

Understanding Harassment

1

Understanding Harassment of Abused Women

Via Interpretive Interactionism

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Running head: UNDERSTANDING HARASSMENT OF ABUSED WOMEN

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Introduction

This paper is based primarily on the qualitative methodology described by Norman K. Denzin in Interpretive Interactionism (1989) and is an exemplar of a beginning sociological, interpretive process that incorporates my worlds of lived and autobiographical experiences with the "interrelationship between private lives and public responses to personal troubles" of women in abusive relationships (p.10).

I will first provide a brief summary of the ideographic (emic) interpretive interactionist perspective, then try to weave the tenants of this perspective into my lived experience of being a family violence clinical nurse specialist, a doctoral student, and a beginning researcher studying the experiences of battered women.

Interpretive Interactionism

By interpretive interactionism, Denzin (p. 7) states he is trying to bring to readers the problematic, lived experiences of ordinary people

through the use of creative, open-ended interviewing; document analysis; semiotics; life-history; life-story; personal experience and self-story construction; participant observation; and thick description. He acknowledges that his approach is eclectic and attempts to unite many qualitative methods and sociologic approaches citing symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969); participant observation and ethnography (Becker, 1970; Lofland and Lofland, 1984; Adler and Adler, 1987; Agar, 1986; Fielding and Fielding, 1986); semiotics and fieldwork (Manning, 1987); postmodern ethnographic research (Turner and Bruner, 1986); naturalistic studies (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 1980); creative interviewing (Douglas, 1985); the case method (Stake, 1986; Yin, 1985); interpretive, hermeneutic phenomenology (Heidegger, 1982); and feminism (Cook and Fonow, 1980). Many of the above authors have been core readings in this doctoral program

Denzin clearly states the his interpretive interactionism approach should "only" be used if one wants to study the relationship between troubles in personal lives and the concurrent interaction between

public policies and public institutions designed to address these troubles (p. 10). He cites family violence and wife-battering as topics conducive to study using an interpretive interactionism approach.

Using thick descriptions of the recorded open-ended interviews of the stories (lived experiences) of the people being studied, coupled with the actual and/or witnessed experiences of the researcher, the interpretive interactionist makes available to the reader a meaningful interactions between people (pp. 12-14).

Epiphanies

According to Denzin, there are certain life experiences that dramatically change the meanings people give to themselves and the course of events in their lives. He calls these key experiences - epiphanies, turning points in peoples' lives that forever change them. He identifies four levels of epiphanies:

1. The Major - a major and/or life-shattering, life altering experience.
2. The Cumulation - a build up of a series of events.

3. The Minor/Illuminative - underlying tensions/problems get revealed.
4. The Relived - a reliving and/or reoccurrence of a major turning point (p. 17).

Epiphanies have the ability to greatly change peoples lives at the deepest of levels and are often remembered via the stories people tell. These stories can have multiple meanings to multiple people and the meanings may change over time. Epiphanies can be of profoundly troubling events or a series of more minor events. They tend to be interactional in nature and are amenable to being recorded, studied, and described by interpretive researchers (p. 40).

Two Interpretive Camps

Denzin divides interpretive researchers into two camps. First are those interpretive researchers (Geertz, 1988, Strauss, 1987, and Becker, 1986) who participate in pure interpretation intended to "build interpretations that are grounded in social interaction" (p. 22). This pure interpretive research can influence and direct the second type of interpretive research, that designed to provide to social policy makers tangible, real world

recommendations for reducing or eliminating social problems. These recommendations are never value free since this perspective acknowledges that the researcher always brings to the process preconceptions of the topic of interest. Therefore, the researcher must state, upfront, her/his prior interpretations of the problem under study (pp. 22-23).

Using Ordinary Language and One's Self

Using the language of ordinary people, interpretive interactionists, who are active participants in the social worlds under study, often research and write about their own worlds of experience. Unlike positivists who strive to distance and insulate themselves from their research topics, Denzin argues that..."meaningful interpretations of human experience can only come from those persons who have thoroughly immersed themselves in the phenomenon they wish to interpret and understand" (p. 26).

The Feminist-Interpretive Interactionism Link

In addition to research not being value-free, Denzin states that there is no gender-free knowledge and that much prior research has ignored, neglected, or made trivial the voices of women in the interpretive

process. Interpretive research must ensure that the voices of women be included in the process.

Denzin identified five phases of the interpretive process:

1. Deconstruction - a critical analysis and interpretation of prior research on the problem being studied;
2. Capture - obtaining multiple, naturalistic instances of the experience being studied;
3. Bracketing/Reduction - isolating the salient features of the experience being studied;
4. Construction - an attempt to thoroughly interpret the experience or problem being studied; and
5. Contextualization - bringing the research back into the lives of those experiencing the problem being studied (p. 31).

Thick Description

This five step process is the foundation of the interpretive interactionist process - a written, thick description of the phenomena being studied that enables the reader to secure a "deep, authentic understanding" (p. 33).

Autobiographical Analysis

The Never Ending Incompletes

At this point in the paper, I am now switching to a more autobiographical style of writing that outlines events in my self story that parallel the interpretive interactionism process as outlined by Denzin.

I initially enrolled in Nursing 611 during my first quarter as a part-time student in the doctoral program in the Fall of 1990. At that time, I was confident that my research program was going to lead me to study battered women's experiences in emergency departments. My prior work and research interest were ED based (Parker, Ulrich, Bullock, Campbell, D., Campbell J., King, Landenberger, McFarlane, Ryan, Sheridan, Smith-McKenna, Torres, 1990; Campbell and Sheridan, 1989; Tilden and Shepherd, 1987) A year earlier our family had moved to Portland from Chicago, where I had created and then coordinated for over three years an emergency department-based family violence intervention program. I was also an experienced emergency room nurse.

