Understanding DV Attitudes in a College Sample

While more than 20,000 phone calls are placed to domestic violence hotlines on a typical day, one in three women and one in four men have been victims of some form of physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner within their lifetime (www.enditnow.org). Even though rates of DV are pandemic, very little literature has examined how religious beliefs impact people’s perceptions of DV. Even less has focused on perceptions of college students. Therefore, using online surveys, the current study aimed to document student’s religious and gender role beliefs, and assess their relationships with definitions of domestic violence and acceptability of church-related and secular helping resources.

Our sample consisted of 98 students (45 freshmen, 20 sophomores, 12 juniors, 13 seniors and 8 Graduate or other) at a Midwestern Christian College. We examined relationships between identified and introjected religiosity, machismo and caballerismo gender role beliefs, definitions of which acts are considered DV and which resources, Adventist or not, student’s felt were acceptable for SDA victims to seek help from. Results and their implications for collaborations between churches and helping agencies will be discussed.