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Exploring the role of coercive control in arrest incidents of intimate partner violence

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Abstract

Exploring the Role of Coercive Control in Arrest Incidents

of Intimate Partner Violence

By

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Major Department: Criminal Justice and Criminology

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is an enduring public health, social, and criminal justice problem with immediate and long-term negative effects on family health and the economy. To date, only some of the abusive behaviors involving IPV have been criminalized despite the correlation of nonphysical coercive controlling behaviors with serious and escalating IPV (Beck & Raghavan, 2010; Tanha, Beck, Figueredo, & Raghavan, 2010). Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra (2015) and Breiding, Chen, & Black (2014) offer a model of IPV, which includes both physical violence and nonphysical abuse. This study appropriated the nonphysical abuse components of Breiding et al.'s IPV model to define a new coercive control framework. This framework was then used to analyze the descriptions of aggressive and abusive behaviors of intimate partners provided by a sample of 266 women whose partners or ex-partners were arrested for misdemeanor family violence offenses in Georgia. These interviews generated 581 distinct narratives concerning IPV incidents. Content analysis was used to capture themes derived from Breiding et. al.'s coercive control framework. Cases were coded for women having experienced only physical or sexual violence, only coercive control, or co-occurring physical and/or sexual violence and coercive control. The largest percentage of women (72% or n=191)

reported incidents of co-occurring physical violence and coercive controlling behaviors. About one quarter (26.3% or n = 70) reported experiencing physical or sexual violence with no coercive control. Few women (7.5% or n = 20) reported only experiencing coercive control. Findings and discussions support elevating coercive controlling behaviors from a sub-subtype of IPV to a structural framework through which most IPV unfolds, as over 7 in 10 women experienced coercive control in the context of IPV. Recommendations for more effective system identification and management of coercive control as the IPV framework are included.

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF COERCIVE CONTROL IN ARREST INCIDENTS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

BY

NANCY DICKINSON

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctorate in Philosophy
in the
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
of
Georgia State University

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
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Acceptance

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. It has been approved and accepted by all members of that committee, and it has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies of Georgia State University.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Statement

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a complex, high-risk social problem in the United States. It has been shown to account for 11.9% of all violent victimization (Morgan & Oudekerk, 2019). Just as for violent crime in general, simple assault is the most common type of IPV violent crime (64%), yet serious violence[1] comprises 36% of these crimes (Truman & Morgan, 2014). One in three U.S. women (32.9%) report experiencing some form of IPV over their lifetime (Breiding, Chen, & Black, 2014) and almost one in four (24.3%, 29 million) women report severe IPV, including beating, burning, and strangling (Breiding, Chen et al., 2014). The U.S Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that, from 1993 to 2010, four in five non-fatal IPV victims were female (Catalano, 2015; Catalano, Smith, Snyder, & Rand, 2009).

IPV makes up the largest part of domestic violence crimes, accounting for 15% of this category of non-fatal violent victimization. It is also a highly injurious category of violent victimization. Among all violent victimizations, 43% of IPV victims receive bruises or cuts and 11% receive serious injuries (e.g., gunshots, knife wounds, internal injuries, unconsciousness, and broken bones. In contrast, 21% of non-IPV victims receive bruises or cuts and 4% receive serious injury (Truman & Morgan, 2014, p. 8). A recent meta-analysis in *Reproductive Health* reviewed 33 IPV studies published from 1994 to 2017 (Semahegn, Torpey, Manu, Assefa, Tesfaye, & Ankomah, 2019). This analysis yielded comprehensive rates for both lifetime (55%) and current (35%) pooled prevalence of IPV for U.S. women. Extant data suggest that IPV is a costly crime as well; the estimated economic costs range from $5.8 billion to $12.6 billion annually (Waters, Hyder, Rajkotia, Basu, Rehwinkel, & Butchart, 2004).

IPV and sexual assault intersect with concerning prevalence and impact. Over half of female rape victims report being raped by their intimate partner (Black, Basile, Breiding, Smith,

Walters, Merrick . . . Stevens, 2011). It is estimated that 60% of women in abusive relationships have been sexually assaulted[2] in that same relationship, and half of those will suffer multiple sexual assaults by that partner (Howard, Rigor, Campbell, & Wasco, 2003). This intersection of sexual assault[3] with physical violence is reflected in the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) model of IPV (Breiding, Chen et al., 2014) and serves as the basis for this project's IPV Control Framework. Victims who are sexually assaulted by partners are more frequently injured than those assaulted by strangers or acquaintances (Kelly & Stermac, 2012).

While there is debate on how best to define IPV, it is generally understood as any violence or aggression that occurs in a relationship that was, or is presently, intimate, romantic, or sexual. It is understood to include physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression[4] (Breiding, Chen et al., 2014). IPV is an enduring public health, social, and criminal justice problem with immediate and long-term negative effects on family health and the economy. Offenders may be arrested and charged with crimes under state domestic violence, family violence, or stalking codes.

A primary challenge for the criminal justice system in addressing this type of violent victimization is that *only some of the behaviors and actions involving intimate partner violence have been criminalized*. Law enforcement, typically the first responders to violent incidents, are trained to intervene only in response to a narrow slice of the range of aggressive, abusive, or physically violent behaviors understood to constitute intimate partner violence. On arrival at the scene of a 'domestic,' they may encounter no observable violence or aggression, especially where the offender has fled. They could encounter active fighting, a shooting, a stabbing, a or a victim stating there was no violence. Responding officers are trained to rapidly scan for weapons, physical threats, and obvious signs of physical violence. They have the discretion to

make warrantless arrests based upon evidence of physical or weapon-based assaults on intimate partners (Prittie, 2011; Buzawa, Buzawa, & Stark, 2017). Yet, some harmful, abusive behaviors do not manifest as overt physical violence. Offenders may employ a range of behaviors that can exert instrumental control over victims that is so complete, it nullifies the system's and the community's efforts to serve and protect victims (Arnold, 2009; Buzawa et al., 2017; Day & Bowen, 2015; Dutton & Goodman, 2005; DeKeseredy, Dragiewicz, 2009; DeKeseredy, Dragiewicz & Schwartz, 2017). For example, victims may be prevented from contacting or visiting others, leaving the home, working for income, making purchases, receiving health care, or controlling their reproduction. Intimidation or threats of force often underlie these controlling behaviors, and in some jurisdictions, these behaviors need to be witnessed by officers or a credible third party to qualify as cause for arrest (Klein & Klein, 2016; Prittie, 2011).

Stalking codes are the closest the system comes to recognizing and acting upon a similar, associated behavior. The CDC recognized stalking performed by intimates as a component of IPV, and this study includes IPV stalking as a coercive controlling behavior (Breiding, Chen et al., 2014). Most stalking codes, including Georgia's stalking statute, have provisions authorizing officers to arrest for harassment and intimidation when an offender's willful conduct causes emotional distress for a victim (Logan, 2017; Logan & Walker, 2017). Georgia defines stalking as a "course of conduct crime that does not require proof of an overt threat of bodily harm or death" (The Official Code of Georgia Annotated O.C.G.A. § 16-5-90 et seq., 1998). Course of conduct refers to a pattern of conduct made up of two or more acts showing the offender's continuity of purpose. The stalking law makes it a crime to follow, surveil, or contact someone without his/her/their consent, unless these actions occur inside the residence of the victim or these acts are not prohibited by a civil order in place.

This study will analyze aggressive and abusive behaviors *without direct physical violence* that occur in relationships in which an offender was arrested in Georgia on a charge classified by criminal statute as intimate partner violence. This range of familiar, patterned behaviors is often called 'coercive control' by advocates and scholars (Adams, 1988; Buzawa et al., 2017). Coercive controlling behaviors are often deeply interwoven into acts of physical violence directed at intimate partners. Coercive control's conceptualization, boundaries, and definition are not monolithic. Drawing upon the lived experiences of a sample of battered women[5], this study explores how and to what degree coercive control co-occurs with acts of physical violence. Furthermore, it considers whether coercive control is a component (either additive or intrinsic) of abuse when physical violence is also present. Providing a qualitative, yet empirically informed assessment of coercive controlling behaviors is an important first step to understanding this phenomenon. The objective of this study is to better define these nonphysical behaviors in the patterns of abuse and trauma experienced by IPV victims who have contact with law enforcement. Improved definition and understanding are critical first steps in aiding authorities responsible for addressing this problem.

The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) defines coercive control as follows: "Limiting access to transportation, money, friends, and family; excessive monitoring of a person's whereabouts and communications; monitoring or interfering with electronic communication without permission; making threats to harm self; or making threats to harm a loved one or possession" (Breiding et al., 2015, p.15). The NISVS found that 41.1% of U.S. women have experienced at least one form of coercive control over their lifetime. It is estimated that nearly 11% of all U.S. women have experienced some form of coercive control in the past 12 months (Breiding, Chen et al., 2014). Further, a U.K. study by Myhill (2015) found

that coercive control accounted for almost 30% of women's IPV. This researcher found that female victims of coercive controlling abuse suffered more frequent and severe physical violence, including more severe physical injury.

There is a lack of clarity regarding the definition of coercive control; namely, what it is and what is its role in IPV. Chapter 2 provides a thorough review of the extant definitional landscape of coercive control. Much of the definitional landscape is populated by narrow conceptualizations of coercive control that have served to limit the system's ability to recognize and respond to this behavior. This project proposes a broader conceptual lens, one that conceives of coercive control to include *any and all non-violent behaviors that attend IPV*. More specifically, the current project conceives of coercive control as a framework containing a complex and nuanced continuum of shifting, custom applied, controlling behaviors. Thus, coercive control involves actions that deprive adult victims of their liberty and dignity and undermine their mental and physical agency and independence. Moreover, this study considers the gendered nature of these behaviors salient. Research confirms that coercive control exists in LGBT abusive relationships (Barnes & Donovan, 2018; Donovan & Hester, 2011, 2014), sometimes in less obvious ways than in heterosexual relationships. Offenders of any gender may exploit dominant social structures to their victim's disadvantage. In heteronormative abusive relationships, offenders exploit existing domestic and social structures that disadvantage women to reinforce their controlling strategies (Myhill, 2015). Prior research confirms women are more likely to be subjected to coercive control, and the sample of victims examined here is exclusively female.

Coercive Control in the Current Study

This study proposes elevating coercive control from its role as a type of violence to an instrumental framework within which IPV operates. All nonphysical abuse may function as dominating, coercive controlling behavior. This study relies on Breiding et al.'s (2015, p. 11) description or model of IPV, which include both physical violence and nonphysical abuse. This study appropriated all Breiding et al's IPV model's nonphysical abuse components to define a new coercive control framework. The first component is *psychological aggression,* defined as:

- Use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to: a) harm another person mentally or emotionally, and/or b) exert control over another person.

