

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Explanations of Violence

The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet (1803–1882)

A. Chapter Objectives

1. Present the ecological framework as an organizational model to guide our understanding of the various perspectives used to explain intimate personal violence.
2. Present, define, and explain how the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of society contribute to our understanding of intimate personal violence.
3. Present, define, and explain the major theoretical explanations under the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of organization.

B. Chapter Outline

The Ecological Model

2.2 The Macro Level and Violence: The Big Picture

Oppression

Patriarchy: Privilege, Power, and Control— A Feminist Theory

Macro Conclusion

2.3 The Mezzo Level

Intergenerational Violence: The Cycle of Violence Hypothesis

Learning Theory: Behaviourism

Social Learning Theories and Cognition

Cognitive Theory

Conclusion

2.4 Micro-Level Theories That Emphasize the Individual

Personal Attributes and Characteristics

Stopping Sex Offenders in Their Tracks

Biological Theories

2.5 Victim Theories

The Battered Woman Syndrome

The Theory of Learned Helplessness

Violence Over Time: Walker's Cycle of Violence

Chapter Conclusion

Multiple Choice Questions

Discussion Questions

Key Terms

C. Key Terms

Battered woman syndrome (BWS)	cycle of violence	post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
disinhibitor	micro	patriarchy
Munchausen syndrome by proxy	norms	pedophile
ecological model	operant conditioning	power and control wheel
gender stereotypes	oppression	victim blaming
stimulus generalization	learned helplessness	locus of control
macro	mezzo	

Note: There is a Key Terms Word Puzzle included in **Section K**:

D. Introduction to Class: *Lecture Launchers and Learning Activities*

1. In 2011, the hip hop band Atmosphere released a track on their album Family Sign called “Last to Say” about the cycle of family violence. The music video and song lyrics tell the story of woman abuse and its impact on children. The video can be used to launch discussion about key content in Chapter 2 such as: intergenerational violence; learning theories; cognition theories; the power and control wheel; battered women syndrome; learned helplessness; the cycle of violence. The music video was featured on MTV’s activist-focused ACT blog along with contact information for the U.S. National Domestic Violence Hotline. The music video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uEJi0x-49E>) and lyrics are available online.
2. Although the relationship between the music industry and violence against women is controversial, there are a variety of music videos about interpersonal violence that can be used to demonstrate the theories that help us understand and explain the grim realities. The Canadian band Nickleback’s song, “Never Again” depicts domestic abuse “through the eyes of a child”. There are many other choices and websites available categorizing music by specific themes.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

E. The Canadian Headline News Stories: Learning Activities

1. Canadian Headline News: Husband Accuses Wife of Infidelity, Gouges Her Eyes and Bites Her Nose: 2.1

Book Reflection Suggestion: Each Canadian Headline News segment ends with reflection questions that can be used for in-class or online discussion based assignments.

Rumana Monzur's highly publicized case of brutal domestic violence is cited in the excerpt as a violation of her fundamental human rights as a woman to "access education." If you were asked to be the spokesperson for Canada's position on the human rights violation(s) inherent in the story of Rumana Monzur, what message would you want to emphasize to the world?

Learning Activity: The horror of the Rumana Monzur' story belies an event greater horror, namely, the "pandemic" of violence against women worldwide. In media coverage, culture is frequently identified as the culprit. Many scholars suggest that culture arguments although an undeniable factor, blind us to the real underlying causes and similarities in violence perpetrated against women around the world. Ultimately, the gang rape of a 16 year old girl in British Columbia shares commonalities with the shooting of a 14 year old girl in Pakistan for daring to want an education. Have students compile a comparative list of rates and types of violence against women from a sampling of world countries. Using macro level theories and perspectives, identify the common themes present in the picture the data presents (oppression, gender inequality, patriarchy, etc.). The assignment can be done in written or discussion format.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

2. Canadian Headline News: Death in the Name of Honour: 2.2

Book Reflection Suggestion: Each Canadian Headline News segment ends with reflection questions that can be used for in-class or online discussion based assignments. *How should our courts respond to these types of crimes? Do you think these victimizations should be treated any differently than other acts of violence?*

