

**Murder in Britain**  
**A Comparison of Lethal and Non-lethal Violence**  
**Against Women Partners**



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# OVERVIEW

Murder – International Comparisons

Explanations

Assessing Risk of violence against women

Two Studies

- National Study of Murder in Britain

- The Violent Men Study

Comparisons – Identifying Risk Factors

- Intimate Partner Murder and Male-Male Murder

- Lethal and Non-lethal violence against women

Implications

Risk factors = issues for intervention

# Different Rates of Homicide

## Rates per 100,000

<b>South Africa</b>	<b>75.30</b>
<b>Colombia</b>	<b>64.60</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>6.80 (10.1)</b>
<b>N. Ireland</b>	<b>6.09</b>
<b>Finland</b>	<b>3.24</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>2.98</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>2.25</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2.24</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>2.16</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>1.71</b>
<b>England/Wales</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>1.30</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>1.17</b>
<b>Spain</b>	<b>0.95</b>
<b>Ireland</b>	<b>0.62</b>
<b>Japan</b>	<b>0.62</b>

# Assessing Risk

## Assessing the Risk of Intimate Partner Violence

Began with women's groups USA (B. Hart) (*for women to assess risk to themselves*)

'What works' agenda/treatment programmes

Developmental research on offenders, epidemiology

**What is assessed/predicted?** assault, *serious violence, homicide*

**Approaches:** structured professional judgement or actuarial

**Risk Assessment Instruments for IPV:**

....SARA –Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (R.Kropp) 20 areas

....MOASIC 20- 48 questions

....Danger Assessment [*for women*] (J. Campbell)- 15 items – risk of homicide

....Women's Own Personal Assessment of Risk (not systematic)

**Predictability:** Assessing the risk of general criminality is a better predictor of IPV than the specialist IPV Assessment tools above

**Future Needs:-** more on dynamic risk management , safety planning for women, systematize women's own assessments of risk

**Best Indicators of Risk:** based on empirical evidence but must be located within an explanatory framework

# Violence Against Women in Intimate Relationships

## Explanations

**Socio-demographic...age, gender, disadvantage, educ., employment**

**Socio-cultural... culture, subcultures, masculinity**

**Feminist... gender, power, domination, jealousy, possessiveness**

**Contextual/Situational Factors & Processes...**

**conflict, type of relationship, substance abuse**

**Cognition ...thinking, emotions and action**

**Psychological Traits/attributes...(psychopathy, personality, lifecourse, early onset)**

**Evolved Psychology...(male proprietariness)**

**Biology...(genes, hormones, testosterone, serotonin)**

# COMPARISON OF TWO STUDIES

**National Study of Murder in Britain** (funded by ESRC)

**Objective – all types of murder, create typology, improve understanding of pathways, focus on contexts & situations**

**Three sources of Data:**

**-Homicide Indexes** (England/Wales and Scotland)

**-866 Case Files** (786 men and 80 women convicted of murder)

**-200 Interviews** (180 men and 20 women in prison for murder)

**Violent Men Study-Evaluation of CJ Interventions for Abusers** (funded by Home Office & Scottish Office)

**Depth Interviews with:**

**-122 men convicted of offence involving non-lethal violence  
against an intimate partner**

**-136 women partners of violent men**

# MURDER IN BRITAIN STUDY

## 3 Sources of Data

### Homicide Index:

All homicides	(1980-2000)
England/Wales	n=12,000 (27vars)
Scotland	n=2,000 (19vars)

### Case Files: sample n=866 425 vars

Sample from all murderers currently serving life in prison:  
England/Wales (n=3,000) Scotland (n=500)

### Depth Interviews: sample n=200

	Men	Women	
England	143	20	
Scotland	37	0	
Total	180	20	.... Overall Total=200

# CASEFILES (documents from...

Police Investigation

Trial Judge Summary

Forensic Report

Govs & Prison Officers (Assessment, Life Plan, Conduct)

Probation (Pre & post sentence, prison)

Psychiatric/ Medical (Pre & post sentence, prison)

