

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS: RESULTS FROM FOUR STUDIES

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- **Other publications on this and related issues can be downloaded from <http://www.pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2>**
- **The work was supported by National Institute of Mental Health grant T32MH15161 and by the University of New Hampshire**

THE FOUR STUDIES

- Study 1 Sexual coercion by University students
- Study 2 Risky sex by University students
- Study 3 Risky sex by Secondary school students
- Study 4 Masochistic sex by University students

QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

1. What is corporal punishment (CP)?
2. How prevalent and how chronic is CP?
3. What is the theoretical model which guided studies 1, 2, and 3?
4. What is the empirical evidence that led to this model
5. What are the results of the four studies of sexual behavior problems
6. What are the implications for primary prevention of these and many other social and psychological problems?

Questions 1 & 2 : **WHAT IS CORPORAL PUNISHMENT (CP) AND HOW PREVALENT IS IT?**

- A. USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE
- B. WITH THE INTENTION OF CAUSING BODILY PAIN
- C. BUT NOT INJURY
- D. FOR PURPOSES OF CORRECTION OR CONTROL

EXAMPLES

- “SPANK,” “SMACK”
 - SLAP HAND
 - SHAKE, SHOVE, JERK
 - GRAB OR SQUEEZE HARD
 - TWIST EAR
- etc.



FIG 3. PREVALENCE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BY CHILD'S AGE

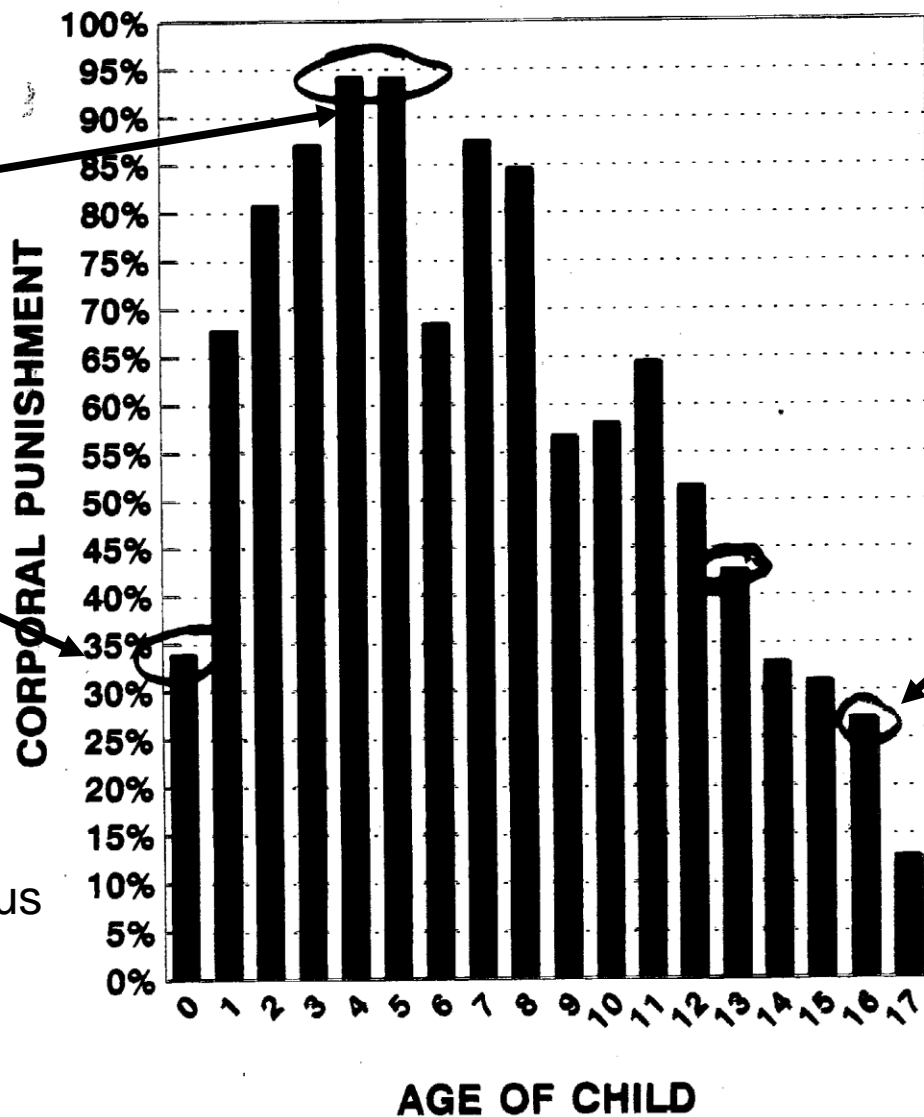
*** CP IS THE PRIMORDIAL VIOLENCE**

Over 90% hit toddlers

More than a third hit infants

US national survey, 1,000 children, Straus & Stewart, 1999

CP40 deny



One out of four are still hitting at age 16

THREE EXAMPLES OF STUDIES SHOWING HOW OFTEN PARENTS HIT CHILDREN

NATION & REF.	SAMPLE & Number	CHILD AGE	% HIT	TIME PERIOD	MEAN TIMES
SWEDEN STATTIN ET ALL, 1995	STOCKHOLM BIRTH COHORT 1955-58 N = 212	3	94%	YEAR	33% AT LEAST DAILY
USA GILES-SIMS ET AL, 1995	NATIONAL N = 1,770 1988, 1990	2-3	10%	DURING INTER- VIEW	3.2 TIMES PER WEEK
USA HOLDEN ET AL, 1995	COLLEGE ED MOTHERS, AUSTIN, TX N = 39	3	77%	WEEK	2.5 TIMES PER WEEK

QUESTION 3: WHAT COULD EXPLAIN WHY CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IS LINKED TO SEXUAL COERCION AND RISKY SEX?



QUESTION 4, WHAT IS THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE THAT CP IS RELATED TO ABOVE MEDIATING VARIABLES? – next slide

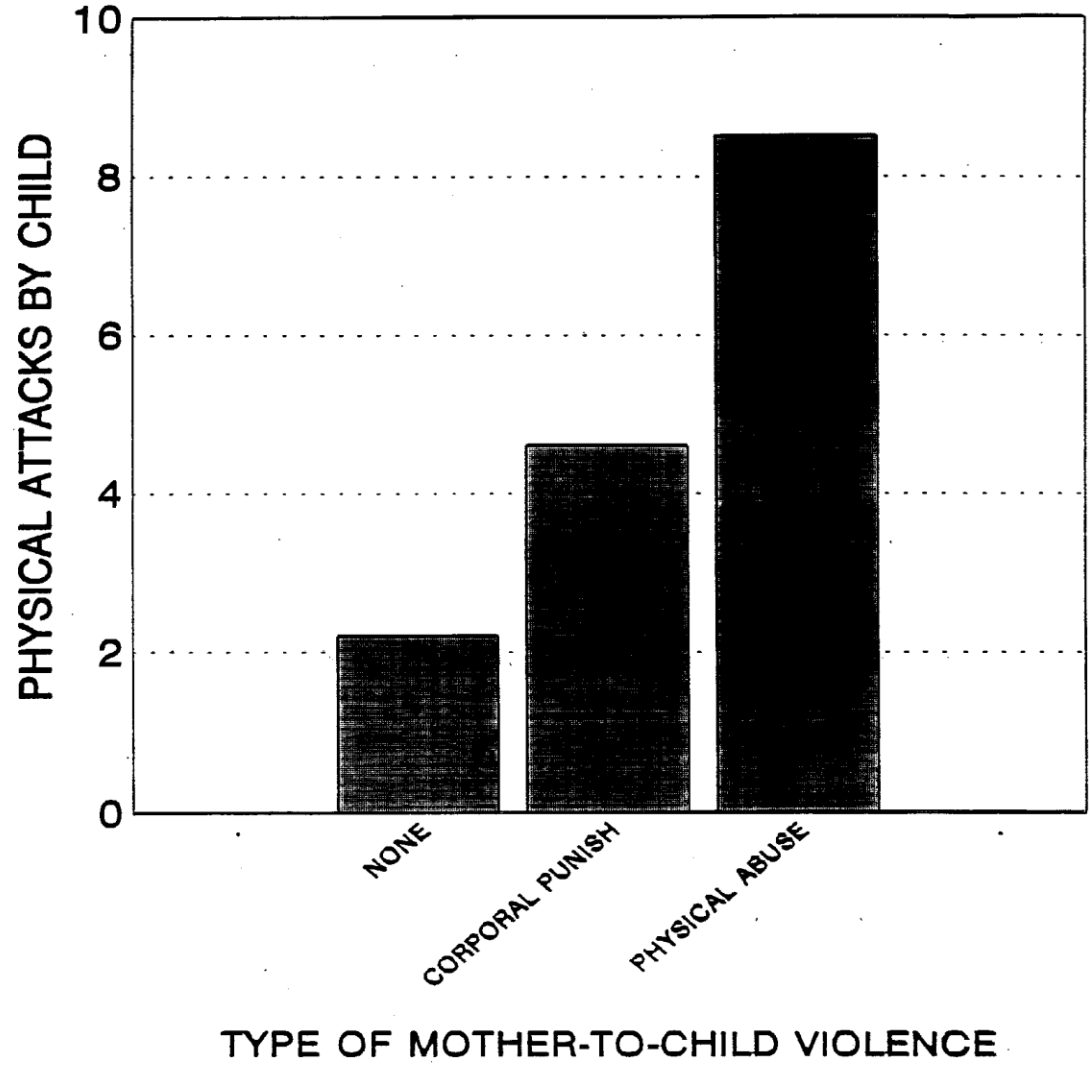
SOME OF THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

META ANALYSIS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT STUDIES		
OUTCOME MEASURED	# OF STUDIES	HARMFUL EFFECT
A. EFFECTS ON CHILDREN		
Less Moral Internalization	15	87%
Aggression	27	100%
Delinquent and antisocial behavior	13	92%
Quality of parent-child relationships	13	100%
Mental health	12	100%
Victim of child abuse	10	100%
B. EFFECTS ON ADULTS		
Aggression	4	100%
Criminal and antisocial behavior	5	80%
Mental health	8	100%
Adult abuse of own child or spouse	5	100%
C. CP NOT MORE EFFECTIVE THAN OTHER DISCIPLINE		
Compliance	5	60%
Gershoff, E. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> , 128(4), 539-579.		

