

A Comparison of DV/IPV and Sex Trafficking: How Understanding Batterers Can Help Develop Programming for “Boyfriend” Pimp/Traffickers

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Abstract

Drawing from the extant research, this chapter compares and contrasts the backgrounds and characteristics of batterers and traffickers in the United States. Striking similarities between batterers and “boyfriend” pimps (a type of trafficker) indicate that batterers programming can be applied to pimps, as long as the components of the batterers program include: diligent cognitive work at the intra/interpersonal level with trauma counseling available to help pimps overcome past and current trauma experiences, and awareness and mindfulness work at the societal level to reduce internalized sexism. While there are limitations to complete transference from batterers to pimps, adaptation of batterers programs for “boyfriend” pimp/traffickers would be useful and could lead to successful intervention efforts.

Introduction

Sex work has been around for thousands of years. In fact, the idea of selling one’s body for sex has “existed in every society for which there are written records” (Jenness, 1990, p. 416), and with the advent of technology, it has become easier and easier in the United States to obtain sex from someone at almost any time of day. Meanwhile, many of the people engaged in sex work are

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connected to a pimp or trafficker. Based upon my previous experience working in the domestic and sexual violence field working with men who batter their partners, it has come to my attention that there are many similarities between those who batter and those who pimp/traffic within the U.S. Recently, I spent a year working in a batterers intervention program in St. Louis, where I wrote curriculum, led and observed groups, and worked with the staff and board to create changes in the program structure.

While there is intervention programming for batterers, there is no such programming for pimps/traffickers. Looking first at the literature examining batterers and pimps/traffickers and describing similarities between the two, this paper then examines the current batterer programming and the ways such programming can be applied to “the boyfriend” pimp-trafficker. Though the populations differ, there is enough overlap in their backgrounds and manifestations of coercive control to create programming based on current batterer intervention programming that could help those who pimp/traffic leave that lifestyle. This would involve focusing on changing internalized thoughts, providing trauma therapy, and increasing awareness of societal sexism. Such work broadens the scope of the sex trafficking literature by specifically emphasizing the role of traffickers and the systems that should be present to assist in ameliorating sex trafficking. While there are interventions in place to address the needs of survivors, and to “rehabilitate” buyers (e.g. demand reduction or Johns programs), little work focuses on interventions targeting traffickers outside of arrest and prosecution. Arrest and prosecution are limited in their ability to prevent further trafficking, as cases are often dropped, prosecuted as lesser crimes, and time served tends to be limited. Accordingly, intervention beyond prosecution efforts adds another layer in preventing further trafficking.

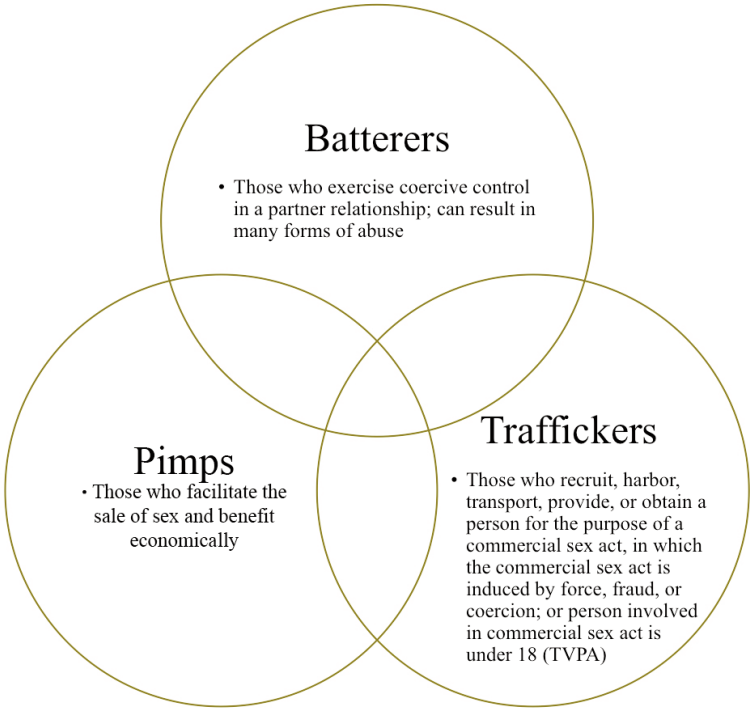
Overlap Between Pimps/Traffickers and Batterers