Coercive control in this study includes all of Breiding et al.'s (2015, p. 15) categories of psychological aggression:

- Expressive aggression: name-calling, humiliating, degrading, acting angry in a way that seems dangerous
- Threats of physical violence or sexual violence: "I'll kill you;" "I'll beat you up if you don't have sex with me;" brandishing a weapon. Use of words, gestures, or weapons to communicate the intent to cause death, disability, injury, or physical harm. Threats also include the use of words, gestures, or weapons to communicate the intent to compel a person to engage in sex acts or sexual contact when the person is either unwilling or unable to consent
- Coercive controlling behaviors: coercive control (e.g., limiting access to transportation, money, friends, and family; excessive monitoring of a person's whereabouts and communications; monitoring or interfering with electronic

communication [e.g., emails, instant messages, social media] without permission; making threats to harm self; or making threats to harm a loved one or possession)

- Exploitation of victim' vulnerability: immigration status, disability, undisclosed sexual orientation, age
- Exploitation of perpetrator's vulnerability (e.g., perpetrator's use of real or perceived disability, immigration status to control a victim's choices or limit a victim's options). For example, telling a victim "if you call the police, I could be deported."
- Gaslighting (i.e., "mind games") – presenting false information to the victim with the intent of making them doubt their own memory and perception.

This study also relies on Breiding et al.'s (2015, p. 14) definition of *IPV stalking,* the other nonphysical form of IPV:

- IPV stalking: A pattern of repeated, unwanted, attention and contact that causes fear or concern for one's own safety or the safety of someone else (e.g., family member, close friend). A list of familiar stalking behaviors used by perpetrators can be referenced in Appendix A.

Primary Aim of Current Study

The primary aim of this study is to better understand victim's reports of *what* offenders are doing to exert control through both physical and nonphysical means. This study offers an expanded, functional definition of controlling, nonphysical abuses used by offenders as reported by this population of victims. It is anticipated that details of *how* and *where*, as well as inferences of *why*, coercive control occurs will be contained in the victims' narratives. These details provide context around what behaviors offenders use to exercise control.

The current study proposes that coercive control may co-occur with physical violence but should be distinguished from it. Most commonly, coercive control is intrinsic (i.e., belongs naturally) to physical violence. It is not a requirement for physical violence to occur, yet the two phenomena are often temporally involved with one another. This view of physical violence and coercive control being intertwined follows from the extant scholarship on intimate partner violence. For example, Walby and Towers (2018) suggest that coercive control is an element of intimate partner violence crime, where all physical violence is understood to be instrumental, all coercive and controlling. However, they reject the necessity of criminalizing coercive control, as they believe that arrests for physical violence will always be capturing coercive control. Stated differently, Myhill and Hohl (2016, p. 16) conceptualized coercive control as the "golden thread" running through intimate partner violence, an essential component deserving central attention in risk identification and analysis. Additionally, several scholars have focused on the efficiency of repeated physical violence with coercive control. Offenders are able to predict and ensure victims' compliance with mere gestures or reminders of the violence past. In such cases, coercive control serves as a proxy for physical violence. Effective control is performed without physical violence and is often invisible (Day & Bowen, 2015; Stark, 2007, 2010; Weiner, 2017). In fact, it is this reality which is the basis for Stark and Hester (2019) declaring that coercive control is not a *type* of violence. It frequently exists outside of physical violence; ergo, not a type. The current study conceives of coercive control quite distinct from the IPV typologies of the 1980s and 1990s (Johnson, 2006, 2008; Kelly & Johnson, 2008). Rather, as Stark (2018a) and Stark and Hester (2019) most recently proposed, coercive control is treated as a framework that supports IPV; it serves as a context to leverage physical and sexual violence (Day & Bowen, 2015; DeKeseredy, Dragiewicz, & Schwartz, 2017; Weiner, 2017).

The current study divides the abusive experiences reported in victim narratives into three sorts: experiences of physical violence only, coercive controlling behaviors only, and co-occurrences of physical violence with coercive controlling behaviors. This study posits that acts of coercive control can and do exist outside of incidents of physical violence. Controlling acts are not exclusive to or necessary conditions for physical violence, as some offenders *never* escalate to physical assault. Conversely, some extremely physically violent offenders may never employ controlling behaviors. Further, *physical violence and coercive controlling behaviors* can co-occur. Some evidence suggests that coercive controlling behaviors commonly occur before physical attacks and their presence can serve as predictors of subsequent physical violence and fatalities (Follingstad, Rutledge, Berg, Hause, & Polek, 1990; Tanha et al., 2010, p.1838; Stark & Hester, 2019). Coercive control can also occur after acts of physical violence to extend or punctuate the offender's dominance over the victim. Little attention has been paid to the use of coercive controlling acts during physical attacks. Physical violence seems rarely to *only* involve direct physical threat or injury of a victim. For example, during a physical attack, an offender may destroy a cellphone, clothing, property or a vehicle. These acts are not random, and they are also not direct physical harm. The current study presumes that physical attacks can be defined or accompanied by instrumental (Day & Bowen, 2015) coercive controlling behaviors with identifiable infrastructures (Weiner, 2017). Day and Bowen note that instrumental aggression and violence serve a primary purpose of getting some reward, or having a demand met. Dutton and Goodman's (2005) model presented identifiable components. Offenders who groom their victims use courtship, fear, emotional abuse, and isolation as the infrastructure for their control. Coercive control is a complex construction of multiple behaviors and strategies, and every case features custom-designed tactics for controlling that victim.

Qualitative Study Design

This is a qualitative study that seeks to reveal linkages between coercive controlling behaviors and acts of physical violence as evidenced in these 266 misdemeanor cases of intimate partner violence reported to the police in Georgia. It will employ grounded theory thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2014; Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019) as the framework for deliberate, rigorous qualitative analysis. The conceptual underpinnings of the analysis will be informed by the existing literature and will seek to situate and contextualize the phenomenon of coercive control within the lived experiences of women who had been in contact with police after a violent victimization by their former or current husband or boyfriend. These interviews were conducted as part of Finn's (2005) study on victim empowerment. Interviews were conducted by six trained adult graduate and undergraduate criminal justice students. Recorded interviews were transcribed; transcripts were reviewed for accuracy twice by two trained graduate research assistants.

Organization of Current Study

Chapter 2 (Literature Review) reviews academic and government reports on the reported prevalence of coercive control and IPV. This chapter presents conceptualizations and definitions of coercive control and discusses their differences. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework designed to guide the current study. Chapter 3 (Methods) describes the research design utilized, characteristics of this sample, and the variables of the coercive controlling framework for IPV. The data sources are discussed and the coding process for categories and themes that will guide the analysis are explained. Chapter 4 (Results) presents the major findings of the content analysis and the various conceptually driven categories and themes that emerged from the data. Details of by-case prevalence of physical violence only, coercive controlling

behaviors only, and co-occurring physical violence with coercive control are included. Three trends that emerged during content analysis are also discussed. In Chapter 5 (Conclusion and Discussion) the results are contextualized, the utility of the coercive control framework discussed, and implications of results for system policy change and refinement are presented.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Organization of the Literature Review

This literature review surveys the scholarship on the nature and role of coercive controlling behaviors that exist independent of, or co-occur with, physical intimate partner violence. The central focus is placed on how coercive control has been defined, conceptualized, and empirically assessed in literature and legal code, and what existing research on coercive control has contributed to our understanding of it today. It serves to justify the need to undertake additional research to expand and refine current theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of coercive control.

First, this review notes issues that emanate from the conflicting legal/cultural definitions of violence against women in general. Next, the chapter content traces the emergence of the coercive control concept within the scholarly literature and presents the advantages of expanding and refining understanding of the coercive control model. Third, the central works aimed at operationalizing the concept of coercive control within a scholarly context are introduced, and the existing conceptual frameworks are summarized. Finally, existing theoretical frameworks are reviewed, and a theoretical study framework is proposed.

Conflicting Constructions: IPV, Battering, and Coercive Control

Dragiewicz (2011) noted that there is a lack of definitional parsimony in the study of violence between intimate partners. Scholars have forwarded many terms to delineate the phenomenon of study. The text below focuses on three specific terms: intimate partner violence (IPV), battering, and coercive control. Each term has benefits and limitations in understanding the phenomenon of abuse that occurs between intimate partners (Buzawa et al., 2017; Hamby, 2014; Hamby & Grych, 2013). The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the

Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) Breiding, Chen et al. (2014, p. 7) define IPV as "physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner (i.e., spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner, or ongoing sexual partner)." Miller-Perrin, Perrin, and Renzetti (2018) define it as "any threatened or completed acts of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse committed by a spouse, ex-spouse, or current or former boyfriend or girlfriend" (p.302). In both Breiding et al.'s (2015) and Miller-Perrin et al.'s (2018) conceptualizations, coercive control is treated as a type or subset of intimate partner violence.

The term 'battering' is relevant here because it served as a kind of crucible in which the term coercive control was forged. Both Breiding et al. (2015) and Miller-Perrin et al.'s (2018) definitions of IPV track with the earliest and more recent uses of the term 'battering,' a term initially used to define women experiencing physical, sexual or psychological abuse by their intimate partner (Follingstad et al.,1990; Hamby, 2014; Smith, Tessaro, & Earp, 1995). The use of this term dates from the 1970s' feminist grassroots movement dedicated to protecting women and their children who had been abused by violent male partners, former and current (Dragiewicz, 2011). This early, inclusive conceptualization of physical violence mixed with nonphysical forms of abuse emerged from victims' lived experiences as told to advocates. Psychological, emotional, economical abuse and men's practices of isolating and controlling victims accompanied reports of chronic physical violence from the beginning, and that inclusive definition of battering endures. David Adams, a pioneer in the grassroots battered women's movement, defined *all* battering as violent, even nonphysical controlling behaviors. He altered the movement's focus from physical harm to *any* acts that violated women's autonomy or independence (Adams, 1988; Buzawa et al., 2017).

Since the early 1970s, controlling behaviors have been understood to be connected to battering, and battering is often used interchangeably with the term intimate partner violence. When advocates and scholars use the term battering, they are communicating about a pattern of dominance and harm exceeding physical violence. Scholars have come to define battering as a "process whereby [women] experience vulnerability, loss of power and control, and entrapment as a consequence of [their partners'] exercise of power through the patterned use of physical, sexual, psychological, and/or moral force" (Notestine, Murray, Borders, & Ackerman, 2017; Smith, Smith, & Earp, 1999, p. 186; Smith, Murray, & Coker, 2010). Yet to police, law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges, the term 'batterer' is assigned only to offenders who physically harm partners. Arrested offenders may be referred to or required to attend 'batterer intervention programs' or family violence intervention programs. In the eyes of the legal system, the term battering may signal something other than physical harm is happening, but the term intimate partner violence often equates to physical violence.

This study investigates the intersection of physical violence (IPV) and nonphysical abusive behaviors (coercive control), thus teasing apart the components of battering. The term, battering, communicates a mixture of harmful behaviors, some captured in the criminal code and some not captured in the criminal code. The task of this study is to tease apart this mixture. Battering signals the patterned, repetitive nature of physical with nonphysical abuse. The term coercive control is generally regarded as ongoing, instrumental, and patterned, and not always incident specific (Stark, 2007, 2018a,); Walby and Towers, 2018). Therefore, capturing and analyzing arrest incidents of IPV for the presence or absence of coercive control can inform our understanding of the nature of its relationship to physical violence.

Emerging Definitional and Conceptual Frameworks

Figure 1 below provides a chronological list of the key milestones in the scholarly literature on the development of coercive control as a concept. These works in Figure 1 have the most direct bearing on the definition of coercive control that informs the current study. It is important to note that a specific sort of gendered-controlling behavior first emerged as advocates and clinicians were confronted with the patterns of violence and restrictions reported by women. Susan Schecter, a social work scholar and battered women's movement pioneer, used the term 'coercive control' in 1982, naming a collection of restrictive and monitoring behaviors offenders used to curtail women's freedom (Goodmark, 2011). Evan Stark was introduced to the term coercive control in 1982 by Susan Schecter and by David Adams, founder of the nation's first intimate partner violence offender counseling program (Buzawa et al., 2017, Stark, 2007).