93% agreement in studies of harmful side effects

Figure 10
PHYSICAL ATTACKS ON OTHER CHILDREN IN SCHOOL
ARE TWICE AS FREQUENT IF THE MOTHER USED
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT SIX MONTHS EARLIER

Example 1



CP40 deny

Example 2

FIGURE 1. CHANGE IN ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR FROM 1988 TO 1990 BY SPANKING IN 1988 (CHILDREN 6-9)

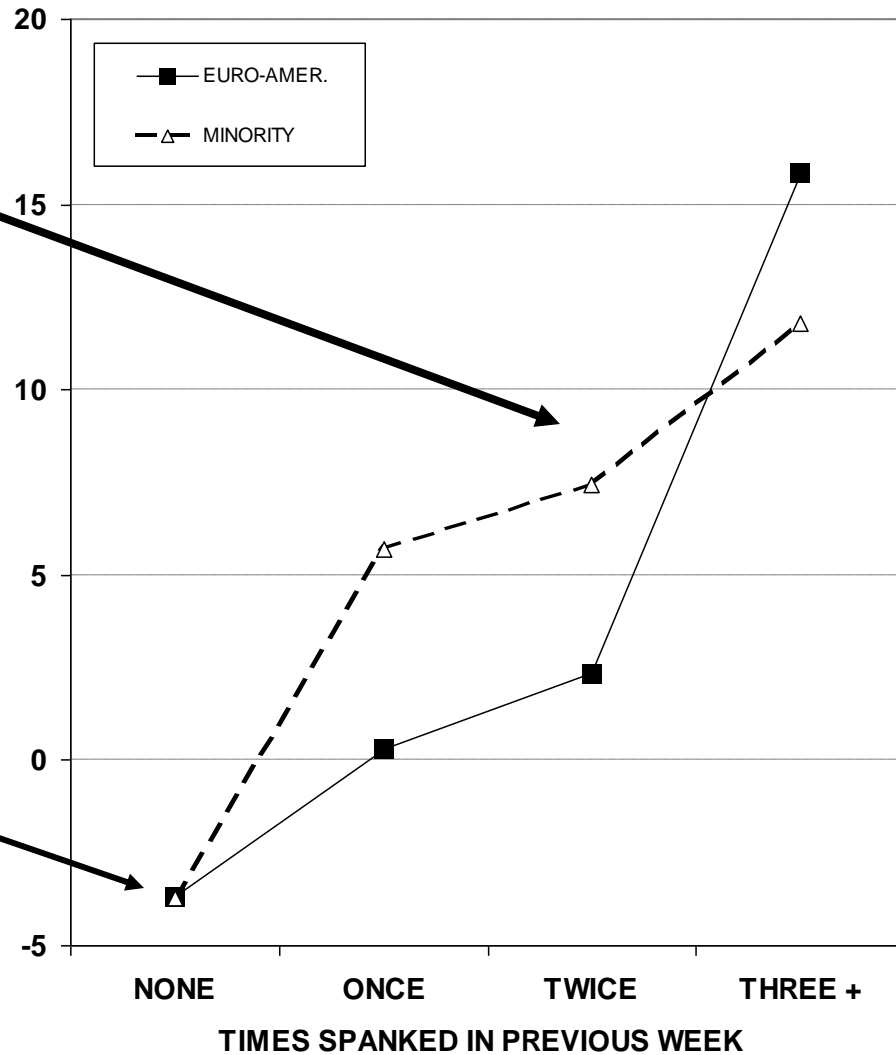
SPANKED CHILDREN

The more spanking the more antisocial behavior two years later

NOT SPANKED

Antisocial behavior measured two years later decreased

CHANGE IN ANTI-SOCIAL* BEHAVIOR



* **Example 3**

**NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF 9,789
CANADIAN CHILDREN AGE 4-11 (Millar, 2006)**

SPANKING AT TIME 1 IS RELATED TO AN INCREASE IN CHILD'S:

- Physical Aggression .27
- Psychological aggression .11
- Child Delinquency (property crimes) .39

**SPANKING HAD A STRONGER EFFECT ON AGGRESSION AND
DELINQUENCY THAN:**

- * Parent depressed
- * Inadequate supervision
- * Lack of Love and support
- * Low income
- * Broken family

AFTER MANY CONTROL

THESE RESULTS ARE AFTER CONTROLLING FOR

- Age of child
- Gender of child
- Psychological aggression by the parent
- Positive interaction with child (love and support)
- Supervision by parent
- Depression of parent
- Education of parent
- Family income
- Income below poverty
- Family structure (single parent family)

STUDY 1 - CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND SEXUAL COERCION BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

(Gamez & Straus, 2008)

- **Sample:** 14,252 students at 68 universities in 32 nations
- **Measure of Corporal Punishment:**
 - ~Did not strongly disagree that “I was spanked or hit a lot before age 12”
 - ~Median nation = 52%, US = 61%, UK = 55%
- **Measure of Sexual Coercion In Past Year - Revised Conflict Tactics Scales**
 - ~ Verbal Sexual Coercion Scale
 - Median nation = 23.3%, US = 27.4%, UK = 17.9%
 - ~ Forced Sex scale
 - Median nation = 1.4%, US = 2.1%, UK = 1.7%

* Gamez-Guadix, M., & Straus, M. A. (2008). Childhood and adolescent victimization and sexual coercion and assault by male and female university. Unpublished Manuscript. Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire.

* Straus, M. A., Hamby, S. L., Boney-McCoy, S., & Sugarman, D. B. (1996). The revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2): Development and preliminary psychometric data. *Journal of Family Issues*, 17(3), 283-316.

32 Nations In
the International
Dating
Violence
Study

**PERCENT WHO DID NOT STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT THEY WERE
SPANKED OR HIT A LOT BEFORE AGE 12**

ALL NATIONS MEDIAN: Total = 52, Males = 55, Females = 50

High Half Of Nations

Low Half Of Nations

	Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female
Taiwan	74.3	80.7	71.6	Australia	53.2	57.7	52.1
Tanzania	71.1	71.6	68.4	Canada	51.7	55.2	50.2
South Africa	67.6	61.0	67.2	Hungary	51.6	45.6	54.3
Mexico	66.7	70.8	65.7	Iran	51.6	57.1	50.0
Singapore	65.5	68.2	64.2	Greece	50.3	67.3	43.2
United States	60.8	68.9	56.7	Lithuania	48.8	57.6	44.2
Germany	60.1	63.8	58.5	Switzerland	45.2	52.6	41.6
Hong Kong	60.1	65.4	57.9	Romania	42.0	56.7	40.4
South Korea	59.0	63.5	56.4	Japan	35.1	45.0	25.4
Russia	58.8	65.3	54.0	Guatemala	33.4	40.0	24.8
China	58.4	64.7	54.9	Malta	33.3	45.9	28.8
India	56.3	59.1	54.8	Venezuela	28.3	40.9	19.3
Great Britain	55.0	62.3	53.6	Belgium	23.0	27.8	21.5
New Zealand	54.4	51.3	55.4	Israel	23.0	23.8	22.7
Australia	53.2	57.7	52.1	Portugal	20.8	27.7	16.9
Canada	51.7	55.2	50.2	Brazil	19.3	25.0	16.4