Learning Activity: Have students explore the role that the stories of heroines and martyrs like Rumana Monzur, Aqsa Parvez, Malala Yousafzai, and countless others have played in national and world efforts to end gender-based violence. Students should research the human, legal, media, and organizational responses that mobilized around these individuals. Write a reflection paper or journal about your impressions regarding the impact of these women.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

G. Content Projects

1. Refer to Figure 2.1 the Micro, Mezzo, and Macro Levels of Organization. Provide students with a series of case scenarios (the authors have provided one example) designed to demonstrate applied theory. Students read case vignettes, discuss the content, and determine the theory, model, or type of intimate partner violence represented in the stories. The exercise can be used as a class activity or a written assignment.

Case Vignette

Question: What model of intimate partner violence does this scenario describe?

Richard came from a large family of seven children. His relationship with his father (John) could be described as weak or hollow. Back then, when Richard was growing up, John believed men should work to take care of the family; men did not have time to play with their children! When John came home from work he wanted his dinner and beer; no conversation and no trouble from his wife or kids. Richard's mother Linda, had a temper; she rarely complied with her husbands' demands for a well-timed dinner or a quiet house. Consequently, the two yelled and fought frequently. Typically, it would stop with Richard's mom crying from an injury caused from a backhand or a shove to the ground. Seeing his mom hurt like that made Richard bristle.

Richard's upbringing made him vow not to be like his parents. He said he would never hit his wife. In time, Richard married and had three children. They struggled financially; more often than not, there was not enough money to pay the bills. Richard felt inadequate. His wife's demands increased. He began to drink to forget and to drown out the noise. Then it happened--- he gave his wife a backhand. It was the only thing he could think of to do.

Answer: Intergenerational Violence theory applies to this case scenario. The cycle of violence hypothesis is commonly used to explain family violence. In this model, abusive behaviour is handed down from generation to generation as an appropriate way to deal with conflict: Violence begets violence. The premise does not suggest that violent tendencies are inherited (not micro); rather, they are experienced or learned. Richard witnessed violence in his home. When he faced similar problems as an adult, he resorted to what he knew. Statistically, people who observe familial violence as children are more likely to be violent in their own relationships later in life. The child becomes an abusing adult—toward a spouse and often toward his or her own children. A cycle of abuse occurs across generations but only in 30-40% of cases. The chapter's opening quote states "The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be...". The research indicates that 60-70% of individuals do not repeat the cycle of violence! What suggestions/intervention might facilitate a different outcome for Richard creating choices and moving him and his family toward the 60-70 percent?

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

2. Research and Presentation Projects: To expand the knowledge base of the macro, mezzo, and micro theories used to explain intimate personal violence, assign group research and presentation projects for the following topics or combinations of topics:

Macro Level: 1. Oppression; 2. Patriarchy

Mezzo Level: 1. Classical Conditioning; 2. Operant Conditioning; 3. Learning Theory; 4. Cognitive Theory

Micro Level: 1. Personal attributes and characteristics; 2. Power and Control Wheel; 3. Borderline Personality Disorder; 4. Antisocial Personality Disorder; 5. Pedophilia 6. Biological Theories

Victim Theories: 1. Battered Woman Syndrome; 2. Learned helplessness; 3. PTSD; 4. Walker's Cycle of Violence

3. Create a class wiki project to catalogue resources that provide advocacy and information about violence against women. Include local, provincial, national, and international sources. The project can be added to as students discover new items and sources. Include major research reports, human rights defenders, anti-violence campaigns, support services and networks, etc.
4. Choose one of the forms of intimate violence presented in the textbook (i.e.?????) and apply an ecological model framework to the selected topic. Identify and explain the interrelated macro, mezzo, and micro variables that influence the form of violence. Present the material through the use of a case study

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

Macro Level content projects: Oppression and Patriarchy: Privilege, Power, and Control — A Feminist Theory

Reflection Journal Assignment:

A. Describe a personal experience where you attempted to establish authority or control over another individual. What was the context? What was your intention? What were your feelings? How did the experience affect the other person? How were you affected? What did you learn from the experience?