Stark refined coercive control the early 1990s to 2004 (Buzawa et al., 2017; Stark, 1995, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2010), and Stark positioned coercive control as a legal framework to replace the Battered Woman Syndrome defense, which highlights traumatizing, violent acts. From the beginning, he promoted evaluating abusive relationships in terms of "progressive entrapment" (Stark, 1995, p. 1024) of victims, and to move beyond the practice of counting moments of brutality. Stark (2007) popularized the term, coercive control, as a form of aggression common to relationships featuring intimate partner violence. In early days, Stark maintained that this was a *subtype* of intimate partner violence and should be conceived of as a crime against women's liberties and rights (Stark, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2016, 2018a) rather than an assault crime. Stark expressed frustration that the legal processing of violence against women as assault crimes had not addressed the complex reality of their victimization experiences. He saw the new incident-based laws as imprecise, narrow solutions that could not protect women from the repeat,

YEAR	FORMATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TERM "COERCIVE CONTROL"
1982	**Susan Schecter & David Adams coin term 'Coercive Control (CC).' Conceptualized as an individual-level characteristic. Gendered, controlling behavior, part of IPV**
GAP	**Few cites in literature; Stark defines CC in 1995 journal article and begins book**
2004	**Stark puts term CC into circulation with "Insults, Injury & Injustice." Conceptualized as control using domestic structures. Results in victims feeling trapped. Conceived as public wrong rooted in socio-sexual hierarchies. Coercion is physical component that includes physical violence and coercion is nonphysical. For Stark, CC is physical Tuerkheimer calls for criminalization of coercive control to remedy battering**
2005	**Dutton & Goodman, Dutton, Goodman, & Schmidt reconceived CC= demands, coercion, and surveillance, across at least 9 domains of life; created subscales. New model of IPV coercion requires a demand & a threat. They developed scale to measure nonphysical CC for IPV. 1st discrete empirical support for nonphysical CC. Dynamic process, spiraling, over-lapping sequences**
2007	**Stark publishes book "Coercive Control" on instrumental tactics. Says umbrella is CC, PV just component, outcome. Sexism is cause & consequence of CC. PV is just 1 out of 4 parts of CC. Stark noted that legal focus on purely physical harm had not reduced prevalence or incidence. Tuerkheimer again calls for criminalization of coercive control, Burke calls for reconceptualizing IPV as a crime of pattern & intent.**
2008	**CDC's 4 subtypes of IPV, CC is sub-subtype of psych. abuse, nonphysical. 2008-2010 revising, pub 2015. Johnson & Kelly's typology changes 'intimate terrorism' to 'coercive controlling violence, a type of IPV**
2009	**Catteneo calls for reliable tests of CC. Stark's "Rethinking Coercive Control" refines term as 'liberty crime." VAW special issue "Focusing on Coercive Control" (Anderson; Arnold; Brush; Hanna; Libal & Pareks; Poletta)**
2010	**Tanha et al. CC is a motivation. leads to, predicts other abuse, including IPV. Focused on nonphysical violence, restricted liberties**
2014	**Donovan & Hester locate power & control in abusive LGBT relationships. Breiding, Chen et al.'s NISVS defines IPV: includes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, & psychological aggression. Coercive control is one of 6 subtypes of psych. aggression**
2015	**Breiding et al.'s CDC/ revised uniform definition of IPV components. CC defined as a subtype of psychological aggression, itself a nonphysical component of IPV. England & Wales put CC into their legal code. Concept follows Stark. Day & Bowen's offending competency work supports instrumental thesis**
2017	**Hamberger, Larsen, & Lehrner. refine D&G's CC down to 3 elements: abuser's intentionality, victim's negative perception of CC, and abuser's credible threats. CC not denoted by violence but can be set up by and perpetuated by violence. Cultural scripts facilitate CC, study distinguishes attempts from achievement of CC, violence is seen as "intertwined" with coercive control. Weiner's behavioral model views CC as having identifiable infrastructures, develops practical one day training on CC for police, first responders. Brings offenders' "grooming" behaviors to light, reinforces understanding of CC as "invisible" to police, legal system, community**
2018	**C&CJ special issue signals revived interest in CC. (Burman & Brooks-Hay; Douglas; Robinson, Myhill, & Wire; Sheehy; Tolmie; Walby & Towers; Walker, Bowen, Brown & Sleath; Walklate, Fitz-Gibbon & McCulloch). Scotland adds CC to code. Stark promotes CC as framework**
2019	**Stark & Hester declare "CC is not a type of violence, " rather it is a framework, a context for DV/IPV. Contextualizing a 'new definition' of DV/IPV as CC**

Figure 1. Formative Contributions of the Term "Coercive Control" in Scholarly Literature

patterned nature of the crime they experienced. He argued that the system became a revolving door for repeat offenders, with less than 4% of 911 calls for help resulting in conviction or punishment (Hester, 2006; Stark, 2012, 2018b). Stark suggested reconceiving coercive control as a crime against victims' civil liberty. In a 2016 video, Stark reaffirmed his "liberty crime" approach to criminalizing coercive controlling IPV.

Stark's (2004, 2005, 2007) original conceptualization of coercive control described a gendered strategy designed to compel victims' obedience through use of isolation, intimidation, and physical violence (Hanna, 2009). In these early conceptualizations, acts of physical violence were *included* in the description of coercive control. More recently, Stark (2018a) and Stark and Hester (2019) have refined the definition, stating: "Coercive control is not a form of violence" but rather is a framework (Stark & Hester, 2019, p. 81).

The present study aims to untangle coercive controlling behaviors from physical violence. *For the purpose of this study, coercive control does not include physically violent acts, but sits to one side of that behavioral boundary*. In that regard, this study's conceptualization of coercive control does not conform to Stark's original definition of coercive control, "a strategic course of gender-based abuse in which some combination of physical and sexual violence, intimidation, degradation, isolation, control, and arbitrary violations of liberty are used to subjugate a partner and deprive her of basic rights and resources" (Buzawa et al., 2017, p. 105). Stark (2007, 2009) distinguished coercion (use of physical force or threats) from control (tactics to compel obedience) whereas the current study does not. Stark's most recent work (Stark & Hester, 2019) clearly *included all* the elements of Breiding et al's 2015 definition of IPV. It was a specific kind of chronic, gendered IPV; a course of conduct designed to entrap and limit

victims. Stark & Hester's (2019) focus now is on *reconceptualizing* coercive control as a *strategic instrument for domination* in domestic relationships, including control over children.

Stark has been consistent in rooting coercive control in the "realities of sexual power and hierarchies" (Stark, 2004, p.1309). He proposed that coercive control was connected to structural inequalities, oppression of women in certain relationships, and purposeful male dominance. His efforts shifted attention from physically violent episodes to purposeful courses of criminal conduct which restricted women's autonomy and liberty. He focused on the gendered nature of these behaviors, but clearly stated that the coercive control theory of battering should apply to victims of any race, class, or gender. Stark proposed that coercion was comprised of physical violence while control was nonphysical. This study's approach aligns with Stark's position that coercive control is rooted in social forces and hierarchies but departs from Stark on one key point. The current study proposes that these behaviors of dominance and control are best conceptualized and recorded as separate from physical acts of violence.

Other scholars, notably Dutton and Goodman (2005) and Dutton, Goodman and Schmidt (2005) have developed a conceptual model of non-violent coercive control in intimate partner violence relationships. This model conceives of the phenomenon as a dynamic process comprised of social ecology; setting the stage (grooming); coercion involving a demand and a credible threat for noncompliance; surveillance; delivery of threatened consequences; and the victim's behavioral and emotional response to coercion (Dutton et al., 2005). They conceived of coercive control as a dynamic process that is a *key construct* of intimate partner violence. They proposed that its conceptualization and measurement had been neglected by other researchers.

Hamberger, Larsen, and Lehrner (2017) provided the second major comprehensive review (after Dutton & Goodman, 2005) of coercive control's conceptualizations, definitions,

operationalizations, and measurements, resulting in their own synthesis and research recommendations. They reduced and refined all previous literature of consequence on coercive control and identified three critical elements. Similar to Dutton and Goodman's (2005) conceptualization of coercive control, this solution is not suited to thematic content analysis.

At present, coercive control is alternately considered a cause, an effect, a process, an abusive element, a key construct or element, a subtype, a framework, or a whole theory of intimate partner violence. Some have defined it as strictly nonphysical abuse, while others interweave the concept with physically violent behaviors. Having reviewed coercive control's relationship to battering, this study explains its current relationship to psychological aggression and IPV stalking. Finally, I reconceptualize this nuanced construct purely for the purpose of analyzing these 266 women's cases for its presence and absence.

As an alternative, the CDC recently (Breiding, et al., 2015; Breiding, Chen et al., 2014;) conceptualized and operationalized four discrete subtypes of intimate partner violence, before administration of the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression. Psychological aggression includes coercive control among its six subtypes. Breiding et al. (2015) published uniform definitions and recommended data elements for intimate partner violence research. These updated, uniform definitions are necessarily general, and the authors noted that researchers or clinicians may need to further refine the definitions. For the first time, United States public health surveillance definitions recognized stalking and the use of technology for stalking, as well as non-contact forms of sexual violence, as being elements of intimate partner violence. The earlier term "psychological abuse" was renamed and expanded to the newer term "psychological aggression," which was newly defined. During their shift from "abuse" to "aggression," the CDC

added behaviors such as efforts or success in controlling a partner's sexual or reproductive health, gaslighting, and exploiting a partner's vulnerabilities to their definition of psychological aggression. Breiding et al. (2015) took particular care to include *tactics* used during contact-and non-contact sexual violence, like administering alcohol or drugs and using false promises.

Psychologically-aggressive acts are not physical acts of violence. In some cases, they may not be perceived as aggression because they are covert and manipulative in nature. Nevertheless, psychological aggression, of which coercive control is but one of six elements noted by Breiding et al. (2015), is a key component of the public health domain's conceptualization of intimate partner violence for several reasons. First, psychological aggression frequently co-occurs with other forms of intimate partner violence, and research suggests that it often precedes physical and sexual violence (Crossman, Hardesty, & Raffaeli, 2016; Dutton & Goodman, 2005; Dutton et al., 2005; Levine, 2015; Stark, 2004, 2007, 2012; Tanha et al., 2010). Second, acts of psychological aggression can significantly influence the impact of other forms of intimate partner violence (e.g., the fear resulting from being hit by an intimate partner will likely be greater had the intimate partner previously threatened to kill the victim). Third, research suggests that the impact of psychological aggression by an intimate partner can produce a similar or sometimes higher level of perceived harm as that of physical violence by an intimate partner[6] (Beck & Raghavan, 2010; Stark, 2007, 2009; Tanha et al., 2010).