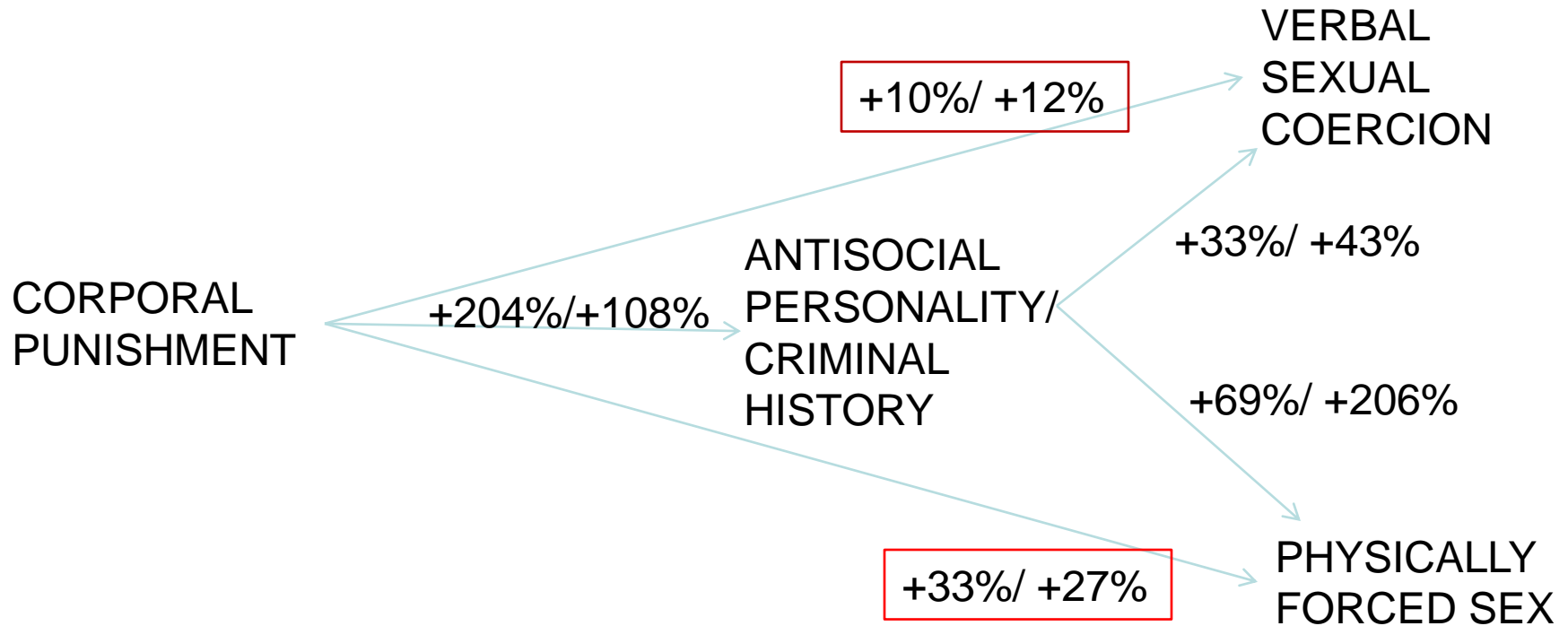


CP40 d

In rank order of national context total (VS01_1)

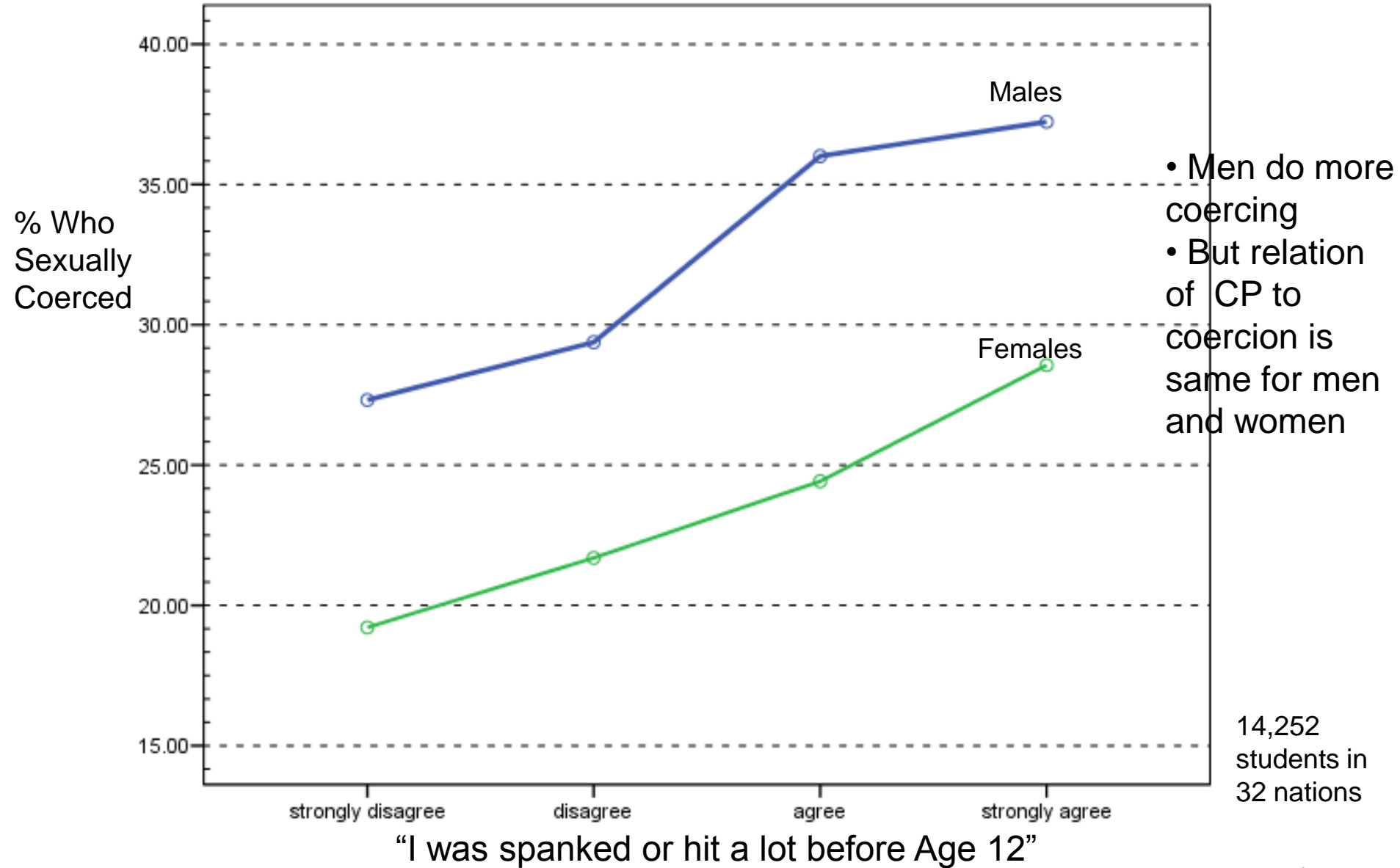
FIGURE 2. PATHS FROM VICTIMIZATION TO SEXUAL COERCION

Left number is the percent by which corporal punishment increases the probability of sexual coercion by men; right is the percent for women*

