

# Domestic Violence

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## Prevalence

- Women in low income families are most susceptible to DV.
- Most are unemployed, and often rely on partner for support.
- DV among AI women in comparison to the other races is at least 50% higher.



## Occurrence

- DV is usually triggered by certain factors that can influence occurrence of incidents.
- Unemployment, poverty, poor education background, systemic prejudice, anger management, teen pregnancy and marriage at early ages due to unplanned pregnancies.
- Cyclical as occurrence depends on presence of triggers.



## Problem

- At least 80% of AI men and women have experienced violence in their lifetime.
- AI women living on reservations suffer close to 50% DV compared to women of other ethnic backgrounds (DOJ)



## Consequences of IPV

- Impacts mental health of affected women, children, and families.
- Violence against indigenous women begins at a young age, is related to depression, substance abuse, and attempted suicide.
- Women report feeling more stressed and depressed, 38% report worsened substance use since experiencing IPV.



## Indigenous women's perspectives

- A majority witnessed IPV in childhood, often leading to intergenerational cycle of violence.
- IPV is the most common forms of violence by current or former partner.
- 2.5 times the rate of all non-indigenous women.



## Consequences of IPV

- Victims more likely to report depressive symptoms, substance abuse, and chronic mental illness than non-victims.
- Places victims at risk for anxiety, depression, PTSD, antisocial behavior, suicidal thoughts, and emotional detachment.



## Negative effects on children

- 5-7 times more likely to suffer psychological problems, such as childhood depression, anxiety, aggression, insecure attachment, low self-esteem, than children from non-violent households.
- 46% girls and 22% boys increased risk for delinquency, violent expressions and impaired relationships.
- As adults, psychiatric distress, self-harm, trauma symptoms, depression, underemployment, poor educational attainment, and attachment problems.





## Families directly affected

- Psychological consequences from exposure
- Indirectly affects by interparental conflict impairing parenting and parent-child relationships
- Constrains child development
- Is found to be transmitted intergenerationally



## Research outcomes

- Women report PTSD, depression, suicide attempts, sleep disruption, employment problems, and living in constant fear.
- Symptoms persist years & decades beyond the violence.
- IPV normalized in own childhood, making them more at risk for being a victim.
- Children indirectly affected by loss of parent.



## History of the problem

- Exact date DV began cannot be accurately established.
- Invasion and subsequent colonization by the British.
- Exacerbated by unemployment and deplorable living conditions. DV has become a common health care problem



## History of the Problem Cont...

- Every minute at least 20 people suffer physical assault by intimate partners.
- Influenced by high drug and substance abuse, psychological imbalance, and increased insecurity.
- Sequelae of DV can be physical, emotional and mental.
- Physical sequelae include permanent scars, deformation and in extreme cases death.



## History continued...

- Physical genocide ceased in the late 1800's
- US governments policies and programs still had genocide in mind.
- Just more subtle
- The Indian Removal Act, residential schools, and forced sterilization
- All tactics to subdue, control and marginalize



## US Army and the Civil War

- “Kill every Buffalo you can! Every Buffalo Dead is an Indian gone!”
- Slaughtered the buffalo that were once in the millions.
- Civil War wanting to expand westward
- Nearly starved to death and forced to rely on government issued rations that were often spoiled.