Before going further, it is important to draw definitional distinctions between pimps, traffickers, and batterers while recognizing the overlap. Batterers are those who use methods of coercive control in intimate partner relationships, resulting in physical, psychological, economic, and/or sexual abuse. Pimps are those who facilitate the sale of sex and reap economic benefits. Methods of control that batterers use are also similar in many ways to that of pimps/traffickers. While a pimp may benefit economically, they also often seek “power, control, and respect” (Nichols, 2016), which is similar to the characteristics and motives of many batterers. Further, in cases involving a “boyfriend” pimp, there is an intimate partner relationship with the pimp,

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and often accompanying coercive control. Thus, in such cases, there is some overlap between pimping and battering in methods of coercive control and abuse within the context of an intimate partner relationship. There is an overlap between pimps and traffickers, although not all traffickers are pimps and vice versa. Traffickers are most commonly a male “pimp,” who may be a boyfriend (sometimes partnered with a female pimp), but can also involve small criminal groups, gangs, or individuals, or people linked to transnational/international organized crime (though this is less common than individual enterprise), and family members (Nichols, 2016). In a book detailing sex trafficking in the Midwest, traffickers were identified as “pimps, boyfriends, parents, and buyers [and trafficking took the form of] pimp-controlled prostitution, the ‘boyfriend pimp,’ survival sex, parents-as-traffickers, false-front fraud schemes, and pornography” (Heil and Nichols, 2015, p. 58). Accordingly, pimps are a “type” of trafficker. Figure 1 illustrates the differences between pimps and traffickers and shows the connection to batterers.

Figure 1. Diagram Of The Intersection Between Batterers, Pimps, And Traffickers



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Because this chapter focuses on sex trafficking, any further mention of pimps or traffickers refers to the intersection where characteristics of the pimps, batterers, and traffickers overlap, as illustrated in Figure 1. This type of pimp/trafficker is commonly known as the “boyfriend” pimp, which is the type of trafficker most comparable to batterers.

To clarify, there are certain characteristics that are common across different types of traffickers (labor traffickers and other types of sex traffickers). The reason the chapter focuses on the “boyfriend” pimp is simple—this relationship most closely mimics the relationships seen in partner violence. Further, other types of traffickers, such as labor traffickers, large crime rings, or family members, do not cultivate the same types of relationships with victim/survivors as “boyfriend” pimps do, as the nature of the relationship is different. The former types are more focused on profits, and the latter focus also on power and control of individuals specifically using trafficking as an extension of intimate partner violence. The focus of this chapter centers upon controlling and abusive domestic violence relationships, and the ways in which the “boyfriend” pimp falls into this category.

Parallels Between Batterers and Pimps/Traffickers

Power and Control

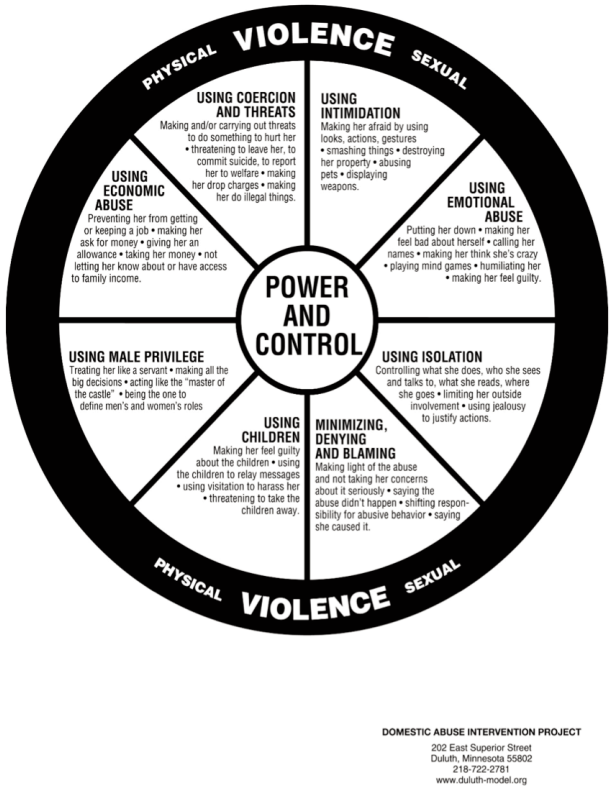
Bancroft, Silverman, and Ritchie define a batterer as:

A person who exercises a pattern of coercive control in a partner relationship, punctuated by one or more acts of intimidating physical violence, sexual assault, or credible threat of physical violence. This pattern of control and intimidation may be predominately psychological, economic, or sexual in nature or may rely primarily on the use of the violence (Bancroft, Silverman, and Ritchie, 2012, p. 4).

