	<0.0	
- rape 1994 (excl. attempts)	4.2	3.0	0.2	0.6	0.2	<0.0	
- rape 2003 (incl. attempts)	5.5	3.7	0.3	1.2	0.4	<0.0	
- rape 2003 (excl. attempts)	4.4	3.1	0.2	0.7	0.2	<0.0	
- assault by penetration 2003 (including attempts)	2.9	1.6	0.3	0.4	0.2	<0.0	
- assault by penetration 2003 (excluding attempts)	2.2	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	<0.0	
- less serious sexual assault	22.3	15.3	1.9	3.9	1.8	0.2	
Stalking	18.9	...	7.8	11.6	...	5.8	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. '...' Not applicable/not available.
3. Data rounded to one decimal place.
4. Prevalences estimates are based on the total sample including those who said they did not know or did not want to answer the question.
5. Rape (1994) is the legal category of rape introduced in 1994. This is penetration of the vagina or anus by a penis without consent. Rape (2003) is the legal category of rape introduced in legislation in 2003. This additionally includes the penetration of the mouth by a penis without consent. Assault by penetration (2003) is a new legal offence introduced in 2003. This is the penetration of the vagina or anus by an object or other body part without consent.

Comparisons between the profiles of events reported 'since 16' and 'last year' in this report should be treated with caution. There are at least five reasons for differences between these two time frames. First, over the many years of a lifetime there are more opportunities for inter-personal violence than in one year, 'last year'. In this sense 'last year' is just a small sub-set of 'since 16', so there may be less likelihood of incidence and of severe acts 'last year' than 'since 16'. Second, respondents' answers may be affected by considerations of memory and recall. It is possible that events long ago may be forgotten, or less easily brought to mind, than events that are more recent. This may mean greater under-reporting of events 'since 16' than 'last year'. Third, events in the last year may be less reported because victims have not yet come to terms with their experience, may not yet have discussed it with others, and not feel able to respond to the multiple choice questions put to them by an anonymous computer. Fourth, events in the last year may be under-reported because victims may have recently moved away from a violent partner, and not yet have a settled domestic residence, perhaps staying with family, friends or in a refuge, and so not within the BCS sampling frame that is constituted by residents of domestic households. Fifth, there may be change over time, in at least two different ways: there may be greater willingness to name acts as domestic violence or rape or stalking today than decades ago; and/or there may be a higher 'actual' rate of inter-personal violence than in earlier years. While some of the data presented in this report addresses some of these issues, many of these questions cannot be resolved by data from a survey at one point in time. Rather they are considerations to be borne in mind when data from both 'since 16' and 'last year' are presented side by side.

Detailed prevalence

Table 2.2 shows a more detailed breakdown of the prevalence of types of violence. The descriptions of the different types of non-sexual domestic violence and their location in a hierarchical scale were developed using a modified version of the widely used Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus and Gelles 1990). The scale was adapted in the light of critical comments (e.g. Dobash *et al.* 1992) and also to take account of the UK context (e.g. the lower prevalence of guns than in the US). The report uses a set of categories that group the levels of domestic violence: abuse, that includes financial and emotional abuse; threats, these are limited to threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them that frightened the respondent; two levels of domestic force, minor force, limited to being pushed, held down or slapped, and severe force that included being kicked, hit with a fist, choked, threats to kill and use or threat of use of weapons. This list does not include sexual assaults, which are included in a separate scale.

Attempted to penetrate your anus with a penis	0.3	0.2	<0.1	2	0.3	0.2	<0.1
<i>Rape (2003)</i>							
Penetrated your mouth with a penis	5.5	3.7	0.3	52	1.2	0.4	<0.0
Attempted to penetrate your mouth with a penis	0.9	0.6	0.1	10	0.2	<0.1	<0.1
<i>Assault by penetration (2003)</i>							...
Penetrated your vagina with an object (incl. fingers)	2.9	1.6	0.3	42	0.4	0.2	<0.0
Attempted to penetrate your vagina with an object (incl. fingers)	2.0	1.1	0.2	25	***	***	***
Penetrated your anus with an object (incl. fingers)	0.8	0.4	0.1	15	***	***	***
Attempted to penetrate your anus with an object (incl. fingers)	0.4	0.2	<0.1	5	0.3	0.1	<0.1
Less serious sexual assault	22.3	15.3	1.9	293	3.9	1.8	0.2
Indecently exposing himself (flashing) in a manner that caused fear, alarm or distress	12.8	8.0	0.5	80	1.2	0.5	0.1
Touching you sexually in a manner that caused you fear, alarm or distress (e.g. groping, touching breasts or bottom, unwanted kissing)	10.7	7.0	1.1	172	2.3	1.1	0.1
Sexually threatening you in a manner that caused you fear, alarm or distress (e.g. demanding sex when you didn't want it, following or cornering you in a sexually threatening way)	4.9	3.8	0.6	90	0.8	0.4	<0.1
Stalking	18.9	...	7.8	1206	11.6	...	5.8
Received a series (i.e. two or more) phone calls or written letters that were obscene, a significant nuisance or threatening or had been left obscene, offensive or disturbing material.	13.5	...	4.9	758	5.3	...	2.7
Someone loitered regularly outside my house/work place/place I regularly visit or persistently followed me around (at least twice)	3.7	...	1.1	167	1.0	...	0.4
Someone deliberately interfered with/damaged my property on at least two occasions.	5.0	...	2.5	385	6.5	...	3.1

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. '...' Not available
3. '***' not applicable
4. '!' indicates no cases in this category
5. Estimated number of victims are rounded to the nearest 1,000.
6. Number of victims are not available for male serious sexual assault due to the small number of cases.
7. Prevalence estimates are based on the total sample including those who said they did not know or did not want to answer the question.

The typology of forms of sexual assault is more detailed than in either the conflict tactics scale (which has just one sexual item), or in earlier BCS work. There are two main levels: serious sexual assaults and less serious sexual assaults. 'Serious sexual assaults' were defined as penetration or attempted penetration of the body without consent. There are three further groups of categories. First, there are acts that meet the legal definition of rape since 1994, that is, the penetration of the vagina or anus by a man's penis without consent. Second, there are acts that additionally meet the extension to the definition of rape in 2003, that is, penetration of the mouth by a penis without consent. The third category is of acts that are included in a new offence of 'assault by penetration', that is, penetration of the vagina or anus by other body parts or by objects without consent. The survey explicitly named each orifice and object for two reasons. Firstly, experts advised that acts within this category would be under-reported unless they were explicitly named. Secondly, it was proposed in the Home Office (2000) review of sexual offences and in the subsequent Sexual Offences Bill (House of Lords 2003) that unwanted penetration of the mouth by a man's penis be included within the legal category of rape, while unwanted penetration of the vagina or anus by a part of the body other than penis or by an object be included in a new legal category of 'assault by penetration'. Data is thus provided here on events that fall within the 1994 legal definition of rape, those that fall within the 2003 extension to the category of rape, and those that fall within the new offence of assault by penetration.

A minimum threshold was set for the less serious sexual assault, that the event had to cause 'fear, alarm or distress', in order to remove ambiguity and to avoid trivial or spurious responses, and uses wording suggested in Home Office (2000). Three sub-categories of less serious sexual assaults used in the survey were provided with details and examples for clarity: 'indecently exposing himself to you (i.e. flashing) in a manner that caused you fear or alarm or distress; touching you sexually when you did not want it, in a manner which caused you fear or alarm or distress (e.g. groping, touching of breasts or bottom, unwanted kissing); sexually threatening you in a manner which caused you fear or alarm or distress (e.g. demanding sex when you did not want it; following or cornering you in a sexually threatening way).

The study uses three different thresholds for the analysis of non-sexual domestic violence, emotional and financial abuse, threats, and force. These are nested for women, as seen in Table 2.9. By this is meant that those who have experienced the more serious forms of violence are likely also to have experienced the less serious forms. That is, of those women who have been subject to domestic force half (48%) have also been subject to frightening threats and nearly half (41%) to emotional or financial abuse. However, men's experiences are much less nested, that is, of those subject to domestic force, only 9 per cent had also experienced frightening threats and 28 per cent emotional or financial abuse.

The most common form of non-sexual domestic force used against women was 'pushed you, held or pinned you down, or slapped you', experienced by 15 per cent of women since 16. Three per cent (410,000 women) reported experiencing this form of violence in the last year. Ten per cent of women were subject to 'kicked you, bit you, or hit you with a fist or something else, or threw something at you that could hurt you', since they were 16. One per cent (205,000 women) experienced this last year. The very serious, life-threatening, form of domestic violence, 'choked or tried to strangle you' was experienced by five per cent of women since 16. In the year recall period this happened to 65,000 women.

The rates of many forms of non-sexual domestic violence among men were around half those for women. Further, the meaning of these actions may also be different. Men reported being frightened by threats much less than women, while eleven per cent of women reported frightening threats since 16, and over 300,000 last year, only one per cent of men reported frightening threats since 16, affecting less than 30,000 men last year. The context of fear is an important element in the understanding of domestic violence as a pattern of coercive control. Further, only one tenth as many men as women reported the potentially life-threatening form of violence of being 'choked or tried to strangle you'.

The most common of the forms of less serious sexual assault in the previous year was unwanted sexual touching that caused fear, alarm or distress, affecting 172,000 women. The forms of serious sexual assault involving unwanted penetration of the body were varied. Just over half the cases involved the (now defunct) definition of rape as non-consensual sex involving a penis and vagina, while three-quarters were legally rape under the extended 1994 definition (non-consensual sex involving a penis and vagina or anus). The further extension of the legal definition of rape in 2003 (including penetration of the mouth by penis without consent) slightly increased the number of incidents of serious sexual assault legally categorised as rape. The new offence of 'assault by penetration' would be relevant to further cases of serious sexual assault that fall outside the definition of rape, the most common of which was the penetration of the vagina by a body part or object without consent. Among men, the numbers of reported incidents of serious sexual assault were too few for reliable further analysis.

Stalking is defined as a course of conduct, as a series of events. There is no difference between the number of incidents and the number of victims because even when there are many separate incidents these are counted simply as one course of conduct of harassment and, further, because the respondents were not asked about the possibility of multiple perpetrators (even though this may have occurred to them). Respondents were asked about three types of stalking or harassment. The most common form was that of phone calls or written notes or other material that had been left for the respondent that were obscene, offensive, disturbing, a significant nuisance or threatening. This was experienced by 4.9 per

cent of women and 2.7 per cent of men last year. The second most common form was that of deliberate interference with or damage to property and had been experienced by 2.5 per cent of women and 3.1 per cent of men in the last year. The third form was that of regular loitering at the respondent's home or place of work or persistently following, which had been experienced by 1.1 per cent of women and 0.4 per cent of men last year.

As these estimates are derived from a survey, they are subject to sampling error. These figures constitute the best estimates of the number of victims. Table 2.3 shows the upper and lower limits of these estimates, based on 95 per cent confidence intervals and a design factor of 1.2.

Table 2.3 *Estimates of the number of victims in the last year, with confidence intervals*

	BCS		
	Best estimate	Lowest estimate	Highest estimate
Women			
Domestic violence (non-sexual)			
- domestic abuse, threat or force	931,000	853,000	1,009,000
- domestic threat or force	657,000	590,000	723,000
- domestic force	529,000	469,000	589,000
Sexual assault⁴			
Serious sexual assault (incl. attempts)	79,000	54,000	104,000
Rape (1994) (incl. attempts)	47,000	28,000	67,000
Rape (1994) (excl. attempts)	25,000	11,000	39,000
Less serious sexual assault	293,000	245,000	340,000
Stalking	1,206,000	1,112,000	1,299,000
Men			
Domestic violence (non-sexual)			
- domestic abuse, threat or force	672,000	600,000	745,000
- domestic threat or force	356,000	302,000	409,000
- domestic force	338,000	286,000	390,000
Stalking	888,000	800,000	976,000

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. The estimates are subject to sampling error. The lowest and highest estimates are based on 95% confidence intervals and assume a design factor of 1.2.
3. Estimates of numbers of victims are rounded to the nearest 1,000.
4. The number of cases of serious sexual assault and rape from which these estimates of numbers of incidents are generated are low at 49 and 30 respectively, hence they should be treated with caution. Male prevalence was too low to generate comparable estimates.

Estimates of incidents of inter-personal violence (year prior to interview)

While prevalence refers to the proportion of the population that has experienced a particular type of violence once or more, incidence refers to the total number of occasions on which the violence occurred. Respondents were asked how many times a particular type of incident had occurred to them. The estimates of the number of incidents were generated from these follow-up questions in the module. The response categories for these particular questions were banded, so appropriate values needed to be taken to represent each of the various bands (where possible midpoints were used). In order to limit the burden on respondents, the follow-up questions needed to ascertain incidence were not asked in relation to financial and emotional abuse; while those for 'choked/threatened to kill/threatened with a weapon/and other force not otherwise mentioned' were all grouped as one. The frequency of the different forms of domestic violence for victims (since age 16) is shown in the table below.

The estimates of the number of incidents suffered by the sample in the year prior to interview were then multiplied by the appropriate factor to gross up the estimates to the population (aged 16-59) in England and Wales.

It is important to note that the number of incidents is larger than the number of victims, because some will have experienced more than one incident. Further, estimates of incidents here are summations of the number of times different acts occurred. It is possible that more than one act could have occurred in the same event, so these may not all constitute separate 'incidents'. However, it is also possible that, since one 'event' of domestic violence can sometimes be spread over several hours, there could be an underestimation of the number of repeated actions.

Table 2.4 Frequency of domestic violence victimisation for victims, since age 16

Percentages							BCS
	Once	Twice	3 to 5	6 to 50	More than 50	Too many to count	N (unweighted)
Female							
Frightening threats	20	10	25	32	3	12	1562
Pushed, held, pinned down or slapped	25	14	27	25	2	8	2111
Kicked, bit, hit, threw something that hurt	21	12	22	31	2	11	1362
Choked, tried to strangle, threatened with or used a weapon, threatened to kill	36	14	18	20	2	10	993
Male							
Frightening threats	35	13	26	19	1	5	157
Pushed, held, pinned down or slapped	34	24	27	13	1	1	505
Kicked, bit, hit, threw something that hurt	43	17	26	12	<1	1	617
Choked, tried to strangle, threatened with or used a weapon, threatened to kill	50	17	20	9	1	2	259

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. These represent frequency of victimisation since the age of 16.

Women

The BCS estimated that there were 12.9 million incidents of domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force) against women in the year prior to interview. If the definition of domestic violence is limited to non-sexual force, then there were 8.3 million incidents against women (Table 2.5).

The BCS estimates that there were 190,000 incidents of serious sexual assault against women. Among these there were an estimated 80,000 incidents of rape (using the 1994 definition and including attempts). There were 450,000 incidents of less serious sexual assault affecting nearly 300,000 women. Well over a million women reported experiencing stalking behaviour.

Men

The BCS estimates that there were 2.5 million incidents of non-sexual domestic violence against men of the form of either threats of force or use of force, and 2.2 million when the definition is restricted to force (or a death threat). Almost 900,000 men were affected by stalking. The number of sexual assaults against men was too small to analyse reliably beyond prevalence rates.

Repeat victimisation

Inter-personal violence is frequently marked by very high rates of repeat victimisation, where the same person is subject to multiple incidents of the same type of event. Table 2.5 shows that two-thirds of female victims of non-sexual domestic violence (threats or force) and half the victims of sexual assault had experienced more than one incident in the last year. Some had experienced very high numbers of incidents: when domestic violence is defined as non-sexual threats and force, the average (mean) number of incidents per woman was nearly 20 in the previous year, and, if the definition is restricted to non-sexual force, just over 16. However, this (mean) average figure is affected by the fact that a small number of respondents suffered very high numbers of incidents. The median² number of incidents experienced by victims was four and three respectively. On average, male victims had experienced fewer incidents than women: the mean number of incidents of both domestic threats and domestic force was seven (median = 2). Nearly half of male victims had experienced just one incident of domestic violence in the past year compared to under a third of female victims.

Women who experienced serious sexual assaults reported a mean average of two incidents in the past year (median = 2). Those who had experienced less serious sexual assault had also experienced an average (mean) of two incidents in the past year (median = 1).

2 The median value is one of three values used to represent the average. It is the 'middle' value with 50 per cent of cases falling on either side of this number. The median value is less likely to be skewed by the relatively small proportion of victims who had very high estimated number of incidents.

Table 2.5 *Estimated number of incidents of inter-personal violence acts in previous 12 months*

	Estimated number of incidents ^{3,4}	Estimated number of victims	Mean number of incidents per victim	Median number of incidents per victim ⁵	% victims with one incident only	Unw'ted N (number of victims in sample) ⁶
BCS						
Women						
Domestic violence (non-sexual)						
- domestic threat or force	12,900,000	657,000	20	4	28	509
- domestic force	8,280,000	529,000	16	3	32	398
- minor	3,970,000	410,000	10	2	37	331
- severe	4,300,000	242,000	18	4	27	211
Sexual assault⁶						
Serious sexual assault (incl. attempts)	190,000	79,000	2	2	49	49
Rape (1994) (incl. attempts) ⁷	80,000	47,000	2	.	50	30
Less serious sexual assault	450,000	293,000	2	1	55	175
Men						
Domestic violence (non-sexual)						
- domestic threat or force	2,500,000	356,000	7	2	47	209
- domestic force	2,240,000	338,000	7	2	48	199
- minor	1,070,000	174,000	6	1	50	109
- severe	1,170,000	186,000	6	2	49	123

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Estimates of the number of incidents are rounded to the nearest 10,000. Estimates of numbers of victims are rounded to the nearest 1,000, and the mean and median to the nearest whole number.
3. The estimates of incidents here are summations of the number of times different acts occurred. It is of course possible that more than one act could have occurred in the same event, so these may not all constitute separate 'incidents'.
4. The estimates of the number of incidents were generated from follow-up questions in the IPV module. The response categories for these questions were banded, so appropriate values needed to be taken to represent each of the various bands (where possible midpoints were used, except in the cases for domestic violence of 'more than 50' where the number estimated was 51 and 'too many times to count' where 60 was used; however where victims did not know or want to say the number of last year incidents they were excluded from the analysis). For the types of domestic violence incidents, financial and emotional abuse was not followed up (hence their exclusion here) and choked/threatened to kill/threatened with a weapon/and other force not otherwise mentioned were all grouped as one for the follow-up question seeking numbers of incidents. Mid-2001 ONS population estimates were then used to apply these estimates to the population (aged 16-59) in England and Wales, these figures being 15,497,000 for women and 15,229,500 for men. These factors should be borne in mind in interpreting the subsequent results.
5. The median value is one of three measures typically used to represent the average. It is the 'middle value' with fifty per cent of cases falling on either side of it. The median value is less likely to be skewed by a small number of extreme values.
6. The number of cases of serious sexual assault and rape from which these estimates of number of incidents are generated are low at 49 and 30 respectively, hence they should be treated with caution. Male prevalence was too low to generate comparable estimates.
7. The sample size is too small to calculate a value for the median for rape.
8. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

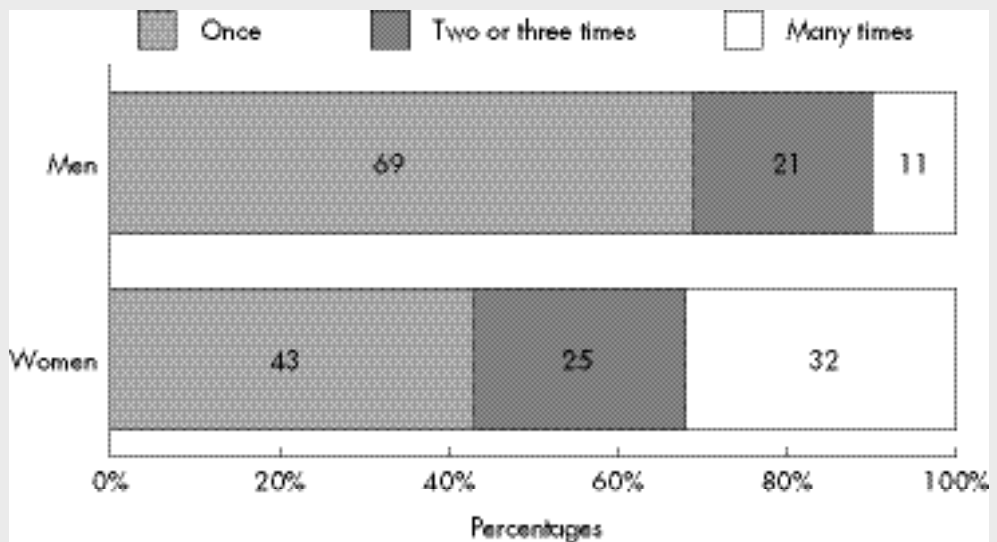
Repeat victimisation by the same perpetrator

While the data on prevalence shows how widespread inter-personal violence to be, the data on repeat victimisation indicates that there is also a smaller group that is very heavily abused. Patterns of repeat victimisation vary significantly. Some women suffered many attacks from the perpetrator of the worst incident. Some people, especially men, were not subject to more than one occurrence.