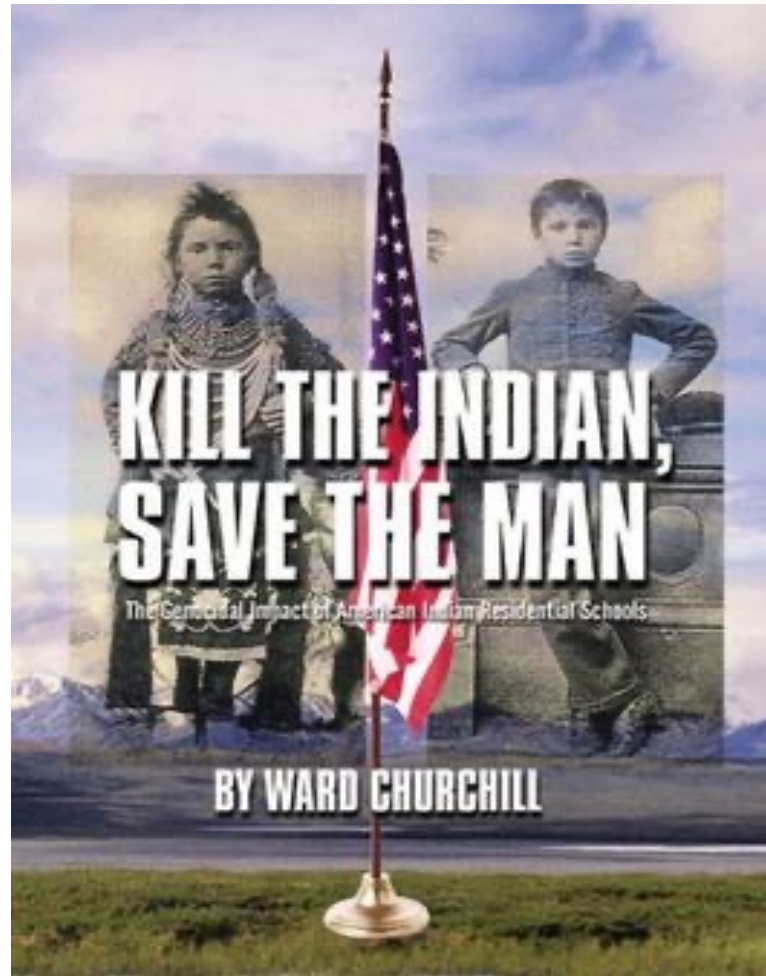
## Cultural genocide

- Programs and policies were more related to ‘cultural genocide’ rather than physical.
- The ‘good’ European society was fine with it.
- “Kill the Indian. Save the Man.”
- Carlisle Indian school – model for Indian Education





# Residential Schools genocide







## Remains of Northern Arapaho boy will be returned to Wyoming after a century in boarding school graveyard



Little Plume's riderless horse approaches a grave site... ▲

Heather Richards 307.333.3500



## Forced Sterilization

- Est. 25% of NA women of childbearing age were sterilized by 1976.
- Coerced into signing forms at IHS.
- 2-15 y/o native girls admitted for tonsillectomies, released with tubal ligations.
- Women in Aberdeen, Albuquerque, Oklahoma City, and Phoenix.



## Urban Indian women

- 112 women
- 65% some form of IPV
- 28% childhood physical abuse
- 48% rape
- 40% history of DV
- 40% multiple victimization experiences



## National Violence Survey

- Highest rates of all forms of violence occur
- 34.1% report rape
- 61.4% physical assault
- 17% stalking of some sort
- Highest rates of being witness to traumatic events



## Reservation-based women

- 27% report childhood physical abuse
- 40% child sexual abuse
- 40% adult sexual assault
- 67% physical violence from adult partner
- 60.7% attended mental health counseling
- 67.9% utilized traditional Native Healing



## Indigenous Men

- Little activism to address men's issues
- Very few social programs designed for men
- Emerging Indigenous masculinities studies
- Men's issues largely ignored
- Issues similar to those of women
- More men murdered than women
- 2.5 times more likely to be victim of homicide





## Indigenous men cont...

- Shorter life spans
- Less likely to graduate high school
- More likely to be incarcerated
- Murdered at a higher rate
- Lack of public awareness and political will
- Who is walking with our brothers?
- Perceived women face higher violence risk



## Significance of the problem

- Emotional sequelae include PTSD and persistent anxiety.
- Statistics indicate that due to limited resources and informed knowledge they will continue to suffer such atrocities.
- Need for intervention and increased awareness as well as improved legal actions to curb incidents of DV and improve the plight of the population at risk.



## Resources

- One of the main triggers has been linked to established resources.
- Basic resources of food and water are required for humans to exist.
- Many people unable to meet basic needs reduces purchase capacity.
- Provision of resources can serve as primary prevention.



## Resources cont...

- Lack of access to facilities and community activities that improve team building and interpersonal relations are crucial to building character focused on conflict resolution.
- Practice of better communication channels is fundamental in improving conflict resolution between high risk young couples.



## Existing Service Issues

- Complications with existing services for Native American domestic violence clients.
- Shelters
- Counseling
- Workshops/classes
- Transportation and court
- Beds to house women with multiple children



## Absence of Services

- NA DV victims state services are absent on tribal land.
- Domestic violence support groups
- Local tribal support
- Daycare assistance
- Victim compensation
- Awareness of services available from tribes.