Although they add several caveats to this definition, such as the need for the presence of fear or threats of physical violence, they attempt to make this definition as flexible as possible to include multiple types of abuse and abusers. Further, they establish that the majority of batterers are male, citing statistics such as “sexual assault by intimate partners occurs 25 times as often to women as to men” (Bancroft, Silverman, and Ritchie, 2012, p. 5). According to the authors, other characteristics of batterers include: control, entitlement, selfishness and self-centeredness, superiority, possessiveness, confusion of love and abuse,

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Figure 2. Power And Control Wheel



manipulativeness, contradictory statements and behaviors, externalization of responsibility, denial, minimization, and victim blaming, and serial battering (Bancroft, Silverman, and Ritchie, 2012). These characteristics closely mirror the factors mentioned in the Duluth Power and Control Wheel. The Power and Control Wheel was originally developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota (see Figure 2).

Power and control are at the center, surrounded by eight items, and are then encapsulated by a physical and sexual violence ring: coercion and threats, economic abuse, male privilege, isolation, intimidation, emotional abuse, using children, and minimizing, denying, and blaming. It is the basis of tools com-

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monly used by domestic violence agencies that ascribe to the second-wave (and sometimes third-wave) feminist movement.

There is little research available that compares batterers and pimps, but two articles do stand out that support the comparisons made above. Stark and Hodgson cite the Power and Control Wheel and claim that the tactics used by batterers and pimps are similar in every spoke of the wheel (Stark and Hodgson, 2004, pp. 21–24). They discuss the isolation and minimization of abuse in public, saying that the basis of said techniques derive from torture techniques, “in which torturers deprive their victims of social support, eliminate stimuli other than those controlled by the captor, and block noncompliant behaviors” (2004, p. 21). Batterers isolate victims/survivors from friends and family; traffickers move from city to city purposefully to take women and girls away from friends and family, and community (Coohey 2007; Nichols 2016). These techniques accompany an increase in dangerous physical violence in private towards the victim/survivors to “demonstrate the futility of resistance” (Stark and Hodgson, 2004, p. 22). Some batterers and pimps utilize economic exploitation and emotional abuse. Commonly, batterers will deny their partners access to money by showing up at their workplace and collecting their partner’s checks; pimps, in one study of trafficked women and girls, took the money from 69% of the victim/survivors (Stark and Hodgson, 2004; Raphael, Reichert and Powers, 2010). Giobbe (1993) also points out that power and control pimps use can be compared to power and control batterers use. Specifically, Giobbe points to pimp and batterer use of male privilege and threats and intimidation to keep women in systems of commercial sexual exploitation. Batterers and pimps use power and control to dominate women based on various spokes of the Power and Control Wheel.

Background Characteristics

Davies and Lyon (2014) provide a list of traits that they also believe define some or most of the people who batter, yet their characteristics center more on information for advocates than attempts to broadly understand why people abuse. According to Davies and Lyon, batterers can be all ages, races, cultures, genders, and economic backgrounds, but usually fall into one of the following categories: (1) batterers are more likely than people who do not use violence against intimate partners to be young, male, exposed to or victims of violence in their family during childhood, cohabitating with their partner and either living in poverty or experiencing economic or employment instability; (2) batterers exhibit or hold a range of attitudes and beliefs that include an exaggerated sense of entitlement, the use of physical violence as an acceptable

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response, a disrespectful attitude towards women; or (3) the same definitions/characteristics of power and control listed above by Bancroft et. al. (Davies and Lyon, 2014, p. 213). While the characteristics describing batterers are valuable to know, they are not foolproof or all-inclusive. Yet, both authors have drawn on multiple qualitative and quantitative studies, and come to similar conclusions on who batters. Batterers are usually males that exert power and/or control over their partners, and carry a set of beliefs/attitudes/entitlements that allow for them to be comfortable with exerting said power and control. Drawing from my own experience working with batterers, this generalization of batterers provides an accurate overview of who attends batterers intervention programs.