As part of the Nursing 611 course requirements, in October, 1990 I conducted audio taped interviews with

two former battered women, then employed at Bradley-Angle House, Inc., a multi-service, community-based battered women's agency in northeast Portland. The interviews were focused on the womens' experiences in seeking emergency room care after an abusive event. I choose that agency because for over a year my wife had been a member of Bradley-Angle's board of directors and I was an affiliate board member (by organizational bylaws, men could only be affiliate board members). That agency was (and continues to be) very protective of their clients. Primarily because of my gender, the staff would not allow me access to their "clients." The "survivors" on staff had to assess my clinical abilities to talk with battered women and, more importantly, they needed to assess if I, politically and philosophically, interacted with them from a non-victim blaming, empowering perspective.

I spent many, many hours transcribing the two interviews (Appendix A) on a newly purchased (first-time I ever used) computer. I learned that self-transcription is an extremely inefficient, time-consuming experience that convinced me that all further interviews conducted throughout my career would be

typed by trained, prompt, and paid transcriptionists.

Analysis of the transcribed interviews was put on hold since several family crises contributed to my taking an incomplete in Nursing 611 Fall Quarter and my being a very part-time student for the remainder of that academic year.

In Fall 1991, I re-enrolled in Nursing 611 with a better understanding of qualitative research processes but now with much ambivalence and confusion about a research program focused on battered women's emergency room experiences. I had created a domestic violence clinical intervention program at University Hospital that did not have a strong emergency department focus. In fact, I was beginning to understand that most abused women presented for health care services in a variety of out-patient and in-patient settings, especially in routine women's health care settings.

By Fall 1991, my doctoral course work had introduced me to a variety of qualitative methodologies that had, to varying degrees, interested me as possibly applicable to clinical nursing practice and research with domestic violence survivors. For awhile, grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and feminist-based

methods (Roberts, 1981; Jagger and Rothenberg, 1986; Harding, 1986, 1987; and Donovan, 1990) looked appealing. However, from my clinical experiences, the complexities of understanding and working with survivors of domestic violence did not seem to lend themselves to any one qualitative method. Contributing to my prolonged procrastination in completing this assignment was my reluctance to immerse myself, for primarily academic purposes, into learning a qualitative approach that intuitively did not fit my experiences in providing clinical interventions to battered women.

Lost in the Doctoral Student Abyss

Not uncommon, I became quite lost in the doctoral student abyss of not knowing what to clinically research and not having any prolonged and burning interest in any of the quantitative methodologies to which I had been introduced. Indecision led to ambivalence; which led to further indecision; which led to my own self-perpetuating circle of procrastination. Another fall quarter was completed with yet another incomplete in Nursing 611.

During Winter Quarter, 1992 I was challenged in

Dr. Virginia Tilden's measurement course (Nursing 612) to create a new psychometric measure on a topic of interest of my choice.

Early in Winter Quarter, I attended a quarterly meeting of the Nursing Research Consortium on Violence and Abuse (NRCVA). I am one of the founding members of the NRCVA. During one of the morning meetings, I had asked the group for suggestions in helping me to identify a research project (either helping with one of their projects or a brainstorming on a totally new project) that could be conducted during the quarter to meet course objectives outlined in Nursing 612.

That evening, during what has become a ritualized social, cocktail-enhanced, brainstorming sessions I shared with the group the recent murder of one my clinical hospital patients. Many in the group began sharing their own tragic case stories of clients, patients, and friends of theirs who had been killed in "domestic squabbles" over the years. Sometime during that discussion, I found myself staring at a copy of a recent publication (October, 1991) of From Harassment to Homicide: A Report on the Response to Domestic Violence in Multnomah County (Appendix B). I had

brought the report with me to read during "downtime."

From Epiphany to Deconstruction

Spontaneously, I said very emphatically, "I think women are harassed a lot more when they try to leave their abusers. The harassment escalates to the point where either he kills her or she kills him. Why don't I develop a tool to measure harassment of women leaving abusive relationships?" I believe this moment was a cumulative epiphany for me and for the group.

With much excitement, we proceeded to deconstruct prior work on psychological abuse. The family violence literature does not contain any descriptions of research focused on specifically on harassment of battered women. Most frequently the literature differentiated between physical and psychological abuse (Walker, 1979, 1984 & 1989; Campbell & Humphreys, 1984). Straus (1979) developed a self-report measure, the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), that addresses "reasoning, verbal aggression, and violence" in the family but not specifically with battered women. The Index of Spouse Abuse (ISA), a 30-item summated-category, partition scale was created to explore the severity of physical abuse and non-physical abuse

against women by abusive male intimates (Hudson & McIntosh, 1981). While both measures address physical abuse, another domain of interest in these studies may be viewed as psychological abuse. Tolman (1989), a social worker from Chicago with whom I had routinely networked, completed his doctorate in social work by developing a measure of psychological maltreatment of women by their male partners. It combines the non-physical features of the ISA and CTS.

Walker's (1974) definition of a battered woman includes woman who endure repeated forceful physical and psychological behaviors by the man that are meant to coerce her to do something against her will, including sexual abuse.

Women Who Kill Their Abusers

Browne, in her study of women who killed their abusive male intimates, describes "coercive physical acts like restraint or a physical threat of violence" (1987, p. 14) as abusive but included women in her study only if they had been physically beaten at least twice. She did document information such as extreme jealousy, verbal harassment, sexual abuse, threats, pet killing, and surveillance observing that "such actions

seemed to have an even greater impact on the women than some of the physical violence they experienced" (p. 14). This is consistent with Walker's (1974) research findings in which battered women "... describe incidents involving psychological humiliation and verbal harassment as their worst battering experiences, whether or not they had been physically abused" (p. xv).