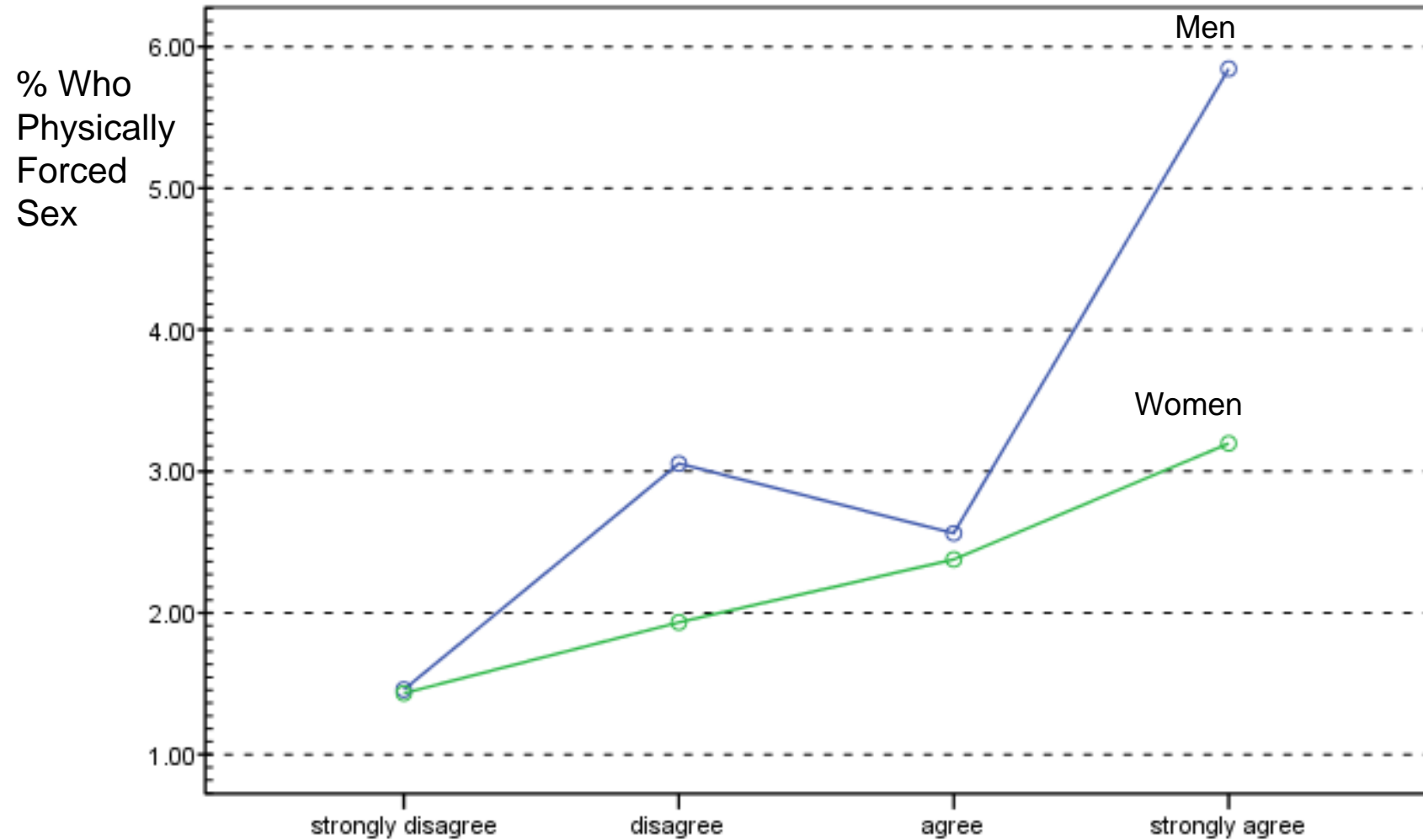


* Percentages are based on odds ratios from logistic regression controlling for age, length of relationship, socioeconomic status, and score on a social desirability response bias scale

PERCENT WHO SEXUALLY COERCED IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS BY CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BEFORE AGE 12, AND GENDER



PERCENT WHO PHYSICALLY FORCED SEX IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS BY CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BEFORE AGE 12, AND GENDER



I was spanked or hit a lot before Age 12

STUDY 2 – CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND RISKY SEX BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

➤ Theory of study 2

- * Corporal punishment (CP) increases the probability of two characteristics that lead to insisting on sex without a condom
 - ~Lack of self-control and internalized standards of behavior
 - ~Approval of violence

➤ Sample: Same as Study 1

➤ Measure of Risky Sex: Insisting on sex without a condom

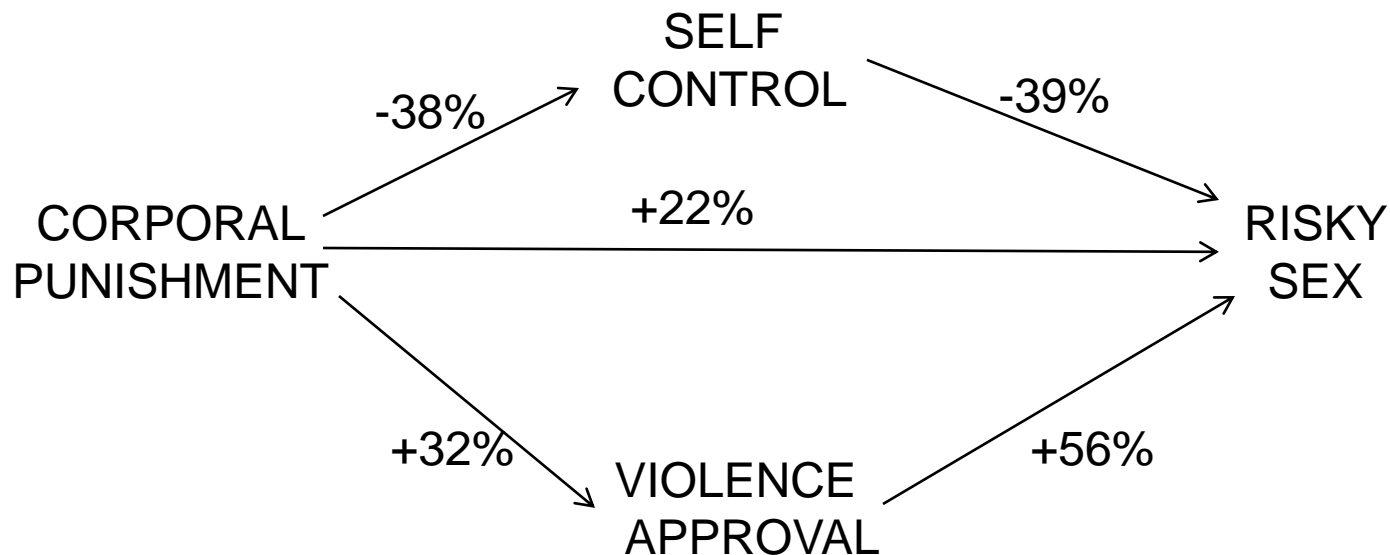
➤ Measure of Self Control: 6 item scale (Rebellon & Straus, 2008)

➤ Measure of Violence Approval: 8 item scale (Straus et al, 1999)

Straus, M. A., Hamby, S. L., Boney-McCoy, S., & Sugarman, D. (1999 (Revised 2007)). Manual for the Personal and Relationships Profile (PRP). Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Family Research Laboratory. Available in: <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2/>.

Rebellon, C. J., & Straus, M. A. (2008 in press). Self-control in global perspective: An Empirical assessment of Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory within and across 32 national settings. *European journal of criminology*.

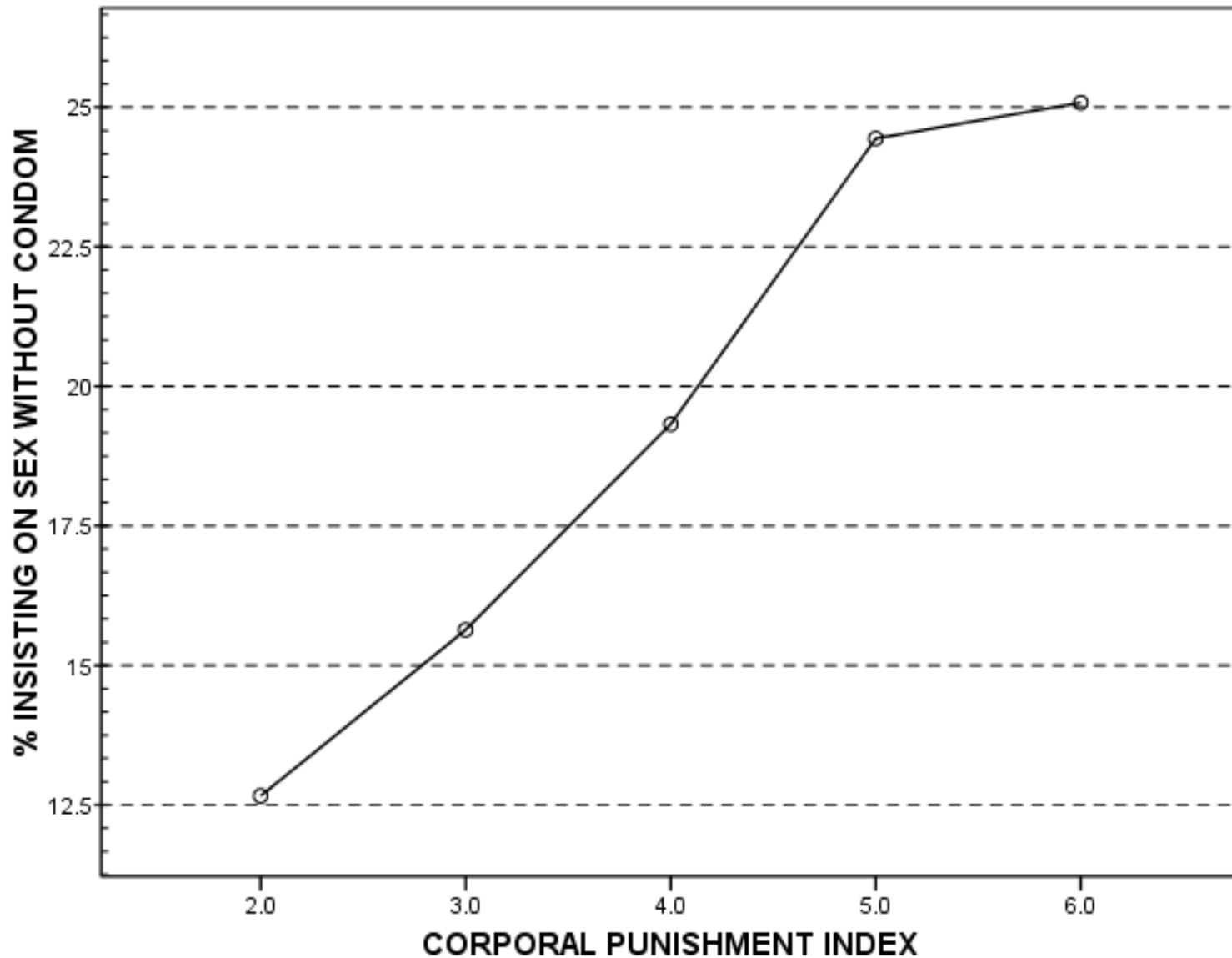
LINKS BETWEEN CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS A CHILD AND RISKY SEX AS AN ADULT



