

Vanessa Anne Handsel

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EDUCATION

University of Tennessee Knoxville
Doctor of Philosophy: to be conferred May 2012
Concentration: Clinical Psychology

University of North Carolina Wilmington
Master of Arts: May 2007
Concentration: Psychology, General Experimental

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC
Bachelor of Arts: December 2003
Majors: Anthropology & International Studies
Overall GPA: 3.41/4.0
Anthropology GPA: 3.70/4.0

RESEARCH

“Stage of Change in College Student Relationships.” September 2008 – Present. The goal of this study is the development of a Stage-of-Change measure of Stay-Leave decision making in intimate relationships, the stage of change in college student relationships questionnaire (SOCRS). Phase I of the study occurred in fall 2008. Participants were 409 male and female students from a large southeastern university. To meet criteria for inclusion, participants had to report being involved in or recently separated from an intimate partner. The initial measure included 83 items developed through a rational estimation of thoughts and behaviors at each stage of change. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to verify that the five-factor model fit the data. While the initial CFA showed a good fit of the model, we removed items with factor loadings below .50 as well as items that would improve the overall fit of the model based on standard modification indices. The final CFA for the factor weights and latent variable covariances showed a very good fit of the model to the data. This final measure consists of 25 items (5 items for each factor), with factor loadings ranging from .52 to .94. Also supporting the five-factor structure, tolerance values demonstrated that between 21% and 55% of the variance in each factor was not shared by the other four factors combined. In sum, there appeared to be substantial empirical independence among the subscales. Results of this investigation indicate that our measure is a reliable tool to assess the five stages of change, supporting the view of relationship decision-making as a process, not an absolute outcome. Phase II of the study is currently in underway. Participants who met the same criteria as Phase I were administered the finalized SOCRS survey and other assessments at the beginning of the spring semester and were recently invited to complete a follow-up survey in which we ask them if they are still with the same partner as indicated at the beginning of the semester. This portion of the study is designed to examine the predictive validity of the SOCRS measure.

“Attribution Study.” February 2008 – Present. This study examines the relationship between the strength of male participants’ gender role identification and aggression.

Participants complete a baseline survey online, and then are brought in to the lab where they are made to believe they are playing a computer game against a confederate. Fellow researchers play the role of the confederate at the beginning of the study and their gender is varied. Once the computer program begins, it randomly takes money away from the participant, who has the option of three button presses (take money away, protect money, give money to confederate). I was involved in study conceptualization have run some of the experiment sessions.

“Variables Related to Relapse.” August 2008 – Present. Participants are recruited from the Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program (IOP) at Cornerstone of Recovery, a substance abuse treatment center. Control subjects fill out a baseline survey packet and another at two months post-treatment. Subjects in the experimental group complete baseline surveys, and then are trained to use handheld PC devices on which they are prompted to complete three random and one daily survey per day for two months. The goal of this study is to examine variables related to relapse and resiliency. I am responsible for screening participants, training them on the handheld PCs, managing the PC devices, paying participants for their participation, conducting trouble-shooting meetings, and gathering follow-up data.

“Women’s Health Study.” August 2008 – December 2008. Participants are victims of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) recruited from the community. A structured clinical interview for DSM disorders (SCID), as well as the Clinician Administered PTSD Scale (CAPS), and a self-report survey packet are administered to participants. A five week CAPS training course was mandatory for all researchers. This study was designed to examine variables related to revictimization and returning to an abusive partner. Duties included SCID interviews, administering the CAPS, and survey packets.

“The Impact of PTSD Symptoms on Women’s Commitment to Violent Relationships.” August 2007 – October 2008. This was an online study of undergraduates which utilized vignettes to assess women’s decision making processes in violent intimate relationships. It was found that PTSD symptomatology did impact the degree of commitment a woman felt towards her partner. I was involved in study conceptualization.

“Temporal Association between Substance Use and Interpersonal Violence.” August 2007 – May 2008. Undergraduates were trained in how to use a handheld PC, filled out baseline surveys, and then completed a random and a daily survey on the handheld independently for two months. The goal of the study was to examine the relationship between self-reported substance usage and violent behavior, especially partner violence. My duties included assisting in data collection and participant training using handheld PC devices.

“Safe Schools, Healthy Students Grant Initiative.” June 2005 – June 2007. This research examined evidence-based methods for reducing school violence. Evaluation measures were developed and implemented into 22 area agencies to assess the degree of violence and drug use reduction. Biannual federal progress reports were completed to track improvement of these programs over the course of the grant. School safety assessments and school wide surveys were also completed to provide a better case for the necessity of these types of programs. My responsibilities included data collection, entry,

analysis, database management, and report writing. I also occasionally performed classroom behavioral observations using Noldus Palm Pilot software and was trained in the use of Survey Tracker Plus to develop online assessments.