B. Flip the scenario. Describe a time when someone tried to establish authority or control over you. What was the context? What was your perception re: the other person's intentions? What did you feel? How were you affected? What did you learn from the experience?

The purpose of this activity is to have students reflect on their own feelings and experiences with power in relationships.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

5. Asks students to watch TV for an evening (or a weekend) paying special attention to the comments and references about women, children, and seniors. What messages are given about Society's value for members of these groups? The purpose of this activity is to give students an opportunity to reflect on how the media influences the way we view women, children and the older adults.

- a. Alternatively, instructors' could select specific T.V. programs or commercials for a more targeted examination of the issue. Students could reflect on or discuss the impacts of media influence on creating stereotypes.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

The Mezzo level: Intergenerational Violence: the Cycle of Violence Hypothesis.

1. The following content project can be used as either an in-class or online activity.
 - a. Organize the class into small groups. Ask each group to draw a simple line graph on a chart or large sheet of paper to represent a continuum. The graph will be used to rank and record abusive acts associated with family violence. Have students brainstorm and identify which acts/behaviours to include on the graph. Then rank the acts from least to most serious and plot them on the graph. Groups will post and share their completed graphs. Discuss the behaviours included on each group's graph. Are there similarities and areas of agreement? Differences of opinion? Omissions? Students can explain and debate their decisions as well as share ideas.
 - i. Next, ask students to consider causes associated with the behaviours identified (oppression, ignorance, learned behavior, poverty, neglect, etc.). Reflection and discussion can move ideas about family violence toward a more comprehensive, holistic, ecological understanding. This step, or moment of reflection, can assist students in the way they organize their thinking about family violence in a comprehensive and "holistic" ~ ecological approach.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

1. The GLBT community has been oppressed in Canada for centuries. Building on the theory from Chapter one, have students take the Trans Ally Quiz. The quiz helps the "heterosexual" population understand how to effectively support members of trans communities. Download the quiz at www.trans-academics.org/TransAllyQuiz.doc and test your ability to provide trans-positive service. Once you have completed the quiz, consider the implications your answers might have for transgendered individuals who are also victims of intimate personal violence.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

The Mezzo level and the Micro

1. Choose one of following films listed in the resources for the chapter.
 - *The Crown Prince* (1988). Drama. 37 min 37s. or
 - *Love Taps*. (1996). National Film Board. 22 min 49s
 - *The Boys of St. Vincent 15 years later*. (1992) 92 min 35 s
 - a. Using theoretical models highlighted in Chapter 2 (Intergenerational Violence; Battered Woman Syndrome; Cycle of Violence; Learned Helplessness; the Power and Control Wheel) analyze the film's content. Identify the different forms of violence,

their causes and impacts. Examine the interrelationships between the micro, mezzo and macro variables.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

2. Family and Self Reflection: The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to examine their own families and reflect on the way one's family can influence who we are.
 - a. Describe your family. Discuss the dynamics in your family. What are the roles of males and females? How are problems solved? What is the family's communication style? How are problems managed? How is vulnerability supported? What cultural and religious influences are present? What values are dominant? What resources and supports are available to the family? Think macro, mezzo, and micro in your analysis and description. To what degree do your current relationships resemble relationships from your family of origin?
 - b. This assignment is very personal; therefore, journals or reflection essays are recommended.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

Micro-level theories that emphasize the individual

1. Ask students to research a case of a convicted sexual offender. Apply Psychological Explanations; Pedophilia and Sexual Offending; Groth's Typology of Pedophilia; and Finkelhor's Multifactor Model: Incest Theory, to the known facts of the case. Analyze the behaviour of the sexual offender. Two cases discussed in chapter 3 could be used for the assignment. Write a 3-5 page paper about the analysis.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

H. Online Learning Activities

Online suggestions are referenced throughout the manual. The course content is transferable to an online format with multiple teaching options including, online lectures, tutorials, PowerPoint, Webquests, discussion boards, journals, blogs, wikis, etc. The majority of the films and documents are available in the public domain and can be accessed by students to view online.

