

# **Dialectical Behavior Therapy: Essential Characteristics and Clinical Outcomes**

# DBT RESEARCH

**Published and In Press  
Randomized Clinical Trials**

# Initial DBT Outcome Trial

(Linehan, Armstrong, Suarez, Allmon, & Heard, 1991)

## *Statistically Significant Findings*

- DBT Ss had fewer incidences of parasuicide and less medically severe parasuicides compared to TAU Ss.
- DBT was superior in treatment retention.
- DBT Ss had significantly fewer inpatient psychiatric days.

# Initial DBT Outcome Trial

(Linehan, Armstrong, Suarez, Allmon, & Heard, 1991)

## DBT=TAU on Following Variables

- Depression
- Hopelessness
- Suicide ideation
- Reasons for Living

# Initial DBT Outcome Trial: One-Year Follow-Up

(Linehan, Heard, & Armstrong, 1993)

## *Statistically Significant Findings*

- DBT Ss had higher GAS scores throughout follow-up.
- DBT Ss had less parasuicidal behaviors, less anger, and better social adjustment during initial 6-months of follow-up.
- DBT Ss had fewer psychiatric inpatient days and better interviewer-rated social adjustment during final six months.

# DBT Outcome Trial for Substance Abusers with BPD

(Linehan, Schmidt, Dimeff, Craft, Kanter, & Comtois, in press)

- DBT Ss had significantly greater reductions in drug abuse throughout treatment and at follow-up than TAU Ss.
- DBT was superior in treatment retention.
- Significant greater gains in global and social adjustment at follow-up compared to TAU Ss.

# MACT for Recurrent Parasuicide

(Evans, Tyrer, Catalan, Schmidt, Davidson, Tata, et al., 1999)

- Compared MACT brief intervention using DBT skills and chain analysis to TAU among Ss with recurrent parasuicidal behavior.
- Rates of parasuicide episodes was lower with MACT than TAU although not statistically significant.
- MACT was significantly more effective on self-report of depression than TAU.

# DBT RESEARCH

## Non-Published or In-Progress Randomized Clinical Trials

# **Efficacy of Dialectical Behavior Therapy in Women Veterans with Borderline Personality Disorder**

***The Durham VA Medical Center***

***Koons, Robins, Tweed, Lynch, Gonzalez, Morse,  
Bishop, Butterfield, & Bastian, 1998***

# Design: RCT

*Koons, Robins, Tweed, Lynch, Gonzalez, Morse, Bishop, Butterfield, & Bastian, 1998*

**Conditions:**      Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)  
Treatment-as-Usual (TAU)  
All Ss treated in VA Medical Center

**Time Frame:**      6-month treatment

**Assessments:**      Pre-treatment  
Mid-treatment (3 months)  
Post-treatment (6 months)

# Subjects

*Koons, Robins, Tweed, Lynch, Gonzalez, Morse, Bishop, Butterfield, & Bastian, 1998*

- **Women veterans, total N = 20**
- **Met SCID-II criteria for Borderline Personality Disorder**
- **Mean Age = 35**
- **75% had lifetime history of parasuicide; 40% had a parasuicide within the six months prior to the study**
- **Overall, a less parasuicidal, less frequently hospitalized group than studied in Linehan's (1991) study**

# Variables Changing Significantly in DBT Over Time

*Koons, Robins, Tweed, Lynch, Gonzalez, Morse, Bishop, Butterfield, & Bastian, 1998*

- **Self-rated suicide ideation**
- **Hopelessness**
- **Anger**
- **Dissociative Experiences**
- **Depression**

# Post-Treatment Between Group Differences, DBT < TAU

*Koons, Robins, Tweed, Lynch, Gonzalez, Morse, Bishop, Butterfield, & Bastian, 1998*

- **Parasuicide**
- **Hopelessness**
- **Depression**
- **Suicidal Ideation**
- **Hostility & Anger**

# DBT RESEARCH

## Non-Randomized Clinical Trials

**Pilot Project Comparing  
DBT to Matched Group  
Receiving TAU for Suicidal and  
Self-Mutilating Behavior**

***New York State Psychiatric Institute  
& Columbia University***

***Stanley, Ivanoff, Brodsky, Oppenheim, & Mann (1998)***

# Design

Stanley, Ivanoff, Brodsky, Oppenheim, & Mann, 1998

**Conditions:** Dialectical Behavior Therapy  
(DBT, n=15)  
Treatment-as-Usual (TAU)  
(TAU, n=15)

**Time Frame:** 6-month treatment

**Assessments:** Pre-treatment  
Mid-treatment (3 months)  
Post-treatment

# Subjects

Stanley, Ivanoff, Brodsky, Oppenheim, & Mann, 1998

- **Females, total N = 30; 15 subjects receiving DBT were matched to 15 subjects receiving community TAU**
- **All subjects met criteria for Borderline Personality Disorder**
- **The baseline mean number of suicide attempts did not differ between DBT and TAU**