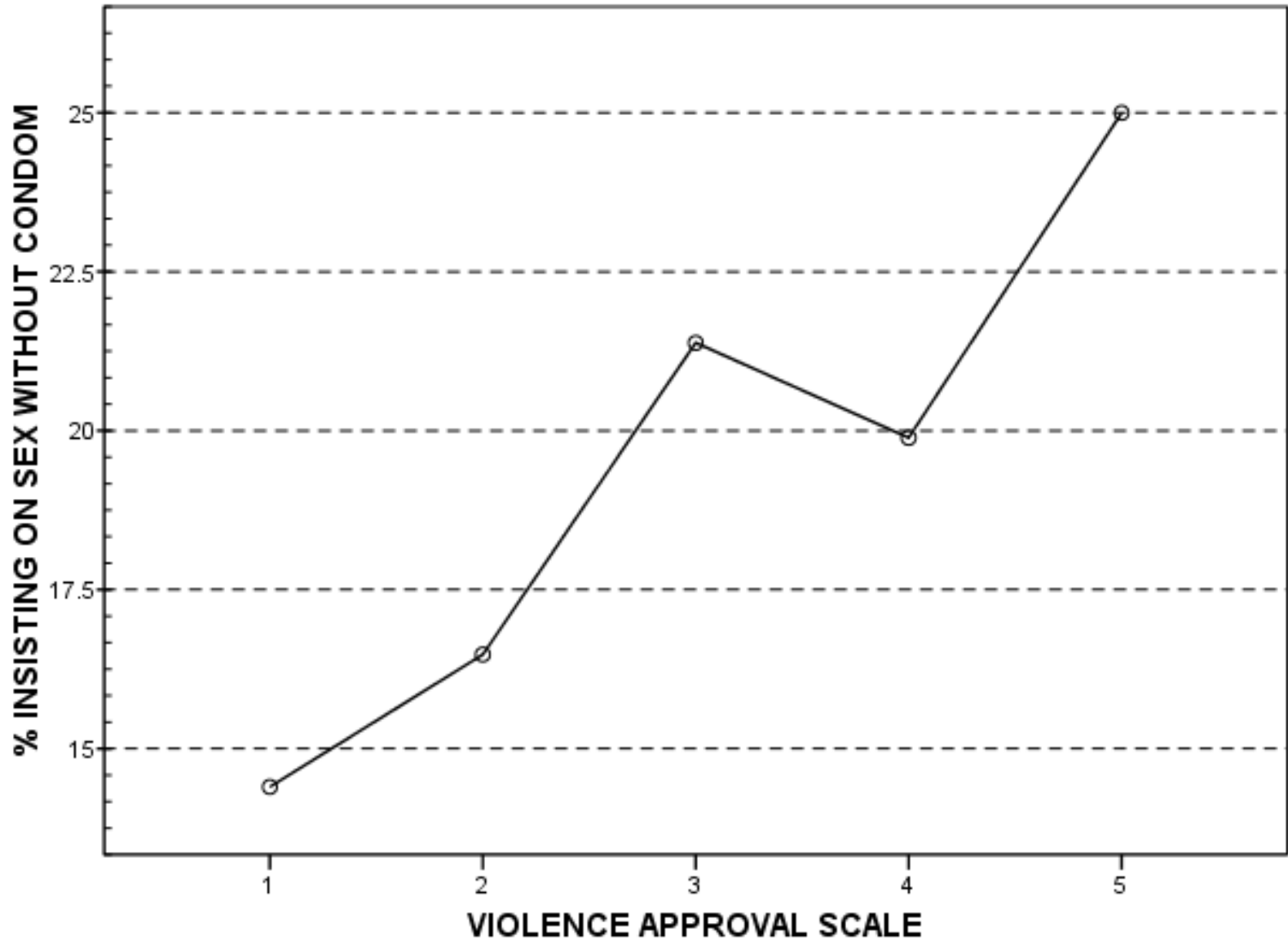
Percent by which the variable at the left increases or decreases the probability of the variable at the right.

Calculated from logistic regression, controlling for age of student, education of mother and father, length of relationship, and score on Limited Disclosure Scale. High Self-Control and High Violence Approval are the high scoring fifth of the sample.

THE MORE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS A CHILD, THE GREATER THE PROBABILITY OF RISKY SEX AS A YOUNG ADULT*



THE MORE VIOLENCE IS APPROVED, THE GREATER THE PROBABILITY OF INSISTING ON SEX WITHOUT A CONDOM*



STUDY 3 – CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND RISKY SEX BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sample: 440 students in 9th through 12th grade of a New Hampshire high school

Measure Corporal Punishment: five groups:

Group 1: No CP (39% of the sample)

Groups 2-5: Quartiles of those who experienced CP
(Group 5: CP at age 13 years or older)

Measure of Risky Sex: Factor score from analysis of the following behaviors: Ever had sexual intercourse. Number of times sex in the past year. Age at first sex. Number of sex partners. Frequency of condom use. Frequency of pill use. Frequency of use of other contraception. Number of time purchased condoms in the past year. Whether or not the respondent has had or caused a pregnancy.

THEORETICAL MODEL OF LINKS BETWEEN CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND UNSAFE SEX

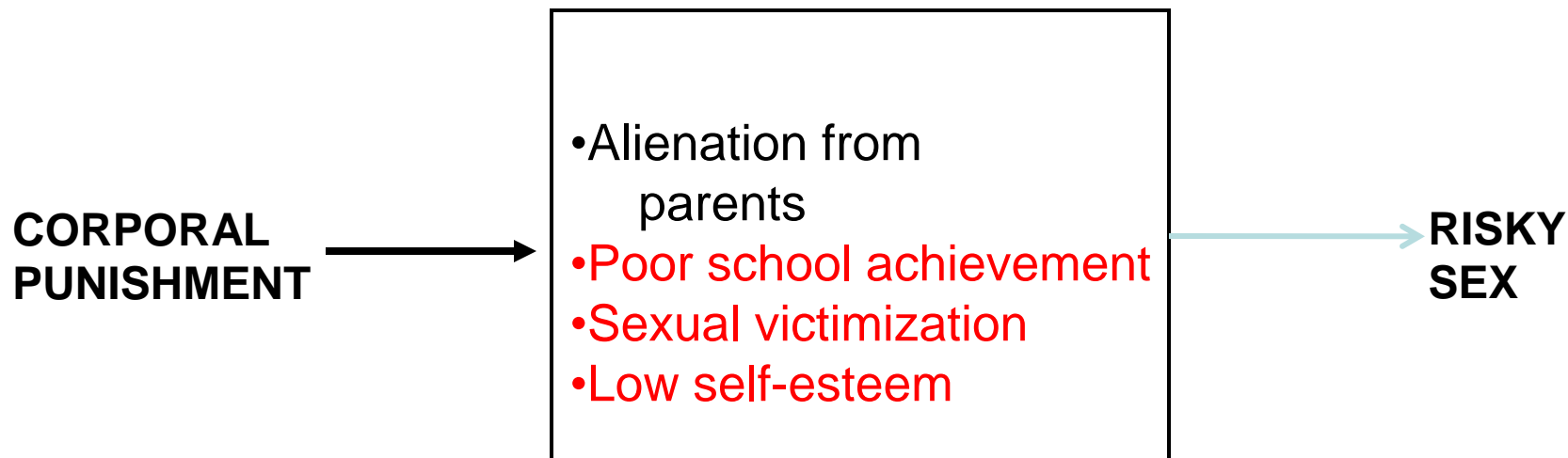


Chart 2-4.1 Students Who Experienced the Most Corporal Punishment Were Most Likely to Engage in Risky Sexual Behavior