Psychologist

Parole Review

Offending Behaviour Programmes

Offender Accounts

# **CASEFILES & INTERVIEWS** (information about...)

## **Childhood Background**

Family - School - Social & Legal Services

## **Adult Life and Circumstances**

Relationships, Problems, Social & Legal Services

## **Murder Event**

Violence, Injuries, Circumstances, Situations, Perpetrator-Victim Relationship

## **Legal Process/Criminal Career**

Current Charges & Previous Convictions

## **Prison Life and Rehabilitation Programmes**

Adjustment, Education, Problems, Violence, Programmes

# COMPARISONS OF INTIMATE PARTNER MURDER & MALE-MALE MURDER

## Murder in Britain

**IP Murder      106 men**

**MM Murder      424 men**



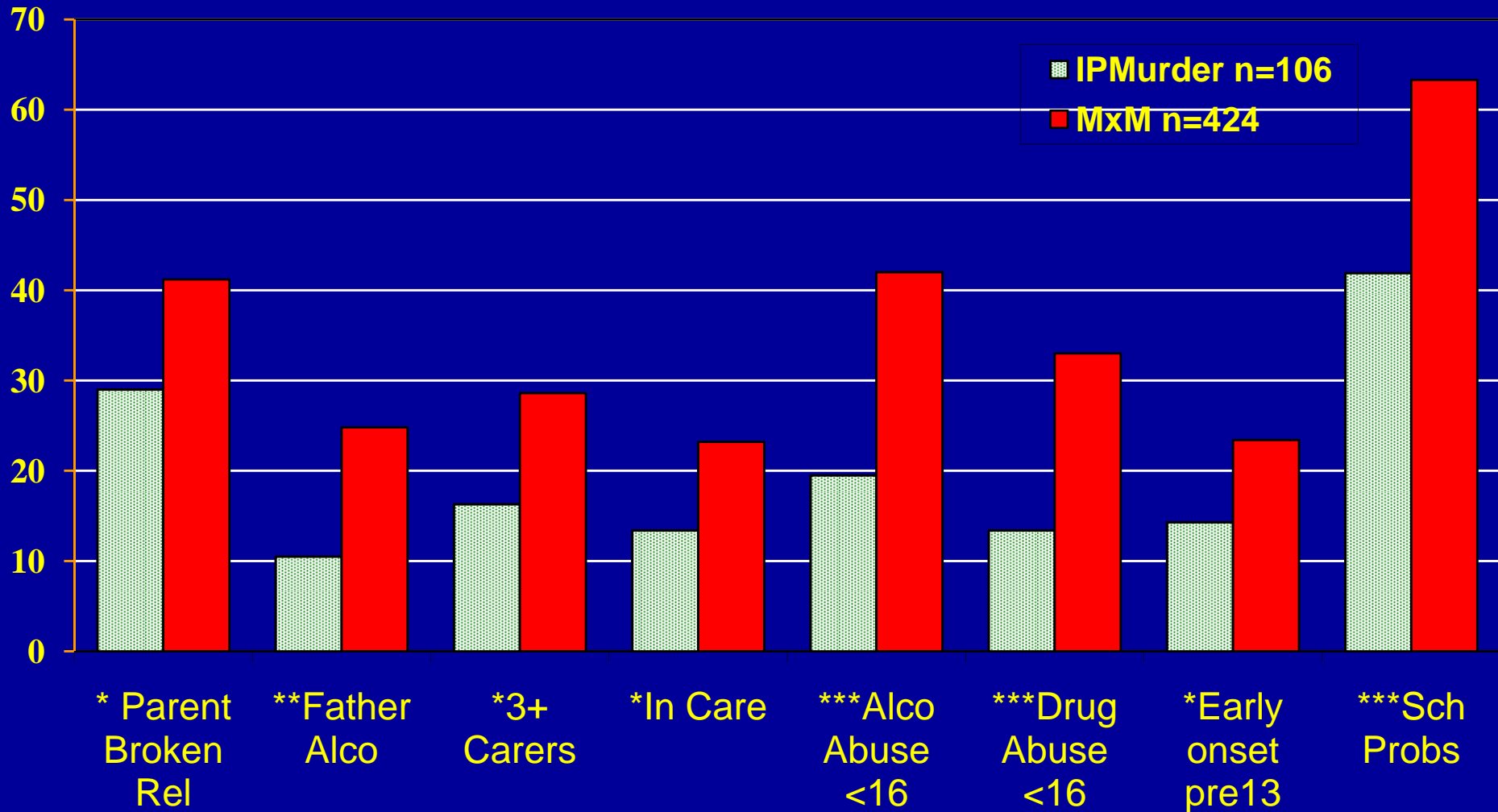