Descriptions of women who have killed their alleged abusers document similar findings. Death threats to the women and/or their children, especially if the women threaten to leave the relationship are common. Other common non-physically abusive behaviors by men towards women in intimate relationships include the threatened use of weapons, destruction of personal and prized possessions, false accusations of child abuse, and threats to family and friends (Ewing, 1987; & Gillespie, 1989).

We reached group consensus that we knew of no existing measure that focused on the harassment of women trying leave abusive relationships and that the phenomena of harassment in abusive relationships appears to be subsumed under the larger category of

psychological abuse. We also identified that there was only limited information on the process of women leaving abusive relationships (Ulrich, 1991; May, 1990; Landenberger, 1989; Limandri, 1987)

NRCVA members that contributed to the deconstruction are: Jacquelyn C. Campbell; Barbara Parker; Judy McFarlane; Christine King; Josephine Ryan; Linda Bullock, Sara Torres, Karen Landenberger, Doris Campbell; Laura Smith-McKenna and Yvonne Ulrich.

Historical Immersion

To further understand the cumulative epiphany of this event, a lengthy autobiographical aside is in order. This autobiographical background provides salient background to that moment in time. This is also consistent with Denzin's views and the written guidelines for the project report for Nursing 611 that require a typed background leading to the study project and research purpose. The background of this project could be succinctly, positivistly, and thinly (Denzin, 1989, p. 33) written as follows:

This author, with over 13 years experience in developing nurse-directed, hospital-based family

violence clinical programming identified, during a meeting of nurse researchers, a clinical link between harassment and homicide as battered women try to leave abusive relationships. The purpose of this study is to qualitatively explore the concept of harassment in the lived experiences of women in the process of leaving abusive relationships. Content analysis of these lived experiences will lead to item generation of a much-needed tool to measure harassment of battered women in the process of leaving abusive relationships.

Compare the above paragraph with the following significantly longer, "thick" description of the background leading up this study that includes the context, evolution, development, and meanings that helped shape my decision to study harassment of abused women:

A Self Story

During the past 13 years, I have given hundreds of lectures on family and domestic violence. I often begin training on domestic violence with the following self story that outlines cumulative epiphanies in my

life:

In 1975, as a 20 year old operating room (OR) technician in the Air Force, stationed in Ohio, the emergency department called me and said they were sending up a women who had been shot five times by her husband, an Air Force officer because he thought she was having an affair and might leave him. He was a marksman and he shot her once to the right leg; once to the left leg; once to the right arm; and once to the left arm. He put the fifth bullet into her abdomen. This was the first patient I had ever seen with fresh gunshot injuries. At first we thought the patient was going to die in the OR. We worked on her for hours and hours and hours. Her vital signs began to stabilize. She was going to live. The exhausted OR team began to relax a bit, tell some jokes. We were feeling good because we had saved a life. Near the end of the case the chief surgeon said in a very joking voice, "You know, if my old lady was cheating on me. I'd have done it

right. I would have shot the bitch five times in the head." Everybody in that OR, except the patient, was male. Every male in that room laughed, me included, at what I discovered years later was a crude battered woman joke. In fact we laughed so hard, surgery stopped for a few minutes until we could regain composure. The year was 1975, and it was in 1975 that the battered women's movement was first beginning in the United States from its 1972 origins in London, England. In 1975, only a handful of women in the United States would have recognized this patient as a battered women. When this case ended I went back to my room in the barracks and felt a little uncomfortable about laughing at this poor women who would need months to physically recover from the damage done by all those bullets. I never considered the fact she would have also have emotional damage. I had a few beers, fell asleep and did not think much about this incident until 1978...It was in 1978 that I

married and learned the term battered women...That doesn't mean that I beat my wife in 1978. I learned in 1978 that the secret to a long marriage is to do whatever it is your wife wants you to do. Marge was setting up the first battered women's hotline in Chicago and I was "volunteered" to be the first male to complete the hotline volunteer training. When I started nursing school in 1980 as a junior at Chicago's Rush University, I was the expert on domestic violence within the entire school. Why? I had two years of hotline experience.....

In 1980, as a junior nursing student, I created an all-volunteer group at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center (RPSLMC) called the Rush Coalition Against Spouse Abuse (RCASA). Its purpose was to raise awareness to the health issues of domestic violence. In the Fall, 1981, as senior nursing student, I gave the first ever lecture on domestic violence to RPSLMC nursing students. After the graded presentation, I had almost a dozen fellow students approach me with their histories of current and/or past domestic abuse. While

the battered woman gunshot patient I saw in 1975 was obviously an epiphany, hearing the stories of abuse among my peers was the catalyst (epiphany) that steered me into a career goal to become a domestic violence nurse clinical specialist.

In June of 1982, as a new graduate, I approached the RPSLMC director of medical nursing and insisted she hire me full time to develop and run a hospital-based domestic violence program. Instead, she hired me as a full-time night nurse on a medical floor and agreed to pay me four hours per month to represent RPSLMC at the monthly meeting of the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network. She said she would seriously consider setting up a program when I completed a master's degree. Within a few weeks, I enrolled, part-time, in a psychiatric-mental health nurse clinical specialist graduate program.

After only a few months as a floor nurse, I was able to transfer to the emergency department (ED) and soon discovered the head nurse had hired me because she was being routinely beaten by her husband, an attending physician at RPSLMC. She wanted me in the ED to "educate" her staff on the issues surrounding domestic

violence and why battered women stay in abusive relationships; and (primarily) to serve as a "private" source of support and advocacy as she developed plans to leave the abusive relationship.