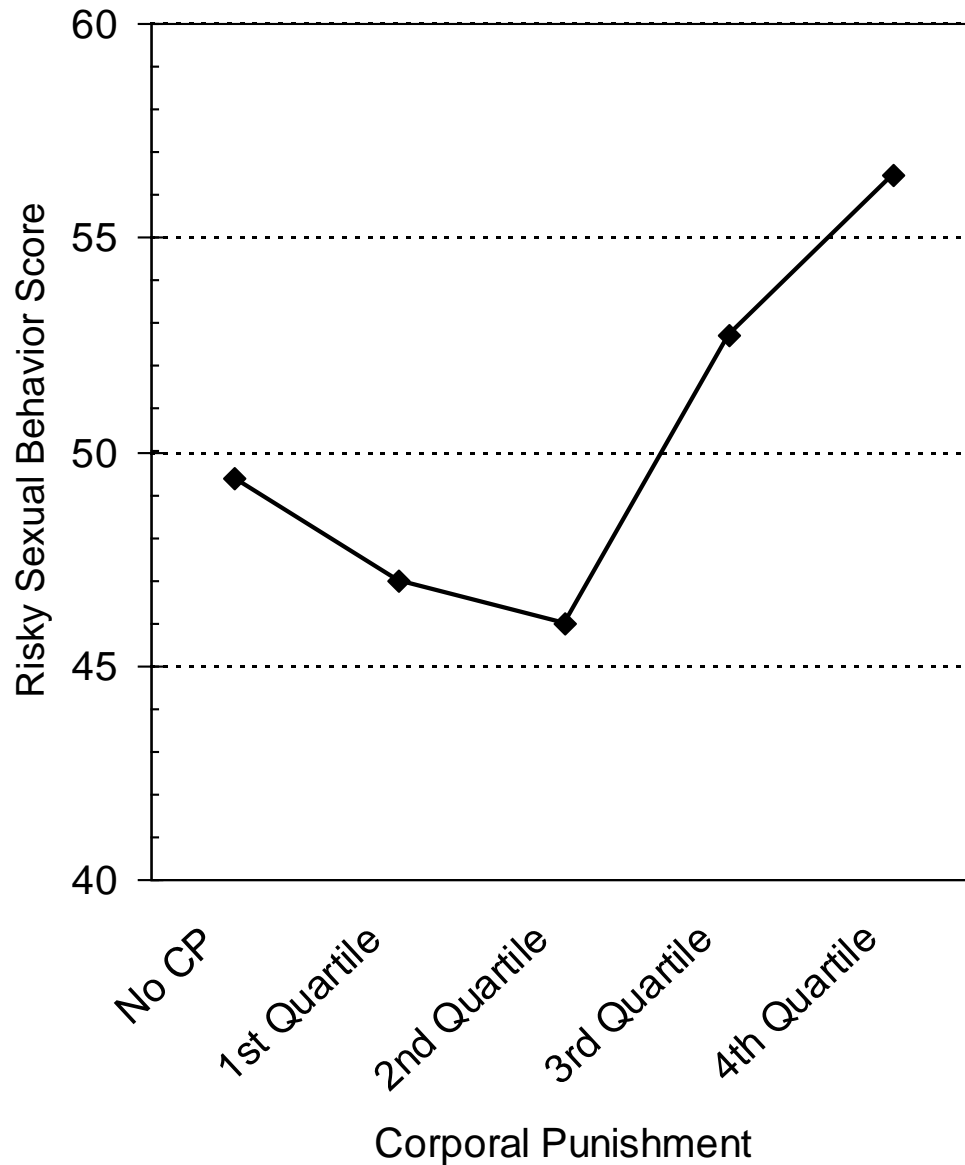
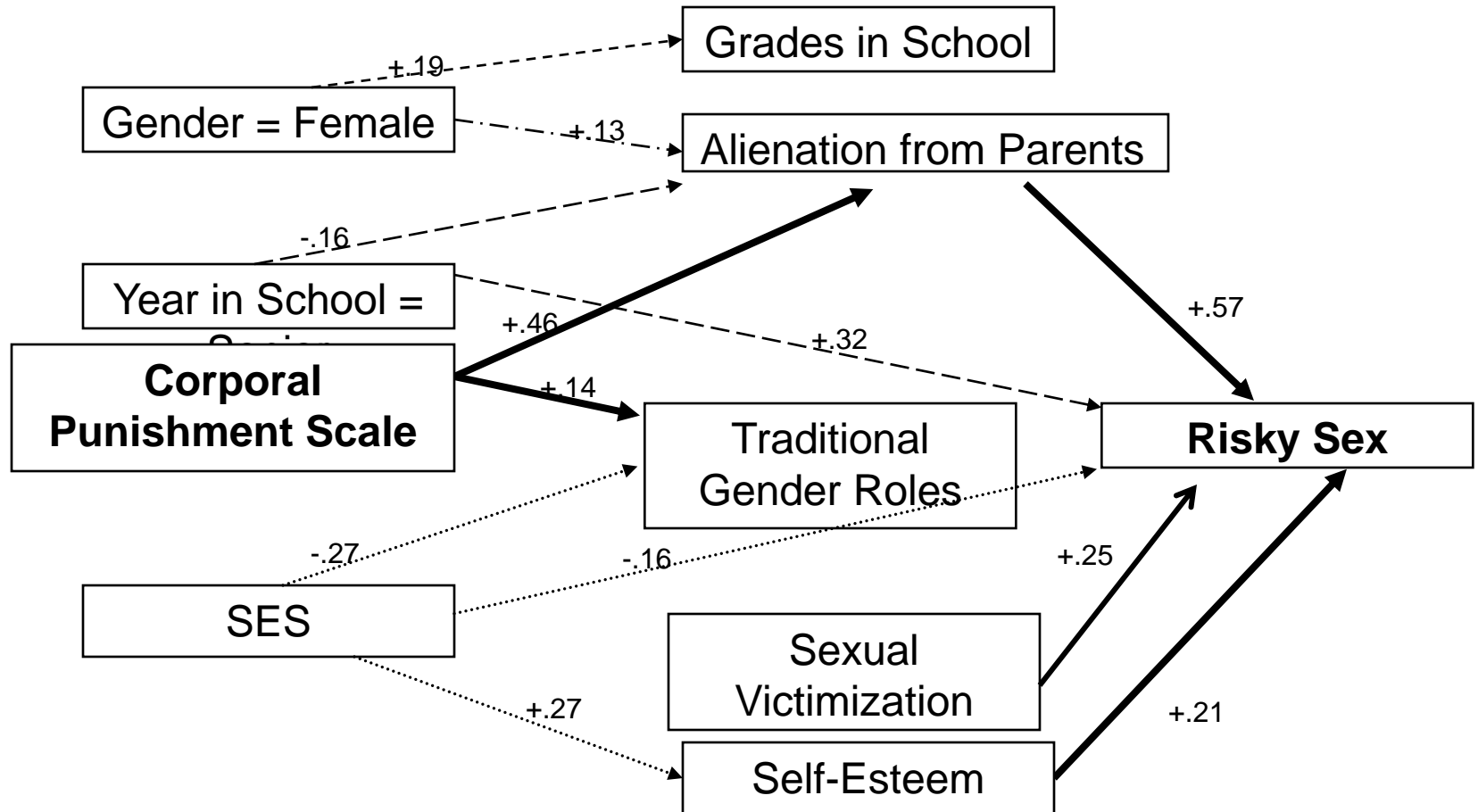


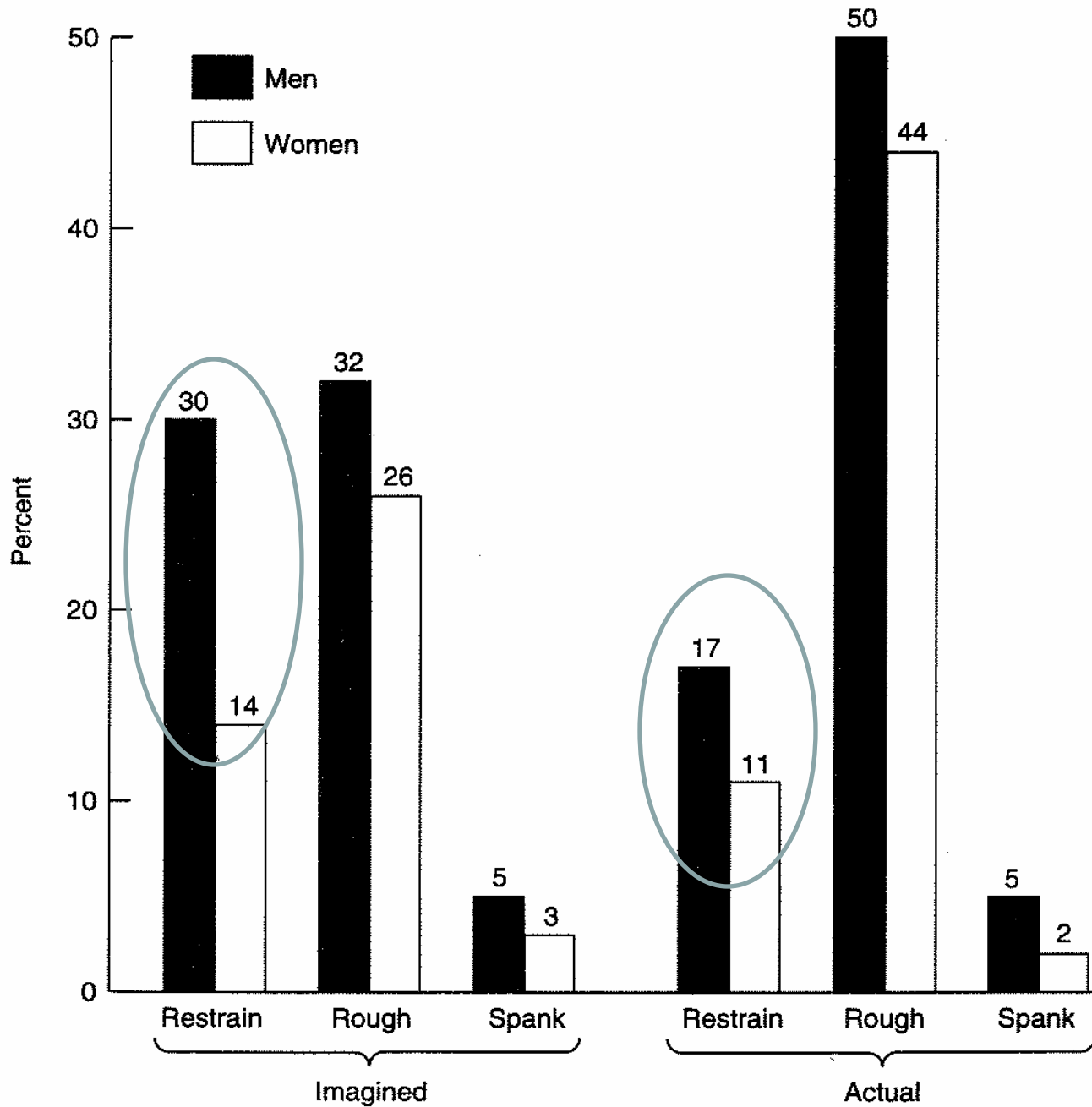
CHART 2-4.2 PATHS FROM CORPORAL PUNISHMENT TO RISKY SEX (Dark lines are theoretically predicted paths)