# IPMurder & M-M Murder Comparisons

## *Similarities and Differences:*

- **Childhood** (Caretaking, Abuse, Behaviour problems, Offending)
- **Adulthood** (Education, Employment, Relationships)
- **Previous Offending** (violence and prison)
- **Murder Event** (age, substance abuse, previous violence to victim, use of weapon)
- **Problems** Identified by Professionals (Substance abuse, Mental health, Problems with Women, Empathy, Denial, Risk to Public)
- **Prison** and Dealing with Offending Behaviour (adjustment, report for violence, self harm, discuss murder, prison courses)

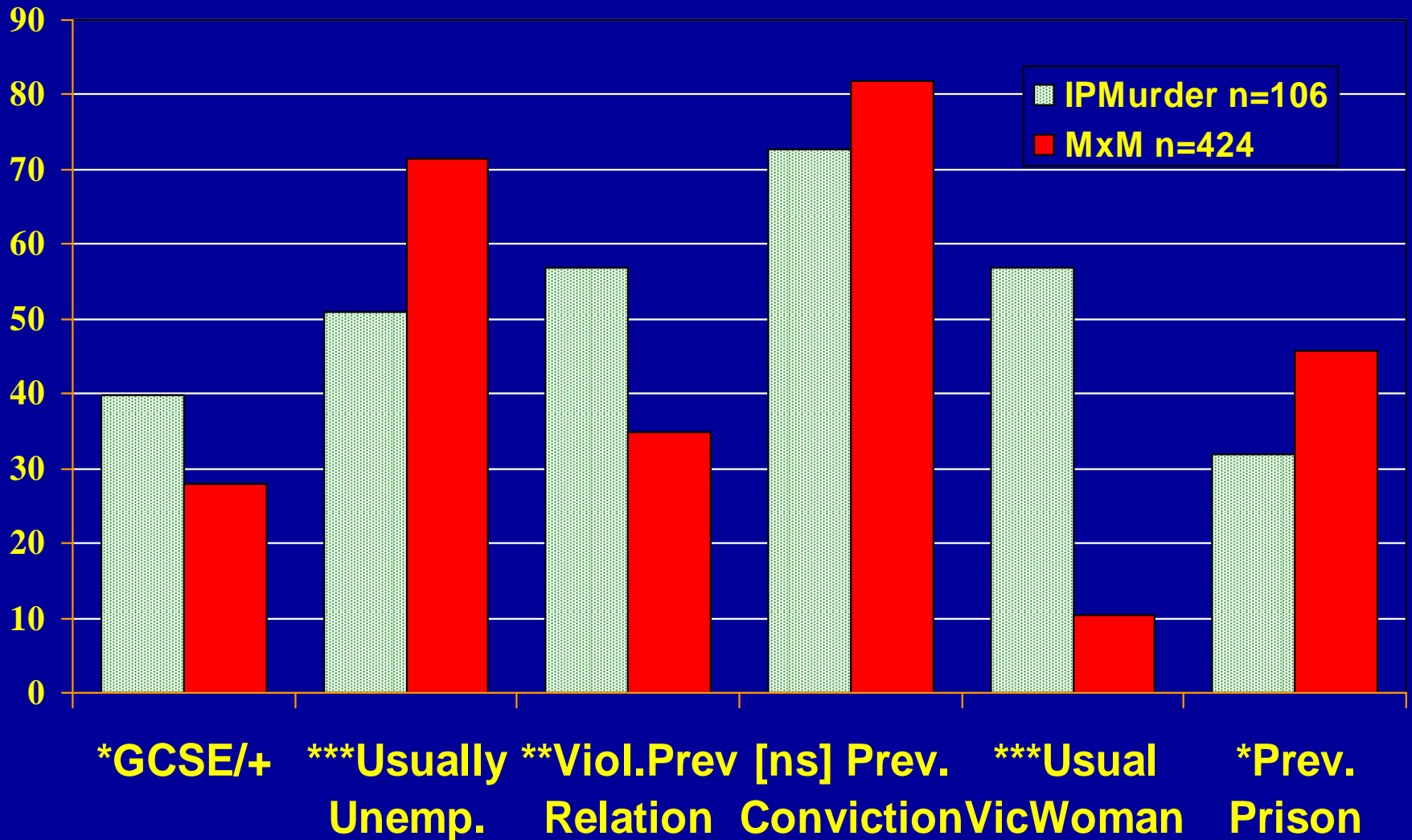
# Childhood (before 16)