Like with batterers, there has been enough quantitative/qualitative data available on pimps to make generalizations; there are distinct similarities to batterers. From the perspective of attorneys who have prosecuted sex traffickers, there have been both male and female traffickers from a variety of racial backgrounds (Parker and Skrmetti, 2013, p. 1029). Yet, the majority are male, and the majority of traffickers involved in intimate partner relationships with their victims are male (Polaris Project, 2014), similar to batterers. A study conducted in Chicago of 25 ex pimps and madams found 18 of the ex-pimps were male and 7 were female (Raphael and Myers-Powell, 2010, p. 1). The Department of Justice put together a report in 2011 in which they opened 2,515 suspected incidents of human trafficking for investigation in between January 2008 and June 2010. What they found was that “most confirmed human trafficking suspects were male (81%)”. Although this information is generalized to all types of trafficking and is based solely on prosecuted cases, the report adds data to what is presently available. The consensus of information available is that traffickers are disproportionately men who are using force, fraud, or coercion to further themselves economically. These traits can be seen clearly in the Chicago ex pimp interviews, where the different interviewees provided information about what techniques they used to pimp and what they gained from pimping—power, control, coercion, and a sense of self. These traits and techniques are similar to those for batterers.

Background of Trauma and Victimization

At present, there is research being done to suggest that batterers have a background of trauma and grew up in houses where domestic violence was present. Some authors go even as far as to suggest that trauma fundamentally changes personalities to create patterns of abusive behavior (Dutton, 2001). Further, the interviews in Raphael & Myers-Powell’s study revealed that ex

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pimps experienced a variety of traumas or difficult life experiences including physical abuse growing up, childhood sexual assault, domestic violence in the home, drugs and alcohol in the home, family and neighborhood members in prostitution, an average age of 12.5 for self-use of alcohol, disproportionate presence in foster care, and had experiences as runaway youth (Raphael and Myers-Powell, 2010, p. 1) (see Appendix A). In the same study, 10 men (about half the sample of men) and 7 women (all of the sample of women) sold sex prior to becoming pimps themselves. In looking at the research, it seems many batterers and pimps hold similar backgrounds of victimization. This victimization itself leads to a search for power, control, and respect, whether learned through the intergenerational transmission of prostitution, and seeing the power implicit in pimping or witnessing and modeling gender dynamics of intimate partner violence in the home, or some combination of both.

Comparing Batterers and Traffickers

While battering and trafficking come in many different forms, there are enough similarities that generalizations can be drawn from both. They have overlapping motivations for continuing behavior: power, control, respect, entitlement, and more. Notably, batterers and traffickers are both connected to larger, macro-structural systems that help them continue their behaviors, such as sexism, race and class marginalization, and other identities. There are many more similarities than the ones listed above, but these micro and macro motivations provide a basis for the claim that components of effective batterer programming can be adapted and applied to the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker to provide for effective intervention and an alternative or supplement to the criminalization of traffickers. For instance, since the Power and Control Wheel is used in programming for batterers, then it makes sense that it could be used for programming with the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker as well.

Batterer Programming

The most widely known programming used with batterers is batterers intervention. While batterers intervention has continued to evolve since its inception, it is difficult to make definitive conclusions about what defines a successful batterers program. Regardless, based on my expertise and experience in a batterers intervention program, as well as the extant research, I note that programming can be effective for batterers. Our organization measured effectiveness through completion of the program and recidivism rates. Yet, get-

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ting our participants to be even willing to try to not choose violence is an important measure of effectiveness, and a necessary first step. In order to be effective at reducing recidivism rates, we need batterers to consistently choose not to abuse. Aspects of current batterers intervention, in combination with other types of programming, could create an effective program for the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker. This review will attempt to describe different types of batterers programming by focusing on a few authors.

