Gender and the Recall of Relational and Overt Aggression
It is no secret that men and women act differently when it comes to aggression. Males typically engage in overt, or physical, aggression while females typically engage in relational aggression, also known as covert bullying.
In a review of their literature, Basow, Cahill, Phelan, Longshore, & McGillicuddy-DeLisi (2007) found that women are most likely to be both perpetrator and victim of relational aggression while men are most likely to be both perpetrator and victim of overt aggression. They also noted that women felt that aggression was overall more hurtful and damaging than men.
Aggression has been found to take shape early in development too. Giles and Heyman (2005) found that when children were asked which behaviors girls and boys would engage in if they wanted to hurt someone, children were more likely to choose relational aggression if the perpetrator was a girl, and overt aggression if the perpetrator was a boy.
However, which type of aggression would be most memorable to each gender?
In a study conducted by Sandu and Shaffer (2008), recall assessments showed women focused their attention on relational aggressive slides while men focused their attention on overt aggressive slides. But would this be the case again?
36 undergraduate participants, 15 men and 21 women, viewed a PowerPoint presentation showing aggressive acts.
They viewed 5 overt aggressive actions...
And 5 relational aggressive actions...
But which slides would be most memorable?

Surprisingly, both men and women remembered overt aggressive slides more than relational aggressive slides, 70% and 59% respectively for overt aggression and 30% and 41% respectively for relational aggression, with no significant differences between the genders.
With their most memorable slides being...
Apparently, male or female, the image of physical, or overt, aggression stays with us all....
References


References for Photos from Slides

• Overt photo 1 – students.usm.maine.edu
• Overt photo 2 – blogs.psychologytoday.com/blog/
• Overt photo 3 – www.stylishandtrendy.com
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• Relational photo 1 – www.theapple.com
• Relational photo 2 - www.spsk12.net
• Relational photo 3 – www.preteenagerstoday.com
• Relational photo 4 – www.spsk12.net
• Relational photo 5 – wings.buffalo.edu