Of women, 43 per cent had experienced one act of domestic violence from this person, while a further 25 per cent suffered one or two further incidents. Of men, 69 per cent said that the event was never repeated by that partner, while for 21 per cent it was repeated once or twice more. Among women, 32 per cent of those who had experienced domestic violence since 16 did so 'many times' (that is, four or more times), as compared with 11 per cent of the (smaller number) of men who had done so.

Women constituted 89 per cent of all those who suffered four or more incidents.

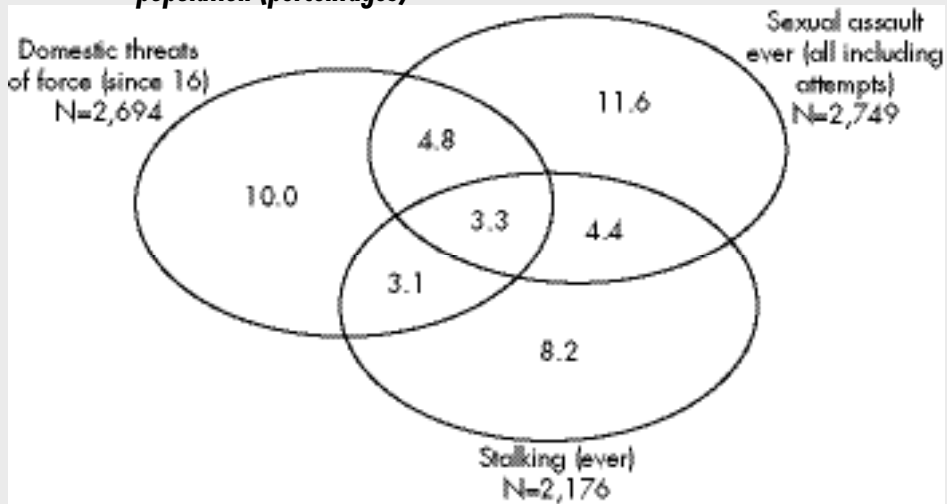
Figure 2.4 *Frequency of domestic violence from the perpetrator of the worst incident, since 16 victims*



Overlaps between different forms of inter-personal violence

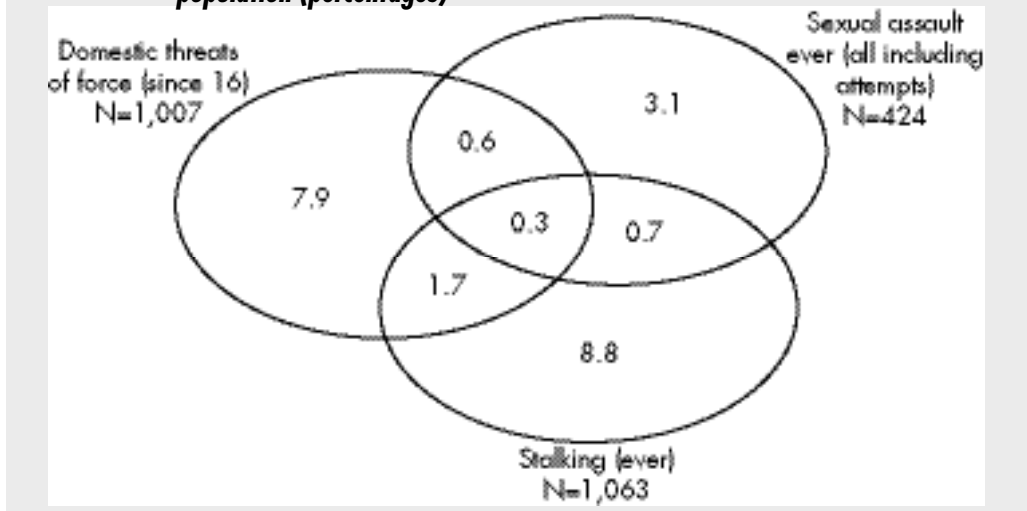
There is a group of people, largely women, who experience more than one, sometimes all three, forms of inter-personal violence. The fact that the 2001 BCS asked respondents about different types of inter-personal violence allowed us to examine the degree to which victims experienced different forms of inter-personal violence.

Figure 2.5 Female overlap between types of inter-personal violence, proportion of population (percentages)³



Figures 2.5 and 2.6 present these overlaps graphically. These show that 3.3 per cent of women and 0.3 per cent of men have experienced all three forms of inter-personal violence at some point in their lives. The percentages here relate to the proportion of the population, rather than the proportion of victims, who have experienced inter-personal violence.

Figure 2.6 *Male overlap between types of inter-personal violence, proportion of population (percentages)³*



While the majority of both male (85%) and female victims (66%) had been subject to only one form of inter-personal violence, a small minority of male (1%) and female victims (7%) had experienced all three forms, while a further 27 per cent of female victims and 13 per cent of male victims reported experiencing two forms of inter-personal violence. This is shown in Tables 2.6/2.7.

Among women, those experiencing stalking were most likely to have also experienced other forms of personal violence: 17 per cent of those who had been stalked had also experienced domestic violence and sexual assault. Men were less likely to have experienced multiple forms of inter-personal violence.

³ Figures 2.5 and 2.6 are based on the sample where the self-completion was completed by the respondent.

Table 2.6 *Extent to which victims have experienced other types of violence*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Women	Men
Domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force - since 16)		
Domestic threats or force (since 16) only	47	75
Domestic threats or force (since 16) + sexual assault (ever), not stalking	23	6
Domestic threats or force (since 16) + stalking (ever), not sexual assault	14	16
Domestic threats or force (since 16) + sexual assault (ever) + stalking (ever)	15	3
<i>Unweighted N (victims of domestic threats or force)</i>	2694	1007
Sexual assault (ever)		
Sexual assault only	48	65
Sexual assault + domestic threats or force (since 16), not stalking	20	13
Sexual assault + stalking (ever), not domestic threats or force	18	16
Sexual assault (ever) + stalking (ever) + domestic threats or force (since 16)	14	6
<i>Unweighted N (victims of sexual assault)</i>	2749	424
Stalking (ever)		
Stalking only	43	76
Stalking + domestic threats or force (since 16), not sexual assault	16	15
Stalking + sexual assault (ever), not domestic violence	23	6
Stalking (ever) + domestic threats or force (since 16) + sexual assault (ever)	17	2
<i>Unweighted N (victims of stalking)</i>	2176	1063
Total number of victims (any IPV)	5250	2143

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Sexual assault includes serious and less serious. It also includes attempted serious sexual assaults.
3. Based on sample where self-completion completed by respondent.
4. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Table 2.7 *Extent of overlaps between different types of violence, victims*

Percentages	BCS					
	Female victims reporting:			Male victims reporting:		
	One form of IPV	Two forms of IPV	Three forms of IPV	One form of IPV	Two forms of IPV	Three forms of IPV
Any form of Interpersonal violence	66	27	7	85	13	1
Domestic violence non-sexual threats or force (since 16)	47	37	15	75	22	3
Sexual assault (ever) ²	48	38	14	65	29	6
Stalking (ever)	43	40	17	76	21	2

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Sexual assaults include both serious and less serious. It also includes attempted serious sexual assaults.
3. Please refer to sample sizes (unweighted N) in previous table.
4. Based on sample where self-completion completed by respondent.
5. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Those who had experienced the most severe forms of violence were more likely to also experience other types of violence. In particular, almost two-thirds (62%) of the women who experienced serious sexual violence since 16 also reported experiencing domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force), and 39 per cent had been stalked. Among those who reported only less serious sexual assaults, a smaller proportion reported that they had been subject to domestic threats or stalking (Table 2.8 below).

Table 2.8 *Overlaps between sexual assault and other forms of inter-personal violence (women)*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS		
	Serious sexual assault (since 16)	Less serious sexual assault (since 16)	Sexual assault – any form (since 16)
Non-sexual domestic violence (since 16)			
- domestic abuse, threat or force	72	42	45
- domestic threat or force	62	35	38
- domestic force	57	32	35
Less serious sexual assault (since 16)	70
Stalking (ever)	39	34	34
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>570</i>	<i>1762</i>	<i>1927</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. '...' Not applicable.
3. Serious sexual assaults include attempts.

Just looking at those who experience domestic violence (non-sexual), there was evidence of overlap between the different categories that comprise domestic violence (Table 2.9). Women who experience non-sexual domestic force are likely to also experience emotional and financial abuse and threats. This is consistent with the understanding of domestic violence as a pattern of coercive control. Women who experience threats or force are also likely to experience emotional and financial abuse. Men who suffer domestic force are much less likely than women to additionally face frightening threats or emotional or financial abuse.

Chapter 4 investigates the extent to which the perpetrators of these different forms of inter-personal violence had intimate relationships with the victim. While it seems reasonable to think that the perpetrator of these overlapping forms of violence may often be the same person, it was not possible to ascertain whether this was the case from this data.

Table 2.9 *Overlap between financial or emotional abuse, frightening threats and domestic force*

Percentages	Women		Men		BCS
	Since age 16	Last year	Since age 16	Last year	
When domestic force (non sexual), also:					
- frightening threats	48	34	9	4	
- emotional or financial abuse	41	29	28	18	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2657	463	1045	227	
When domestic threats or force (non sexual), also:					
- emotional or financial abuse	39	28	28	18	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2977	568	1098	239	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.

Main points

Inter-personal violence is an experience that is both distributed very widely in the population, since 45 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men reported at least one incident in their lifetimes, and one that is also concentrated, in that a minority are heavily and repeatedly abused. Inter-personal violence is more frequently experienced by women than by men, especially forms of sexual assault. Inter-personal violence, especially domestic violence, can often be a repeat form of victimisation.

While there is a wide distribution of some experience of violence throughout the population, there is also a minority, largely women, who have experienced many repeat attacks and several forms of violence. In particular, two-thirds (62%) of women who had been subject to penetrative sexual assault (or attempts) had also been subject to domestic violence and two-fifths (39%) of these women had also been stalked.

3. The experience of inter-personal violence: impact and meaning

This chapter is concerned with the experience of inter-personal violence. This includes the nature and impact of violence, and the varied meanings of this violence to those who have suffered it. Inter-personal violence can cause physical and mental injuries, and many further impacts on the lives of victims. The extent to which this occurs can vary not only by the nature of the violent actions, but also by their frequency, by the gender of the perpetrator and victim, and other situational and structural factors. Inter-personal violence can damage a person's capacity to work, including detrimental impacts on their employment, which can have wider repercussions, for example, for employers. There are many varied definitions of inter-personal violence and of the different types of this violence. These variations occur not only within the policy and academic worlds but also in popular discourse. Many of the actions and the words to describe them are stigmatised, and words used freely to describe them in policy discourse are used less frequently in the wider population. While the basic definitions and their overlaps were provided in the introduction to the report and in the chapter on the extent of inter-personal violence, this chapter focuses on the variations in definition used in practice, especially by those who have been subject to inter-personal violence, and the extent to which these overlap with definitions active in the policy and legal worlds. The analysis of the nature of inter-personal violence presented in this report is based on the worst event experienced, either since the age of 16 or in the year prior to interview. The analysis of female serious sexual assault is restricted to that involving a single perpetrator.

Injuries

Domestic violence (non-sexual)

Physical or mental injuries of some kind were typically sustained in incidents of domestic violence that were reported as the worst experienced since 16. Women were more likely than men to sustain some form of physical or mental injury, indeed three-quarters of women (75%) as compared with half of men (50%) reported sustaining injuries. Female victims of domestic violence were much more likely than men to suffer (self-defined) mental or emotional problems as a consequence of this incident (37% women; 10% men). Further, women were much more likely to sustain more severe physical injuries such as broken bones/teeth (8% women, 2% men), or to sustain severe bruising (21% women 5% men). A significant gender asymmetry in the impact of acts of domestic violence is revealed by this

data. As noted, the data here concerns the worst (as defined by the victim), rather than a typical, incident. It focuses on just this one incident, and it is probable that repeated incidents would have an additional cumulative effect that is not captured here. Nevertheless, it is possible to focus on the more heavily abused group, that is, those who report being subject to domestic violence four or more times. Among this group, of whom 89 per cent are women, most (97% women; 87% men) report being injured in the worst single incident. This means that those subject to more frequent attacks are also more likely to be injured.

Table 3.1 Injuries sustained in worst incident of domestic violence

	Percentages						BCS
	Women			Men			
	Since age 16	Victims 4 or more times since 16 ²	Last year	Since age 16	Victims 4 or more times since 16 ²	Last year	
No injury	25	3	28	50	13	49	
Mental or emotional problems	37	60	31	10	37	9	
Minor injury	48	62	46	35	63	41	
Minor bruising or black eye	42	52	40	20	36	21	
Scratches	12	20	13	20	50	25	
Other physical injuries	7	15	4	3	9	3	
Moderate injuries	26	50	20	15	44	14	
Severe bruising	21	43	15	5	21	5	
Bleeding from cuts	11	20	8	12	36	11	
Severe injuries	8	17	6	2	7	1	
Internal injury	2	4	2	1	3	1	
Broken bones/teeth	7	14	6	1	5	<1	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2744</i>	<i>892</i>	<i>525</i>	<i>982</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>217</i>	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. This is victimisation from the perpetrator of the worst incident.
3. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
4. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%
5. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Serious sexual assault

Six per cent of cases of female serious sexual assault involved more than one perpetrator, and these are excluded from the analysis presented in this chapter. They are not confined to a domestic context but include a range of settings.

Women who were subject to serious sexual assault, that is, involving unwanted penetration of the body (vagina, anus or mouth), suffered a range of physical and mental injuries in addition to the assault itself. In particular, they were prone to depression and other emotional problems (52%); there was a discernible incidence of attempted suicide (5%), while four per cent had to deal with an unwanted pregnancy. This form of assault has further deleterious consequences for forms of social interaction, leading over one-third (38%) to stop trusting people, while 15 per cent stopped going out so much, with further ramifications for the quality of their lives.

It is not possible to present findings for men in relation to the nature of sexual assault, since the numbers were too small for reliable analysis.

Table 3.2 *Additional injuries sustained in worst incident of serious sexual assault, female victims since age 16*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
Depression/emotional problems	52
Stopped trusting people	38
Difficulty sleeping	21
Minor bruising, scratches	18
Stopped going out so much	15
Substantial bruising	10
Bleeding from cuts	7
Tried to kill self	5
Internal injury	4
Other physical injuries	4
Pregnancy	4
Something else	4
Disease contracted	2
None of these	22
<i>Unweighted N</i>	501

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Serious sexual assault is defined as taking place without consent. The different kinds of coercion deployed are listed in Table 3.3 below. While the most frequently used forms of coercion were those of being held down, hurt or forced in some way, there were also substantial numbers who were threatened and a group who were assaulted while they were incapable of consent because they were unconscious, asleep or drugged in some way.

Table 3.3 *How serious sexual assault was achieved, female victims (since 16)*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Rape (1994)	Other serious sexual assault
Threats	29	37
Threatened in some way	28	34
Threatened to hurt someone or something dear to victim	8	16
Physical force	71	62
Held down	55	47
Hurt in some way	22	23
Forced in some way	43	42
Used or threatened with a weapon	10	12
Threatened with a weapon	9	11
Used a weapon	3	4
Drugged/unconscious/incapable of consent	23	27
Drugged in some way	5	6
Done when incapable of consent due to alcohol	15	17
Done when unconscious or asleep	10	8
Used some other kind of force or intimidation	20	29
<i>Unweighted N</i>	338	144

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. The figures here exclude attempts.
3. Multiple reponses were allowed therefore totals will not sum to 100.
4. Based on all incidents, not worst incident.

Impacts of different types of acts of domestic violence

There are a number of different ways of measuring the degree of severity of domestic violence. A frequently used scale or typology is the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), devised by Straus and Gelles (1990) in the United States. A version of this scale, slightly modified for UK circumstances, was one of the instruments used in the survey to identify different degrees of severity of the violence. This is based on the nature of the action taken by the perpetrator of the violence, in a hierarchy of increasing severity (e.g. slap, kick, choke). This was reported in detail in Chapter 2 on the extent of the violence and was the basis for the generation of both prevalence and incidence rates for England and Wales.

A disadvantage of the CTS is that it focuses on the perpetrator's action to the exclusion of the impact of the act, despite the interest in the impact and consequences of domestic violence. A further disadvantage is that the same act can have a different impact and set of consequences depending on situational and structural factors. In particular, the same act may have a less severe impact when addressed from a woman to a man than it does when addressed from a man to a woman. This issue lies at the basis of many of the critical comments about the CTS scale, that it tends to generate a spurious gender symmetry that vanishes if and when the impact of the act is brought into focus.

The BCS IPV collected data both within the CTS framework and on a separate scale of impact, so that it is possible to assess these arguments empirically using British data for the first time. The data in Table 3.4 show that at a given level of force, women were more likely to suffer both physical and mental injury as a result of the incident than were men. When the impact of domestic violence is the focus of analysis, there is greater gender asymmetry than when the focus is the nature of the act.

Table 3.4 Injuries sustained in different acts of domestic violence, last year victims

	Percentages				BCS
	Minor act		Severe act		
	Female	Male ²	Female	Male	
Mental injury	21	4	42	11	
Physical injury	49	36	77	56	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	206	84	153	110	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. The base size for males suffering a minor act is low (84 cases), hence these figures should be treated with caution.
3. In a minor act the victim was either pushed, held or pinned down or slapped. A severe act is defined as including one or more of the following: being kicked, bit, hit, having something thrown at the victim, being choked or strangled, threatened with a weapon, threatened to be killed or a weapon used against the victim.
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Impact on employment

Inter-personal violence impacts on people’s capacities for many kinds of activities. One of these is employment. Time off work can lead to lost earnings, while reduced performance can lead to loss of promotion possibilities, and indeed the loss of a job if there is a need to move area to flee violence. This may contribute to the low income found to be associated with domestic violence (see Chapter 5). The employer may also suffer losses, as a consequence of paying wages during time taken off work, reduced workplace performance, and the costs of recruiting a new worker if one is lost. The state and wider community may also sustain costs by the need to fund sick pay as well as the costs to the productivity of the economy as a whole.

But how big is the impact and how great the losses? The data here allow for estimates of the impact of one incident of domestic violence, the worst that was suffered. By definition, this is likely to be higher than the average amount per typical incident. However, it is only one incident and most people who have been subject to domestic violence suffered more than one, sometimes many, incidents.

More than one fifth of women (21%) who were employed and who have suffered domestic violence in the year prior to interview took time off work as a result of the worst incident. Men also took time off, but at lower rates (6%). While for around half the women the time taken off employment was limited to a day or two, for nearly a quarter this lasted more than a week. Most seriously, two per cent of women and of men lost their jobs because of this incident.