The present study is based on the premise that further work is needed on the measurement of psychological aggression, particularly how to determine when psychologically-aggressive behavior crosses the threshold into psychological abuse. Breiding et al. (2015) acknowledged that this threshold is critical. Yet, they could not agree on how to define a pattern

of psychologically-aggressive acts or the impact that such a pattern creates: when psychological aggression can be identified as psychological abuse. In refining and broadening "abuse" to "aggression," the CDC provided a more thorough and nuanced understanding of the instrumental nature of particularly damaging *tactics*. Breiding et al. (2015) proposed a model of IPV which included coercive control only as a subset of psychological aggression, as represented in Figure 2. The recent changes to the United States' public health definitions of nonphysical IPV represent an advance in more thoughtful inclusion of victims' lived experiences in public health surveillance definitions.

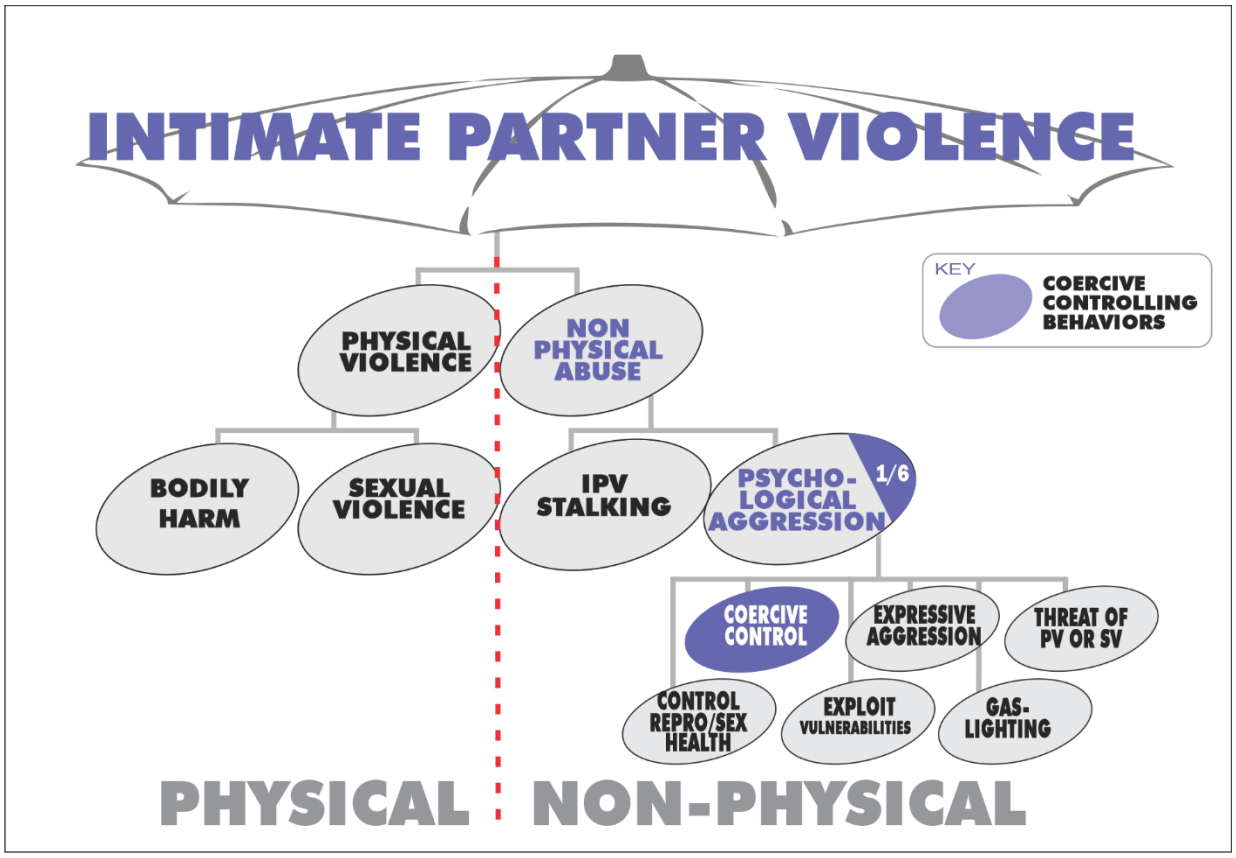

Figure 2. Breiding et al.'s (2015) Model of IPV with Conceptualization of Physical and Nonphysical IPV

Evidence suggests that coercive controlling tactics can be involved in all six domains of psychological aggression (Breiding et al. 2015; Alves, Graham-Berman, Hunter, Miller-Graf, &

Schomer, 2017; Dutton & Goodman, 2005; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2018) and in IPV stalking. A deeper and broader understanding of the nature of this class of abusive behaviors and how they are experienced by victims could provide expert panels with a framework to define patterns of psychologically-aggressive behaviors and better define the transition from "aggression" into actual documentable "abuse."

Breiding et al. (2015) warn researchers that victims may not always, or may never, experience intimate partner violence as it is definitionally categorized. In definitions, discrete subtypes are designed to help us surveil, count, and quantitatively analyze data. This is relevant because *this study aims to tease out and potentially link instrumentally controlling nonphysical yet harming behaviors* that unfold in IPV incidents. As such, this study seeks to aid in better defining, identifying, and treating offender's damaging patterned behaviors as coercive controlling abuse.

In the criminal justice domain, intimate partner violence is afforded a far narrower definition than in the public health arena. In the criminal statutes of many jurisdictions, intimate partner violence is included under the umbrella of domestic violence, defined as physical violence or credible threats of violence "between past or present spouses, people who are parents of the same child, parents and children, stepparents and step children, foster parents and foster children, or other persons living or formerly living together in the same household" (The Official Code of Georgia Annotated, The Family Violence Act, O.C.G.A. §19-13-1 et seq., (1998); Prittie, 2011). Coercive control is largely absent from definitions found in criminal statutes, despite its recognition as a missed predictive variable in severe violence and female homicide fatality review or a defense strategy for female partner homicide defendants (Bendlin &

Sheridan, 2019a; Graham-Kevin & Archer, 2008; King, 2019; Robinson, Pinchevsky, & Guthrie, 2018; Smith, 2018; Stark & Hester, 2019).

Turning to the adjudication context, Prittie's (2011) *Georgia Domestic Violence Benchbook* makes four relevant mentions of coercive control, describing it as a type of intimate partner violence characterized by isolation and control of resources. Prittie (2011) refers judges to mental health evaluators who are trained to recognize coercive control and refers judges to criminal records and arrest reports for evidence of same. As Klein and Klein (2016) explain the civil status of protective orders and misdemeanor status of most intimate partner violence crimes have the effect of veiling the history of repeat offenders. With cases dismissed, diversion to family violence intervention programs, pleading to fines and lesser charges, civil court judges have poor access to offenders' history of arrests for violence. Judges' knowledge of the myriad definitions of coercive control are useless if they are not given data on offenders before them. Judges may be depending upon first responder documentation to flag them on this complex, patterned, tactical behavior.

In summary, it is to be expected that this complex concept of coercive control has multiple and varying definitions, as it has differing meaning and value to disparate parties. Coercive control is referred to in capital court cases where women have killed their abusers (Stark, 2007; Sheehy, 2018), in grant makers' resource allocation, in policies to transform law enforcement (Weiner, 2017), and in articles designed to simplify the legal landscape (Walklate, Fitz-Gibbon, & McCulloch, 2018). Scholars seeking to help women find justice and economic equality both promote coercive control's wholesale adoption into code (Goodmark, 2011), whereas others want to strip it from the UK code (Walby & Towers, 2018). Recently, a Tennessee legal scholar (Ortiz, 2018) suggested adapting that state's false imprisonment code to

address coercive control and IPV. Some victim advocates side with the legal scholars who warn against including coercive control into legal doctrine for purity's sake, citing the danger of refocusing prosecution and defense on the victim's mental state and involvement (complicity) in her own abuse (Hanna, 2009). If we truly seek to address intimate partner violence, our existing legal framework that focuses on single incidents and not patterns of behavior and assault will fail, as noted by Stark (2007). Stark's concept was intended to keep the focus on the offenders' decisions and away from the victims' mental state, acknowledging the inherent weakness of battered women's syndrome language. Clearly, employing the construct of coercive control legally means very different things to an array of stakeholders. The most useful conceptual frameworks should be supported by a theoretical framework, and not all of those related to coercive control are.

A Conceptual Study Framework

This study focuses on offender behaviors, relying on an elevated and expanded conceptualization of offenders' coercive control, not on any theory of its etiology. The data source in this study is victim narrative reports of offender behaviors. Offender intent is hard to infer from this source alone, even when supported by official reports (Finn, 2003). Absolute distinction between offender's conscious, criminal intent to do harm and other impulses or motivations to act in a harmful manner requires legal and clinical focus beyond the scope of this study. This study does look at the victims' recount of facts and it makes logical inferences about the offender's intention. In this study's coding of data, the pivot point between coercive control and pure physical violence is based on the victim's own words. Guided by Breiding et al.'s 2015 full definitions of psychological aggression and IPV stalking as coercive control, this study analyzed victim narratives to code offenders' coercive controlling behaviors.

This analysis was further informed by Wiener's (2017) research that identified the context and "infrastructure" of coercive control. Wiener's operationalized coercive control with, a working, behavioral model designed to *transform* policing of IPV in the U.K. To assist police in judging potentially abusive relationships, Wiener interviewed female survivors, police, advocates, and advisors about nonphysical abuse. Her study effectively revealed coercive control's infrastructure: the organized, intentional interlinking of offenders' behaviors. Wiener's three dimensions of coercive control are: grooming induced vulnerability, coercive behaviors buttressed by credible threats, and the victim's response to the control, (e.g., her fear levels or instability). In the case of stalking in the U.S., police must judge whether a potential perpetrator is stalking a victim by inferring the offender's intent and weighing the victim's reaction. Wiener's model offers a similar three-part framework to help police judge abusive behaviors in relationships. Offenders 'strategies cannot be assigned a specific space and time like a physical domestic assault but looking for the structures of coercive control can reveal offender's probable intention to control through abuse.

Wiener's working model is a refined version of Dutton and Goodman's 2005 model providing the detailed behavioral descriptions of nonphysical, coercive controlling tactics across a range of domestic domains. Weiner's model is best suited for studies with data specifically collected for measuring coercive control based upon direct reports with rich data. These two operationalizations of coercive control provided clarity on the range of all behaviors this study needed to include when assessing these narratives for any evidence of coercive control. Both Weiner and Dutton and Goodman's models have more inclusive conceptualizations of coercive control than the CDC's NISVS model and either would be preferable over Breiding et al.'s model for analysis in new, targeted studies. The current study selected Breiding et al.'s (2015)

IPV model and definitions for three reasons. First, the CDC leads public health and injury research in this country. Targeting their model to elevate coercive control's conceptualization could lead to enhanced understanding and interventions in IPV. Second, their simpler IPV model's nonphysical IPV components cover every instrumental, tactical behavior reported by victims in these narratives. Third, this study's thematic content analysis was performed on existing narratives not targeted at collecting coercive control behavioral data. This study proposes that control is the umbrella under which most IPV is located, yet not all acts under this umbrella show evidence of control. The evidence for the absence of control in the minority of the cases in this study will be addressed, but the focus is on the prevalence and presence of control and domination in these narratives. The current study proposes an IPV Control Framework (Figure 3) that goes beyond Breiding et al.'s (2015) IPV Framework, appropriating all of the NISVS's categories of nonphysical harm as forms of coercive control.