During this time I continued to coordinate the RCASA group, volunteer on the battered women's hotline, and volunteer at the new battered women's shelter that my wife and others had created. My domestic violence clinical skills were primarily being developed, mostly at the community, grassroots level and occasionally within the health care system.

While in graduate school, whenever "allowed" by my instructors, I would complete course requirements by doing independent graded projects in the area of domestic and family violence. Several instructors "forbade" me from doing projects on domestic violence because "some day I would wake up, give up all this violence stuff and come back to real psychiatric nursing."

I completed my master's degree in late 1985 and immediately met with the director of medical nursing with a well-developed new program proposal, an extensive literature review, and a year's worth of

incidence data from RPSLMC's ED (collected during down-time and lunch hours). She started the wheels of bureaucracy on a slow roll that culminated in my being hired to work with survivors of family violence effective July 1, 1986.

Marilee I. Donovan, PhD, RN was the director of medical nursing who, in hiring me to coordinate the Family Violence Program (FVP), established the second hospital-based domestic violence program in the United States.

I coordinated the FVP for over three years, directly working with hundreds of battered, neglected, and abused patients, until our family moved to Portland, OR in November, 1989.

During my orientation as a trauma program staff nurse at Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU), I shared that I had a goal of setting up another hospital-based family violence program at OHSU within a year. Throughout 1990, again, on my "own time," I collected incidence data from the ED and OB/GYN inpatient units and prepared a new program proposal. That proposal sat in administrative limbo until early in 1991 when the newly appointed associate hospital

director hired me as a family violence consultant to create a Domestic Violence Intervention Team at OHSU Hospital. Her name was Marilee I. Donovan, PhD, RN.

From 1991 until October 1, 1994 I directed the Domestic Violence Intervention Team and provided clinical services to hundreds more survivors of intimate partner abuse. The Domestic Violence Intervention Team dissolved on October 1, 1994 when Dr. Donovan's successor eliminated my position because of budgetary constraints.

Lethal Violence

During the past 16 years, I know of the murder of at least three of my former patients as they were in the process of leaving the abusive relationships. I also know of one patient who killed her abuser in what she perceived to be an act of self-defense (she is currently incarcerated, convicted of murder, at Illinois' Dwight Correctional Center where she will spend most of her life). During this time several of Marge's clients also died. Both of us have had our lives threatened by abusive males because we were working to help women to develop safe plans to leave abusive relationships. Most of our friends and

colleagues who have been working in the domestic violence movement have had some of their clients killed.

The Past: No Different from the Present

In fact, a few weeks ago while cleaning out my office in University Hospital North in preparation for being laid off, I discovered an old file of photocopies of clippings from Chicago-area newspapers that date back to 1982. These clippings all dealt with domestic homicides with most of the victims being women in the process of leaving the abuser. These clippings were compared and contrasted to more recent clippings (Appendix C) In 1982, the score card from the few clippings I have kept for 14 years shows:

Six women dead - domestic murder

Three children dead - domestic murder and

Three men dead - domestic suicide after committing murder

One of dead women was Dianne Masters, a founding board member of one of Chicago's first south suburban battered women's shelters and hotlines. She was murdered, mob-style while in the process of divorcing her attorney husband, who was alleged to have mob

connections. Her body, with two bullet wounds to the head, was found 10 months after she had disappeared. Her corpse was in the locked trunk of her car which was on the bottom of a local sanitary and ship canal, a frequent site of mob-related activities. Dianne was well known to my wife. I had met her once or twice. The discovery of her body had profound emotional effects on many of us in the Chicago area who were struggling to do domestic violence work in the early days of the movement.

The clippings from 1983 Chicago papers show:

Three women dead - domestic murder

One women convicted and sentenced to jail after her unsuccessful attempt to be the first women to use "Battered Women Syndrome" as a legal defense for murdering her known abusive husband.

A clipping from 1989 tallies as follows:

Three women dead - domestic murder

One man dead - (a Chicago police officer)
domestic suicide after domestic homicide
(his wife was also a Chicago police officer)

Several women severely beaten.

More recently, some clippings from 1993 tally as follows:

Three women dead - domestic murder

One women convicted of shooting her estranged husband

One grossly erroneously reported double stabbing event involving a divorcing couple who both became my patients in my clinical role

An overview article about the histories of abuse in the lives of women sitting on death rows.

Some clippings from the past six weeks score as:

Six women dead - domestic murder

Two teenage girls dead - domestic murder

Five men dead - domestic suicides following domestic homicide.

Four of the most recent murder-suicides were from the greater Portland vicinity. One involved a Portland police officer who killed his estranged wife then himself. Not surprisingly, the Portland Police Bureau wondered why one of their own would commit such an act,

especially one who worked the "prestigious" motorcycle unit. Margie Boule, of the Oregonian, in a column about the television and newspaper coverage of the police officer's murder-suicide exclaimed in amazement that the coverage to date told the public nothing about the life of the murdered woman. Boule reminded the readers that a woman, the mother of small child and a valued employee was murdered by a man who chose to shoot her, not a "prestigious" police officer (son of a retired Portland police commander) who obviously cracked under the strain of the job. All the murdered woman had done was file for divorce.

Among the recent clippings of interest a story on elephant abuse received double the ink (18 inches text) on the same page of the Oregonian that reported one of the above domestic murder-suicides (9 inches of text). That parallels another recent clipping from Anna Quindlen, a syndicated columnist that discusses that women are obviously valued half as much as men. In Maryland, a severely battered woman who killed her abuser by lighting him on fire received twice the sentence that a man received for killing his wife several hours after he caught her in bed with another

man. Boule and Quindlen consistently serve as "the voices of women" in a newspaper industry steeped in the patriarch.