Table 3.5 *Time taken off work due to worst incident, last year female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
If took time off work, how much time:	
Less than one day	8
One day	21
Two days	25
Between three and six days	22
Between a week and a month	19
More than a month	5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	87

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is those respondents that took time off of work.
3. These figures should be treated with caution owing to a small base number of victims (87).
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Is it 'domestic violence'?

It has become commonplace to refer to 'domestic violence' in many policy and practitioner circles, even though there are a number of different definitions in active use. The definition in use in the Home Office was noted in Chapter 1. But do those who have suffered such actions think what happened to them can be described as domestic violence? The definitions used by those suffering the violence is of importance to those seeking to encourage them to seek help, since if the vocabulary used by agencies is different from that used by victims themselves this will hinder this process. Indeed, as is shown below, naming the incident as domestic violence is associated with the greater likelihood of survivors of violence seeking help. While three-quarters of women who had been victims of domestic violence since 16, according to a definition more restrictive than that of the Home Office, that is, non-sexual domestic threat or force, which does not include emotional or financial abuse, agreed that they would call it domestic violence, one quarter did not. Among men, only 41 per cent would call it domestic violence, and the majority, 59 per cent would not.

Table 3.6 *Whether victim classifies worst incident as domestic violence*

	BCS			
	Female		Male	
	Since 16	Last year	Since 16	Last year
Yes	75	66	41	34
No	25	34	59	66
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2760</i>	<i>518</i>	<i>1001</i>	<i>221</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

An investigation was conducted of the characteristics and circumstances under which people would and would not call the incident 'domestic violence'.

People were more likely to define the event that had happened to them as domestic violence if it was more serious, that is, those who were injured rather than not, who were more severely injured, or frequently assaulted, and where the nature of the act was more severe. Older women were more likely than younger women (especially those 16-24) to define an event as domestic violence. Women from poorer households were slightly more likely than women from more affluent households to define the event as domestic violence. Women were more likely to use the concept of domestic violence than men. Those who told others, especially those who sought legal help, were more likely to use the concept of domestic violence.

Table 3.7 *Victim's use of the concept 'domestic violence' by their characteristics and circumstances*

<i>Percentages</i>					BCS
Injury sustained (since 16 victims)²	None	Mental	<i>Physical injury</i>		
			Minor injury only	Up to moderate (but not serious)	Serious
Female	39	89	83	95	94
<i>Unweighted N</i>	598	1038	843	609	240
Male	23	70	50	77 ⁵	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	457	119	276	161	
Frequency of domestic violence					
	Once	Two/Three times	Many times		
Female					
- since 16	56	82	95		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1015	586	897		
- last year	56	70	89		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	239	103	126		
Male					
- since 16	29	59	84		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	577	188	113		
Nature of worst act (last year victims)					
	Frightening threats only	Minor force, not severe ³	Severe force ⁴		
Female	65	58	78		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	145	195	156		
Male		27 ⁶	40		
<i>Unweighted N</i>		100	110		
Who else was told about worst incident (since 16)					
	No one ⁷	Victim's friends, relatives, or neighbours	Victim's partners, friends, or neighbours	Someone at work	Sought legal advice
Female	67	79	87	83	95
<i>Unweighted N</i>	871	1679	279	215	187

Table 3.7 *Victim's use of the concept 'domestic violence' by their characteristics and circumstances (continued)*

Percentages		BCS		
Age of victim (at time of interview) (last year victims)				
	16 to 24	25 to 39	40 to 59	
Female	46	74	84	
Unweighted N	128	273	117	
Total household income (last year victims)				
	Less than £10,000	£10,000 to £20,000	More than £20,000	
Female	83	74	69	
Unweighted N	170	128	137	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. 'Minor' injury consists of minor bruising or black eye, or scratches. 'Up to moderate' injury includes severe bruising or bleeding from cuts. 'Serious' injury includes internal injuries or broken bones/teeth. Sufferers of mental injury could have been victim to physical injury also.
3. 'Minor force, not severe' can include being pushed, held or pinned down or slapped.
4. 'Severe force' is defined here as being kicked, bit, hit, having something thrown at the victim that hurt them, being choked or strangled, threatened with a weapon, threatened to be killed or used a weapon against them.
5. For male injury sustained, moderate or severe injury are one category due to small sample size.
6. For male nature of worst act, frightening threats or minor act are combined due to small sample size.
7. This category may include some people who told a health professional or the police, due to the wording of the question and its place in the questionnaire
8. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Is it 'criminal'?

The policy world is increasingly addressing domestic violence and other forms of inter-personal violence as crimes. The section addresses the extent to which survivors of domestic violence thought of what had happened to them as a crime. Domestic violence does not constitute a crime category in its own right in the UK, although there have been discussions of this possibility among policy-makers, and criminal justice system practitioners including in the government consultation document *Safety and Justice* (Home Office 2003). However, many instances of domestic violence may be crimes under existing crime codes. The survey asked respondents whether they thought that what had happened to them was a crime, and if not what it was. It is appropriate first to identify the definitions used in recording crime, so as to place the respondents' views in the context of current legal definitions and recorded crime counting rules.

Crime classifications usually focus on the nature of the act, with a secondary concern with the impact of the act, and they also require criminal intent. While it is not possible to be definitive as to which acts of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking would be classified as which kinds of crime within the legal system, it is possible to provide some approximate guidance, while bearing the limitations in mind. One of the limitations is that all crimes require the notion of intent by the perpetrator, and the BCS IPV did not collect information on this. A second limitation is that the extent to which injuries are consequent to acts can vary.

Bearing in mind these limitations, it is probable that many instances of domestic violence (non-sexual force) would fall into one of two legal categories: 'common assault' and 'wounding'. Common assault requires unwanted physical contact, but does not require visible injury. New recording rules concerning the classification of common assault in relation to minor injuries were introduced in 2002 and prior to this, some incidents involving minor injuries were classified as common assault.

Minor injuries: Recording Practice. Common assault includes common assault with no injury. Where battery results in injury, other wounding (class 8A) should be recorded even if the injury amounts to no more than grazes, scratches, abrasions, minor bruises, swellings, reddening of the skin, superficial cuts, or a "black eye". Crimes which result in injuries more serious than those listed above should be recorded under the appropriate wounding classification (probably either class 5 or 8)
(Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime for Violence Against the Person and Sexual Offences April 2002).

It is possible that many of the incidents reported to the BCS IPV as instances of 'pushed, held or pinned you down or slapped you', and therefore classified as 'domestic violence, non-sexual, minor force', might be instances of 'common assault'. This depends on the assumption that these acts do not cause any injury. If they did cause injury then they should be more properly classified as 'wounding'. 'Wounding' is the second major category into which instances of domestic violence may fall. It is possible that many of the incidents reported to the BCS IPV that were classified as forms of 'domestic violence, non-sexual, severe force' might be instances of 'wounding'. Additionally, stalking, or more properly a course of conduct of more than two events which amounts to harassment, is also legally classified in the 'wounding' section of the crime classification since the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act. There are further distinctions within the category of 'wounding' between 'serious wounding', which involves the intent to threaten life or to cause very serious injuries, and 'other wounding' includes those assaults where there are injuries and it is also a

category that includes harassment and stalking and other serious threats. It is unlikely that most instances of financial and emotional abuse constitute crimes. Whether or not frightening threats may be crimes is more ambiguous, since, if they are repeated and constitute a course of conduct that amounts to harassment, they may be offences under the 1997 Protection of Harassment Act. Homicide is outside the remit of this study since it is based on live victims.

Despite limitations, it is useful to provide some approximate categories that enable some rough comparisons between the likely criminal category of an action and the extent to which victims consider that action to be a crime, as in Box 3.1. Categories used in the survey are presented in italics and located adjacent to the most likely (though not certain) crime category.

Box 3.1 ***Approximate legal categories of different kinds of inter-personal violence***

Violence Against the Person

- 3 Threat to murder
- 3/1 Threat to kill
Threatened to kill you
- 5 Wounding or other act endangering life
- 5/1 Wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm
Used a weapon against you e.g. a knife
- 5/4 Attempting to choke etc. in order to commit indictable offence
Choked you or tried to strangle you
- 8A Other wounding
- 8/1 Wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm, with or without a weapon
- 8/6 Assault occasioning actual bodily harm
Kicked you, bit you, or hit you with a fist or something else, or threw something at you that hurt you
- 8C Harassment
- 8/30, 194/94 (Protection from Harassment Act 1997)
Stalking
- 8/30 Putting people in fear of violence
Threatened you with a weapon such as a stick or knife

105A Common assault

105/1 Common assault and battery

Pushed, held or pinned you down or slapped you.

Some other kind of force

Sexual Offences

19 Rape

Rape

Assault by penetration

Serious sexual assault involving penetration that is not rape

17 Sexual assault

Unwanted sexual touching

Exposure

Flashing

Probably not crimes

(though they might fall under the 1997 Anti-Harassment Act and thus be a form of Code 8 if there are two or more incidents that amount to a course of conduct of harassment)

Financial and emotional abuse

Frightened you by threatening to hurt you or someone close to you

Sexually threatening behaviour

Victims' views on whether domestic violence is a crime

Do those who experienced domestic violence think it was a crime? Half (51%) of women who had experienced domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force) thought their worst incident was a crime, a third (33%) thought that it was wrong, but not a crime, and 13 per cent that it was just something that happens.

Table 3.8 *Victim's description of the worst incident of domestic violence*

Percentages	BCS			
	Female		Male	
	Since 16	Last year	Since 16	Last year
It was a crime	51	36	11	6
It was wrong, but not a crime	33	40	30	36
It was just something that happens	13	17	49	44
None of these	3	6	10	14
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2808</i>	<i>524</i>	<i>1021</i>	<i>226</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is victims of domestic violence, non-sexual threats or force.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Victims are less likely to call domestic violence a crime than is legally the case. This is most clear in instances of assaults occasioning physical injuries (that is, actual bodily harm or grievous bodily harm) where, among women, 47 per cent of those with minor injuries and 13 per cent of those with serious injuries did not call the event a crime, and among men, 90 per cent of those with minor injuries did not call the event a crime.

People were more likely to call the event that had happened to them a crime if it caused physical injury rather than not, a more severe rather than less severe physical injury, occurred more frequently, and involved acts of a more serious nature. People were more likely to call the event a crime if it had caused mental injury, but care is needed not to over-interpret this, since mental injury is also associated with physical injury. Women were more likely to call the event a crime than men, though again caution is needed in the interpretation here, since women were more likely to suffer more severe, more frequent assaults, to suffer more severe injury and to be poor, that is, being a woman is associated with all the factors associated with being more likely to call the event a crime. Older women (25-59 years) were more likely to call it a crime than younger women (16-24 years). Women in poorer households were more likely to call it a crime than women in more affluent households (Tables 3.9, 3.10, 3.11).

Table 3.9 *Victim's description of the worst incident of domestic violence, by injury sustained in worst incident*

<i>Percentages</i>					BCS
Injury sustained (since 16 victims)²	None	Mental	<i>Physical injury</i>		
			Minor injury only	Up to moderate (but not serious)	Serious
<i>Female</i>					
It was a crime	15	70	53	79	87
It was wrong, but not a crime	52	21	33	15	7
It was just something that happens	23	8	12	6	6
None of these	10	1	1	1	.
<i>Unweighted N</i>	617	1048	859	608	242
<i>Male³</i>					
It was a crime	3	30	10		30
It was wrong, but not a crime	23	37	39		41
It was just something that happens	58	29	46		26
None of these	16	4	5		3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	460	125	279		160

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. 'Minor' injury consists of minor bruising or black eye, or scratches. 'Up to moderate' injury includes severe bruising or bleeding from cuts. 'Serious' injury includes internal injuries or broken bones/teeth. Sufferers of mental injury could have been victim to physical injury also.
3. For male injury sustained, moderate or serious injury are one category due to small sample size.
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Table 3.10 *Victim's description of the worst incident of domestic violence, by nature of incident and frequency of victimisation from perpetrator of worst incident*

Percentages	Nature of worst act (last year victims)			Frequency of domestic violence			BCS
	Frightening threats only	Minor force, not severe ²	Severe force ³	Once	Two/Three times	Many times	
Female				Female (last year)			
It was a crime	34	23	56	24	36	66	
It was wrong, but not a crime	41	48	30	51	41	17	
It was just something that happens	18	22	11	17	20	12	
None of these	7	6	4	8	2	5	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	146	200	152	244	102	124	
				Female (since 16)			
It was a crime				29	52	82	
It was wrong, but not a crime				47	35	12	
It was just something that happens				19	12	6	
None of these				5	1	1	
<i>Unweighted N</i>				1041	599	901	
Male⁴				Male (since 16 victims)			
It was a crime	4		7	6	15	32	
It was wrong, but not a crime	27		40	27	36	45	
It was just something that happens	51		40	54	45	21	
None of these	18		13	13	4	1	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	101		114	586	190	111	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. 'Minor force, not severe' can include being pushed, held or pinned down or slapped.
3. 'Severe force' is defined here as being kicked, bit, hit, having something thrown at the victim that hurt them, being choked or strangled, threatened with a weapon, threatened to be killed or used a weapon against them.
4. For male nature of worst act, frightening threats or minor force are combined due to small sample size.
5. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer responses'.

Table 3.11 *Victim's description of the worst incident of domestic violence, by age of female victim and total household income*

<i>Percentages</i>						BCS
Age of victim (at time of interview) (last year victims)				Total household income		
	16 to 24	25 to 39	40 to 59	Less than £10,000	£10,000 to £20,000	More than £20,000
It was a crime	28	44	36	48	45	33
It was wrong, but not a crime	41	34	52	32	38	45
It was just something that happens	21	17	12	16	14	16
None of these	10	5	1	4	4	7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	131	275	118	179	128	138

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Victims' views on whether less serious sexual assault was a crime

The vocabulary around sexual assault is varied in the policy world as well as popular discourse. The legal offence here has traditionally been named 'indecent assault'. However, the Sexual Offences Act (2003) replaced the offence of indecent assault by that of sexual assault, and this encompasses unwanted sexual touching. Two of the three forms of (what has so far been described as) less serious sexual assault, that is, flashing, and unwanted sexual touching are crimes. However, it is unlikely that sexually threatening behaviour is a crime. An event was only included in the figures reported here if the event had caused the subject fear, alarm or distress. Those women subject to these forms of behaviour provided considerable variation in their choice of terms to describe the phenomena. While just over a quarter (29%) suggested indecent assault (the legal category closest to these events at the time of interview), one fifth (20%) suggested sexual assault, a smaller number (13%) sexual abuse, and the largest selected category was 'something else'. There was only slight variation as to the preferred term between those who had been subjected to contact and non-contact forms of abuse, with the former more likely to deem it a sexual assault. The discussion on sexual assault is confined to responses from women, since the numbers of men reporting such incidents (in the last year) was too small for reliable analysis.

Table 3.12 *Victim's classification of worst incident of less serious sexual assault, last year female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS		
	Flashing or sexually threatening behaviour ²	Unwanted sexual touching ²	All less serious sexual assaults
An indecent assault	25	31	29
A sexual assault	15	24	20
Sexual abuse	16	12	13
Something else	44	34	38
<i>Unweighted N</i>	90	84	160

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. These figures should be treated with caution owing to a small base number of victims.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

When asked if they regarded what had happened to them as a crime, nearly half the women said that it was. Behaviour that was threatening and did not involve contact (flashing or sexually threatening behaviour) was no less likely to be regarded as a crime.

Table 3.13 *Victim's description of worst incident of less serious sexual assault, last year female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS		
	Flashing or sexually threatening behaviour ²	Unwanted sexual touching ²	All less serious sexual assaults
A crime	51	40	44
Wrong, but not a crime	34	30	31
Just something that happens	12	23	19
None of these	2	7	5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	93	86	165

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. These figures should be treated with caution owing to a small base number of victims.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

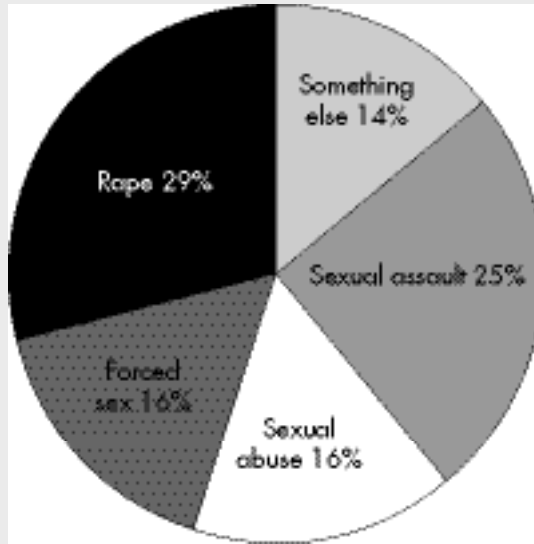
Victims' views on serious sexual assault

The vocabulary around rape is very difficult, not least in that few who have suffered this want to use the term 'rape'. This is probably partly because the term refers to a status that is typically regarded as degraded and few would wish to associate themselves with this, and partly because the image or indeed stereotype of rape in newspapers and popular culture is much narrower than that allowed for by the law. There have also been recent changes in the definitions used in law (such as the legal recognition of rape in marriage and inclusion of anus alongside vagina) that may have created further ambiguity.

The traditional legal definition of rape involved the penetration of the vagina by a penis without the consent of the woman. This was revised in 1994 so as to include penetration of the anus, thus allowing for the category of rape of a man as well as a woman (henceforth 1994 rape). The Home Office Recorded Crime convention in relation to attempts is to include them in the crime totals, so this is followed here. However, because this may be an additional source of ambiguity in popular definitions, it is separated out in some of the tables below.

Women who had been subject to serious sexual assault, that is, actual and attempted penetration of the body (vagina, anus or mouth) without consent, that is rape and other forced penetration, were asked how they would describe what had happened to them on the worst incident. Less than a third (29%) selected the option of 'rape', with almost as many selecting 'sexual assault' (25%), followed by substantial minorities selecting 'forced sex' (16%) and 'sexual abuse' (16%), while 14 per cent rejected all these options. There is no consensus among those who have suffered penetrative forms of sexual assault on the terminology to describe their experiences. When the perpetrator of the worst incident was a current or ex-intimate, 20 per cent of women called the incident sexual assault, 18 per cent sexual abuse, 23 per cent forced sex, 28 per cent rape, and 12 per cent 'something else'.

Figure 3.1 *Victim's description of serious sexual assault, female since 16 victims*



Note: Serious sexual assault is actual and attempted penetration of the body (vagina, anus or mouth), without consent, that is rape and other forms of forced penetration.

Next is a comparison of the responses of those whose sexual assault was likely to meet the 1994 legal definition of rape, while further excluding attempts. Less than half of the women (43%) who had been subject to an assault that was probably legally rape under the 1994 definition chose to define the act as one of rape.

Figure 3.2 *Victim's description of rape (1994 legal definition, excluding attempts) female since 16 victims⁴*



52 4 This is the 1994 legal category of rape, excluding attempts.

If there was a physical injury additional to that of the rape, then women were more likely to describe the event as one of rape, although even then, 38 per cent did not so describe the incident. Where there was no physical injury additional to the rape, the women were almost as likely to describe the event as 'forced sex' as they were 'rape' (Table 3.14).

Women were less likely to describe an act that meets the legal definition of rape (excluding attempts) as rape if the rapist were an intimate or former intimate. In this case only one third (31%) described the incident as rape.

Table 3.14 Female victim's description of worst incident of rape (1994 legal definition, excluding attempts)

Percentages	BCS	
	Additional physical injury	No additional physical injury
Sexual assault	16	16
Sexual abuse	8	14
Forced sex	8	28
Rape	62	32
Something else	5	10
<i>Unweighted N</i>	106	174

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Domestic violence and serious sexual assault

While the definition of domestic violence used by the Home Office includes sexual abuse, this is not always evident in popular understandings of the term. Among women whose partner or former partner was the perpetrator of the worst incident of serious sexual assault, just 60 per cent were prepared to define this event as domestic violence.