Admittedly, this conceptual approach is at odds with the views of some scholars. Most notably, in 2017, Walby and Towers proposed a new theory of intimate partner violence that posited all physical violence is understood to *include* coercive control. A year later, Walby and Towers (2018) went on to promote the concept of "domestic violence crime." They propose ignoring coercive control as a legal issue and mainstreaming IPV *back under the violent crime umbrella* for measurement and analysis purposes. Their method discounted the gender parity issue and its attendant typology of harmful and non-harmful intimate partner violence, as conceptualized by Stark (2007) and Kelly and Johnson (2008). The gaps in their approach are

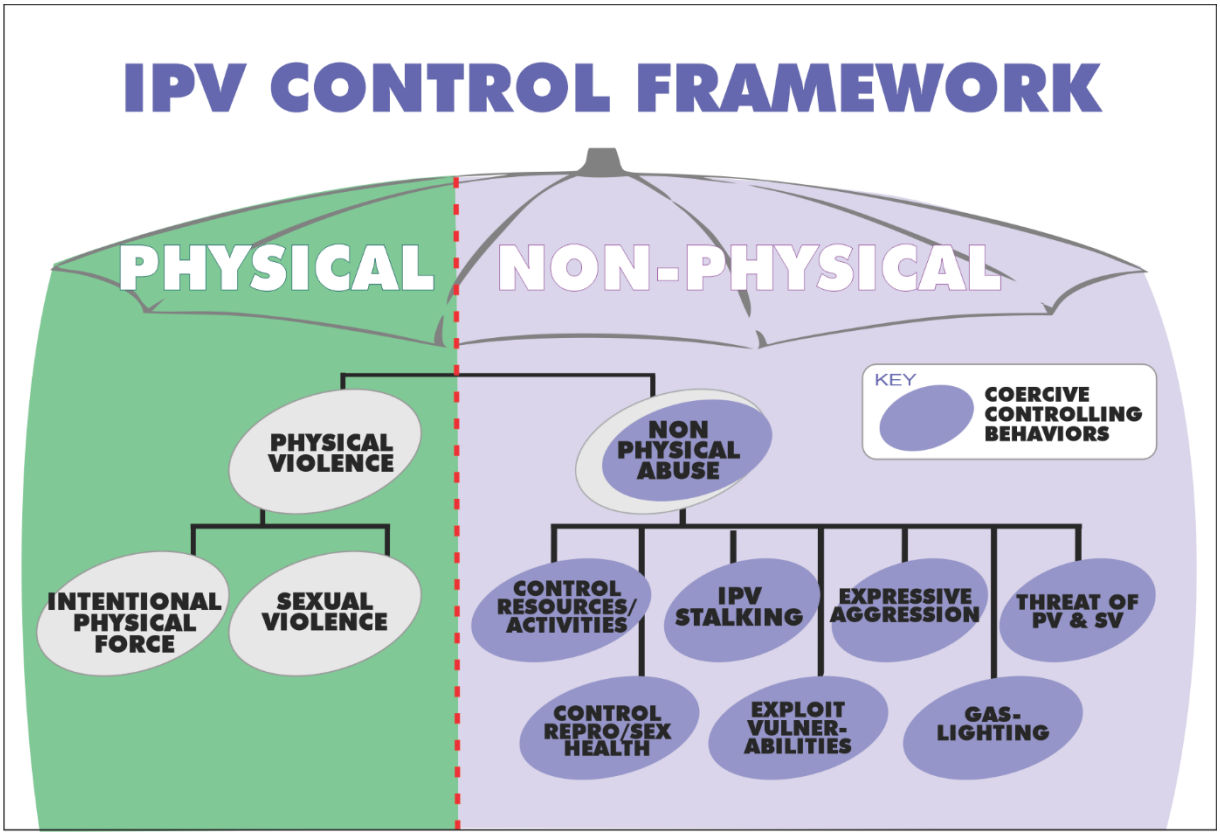

Figure 3. This Study's Conceptual Framework: Coercive Control Represented as All Breiding et al.'s (2015) Nonphysical IPV

two-fold. First, their study found coercive controlling behaviors in most IPV physical assaults that came to the attention of the system. Presuming coercive control is part of most IPV seems like a conceptual advance only if one abandons hope of preventing coercive controlling behavior or using aspects of coercive control to predict future injurious assaults or fatalities. The second gap in Walby and Towers' approach ignores offenders' use of coercive control with or without physical harm that goes unreported to the system. The present study seeks to fill both of these gaps in the literature.

Walby and Towers (2018) point out that neither Stark's (2007) nor Kelly and Johnson's (2008) typologies are internally stable enough to withstand testing. They posit that there is no "less bad" type or form of intimate partner violence. Their study identifies the victim's economic

status as the primary predictor of frequency and seriousness of violence. Their results prove true for victims of low economic status and reported crime, yet functionally discount all other intimate partner violence victims, especially the controlled, isolated victims of *unreported* assaults, or the 96% which are estimated to get dismissed (Klein & Klein, 2016). We are not safe in assuming that any victim is at lesser risk because she may have no locus of control over her most powerful predictor variable: household economy. In this context, there is no safe coercive control. The present study accepts Walby and Towers' (2018) contention that all intimate partner violence is gender asymmetrical, and gender inequality exists throughout violent crime as reflected in society. Analysis of all violent crime should presume gender to be an issue in all domestic relationships. However, Walby and Towers' (2018) insistence that non-criminal acts (like non-violent coercive controlling behaviors) be discounted is rejected here. Such a small proportion of intimate partner violence crimes are reported that this simple "arrest-the-lawbreaker" proposal fails to protect victims of this complex crime. As represented in Figure 3, the present study's conceptual approach values separating out physical from nonphysical abuses in known abusive relationships in order to better understand the context and complexities of controlling behaviors with physical violence. Until we can interrupt the way this instrumental aspect of intimate partner violence uses gender inequality as leverage and reinforces physical violence, it will take special efforts to expose these largely invisible behaviors (Candela, 2016; Weiner, 2017).

The Empirical Status of Coercive Control

Today, researchers are still calling for an effective, working model of coercive control, particularly one useful for police and other first responders (Crossman et al., 2016; Hardesty Crossman, Haselschwerdt, Raffaelli, Ogolsky, & Johnson, 2015; Myhill, 2019; Tanha et al.,

2010; Weiner, 2017). Hamberger et al. (2017) synthesized existing conceptual approaches and offered a clear new definition, operationalization and measurement guidelines, pushing for more consensus and consistency. After assessing 33 existing measures, each of which capture but some aspects of this complex construct, they call for continuing development of longitudinally sensitive measures specific to coercive controls. Hamberger and colleagues (2017) admitted that researchers are still in the process of assessing what coercive control is and are still far from explaining it. They explain it as an underlying dynamic that is set up and enforced with violent behaviors. They, as Dutton and Goodman (2005) and Breiding et al. (2015) do, find coercive control to be a distinct *subtype* of psychological abuse because "not all psychological abuse is controlling even if it is damaging in some way," (Hamberger et al., 2017, p. 3). The current study finds that position problematic. Breiding et al.'s description of psychological abuse is consistent with every example of controlling behaviors listed in Dutton and Goodman's comprehensive list of coercive controlling behaviors throughout every domestic domain. Nowhere have Dutton and Goodman, Breiding et al., or Hamberger et al. presented an example of psychological abuse that is outside of these detailed examples. The present study will be coding 16 themes of all types of abusive behaviors listed under Breiding et al.'s model and specifying which do or do not include coercive control. Each subtype of psychological abuse includes exemplars of coercive controlling behaviors with remarks on what either the apparent intent or controlling outcome is thought to be. The current study presents a model which prompts the reader to imagine that every type of psychological abuse and IPV stalking comprise coercive control in the IPV Control Framework (Figure 3). Coercive control is best understood as a structure including *all* nonphysical abusive behaviors described by Breiding et al. (2015). *This study promotes an IPV Control Framework model that appropriates all of Breiding et al.'s (2015) six subtypes of*

psychological aggression under the umbrella of control as coercive controlling behaviors. IPV stalking is also be included within this umbrella, or framework.

Both quantitative and qualitative researchers suggest more qualitative research is needed on coercive control, escalation and desistance of violence, risk factors, and both impacts and outcomes of victim responses. The current study looks at victim narratives to collect and analyze data on the relationship between coercive control and intimate partner physical violence. It is expected that victim's voices may provide insight on the elusive boundary between nonphysical and physical abuse. As coercive controlling behaviors seem so often involved with physical violence, the relationship between the two is of key import. The present study is focused on the boundary between nonphysical and physical abuse.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

This qualitative study relies on thematic content analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2014; Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012; Kuckartz, 2014; Lune & Berg, 2017) to shed light on the personal narratives of 266 intimate partner violence victims. These narratives were recorded after the arrest of the victims' partners for perpetrating physical violence against them, for exhibiting illegal stalking, or for engaging in extreme threatening behaviors. Because most arrests and prosecutions focus exclusively on illegal physical violence, the non-violent behavior that precedes, accompanies, or follows the physical assaults is not usually a punishable crime. As noted in Chapter 1, first responders are trained to focus on discrete events, punishable offenses and public safety. They may see, hear, or know of the non-violent abuse, but their primary mission is to formally intervene in physical violence. Data about the rich and possibly explanatory context and role of non-violent coercive control in IPV events is often lost to the system once an arrest is made. The present study seeks to analyze how coercive controlling behaviors from victim statements and community-based reports go together with physically violent abuse. To support future efforts to quantify these theoretically connected coercive controlling behaviors, research should qualitatively contextualize these instrumental tactics to their proximal relationship with physical violence. This study does that by connecting all reports of abusive, nonphysical behaviors in these narratives to every category of nonphysical abusive behaviors in Breiding et al.'s model (2015).

Research shows that victims may adopt subjective perceptions of their abusive conditions. Hardnek (2012) suggested that betrayal trauma theory is in play, wherein victims may be blind to, or ignore, traumatic abuse in order to survive or maintain a connection with the

abuser. In some cases, victims perceive physical attacks as secondary to coercive controlling abuse, and in others the reverse is true. Victims can be expected to express diverse perceptions about acts which threaten their autonomy or liberty. In this study, victims were privileged as experts on their experiences. Their accounts are not expected to mirror the perceptions of researchers. Thematic analysis of these narratives will be used to address the following key research questions:

(1) Is there evidence that physical violence occurs *without* apparent coercive controlling behaviors? If yes, what is the context and what are its characteristics?

(2) Is there evidence that coercive controlling behaviors exist *without* physical violence? If yes, what are the characteristics of these cases?

(3) Are there reports of coercive controlling behaviors *co-occurring* with acts of physical violence? If yes, what is the context and what are the characteristics of these cases?

(4) Is there utility to considering the concept of coercive control as intrinsic to or apart from the nature of physical violence?

Thematic analysis allows the encoding of qualitative data into themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes are patterns in the data that describe, organize, and allow for interpretation of phenomena (Boyatzis, 1998). This technique is particularly well suited for identifying conceptual patterns within and across the transcripts of recorded conversations (Lune & Berg, 2017).