In a large and growing sack in my home office I have scores of articles on the continuing saga of the Nicole Simpson and Ron Goldman murder case. Notice I did not say "The O.J. Simpson Case:" (a simple attempt on my part to refocus us on the fact that a woman and a man were murdered in what prosecutors believe to be a fairly typical domestic homicide that spilled over to either an innocent male bystander or a man perceived by O.J. to be in a sexual relationship with Nicole).

Personal Audit Trail

As the above "personal audit trail" demonstrates, I have been thoroughly immersed in the phenomena to be researched for many years, one of Denzin's requisites to conduct research via an interpretive interactionist approach. Based on this historic and ongoing immersion, I proceeded in Nursing 612 to develop a pilot tool, HARASS, (Harassment in Abusive Relationships: A Self-Report Scale - Appendix D). A development log was also started that chronicles, by dates, the psychometric process that quarter (Appendix

E).

In order to develop HARASS, qualitative interview data was obtained from three formerly battered women, one living in sheltered transitional housing and two living in the community and attending counseling activities offered by the shelter agency.

The women who participated in the audio recorded interviews were each given \$10 to help compensate for any child care and/or travel expenses and to validate that their experiences have worth. The audio recorded interviews were promptly transcribed by an experienced transcriptionist and a content analysis was conducted.

The interviews were loosely structured and prefaced with a statement that this author was interested in any harassment they had or may have experienced in their relationships with abusive male intimates. A formal definition of harassment was not given, rather the women were encouraged to describe their own meaning of harassment.

The transcripts were coded for key content statements however, a particular methodology was not used at that time. Based on statements made by the respondents, various behaviors were identified as

harassing. While the responses were often very specific to each woman's history, there was overlap. All the women referred to repetitive behaviors by the abusing men that were perceived by the women as attempts to control their behavior.

All the women described receiving verbal death threats if they tried to leave the relationship including threats of murder of the women and suicide of the men. "Stalking" behaviors (spying, surveillance and/or following of the women) were described as well as behaviors that were financially controlling. The women frequently used the word "sabotage" to describe how their abusers were trying to control their behaviors. The qualitative data also suggested that it was inappropriate to limit the exploration of harassment of women in abusive relationships only to those women who have been out of such a relationship between three and 12 months. The data suggests that leaving is a dynamic process characterized by multiple mini-attempts to leave. Also the qualitative data suggest that abusers use harassing behaviors while the women are still in the relationship.

To supplement the expertise of women who had lived

in abusive relationships, telephone interviews were also conducted with three family violence nurse clinical experts (Appendix F). The nurse experts were also not given a specific definition of harassment of women by abusive male intimates, rather they were asked to describe what they believed to be harassment and if it was a problem experienced by their clients. The nurse experts identified as harassment, behaviors such as stalking, pet killing, threats of sexual abuse, destruction of the women's property, frequent unwanted telephone calls to home and work, and threats of harm to the women, her children, her extended family, and her friends. The nurse experts also identified that these behaviors had a pattern intended to control women's behaviors. The nurse experts also stated that limiting a study of harassment of battered women to those that had been out of abusive relationship between three and 12 months would be too restrictive and not capture the domain of interest.

In addition, the battered women survivors and the nurse experts described that the effect of harassing behaviors by male intimates made the battered women feel bothered, trapped, threatened, frightened and/or

terrified. These attributes are consistent with the fairly inclusive and global definition of domestic violence given in From Harassment to Homicide (Hubbard, 1991):

Domestic violence is emotional, physical, psychological or sexual abuse or the threat thereof, perpetrated against a person by that person's spouse, former spouse, partner, former partner, or adult relative, or by the parent of a minor child. abuse may include threats, harm, injury, harassment, control, terrorism, or damage to living beings or property (p. 11).

Viewed within the larger context of psychological abuse, harassment of battered women by abusive male intimates was eventually defined as:

Harassment is defined as a persistent pattern of behavior by a male intimate partner that is intended to bother, annoy, trap, threaten, frighten, and/or terrify you in order to control your behavior.

Pilot HARASS Questionnaire Developed

The nature of the latent variable, 'Harassment in abusive relationships,' appears to be measurable via a

self-report format. Based on the qualitative data from battered women survivors and from nurse experts, and the above definition of harassment, an initial 54-item, then a subsequent 45-item summated rating scale was created to measure the frequency (OFTEN scale) of harassing behaviors and, if present, the level of perceived distress (DIS scale).

To help establish face and content validity measures were undertaken via the use of a variety of domestic violence experts, including battered women survivors. Content validity in measurement of nursing research are discussed by Waltz, Strickland, and Lenz (1991) however, the content validity of HARASS has yet to be established.

To keep the measure within the Denzin's ordinary language viewpoint, the words 'sabotage' and 'stalking' were edited to messes with and follows me based on the input from many of the experts that these words, while very descriptive to clinicians, may be beyond the understanding of some battered women.

Comments on face validity from the student experts helped to modify the layout of the form into a visually more appealing and easier to follow format. The

doctoral students were helpful in identifying grammatical, verb usage, and syntax problems.

Pilot Sample

The HARASS pilot instrument was printed and distributed to two battered women agencies and a hospital-based family violence program in Portland; to a battered women's agency in Chicago; and to 12 nurse clinical researchers throughout the country. The data collectors received comparable verbal and written instructions on its administration. Eleven women completed the pilot HARASS tool, most in less than 10 minutes.

Results

Data were entered into the Crunch4 statistical software system. Univariate statistical analysis was conducted. The reliability of the HARASS instrument pilot was evaluated by determining the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the OFTEN and DISTRESS scales. The alpha in the OFTEN scale is 0.99 and the alpha in the DISTRESS scale is 0.98, indicating much redundancy in the HARASS instrument items.