Policy perceptions

The Morgan case

There has long been a legal issue as to whether men can escape a conviction for rape on the grounds that they honestly believed that the woman was consenting even though she

was not. This has become known by the name of one of the cases concerning this law 'the Morgan case'. All respondents were asked their view on the legal principle at stake. Of the women, 90 per cent thought that the man should be convicted of rape compared with 81 per cent of men. There was no significant difference between those who had suffered serious sexual assault compared with those who had not.

Perceptions of the legitimacy of inter-personal violence

The overwhelming majority of both women and men think that it is 'never all right under any circumstances to use force or violence on a partner' (95% women and 91% men). Those who have experienced domestic violence (since 16) show similar responses among women (94%), though the rate among such men drops to 83 per cent.

Rape is the most feared crime

Women fear rape more than any other crime, according to their responses to the BCS. Latest results show that for 2002/03, 23 per cent of women were 'very worried' about being raped, as opposed to five per cent of men.

Perceptions of public policy priorities

Most people think that the government and its agencies, such as the police and courts, are not doing enough about either domestic violence or rape. Asked if they thought that the government was doing enough about these separately, over two-thirds of the total sample said that they thought that the government was doing too little about each. Women were slightly more likely than men to think that the government was not doing enough, but the difference between the sexes was small. Female victims of both domestic violence and serious sexual assault were slightly more likely to think that the government did too little than non-victims, as were male victims of serious sexual assault compared with those men who were not, but the differences between victims and non-victims here was minor. Male victims of domestic violence were slightly more satisfied with the government than was any other group, though even here 60 per cent thought that government did too little.

Table 3.15 *Is the government doing enough about inter-personal violence?*

<i>Percentages</i>				BCS
<i>Do you think the government and agencies, such as the police and courts, are doing enough about:</i>	All female respondents	All male respondents	Female victims of domestic violence	Male victims of domestic violence
...domestic violence				
Enough	28	34	27	39
Too little	71	65	73	60
Too much	1	1	<1	1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	9932	8058	2577	877
	All female respondents	All male respondents	Female victims of serious sexual assault (ever)	Male victims of serious sexual assault (ever) ⁴
...rape				
Enough	26	38	18	26
Too little	73	61	81	68
Too much	1	1	<1	6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7909	6639	677	90

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.
3. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%.
4. These figures should be treated with caution owing to a small base number of victims.

It is well known from previous BCS studies that the majority of the perpetrators of inter-personal violence are men who are known to their victim (Mirrlees-Black 1999; Budd, Mattinson and Myhill 2000; Myhill and Allen 2002). This is obvious in the case of domestic violence, but extends also to cases of sexual assault and stalking. Much domestic violence is a repeat offence where the victim is subject to further assaults from the same perpetrator. Stalking is always a repeat offence, since it is defined as a series of at least two incidents.

The focus of this chapter is on the relationship between the offender and victim, where one exists. The analysis of sexual assaults is confined to incidents with one offender. The particular interest is in the dynamics of the violent relationship during the process of cessation. The underlying issue of interest is that of desistance, that is, the circumstances under which the violence is made to stop. This chapter does not extend to the use of the full range of services, which are considered in detail in Chapter 6, which further contribute to desistance.

The conventional view is that desistance, or perhaps more accurately, cessation, may be best achieved by the ending of the violent relationship. While this may be the case for the majority of people, the picture is more complicated than it might appear, not least because, for some, the ending of the relationship is associated with the continuation of the violence in a new form such as stalking and other forms of harassment. Hence this chapter explores some of the nuances of the process of onset and cessation of inter-personal violence through the complexities of relationships, in so far as this is possible with data from a survey looking backwards from one point in time.

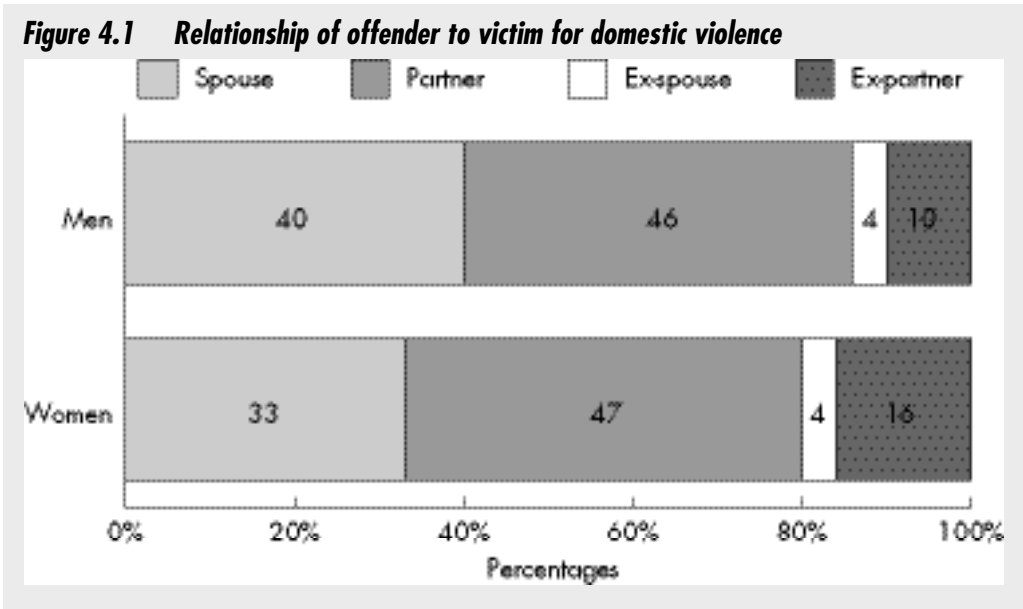
The term domestic violence in this section refers to non-sexual domestic threats or force.

Relationship of offender to victim

Domestic violence

In the case of domestic violence all the perpetrators are people who have or have had an intimate relationship with the victim. Four-fifths of the worst incidents suffered in the last year were from current partners/spouses and one-fifth from former partners/spouses. A higher risk of physical violence is associated with non-married as compared with married partners. This may be a consequence of the early dissolution of violent relationships before they reach

the stage of marriage, or the association of younger ages with cohabitation rather than marriage, or the association of low income with cohabitation rather than marriage, or to some intrinsic feature of marriage itself.



Flashing, unwanted sexual touching, sexually threatening behaviour

Nearly half (45%) of those responsible for less serious sexual assaults against women, that is, flashing, unwanted sexual touching, and sexually threatening behaviour, that caused fear, alarm or distress, were known to the victim. The proportion of perpetrators who were known to the female victim was higher for unwanted sexual touching or sexually threatening behaviour than for flashing. When flashing is excluded from the analysis it is found that, unwanted sexual touching or sexually threatening behaviour were perpetrated in the majority of cases (57%) by men who were known to the women. The largest single category was that of 'colleague' (17% of any less serious sexual attack; 20% when flashing is excluded). The numbers of male victims was too small for reliable analysis.

Table 4.1 *Relationship of offender to victim at time of worst incident for less serious sexual assault, last year female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Any form of less serious sexual assault	Unwanted sexual touching or sexually threatening behaviour only
Intimate²	11	15
Husband	3	4
Male partner	6	9
Ex-husband	<1	<1
Ex-male partner	2	2
Other known³	34	42
Date	1	1
Father	<1	<1
Step-father	1	1
Other relative	2	3
Colleague	17	20
Person in position of trust	.	.
Neighbour	1	2
Friend	8	11
Acquaintance	4	4
Stranger	55	43
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>119</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. 'Intimate' includes spouses, partners or ex-spouses/partners.
3. 'Other known' includes dates, parents/step-parents, other relatives, work/school colleagues, person in position of trust, neighbour, friend or other acquaintance.
4. These figures represent one-offender incidents only.
5. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Rape and serious sexual assaults

The more serious the sexual assault, the more likely was the perpetrator to be well known to the victim. In cases of rape and other serious sexual assaults more of the perpetrators were intimates than in the case of the less serious sexual assaults. In cases of rape (1994 definition), the majority of the perpetrators, 54 per cent, were intimates, that is, husband, partner/boyfriend or former husband/partner. When the definition of the offence is broadened to include other forms of serious sexual assault (involving

penetration of not only vagina and anus but also of the mouth, and by objects and other body parts as well as by a penis) then this proportion drops very slightly to 47 per cent. In only 17 per cent of rapes and 18 per cent of serious sexual assaults was the perpetrator a stranger. 'Date rape' is also less common than perhaps its representation in the media might suggest, at four per cent of rapes and six per cent of serious sexual assaults. The profile of the relationship between victim and offender is little different for rape and other forms of serious sexual assaults. The pattern is similar for both attempts and completed assaults.

Table 4.2 Relationship of offender to victim at time of worst incident for serious sexual assault and rape, since 16 female victims

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Serious sexual assault	Rape (1994) ⁵
Intimate²	47	54
Husband	14	18
Partner	22	27
Ex-husband	2	2
Ex-partner	8	7
Other known³	35	29
Date	6	4
Father	<1	1
Step-father	2	1
Other relative	4	3
Colleague	6	7
Person in position of trust	1	1
Neighbour	1	1
Friend	8	8
Acquaintance	6	3
Stranger	18	17
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>506</i>	<i>288</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. 'Intimate' includes spouses, partners or ex-spouses/partners.
3. 'Other known' includes dates, parents/step-parents, other relatives, work/school colleagues, person in position of trust, neighbour, friend or other acquaintance
4. These figures represent one-offender incidents only.
5. Excludes attempts.
6. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Figure 4.2 Relationship of offender to victim for rape and serious sexual assault**Aggravated stalking**

The analysis of stalking in this section is restricted to those cases where the stalking was accompanied by additional forms of violence towards the victim. These were any of: trying to touch, corner, or grab them; threatened to use violence against them; actually used force against them in any way; made them have sex or attempted to make them have sex without their consent. This is here called 'aggravated stalking' to distinguish it from the basic form.

In these cases of aggravated stalking, among women, 37 per cent were by an intimate or former intimate, 59 per cent by other known persons, and seven per cent by strangers. Nearly one quarter, 22 per cent, of this aggravated stalking was carried out by former husbands and partners. This reflects the analysis in Chapter 2, showing the size of the overlap between the different forms of violence. In particular, for the case of women, a significant minority of the stalking followed women's attempts to exit relationships.

The earlier BCS publication on stalking by Budd, Mattinson and Myhill (2000) reports that in the case of female stalking victims the perpetrator was an intimate or former intimate in 34 per cent of cases, otherwise known to the victim in 34 per cent of the cases and a stranger in 35 per cent of the cases. In the cases of men who were stalked, the perpetrator was an intimate in 27 per cent of cases, other known person in 44 per cent, and a stranger in 28 per cent of cases.

These findings are consistent with the thesis that the more severe forms of violence against women are more likely to be carried out by intimates or other known men rather than strangers. The figures for men suggest that stalking, when accompanied by additional forms of violence, takes a different pattern from that for women, in that strangers are more rather than less significant than intimates, however, due to the small number of cases these results should be treated with caution.

Table 4.3 Relationship of offender to victim at time of worst incident for aggravated stalking, last year victims

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Women	Men ²
Intimate²	37	8
of which:		
Ex-spouse/partner	22	6
Other known³	59	70
Stranger	7	30
<i>Unweighted N</i>	109	76

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. These figures should be treated with caution due to the low number of victims.
3. 'Intimate' includes spouses, partners or ex-spouses/partners.
4. 'Other known' includes dates, parents/step-parents, other relatives, work/school colleagues, person in position of trust, neighbour, friend or other acquaintance.
5. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
6. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Starting and stopping violent relationships

Domestic violence is often a repeat offence that can take place in long-lasting as well as short-lived relationships. The simple assumption that the violence would stop if and when the victimised person left the relationship has been replaced by more complex questions as to the relationship between violence and the starting and stopping of relationships. For instance, violence does not always stop when a woman leaves, since she may be pursued by a violent man, and stalking may develop after a person has refused or broken from an intimate relationship. This section attempts to provide some data to allow for a more sophisticated analysis of the complex inter-play between the starting and stopping of relationships and the starting and stopping of inter-personal violence.

The following section focuses primarily on the analysis of domestic violence (non-sexual threats and force) and examines the onset and cessation of this violence in the context of the starting and sometimes ending of a relationship. One question here is the extent to which cessation of the violence is obtained by the ending of the relationship, or whether people find other ways of stopping the violence. There is a further question of the extent to which ending the relationship successfully ends the violence, or whether it continues, maybe in a different form. Relationships can stop and start again as people try to reduce or eliminate violence from their partner, trying repeatedly to start afresh. We investigate what resources people call upon when they did move out, whether temporarily or permanently. We investigate the timing of the violence in relationship to the length of the partnership and its stops and starts, to better understand what works in stopping the violence. The following analysis uses analysis of both a 'worst incident', selected by the respondent, and of the total series of events that make up a course of domestic violence. While this section is confined to an analysis of non-sexual domestic violence, later sections address serious sexual violence in a domestic setting and stalking.

Onset of domestic violence

Domestic violence starts early in the life of those relationships where it is present. If domestic violence was going to become a repeated act, it had started during the first year of a relationship for 49 per cent of women and 39 per cent of men, indeed within three months for 19 per cent of women and 13 per cent of men. If it was going to occur, it had usually done so during the first five years of a relationship (90% for female victims, 85% for male victims). After five years, it was relatively unusual for violence to start, 10 per cent for women, and 15 per cent for male victims. Nearly a quarter (25% women; 22% men) had never lived with the partner who committed the worst act of domestic violence against them.

The worst event (self-defined) took place during the first year for 24 per cent of the women and 20 per cent of the men. More typically it took place between one and five years into the relationship, 43 per cent for women, 46 per cent for men. For one third of women this event was after five years, with a similar pattern for men.

Table 4.4 *Onset of domestic violence and time of worst event, after starting to live with perpetrator of worst event*

Percentages	BCS			
	Women		Men	
	Onset of domestic violence ²	Worst incident	Onset of domestic violence ²	Worst incident
Under one month	6	2	5	2
Between one and three months	13	5	8	3
Between three and six months	15	6	13	6
Between six months and a year	15	12	13	9
Between one year and five years	41	43	47	46
Between five years and ten years	8	17	6	16
Over ten years	2	16	9	18
<i>Unweighted N</i>	883	2796	111	1007

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is victims of multiple incidents of domestic violence.
3. Domestic violence here refers to non-sexual domestic threats or force.
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Emergency accommodation

After the worst incident of domestic violence, 39 per cent of the women moved out, though some for just one night, as compared with 13 per cent of the men. The main location for the overwhelming proportion of women was to family and friends (90%), while some went to a woman’s refuge (4%). After that, half of the women went back home to their partner; nearly a fifth stayed with family and friends; while an eighth set up a new home; and nearly a fifth went back home and got the partner to leave either by their own accord or by using the law; and, the smallest group of all, moved into temporary accommodation. These findings are consistent with reports from refuges, that some women will leave and return several times before finally deciding to leave permanently.

Table 4.5 Destination of domestic violence victims after initial flight, female last year

Percentages	BCS
Family and friends	18
Went back home to partner	50
Went back home, but partner had to leave by law	8
Went back home and partner left of own accord	8
Temporary accommodation	5
Set up new home	12
Somewhere else	10
<i>Unweighted N</i>	127

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Leaving and stopping domestic violence?

To what extent does leaving a violent partner solve the problem? This is a key question about desistance that implicitly underlies much analysis. For the majority of women and men leaving the violent partner stopped the violence. However, this is not the case for a significant minority, one third (37%) of women and one fifth (22%) of men. Further, leaving a partner is not simple. Indeed many women who suffer domestic violence say that what they want is for the violence to stop and not to have the relationship end, a view indicated in the survey by the fact that half of women who had left home after the worst incident of domestic violence went back home to their partner (as shown in Table 4.5).

When women split up with their partner the violence stopped completely for 63 per cent, got better for eight per cent, stayed about the same for five per cent, got worse for three per cent, only started when they split up for three per cent, and changed to something else, such as stalking and other harassment, for 18 per cent. For men, splitting up led to the violence stopping completely for slightly more people, and this was less likely to be followed by harassment or stalking than was the case for women. Thus, for a significant minority, especially among women, the violence continued after leaving, sometimes changing form to harassment or stalking.

Table 4.6 *The effect of leaving on violence, since 16 victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Women	Men
Stopped completely	63	78
Got better	8	8
Stayed about the same	5	6
Got worse	3	1
Only started when split up	3	3
Changed to a different form of behaviour (such as harassment/stalking)	18	5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2,193</i>	<i>577</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base of those victims who had split from the perpetrator of their worst incident.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

For seven per cent of women who had suffered domestic violence and lived with the perpetrator of the worst incident, this incident took place after they stopped living with their violent partner. For many of these women, for whom the worst incident of domestic violence was after they had left the relationship, the worst event of violence occurred several months or even years after they had stopped living together. Among this group, for over a quarter, (27%), the worst incident was over a year afterwards, for 20 per cent between six months and a year afterwards, and for 53 per cent it was within six months of leaving. For a small but significant minority, leaving the relationship is the most dangerous time of all.

Many people do find a way of getting the violence to stop. This is evidenced by the much higher proportion of people who have experienced domestic violence at some point in their adult lives, than those who currently suffer it. For two-thirds (64%) of the women who reported that they had suffered domestic violence 'many times' since they were 16, the last incident was more than five years ago, and for 82 per cent it was more than two years ago, while for 70 per cent of the (smaller number of) men the last incident was more than two years ago.

Those who had found a way of getting the violence to stop (evidenced by the last incident being more than six months ago) were asked why they thought that this had happened. The overwhelming majority said that it had stopped because they had split up and/or one of them had moved out (88% of women and men).

Table 4.7 *Timing of the worst incident of domestic violence, how long after stopping living with perpetrator, female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
Under one month	18
Between one and three months	24
Between three and six months	11
Between six months and a year	20
Between one year and five years	24
Over five years	3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>161</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is those victims whose worst incident occurred after they stopped living with the perpetrator.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

These findings confirm the view that the main source of cessation is leaving a violent relationship. However, they also indicate the complexity and length of a process that is uneven and potentially dangerous.

Table 4.8 *How long before the interview that the perpetrator of worst incident threatened or used force against victim, since 16 victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Women	Men
Under one month	5	5
Between one and six months	5	7
Between six months and a year	3	9
Between one year and two years	5	9
Between two years and five years	18	26
Between six years and ten years	22	24
Between eleven years and twenty years	30	15
Over twenty years ago	12	5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>896</i>	<i>112</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is victims reporting they had suffered domestic violence from this perpetrator 'many times'.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Leaving and stopping serious sexual assault

Sexual assaults are one part of the broader continuum of domestic violence. While this report analyses them somewhat separately, they may be closely related to domestic violence. As noted earlier, 47 per cent of serious sexual assaults and 54 per cent of rapes (including attempts) were carried out by intimates or former intimates. Further, nearly one-third (29%) of women subject to serious sexual assaults were living with the perpetrator at the time of the worst event.

By the time of the interview, these women were overwhelmingly (86%) no longer living with this man. For multiple victims, when they split up, the abuse stopped completely for 62 per cent, got better for only one per cent, stayed about the same for less than one per cent, got worse for five per cent, only started when they split up for two per cent, and changed to some other form of behaviour, such as harassment or stalking for 29 per cent.

Comparing the sub-set of women leaving a sexually violent relationship with those leaving a violent relationship, the main difference is that a higher proportion of women moving out from a sexually violent relationship (29% compared with 18%) found that the violence continued in another form, such as harassment or stalking. That is, those women who suffered serious sexual assaults as well as physical assaults from their partner, were also more likely to suffer stalking if they left him. This constitutes an intense pattern of overlapping forms of multiple abuse.