Dutton et al. (2005) developed and tested a thorough and useful scale to measure nonviolent coercive control behaviors in the context of intimate partner violence. Their instrument structured questions to tap the self-reported behaviors of victims or offenders. In fourteen years, no subsequent study appears to have validated their measurement principles or

extrapolated them to other samples of victims. Again, their scale is not suited to the ex post facto thematic content analysis of this study, but the lack of use of their scale confirms the following observation. Coercive control research suffers from a lack of evidence-based information about its role in what we *do* recognize as illegal violent victimization. Because coercive control is a patterned, dynamic, and complex behavioral process involving two intimates, and because it is performed across all domains of personal life, our incident-based system is challenged to observe and document it. The theoretical flexibility of thematic content analysis makes it an ideal technique for advancing the theoretical and conceptual landscape of this line of inquiry, as it allows the researcher to explore the complex and nuanced nature of a phenomena such as coercive control (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87, 2014, 2016; Kuckartz, 2014). Specifically, thematic analysis accommodates my plan to distinguish incidents of physical violence occurring without coercive control, coercive control occurring without physical violence, and coercive control co-occurring with physical violence. In addition, thematic analysis may reveal subtler behavioral manifestations of coercive control.

Alves et al.'s (2017) use of thematic analysis helped define physically violent offenders' coercive controlling behaviors as instrumental. Alves et al. created a scale of eight questions for victims to collect data from victims. These victim self-reports allowed researchers to examine offenders' tactical use of coercive control, building on existing feminist intimate partner violence theory. Offenders were shown to have promises, apologies, and incentives to pressure their pregnant partners to remain in relationships with them. Similarly, Heward-Belle (2017) enlisted thematic content analysis in their study specifically designed to reveal males' tactical use of coercive control to damage their partner's identities as "good" mothers. Pitman (2017), too, used thematic analysis to expose offenders' systems of double standards, boundary violations and

double binds to attack victims' self-efficacy as mothers and overall self-esteem. Offender behaviors may be expressive or reactive, and difficult to connect to any domination or control tactics. However, careful previous research has made that connection and revealed manifest and latent tactics, so it is known that these intentions have been inferred by other researchers using thematic analysis. This prior research reinforces my plan to analyze this study's data for any and all behaviors included under all the CDC's nonphysical categories of nonphysical IPV.

Research Design

Theoretical concepts from the extant literature on coercive control will guide this qualitative analysis, as victims' interview narratives are first coded into categories. During this process, this researcher will remain flexible to the emergence or appearance of new or unforeseen themes. Themes will be identified within categories, then defined and named, creating the most relevant coercive control themes within the narratives.

In this methodological approach, the victims' own narratives will set the definitional basis of coercive control and their own words will illustrate this concept. Victims' accounts that correspond to Breiding et al.'s definition (2015) of all subtypes of psychological aggression and IPV stalking (Figure 2) will be classified as having experienced coercive control. This is a phenomenological study (Guest et al., 2012), limited to one type of data, and in this case, one limited population. It is designed to gain a clearer understanding of the phenomenon of coercive control. If that objective is met, this study's conclusions may be used to contribute to theory-building about coercive control, in the grounded theory tradition (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). One ideal outcome would be to better ground an understanding of these non-criminal behaviors as abusive and harmful acts through descriptions of those who have experienced abuse in their intimate relationship with their partners.

Thematic analysis is a useful method for both representing reality and untangling the ways we currently present reality to each other in practical, justice-based settings. Disentangling coercive controlling behaviors' connection and relationship to physical violence has potential to alter persistent, problematic public and law enforcement myths or misconceptions about IPV. In discounting these harmful, sometimes entrapping behaviors, the system bypasses a critical indicator and predictor of enduring harm, escalating violence, more serious physical injury to victims, and fatality (Anderson, 2009; Bendlin & Sheridan, 2019b; Robinson, Myhill & Wire, 2018; Robinson, Pinchevsky et al., 2018). Beginning with the public's exposure to the term battering, nonphysical abuse has been accepted as a sometime component of IPV. A bright line[7] rule is a legalistic term for a clear, simple test one applies to subjectively judge a situation. The lack of a bright line threshold or boundary between physical violence and coercive controlling behaviors may undermine efforts to prevent IPV, effectively respond to victims, and hold offenders accountable for both crimes and harm. Having a more granular understanding of the connection between and roles of non- physical abuse and physical violence on IPV could serve to improve system interventions.

Source of Data

Data were collected for a National Institute of Justice study (Finn, 2005) on the effects of prosecution styles on victims' empowerment and future victimization. Although this sample may not have experienced the range of internet and social media monitoring and surveillance that victims experience today, examples from narratives will show many behaviors aimed at controlling, monitoring, and surveilling victims. The research protocol was approved by GSU's institutional review board (IRB). Participants from incoming criminal court cases in two southeastern major metro area jurisdictions were solicited for an interview. To be eligible,

participants had to be female, age 18 or older, and the victim of one or more misdemeanor criminal family violence charges. The criminal charges of these family violence designations included battery, criminal trespass, harassment or verbal threats, interference with custody, pointing a pistol at another, sexual battery, simple assault, simple battery, theft by taking, stalking, and violation of civil protection orders.

Finn's original pool of eligible cases numbered 450 women across two jurisdictions. Qualified female participants were telephoned by project managers who solicited their participation in the study. These contacts began with study personnel reading from a script provided by the researcher, describing the purpose and scope of this study. Eligible participants were told that data collection would occur: 1) shortly after the solicitor's office assigned the victim's case; 2) after the court determined the disposition of the victim's case; and 3) six months after the case disposition. Of the 288 women who agreed to participate, 286 were found to be usable. Finn completed intake interviews on 286 women, however case attrition transpired for a number of reasons and Finn's final sample was reduced to 170 women.

Finn's research team recruited victims into the multi-stage data collection protocol shortly after the offender's arrest. The first interview focused on the victim's experiences with violence and abuse with the arrested offender preceding the current arrest. The second interview occurred after the case disposition and the narratives contain descriptions of abusive behaviors experienced after arrest, as the victim's case was being processed and immediately after the case had been disposed of by the court. The final interview took place six months after each case was adjudicated and closed by the court and includes victims' experiences with abusive behaviors in the six months after case disposition. At all three points in time, victims were asked a series of questions by trained interviewers in person, with questions comprised of fixed response items,

short answer items, and open-ended narrative items. Survey instructions asked respondents to describe their most recent experience with physical violence and abuse. In the first interview, the focus was the behaviors that resulted in the arrest and court charge. In the second interview, the focus was the behaviors that occurred after arrest and up to court disposition. In the third interview, the focus was the behaviors that occurred during the six months after court disposition.

The current study focuses primarily on the content of the in person, open-ended narrative questions and participant responses to provide descriptive context. Eligible female participants were informed that each of the three confidential interviews would each take approximately one hour. These interviews were scheduled to occur at the victim's home or in a safe and convenient place selected by the victim. Potential participants were told that all verbal narrative responses would be recorded and transcribed, and each participant's responses to questions would be anonymized for current and future research use. Each participant was paid for their participation in the study. If the participant gave her informed consent to participate, a list of community support resources was provided at the end of this initial, telephone-based selection interview. Participants made decisions about their safest contact strategies and each participant's preferred contact information was collected at this initial, telephone-based selection interview.

The two project managers and the six interviewers were adult undergraduate or graduate students studying criminal justice or psychology, certified in research ethics prepared for interviewing victims of violence and trauma. At each in-person interview, the interviewer collected the informed consent, then administered an oral survey to collect demographics and each participant's history of frequency and severity of IPV (using the Conflict Tactics Scale 2, CTS2), and current case phase information. Finn used existing, validated scales to collect and

measure victims' perceptions of the degree of control or coercion the system exerted as the case was processed. Finn's team of researchers collected official records and administered paper and pencil surveys and face to face interviews to all available victims during each of the study's three data collection intervals (after arrest when the case was assigned, at case disposition, and 6 months after case disposition).

The source material for the current analysis was based upon answers to Finn's interview questions as follows:

> Intake Interview Question III.1: "Not considering the family violence case pending in the solicitor's office in the past 12 months, did you or someone else called the police for assistance because your spouse/partner was threatening, attempting, or completing an act of physical violence against you?"
>
> Intake Interview Question III.1.a "If not, why not?"
>
> Intake Interview Question III.1.b. "If yes, how many times have the police provided assistance in the past 12 months?" (Finn, 2005, p.125). Answers to the follow up question "If not, why not?" disclosed either the arrest event as the onset of physical violence or stalking, victim cost-benefit analysis resulting in no call decision, or victim resistance (Finn, 2005).
>
> Intake Interview Question IV.11: "How long ago did your partner begin to abuse you?" (Finn, 2005, p.123).
>
> Intake Interview Question IV.1: "Describe the most recent act of physical violence your spouse/intimate partner engaged in and for which charges are pending in the solicitor's office?"

Intake Interview Question IV.15.: “During the time that has passed between the family violence incident for which charges are pending and today’s interview has your spouse/partner been abusive toward you?”

Intake Interview Question IV.15.a.: “Describe the incident(s).”

Case Disposition Interview Question 19.: “During the court processing of this case (from arrest to case settlement), did your spouse/partner attempt, threaten, or complete an act of family violence against you?”

Case Disposition Interview Question 19a: “Describe the incident(s).”

Six Months After Disposition Interview Question 5.1.a.: “From the final disposition of this case, did your spouse/partner attempt, threaten, or complete an act of family violence against you?”

Finn’s (2005) question format was designed to capture victims’ experiences as their offenders’ case moved from arrest to six months beyond case disposition, not to discern the subtle elements of coercive controlling behaviors in the context of physical violence. These narratives contain rich reports of nonphysical abuses, but this content was collected incidentally. The interview questions’ lack of specificity about the boundaries between physical and non-physical abuses limits the conclusions following in Chapters 4 and 5.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed into Microsoft Word documents, then imported into SPSS. Every transcript was reviewed for accuracy by two separate members of the research team. No audio portions were entered as missing data. The present study draws upon the anonymized, de-identified text narratives provided by Finn in SPSS format. These narratives vary substantially in length and level of detail. Some victims responded with terse phrasing, so those narrative are short sequences of several word answers or short phrases. Others are

sequences of monologues explaining offenders' behaviors in detail, and some of those are multipage accounts. Across all three points in time, the length of narratives ranged between 1 to 2738 words each. The average was 273 words per narrative and the standard deviation was 337.

Notice that the numeric labels assigned to actual cases cited in Chapters 4 and 5 extends beyond the final sample size of 266 women, as the source data sample labeled many more women across two jurisdictions. This study kept the original sample naming convention, using data from and referencing cases numbered 001 to 943.

Sample Characteristics

The present study relies on the narrative information provided by study participants at one or more stages of interview. A total of 266 individuals provided one or more narrative accounts to the study team across the term of the study. Of this 266, Sub-group 1 consisted of 139 individuals who contributed three narratives, one at each stage of the study. Sub-group 2 consisted of 127 individuals. These women contributed just one narrative (n = 90) or two narratives (n = 37). Across both groups, 581 narratives were available for analysis. Sub-group 1 provided 417 or 72% of the narratives. Sub-group 2 provided 164 or 28% of the narratives (See Figure 4).