I. Opening Quote Wrap-Up Activity

Chapter 2 begins with a quote from the famous Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson was an American essayist, lecturer, and poet who led the transcendentalist movement of the mid-19th century. Emerson wrote on a number of subjects, including the development of certain ideas such as *individuality*, freedom, the ability for humankind to realize almost anything, and the relationship between the soul and the surrounding world. When he was once asked to sum up his work, he said his central doctrine was "the infinitude of the private man!"

Learning Activity: Consider *Emerson's* quote, “*The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.*” Find an image to accompany the quote that reflects the quote’s relevance as a motivational statement for victims of violence. Ensure that you screen for subtle/not subtle messages in the images that could potentially convey “victim blaming”. Put the quote and your image together to create an inspirational poster to be shared in class. Submit a brief written statement with the poster explaining your choice of images and the message you hoped to convey. The exercise could also be done online and posted.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

J. Guest Speaker Suggestions

Appropriate speakers would vary depending on the topic being discussed and the various professionals available in your community. Examples include:

- a representative from the Aboriginal community
- a representative from Immigrant Services
- a representative from a local GLBT organization
- a representative from a women’s shelter
- a representative from a feminist group or organization
- a representative from a social justice group, organization, or coalition
- a human rights lawyer
- a community development worker

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

K. Working for Positive Change

Supporting the theory and research contained in Chapter 1, encourage students to get involved! Have students engage in a participation project with an advocacy or social justice theme related to content in Chapter 1. Students explore opportunities available in their own community and brainstorm these options as a group prior to selecting a participation activity (subject to professor approval). Upon completion of the assignment, students write a brief report describing:

- 1) the activity
- 2) the interpersonal violence and social justice connections
- 3) personal reflections about their learning experience.

The assignment preparation, brainstorming, and concluding report can easily be adapted for online delivery through an online lecture or PowerPoint instructions, discussion boards, and an assignment dropbox.

L. End of Chapter Discussion Questions

1. Describe and explain Lenore Walker's cycle of violence theory.

Answer

- Is based on the theory of learned helplessness and the cycle of abuse.
- The battered victim believes she or he cannot influence or escape the abuser's violence. One rare reaction when faced with the "reality" is to resort to the only perceived option, that is, to kill the abuser.
- It is considered self-defense even though the victim may not have been in imminent danger of death or great bodily harm at the exact time that the killing occurred.

2. What are the cultural and social influences that are believed to contribute to the impact of violence and maltreatment?

Answer

- The Duluth model illustrates the elements of a battering relationship, by using the actions indicated in the *power and control wheel*.
- The theory of learned helplessness and the cycle of abuse

3. What are the "individual-level" influences that are believed to contribute to the impact of violence and maltreatment?

Answer

- Personal Attributes and Characteristics
- Psychological Explanations
- Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy
- Biochemical theories

M. Additional Resources: Films, Websites, and Key Terms Word Puzzle

Films

The Butterbox Babies. (2002). Classified as a Drama. 97 minutes

Description/ Storyline

Adapted from the book *Butterbox Babies* by Bette L. Cahill, this Sullivan Entertainment film is based on the true story of the Ideal Maternity Home in Nova Scotia (1.2 Canadian Headline News: The Butterbox Babies of the 1920s, '30s and '40s). Owned and operated by Young and Lila Sullivan, IMH was allegedly set up to assist unwed mothers by housing them and arranging adoptions for their babies. Exploitive fees were charged to the mothers and adoptive parents. Sanitary conditions in the home were deplorable. Unadoptable babies were left to die and were buried in small pine butterboxes. The home continued to operate for many years before the scandals were revealed and it was eventually shut down.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

There Is Something about Mary. (1998). Classified as a Romantic Comedy. 119 minutes