Stopping stalking

Stalking is sometimes the continuation of other forms of violence, as noted above. Stalking is by its nature a repeat offence with a duration over time. For almost a quarter (23%) of women, it lasted a few days, while for another quarter (24%) it lasted for more than a year, indeed for five per cent of respondents it lasted more than ten years. The durations for men were similar (Table 4.9).

By the time of the interview, for 79 per cent of women and 78 per cent of men stalked in the last year the stalking had stopped. The most important reasons that the women reported for it stopping include, avoidance, either by the drastic step of moving away, or, less drastically, by changing a phone number/email address; followed by the threat of police or court action (19%). A similar pattern for cessation is found among men who were stalked.

Table 4.9 *Duration of stalking, ever victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Women	Men
A few days	23	27
Between a few days and a month	18	16
Between one and three months	15	12
Between three and six months	10	8
Between six months and a year	9	12
Between one year and five years	14	17
Between five years and ten years	5	3
More than ten years	5	4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1624	656

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is victims reporting they had suffered domestic violence from this perpetrator 'many times'.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Table 4.10 *Why the victim thought the stalking stopped, last year victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS	
	Women	Men
Victim moved away	9	6
Victim changed their phone number/email address	24	16
Relatives/friends/neighbours of victim spoke to/dealt with the person	12	5
Threat of police/court action	19	15
The person moved away	5	3
Some other reason	43	62
<i>Unweighted N</i>	489	263

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is victims reporting that the stalking had stopped.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Children and continuation of the violence

While some people make a clean break from a violent partner, others do not choose, or are not able, to do this. One reason for continued contact is the existence of children common to both parents. There have been some concerns raised about whether and the extent to which men who had been violent in the home are using the occasion of seeing their children as an opportunity for further abuse.

The majority of women no longer with the perpetrator of the worst incident (81% of victims) said that they never saw their former violent partner, 60 per cent of those subject to domestic violence and 65 per cent of those that had been subject to serious sexual assaults. Of women subject to domestic violence, eight per cent saw him regularly, 13 per cent occasionally, and 20 per cent rarely. Of the women who did see their former partner and have child/ren, nearly three-quarters, (73%), did so because of the child/ren. In 19 per cent of these cases there was a child contact order that required the women to allow their former partner to see the child/ren. In more than one third of the cases where the woman saw the man because of the child/ren, this had led to threats, abuse or violence, with 29 per cent reporting that they had been threatened and 13 per cent that they had been abused in some way.

Table 4.11 On the occasions the victim has seen the perpetrator of domestic violence since they split up, whether threats or abuse occurred

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
They have been threatened	29
They have been abused in some way	13
The perpetrator has threatened to hurt their child/ren	2
The perpetrator has hurt their child/ren	1
None of these	64
<i>Unweighted N</i>	449

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is victims who saw their former abusive partner because of their children.
3. Multiple responses were allowed therefore the total will not sum to 100.
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Main points

The majority of the perpetrators of inter-personal violence are men who are known to their victims. Fifty four per cent of rapists were intimates and a further 29 per cent were known to the victim. Date rape is rare, comprising four per cent of rapes. In cases of aggravated stalking of women, 37 per cent were by an intimate, and a further 59 per cent by other known persons. While 88 per cent of both men and women said that leaving the partner was the reason that the violence stopped, the process of leaving can be long and complex. For 37 per cent of women and 22 per cent of men, the domestic violence did not stop when they left, rather for 18 per cent of women and five per cent of men it changed to another form, such as stalking. For those women leaving a sexually violent relationship 29 per cent suffered stalking when they left. One third (36%) of the women who saw the perpetrator of domestic violence after they had split up had experienced either threats or abuse to themselves or their children.

The extent of inter-personal violence is uneven and varies by social and situational characteristics. This chapter examines the data on the risk factors associated with becoming a victim of inter-personal violence.

A risk factor is something that is associated with, or correlates with, being subject to violence. While it may be an indicator of which groups of people are most vulnerable, a risk factor is not the same as the cause of the violence since it might be correlated with something else that is associated with the underlying cause. For example, young women appear to be more vulnerable to inter-personal violence than older women. However, it may be that the age of the offender is more important to the causation of the act, and that the association with the age of the woman is simply because people are more likely to associate with people of their own age (or some other reason). So, risk factors merely describe the distribution of inter-personal violence through the population. They assist an analysis of causation but do not substitute for one.

The greater amount of empirical detail on victims rather than offenders is not intended to convey the impression that it is the characteristics of victims that cause the violence, but is merely the consequence of the nature of a survey in which the respondents were those who were potential or actual victims of inter-personal violence.

The data in this chapter are restricted to those people who were subject to inter-personal violence in the 12 months prior to interview. For some particular sub-types of violence, in particular men subject to sexual assault, the numbers in the sample are too small for it to be appropriate to report the findings because they would be an unreliable guide to the pattern in the population as a whole. While for some issues the characteristics are those reported to be the case at the time of the incident, in the majority of cases the characteristics are those at the time of the interview, and it is possible that these may differ from those at the time of the violence (even when considering victimisation in the 12 months directly prior to interview) for some respondents.

The categories of inter-personal violence reported on throughout this chapter are limited to: domestic violence (non-sexual threat or force), hereafter in this chapter referred to as domestic violence; sexual assault (less serious and more serious combined); and stalking.

Three important risk factors are to be female, young and poor. However, the risk of inter-personal violence is not eliminated for any category of person. The risk factors vary in size between the different forms of inter-personal violence, with the economic factors being most pertinent for domestic violence for women, but they are usually the same factors and affect risk in the same direction. Several of the main risk factors correlate with each other, for example, people who are younger are also on average poorer. This means that the interpretation of the significance any one risk factor in isolation should be done carefully.

Appendix B reports on tests for the statistical significance of these risk factors. Where the difference to the average was found to be statistically significant attention is drawn to the risk factor in the text of this chapter. Where they are not statistically significant the data is reported in the tables without comment.

Gender

Gender is a significant risk factor. Women are more likely than men to be subject to inter-personal violence, especially sexual violence. Details were provided in the previous chapter.

Socio-economic

Vulnerability to some forms of inter-personal violence is associated with lack of access to economic resources. There are many ways in which lack of access to financial resources might increase vulnerability to becoming a victim, or indeed, perpetrator of violence. This may be associated with lack of access to resources to set up a new independent household or to pay for independent transport home such as a taxi. Or it may be that the link is via the perpetrator, such as a desire to obtain power that is unobtainable because of an absence of well-paid employment. Or it may be associated with tensions and disputes within a household that is short of money at a particular moment. It is also possible that the causal link may flow in the opposite direction, that domestic violence leads to poverty either as a result of disrupted employment or as a result of fleeing the violence and setting up a new household as a lone parent who no longer benefits from a partner's income. There are further complex forms of associations.

Data on different kinds of economic resources are reported in the sections on income and money; employment status; social class; and housing. In this section data is provided on four factors: household income; the victim's income; the victim's partner's income; and the ability to find money at short notice. Household income gives some indication of the average level of resources available in the household. Income here includes not only earned income, but also any benefits. However, these resources may not always be equally accessible to both partners. The income of the victim and the victim's partner are reported separately, and are confined to earned income. The third measure, the ability to find £100 at short notice, addresses the issue of immediate access to funds rather than overall standard of living.

Household income

Women in poorer households were subject to more inter-personal violence than those in richer ones. This is very marked for domestic violence where women in households with an income of less than £10,000 were three and a half times at risk than those in households with an income of over £20,000 just under the national average wage. Women in the poorest households were more likely to have been subject to sexual assault than those in more affluent households. For men, while there was some association between household income and risk of domestic violence, this was less marked than it was for women.

The data about household income is that available at the time of the interview (referring to the year prior to interview), and may not describe the situation at the time of the violence if, for instance, the victim has since moved on. In particular, it may be that the low household income found among some women who suffered domestic violence in the last year may be a consequence of their leaving a violent home. That is, it is hard to disentangle the direction of the causality, as to whether low income is a cause or consequence of domestic violence, for women, from this data alone.

Table 5.1 Prevalence of IPV by household income

Percent victims once or more			BCS
	Less than £10,000	Between £10,000 and £20,000	£20,000 and over
Women			
Domestic violence	8.9	5.8	2.6
Sexual assault	2.7	1.7	1.5
Stalking	9.4	9.3	7.4
Men			
Domestic violence	3.7	2.4	2.3
Stalking	7.3	6.6	5.6

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Own and partner income

Table 5.2 reports on the association of the individual earnings of both the victim and of their partner with inter-personal separately.

Table 5.2 Prevalence of IPV by individual earnings of victim and partner

Percent victims once or more							BCS
	Victim			Partner			
	Under £10,000	£10,000 to £20,000	£20,000+	Under £10,000	£10,000 to £20,000	£20,000+	
Women							
Domestic violence	3.7	4.0	2.6	4.7	3.1	1.6	
Sexual assault	2.0	1.2	1.7	1.2	1.1	0.7	
Stalking	7.1	8.5	6.6	9.4	7.2	6.4	
Men							
Domestic violence	3.0	1.7	2.3	2.2	1.6	3.5	
Stalking	7.1	5.5	5.7	5.7	6.6	5.1	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Ability to find money at short notice

The ability to find £100 at short notice is associated with a sizeable difference in risk for both men and women. It is especially the case for women and especially for domestic violence. Women are three and a half times more likely to be subject to domestic violence if they found it impossible to find £100 at short notice than if this was no problem, while for men the ratio is two and a half. Among women, rates of sexual assault were twice as high among those who would find it impossible to find £100 compared with those for whom it was no problem. In the case of stalking the difficulty in finding money at short notice was also associated with a higher prevalence of stalking, for both women and men, but much less intensely so.

Table 5.3 *Prevalence of IPV by how much of a problem it would be to find £100*

	Percent victims once or more			BCS
	Impossible	A bit of a Problem	No Problem	
Women				
Domestic violence	9.6	6.2	2.7	
Sexual assault	3.3	3.0	1.5	
Stalking	10.5	9.5	6.7	
Men				
Domestic violence	5.0	3.1	1.8	
Stalking	8.7	7.0	5.3	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Employment status

Table 5.4 reports on the risk associated with different employment statuses, that is whether the respondent is employed, unemployed or economically inactive.

Table 5.4 Prevalence of IPV by employment status of victim

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>		BCS		
	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive	
Women				
Domestic violence	3.9	6.3	4.8	
Sexual assault	1.8	3.4	2.5	
Stalking	7.6	8.3	8.2	
Men				
Domestic violence	2.1	2.6	2.9	
Stalking	5.5	7.4	7.4	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Social class

Table 5.5 reports on the risk of domestic violence associated with social class. Unlike the variations in risk associated with household income or the ability to find money at short notice (noted previously), this was rarely significantly different from the average.

Table 5.5 Prevalence of IPV by social class of respondent

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>		BCS				
	Professional	Managerial and Technical	Skilled non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi-skilled	Unskilled
Women						
Domestic violence	3.3	3.5	4.3	3.9	5.1	4.5
Sexual assault	0.7	1.7	2.3	1.5	1.9	1.1
Stalking	8.3	8.4	7.8	7.0	8.0	7.1
Men						
Domestic violence	1.8	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.5	3.1
Stalking	5.3	5.3	6.2	6.2	4.7	7.5

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Ethnicity

There is little variation in inter-personal violence by ethnicity. This is an interesting finding because, since ethnicity is associated with variations in economic resources, it might have been expected to show parallel variations.

Table 5.6 *Prevalence of IPV by ethnicity of respondent*

	<i>Percent victims once or more</i>			BCS
	White	Black	Asian	
Women				
Domestic violence	4.2	4.3	4.1	
Sexual assault	2.0	2.1	1.5	
Stalking	7.7	5.7	9.7	
Men				
Domestic violence	2.4	1.6	0.6	
Stalking	5.9	7.5	4.9	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Housing tenure

The form of housing tenure is an approximate indicator of both the extent to which a household is affluent and the extent to which it is settled, though of course there are many exceptions. Owner-occupiers, who make up 70 per cent of the population, are the most affluent and the most settled. The private rented sector has perhaps the youngest population. Among women, the highest risk of domestic violence is found among those living in the social rented sector, followed by the private rented sector and least among owners (or co-owners) of their own homes. While this association may be partly an indication that poverty is linked with the causation of domestic violence, it could be rather that it is a consequence of domestic violence, since women who seek help with re-housing in order to flee domestic violence may be provided with social housing, because many women do not earn enough to support a mortgage on their income alone. Such an association of social housing with greater risk is found among women subject to stalking, though very much less steep. For sexual assault, women in the private rented sector are those who are most at risk. This is consistent with the greater risks of sexual assault among younger women.

Table 5.7 Prevalence of IPV by housing tenure of respondent

Percent victims once or more

BCS

	Owners	Private rented sector	Social rented sector
Women			
Domestic violence	2.8	6.2	9.1
Sexual assault	1.5	4.7	2.4
Stalking	7.2	8.2	10.2
Men			
Domestic violence	2.0	3.4	2.5
Stalking	5.7	6.0	6.6

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Region and area

The variations in reported inter-personal violence across different regions is relatively minor.

Table 5.8 Prevalence of IPV by government office region

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>										BCS
	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humberside	East Midlands	West Midlands	South West	Eastern	London	South East	Wales
Women										
Domestic violence	4.9	4.4	3.6	4.7	5.8	3.7	3.3	4.6	3.7	4.0
Sexual assault	2.1	2.2	1.1	2.8	2.4	1.6	2.3	2.5	2.1	0.5
Stalking	10.4	8.8	6.3	7.8	8.4	7.5	8.0	8.5	5.4	6.4
Men										
Domestic violence	1.6	2.6	2.2	1.3	2.3	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.0	2.5
Stalking	7.3	7.4	5.2	6.2	5.8	5.8	4.9	5.8	4.9	5.8

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

There are variations in risk of inter-personal violence associated with living in inner city, urban or rural areas, especially for women. The higher rate associated with the inner city runs parallel with the finding of a higher rate of inter-personal violence associated with lack of economic resources.

Table 5.9 Prevalence of IPV by area type

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>			BCS
	Inner-city	Urban	Rural
Women			
Domestic violence	7.0	4.1	3.3
Sexual assault	3.0	2.2	1.2
Stalking	10.8	7.7	6.8
Men			
Domestic violence	2.7	2.4	1.8
Stalking	6.0	6.3	4.2

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Informal social resources

The resources needed to be resilient in the face of violence, or to leave a violent home, may be social as well as economic. There has been much discussion of the relevance of 'social capital' (Putnam 2001) in relation to social cohesion. Other people in a person's informal social network may be able to offer support, advice and help that is important to the prevention or early cessation of violence. Of course, it is also possible that active social networks may correlate with other risk factors in such a way that their effects are obscured. The extent to which victims sought help after an incident is discussed in Chapter 6. Here the interest is in the extent to which those with and without social networks were more or less at risk. Two indicators of active and supportive social networks were investigated: whether they had someone they could stay with at short notice; how much they saw friends and relatives.

Active social network

An active social network may be important in providing access to support and advice, or, for non-domestic forms of inter-personal violence, it may in itself constitute a risk in that it exposes a person to a wider range of potential perpetrators. So the question here is, does an active social network increase or decrease the risk of different forms of violence. Table 5.10 reports on the frequency of seeing friends and relatives in relation to the prevalence of inter-personal violence. Just over half the population reported that they saw friends and relatives most days. There is little patterning in the results in this table. Simply seeing friends and relatives most days is not a protective factor in inter-personal violence. However, this finding does not rule out the possibility that particular qualities of the relationships may be relevant.

Table 5.10 *Prevalence of IPV according to how often victim saw friends or relatives in the past year*

	Percent victims once or more				BCS
	Most days	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	
Women					
Domestic violence	4.5	3.6	4.3	4.8	
Sexual assault	2.4	1.6	1.4	1.9	
Stalking	8.2	7.4	6.5	8.3	
Men					
Domestic violence	2.6	1.7	2.9	1.6	
Stalking	6.1	5.1	6.5	6.0	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Someone you could stay with at short notice?

It may be that just seeing friends and relatives is less relevant than whether they could deliver some more concrete form of support. An example of such support is whether friends and relatives would be able and willing to offer temporary accommodation in a crisis. Access to somewhere to stay in an emergency may be relevant to some forms of inter-personal violence, especially those where the potential victim is able to assess the risk of emerging danger. The ability to remove oneself at short notice from a difficult or escalating situation might prevent or reduce violence. This is especially relevant as an issue for domestic violence in the home. However, for non-domestic forms of violence, an active social network may also be associated with increased risk since it increases exposure to potential perpetrators. Table 5.11 reports on the prevalence of inter-personal violence for those who did or did not have friends and relatives with whom they could stay for a night or two at short notice if they needed to. Most people, 91 per cent of women and 93 per cent of men, said that they did have someone that they could stay with at short notice. Women are more likely to suffer domestic violence if they have no one to stay with, suggesting that this lack of informal emergency accommodation is a significant resource issue for them. For men, there was no difference, suggesting that such a lack of this informal resource was not a significant issue. Stalking is slightly higher among those who do have someone to stay with, especially for women. This may be because the active network implied by this factor may result in higher exposure to potential perpetrators.

Table 5.11 Prevalence of IPV by whether victim had friends/relatives to stay with for a night or two at short notice if needed

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>	BCS		
	Yes	No	Total
Women			
Domestic violence	4.1	6.4	4.2
Sexual assault (more serious)	0.5	1.0	0.5
Stalking	7.9	5.7	7.8
Men			
Domestic violence	2.3	2.3	2.3
Stalking	5.9	5.1	5.8

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Age

The younger a person is, the more likely they are to be subject to inter-personal violence. In all cases those under 25 are the most likely to suffer inter-personal violence. The oldest group is the least likely to suffer such violence, but the risk is not eliminated. Women have a steeper age gradient than men. It is most pronounced for sexual assault of women, followed by domestic violence against women. The gradient for stalking is less steep for both sexes.

The association of age with inter-personal violence may be due to the greater vulnerability of younger women, or it may be due to the greater propensity of younger rather than older men to use violence coupled with the tendency of people to associate with people of the same age group. This age-related finding is not unique to inter-personal violence. Young men are much more likely to commit most forms of crime than are older men (Farrington 1992).

Table 5.12 Prevalence of IPV by age of victim

	Percent victims once or more									BCS
	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	
Women										
Domestic violence	7.2	8.8	5.9	5.1	3.6	3.3	2.5	1.5	0.8	
Sexual assault	7.4	3.6	2.6	1.7	1.3	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.1	
Stalking	10.1	8.5	9.2	8.1	7.3	7.0	7.9	6.3	5.4	
Men										
Domestic violence	3.4	3.6	2.6	3.0	2.5	2.3	1.0	1.2	0.7	
Stalking	8.4	7.0	4.5	4.2	6.4	6.9	5.3	6.5	3.3	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Marital status and household structure

Marital status

There are considerable variations in the risk of inter-personal violence by marital status. Among women, domestic violence is highest among those who are separated. This violence may be either on-going from a former partner, or it may be violence during the course of the past year by a husband from whom the woman had separated by the time of the interview. The next highest risk categories for domestic violence were those of people who were divorced and single. Single is something of a mixed category, and the violence reported here will include that within a cohabiting relationship that has ended by the time of the interview (women who have left a marriage are recorded as separated, while those who have left a cohabiting relationship are recorded as single). Among women, the highest risk marital statuses for sexual assault are single and separated. Among women, rates of stalking are higher among those who are separated. Among men, there is less variation in the risk of inter-personal violence by marital status than there is among women. Men who are divorced are the most likely to have suffered domestic violence at some point in the year prior to interview.