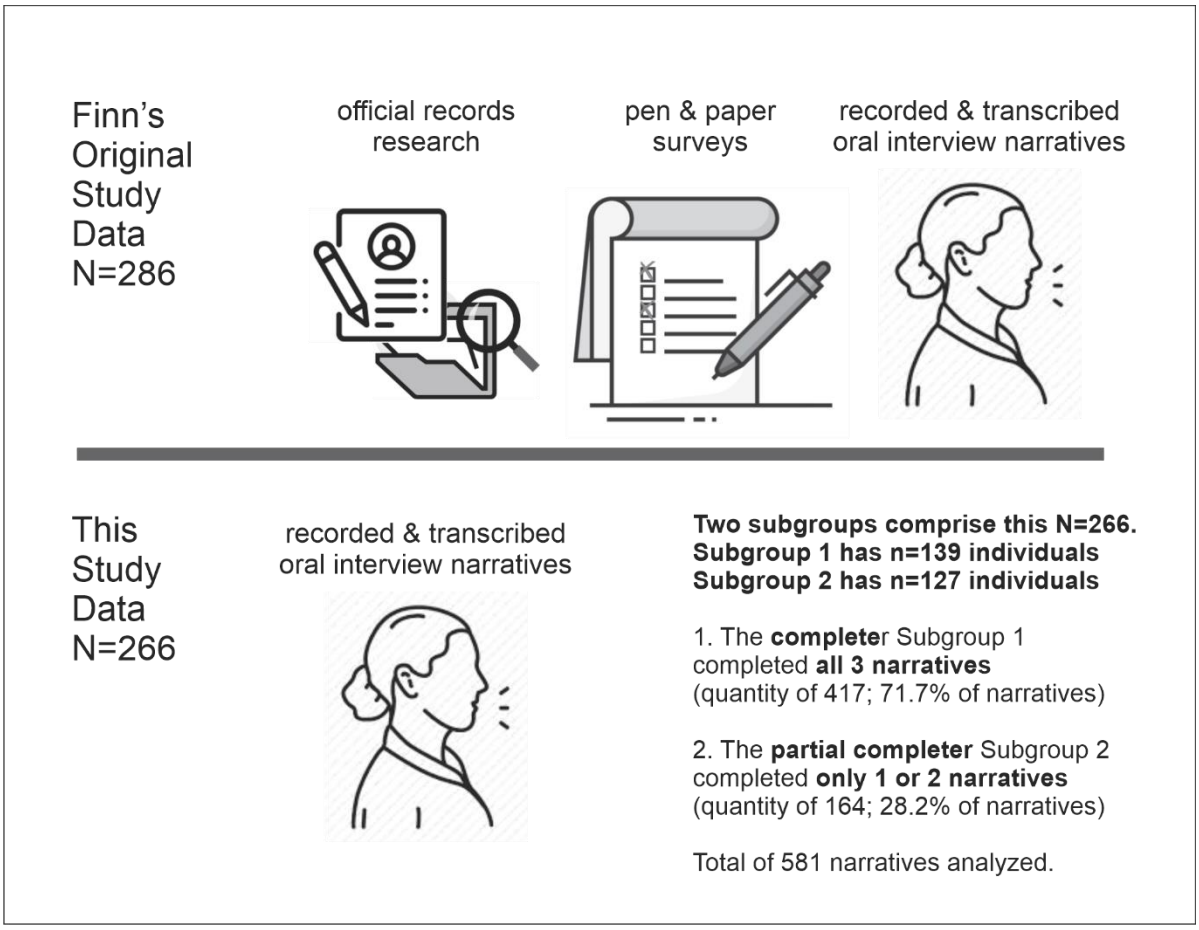

Figure 4. Comparison of Finn's Original Study and the Current Study

Note. Finn's original study used three sources of data collected at three different points in time. The present study's qualitative analyses use every oral interview collected by Finn (2005).

The 266 women that comprise the study sample are from two southern, metropolitan counties and most of them are African American (62.5 %). This is a young sample with most participants in their early thirties (mean = 33.0 years, SD = 9.38). Forty percent of this sample had never been married. Over 88% of this sample worked during the 12 months before study intake. Half of the sample reported their 2001 annual income was under $21,000, which fell below the poverty line at that time. This was equivalent to the buying power of $30,956 annually in 2020 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). The interviewees averaged having been married .80 times. Years of formal education these women completed ranged from eighth grade to graduate

school, with 37.9% having completed high school. The median years of school completed were 13.29. This sample of women had an average of 1.4 children living with them at home.

Sample Attrition and Potential Bias

Sample attrition was an issue with the data collection effort undertaken by Finn and then by extension an issue with the data comprising the present study's sample. Finn's study analyzed major demographic differences of the 170 women who fully complied with the study design (i.e., completed survey and records data and attended all three waves of data collection) against the characteristics of Finn's (2005) full study sample of 286. Considering eleven major demographic variables, Finn found that her full sample did not differ demographically in any significant way from her final complete case sample of n=170 (Finn, 2005). While not a direct reflection of the effects of sample attrition for the data used in the present study, Finn's efforts provide important assurances in this regard.

Finn (2005) reported attrition of the sample as the phased data collection effort progressed. Intake interviews were completed on 288 cases after arrest when the case had been assigned. Two of the original 288 cases were discarded immediately because of interviewer error. Second interviews held after the case disposition stage, were completed with 205 of the original 286 victims. Final interviews, which occurred six months after case disposition, were completed with 170 of the original 286 victims. Case attrition transpired for a variety of reasons. These include instances where interviewers could not subsequently locate victims, victims refused to continue the interviews, or the referring misdemeanor cases were subsequently transferred to felony court and thus were deemed ineligible for continued participation in the study.

Recall that the present study includes subgroups of victims who completed all three of Finn's interview protocols as well as those who completed only one or two of the interview protocols. This raises a new prospect for attrition bias to manifest itself. As such, before presenting results of coding interview narratives to categories and themes, it critical to determine that no significant differences existed between the two subgroups comprising the current study sample: interview completers and partial completers. To this end the following analyses were conducted. The first analysis (see Appendix B for Table 1) presented the means of this study's two subgroups' demographic characteristics. These data were derived from Finn (2005). Subgroup 1 consisted of victims who completed all three narrative sessions (n=139) and Subgroup 2 consisted of victims who completed only one or two narrative sessions (n=127). Table 1 details the characteristics of the sample subgroups across eight demographic measures. The first variable, Race, was coded 1 for Black, 0 for Other. The sample was asked if they were Never Married, coded as 1 for never married and 0 if they had ever been married. Victims' recent work history was captured by Worked in 12 Months Before Intake, with yes coded as 1 and no coded as 0. Victims' Age at Intake was coded in years. Annual income was coded into 2 discrete categories: below or above $21,000. Number of Children at Home was coded from 0 to 5, representing the real number of children. Victims were asked How Many Times Married and answers were coded from 0 to 3, representing actual number of marriages. Education was captured with Highest Year School Completed.

Overall, the data presented in Table 1 (Appendix B) demonstrates that, for these eight basic variables, the two groups share important demographic similarities. They are similar in race, marital status, whether they worked in the last twelve months, age, annual income, how

many children they have at home, how many times they had married, and their level of education.

The second analysis in Table 1 (Appendix B) compared the means of these eight variables between subgroups. The first four variables were categorical, requiring a Pearson's chi square analysis to compare differences. The final six variables were continuous, requiring a T-test to compare differences between these two subgroups. Notice that both Pearson's chi square and T-test analyses show no statistically significant differences between these two subgroups on these variables.

Beyond demographic homogeneity, the more serious concern was that these two subgroups might differ in the forms or severity of harms they had experienced in abusive relationships. Significant differences between the two subgroups could theoretically skew prevalence and incidence counts of these narrative experiences across themes. Fortunately, Finn (2005) administered the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2) to all study participants. This validated instrument was designed by Strauss and colleagues (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) to measure different forms of psychological abuse, physical assault, and sexual coercion women experienced by women over the course of their lifetime. A third analysis (Table 2, Appendix B) presents the mean scores for all 27 items on the CTS2[8] and tests for significant differences between this study's two subgroups. The analysis reveals very few significant differences between groups regarding levels of psychological aggression, physical assault, or sexual coercion they have experienced. In every case, women reported considerable amounts and kinds of abuse at the hands of their abusers, yet t-tests revealed no significant differences (p-value = 005) in the item means across the two groups.

A fourth analysis compared this study's two subgroups on each woman's history of severity of violence as revealed in the narratives. This information was derived from a qualitative measure of severity of physical violence. This count was made by tallying those victims who had experienced violence which qualified for re-categorization from misdemeanor to felony, according to State of Georgia criminal code. I assessed each case separately for seriousness of physical violence to arrive at this statutory threshold determination. For a case to be coded 'severe,' women had to have reported levels of injury, threats, or stalking that would technically justify escalating the crime(s) against them to felony assault or battery from misdemeanor assault or battery. Note that this assessment was not related to any actual changes in case dispositions but strictly based on charge requirement guidelines (see Appendix C for The Official Code of Georgia Annotated, , O.C.G.A. §19-13-1 et seq., 1998). Many narratives revealed physically or sexually violent acts which clearly rose above the level of misdemeanor, according to the Georgia code. Fully one quarter (25.1%) of the 266 narratives included a physically violent victimization that could have been charged as a felony. This categorical, binary variable allowed comparison (misdemeanor/felony) between the two subgroups by Pearson's chi square analysis. The analysis showed no appreciable difference between groups, as 36 completers experienced severe violence compared to 31 partial completers(df = 1, X^2 = .099 on N=265 valid cases).

There is no data available to discern whether one subgroup was less organized, had worse trauma symptoms affecting accurate recall, or was more or less forthcoming than the other. Overall, the comparisons of data presented above show minimal differences in basic demographics and frequency and types of abuse experienced by those who provided narrative data on all three data collection periods versus those who chose to provide narrative data on a subset of these periods.

The purpose of the above analysis was to describe the general characteristics of the victims, the abuse they experienced, and to establish the general homogeneity of both subgroups of this study. This analysis should allay concerns of selection bias as a result of sample attrition in general. Moreover, results indicate that few substantive demographic or experiential differences exist between those victims who completed all three narrative sessions and those who did not. This result suggests that sampling bias is not an issue among the 266 women who provided 581 individual narrative reports detailing 823 abuse events.

Coding Process

This study was guided by a structured coding process. The details of the analysis plan are carefully documented below to enable clarity and allow future replication.

Unit of Analysis

The goal of this study is to contextualize the intersection of nonphysical abuse and physical violence. The unit of analysis is one or more act of coercive controlling or physically violent behavior occurring within a continuous 24-hour period, as reported and defined by the victim. Multiple acts occurring within a contiguous 24-hour period were treated as a single incident. Where acts of physical or nonphysical abuse resumed after a 24-hour lull, they were coded as a separate incident. The choice of a 24-hour period was intended to consider the fluid and often ongoing nature of a domestic incident. As many victims related recent abuse, some reported many incidents of abuse in just one hour or one part of a day. Many others seemed to recall abuse episodes in terms of days or weeks. It was necessary to *define* what constituted one incident, and thus the 24-hour period was selected. The limitations of this choice are addressed in Chapter 5. There were 581 narratives available for analysis. More than a few of these individual narratives describe more than one incident of either nonphysical abuse, physical violence, or co-

occurring nonphysical and physical abuse in separate 24-hour periods. The total number of incidents described in the 581 narratives was 823.