Description/ Storyline

In the film, "There Is Something about Mary" three men present obsessed stalking behaviour toward the main female character, Mary. Mary moves cities and changes her name to escape her first stalker who eventually finds her with the help of a private detective. In her new community, Mary encounters two additional stalkers. A popular comedy with well-known actors, the film provides a "lighten up" view of a serious social problem. Despite its comedic facade, the film portrays classic stalking behaviours and brings to light the boundary issues we struggle with as a culture in defining "acceptable" behaviour in male and female relationships.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

The Boys of St. Vincent 2-Volume Set. (1992). A National Film Board of Canada release. Classified as a Drama. The Boys of St. Vincent (1992). 92 min 20s & The Boys of St. Vincent 15 years later. (1992) 92 min 35 s

Description/ Storyline

Based on the Canadian Headline news story 3.5 Canadian Headline News: Mount Cashel— A Canadian Story of Abuse and the Conspiracy of Silence, this realistic two-part dramatization follows the desperate struggle by young residents of a Roman Catholic orphanage to escape their nightmare of physical and sexual abuse. Their cries for help go unanswered, although a concerned janitor and a no-nonsense cop wage a personal crusade to uncover the terrible truth, and end the suffering. For many long years, Church officials, police and high government officials conspire to conceal the truth. For the victims, there is only shame and bitterness. And a deafening silence. Part two picks up the story 15 years later.

Justice after many decades is eventually realized. (3.6 From the Pen of Michael Harris, Author of Unholy Orders) A government inquiry reopens the case. The victims must come face-to-face with their abusers and relive the awful past yet again. The time for silence has ended.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

Looking for Angelina. (2005). Classified as a Drama. 85 minutes

Description/ Storyline

The film, Looking for Angelina, is based on a famous Canadian murder case (also referenced in the textbook's 5.3 Canadian Headline News: Canada's First Battered Woman Defence). In 1911, Angelina Napolitano was convicted of murder and sentenced to execution for killing her abusive husband with an axe. The movie depicts the controversial case that ignited debate about the battered woman as a defense for murder. Filmed in both English and Italian, the story provides a telling portrait about the treatment of women in Canada at the turn of the century.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

To a Safer Place. A national film board of Canada release. (1987). Classified as Documentary. 58 min 20s

Description/ Storyline

This inspiring film is about Shirley Turcotte, and how she came to terms with her life as a survivor of incest. Ms. Turcotte was sexually abused by her father from infancy to early adolescence. *Now* in her thirties this film depicts how she courageously succeeded in building a rich and full life. In *To a Safer Place*, Ms. Turcotte takes a further step to reconcile her past and present. The film accompanies her as she returns to the people and places of her childhood. Her mother, brothers and sister, all of whom were also caught up in the cycle of family violence, openly share their thoughts. Their frank disclosures will encourage survivors of incest to break through the silence and betrayal to recover and develop a sense of self-worth and dignity.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

Love Taps. (1996). National Film Board. 22 min 49s

Description/ Storyline

The relevance of the topic is timeless. The story examines violence in adolescent relationships through the stories of two young couples. High school students Mark and Terese are involved in a dangerous relationship. Mark becomes more possessive and abusive. Terese thinks it's her fault but is convinced she can handle it... until Mark physically attacks her in front of a group of friends. Kelly cares deeply for her boyfriend Benson, but she is always making sarcastic remarks about his intelligence. When Benson reacts to her verbal abuse, Kelly says she's "just joking." The couple dynamics tell the story of teen relationship and dating violence.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

The Crown Prince (1988). Drama. 37 min 37s

Description/ Storyline

Although an older film, the realism, and emotional impact of this film quickly engages students. In *The Crown Prince*, Frank Robinson abuses his wife psychologically and verbally, with traumatic consequences not only for her, but also for their sons, Billy and Freddy. The generational transmission of violence is depicted in Billy's relationship with an adolescent female peer. This film is a thought-provoking drama that explores the complex problems teenagers face in dealing with family violence. The film also shows how the family begins the healing process and chooses to alter the cyclical nature of violence.