It should be noted that marital status correlates with other risk factors, for example, younger people, who are higher risk, are less likely to be married and more likely to be single or cohabiting. Further, it is perhaps not surprising that the rates of domestic violence in the last year are higher for post-married statuses, since women who have recently left a violent relationship are likely to fall into these categories.

Table 5.13 Prevalence of IPV by marital status of victim

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>						BCS
	Married	Cohabiting	Single	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
Women						
Domestic violence	2.0	6.2	6.9	1.3	6.8	14.5
Sexual assault	0.7	2.0	4.8	1.9	2.1	4.0
Stalking	6.7	7.7	8.7	8.0	10.0	15.5
Men						
Domestic violence	1.8	3.9	2.3	.	4.6	3.9
Stalking	5.5	5.4	6.6	.	6.7	4.5

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Household structure

Women living in one-parent households with child/ren are much more likely to have been subject to domestic violence than other forms of household. This is probably because women who have recently left a violent partner are most likely to fall into this category. This is also associated with higher rates of sexual assault and stalking, possibly for the same reason.

Table 5.14 Prevalence of IPV by household structure

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>		BCS
	Single adult & child(ren)	Adults & child(ren)
Women		
Domestic violence	14.7	3.9
Sexual assault	3.3	1.9
Stalking	12.1	7.5
Men		
Domestic violence	4.7	2.4
Stalking	7.2	6.4

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Children in household

The presence of children in the household is associated with nearly double the risk of domestic violence for women. The presence or absence of children has little effect on the risk of other types of inter-personal violence. This is consistent with both the thesis that women are reluctant to save themselves by breaking-up a home if there are children and the thesis that it is more difficult for women to establish a home of their own if they have children for economic reasons, that is, it is harder to earn sufficient income to establish and maintain a new home if there are dependent children to support.

Table 5.15 *Prevalence of IPV by whether children in household*

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>	BCS	
	Children present in household	No children present in household
Women		
Domestic violence	5.6	3.1
Sexual assault	2.1	2.0
Stalking	8.2	7.4
Men		
Domestic violence	2.5	2.2
Stalking	6.4	5.5

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Health status

Self-reported health status is associated with some variations in inter-personal violence for women. It is more likely that this health status is either an outcome of the violence, or that health status and inter-personal violence are associated through complex pathways, than it is for poor health to be a cause of violence. Women who report that they are in poor health have suffered more than twice the rate of domestic violence and of stalking than those that report that they are in good health. For men, there is no association between health status and domestic violence.

Table 5.16 Prevalence of IPV by health status (self-reported) of victim

<i>Percent victims once or more</i>	BCS		
	Good	Fair	Poor
Women			
Domestic violence	3.7	6.7	8.8
Sexual assault	2.0	2.6	3.0
Stalking	6.8	12.5	17.7
Men			
Domestic violence	2.2	2.7	2.4
Stalking	5.7	6.5	7.6

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS
2. Domestic violence is non-sexual force or threats.
3. Sexual assault includes more or less serious, and attempts.
4. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Criminality of perpetrator

A person with a criminal history has a higher risk of further offending than those without such a record, in relation to both the same and different types of crime (Farrington 1992). But does this apply to domestic violence as well or is it different from other types of crime? Do perpetrators of domestic violence fit the pattern in which a person with a criminal record is more likely to commit another crime than someone who has not, or is there a quite different pattern of associations and causation? Questions were asked about whether the perpetrator of domestic violence in the last year had a criminal history that was known to the victim. This is likely to result in an undercount of the extent of a criminal record, since not all partners will be informed about this. Nevertheless, this enables an investigation of the correlation of a known criminal record (known to the victim) with indicators of the frequency and severity of attack. Twenty-four per cent of women who had suffered domestic violence in the previous year reported that they knew that the perpetrator had a criminal record, while 20 per cent of those that had suffered such violence at some point since they were 16 reported knowing that the perpetrator had a criminal record. The number of men reporting that they knew their perpetrator had a criminal record was only five per cent in the previous year and four per cent since 16. Women have much lower rates of criminality than men, so this gender difference is not surprising.

The findings, reported in Table 5.17 shows that those perpetrators who were known by the victim to have a criminal record were more likely to commit more severe forms of domestic

violence than those that did not. The greater severity is indicated in the case of female victims of domestic violence in the previous year by increased frequency, increased severity of the act, the increased presence of mental and physical injuries and more severe physical injuries. The greater severity is indicated in the case of male victims since 16 in relation to the increased frequency of acts. These findings suggest that the profile of domestic violence has similarities with those of other crimes in that people who commit one crime are more likely than the average person to commit more severe and frequent forms of domestic violence.

Table 5.17 Whether perpetrator was known to have a criminal record by victim

Percentages					BCS
Injury sustained ²	None	Mental	Physical injury		
			Minor injury only	Up to moderate (but not serious)	Serious
Female (since 16)	10	25	21	26	37
Unweighted N	580	967	800	572	216
Frequency of domestic violence					
	Once	Two/Three times	Many times		
Female					
- since 16	11	21	31		
Unweighted N	976	565	828		
- last year	15	28	37		
Unweighted N	224	101	121		
Male					
- since 16	2	4	13		
Unweighted N	568	188	109		
Nature of worst act (last year victims)					
	Frightening threats only	Minor force, not severe ³	Severe force ⁴		
Female (last year)	26	16	33		
Unweighted N	134	197	142		

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. 'Minor' injury consists of minor bruising or black eye, or scratches. 'Up to moderate' injury includes severe bruising or bleeding from cuts. 'Serious' injury includes internal injuries or broken bones/teeth. Sufferers of mental injury could have been victim to physical injury also.
3. 'Minor force, not severe' can include being pushed, held or pinned down or slapped.
4. 'Severe force' is defined here as being kicked, bit, hit, having something thrown at the victim that hurt them, being choked or strangled, threatened with a weapon, threatened to be killed or used a weapon against them.
5. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Main points

There has been much debate as to the most likely causal pathway linking inter-personal violence with variations in social and situational factors. Two of these debates are: firstly, the extent to which vulnerability to violence is associated with social exclusion; secondly, the extent to which this vulnerability is gendered.

Vulnerability to inter-personal violence is greater for women than for men. This vulnerability is associated with social exclusion, especially as indicated by fewer economic resources, especially for women. The association of vulnerability to inter-personal violence with fewer economic resources is stronger for domestic violence than it is for other forms of inter-personal violence. The lack of economic resources is most strongly associated with domestic violence against women. However, while the association is clear, the direction of the causality is not. It may be that poverty is linked to causative processes, perhaps reducing the ability of a man to perform masculinity to his satisfaction, or by reducing the resources women need in order to move on out from a violent relationship, but it may also be that poverty and social exclusion are the consequences of domestic violence. Women who leave behind their homes and partners in order to escape violence will very probably be much poorer as a consequence of the loss of their home and of their partner's income. Another possibility is a web of inter-related processes in which social exclusion and domestic violence are linked in a vicious spiral.

There are many ways to seek help and many forms of help available, yet many who suffer inter-personal violence tell no one and do not seek help, and of those who do, many restrict this to their friends and relatives. There are many innovative voluntary services that have pioneered ways to help those trying to survive various forms of previously unrecognised or under-recognised violence. There have been major transformations in recent years in the way that public services address domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, and many more are being planned. There are many other services of which survivors of violence quietly avail themselves, for example, solicitors, rarely appearing in public records, in their efforts to extricate themselves from difficult situations and relationships. This chapter presents data on the current pattern of use and non-use of services. It notes the vast discrepancy between the new willingness in public and voluntary services to better understand and find ways to support victims of inter-personal violence and the up-take of these services.

The services addressed in greatest detail are the criminal justice system and the medical services. The analysis of the use of housing services and refuges has already been analysed in the context of their role in assisting people to leave violent relationships, and is re-summarised here. The most detailed analysis is provided for domestic violence, since the numbers of cases of sexual assault were often too small to permit reliable analysis.

Who gets told?

Domestic violence

One third (34%) of women who have suffered domestic violence (non-sexual domestic threats or force) since they were 16 have probably never told anyone⁵ other than this survey about their worst incident. The proportion of men who never told anyone is higher, at 62 per cent. Among last year victims, the proportion who have never told anyone is barely lower (see Table 6.1). Those who were subject to domestic violence many (four or more) times from the perpetrator of the worst incident were much more likely to tell someone and to seek help for this incident. The difference between men and women declines when the analysis is limited to those who suffered many incidents. Both men and women who

⁵ It is possible that this percentage overstates the extent to which no one other than the survey has been told. This is because the wording of the question and its location in the questionnaire produces an unintended ambiguity, that might result in this category including people who did tell the police or health professionals.

experienced under four incidents less frequently report their experience to anyone, and this category is a higher proportion of the male than female survivors (89 per cent of those who suffered four or more incidents were female).

The figures in Table 6.1 show the proportions that told about the worst incident they experienced, either since 16 or last year. Among women, the largest portion (58% of victims) had told their own friends, relatives and neighbours. The next largest category to learn of this domestic violence was that of the police (21% of victims), though the police may have first been told by someone else (in 72% of incidents the victim told). For those subject to this violence in the last year the pattern is very similar, with just slightly more telling, especially their informal networks.

The men had a similar pattern to the women, in that they were most likely to have told their own friends, relatives and neighbours if they had told anyone (87% of those who told someone; 32% of victims), and the next most frequently informed group were the police, though they came to know to a much lesser extent than in the case of women.

Those who suffered many incidents were much more likely to seek help. The implication of this finding is that those who approach the police and other agencies are likely to have suffered many incidents, not one or two.

The extent to which many people told only their informal networks rather than public services is striking, as is the size of the group who, even today, tell no one other than our survey.

Table 6.1 Who was told about the worst incident of domestic violence

	BCS					
	Percentages			Percentages		
	Women			Men		
	Victims			Victims		
	4 or more			4 or more		
	Since	times,	Last	Since	times,	Last
	age 16	since 16 ³	year	age 16	since 16 ³	year
Police (came to know)	21	34	23	7	15	8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2842	899	541	1025	113	228
No one ⁵	34	27	31	62	35	63
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2812	901	538	1000	111	224
Friends/relatives/ neighbours	58	65	63	32	56	32
Partner's relatives/ friends/neighbours	10	12	11	7	13	6
Someone at work	7	9	11	6	12	4
Women's refuge	2	5	2	<1	2	.
Women's group/centre	1	4	3	.	.	.
Victim support	2	4	3	<1	1	1
Religious group/leader	<1	1	.	<1	.	1
Social services	2	3	2	<1	1	1
Housing department	1	3	2	<1	1	.
Benefit agency	1	2	1	.	.	.
Sought legal advice	6	12	5	1	6	1
Someone else	4	7	3	2	6	1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2877	900	549	1041	111	234

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is all victims.
3. This is victimisation from the perpetrator of the worst incident.
4. Domestic violence here refers to non-sexual domestic threats or force.
5. While it was intended that the category 'no one' should be selected by only those who had told no one other than the interviewer about the event, it is possible that this category could include people who told a health professional and/or the police (and will be included in these respective figures). This is because of the wording of the question ('Tellany') and its place in the questionnaire.
6. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
7. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%.
8. '.' denotes no cases in this category.
9. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Serious sexual assault

The pattern concerning who was told in relation to serious sexual assault on women is similar to that described for domestic violence suffered by women. If these women told, they were most likely to tell their friends, relatives or neighbours (49% of all assaulted women). The main differences from domestic violence are that there is a higher proportion of those who told no one, 40 per cent, a lower rate of involvement of the police despite the greater seriousness of the violation, and a higher use of counselling services. 25 per cent of those women that were raped in their worst incident (since age 16) and classified it as such, told no one about the incident.

Table 6.2 Who was told about the worst incident of serious sexual assault, female victims (since age 16)

Percentages	BCS	
	Serious sexual assault	Rape (1994) ⁴
Police (came to know)	12	15
<i>Unweighted N</i>	507	289
No one ³	40	40
Partner	15	15
Friends/relatives/neighbours	49	47
Partner's relatives/friends/neighbours	2	1
Someone at work	6	7
Women's refuge	<1	<1
Women's group/centre/aid	<1	<1
Victim support	2	3
Religious group/leader	<1	<1
Counsellor/therapist	6	8
Social services	2	2
Rape crisis line	2	4
Childline	<1	-
Someone else	4	5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	500	286

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is all victims.
3. While it was intended that the category 'no one' should be selected by only those who had told no one other than the interviewer about the event, it is possible that this category could include people who told a health professional and/or the police (and will be included in these respective figures). This is because of the wording of the question ('Sxtell') and its place in the questionnaire.
4. Excludes attempts.
5. These figures represent one-offender incidents only.
6. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
7. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%.
8. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Less serious sexual assault

Among women who had suffered a less serious sexual assault, that is, flashing, unwanted sexual touching, sexually threatening behaviour, in the last year, 21 per cent had not told anyone. Again the largest category told their own friends, relatives or neighbours (92% of those that told; 72% of victims). The next most important category was someone at work (23% of those that told; 18% of victims). The proportion of cases where the police knew about the incident, 13 per cent, was lower than for domestic violence and about the same as for serious sexual assault. Overall, this follows a similar pattern to domestic violence, though with a slightly smaller minority telling no one, a slightly higher proportion telling their friends, relatives, neighbours or someone at work, and a slightly smaller minority told any statutory or voluntary services.

Table 6.3 *Who was told about the worst incident of less serious sexual assault, female last year victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
Police (came to know)	13
<i>Unweighted N</i>	167
No one ³	21
Friends/relatives/neighbours	72
Someone at work	18
Counsellor/therapist	2
Victim support	2
Rape crisis line	<1
Someone else	3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	165

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is all victims.
3. While it was intended that the category 'no one' should be selected by only those who had told no one other than the interviewer about the event, it is possible that this category could include people who told the police (and will be included in this figure). This is because of the wording of the question ('Intell') and its place in the questionnaire.
4. These figures represent one-offender incidents only.
5. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
6. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%
7. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Stalking

Victims of stalking are more likely to tell other people about this form of inter-personal violence than any other, only eight per cent of women and 19 per cent of men who had

ever been victims of stalking had not told anyone other than the survey. Again, the category of people most frequently told was that of friends, relatives and neighbours. A higher proportion of these events come to the attention of the police than other forms of interpersonal violence and, unlike domestic violence, this is gender symmetrical, with the police coming to know in 33 per cent of the female and 32 per cent of the male cases experienced in a lifetime. The evidence from women is that the pattern of telling is very similar between those who had experienced stalking in the previous year and those who had experienced it at some point in their lives. This pattern of greater telling of both friends and police is suggestive of lesser stigma attaching to this form of inter-personal violence. However, there seems little sign of change in this over time, since last year victims were no more likely to report this behaviour to the police than were those who had ever experienced it (31% of women last year victims and 30% of men last year victims involved the police).

Table 6.4 Who was told about stalking

	Percentages				BCS
	Women		Men		
	Ever victim	Last year	Ever victim	Last year	
Police (came to know)	33	31	32	30	
Unweighted N	2000	835	952	493	
No one ³	8	9	19	17	
Friends/relatives/neighbours	87	84	72	73	
Women's refuge	1	1	<1	.	
Rape helpline	<1	.	.	.	
Other helpline	2	2	2	3	
Victim support	1	1	1	1	
Religious group/leader	1	<1	1	1	
Someone else	9	10	11	11	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>1974</i>	<i>827</i>	<i>891</i>	<i>475</i>	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is all victims.
3. While it was intended that the category 'no one' should be selected by only those who had told no one other than the interviewer about the event, it is possible that this category could include people who told the police (and will be included in this figure). This is because of the wording of the question ('Stella-stellj') and its place in the questionnaire.
4. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
5. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%
6. '.' denotes no cases in this category.
7. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

How useful was telling?

Most women (79%) who told someone about their experience of domestic violence in the last year found that the person or service was able to help⁶.

Police

The police came to know about this inter-personal violence in a minority of incidents. In less than one in four (21% women since 16; 23% women last year; 7% men since 16; 8% men last year) of the worst cases of domestic violence did the police come to know, though the proportion is a little higher (34% women; 15% men) for those who had suffered four or more attacks (since 16). The proportion of cases of sexual assault in which the police came to know was lower at less than one in seven of the worst cases (15% completed rape; 12% any serious sexual assault; 13% less serious sexual assault). Stalking was the most reported of these forms of inter-personal violence, but even this was only one in three (33% women ever; 31% women last year; 32% men ever; 30% men last year).

Even when the police were informed about domestic violence, the cases rarely went to court. However, at the same time, those few who use the service think reasonably of it. The issue as to why people do not think that the police would be helpful to them is explored by a consideration of the characteristics of the victims and of the reasons they themselves provided.

Of women who had been subject to domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force) since they were 16, the majority, 79 per cent, said that the police did not come to know of the worst incident, while this was the case for 93 per cent of the men. Of course some of these incidents would be many years ago, when policing practices were different. But have such changes made any difference? The pattern of reporting in the last year is very similar to that for domestic violence since 16, since in 77 per cent of cases concerning women and 92 per cent of cases concerning men, the police did not come to know. Indeed, looking at the rate of reporting of domestic violence over time, as shown in Table 6.5, suggests that, for women, there has been little noticeable change in the rate of reporting over the last ten years for women, though this is somewhat higher than that more than 20 years ago. For men, the rate of reporting over the last five years is higher than that more than five years ago, but remains at a low level.

⁶ This is for those victims that told only one person/service.

Table 6.5 *Whether the police came to know about domestic violence, by time of worst incident*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS			
	Women	<i>Unweighted N</i>	Men	<i>Unweighted N</i>
One to two years ago	20	158	8	100
Two to five years ago	24	503	10	230
Five to ten years ago	23	642	5	206
Ten to twenty years ago	19	690	6	199
More than twenty years ago ²	15	292		

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. The sample size is too small for this category to provide reliable results for men.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Both women and men were much more likely to report domestic violence to the police if it was more serious, that is, it caused injury rather than not, and more severe rather than less severe injury and when it occurred more frequently. This means that the cases about which the police come to know are the most serious ones. The less serious cases are less likely to come to their attention.

Men were less likely to report than women within every comparable sub-category. Younger women (aged 16-24) were less likely to report domestic violence to the police than older women (aged 25-59).

Women in poorer households were more likely to report than women who lived in more affluent households, indeed those who lived in households with an income of less than £20,000 a year were nearly three times as likely to report than those with an income of more than £20,000. This raises questions as to whether domestic violence is more stigmatised in more affluent households, and whether indeed they constitute a 'hard to reach' group.

People were much more likely to report domestic violence to the police if they conceptualised it as being a crime rather than as not a crime. Women and men who considered the act perpetrated against them to be a crime were three to five times more likely to report to the police than those that did not.

Women who told others were more likely to tell the police. Of those seeking legal advice two-thirds reported domestic violence to the police. However, those who told their friends, relatives and neighbours were only slightly more likely than the average victim to tell the police.