The pilot interviews and the initial HARASS psychometric measure indicated that harassment in

abusive relationships by male intimates is a quantifiable concept worthy of further research. However, the concept of harassment and its effects on the lived experiences of battered women needed further definition and refinement. A new HARASS psychometric tool needs to be developed from an expanded qualitative data analysis. That was the basis upon which I wrote my Individual National Research Service Award, Spring Quarter, 1992 and continues to be the cornerstone of my dissertation plan (Appendix G).

Since there are no harassment scales with which to compare the HARASS instrument, I would need to compare it to a conceptually similar measure. Construct validity will be enhanced by administering the HARASS instrument concurrently with the ISA (Hudson & McIntosh, 1981), Campbell's (1986) Danger Assessment and Tolman's (1989) Psychological Maltreatment of Women Inventory.

Construct validity may also be explored by administering the instrument to different groups of women. For example, if the instrument is capturing the domain of "harassment of women," the instrument could be simultaneously given to a known group of battered

women (its original intent) and a known group of alcoholic women (a theoretically close sub-group of women). To give the instrument to alcoholic women would require only replacing the word "abusive" with the word "alcoholic" in the instructions to the respondents. A nurse clinical research expert on alcoholism in women has expressed an interest in piloting the soon to be shorten version of HARASS with a group of recovering alcoholic women who reportedly verbalized experiencing most of the behaviors contained in the tool from their male partners.

In Search of Method to Support My Plan

Returning now to my conceptual audit trail, with the submission of my NRSA in Spring, 1993 I had established a plan to complete a doctoral student level research program. However, I was still searching for a theoretical method to analyze qualitative interviews. During Spring Quarter, I believe while enrolled in Nursing 650, the qualitative research seminar, I first heard of Denzin's interpretive interactionism approach.

Capturing

During the past 18 months, I have sporadically used his methods to collect additional interviews of

abused womens' experiences with harassment. Initial efforts to "capture" women through Bradley-angle House included a letter to the executive director, various consent forms, and an advertisement given to select women in emergency and/or second stage housing (Appendix H). While I have interviewed a few women from Bradley-angle program, capturing these women has been as time consuming as my attempt at transcribing my own data. Therefore, I have basically stopped trying to conduct any student related activities through Bradley-Angle House.

I have built ties with Neighborhood Health Clinics prenatal outreach program in Northeast Portland. I conducted several trainings for NHC staff on the identification, treatment and referral of battered women, focusing on battering during pregnancy. A few weeks ago, I presented another in a series of refresher trainings to the prenatal outreach staff. The program supervisor shared with staff that a year ago, after my first training, they were reluctant to ask about abuse because they believed few if any of their clients were being battered. Now she said they routinely ask every women about abuse and they have found only a few of

their clients who are NOT being abused. NHC has been a predicable source of clients. Of course, it also has been helpful that my wife Marge, is the executive director of Neighborhood Health Clinics. There is no doubt that this has helped me access battered women in the prenatal program.

The battered women that I have interviewed through NHC have not been clients of battered women's agencies. A concern this qualitative process has raised for me is that of acquired language. Just as Denzin points out that the language of AA meetings is much deeper than he originally thought, I have concerns that women learn a language while using battered women program services that women not in programs may not understand. I need to look further at the data from women who are shelter-experienced and from women who are not shelter-experienced to see if there are semiotic differences. For example, I have concerns that words like "coercion, stalking, and intimidating looks" are indicative of those who are "shelter-ese fluent" and not necessarily the words of most battered women. Those words appear to be "pressures me to do stuff against my will," "follows me," "always there," "in my face," and "crazy

looks."

Capturing in the Future

This continued comparison between battered women receiving services from non-domestic violence agencies and domestic violence agencies may be made easier in late November if I accept an offer to sit on the board of directors of the Domestic Violence Resource Center of Washington County. My preliminary discussions with the staff and board of DVRC indicate that they are very committed to participating in quality research on domestic violence. Capturing women to either interview or to complete versions of HARASS may be facilitated by involvement on the board of directors.

Five interviews were conducted in Chicago shortly after I completed the work on the pilot HARASS tool. Most of those interviews ended up as semi-structured interviews based on the items contained in the HARASS. Guidance from Barbara Limandri helped me see, quite visually, how I was talking as much as, if not more than the women. My style of interviewing changed to a more open-ended style that has allowed more of the lived experiences of battered women to be heard. Several key interviews in rural Oregon were not

transcribable, thus lost, secondary to technical problems with the tape player microphone jack system.

For the purpose of completing this long-overdue assignment and not necessarily indicative of a completed process five partially coded interviews are attached (Appendix I) that demonstrate my preliminary efforts to bracket and construct a list of items that describe the concept of harassment (Appendix J) using Denzin's framework.

Further Work

This paper has, in detail, established my autobiographical audit trail; described a deconstruction process; explored issues of gatekeeping in capturing respondents; and presented preliminary bracketing of terms to define harassment from analysis of newspaper clippings, interviews with battered women, and battered women service providers.

However, this paper has not fully analyzed all the contents of the attached transcripts. While it is my plan that this paper complete the course requirements for Nursing 611. Further analysis of the interviews will be conducted this quarter in order to fulfill course requirements for Nursing 605-05 Reading and

Conference and Nursing 605-36, Qualitative Data Analysis. Denzin's Step 5, Contextualization, will be the creation and testing of a new and improved HARASS measure and will be the base of my continued dissertation efforts and not part of fulfilling outstanding incompletes.