“Risk-Taking, Perceived Control, Optimistic Bias, and Intermittent Relationship Reinforcement in Women Who Return To Their Abusers.” August 2005 – May 2007. This research for my master’s thesis examined whether or not a victim’s decision to return to or remain with their abuser was contingent upon risk-taking behavior, optimistic biases about the outcome of the relationship, perceived control over future life events, and the rate of abuse. I regularly visited various domestic violence shelters throughout the state to administer survey measures to abused women. I performed data entry and analysis. The results indicated that there may be different types of abused women: those who indicate that they are never returning and those who are willing to endorse the possibility that they may go back. For victims who claim they have no intention of returning, those who scored highest on the sexual risk taking measure were more likely to return despite their claim. Within the group that acknowledged that there was some possibility they may return, the participants most likely to do so were those who scored highest on measures of control expectations and perceived negative consequences of risk-taking.

“Perceived Control and Attributional Style in Abused and Abusive College Students.” August 2005 – May 2007. Conducted research on the pathology of individuals who have experienced violent relationships. The purpose of this study was to compare students who had used physical aggression towards their partner to students who did not use physical aggression with their partner. Subjects were asked to fill out a number of questionnaires assessing their mood, abuse history, behavior and personality. In addition, they were required to perform a problem-solving task under conditions in which they had either regular or no perceived control over the task. I ran several of the experiment sessions, entered data, and performed analysis.

“Coping, Perceived Control, and and Return to Abuser Among Domestic Violence Victims.” August 2005 – April 2006. Assisted in collecting and analyzing survey data from women in area domestic violence shelters. This study examined the ways in which victims of interpersonal violence perceive and cope with their situation and whether or not their coping style may lead to depression. Also examined were the demographic and emotional variables that may lead a victim to return to their abuser. Subjects were required to complete survey packets assessing coping style, frequency and degree of abuse, depression, and perceived control. My duties involved data collection, entry, and analysis.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

On-site Placement:

Cornerstone of Recovery, August 2009 – August 2010

Hours per week at site: 16

Co-facilitated Group Therapy sessions twice a week (Women's Group and Impaired Professionals Group)

Conducted Family Therapy, Couples Therapy, and Schema Therapy

Conducted Individual Therapy sessions as needed

Conducted Family Questionnaire phone surveys with patient family members to assess social history

Administered assessments and wrote integrative reports for 3-5 Day Evaluation patients

Participated in weekly treatment team meetings

Attended training seminars on couples therapy, Accudetox, and health psychology

UT Psychological Clinic, University of Tennessee, August 2008 - Present

Hours per week at site: 20

Total hours at site during placement: 1512

Total number different patients seen: 77

Total patient contact hours: 280

Total hours of supervision: 680

Conducted Assessments (Parenting Fitness, Custody, Drug & Alcohol, Psychoeducational, and Full Psychological Evaluations)

Conducted Therapy (Cognitive Behavioral Orientation: Individuals and Couples)

Conducted Intakes

Research:

Research Assistant, University of Tennessee, August 2007-Present

Mentor undergraduates, teach data entry skills

Conduct experiment sessions, screen participant phone calls

Manage handheld computer devices

Conduct on-site training with participants at Cornerstone of Recovery

Trained in CAPS and SCID administration

Research Assistant, Safe Schools Healthy Students, June 2005-June 2007

Assessed violence intervention and drug prevention programming through development and implementation of evaluation measures for New Hanover County's Safe Schools Healthy Students grant initiative

Responsible for overseeing two research assistants and one junior graduate student in data entry and analysis

Wrote individual program evaluations as well as federal grant progress reports biannually

Met with agency representatives to assess evaluative needs

Research Assistant, University of North Carolina Wilmington, June 2005-May 2007
Managed Dr. Caroline Clements' Directed Independent Study Lab
Duties consisted of mentoring and managing undergraduates, ensuring that experiments were run correctly, teaching data entry skills, presenting on related topics, leading discussions on assigned readings
Recruited new students for the lab, handled personnel issues

Teaching:

Tutor, Huntington Learning Center, January 2005-June 2005
Developed lesson plans for students of various ages in science, math, history, and English.
Taught weekly Spanish course to group of home-schooled children.
Tutored several high school students in advanced French.

Tutor, Habitat for Humanity UNC After School Program, Spring 2001
Provided educational assistance and study support to underprivileged children in the Chapel Hill area

Other:

Fundraiser, Carolina Annual Fund Phonathon, Summer 2003
Raised money through this non-profit group for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill by working with Alumni

Secretary, All American Homes & Realty, Summer 2001
Answered phones, dealt with customers, designed brochures
Coordinated meetings between realtors, contractors, and builders
Wrote sales letters to prospective clients

REPRESENTATIVE PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

Handsel, V., Ritter, K., Rhatigan, D., Moore, T.M. (2010). Validating the stage of change in relationship status questionnaire. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Conference Poster, San Francisco, CA.

Moore, T.M., Sherman, A., Ritter, K., Elkins, S., Tirone, V., Handsel, V., Kivisto, A., DeCaestecker, S., Brown, M., Allen, L., Gordon, K., McNulty, J., Stuart, G. (2010). Assessing risk factors for substance use relapse using handheld computers. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Conference Poster, San Francisco, CA.