Although there are some programs older than the creation of the Violence Against Women Act, the majority of batterers intervention programs started after 1994 and the passing of the Violence Against Women Act. Criminal legal systems across the country have established and mandated batterers attend these programs: over time, the programs went from six to twelve weekly sessions to programs that last six months to a year (Davies and Lyon, 2014, p. 218). Throughout the evolution, different lengths and different types of programs have been tried, all in an attempt to work with as many types of batterers as possible. Davies and Lyon remind readers that intervention does not happen in a microcosm, that people interact at all levels of the socio-ecologic model and are influenced by other factors, such as race, class, and more.¹ This lens helps conceptualize the intricacies of programming and helps programmers begin to tease out nuances for effective programming.

Recently, other types of interventions with batterers, besides BIPs have emerged. Gondolf (2012) lists some:

Cognitive-behavioral (Hamberger, 2002), skill-building (Wexler, 2006), strengths-based (Lehmann & Simmons, 2009), solution-oriented (Lee, Sebold, & Uken, 2003), anger management (Kassinove & Tafrate, 2002), anti-sexist (Bancroft, 2003; Russel, 1995), consciousness-raising (Paymar, 2000; Kivel, 1998), and narrative therapy programming (Jenkins, 1990; Augusta-Scott & Dankwort, 2002). Next are the approaches that focus on the emotional aspect of men’s abuse: psychodynamic treatment (D. Dutton, 1998), dialectical behavioral therapy (Fruzzetti, 2000), compassion workshops (Stosny, 1995), and trauma rehabilitation (Briere & Scott, 2006) (p. 86).

Not listed here, but discussed elsewhere, are other interventions such as co-programming with substance abuse (Easton et. al., 2007), restorative justice (Mills et al., 2013), and many others. Each type of intervention has the po-

1. This is the intersectional perspective, which says that multiple oppressed or privileged identities can overlap to create multiple layers of privilege or oppression (Nichols, 2016). This paper suggests both a micro and a macro level approach.

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tential to work, and it is clear that the batterers intervention field has room to grow.

A review of all studies published between 1990 through 2013, “using randomized or quasi-experimental designs that compared an active intervention program to a relevant comparison condition,” showed that half of the BIPs were more effective in preventing new episodes of IPV than the control groups (Eckhardt et. al., 2013, p. 197). Further, the authors discuss how the conclusions of the “unsuccessful” groups are based on group effects, and not based on the individuals present in the group, and they claim that “lives will indeed change and success stories of personal growth will be apparent (Eckhardt et al., 2013, p. 220). The review’s conclusion, along with the multiple types of available programming, show that there are multiple ways to attempt to reach batterers, and that batterers intervention is one such way. These different interventions show momentum for the batterers intervention program movement, and the crossover between batterers and the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker suggest that some of the above techniques can be tried with pimps, specifically techniques that focus on both the individual behaviors and the societal factors.

Applying Batterers Programming to Pimps/Traffickers

A major limitation to current research and the main reason for this paper is that there has been little, if any, work done to focus on rehabilitation of the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker. As of now, the focus is on the criminalization of or legal punishment of pimps/traffickers, with implementation of fines or sentences (Roe-Sepowitz et. al., 2014, p. 5). The lack of programming indicates that providers or funders are more interested in the criminalization of pimps/traffickers and not intervention. In looking at the similarities between batterers and pimps/traffickers, the rest of this paper will suggest ways in which to adapt batterer programming to pimps.

Aspects of batterers intervention programming can be partially, if not fully, transferred to pimps by working at various levels of the socioecological model (intra/interpersonal level, the organizational level, and the community/societal level) to inform programming. While there are some limitations, there are enough similarities between batterers and pimps to intervene successfully, by creating a psychoeducational group with a trauma therapy component.

Though terms such as “batterer” and “pimp” are used, what is meant here is “people who (batter or pimp).” This distinction is important because the

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basis of effective programming and tenets of social work include unconditional positive regard and client-centered advocacy. Unconditional positive regard is an idea, formalized by Carl Rogers, that looks at the following:

It is that the individual has within him or her self vast resources for self-understanding, for altering her or his self-concept, attitudes, and self-directed behavior—and that these resources can be tapped if only a definable climate of facilitative psychological attitudes can be provided (Rogers 1986).