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10 Qualitative
Interviews

Understanding Harassment

49

HARASSMENT =

Client A	Aggravation Prolonged divorce proceedings Indirectly through the children
Client B	Abuse - physical Hurting, hitting
Client C	Bothering Coming around Calling you on the phone so much Name calling
Client D	Talking about me Saying bad things about me Name calling Bringing up things from the past Accusing me of things...messing (sleeping) around with...people
Client E	Provoking behaviors Push you into doing something you don't want to do
Client H	Different phone calls People standing outside your house or in cars Telling the kids what they have said What they are wearing What they are doing at different times Following Called and he knew where the shelter was I had to move out for a couple of days...then move back to the shelter
Intvw.01	A lot of unwanted attention Violent sorts of attention
Intvw.02	Anything directly imposed...obviously constructed...to interrupt my choices of the day....on the job...or social activity A stumbling block that is purposely

placed	
average,	An interruption or block of...common, normal pursuits
Intvw.03 (afraid) of	Anything that makes me uncomfortable physical or mental hurt Using the court systems to harass me (Against court orders) he proceeded to house) without (a
come (to the policeman)	Good at psychological harassment psychological fear psychological terror
Steph.02	It's worn me down physically

1980
D. ...
Drane Masters
President of Road

Appendix

Newspaper clippings

1982

- ✓ Chicago Tribune, 8-10-1982
Mt. Prospect man kills family, himself
(he) moved in ... Nov. 1 with his wife and young son ... six weeks later, she split, but in May she came back.
- ✓ Chicago Tribune, 8-16-82
Bankrupt and despondent man kills wife, himself
Suicide note... "I have gone as far as I can go with our lives (Italics mine).
- ✓ Chicago Tribune, 9-20-82
Bullet-riddled body of woman, 38, found in car; ex-husband arrested
The bullet-riddled body of a...woman was found Sunday in a car parked in front of the apartment building of her former husband...She had been last seen with her former husband...
- Chicago Tribune, 11-3-82
Doctor free on bond in wife's death
The autopsy determined (she) had suffered a blunt-force injury in the abdomen...she also had suffered bruises...he (the doctor) told authorities that he and his wife were drinking and quarreling...
- Chicago Sun-Times, several months later
DuPage doctor found dead; was facing trial
(The cause of death of the above doctor was not initially known but it was later determined to be suicide).
- ✓ Chicago Tribune, 11-10-82
Suburb man kills wife, 2 kids, self
(The) Coroner...said the family was having domestic problems...he (the husband) recently had been served with divorce papers...wife and four children had moved five months ago...
- Chicago Sun-Times, December 29, 1982

Fund for battered women set in memory of Palos Park
Victim

A fund to aid battered women...in memory of Dianne Masters...whose body was found Dec. 11 in the trunk of a car...Masters...was the founder and first president of the...center which houses 20 women and 25 children a month...Before the group incorporated in 1978, Masters answered a domestic violence hotline in the kitchen of her home...Masters body was discovered in the trunk of her car...(in) the Sanitary & Ship Canal...She was shot twice in the head. (Not stated in the newsclippings was the fact that Dianne was in the process of divorcing her attorney, allegedly mob-connected, husband. The night she disappeared she was going to her attorney's office reportedly with important papers concerning her husband.)

1983

Chicago Tribune, 1-19-83

Probation aide indicted in killing

...police found the body of his wife (in his apartment)...she had cuts and bruises over 95 percent of her body...the women died...from more than 300 wounds and bruises...

Chicago Tribune, March 1983

Jury probes husband of slain women

The physician husband of a women whose torso was found in Indiana last month is under grand jury investigation involving more than \$200,000 in bad checks to drug companies...80 percent for drugs, such as amphetamines, depressants, and codeine-based cough syrup...surgical needles were found with the torso, which appeared to have been beaten to death...

Chicago Sun-Times, Feb. 8, 1983

'Battered wife' is sentenced in killing

The first woman to use the "battered women syndrome" was sentenced...to three years in prison for murdering her husband...(her) attorney declared she was beaten repeatedly...and saw killing her husband as the only way out...

Chicago Tribune, Feb. 22, 1983

Laotian refugee shoots his estranged wife, self

A Laotian couple's dream...ended...when the husband shot his estranged wife and then turned the gun on himself...the wife had taken refuge (in sponsor's home)...husband had gone to the house...under the premise of having his wife, whose divorce from him was pending, sign income tax returns...she filed for divorce last October (five months earlier)...(she had) left her husband and returned to him at least four times in four years since the couple had come to the U.S.

1989

Chicago Tribune, 6-12-89Justice eluding victims of domestic violence

In 1987, Alice...had an estranged husband and an abusive ex-boyfriend who wouldn't leave her alone...about two months after she moved out of her own apartment to escape the abuse, the boyfriend beat and bloodied her...she (obtained) a one-year order of protection...(he) agreed to "refrain from striking, threatening, harassing, or interfering with (her) personal liberty...Thirteen days later...She had been stabbed (by the ex-boyfriend) 11 times in the head and neck and bled to death...in her purse was the order of protection...

"Orders of protection are valuable if they have teeth behind them," said Daniel Sheridan a registered nurse who is coordinator of the Family Violence Program at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center and a critic of the court's low conviction rate. Orders of protection alone, he said, give battered women "a false sense of security"...

Several years ago...a woman was shot and killed by her lover outside the court after she had brought charges...

Last September, Chicago Police Officer Edward Johnson shot to death his estranged wife, also a police officer, and then killed himself...The wife...who was seeking a divorce, had been issued an order of protection last summer...

Lisa chokes back tears as she tells a judge a judge how her estranged husband threw her out of her car and repeatedly hit her head on the sidewalk...

Elizabeth...was unhappy that the judge had given her

estranged, foreign-born husband visitation rights to their two children. She feared he would follow through on his threats to kidnap the children...