# Between Group Differences, DBT < TAU

Stanley, Ivanoff, Brodsky, Oppenheim, & Mann, 1998

- **Suicide ideation**
- **Suicidal urges**
- **Urges to self-mutilate**
- **Self-mutilation**

# **DBT vs. TAU for Suicidal Adolescents: Pilot Data**

***The Albert Einstein College of Medicine/  
Montefiore Medical Center  
Miller & Rathus (1996)***

# Design: Parallel Control Group

Miller & Rathus, 1996

**Conditions:** Dialectical Behavior Therapy for  
Adolescents (DBT; n=29)  
Treatment-as-Usual (TAU; n=82)

**Time Frame:** 12 week treatment

**Assessments:** Pre-treatment  
Post-treatment (12 weeks)

# Subjects

Miller & Rathus, 1996

- **Referrals (N=111) to the Adolescent Depression and Suicide Program, 78% female and 22% male**
- **Age range 12-19 years (DBT mean 16.1, TAU mean 15.0)**
- **68% Hispanic, 17% African American, 8% Caucasian, 1% Asian, 6% other**

# Subject Assignment to Condition

Miller & Rathus, 1996

- Subjects were assigned to DBT if they met the following criteria:
  - Either made a suicide attempt within the last 16 weeks  
OR  
report current suicidal ideation
  - Met diagnostic criteria for BPD or borderline personality features (as measured by the SCID-II)