(Chapter Objectives 1, 2, & 3)

Websites

Also see Sections D-E

The American Psychiatric Association website

<http://www.psychiatry.org/practice/dsm>

Duluth Model Website

<http://www.theduluthmodel.org/>

Status of Women Canada.

<http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/index-eng.html>

Library and Archives Canada: Celebrating Women's Achievements

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/women/index-e.html>

Key Terms Word Puzzle:

The puzzle can have a few purposes.

- It can be administered to students and used as a pre-test ~ post-test evaluative tool.
- It can be used as an in-class group activity.
- It can be introduced before the content is presented, or after, to assess whether or not the chapter learning objectives have been addressed
- It can be part of a course review; to prepare for exams.

Please note; two combined words might be necessary to secure the accurate answer however there will be no space; for example CriminalCode.

Chapter 2 Key Word Puzzle: Theoretical Explanations of Violence

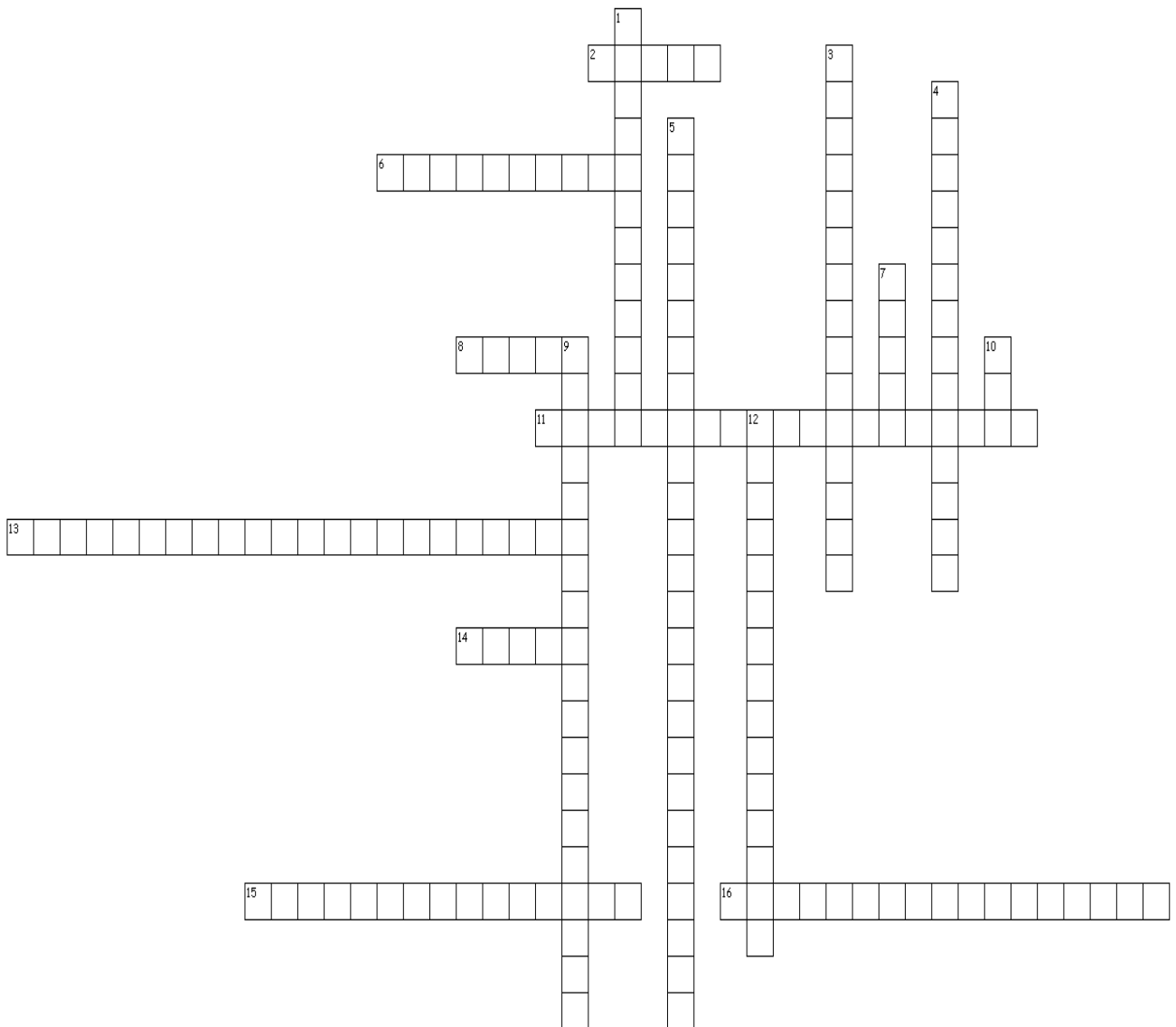
Across

- 2. literally means “small”; in a system-organizational sense, used to refer to small units, especially at the level of single individuals
- 6. the exercise of authority or power in a cruel or unjust manner
- 8. literally means “large”; in a system-organizational sense, used to refer to large units, especially at the cultural and societal level
- 11. a condition used to explain a victim’s inability to protect herself against the batterer’s violence that develops following repeated, but failed, efforts to do so
- 13. occurs when a conditioned response follows a stimulus that is similar to the original conditioned stimulus; the more similar the two stimuli are, the more likely generalization is to occur
- 14. literally means “middle”; in a system-organizational sense, used to refer to medium-sized units, especially at the level of families or small groups
- 15. a theory developed by Dr. Lenore Walker to explain how violence in an intimate relationship is not even but waxes and wanes
- 16. the application of the belief or attitude that certain characteristics are specific to one’s gender that indirectly affect one’s abilities

Down

- 1. something that causes a loss or reduction of an inhibition
- 3. a stage in the cycle of violence theory
- 4. can be either internal or external