1993

Oregonian, 4-15-93

Man gets 25 years for killing two wives

His first wife disappeared Jan. 10, 1994...His second wife disappeared May 1989...a former girlfriend said, "I was lied to, deceived and used...if he were ever given the chance again, there would truly be more women taken by his smooth talking and false promises"...she witnessed his personality change in seconds..."He can be the nicest, congenial cowboy rancher at one time and change to a cold, calculating man within a matter of seconds..."

Oregonian, 4-17-93

Father's tearful plea for his child eases his wife's sentence: Steven Moskowitz, who nearly died last year after his estranged wife repeatedly shot him, persuades a judge to be lenient

...(He) nearly died Oct. 17 at the hands of his angry estranged wife...divorce proceedings are pending...

Oregonian, 4-20-93

Death Row women share abusive pasts: A high percentage of women killers have suffered enormously, their lives a chilling echo of U.S. domestic violence

Roughly 40 percent to 50 percent of women on Death Row are there for killing husbands, lovers or children. Less than 5 percent of men on Death row are there for similar crimes.

Oregonian, 4-24-93

Former boyfriend kills co-owner of topless bar

The co-owner of a...topless bar was shot dead Friday by an ex-boyfriend who critically wounded another man (current boyfriend) before killing himself...(she) had obtained a restraining order...on Thursday, but it hadn't been served. She still had it in her purse when she was shot...

Oregonian, 4-24-93

Women stabs husband, herself

...a women stabbed her estranged husband and then plunged the knife into herself...(they) separated in March...(This is a good example of what is presented as truth in the paper is anything but the truth. Both of these people became my clients while hospitalized at OHSU. My assessment of the situation was she stabbed him superficially to the shoulder as he was approaching her threatening to hit her. After he was stabbed he grabbed her arm in which she was still grasping the knife and he forced the knife into her abdomen. Her stab wound site was not consistent with self-infliction and very consistent with her history of him stabbing her while she held the knife in her hand. She was very much the battered woman. The estranged husband and his girlfriend almost succeeded in convincing the police that things happened as outlined in the paper. She would have been convicted of felony assault and done significant jail time. Based on my abuse assessment, neither party was convicted of any crime.)

1994

Oregonian, 9-27-1994Man learns of sex reports, kills wife, daughters, self

A man who secretly taped (spied on) his wife's calls and learned she had accused him of molesting their two teen-age daughters shot and killed all three of them and himself...(she) had told a detective Saturday that she had just learned during an argument that her husband had molested her daughters...

Oregonian, 9-29-1994Man facing assault trial kills girlfriend, himself

Ronald E. Coiner breaks into the home in The Dalles where his girlfriend had moved, apparently to get away from him

(9 inches of text)

A Troutdale man facing trial next month for assaulting his girlfriend fatally shot her and then killed himself Wednesday morning in The Dalles...(she) apparently moved from Troutdale to The Dalles to get away from (him)... "He claimed he would never hit a girl," Bradley (Multnomah county deputy district attorney) said.

Oregonian, 9-29-1994

Trainer pleads not guilty to animal abuse

A circus trainer...with his discipline of a young Asian elephant entered a not guilty plea...to one count of second-degree animal abuse...If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$2,500 fine...

(18 inches of text)

✓ Oregonian, 10-7-1994

Portland policeman kills wife, then self

John Aichele shot his wife multiple times with a handgun, killing her. Despondent, he then called 9-1-1 before shooting himself once in the head...Officers within the department said Janice Aichele was seeking a divorce...

✓ Oregonian, 10-8-1994

Police wonder why one of their own killed wife, himself

Aichele fired three shots from his...semiautomatic through his wife's back, then two to the head...Authorities said Thursday that Aichele and his wife had been having marital problems...

Oregonian, 10-13-1994

Save your sorrow for the real victims

A cop is mourned, a victim is forgotten

...The (television) reporter said quite a bit about John Aichele's fine record, how well liked he'd been. Made him sound like a real good guy. Nothing was said about the woman who'd been murdered, about how well-liked she'd been, about her talents, her dreams...this newspaper published a big news story. Again there was background about John's police career. there was even information about John's family. There was nothing-nothing-about the woman John had killed...in the coverage of her murder, Janice was virtually ignored...

✓ Oregonian, 10-20-1994

Couple die in murder-suicide

At 1 p.m. Wednesday, Debra...had her husband served with divorce papers...Within hours both were dead in what police said was a murder-suicide...the estranged couple, ...had separated in August...

Oregonian, 10-25-1994

Husband faces trial for wife's murder

...investigators never gave up hope that they would one day put the former Medford man on trial for the murder of his wife...

Oregonian, 10-25-1994

Police identify SE Portland couple found shot

An elderly couple found dead from gunshot wounds...he shot his wife, then took his own life..."It did not appear that she was a willing participant"...

Oregonian, 10-25-1994

Court cases show women valued about half of men

Kenneth Peacock...killed his wife after he found her in bed with another man...The Maryland truck driver got a mere 18 months for shooting the 31-year-old woman...in a classic drove-me-to-do-it defense. Her infidelity counted as contributory negligence..."I seriously wonder how many men married five, four years would have the strength to walk away without inflicting some corporal punishment" the judge, Robert Cahill, said sympathetically...The day after Cahill handed down a sentence half as long as prosecutors had requested...another maryland judge handed down a sentence three times as long as prosecutors thought she deserved to a woman who said she killed her husband after more than a decade of abuse...(she) said that at the end of a day in which her husband beat her yet again and threatened to kill her and hurt her son, she doused him with lighter fluid and set him afire. She was given twice as much jail as Peacock...