Table 6.6 *Percentage of victim's worst incidents of domestic violence that the police came to know about, according to the characteristics of the victim and incident*

<i>Percentages</i>					BCS
Injury sustained (since 16 victims)	None	Mental ²	<i>Physical injury</i>		
			Minor injury only	Up to moderate (but not serious)	Serious
Female	7	30	20	33	45
<i>Unweighted N</i>	621	1060	873	611	239
Male ⁵	3	19	8		16
<i>Unweighted N</i>	467	125	281	163	
Frequency of domestic violence					
	Once	Two/Three times	Many times		
Female					
- since 16	13	21	34		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1052	608	899		
- last year	19	23	40		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	248	107	127		
Male					
- since 16	5	8	15		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	591	191	113		
Nature of worst act (last year victims)					
	Frightening threats only	Minor force, not severe ³	Severe force ⁴		
Female	20	17	38		
<i>Unweighted N</i>	151	207	159		
Who else was told about worst incident (since 16)					
	Victim's friends, relatives, or neighbours	Victim's partners, friends, relatives or neighbours	Someone at work	Sought legal advice	
Female	29	48	44	67	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1715	280	219	188	

Table 6.6 (continued)

<i>Percentages</i>				BCS
Whether victim thought it was a crime (since 16)				
	It was a crime	Wrong, but not a crime	Just something that happens	None of these
Female	34	8	11	6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1491	856	347	80
Male	25	6	4	2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	121	303	487	97
Age of victim (at time of interview) (last year victims)				
	16 to 24	25 to 39	40 to 59	
Female	16	29	25	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	137	281	123	
Total household income (last year victims)				
	Less than £10,000	£10,000 to £20,000	More than £20,000	
Female	38	36	14	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	177	132	142	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. 'Minor' injury consists of minor bruising or black eye, or scratches. 'Up to moderate' injury includes severe bruising or bleeding from cuts. 'Serious' injury includes internal injuries or broken bones/teeth. Sufferers of mental injury could have been victim to physical injury also.
3. 'Minor force, not severe' can include being pushed, held or pinned down or slapped.
4. 'Severe force' is defined here as being kicked, bit, hit, having something thrown at the victim that hurt them, being choked or strangled, threatened with a weapon, threatened to be killed or used a weapon against them.
5. For male injury sustained, moderate or serious injury are one category due to small sample size.
6. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Differences between 'since 16' and 'last year' victims

As noted in Chapter 2, there are differences in the characteristics of incidents and victims between those reported since 16 and those reported last year. This may be a consequence of the longer time period having a greater likelihood of containing a more serious event than a time period of one year, a consequence of reduced recall of events a long time ago, or changes over time. The characteristics for domestic violence victims are compared in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Comparisons of sub-categories of domestic violence

Percentages	Women		Men		BCS
	Since 16	Last year	Since 16	Last year	
Injury sustained					
None	25	28	50	49	
Mental	37	31	10	9	
Minor injury only	32	34	29	34	
Up to moderate (but not serious)	21	16	14	13	
Serious	8	6	2	1	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2744	525	982	217	
Frequency of domestic violence					
Once	43	54	69	72	
Two or three times	25	24	21	17	
Many times	32	22	11	11	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2590	485	905	201	
Whether victim thought it was a crime					
It was a crime	51	36	11	6	
Wrong, but not a crime	33	40	30	36	
Just something that happens	13	17	49	44	
Something else	3	6	10	14	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2808	524	1021	226	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. 'Minor' injury consists of minor bruising or black eye, or scratches. 'Up to moderate' injury includes severe bruising or bleeding from cuts. 'Serious' injury includes internal injuries or broken bones/teeth. Sufferers of mental injury could have been victim to physical injury also.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Victims' reasons for not reporting to the police

Victims' reasons for not reporting inter-personal violence to the police are very varied, ranging from saying that it was too trivial to bother the police to saying that it would result in more violence. When asked why they did not report inter-personal violence to the police, the most commonly given reason was that they thought it was too trivial and not worth reporting. This was especially the case for men who had experienced domestic violence (non-sexual threats or force) (68%), and also women who had suffered a form of less serious sexual assault (flashing, sexually threatening behaviour or unwanted sexual touching) in the

last year (56%), and to a lesser extent women who had experienced domestic violence (41%). In cases of domestic violence over one third of both women (38%) and men (39%) did not report it because they thought it was a private or family matter and not police business. One quarter of women (27%) subject to lesser sexual assault did not report it because they thought that the police could not do much. Significant minorities of women did not report inter-personal violence to the police because they feared further violence or that the situation would get worse as a consequence of police involvement, 13 per cent in cases of domestic violence and 11 per cent of cases of less serious sexual assault.

Table 6.8 *Why the police were not told about worst incident, last year victims*

Percentages	BCS		
	Domestic violence		Less serious sexual assault
	Women	Men	Women
Too trivial/not worth reporting	41	68	56
Private/family matter/not police business	38	39	10
Didn't think they could do much to help	13	4	27
Didn't think that they would believe	2	1	6
Didn't think they would be sympathetic	3	1	8
Police did not come when called	.	<1	.
Dislike/fear the police	1	.	1
Feared more violence/that situation would get worse as a result of police involvement	13	.	11
Didn't want any more humiliation	7	5	10
Didn't want to go to court	2	2	3
Some other reason	5	2	12
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>360</i>	<i>199</i>	<i>139</i>

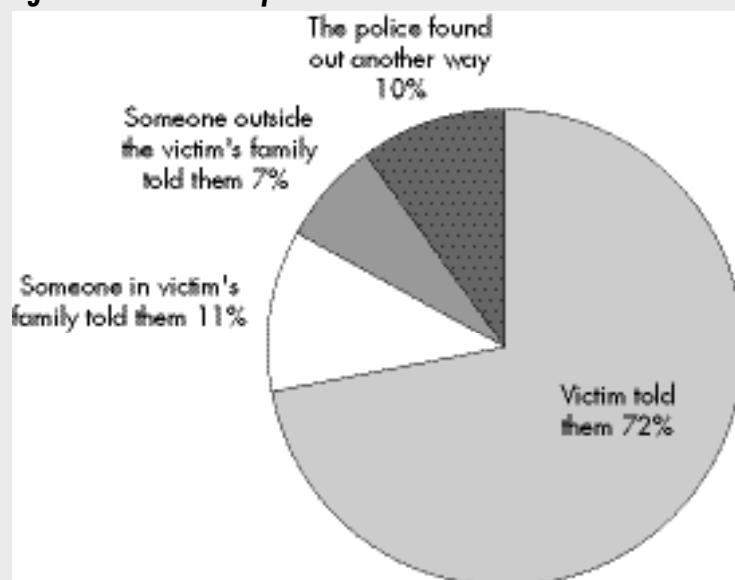
Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
3. Domestic violence here refers to non-sexual domestic threats or force.
4. '<1' denotes values less than 0.5%.
5. '.' denotes no cases in this category.
6. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

How did the police come to know?

In cases restricted to those of domestic violence in the previous year, when the police did come to know about the incident concerning women this was predominantly (72%) because the woman herself told them, though in the remainder others inside (11%) and outside (7%) her family told them, as reported in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 How the police came to know about domestic violence



Police Action

In those instances where the police did come to know of the incident, the woman saw an officer from a Domestic Violence Unit in 35 per cent of cases.

In the cases the police came to know about in only one fifth (21%) of cases was the victim aware that this person was arrested, and only in one tenth (10%) did it lead to a court case, as shown in Table 6.9.

Table 6.9 Police action in cases of domestic violence, last year female victims

Percentages	BCS
Found the person who did it	10
Spoke to the person who did it	42
Arrested the person who did it	21
Person who did it was sent to court	10
The case is ongoing	1
None of these	29
<i>Unweighted N</i>	148

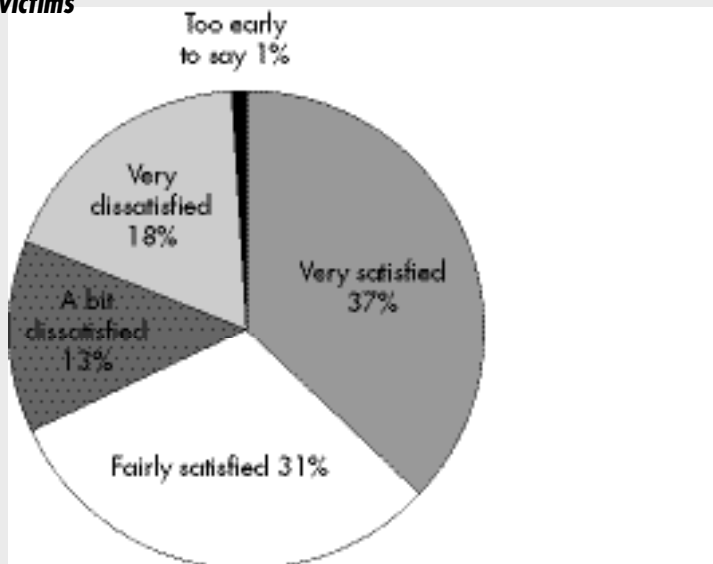
Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is those incidents the police came to know about.
3. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

In those cases where the police had taken some action, that is, any of the first five responses above, 25 per cent of the cases came to court, seven per cent were pending, while 68 per cent resulted in no court action.

Victim evaluation of the police

Figure 6.2 Victim satisfaction with police handling of the matter, female domestic violence victims



The evaluation of the police handling of the domestic violence matter by the minority of women (23%) who used the police was, for two-thirds (68%), one of satisfaction (very or fairly), while a third (31%) reported being (very or a bit) dissatisfied.

Medical services

Seeking medical assistance

Those who sustained injuries in their worst incident of domestic violence were asked if they used medical services on that occasion. Only 30 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men who reported injuries (since 16) sustained in domestic violence, and only 29 per cent of women who suffered serious sexual assault, said that they went to see a doctor, nurse or some other health professional because of these injuries or problems. The figures for seeking medical help in the last year are not higher, of those injured in domestic violence last year – only 27 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men sought medical assistance then.

Since only a minority of people sought medical assistance for this, the worst incident of domestic violence since 16 or that year, we investigated some of the factors that might be associated with this. These are reported in Table 6.10. Some of the factors that are associated with lesser reporting are associated with the severity of the injury, so that over four times as many seek medical help if the injury is serious rather than minor, nearly twice as many if the violence occurs many times rather than one to three times. However, this still leaves 27 per cent of women with serious medical injuries not seeking medical attention. Women who tell someone else are more likely to seek medical help with their injuries than those who do not tell others. In particular, the majority (70%) of those who seek legal advice also seek medical help. However, only 36 per cent of those who told their friends, relatives and neighbours also sought medical assistance, a level only just above the average. Young women (16-24 years) are less than half as likely as older women (25-59 years) to seek medical assistance. Women in households with incomes over £20,000 are half as less likely to seek medical assistance as those with household incomes £10,000 to £20,000.

The pattern of seeking medical assistance is similar to the pattern of seeking assistance from the police. In both cases those with more severe injuries, more frequent attacks, who tell others especially legal advisers, who are older and poorer are more likely to seek assistance.

Table 6.10 Characteristics of those who sought medical help for domestic violence injuries female victims

Percentages				BCS
Injury sustained (since 16 victims)²	Mental	<i>Physical injury</i>		
		Minor injury only	Up to moderate (but not serious)	Serious
	34	16	38	73
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1060	871	611	244
Frequency of domestic violence				
	Once	Two/Three times	Many times	
- since 16	22	24	40	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	572	493	859	
- last year	24	24	36	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	158	87	119	
Nature of worst act (last year victims)				
	Frightening threats only	Minor force, not severe ³	Severe force ⁴	
	24	17	42	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	112	134	136	
Who else was told about worst incident (since 16)				
	Victim's friends, relatives, or neighbours	Victim's partners, friends, relatives or neighbours	Someone at work	Sought legal advice
	36	47	46	70
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1378	250	193	176
Age of victim (at time of interview) (last year victims)				
	16 to 24	25 to 39	40 to 59	
	14	32	37	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	99	212	90	
Total household income (last year victims)				
	Less than £10,000	£10,000 to £20,000	More than £20,000	
	31	42	22	
<i>Unweighted N</i>	145	103	95	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. 'Minor' injury consists of minor bruising or black eye, or scratches. 'Up to moderate' injury includes severe bruising or bleeding from cuts. 'Serious' injury includes internal injuries or broken bones/teeth. Sufferers of mental injury could have been victim to physical injury also.
3. 'Minor force, not severe' can include being pushed, held or pinned down or slapped.
4. 'Severe force' is defined here as being kicked, bit, hit, having something thrown at the victim that hurt them, being choked or strangled, threatened with a weapon, threatened to be killed or used a weapon against them.
5. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Of those who did seek medical help (last year) for domestic violence the most frequently used service by women was the GP (65% of those who sought medical help), followed by Accident and Emergency hospital department.

Table 6.11 *Where victims of domestic violence went to get medical help, last year female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
GP's/doctor's surgery	65
Hospital casualty/Accident and Emergency Department	35
Specialist mental health or psychiatric services	10
Other health services	6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	123

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is those who sought medical help.
3. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
4. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

The vast majority (94%) of women who received medical help at GP's/A&E for injuries sustained in domestic violence last year were asked about the cause of these injuries by either GPs or A&Es. The majority of victims attending GP's/A&E, but not all, (74%), reported that they told the cause of their injuries. This may appear a surprisingly high level of disclosure. There are several possible explanations of this. It may reflect very recent change. It may be that while they told a cause of the injuries they may not have been specific about this being domestic violence. However, it should also be noted that only a minority (30%) of women with injuries sought any medical assistance, and that these women were disproportionately those with serious injuries, had suffered domestic violence many times, experienced severe levels of force and who were also seeking legal advice. Further, only 26 per cent of those that went to a GP/doctor/A&E and 36 per cent of those who told the cause of their injuries were referred on to anyone else who could help them.

Table 6.12 *Whether victims were asked, or told, the cause of their injuries to a doctor/nurse at GP's/A&E and whether they were referred to anyone else who could help, last year female victims*

<i>Percentages</i>	BCS
Asked cause of injuries	94
Told cause of injuries	74
Referred to anyone else that could help	26
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>113-6</i>

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Base is those who sought medical help at doctor's/A&E.
3. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Specialist programmes

In recent years a wide range of innovative treatment programmes has been developing. The extent to which a variety of treatments have been used is reported in Table 6.13. There is little difference between the use of treatments between those reporting domestic violence over a long period and those referring to the previous year as far as victims were aware. About four-fifths of perpetrators have received no treatment. The commonest programmes are general counselling or therapy and, for male perpetrators also help or treatment for alcohol abuse. The proportion undergoing specialised domestic violence treatment programmes is very small. The perpetrators who committed many incidents of domestic violence were only slightly more likely to receive specialist treatment than those who committed few.

Table 6.13 *Whether the perpetrator received help or treatment, since 16 victims*

Percentages	BCS			
	Female victims		Male victims	
	Since 16	Victims 4 or more times, since 16 ³	Since 16	Victims 4 or more times, since 16 ³
Help or treatment for alcohol abuse	6	9	1	2
Counselling or therapy	10	14	12	24
DV treatment programme	1	2	<1	1
None of these	85	79	87	74
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2540	835	949	110

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Help or treatment could be before or after worst incident of domestic violence.
3. This is victimisation from the perpetrator of the worst incident.
4. Multiple responses were allowed, therefore percentages will not sum to 100.
5. Excludes 'don't know' and 'don't want to answer' responses.

Discussion

The use of public services by those struggling to survive inter-personal violence is low. Those few domestic violence victims who use the police generally provide a favourable report of them. For some, the reason for non-contact is fear of further violence. But for the majority, the reasons offered are that they do not think that most public services are sufficiently helpful or that their problem is sufficiently important for them to be worth contacting.

Most people do tell someone, most usually friends and relatives or someone at work, but a significant proportion have never told anyone other than the anonymous computer offered by the interviewer.

7.

Comparisons with other BCS studies

The extent and pattern of inter-personal violence, especially domestic violence, has been estimated by other BCS studies. This chapter compares the findings and methodology of the 2001 BCS IPV with these other studies.

There are two types of methodology in the BCS. The first is the main face-to-face interview in which the interviewer asks the respondent questions and records the answer in a laptop computer. This has produced a series of data over time. The second is a self-completion phase in which the computer is given to the respondent who reads the questions from the computer screen and provides answers via the computer keyboard.

Face-to-face BCS

The main face-to-face section of the BCS asks about all types of crime that might be experienced in a domestic household, including violence against the person and, within this, domestic violence. This part of the survey uses 'screener' questions and, if respondents disclose crimes, these are followed up with a maximum of six victim forms, three long and three short. It is accepted that the estimates of domestic violence represent only a proportion of the actual number of incidents. This is partly because people are less inclined to report such sensitive events during face-to-face questioning than in the more confidential self-completion method. It is also because of the limit of six 'victim forms' and the fact that if an event is defined as a series, a maximum of five incidents is counted to avoid distorting the estimates. The prevalence rates are, however, unaffected by these restrictions on the number of victim forms, although they are affected by the face-to-face rather than self-completion methodology. With the 2001 self-completion, respondents were asked to estimate the number of times acts of domestic violence (in the year period) occurred, and estimates of numbers of incidents were generated from these responses (see Chapter 2 for more detail). This main section of the survey allows for people to report sexual violence, but the numbers of people responding here are considered too small to be reliably reported.

Domestic violence trends over time

The main face-to-face BCS shows a decline in the number of incidents and victims of domestic violence since 1995. These findings have the advantage of constituting a time series with a consistent methodology. This decline in the extent of domestic violence reported to the main

BCS is in the same direction as, but more rapid than, the decline in all BCS violence. Between 1997 and 2002/3 all BCS violent incidents declined by 24 per cent, while incidents of domestic violence declined by 38 per cent.

Table 7.1 Main face-to-face BCS domestic violence prevalence and incidence (in thousands) estimates

	Numbers and percent victims once or more					BCS
	1995	1997	1999	2001/02 interviews	2002/03 interviews	
Number of incidents	987	812	771	622	501	
Prevalence risk	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.6	

1. Source 1996 BCS, 1998 BCS, 2000 BCS, 2001/02 and 2002/03 BCS interviews.

Comparing the main face-to-face BCS measure of domestic violence and the 2001 BCS self-completion module

The self-completion module of the 2001 BCS produces substantially higher estimates than does the main face-to-face BCS. It is not appropriate to compare the number of incidents determined from the main BCS and the self-completion, because of the different methods of calculation and the restrictions to the main measure noted above. However, a broad comparison between the prevalence measures (percent victims once or more) is possible. The 2001/02 BCS (most comparable period) showed that 0.6 per cent of the population (male and female) were a victim of domestic violence in the year prior to interview (this measure excludes frightening threats). The 2001 self-completion shows that overall 2.8 per cent of people (3.4 per cent of women and 2.2 per cent of men) aged 16-59 were a victim of domestic violence (force) in the year prior to interview. Therefore, the self-completion finds a prevalence of approximately five times that of the face-to-face BCS.

Previous BCS self-completion studies

The British Crime Survey has produced previous studies on specific forms of inter-personal violence, though never before on all main forms at the same time. The first was a study on rape and sexual assault in 1994 (Percy and Mayhew 1997), next a study of domestic violence in 1996 (limited to threats and actual physical assaults) (Mirrlees-Black 1999), then

stalking in 1998 (Budd *et al.* 2000), and rape and sexual assault in 1998 and 2000 (Myhill and Allen 2002). These studies share the methodology of self-interviewing by computer in the respondent's home, after the completion of the main face-to-face survey. The current study builds on the methodology of these earlier ones.

The prevalence and incidence rates reported from the different studies vary somewhat. This may be a result of methodological differences in the surveys, or to changes in the willingness of respondents to report incidents to surveys, or to actual changes in the amount of inter-personal violence. There are some differences between the surveys in the terms used in the questions, the words used to lead in to the questions, whether or not lifetime is restricted to 'since 16', and the extent to which 'screener' questions were used before the more detailed questioning. These methodological differences may be expected to lead to some variations in estimates. It is not possible to determine accurately how much of the difference between the estimates is due to methodological differences and how much to changes in behaviour or in the reporting of behaviour.

However, despite the methodological differences, the findings from the various self-completion studies have a broad similarity in their order of magnitude, unlike the contrast between the self-completion and face-to-face sections of the BCS where the findings are very substantially different.

Domestic violence

BCS 2001 IPV distinguished between three main levels of domestic violence, one of which, financial and emotional abuse, was not included in the 1996 BCS. Both the 2001 BCS and the 1996 BCS distinguished between the use of threats and of force. The 2001 BCS asked more detailed questions about the nature of the behaviour and has many more detailed sub-categories. The 1996 BCS asked about domestic violence ever, the 2001 BCS since 16.