- 5. a pattern in which a parent inflicts harm on a child in order to get attention from the medical profession
- 7. socially defined rules of behaviour including folkways, mores, and laws
- 9. learning in which a voluntary response is strengthened or weakened, depending on its favourable or unfavourable consequence
- 10. a set of specific psychological and behavioural symptoms that are caused by protracted exposure to situations of intimate partner violence
- 12. tries to understand phenomena within the context of interacting social environments

Chapter 2 Key Word puzzle: Theoretical Explanations of Violence





INTIMATE PERSONAL VIOLENCE IN CANADA

Chapter 2

Theoretical Explanations of Violence



2.1 Introduction to Theoretical Explanations of Violence



Introduction

- Single cause theories inadequately explain the complexities of interpersonal violence
- **Ecological Model** investigates connections between individual, family, daily systems they live and work within, and larger society's laws and values



The Ecological Model

- People influenced by relationships **and** environment
- **Micro level:** individual development in context of intimate primary relationships
- **Mezzo level:** values, beliefs, and rules of family and communal institutions
- **Macro level:** culture and society, political and economic environment, historical events, power structures, and norms



2.2 The Macro Level and Violence: The Big Picture



Oppression

- Exists when choice is restricted due to a person's status or membership in a group
- Ensures a certain “type” of citizenship is protected
- Oppressors occupy a position of power, influence, and prestige
- Oppressed are controlled “for the good of society”
- Perpetuates **victim blaming**



Types of Oppression

- **Cultural Imperialism:** universalizes experience
- **Exploitation:** denies status, power, & assets
- **Marginalization:** excludes groups from meaningful participation in society
- **Powerlessness:** denies control over one's own life
- **Violence:** includes physical and verbal attacks, intimidation, and victimization



Patriarchy: Privilege, Power, and Control—A Feminist Theory

- Hierarchical, white heterosexual male-dominated and male-entitled “family” system
- Unequal power relations based on gender, social structures, religious practices, and legal codes
- Women systematically disadvantaged, oppressed, and deprived of rights
- Children, women, and gays victimized and harmed