In essence, Rogers believes that individuals have to want to change, and have the ability to do so if provided a therapeutic or educational atmosphere conducive to said change. Therefore, while I use terms like “pimp” or “batterer,” I write first and foremost from the opinion that batterers and pimps are *people* before they are batterers or pimps, which is why it is so crucial to understand and operate from the perspectives of unconditional positive regard and client-centered advocacy. This tenet of social work is crucial to successful intervention with mandated clients, as unconditional positive regard helps social workers see mandated clients as people first. That concept overlays with the idea of client-centered advocacy, which means that the client’s reality is the reality that the social worker operates from. The idea, however, is that the programming described below will help create a change in attitudes, behaviors, thoughts and ideas that will help the pimp actually want to change and engage in other forms of work so as to avoid repeating their behaviors. An ideal program will have access to work opportunities, educational opportunities, housing opportunities, and more that remove the pimp from their previous environment and encourage them to live a life that does not reengage them with the criminal justice system or overt and extreme sexism.

At the intra/interpersonal level, it is important to treat the pimps with unconditional positive regard and approach intervention/ therapy from client-centered advocacy perspective. When I was leading group in batterers intervention, I received much more engagement from batterers who were treated as people first and batterers second than those treated only as batterers. In looking at the above statistics on the 25 pimps, it is important to remember that 88% were physically abused growing up, 76% were sexually assaulted as children, and 88% witnessed domestic violence in the home. These statistics indicate that almost all of those pimping in this study experienced or witnessed some form or multiple forms of trauma.² The Substance Abuse and Mental

2. Discussing the effects of trauma on the brain and on behaviors is beyond the scope of the paper. Generally trauma during development effects people cognitively, physically, and behaviorally. Further, while it may be a stretch, I believe that people who are powerless

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Health Services Administration recommends that trauma-informed approach include the following six principals: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality empowerment; voice and choice, and; cultural, historical, and gender issues (SAMSHA). In order to undo these thought processes and long-seated trauma, effective programs for pimps can use both psychoeducational components and trauma-informed therapy, which would allow for the pimps to receive counseling while simultaneously changing their thoughts, actions, and behavior. This type of intervention is recommended as one type of batterers intervention, and could help pimps on an intra/interpersonal basis because it treats pimps as people and respects their past/current trauma while teaching new behaviors that are not abusive.

On an organizational level, it does not seem like a stretch for a batterers intervention program to add a pimp intervention program as well, or to include boyfriend pimps within their existing program. In organizations that house batterers intervention programs, there are multiple groups throughout the week for batterers. Given the time, money, incentive, and clients, organizations could easily develop and host a program for pimps. Since both battering and pimping fall in the field of sexual violence and power-based/gender-based violence, there is some level of consistency and preparedness already present in this structure to transition to inclusion of a pimp program in an existing batterers intervention organization, assuming the pimp program aligns with the mission of the organization.

At the community and societal level, it is a little bit more challenging for batterers intervention to gain support, let alone for pimp intervention to seem worthwhile. Within batterers intervention programs, it is challenging to truly explain and reverse years of sexism portrayed everywhere: television, film, advertisements, music, and more. Batterers, as mostly males, have a hard time seeing sexism as valid, but if they do, than they struggle to understand the concept of healthy masculinity. Sexism and healthy masculinity are crucial topics to address in batterers intervention because they help batterers see how their community and society helped to shape their beliefs about how women/victims should be treated (as lesser than males or those in power). Reversing this thought can cause change in batterers. With pimps, sexism and healthy masculinities need to be addressed, but two other components are just as critical: the effects of lower income on future wages (i.e., giving up pimping as a form of salary) and the acceptance of pimping/prostitution within society. The

early in life look for ways to achieve power, and becoming a pimp is both powerful and prestigious.

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societal acceptance piece is where programs can begin to ask for funding. A change in perceptions and/or a placement of pressure on the federal government by a shift in public perception can increase money allocated towards intervention and prevention programs for “boyfriend” pimps. If batterers intervention programs (adapted for pimps) can address intra/interpersonal and community/societal factors simultaneously, then pimps may begin to change, much in the same way the I saw batterers change in group—even those with little to no motivation.