- The 1996 BCS estimated that 26 per cent of women and 17 per cent of men had experienced domestic violence (threats or force) at some point in their lives, while 23 per cent of women and 15 per cent of men had experienced domestic violence (physical assaults) at some point in their lives. The 2001 BCS estimates that 21 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men had suffered at least one incident of domestic violence (non-sexual threat or force), and that 19 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men had suffered at least one incident of domestic force since the age of 16.

Table 7.2 1996 and 2001 BCS self-completion studies estimates of domestic violence

	Percent victims once or more				BCS
	1996		2001		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Threats and/or force ²	26.0	17.3	20.8	10.1	
Threats and/or force (last year)	5.9	4.9	4.2	2.3	
Force ²	23.0	15.0	18.6	9.6	
Force (last year)	4.2	4.2	3.4	2.2	

1. Source 1996 and 2001 BCS
2. For 1996 this refers to 'ever', for 2001 'since 16'.
3. 2001 'Force' category includes threats to kill.

- The 1996 BCS estimated that in the last year 5.9 per cent of women and 4.9 per cent of men had experienced either frightening threats of physical assaults from their current or former partner, while 4.2 per cent of women and 4.2 per cent of men had been physically assaulted. The 2001 BCS estimated that in the last year 4.2 per cent of women and 2.3 per cent of men had experienced threats or force from a current or former partner, and that 3.4 per cent of women and 2.2 per cent of men had suffered domestic force.
- The lower prevalence rate of domestic violence found in the 2001 BCS compared with 1996 BCS may be due either to differences in methodology, especially differences in wording, or to real changes. The time series data from the face-to-face BCS suggests that one component of the differences is a real reduction in the prevalence rate.

Sexual assault

Early BCS studies used screener questions before asking about sexual assault in detail, while the 2001 BCS used only a series of detailed questions. The later surveys were more detailed than the earlier ones in the specification of the behaviour asked about. 2001 BCS has an innovative scale for distinguishing different forms and severity of sexual assault.

Table 7.3 *Prevalence of female rape from 1994, 1998, 2000 and 2001 BCS self-completion studies*

	Percent victims once or more					BCS
	1994	1998	2000 (screener)	2000 ²	2001 ³	
Rape (since 16)	6.3	4.4	4.5	4.9	3.6	(4.5)
Rape (last year)	.	.	.	0.4	0.3	(0.5)

1. Source 1994, 1998, 2000, 2001 BCS.

2. These are the results from the follow-up questions in the self-completion questionnaire.

3. The 2001 estimates include attempts at acts.

4. The terms used in the interviews varied between the different surveys, with the later ones making finer distinctions. The screener question terms used in the self-completion modules were: 1994 'forced to have sex against their will'; 1998 'forced to have sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal penetration) against their will'; 2000 'forced to have sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal penetration) against their will'; 2001 distinguishes between the legal definition in 1994, that is, penetration of the vagina or anus by penis without consent, and (the bracketed figure) penetrative sexual assault that additionally includes penetration of vagina or anus by objects and body parts and penetration of the mouth by penis. It is not possible to determine whether or not respondents included these additional acts in interpretation of the questions in 1998 and 2000.

- The 1994 BCS estimated that 6.3 per cent of women had been forced to have sex against their will since 16. The 1998 BCS estimated that 4.4 per cent of women had been forced to have sexual intercourse against their will, since 16. The 2000 BCS estimated that 4.5 per cent (screener) or 4.9 per cent (follow-up questions) of women had been forced to have sexual intercourse against their will, since 16. The 2000 BCS estimated that 9.7 per cent had been subject to any form of sexual victimisation since 16, while 0.9 per cent had been subject to any sexual victimisation and 0.4 per cent had been raped last year.
- The 2001 BCS estimates that 4.5 per cent of women had been seriously sexually assaulted and that 3.6 per cent had been raped, since 16, that 7.0 per cent of women had been seriously sexually assaulted and 5.2 per cent raped ever, and that 0.5 per cent of women had been seriously sexually assaulted and 0.3 per cent raped (1994 definition) last year. These figures include attempts. On less serious sexual assaults, the 2001 BCS estimates that 15.3 per cent of women and 1.8 per cent of men had been subject to a less serious sexual assault since they were 16, as had 1.9 per cent of women last year. The 2001 BCS estimates 0.2 per cent of men had been subject to a sexual assault (more or less serious) last year.

- It is not possible to distinguish between the effects of changes in methodology, especially in the distinctions made between different forms of sexual assault, differences in willingness to report, and any real changes over time.

Stalking

The 1998 BCS asked about 'persistent and unwanted attention' since 16, the 2001 BCS asked about a series (two or more) of such behaviours that were described in greater detail, at any point in the respondent's lifetime.

Table 7.4 Prevalence of stalking, 1998 and 2001 BCS self-completion studies

	Percent victims once or more				BCS
	1998		2001		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Stalking or harassment ²	16.1	6.8	18.9	11.6	
Stalking or harassment (last year)	4.0	1.7	7.8	5.8	

1. Source 1998 and 2001 BCS.

2. For 2001 this refers to 'ever', for 1998 'since 16'.

- The 1998 BCS estimates that 16.1 per cent of women and 6.8 per cent of men were subject to persistent and unwanted attention since 16, and 4.0 per cent of women and 1.7 per cent of men last year.
- The 2001 BCS estimates that 18.9 per cent of women and 11.6 per cent of men were ever subject to stalking, and 7.8 per cent of women and 5.8 per cent of men last year.
- The higher rate of stalking reported in 2001 as compared with 1998 may be partly due to methodological differences (especially in the wording of the questions); and partly due to increased respondent awareness of the issue of stalking and harassment (and of the range of behaviours that are included) as a consequence of increased media attention.

Introduction

The disclosure of sensitive and potentially distressing events of inter-personal violence may be affected by the manner in which a survey is conducted. This appendix reports on the nature and effects of some of the ways in which the conduct of the survey may have affected the extent of inter-personal violence disclosed. These include in particular the presence of others in the room and the sex of the interviewer.

BCS sample design

The sample design is intended to provide, after appropriate weighting, a representative sample of the population aged 16 or over living in private households in England and Wales.

The sample of addresses is derived from the Small Users Postcode Address File (PAF), using a stratified multi-stage random probability design. If there is more than one adult in the household, one is randomly selected. Further information, including the 2001 IPV questionnaire can be found in the technical report on the 2001 BCS (Bolling *et al.* 2002).

It is possible that the exclusion of individuals not living in private households might affect some findings since some of the most recently heavily abused population may be more likely to be living in refuges, hostels or other temporary accommodation, be staying with friends or relatives, or be homeless. However, the number of people in these situations is probably too small to significantly affect the prevalence rates, especially those reported for 'since 16'. Nevertheless, it is possible that it might affect the profile of 'last year' victims.

The sample and time periods

Interviews took place during 2001. In the IPV module, when respondents were asked about their experiences in the 12 months prior to interview, the midpoint of victimisation was approximately the beginning of the calendar year of 2001.

Although the BCS includes respondents aged 16 and over, the questions on inter-personal violence were only asked of those aged between 16 and 59. This was for two main reasons. First older people have greater difficulty with or resistance to using a computer in this way. The earlier BCS self-completion module on stalking (Budd *et al.* 2000) found that interviewer assistance increased with the age of respondent so that among those aged 55-59 over a fifth required interviewer assistance (compared with 5% overall) while in nine per cent of cases the interviewer entered the responses (compared with 5% overall). The data from the 2001 BCS IPV confirms this, since among women aged 55-59 the interviewer completed the questionnaire for the respondent in 19 per cent of cases compared with 11 per cent for all age groups.

Secondly, it was thought that issues of elder abuse (from family members other than intimates) might get confused with responses about violence from intimates and that these issues were more appropriately dealt with in a specialised survey.

Response rate

The response rate for the whole 2001 issued core sample was 73.1 per cent, and to the self-completion module on inter-personal violence 90 per cent, and is made up as shown in Table A.1. The overall response rate for the self-completion was therefore 66 per cent (under the assumption that the response rate among 16 to 59 year-olds was the same for the sample aged 16 and over).

Table A.1 *Response rate to self-completion mode*

	BCS		
	Female	Male	All
Number of eligible respondents	13,551	11,375	24,926
Refused to complete self-completion	1325	1138	2463
Respondent completed questionnaire	10,873	9,078	19,951
Interviewer completed questionnaire ¹	1353	1159	2512
Response rate	90.2	90.0	90.1

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.

2. The option of the interviewer completing the questionnaire was only offered for the domestic violence questions.

Some respondents did not reply to specific questions, or stated that they did not know. In the calculation of prevalences, these respondents are included in the base.

Piloting

The survey was piloted with the help of four women's refuges and a rape crisis centre. This involved around 20 interviews. A researcher sat with each respondent while they were keying in their answers to observe how they coped with and interpreted questions and to answer any queries. In addition they were asked if they felt that any aspect of the questionnaire was problematic. This piloting was particularly helpful in refining the wording of some of the questions and for presenting the time periods to respondents in the best possible way. Unfortunately it did not prove possible within the time frame to pilot the questionnaire on men in parallel settings.

Self-completion

The main part of the BCS survey is conducted face-to-face with the interviewer entering the respondent's answers into a lap-top computer. When this is complete, and it is time for the sections that are to be completed by the respondent, that is, including the module on interpersonal violence, the interviewer turns the computer around to the respondent. The respondent answers questions by selecting one of a number of offered choices using the cursor key and then presses the enter key, which is marked with a red sticker. Most respondents (82%) were able to do this entirely by themselves.

Interviewer assistance

A small minority of respondents received assistance from the interviewer on parts of the questionnaire. Due to possible bias due to the potential special sensitivity of the questions in the sections on sexual assault and stalking, the interviewers were not allowed to complete these sections. The extent of this assistance on the domestic violence module is reported in Table A.2.

Table A.2 Interviewer assistance with the self-completion

	BCS					
	Female		Male		All	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Respondent completed self-completion²	89	10873	89	9078	89	19951
- without any help	82	9985	82	8391	82	18376
- help with one or two questions	4	541	4	403	4	944
- help with less than half	1	132	1	105	1	237
- help with more than half	<1	56	<1	51	<1	107
- help with all/nearly all	1	132	1	111	1	243
Interviewer completed	11	1353	11	1159	11	2512

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.

2. Includes those cases where the degree of help was unknown, hence the constituents will not add to this total.

A lower rate of domestic violence occurred when the interviewer provided assistance than when the respondent entered all the answers into the computer themselves. This effect was found across the range of forms of domestic violence and for both men and women.

Table A.3 Prevalence rates by interviewer assistance

Percent victims once or more

BCS

	Female		Male	
	No assistance	Assistance	No assistance	Assistance
Since 16				
Domestic violence (non-sexual)				
- domestic abuse, threat or force	26.8	21.4	17.8	10.8
- domestic threats or force	21.4	18.1	10.6	7.9
- domestic force	18.9	17.0	10.0	7.6

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.

2. No interviewer assistance is those cases where the respondent completed the questionnaire without any help.

3. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Gender of interviewer

One of the major potential advantages of the self-completion procedure rather than direct verbal exchange with an interviewer is to reduce the effect of the interviewer on the respondent. This is especially important in such a sensitive area. It has been suggested that respondents are more likely to disclose episodes of abuse to female rather than male interviewers, for example, Sorenson (1987) found that respondents (male and female) disclosed 1.27 times as many sexual assaults when they were interviewed by a woman rather than a man. However, Sorenson's work involved face-to-face rather than computer-based interviews. Further Myhill and Allen (2002) reported that the 1998 BCS self-completion module on rape did not find that respondents disclosed fewer rapes when the interviewer was male, indeed they disclosed very slightly more. In the case of the 2001 BCS IPV, the analysis of prevalence rates by interviewer's sex shows that the effect of the interviewers' sex had not been fully eliminated using the self-completion procedure. For each of the three major types of inter-personal violence, physical domestic violence, sexual assaults, and stalking, the prevalence disclosed to female interviewers was about one percentage point greater than that disclosed to male interviewers (i.e. an increase of around 5%). The same effect holds whether the respondent is male or female.

Slightly over half the interviewers were female. The interviewers of female respondents were 58 per cent female, while those of male respondents were 52 per cent female.

Table A.4 Prevalence rates by interviewer sex

Percent victims once or more

BCS

	Female		Male	
	Male interviewer	Female interviewer	Male interviewer	Female interviewer
Since 16				
Domestic violence (non-sexual)				
- domestic abuse, threat or force	25.3	26.3	15.8	17.5
- domestic threats or force	20.2	21.3	9.6	10.7
- domestic force	18.3	18.7	9.2	10
Less serious sexual assault	14.5	15.9	1.6	2.0
Serious sexual assault (incl. attempts)	4.1	4.8	0.5	0.6
Sexual assault (more or less serious - incl. attempts)	15.9	17.2	1.8	2.4
Ever				
Stalking	18.4	19.3	10.8	12.3

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.

2. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Presence of others

The interviewer was trained to try to ensure that no one else was in the room when the completion of the IPV took place, but this result was not always obtained and someone else was present in 29 per cent of cases, around half of whom were partners. The self-completion procedure is such that no one else can usually see the answers that are entered into the computer, not the interviewer, nor, usually, anyone else who may be in the room. However, the sensitivity of the questions is such that the presence of others in the room while the interview was taking place might affect the responses. The extent of the presence of others during the self-completion section of the questionnaire is reported in Table A.5.

Table A.5 *Presence of others during the self-completion, male and female respondents*

	BCS	
	%	N
No one else present	71	15967
Someone else present²	29	6447
- spouse or partner	14	3230
- other adult household member	6	1288
- child in household	9	1925
- other person	3	709
All respondents	100	22414

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.

2. Excludes those where it was not known if somebody else was present.

The small but highly varied associations between the presence of others and disclosure of different types of inter-personal violence by men and women are reported in Table A.6. For women, someone else present in the room very slightly raises the reporting of domestic abuse, domestic violence and stalking, but slightly lowers the reporting of less serious sexual assaults. While for men the slight effect associated with someone else in the room is in a contrary direction, slightly lowering the reporting of domestic violence, raising the reporting of less serious sexual assault and stalking.

Sampling error

As in all surveys where only a sample of the population is questioned, the estimates will be subject to a series of sampling errors. Where it is known that the population interviewed differs from that known from other sources, an adjustment is made by weighting the interviewed sample, in order to bring it into line with the proportions of different types of people known to exist in the population. In order to reduce the effect of remaining sampling errors on reported findings, the BCS does not report findings based on very small groups. In this report data on certain types of violence in particular groups have not been presented as a consequence of this concern with the reliability of the findings.

Table A.6 Prevalence rates by presence in room at time of interview

	Percent victims once or more				BCS
	Female		Male		
	Someone else present	No one else present	Someone else present	No one else present	
Since 16					
Domestic violence (non-sexual)					
- domestic abuse, threat or force	26.8	25.5	16.3	16.8	
- domestic threats or force	21.4	20.5	9.8	10.3	
- domestic force	18.7	18.5	9.1	9.8	
Less serious sexual assault	13.1	16.3	1.3	2.0	
Serious sexual assault (incl. attempts)	4.5	4.5	0.5	0.5	
Sexual assault (more or less serious - incl. attempts)					
	14.6	17.5	1.6	2.3	
Ever					
Stalking	19.3	18.8	12.2	11.3	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 BCS.
2. Excludes those where it was not known if somebody else was present.
3. Prevalences here include 'don't want to answer/don't know' responses in the base.

Discussion

The methodology of the BCS IPV has developed from that in earlier BCS studies. The survey benefits from high response rates, a large sample size and from the confidentiality derived from its completion by the respondent directly into the computer. However, there are some aspects of the methodology that may have implications for the reported prevalence rates and profile of the victims. These include the use of the settled domestic household as the key unit in the sampling frame; the extent to which respondents are assisted in the completion of the questionnaires; the gender of the interviewer; and the presence of other members of the household in the room. There have been doubts expressed over the extent to which people would report events that they did not think of as crimes within the framework of a crime survey. While it is not possible to be definitive on this issue, it is worth noting that many events were reported that the respondents did not think were crimes. It is possible, given the sensitive nature of the questions, that not all events of inter-personal violence were reported to a computer brought by a stranger to their home, especially those that were longer ago that may additionally be affected by less than full memory recall.

Appendix B

Tests for statistical significance of risk factors

Table B.1 *Significance of difference from the average for socio-demographic groups*

BCS

	Female		Male		
	Domestic violence	Sexual assault	Stalking	Domestic violence	Stalking
Household income					
<i>Less than £10,000</i>	*	*		*	
<i>Between £10,000 and £20,000</i>	*				
<i>£20,000 and over</i>	*				
Victim earnings					
<i>Less than £10,000</i>					
<i>Between £10,000 and £20,000</i>					
<i>£20,000 and over</i>					
Partner earnings					
<i>Less than £10,000</i>	*		*		
<i>Between £10,000 and £20,000</i>					
<i>£20,000 and over</i>	*				
How much of a problem to find £100					
<i>Impossible</i>	*	*	*	*	*
<i>A bit of a problem</i>	*	*	*	*	
<i>No problem</i>	*	*	*	*	
Victim employment status					
<i>Employed</i>					
<i>Unemployed</i>					
<i>Inactive</i>					

(Continued overleaf)

Table B.1 (Continued)

	BCS			
	Domestic violence	Female Sexual assault	Stalking	Male Domestic violence Stalking
Social class				
<i>Professional</i>		*		
<i>Managerial/technical</i>				
<i>Skilled non-manual</i>				
<i>Skilled manual</i>				
<i>Semi-skilled</i>				
<i>Unskilled</i>				
Housing tenure				
<i>Owners</i>	*	*		
<i>Private rented sector</i>	*	*		*
<i>Social rented sector</i>	*		*	
Children in household				
<i>Yes</i>	*			
<i>No</i>	*			
Household structure				
<i>Single adult & child(ren)</i>	*	*	*	
<i>Adults & child(ren)</i>				

Notes:

1. Source 2001 IPV.
2. An * denotes statistically significantly different from the average at the 10 per cent level.

Table B.2 *Significance of difference from the average for socio-demographic groups*

	BCS				
		Female		Male	
	Domestic violence	Sexual assault	Stalking	Domestic violence	Stalking
Area					
<i>Inner city</i>	*		*		
<i>Urban</i>					
<i>Rural</i>	*	*			*
Region					
<i>North East</i>			*		
<i>North West</i>					
<i>Yorkshire and Humberside</i>		*			
<i>East Midlands</i>				*	
<i>West Midlands</i>	*				
<i>South West</i>					
<i>Eastern</i>					
<i>London</i>					
<i>South East</i>			*		
<i>Wales</i>		*			
Age					
<i>16-19</i>	*	*			*
<i>20-24</i>	*	*			
<i>25-29</i>	*				
<i>30-34</i>					*
<i>35-39</i>		*			
<i>40-44</i>		*			
<i>45-49</i>	*	*		*	
<i>50-54</i>	*	*		*	
<i>55-59</i>	*	*	*	*	*

(Continued overleaf)

Table B.2 (Continued)

	BCS			
	Domestic violence	Female Sexual assault	Stalking	Male Domestic violence Stalking
Marital status				
<i>Married</i>	*	*	*	*
<i>Cohabiting</i>	*			*
<i>Single</i>	*	*		
<i>Widowed</i>	*			
<i>Divorced</i>	*		*	*
<i>Separated</i>	*	*	*	
Health				
<i>Good</i>	*		*	
<i>Fair</i>	*		*	
<i>Poor</i>	*		*	
Ethnicity				
<i>White</i>				
<i>Black</i>				
<i>Asian</i>				*
Seeing friends/relatives				
<i>Most days</i>				
<i>At least once a week</i>				*
<i>At least once a month</i>				
<i>Less than once a month</i>				
Availability of friends/relatives to stay with at short notice				
<i>Yes</i>				
<i>No</i>	*		*	

Notes:

1. Source 2001 IPV.

2. An * denotes statistically significantly different from the average at the 10 per cent level.

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