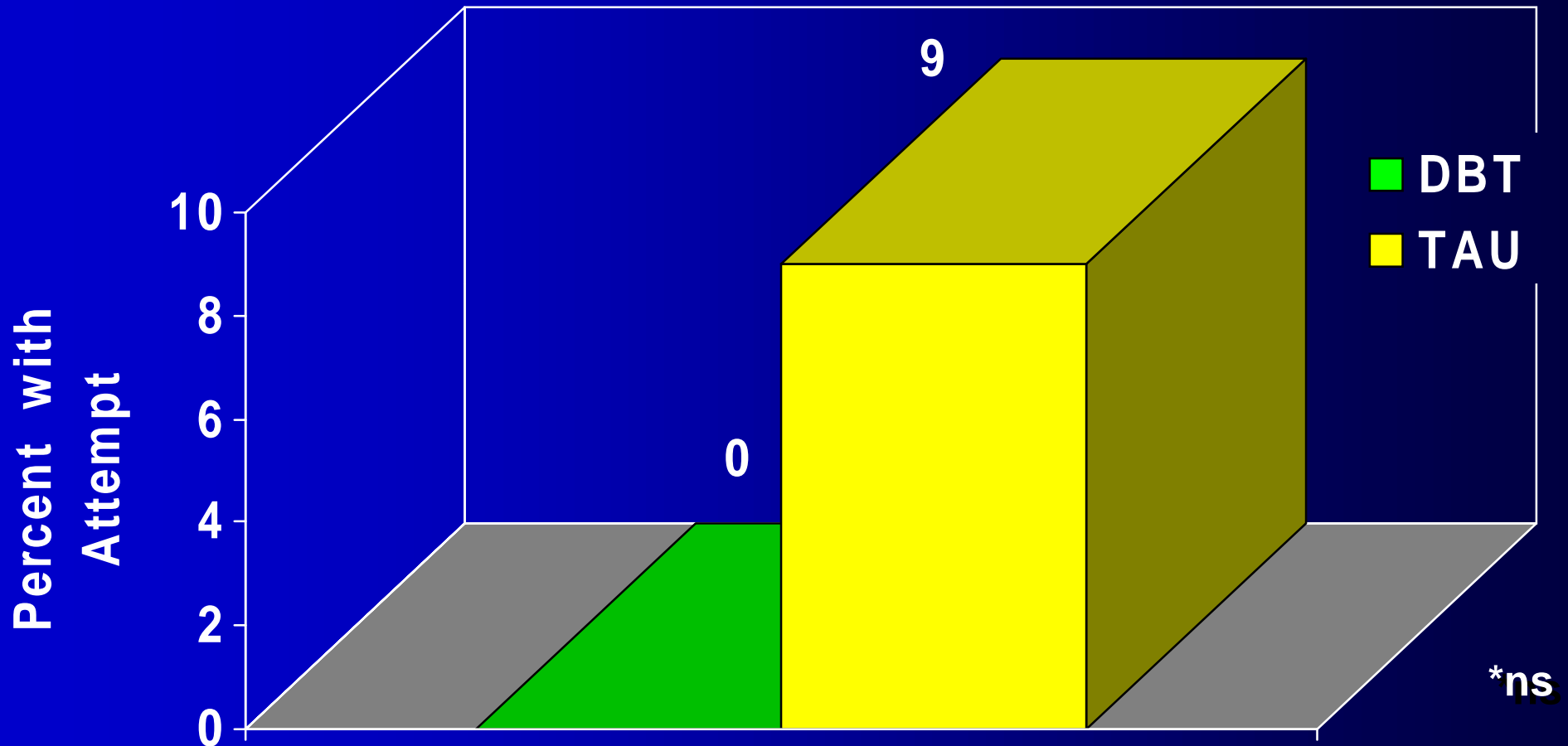
# Pretreatment Group Differences

Miller & Rathus, 1998

- **Number of Axis I disorders**
- **Impulsivity**
- **Number of prior hospitalizations**