STUDY 4 – CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND MASOCHISTIC SEX BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

- **The Theory:** Corporal punishment creates a fusion of love and violence, especially when parents are high in affection
- **Sample:** 207 students (76 men and 131 women) in sociology and psychology classes at three universities and colleges in the Northeast
- **Corporal Punishment:** Factor score from analysis of six questions:
Age when most often hit by Fa & Mo. How often hit at age 10 by Fa & Mo. How often hit at age 17 by Fa and Mo
- **Masochistic Sex:** Six question scale. Whether ever sexual aroused by doing or imagining a partner:
 - ~Restrain me as part of sex play
 - ~Spank me as part of sex play
 - ~Engage in playful fights and partner being physically roughAlpha = .72

sex.



MASOCHISTIC
SEX IS VERY
PREVALENT

CHART 8-3. As corporal punishment increases, so does the chance of masochistic sex as an adult.

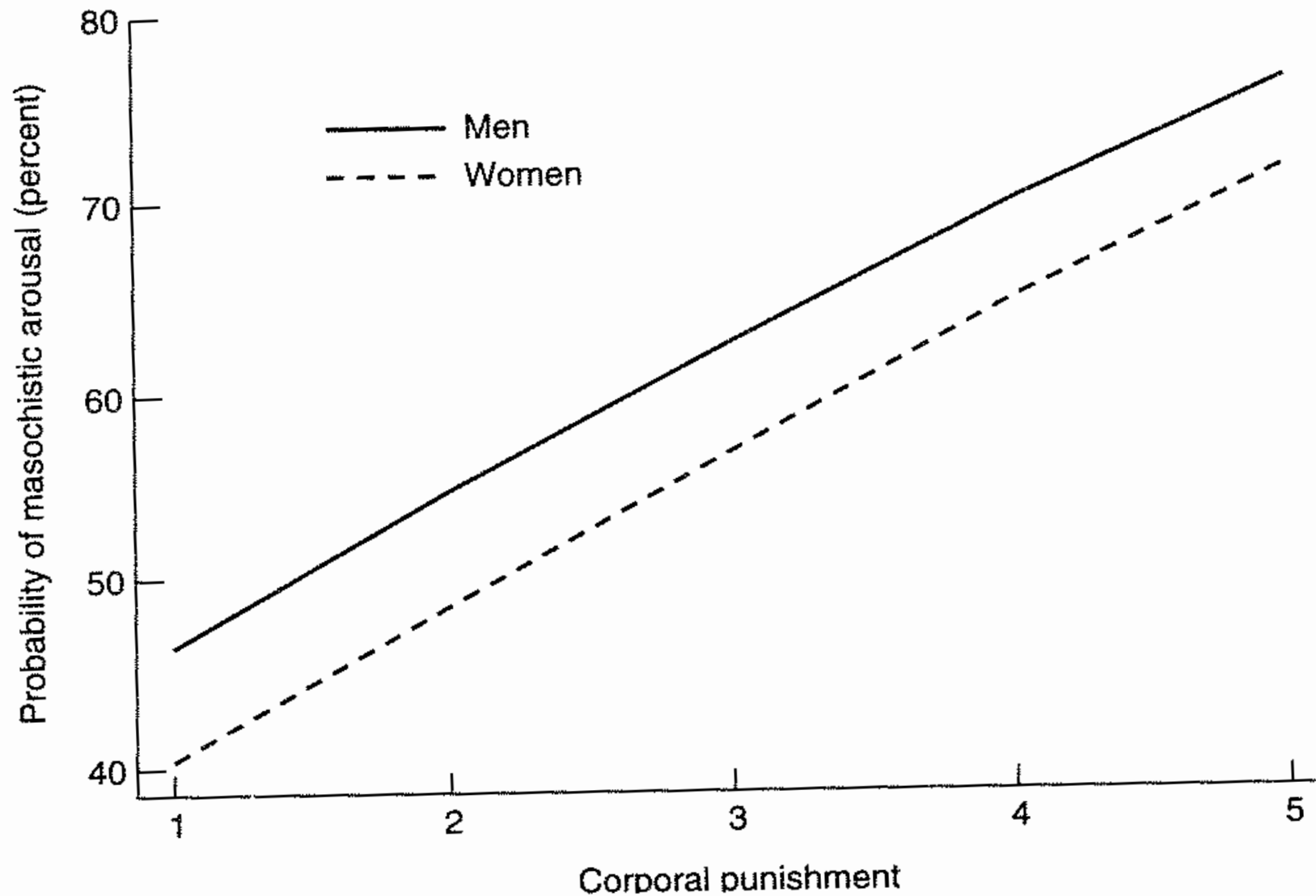
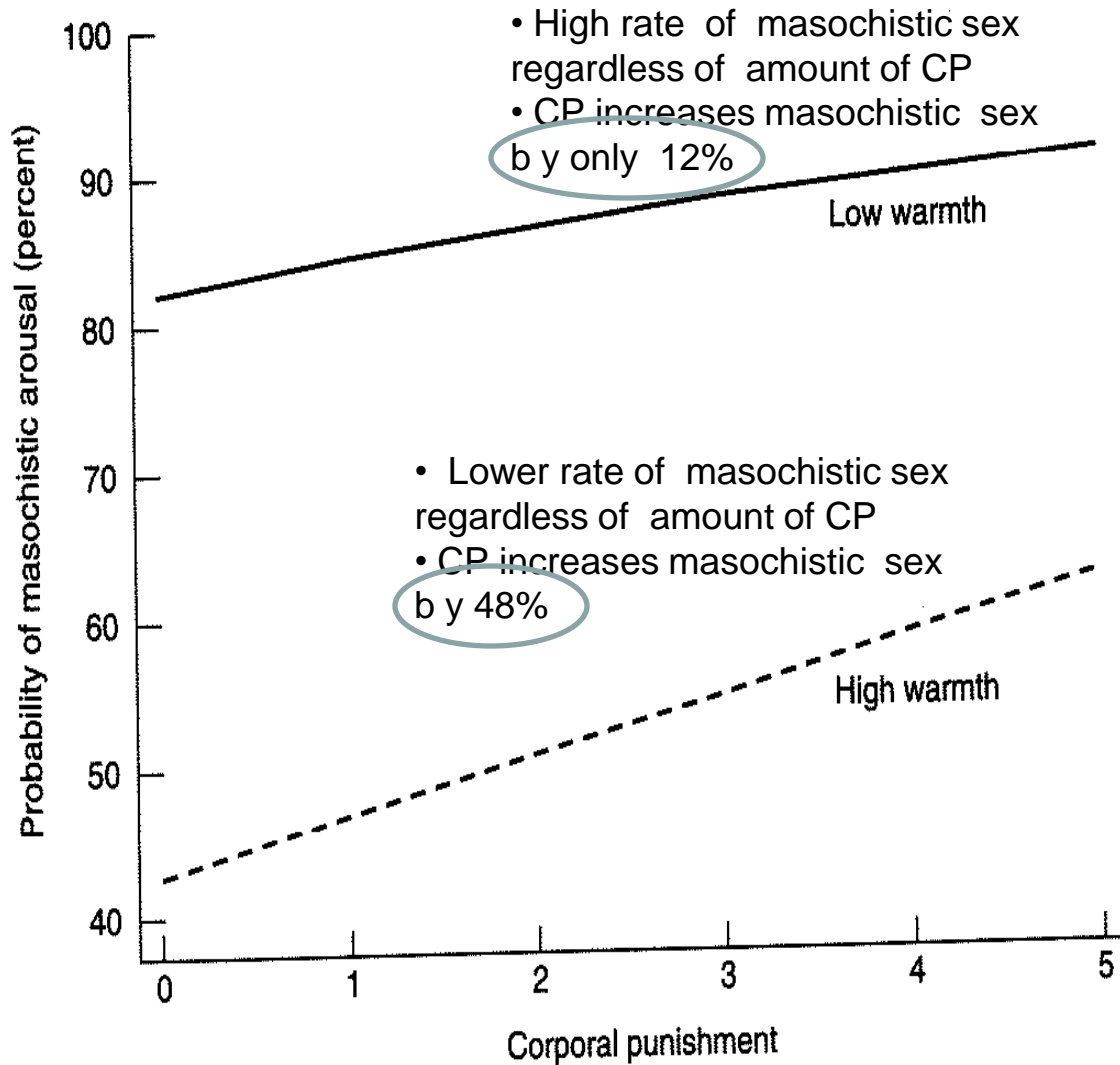


CHART 8-5. The link between corporal punishment and masochistic sex is greater when the parents are warm and loving.