2.3 The Mezzo Level



Intergenerational Violence: The Cycle of Violence Hypothesis

- Relationship titles (wife, son, etc.) impose roles, expectations, and responsibilities
- Children learn relationship patterns from parents
- These lessons inform child's values, knowledge, and skills
- Some (not all) abused children become violent or are victimized in adult relationships



Positive Correlations: Violence Begets Violence

- **Intergenerational theory:** childhood abuse predisposes survivors to violence
- Direct link between violence and future offending suggests violence is a learned behaviour
- Victimized children may exhibit anger/aggression problems, or become criminal offenders



Learning Theory: Behaviourism

- Describes observed behaviour as a predictable response to experience
- Views the environment as more influential on behaviour than biology
- Focuses on **associative learning**: a mental link formed between two events determines whether a behaviour will be repeated
 - classical conditioning
 - operant conditioning



Classical and Operant Conditioning

- **Classical conditioning:** biologically programmed reflexes can be associated with “neutral stimulus” to create new behaviours
- **Operant conditioning:** voluntary responses strengthened/weakened, depending on favourable or unfavourable consequences
- **Negative Correlation:** not all abused children become abusive (cognition & choice)
- Mezzo system can offer supports to “unlearn”



2.4 Micro-Level Theories that Emphasize the Individual



Personal Attributes and Characteristics of Perpetrators

- History of being abused/witnessing abuse
- Family relationship factors (perceptions of child/parent roles)
- Alcohol and drug use/abuse
- Extent to which life seems controlled by external factors
- Self-esteem and ego strength
- Anger and aggression



The Duluth Model: Spousal Violence Theory

Power and Control Wheel depicts behaviours batterers use to dominate partners and children:

- Intimidation, coercion and threats
- Emotional abuse
- Isolation
- Minimizing, denying, blaming
- Using children
- Economic abuse and male privilege



Psychological Explanations

- **Personality disorders:** maladaptive and inflexible patterns of perception cause functional impairment & subjective distress
- **Borderline Personality:** mood swings, impulsive behaviours, relationship problems, low self worth
- **Antisocial Personality Disorder:** disregard for or abuse of rights of others; failure to comply with social norms



Pedophilia and Sexual Offending

- **Sex offender:** individual punished by law
- **Sexual offense:** engagement in illegal sexual behaviours
- **Pedaphile:** engages in adult-child sexual behaviours
 - **Fixated:** pedophilic interest begins in adolescence
 - **Regressed:** pedophilic interest emerges in adulthood



Finkelhor's Multifactor Model: Incest Theory

- Examines process of sexually abusing a child
- Emphasizes four **preexisting conditions** that enable perpetrators to commit abuse
 - 1) **Emotional Congruence** of adult's needs with child's characteristics of accessibility
 - 2) **Sexual Arousal** in the presence of children
 - 3) **Blockage** preventing participation in a satisfying adult relationship
 - 4) **Disinhibition** causing lack of impulse control



Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

- Attention seeking behaviour in adult/parent
- Parent induces real or apparent symptoms of a disease in child
- Children are often hospitalized and made to suffer through unnecessary tests and procedures
- Some children die from infections or other injuries inflicted by parents



Biological Theories

- Historically, biological theories have been used to understand, explain, and predict violence
- Contemporary theories focus on the brain in terms of physiology and chemistry
- Biochemical theories link violence to nutrition/eating habits, hypoglycemia, hormone imbalances, and adrenalin sensitivities



2.5 Victim Theories



The Battered Woman Syndrome and the Theory of Learned Helplessness

- **Battered woman syndrome (BWS)** refers to psychological and behavioural symptoms caused by protracted exposure to abuse
- **Learned helplessness** is a condition explaining a victim's inability to protect herself against ongoing violence
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** results from exposure to severe trauma, including the fear of being battered



Violence Over Time: Walker's Cycle of Violence

Three phases:

- 1) Tension building: victim senses there will be a violent incident; may instigate the incident to get it over with
- 2) Acute battering incident: escalation to severe, out of control violence (may lead to death)
- 3) Respite phase: abuser apologizes profusely, promises never to hurt victim again