## Tolerance of DV

- Tolerance by family and tribal members
- Law enforcement officials not taking DV situations seriously.
- Leads to loss of faith and trust
- Discouraged from reporting abuse
- Sense of fear about law enforcement.
- Family tends to turn against them.



## Isolation

- Extreme isolation on tribal land
- Geographic isolation
- Faced with having to endure ongoing abuse
- Having to leave rez to obtain services because of isolation prohibits obtaining adequate assistance
- Shelters in border towns left isolation from certain services





## Native Providers Needed

- Understand sensitivity to native cultures
- Ability to relate to NA clients
- More rapport and empathy can be created
- Use of native provider connection can be established right away.
- More Native DV service providers needed



## Culturally Sensitive Training

- More culturally sensitive training and cultural understanding is needed.
- Services need to be changed or adapted to fit specifically for NA DV clients.
- Most classes, counseling methods are western oriented, not made for native Americans



## Tribal Education

- Tribal service providers and tribal leaders
- Education must begin with leaders, they have the power, ability, and voice to make any changes.
- Need to understand DV is not something to be ashamed of addressing
- Needs to be recognized as a serious problem.



## Communication value

- Communication breakdown is one of the major causes of DV and it affects young couples as they are not mature enough to handle parenting pressure and marriage in low income society.
- Communication allows for quick and amicable resolutions that prevent occurrence of DV.



## Regulatory Issues

- Most common regulatory measures put into place to reduce DV is the Stand Against Violence and Empower Native Women Act.
- One of the campaigns that has been employed to reduce cases of DV empowering women and advising them of the issues regarding IPV.



## Legal Considerations

- Violence Against Women Act reauthorized by former President Barrack Obama in 2013.
- VAWA is a legal act that restores sovereignty and jurisdiction to the tribal courts in the Indian Country allowing them to investigate and prosecute Tribal members and Non-Indians who perpetrate acts of violence in Indian Country esp. against women. (US DOJ, 2017)



## Ethical Considerations

- DV is a very sensitive issue and requires a lot of care when dealing with victims.
- One must maintain autonomy and confidentiality of the victim and grant the persons wishes.



## Ethical consideration cont...

- Minimizing risk to the victims is also important, limit exposure of the victim to repeated acts of violence in their delivery of care.
- Maintain professional boundaries, and don't impose personal values.





## Our role as community helper

- Complicated and dynamic at the same time because of our impact and influence of the patient's outcomes.
- Helpers have an integral role to play to ensure early intervention and possible prevention of DV because of its mental health consequences on the women and children in high risk areas of AI populations.



## Primary prevention

- It seeks to address the issue of DV before it occurs.
- Mainly involve education of public in high-risk areas.
- Adolescent dating violence one of the most promising programs that seek to educate youth on amicable conflict resolution and anger management therapy.



## Secondary Prevention

- Commonly referred to as early intervention
- Has 3 levels of intervention for youth, couples in high risk setting and improved parenting programs.
- Seeks to improve the knowledge and understanding of the youth regarding gender roles, interpersonal behaviors and reduce high risk violent behaviors by engaging them in team activities.



## Secondary Prevention cont...

- Couples at high risk of violence such as young couples with low income are made aware of their roles in family upbringing and how each partner is crucial to the success of the family by being more involved in family activities.
- Active participation in parenting.
- Parenting education can help relieve frustrations a person might harbor.



## Tertiary prevention

- Involves a number of intervention activities including victim advocacy, treatment and rehabilitation of victim and perpetrators.
- Victims will require treatment and rehabilitation to overcome the physical, mental and emotion trauma they sustained.
- Perpetrators need recovery through rehabilitation process to ensure recidivism and can improve their future relations.



## MMIW state of affairs

- Crisis still unknown to many people in US
- Decades media has deemed deaths or disappearances of AI women and girls as unnewsworthy.
- The media can play a role in supporting Indigenous people.



## Conclusion

- Indigenous women have been harmed in many ways.
- Colonization dissociated women from everything they valued: community, family, culture, spirituality, and sense of self.
- Indigenous women are strong
- Mentally and spiritually
- Very resilient