De Caestecker, S., Sherman, A., Ritter, K., Elkins, S., Handsel, V., Kivisto, A., Tirone, V., Allen, L., Brown, M., & Moore, T. (2010). The relationship between trauma history and relapse among patients in substance abuse treatment. Poster presented at the Exhibition of Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN.

Moore, T. M., Stuart, G. L., Elkins, S., McNulty, J. K., Kivisto, A., Handsel, V., & Sherman, A. (2009). Electronic diary assessment of the temporal association between substance use and intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Symposium Paper Presentation, New York, NY.

Handsel, V., Rhatigan, D.L., Moore, T.M. (2009). Development of a stage-of-change measure of stay-leave decision making in intimate relationships. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Conference Poster, New York, NY.

Rhatigan, D.L., Nathanson, A., Scott, D., Handsel, V., Moore, T.M. (2009). The impact of PTSD symptoms on women's commitment to violent relationships. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Conference Poster, New York, NY.

Elkins, S., Moore, T.M., Kivisto, A., Handsel, V., Nathanson, A., McCollum, K., McNulty, J.K. (2008). Electronic diary assessment of the temporal association between intimate partner violence and substance use. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Conference Poster, Orlando, FL.

Moore, T.M., Elkins, S., Kivisto, A., Handsel, V., Nathanson, A., McCollum, K., McNulty, J.K. (2008). Electronic diary assessment of the temporal association between intimate partner violence and substance use. Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Conference Poster, Orlando, FL.

Handsel, V., Cowan, J.L., Clements, C., Amato, N., Roland, C., Parsons, J., Nix, B. (2007). Racial differences in self-reported reasons for returning to abuser. Association for Psychological Science Conference Poster, Washington, D.C.

Clements, C., Handsel, V., Cowan, J.L., Roland, C., Amato, N., Nix, B., Parsons, J. (2007). Return to abuser: The influence of optimistic biases, perceived control, and coping. Association for Psychological Science Conference Poster, Washington, D.C.

Cowan, J.L., Handsel, V., Clements, C., Oxtoby, C.S., Morgan, K., Flynn, J., Styles, C. (2007). Victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence: Gender, prevalence, and psychopathology. Association for Psychological Science Conference Poster, Washington, D.C.

Handsel, V., Oxtoby, C.S., Clements, C. & Amato, N. (2006). Psychological symptoms among interpersonal violence victims and perpetrators. Association for Psychological Science Conference Poster, New York, NY.

Oxtoby, C.S., Handsel, V., Clements, C., Ogle, R., & Roland, C. (2006). The effects of assault type on reporting of psychological symptoms. Association for Psychological Science Conference Poster, New York, NY.

Oxtoby, C.S., Handsel, V., Clements, C. & Nix, B. (2006). Maltreatment and its effects on children's vulnerability to depression. Association for Psychological Science Conference Poster, New York, NY.

Clements, C.M., Oxtoby, C.S., & Handsel, V. (2005). The role of intermittent reinforcement in abusive relationships. International Association for Behavioral Analysis Conference Poster. Beijing, China.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journals:

Moore, T.M., Elkins, S., McNulty, J.K., Kivisto, A., Handsel, V. (2010). Alcohol use and intimate partner violence perpetration: Assessing the temporal association using electronic diary technology. Article submitted to *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, under review.

Invited Articles:

Handsel, V., & Moore, T.M. (2010). Effects of changes in drug policy on rates of drug-related injuries. *Encyclopedia of Drug Policy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Submitted, pending publication.

Clements, C., Oxtoby, C.S., Handsel, V. (2008). Risk assessment instruments in interpersonal violence. In Renzetti, C.M. & Edleson, J.L. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Interpersonal Violence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

HONORS

UNC Chapel Hill Dean's List 2001, 2002, 2003

National Dean's List 2003

Co-Reviewer for Psychology of Violence 2010 (APA Journal)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Association for Psychological Science, 2005-2007

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, 2008-Present

CONFERENCES

Association for Psychological Science May 2006

Association for Psychological Science May 2007

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies November 2008

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies November 2009

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies November 2010

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in Microsoft Works/Word, PowerPoint, Excel, SPSS, SAS, Noldus

Observer Software, Survey Tracker Plus, Survey Monkey

LANGUAGES

Basic French, Spanish

CERTIFICATIONS

CPR/Lifesaving

ACTIVITIES

UNC Chapel Hill Honor Court Member, 2001-2003

Reviewed and sanctioned cases as part of a peer jury

International Exchange Student Conversation Program, Spring 2003

Paired with a Korean graduate student with whom I met on a weekly basis in order to aid in their acclimation to the campus environment and improve their English skills

Academic Enhancement Program, 2000-2002

Lived in theme dorm in which students were required to complete 12 hours of community service per semester and maintain a GPA of at least 3.0.