## Comparisons of IPMurder & MxM Murder



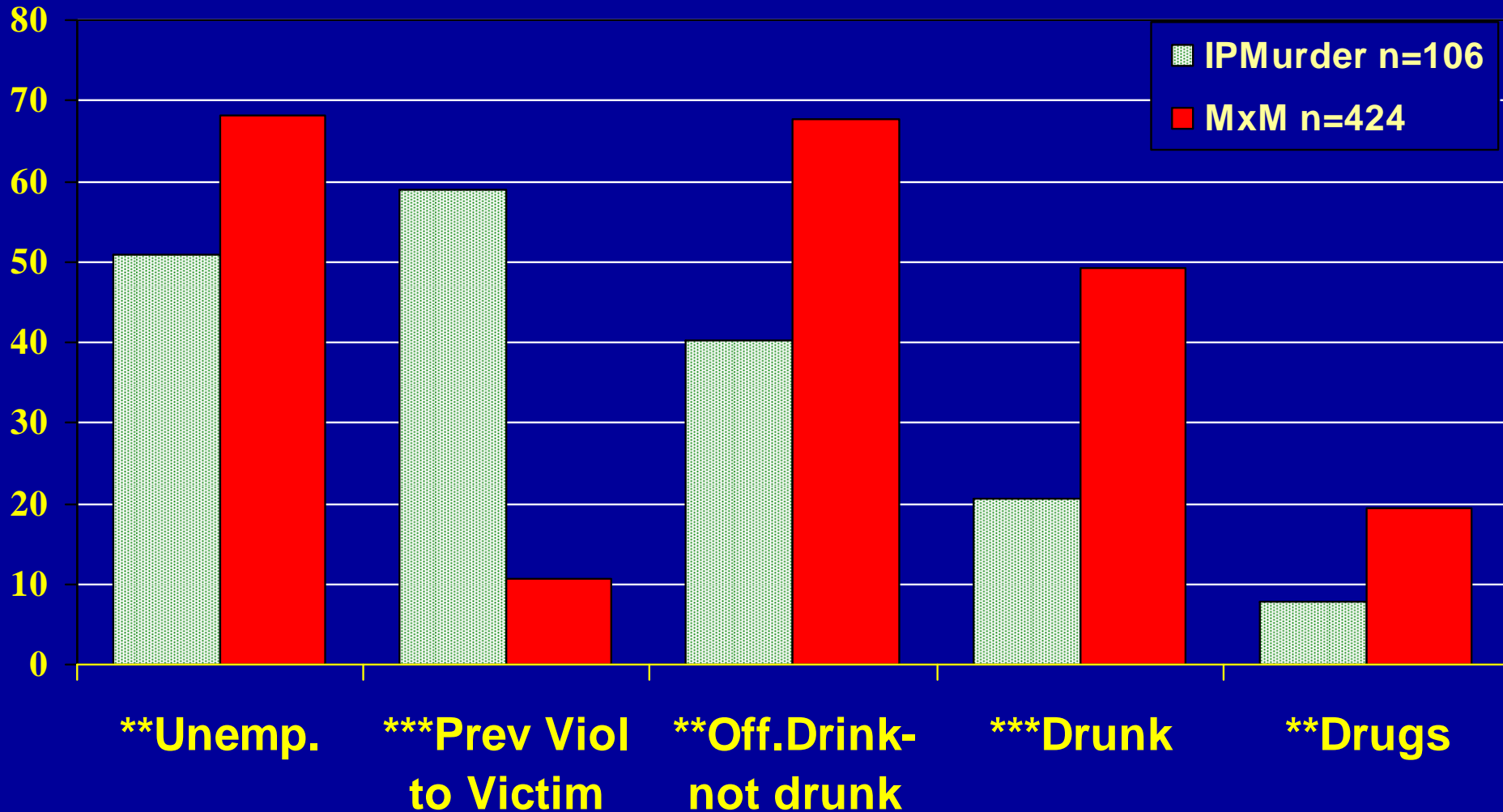
# Adulthood

## Comparisons of IPMurder & MxM Murder



# The Murder Event

## Comparisons of IPMurder & MxM Murder



**COMPARISONS OF  
INTIMATE PARTNER MURDER  
&  
NON-LETHAL ASSAULT**

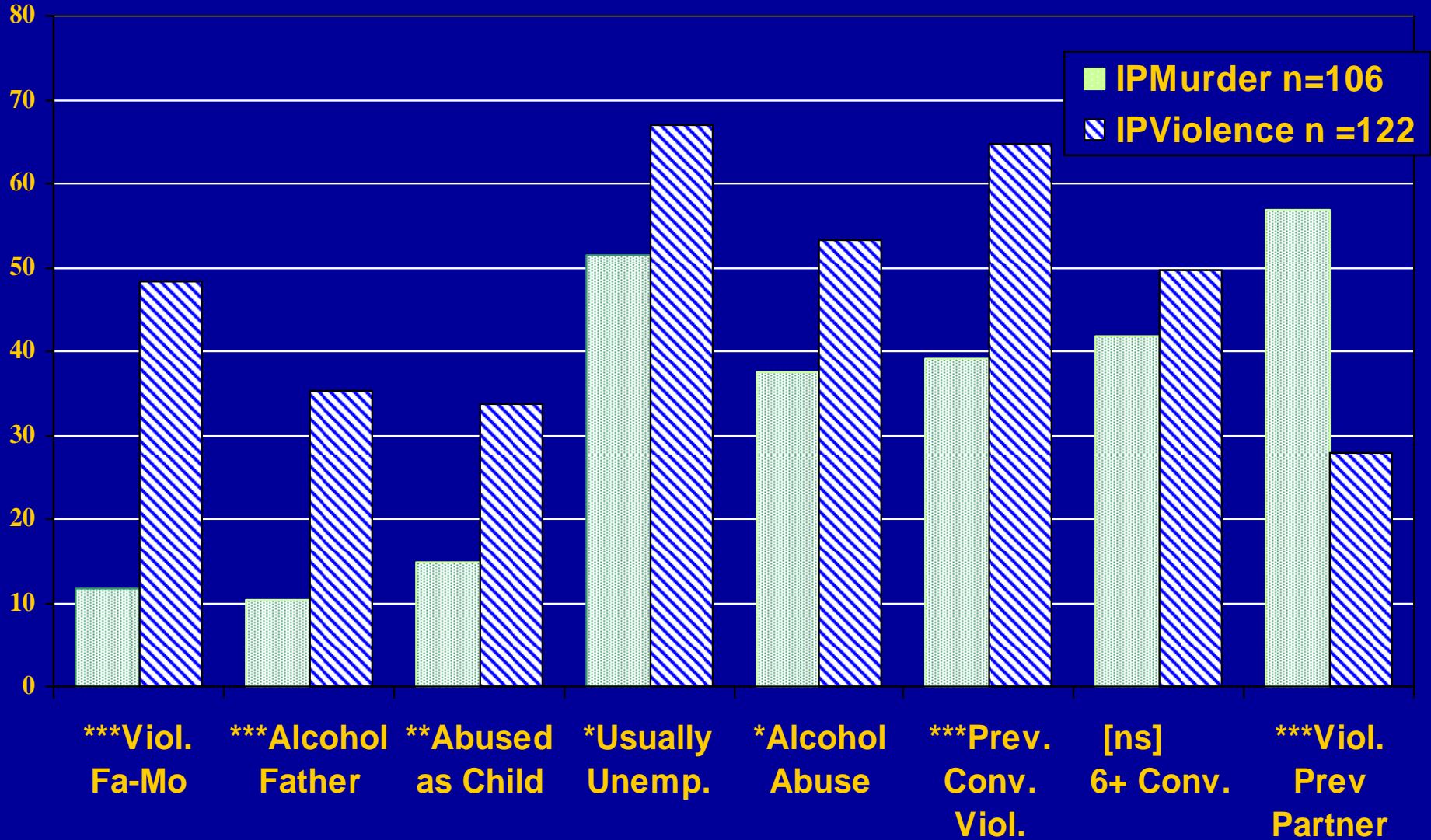
**National Study of Murder in Britain**

**IPMurder      106 men**

**Violent Men Study- Eval. of Abuser Programmes**

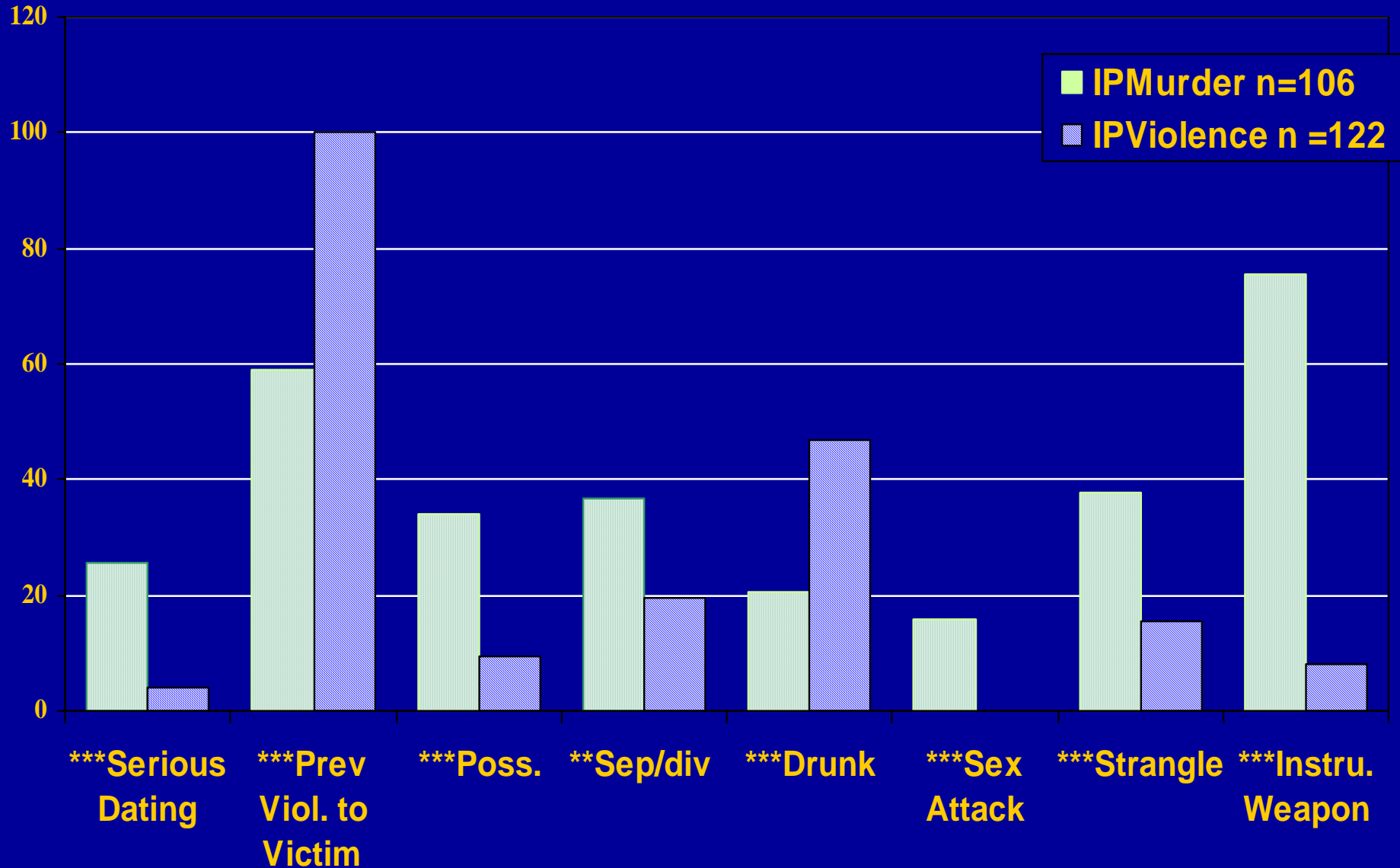
**122 non-lethal abusers**

# Lethal and Non-lethal Violence Childhood and Adulthood



# Lethal and Non-lethal Violence

## Context, Circumstances & Violent Event



# **Risk Factors – Offending & Escalating/Lethal IPV**

## **General Crime:**

**Adversity in Childhood**

**Unemployment**

**Educational Deficits**

**Criminal Career**

**Substance Abuse**