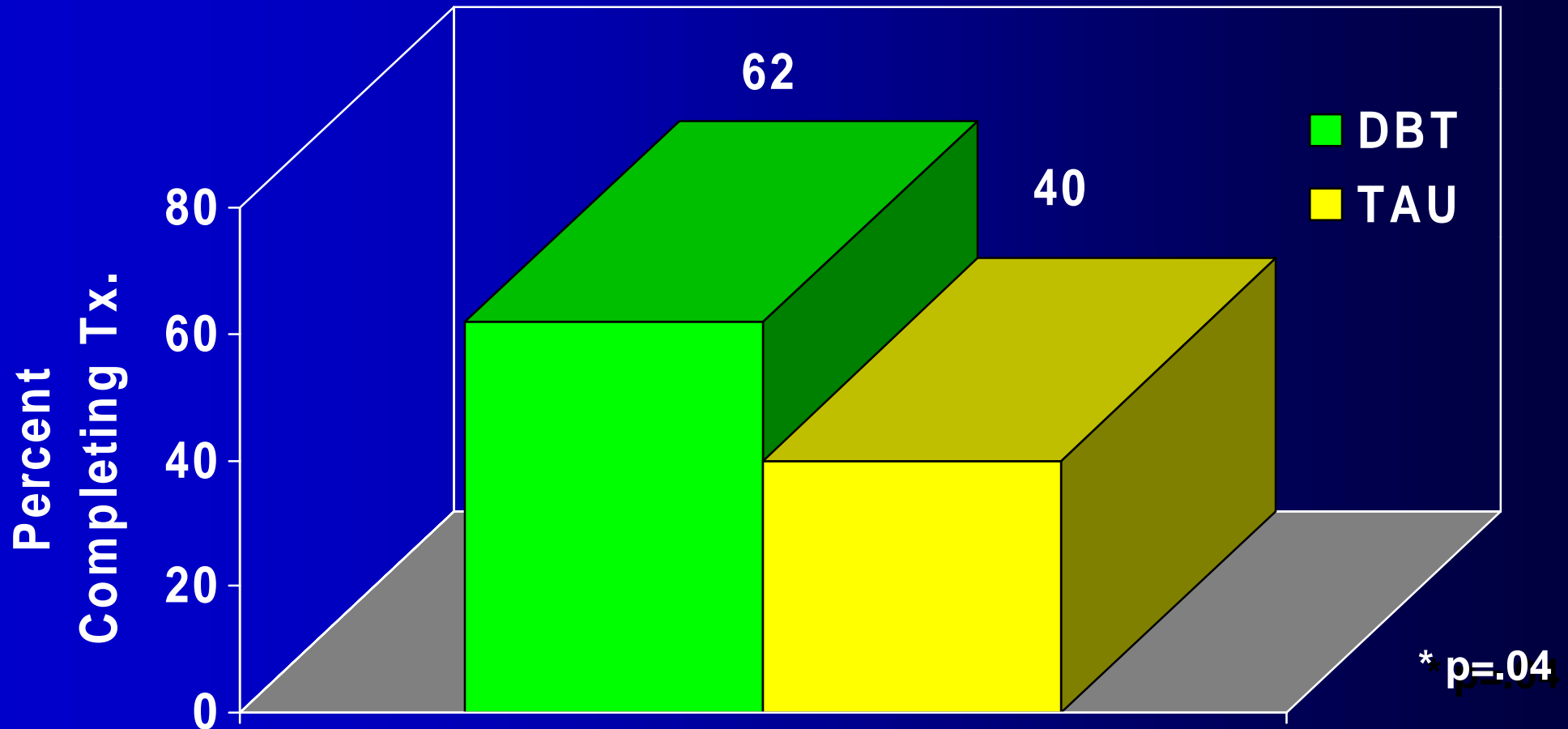
# Suicide Attempts: DBT vs. TAU

Miller & Rathus, 1998



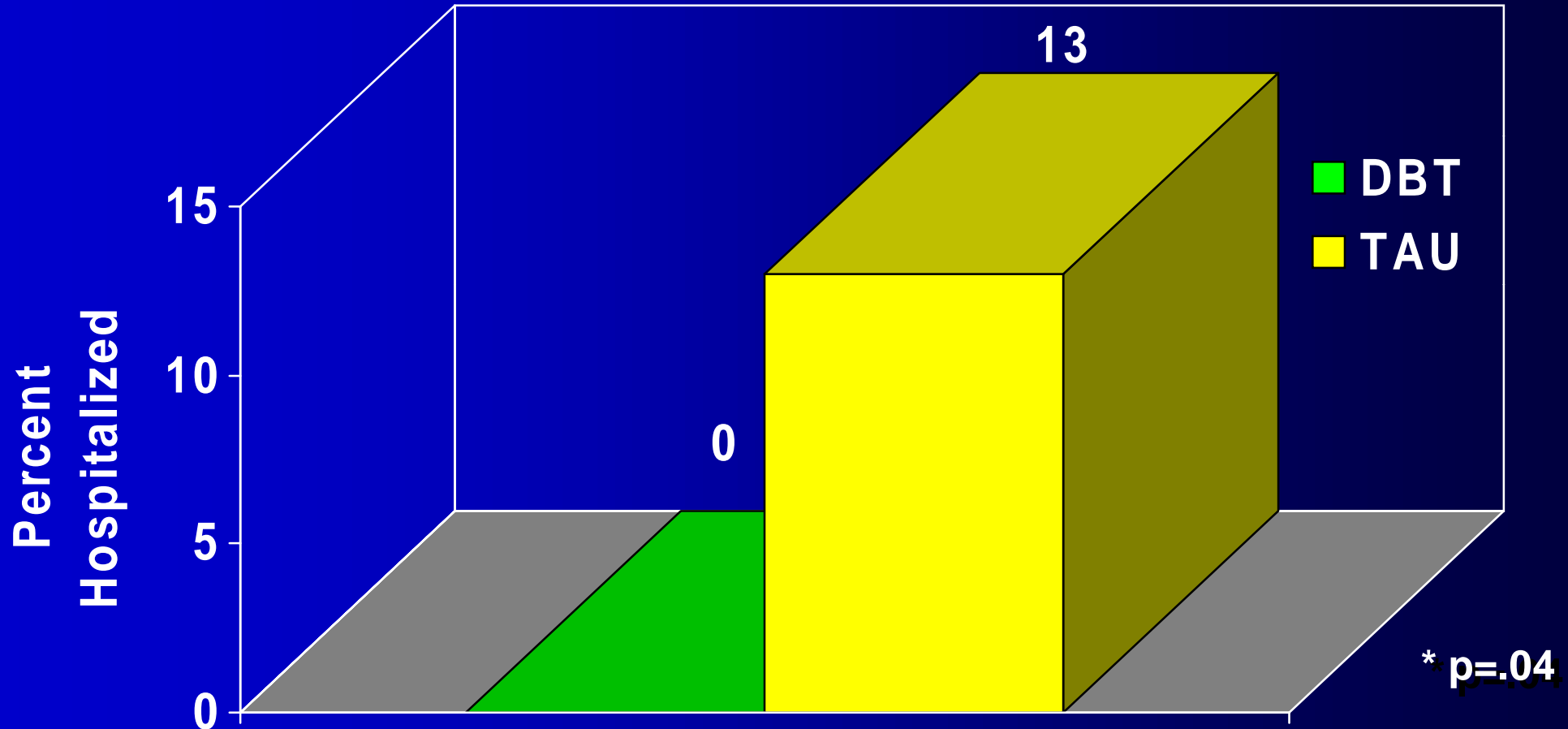
# Treatment Completion: DBT vs TAU

Miller & Rathus, 1998



# Psychiatric Hospitalizations During Treatment: DBT vs TAU

Miller & Rathus, 1998



# Between Group Differences DBT < TAU, at 12 Weeks

Miller & Rathus, 1998

- Treatment drop-out
- Inpatient psychiatric days