* When parents are warm and loving, there is much less masochistic sex

* BUT the effect of corporal punishment is much greater

QUESTION 6. PRACTICE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Meta-analysis of effects of CP shows 93% agreement in finding harmful effects (Gershoff, 2002)
- Over 90% of US parents use CP with toddlers (Straus, 2001, Straus, 2008)
- Therefore: potential for primary prevention of sexual and relationship violence is large (Rose, 1985)
- Because research shows spanking is *not* more effective than other discipline methods, there is no need to expose children to the risk of harmful effects of spanking (Fower, 1986; Larzelere, 1994; Roberts, 1986)

Fower, T. G., & Chabieski, M. L. (1986). Childrearing and impulse control in toddlers: a naturalistic investigation. *Developmental Psychology, 22*(2), 271-275.

Gershoff, E. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. *Psychological Bulletin, 128*(4), 539-579.

Larzelere, R. E., & Merenda, J. A. (1994). The effectiveness of parental discipline for toddler misbehaviour at different levels of child distress. *Family Relations, 43*, 480-488.

Roberts, M. W. (1988). Enforcing timeouts with room timeouts. *Behavior Modifications, 4*, 353-370.

Rose, G. (1985). Sick individuals and sick population. *International Journal of Epidemiology, 14*, 32-38.

PRIMARY PREVENTION OF RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE AND MANY OTHER SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS NEEDS TO INCLUDE

- National policies & professional societies recommend never spanking
- Educate care providers about the evidence-base for the policy so that they can give this information to parents
- Posters and brochures in pediatric and other provider offices
- Warning notice on birth Certificates “Spanking has been shown to be dangerous to your child’s health and well-being”

**FOR EVIDENCE ON THESE
POINTS AND MANY OTHERS
SEE**

* This book 

* Papers on my website
(1st slide)

* **ALSO Forthcoming book**

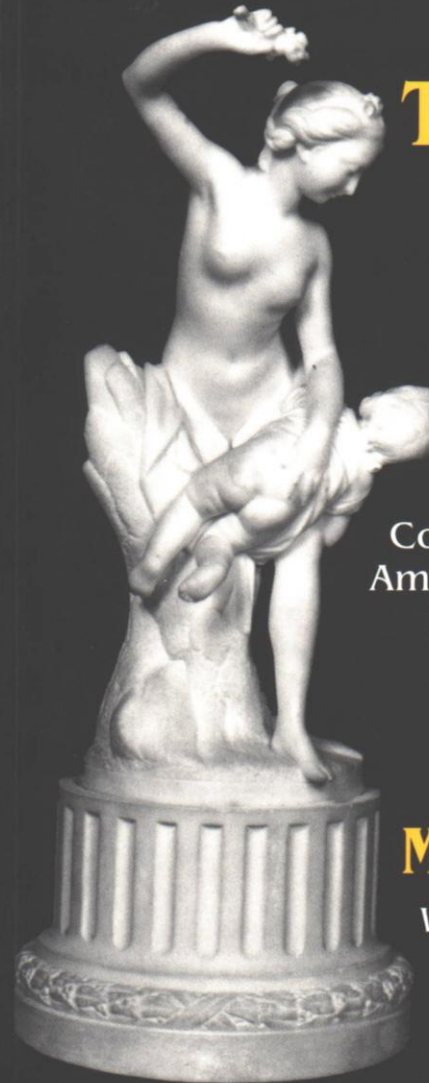
***THE PRIMORDIAL VIOLENCE:
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT,
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT,
AND CRIME***

* Some references on last
slide

CP40 deny

With a new introduction by the author

BEATING THE DEVIL OUT OF THEM



Corporal Punishment in
American Families and its
Effects on Children

Murray A. Straus
with Denise A. Donnelly

A FEW ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Giles-Sims, J., Straus, M. A., & Sugarman, D. B. (1995). Child, maternal and family characteristics associated with spanking. *Family Relations, 44*(2), 170-176.
- Greven, P. (1990). *Spare the child: The religious roots of punishment and the psychological impact of physical abuse*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Simons, R. L., Lin, K.-H., & Gordon, L. C. (1998). Socialization in the Family of origin and male dating violence: A prospective study. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60*(2), 467-478.
- Straus, M. A. (1995). Corporal punishment of children and depression and suicide in adulthood. In J. McCord (Ed.), *Coercion and Punishment in Long Term Perspective*. New York, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Straus, M. A. (2005). Children should never, ever, be spanked no matter what the circumstances. In R. J. Gelles & D. R. Loseke (Eds.), *Current Controversies about Family Violence* (2nd ed., pp. chapter 9). Thousand Oak, CA: Sage.
- Straus, M. A. (2008 in press). *The primordial violence: Corporal punishment by parents, cognitive development, and crime*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Straus, M. A., Sugarman, D. B., & Giles-Sims, J. (1997). Spanking by parents and subsequent antisocial behavior of children. *Archives of pediatric and adolescent medicine, 151*(August), 761-767.
- Straus, M. A., & Yodanis, C. L. (1996). Corporal punishment in adolescence and physical assaults on spouses later in life: What accounts for the link? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 58*(4), 825-841.

END FOR 28 FEB PRESENTATION

32 Nations In
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Study

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Germany	60.1	63.8	58.5	Switzerland	45.2	52.6	41.6
Hong Kong	60.1	65.4	57.9	Romania	42.0	56.7	40.4
South Korea	59.0	63.5	56.4	Japan	35.1	45.0	25.4
Russia	58.8	65.3	54.0	Guatemala	33.4	40.0	24.8
China	58.4	64.7	54.9	Malta	33.3	45.9	28.8
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CP40 d

In rank order of national context total (VS01_1)

SEXUAL COERCION SCALE

Of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales

Insist

- Insisted on sex when my partner did not want to (but did not use physical force)
- Made my partner have sex without a condom
- Insisted my partner have oral or anal sex (but did not use physical force)

Threaten

- Used threats to make my partner have oral or anal sex
- Used threats to make my partner have sex

Forced

- Used force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make my partner have sex
- Used force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make my partner have oral or anal sex

Verbal

Physical

Alpha: By participant Males = .637 Females = .500, Total = .562

By partner - Males = .603, Females = .589, Total = .592

* For Information on this instrument see <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2>

WHAT EXPLAINS THE LINK?

“AFTER THE SPANKING IS OVER, TAKE THE CHILD INTO YOUR ARMS AND TELL HIM HOW MUCH YOU LOVE HIM”

These 4 studies and many others show that that humane treatment of children can have major benefits in creating better human relationships in general, including between men and women.

700 CHILDREN IN NOTTINGHAM, ENGLAND STUDIED AT AGE 1, 4, AND 7 IN EARLY 1960'S

Age 1 62%

Age 4 97% - 75% once a week or more often

Age 7 over 56% - 41% once a week or more often

GROWING UP IN SCOTLAND STUDY, WAVE 2, 2007

	Age 2 years 4,512 children	Age 4 years 2,500 children
Smacked child	16%	34%
Smacked other child in household	37%	37%
Believed smacking useful or very useful	11%	13%

Bradshaw, P., Cunningham-Burley, S., Dobbie, F., MacGregor, A., Marryat, L., Ormston, R., et al. (2008). *Growing up in Scotland: Sweep 2 Overview Report (No. P7004/P7005)*. Edenborough: Scottish Centre for Social Research, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships Children. Young People and Social Care Directorate, Scottish Government.

A PREVIOUS SCOTTISH STUDY

(Anderson, Brownlie and Murray, 2002)

Children under 2	38%
Children age 3-5	68 %
Children age 6-10	49%
Children aged 11 or older	14%

Anderson, A, Brownlie, J and Murray, L (2002) *Disciplining Children: research with parents in Scotland, Edinburgh: Scottish Executive Central Research Unit*

SMACKING AND ATTITUDES ABOUT SMACKING

Representative quota sample of 1,822 parents of child under 18 in England and Wales, 2007

* Ever smacked	62%
* Smacked in past year	35%
* Smacked child 11 to 15 in past year	18%
* Smacked child 16 to 17 in past year	10%
* Agree that ' <i>it is sometimes necessary to smack a naughty child</i> '	52%
* Did not "Strongly Disagree" that spanking is sometimes necessary	80%
* Opposed to a legal ban on smacking	82%

Ipsos MORI 2007. A study into the views of parents on the physical punishment of children. London. Study conducted for the Department for Children, Schools and Families
CP72

*** THE LARGER THE PERCENT WHO EXPERIENCED CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AS A CHILD, THE LARGER THE PERCENT WHO SEVERELY ASSAULTED A PARTNER**

