

A quarterly newsletter for our community partners...

# Research Notes

...from the Traumatic  
Stress Studies Group



UNIVERSITY of  
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ARTS, HUMANITIES  
& SOCIAL SCIENCES  
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www.du.edu/tssgroup  
303.871.7407

## Director's Note

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In addition to reading about new findings and ongoing research on our team in these pages, I invite you to learn more about research happening in the Department of Psychology at the University of Denver that may be relevant to you and your work. In particular, our department is hosting a **research-sharing event focused on stress, early experience, and development**.

**Psychology and the Public Good  
Stress, Early Experience and Development**

Tuesday, 9/26/2017, 5-7 pm

Rose Andom Center

To learn more and register, click [here](#).

I hope to see you at the research-sharing event. As always, thank you for your collaboration – and for all you do to prevent and respond to violence in our community.

Best regards,

Anne

Anne P. DePrince, Ph.D., Professor

## New Papers Available

We are excited to update you on two new papers that might be of interest to you and your work (as always, please visit our [website](#) to access full-text articles or email [anne.deprince@du.edu](mailto:anne.deprince@du.edu) if you can't find what you're looking for).

1. Lee, M. & DePrince, A.P. (2017). [Impact of Executive Function on Efficacy Obtaining Resources following Intimate Partner Violence](#). *Journal of Community Psychology*, 45, 704-714.

This paper focuses on the impact that intimate partner abuse can have on cognitive abilities, particularly attention. We found evidence that greater physical abuse was linked with worse attention; and in turn, worse attention was linked with less efficacy obtaining basic resources (e.g., food, housing) one year later. The paper discusses implications of these findings for practitioners, particularly victim advocates. For example, victim advocates might seek to support women's attention by helping to organize and structure tasks as well as minimize distractions as women do the work necessary to navigate complex systems related to accessing the basic resources.

2. Gagnon, K.L., Lee, M.S., & DePrince, A.P. (2017). [Victim-Perpetrator Dynamics Through the Lens of Betrayal Trauma Theory](#). *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 18(3), 373-382.

This paper addresses the range of negative outcomes linked with interpersonal violence, from psychological distress to cognitive functioning and risk for revictimization. In the paper, we use Betrayal Trauma Theory to make sense of these diverse outcomes, particularly when violence is a betrayal trauma. Betrayal trauma is trauma perpetrated by someone close to the victim. After giving background on betrayal trauma generally, the paper discusses implications of using a Betrayal Trauma Theory framework when doing clinical work with survivors of interpersonal violence. For example, awareness of the cognitive problems linked with betrayal trauma may help therapists minimize their own frustration when clients are late to sessions or appear inattentive. Understanding of the relational disruptions, including revictimization risk, linked with betrayal trauma may provide therapists new avenues through which to address relationship expectations and safety with clients.

## Ongoing Research into Responses to Campus Sexual Assault

Julie Olomi, 3<sup>rd</sup> year graduate student, Child Clinical/DCN Programs

Anne P. DePrince, Director

An estimated 20% of women and 6% of men are sexually assaulted as college students (Krebs et al., 2009). Of those, few report the assault to law enforcement or campus authorities. In a report on sexual victimization of college women, Fisher et al. (2003) found that only 5% of women reported an attempted or completed rape to the police. In the Women's Health Project, our team interviewed more than 40 women who were students at the time they experienced sexual assault. In an honors thesis mentored by Kerry Gagnon and Anne DePrince, honors student Saman Rizvi found that more than 75% of the students interviewed in the Women's Health Project reported that the sexual assault affected their academic functioning. Academic difficulties included experiences such as problems concentrating while doing their coursework, stopping participation in extracurricular activities, dropping a class, and taking a leave of absence.

Reflecting the reality that sexual assault disrupts sexual assault survivors' education, the Obama Administration issued a Dear Colleague Letter in 2011 calling on universities to take campus sexual violence seriously. Out of Obama Administration guidance came a renewed focus on developing multi-disciplinary approaches to respond to campus sexual assault, in which different disciplines (e.g. the police, campuses, the community) work together – particularly to navigate co-investigations, where both campuses and law enforcement are investigating cases.

Building on our research team's long-standing work to understand the impact of multidisciplinary, community-coordinated responses to violence, we are currently collaborating with professionals in Denver to investigate how multidisciplinary groups work together to develop coordinated, effective responses to campus sexual assault. We hope that the research process might reveal insights into the process of building new multidisciplinary collaborations that will be of value locally, as well as nationally to communities who seek to collaborate on this complex topic.

We look forward to sharing findings with you soon. In the meantime, as Secretary of Education Besty DeVos calls into question federal guidance on responding to sexual violence, we encourage you to read up on this issue and have a voice in the national conversation. Our friends at [The Blue Bench](#) have a helpful blog post [here](#) about what some aspects of the national conversation reveal about rape culture.

### References

- Fisher, B.S., Daigle, L.E., Cullen, F.T., & Turner, M.G. (2003). Reporting sexual victimization to the police and others: Results from a national-level study of college women. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 30(1), 6–38.
- Krebs, C. P., Lindquist, C. H., Warner, T. D., Fisher, B. S., & Martin, S. L. (2008). The campus sexual assault (CSA) study. *US Department of Justice*.