**Problematic Social**

**Networks**

**Poor Thinking Skills**

**Poor Emotional**

**Management**

## **Specific to IPV/IPM:**

**Tenuous rels-(cohab,dating)**

**Contested relationships**

**Prolonged conflict**

**Separation/attempt leave**

**Possessiveness & jealousy**

**Probs.w/women, specialize  
violence against women**

**Prev.Violence to victim  
&/or other partners**

**Murder..Strangle/choke,  
forced sex, Use instruments**

## BUT.....

.. IP murders appear to have more conventional backgrounds with fewer problems in childhood or adulthood and some have no previous convictions for crime.

*?? Does IP Murder group contain two types of men??*

Some with more conventional backgrounds and little or no CJS contact (perhaps undetected abusers - perhaps without previous abuse)

Some with more 'criminogenic' backgrounds, problems in childhood & adulthood, substance abuse, previous offending and violence against women and men

# **Who assessed as a risk? Who should receive intervention?**

**Interventions for men should be aimed at:**

**... a broad band of offenders within CJS**

***and attempt to:***

**...‘capture’ those who do not come to attention of CJS**

**More ‘conventional’ men present a problem for risk assessment because they are unlikely to come to attention of anyone dealing with this violence**

**... and risk assessment tools unlikely to identify**

## Publications - Murder in Britain Study

- Dobash, R. P., R. E. Dobash, K. Cavanagh (under review) ‘Out of the Blue’: Men who kill an intimate partner.**
- Dobash, R. P., R. E. Dobash, K. Cavanagh, D. Smith and J. J. Medina-Ariza (2007), Onset of offending and lifecourse of Men Convicted of Murder, *Homicide Studies*, 11, 243-271.**
- Cavanagh, K., R. E. Dobash and R. P. Dobash (2007), The murder of children by fathers in the context of child abuse. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 31, 731-746.**
- Dobash, R. E., R. P. Dobash, K. Cavanagh & J. Medina-Ariza (2007), Lethal and Non-Lethal Violence Against an Intimate Partner: Comparing Male Murderers with non-lethal abusers, *Violence Against Women*, 13, 4:329-353.**
- Cavanagh, K., R. E. Dobash and R. P. Dobash (2005), Men who murder children inside and outside the family. *British Journal of Social Work*, 35:667-688,**
- Dobash, R. E., R. P. Dobash, K. Cavanagh, and J. J. Medina-Ariza. ( 2004), Not an ordinary killer-just an ordinary guy. When men murder an intimate woman partner. *Violence Against Women*, 10, 577-605.**