Limitations

There are several limitations to applying batterers intervention to the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker. With regards to batterers intervention, there is little to no firm evidence to support that programming works due to lack of methodologically rigorous research. While more and more attention is being paid to batterers intervention and research, there is a struggle to measure effectiveness and success, and one author claims that “more than 35 program effectiveness studies exist, but few have rigorous designs that lead to firm conclusions” (Saunders, 2008, p. 159). Lack of consensus on effectiveness has led to a lack of standards that can be used as a method for program design, which would make modifying an existing program for pimps more difficult. In looking at the Gondolf list above of various intervention types, it is no wonder that designing programs is difficult enough in the field of batterers, let alone adapting a program for a pimp/trafficker. Further, funding in batterers intervention is hard to come by, as most of the funding that comes from VAWA goes towards intervention for victims and prevention, and very little goes to working with batterers.

In terms of trafficking related limitations, the major limitation is that pimps, unlike batterers, receive money for their abuse. As discussed above, the 25 ex-pimps averaged \$150,000–\$500,000 a year, which is a large salary in general, let alone for these pimps who are in a lower class and many of whom do not have a high school diploma. They receive incentive to continue their behavior, which decreases their motivation to change. Thus, larger scale macro-structural changes are needed, in terms of increased opportunity in education and economic mobility. Further, there is societal acceptance of pimping. Nichols points out that currently and historically, pimps have “respect, status, and power, [and there are people who pimp] who are still regarded as popular idols and role models within pimp culture today” including Snoop Lyon, Iceberg Slim, and Don “Magic” Juan (Nichols, 2016). Accordingly, addressing glamoriza-

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tion of pimping is necessary as well. In terms of limitations in the sex trafficking field in general, there is limited research and limited funding, and limited ways to even identify pimps/traffickers³ to channel them into criminal justice and rehabilitative systems. Whereas batterers are mandated to batterers intervention, there are relatively few prosecuted cases of traffickers, and those brought up on reduced charges of pimping and pandering are also much fewer than cases involving battering. Accordingly, sustaining programs intended to rehabilitate would be challenging. Also, there are multiple types of traffickers beyond the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker, which makes applying batterer programming to all traffickers exceedingly difficult (but also not necessary, as it may not be the best intervention for other types of traffickers). While there are many limitations in applying batterers intervention to pimps, there are also many reasons why programming could be effective, and since nothing else has been done to work with pimps, batterers intervention could be an effective place to start. For example, a pilot program with boyfriend pimps/traffickers in prison would be a good beginning.

Conclusion

In reviewing batterers, pimps, and programming, batterers programs can and should be applied to traffickers that are “boyfriend” pimp/traffickers. While there are multiple limitations, batterers programs that have both psychoeducational components and individual trauma counseling available for clients can help expose pimps to a non-abusive way of life. More research needs to be done on effective batterers intervention programs, on sex trafficking in general, and more specifically, on the various types of traffickers to confirm the conclusions of this paper. This research would give program developers the ability to adapt effective batterer programs and customize those programs for the “boyfriend” pimp/trafficker.

In concluding this paper, it is important for me to talk about what little things can be done by the readers to begin breaking down some of these limi-

3. This topic could be its own paper, and this paper will not go into all of the limitations. Some include lack of data coming from skewed samples and difficulty in recruiting participants has led to limited funding. Further, the societal believe in individual choice (i.e. prostitutes choose to be prostitutes) makes it harder to bring awareness and advocacy to the dangers of sex trafficking while adhering to the American societal norm of individual choice. (For instance, it is a widespread belief that an individual is poor because of their choices and not because of societal oppression).

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tations. In order to change public perception, we need to change individual perception. This can be done on an individual level by becoming aware of pimp culture, by thinking about pimps as “people who were taught to pimp” and not “horrible human beings,” and by understanding the detrimental effects trauma can have on individuals. We can also break down limitations by calling on our media and other systems to challenge the norm—Snoop Dog does not need to be rewarded for his pimping, nor does Chris Brown for his abuse, and yet they both are still successful. Conversations are the key to beginning dialogues and programs that overcome barriers in attitudes and perceptions.

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Appendix A

List of Pimp Characteristics

Physical abuse while growing up	88%
Childhood sexual assault	76%
Average age of onset of childhood sexual assault	9.5
Domestic violence in home	88%
Drugs and alcohol abuse in home	84%
Family members involved in prostitution	60%
Neighborhood members involved in prostitution	64%
Regular self-use of alcohol as child	84%
Average age of onset of alcohol use	12.5
Committed to foster care	24%
Ran away from home due to physical or sexual abuse	48%

Raphael and Myers-Powell, 2010, p. 1