Coding of Key Study Variables

After careful review of 581 narratives, assessing for themes that could help distinguish physical from nonphysical acts of abuse, a spreadsheet was constructed of all 266 victims. Variables were created using all of Breiding et al.'s (2015) nonphysical forms of abuse (Figure 2). In every narrative, reported instances of physical or nonphysical abuse occurring within a contiguous 24-hour period were first coded into one of three substantive categories (physical violence only, nonphysical coercive control, co-occurring violence and coercive control) and then coded again into any of 16 themes describing that category. Each abuse narrative was considered in light of this study's use of all 16 of Breiding et al.'s nonphysical forms of IPV (see Figure 3, IPV Control Framework, above).

Category 1	Only Physical or Sexual Violence (PV) with No Coercive Control (CC)
Theme 1	Physical/Sexual Violence Accident, No Negative Perception/No Intent Report
Category 2	Only Coercive Control with No Physical or Sexual Violence
Theme 2	CC: Limiting Resource Access, Monitoring, Threats to Harm Self/Others/Things
Theme 3	CC: IPV Stalking or Harassing
Theme 4	CC: Expressive Aggression
Theme 5	CC: Threats of Physical Violence or Sexual Violence
Theme 6	CC: Control of Reproductive Sex or Sexual Health
Theme 7	CC: Exploitation of Victims' or Offenders' Vulnerabilities
Theme 8	CC: Gaslighting (mind games)
Category 3	Co-Occurring Physical or Sexual Violence with Coercive Control
Theme 9	PV + CC w/Sexual Violence: Compelled, Non-Consensual, or Sexually Abusive Contact
Theme 10	PV + CC: Limiting Resource Access, Monitoring, Threats to Harm Self/Others/Things
Theme 11	PV + CC w/IPV + CC Stalking or Harassing
Theme 12	PV + CC w/Expressive Aggression
Theme 13	PV + CC w/Threats of Physical Violence or Sexual Violence
Theme 14	PV + CC w/Control of Reproductive Sex or Sexual Health
Theme 15	PV + CC w/Exploitation of Victims' or Offenders' Vulnerabilities
Theme 16	PV + CC w/Gaslighting (mind games)

Figure 5: Categories and Themes of This Study's Thematic Analysis

Figure 5 above lists the three main categories and corresponding 16 themes. Note that each of the three categories are discrete, reflecting the key research questions of this study. Below each category are themes, labeled according to the categories set forth by Breiding et al. (2015). Each theme is introduced with explanations for each followed by justifications for coding these narratives into that theme.

Category 1: Only Physical or Sexual Violence

Theme 1: Only physical or sexual violence with no coercive control. Reports of purely physical violence manifest themselves in three ways. Some victims explained the incident as accidental harm. Perhaps the victim and offender were wrestling over an object and she was accidentally injured when the offender let go of the object. Other women described the event as matter of fact, with no negative valence and no attendant nonphysical controlling behaviors. Finally, some victims' reports gave no hint as to the offender's intent.

Category 2: Only Coercive Controlling Behaviors

These seven themes were used to code controlling behaviors reported outside of physical violence in the previous or subsequent 24-hour period.

Theme 2: **Coercive control in the form of limiting resources and access, excessive monitoring, and making threats to harm self/others/things**. This theme was comprised of what many consider to be classic coercive controlling behaviors. Here, the offender limited the victim's access to transportation, money, friends, or family, thus isolating her. He may have excessively monitored the victim through emails, social media, texting, or instant messaging. He may have threatened to harm himself, her, loved ones, pets, vehicles, reputations, or valued possessions. These behaviors might have happened via telephone, person, or via proxy. Even when these behaviors happened in person or by proxy, there was no attendant physical violence.

Theme 3: Coercive control in the form of IPV stalking or harassing. These cases reported nonphysically violent stalking or harassing. Breiding et al. (2015) treated stalking as a separate type of IPV, different from but on the same level as psychological aggression (compare Figure 2 to Figure 3 above). For this study, stalking is included in the IPV Control Framework and is managed as a theme in Category 2 and Category 3. This theme included common features of excessive phoning, false accusations, and harassing of minor children. Theme 3 could co-occur in an adjacent 24-hour period with any number of themes of co-occurring coercive control, as this example is purely nonphysical. Theme 3 takes the excessive monitoring and limiting of Theme 2 to a higher and often more visible level. Theme 3 is more often practiced when the victim leaves the home for work, socializing, or after the relationship is over.

Theme 4: Coercive control in the form of expressive aggression, "e.g., name-calling, humiliating, degrading, acting angry in a way that seems dangerous" (Breiding et al. 2015, p. 15). Cases coded for Theme 4 often include angry threats designed to prevent victims from calling 911, informing supportive relatives, or seeking legal protection. Frightening, loud, abrupt, furious, degrading communications are expressly designed to stay the victim's actions. Humiliating, degrading verbalizations are designed to dominate victims, to reduce their sense of self, and to erode their agency (Stark, 2007). Theme 4 behaviors would not be expected to rise to the level of an outcome of arrest.

Theme 5: **Coercive control in the form of threats of physical violence or sexual violence.** Incidents were coded for Theme 5 when offenders' verbal abuse rose from frightening to terroristic threats against life or limb. Enacted in person, by proxy, message, or telephone, these nonphysical threats may have been subtle, calm, or frighteningly loud and public. The distinction between Themes 4 and 5 is one of degree: expressive aggression may include threats,

but it is the *manner* of expression that frightens victims. Theme 5 threats are considered terroristic threats and do rise to the level of arrest.

Theme 6: Coercive control of victim's reproduction, reproductive health or sexual health. This type of coercive control could be "refusal to use birth control; sabotage of birth control, exposure to STDs, [and] coerced pregnancy terminations" (Breiding et al., 2015, p.15).

Theme 7: Coercive control by the offender's exploitation of their or the victim's vulnerabilities. Coercive control in Theme 7 involves the offenders' exploitation of either the victims' or his own vulnerabilities. Breiding et al. (2015, p. 15) define this as "perpetrator's use of real or perceived disability immigration status to control a victim's choices or limit a victim's options." An offender could exploit a victim with mental or physical disability in myriad ways. He could coerce a victim to act illegally on his behalf. Offenders may be trying to avoid parole violations or discovery by immigration officers. If a victim is undocumented, her vulnerability to coercive control is increased. The victims', offenders' and family members' immigration or legal status may be exploited by offenders to coercively control.

Theme 8: Coercive control by offender's gaslighting. Gaslighting is also known as "mind games" where offenders give the victim false information to confuse them or make them doubt their own reality and memories. An offender may lie to the victim, creating an elaborate storyline to control her suspicions and her actions while obscuring his actions and behaviors. Offenders may target victims' self-value as mothers - a common target (Heward-Belle, 2017) - and threaten to have children removed because of the mother's invented inadequacy. The offender may fabricate phone calls or correspondence to support this manipulative fiction. Any instance in which offenders fabricate and enforce some alternative reality that confuses the victim's own senses qualifies.

Category 3: Co-occurring Physical or Sexual Violence with Coercive Controlling Behaviors

These eight themes were used to code any woman's report of co-occurring physical or sexual violence with any coercive controlling behaviors within the same 24-hour period.

Theme 9: Co-occurring sexual violence and coercive control, including compelled, non-consensual, sexual abuse or exposure to pornography in the context of physical violence. Women's narratives were coded for Theme 9 if they were being abused or controlled nonphysically while being attacked or abused sexually. In the same 24-hour period, women could be fending off unwanted sexual advances, threats of touching, fondling, or rape. If an offender took a woman's debit card and publicly stripped her of clothing in the same day, that was coded for Theme 9.

Theme 10: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of limiting resources and access, excessive monitoring, and making threats to harm self/others/things. This theme combines physical violence with coercive control as commonly understood. Offenders limit access to transportation, friends, family, money, and goods in the same 24-hour period as physical/sexual violence. It includes excessive monitoring of the victim's location and interfering with or surveilling the victim's mail, email, texts, social media activity, or instant messaging without her permission. It also includes the offender making threats harm to self, others, or valued things. This theme combines classic controlling tactics with physical attacks. An offender attacking or restraining a victim while keeping her from going to work or communicating with supporters would be coded for Theme 10. This would include any event where the offender performs any assault and threatens suicide, femicide, or familicide in the same 24-hour period.

Theme 11: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of IPV stalking or harassing. These system-involved cases reported frequent stalking and harassing behaviors co-occurring with physical violence. These cases include excessive phoning, offenders making false accusations, and harassing of minor children. Stalking was coded as the experience of multiple stalking episodes or one stalking or harassing behavior repeated multiple times, always in the context of physical violence.

Theme 12: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of expressive aggression. Recall that expressive aggression involves "name-calling, humiliating, degrading, acting angry in a way that seems dangerous" (Breiding et al. 2015, p. 15). This form of coercive control was present in many of these narratives, and occurred before, during, or after a physical attack. Though physical violence is why law enforcement is called, the verbal context of these conflicts often includes names and phrases meant to humiliate or degrade victims. Diminishing a victim's sense of self-value is a controlling tactic (Stark, 2007).

Theme 13: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of threats of *additional* immediate or future physical violence or sexual violence. Theme 13 incidents happen during a physical or sexual attack. An example is an offender who ambushed and detained a victim while he threatened to sexually abuse or assault her.

Theme 14: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of control of reproduction, reproductive health, or sexual health. Within the same 24-hour period as a physically violent act, an offender might sabotage birth control, fool the victim into having consensual unprotected sex, or knowingly expose her to an STD. He could pressure her into either continuing an unwanted pregnancy or into terminating a wanted pregnancy. Any of these actions would be coded as Theme 14.

Theme 15: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of offender's exploitation of victims' or offenders' vulnerabilities. Any exploitation as described in Theme 7, of either parties' physical disability, immigration or legal status is combined in this theme with physical violence. An offender could violate or attack a victim while threatening her that calling 911 will ensure that she will be deported. If she has a disability, he may threaten that her children could be taken from her. If she is financially dependent on him and he is not a legal citizen, the threat is economic devastation.

Theme 16: Co-occurring physical/sexual violence and coercive control in the form of gaslighting. In the same 24-hour period as a physical attack, offenders may gaslight the victim, giving her false information intended to confuse her or make her question her own memory, sanity, or sense of reality. These may be reports of offenders convincing women that they are insufficient mothers or bad influences on their own children. Think of these complex abuses as campaigns by offenders to confuse the victim and undermine her self-value, agency, and sense of reality.

This theme was the last theme directly drawn from Breiding et al.'s (2015) IPV Model. During thematic analysis of narratives, three notable trends emerged as themes. These are presented separately from Themes 1 through 16 and should be considered outside of the three Categories. Themes 1 through 16 capture the presence or absence of coercive control and physical violence as experience in the cases of 266 system-involved women. Those themes were based upon consideration of Breiding et al.'s 2015 model of IPV components and definitions. Themes 17 and 18 emerged during thematic analysis of the narratives as independent themes worthy of remark. Theme 17 and Theme 18 behaviors should be examined for their impact regarding long term impact on victims of IPV. Offender who prevent victims from exercising

their right to call for outside or formal help and those who practice non-fatal strangulation signal clear intentions. Victims have been shown that they cannot get help and that the offender could kill them if he wanted to. Thematic analysis yielded a final theme based upon victim's expressions of upset and frustration when the system ignored their needs or mishandled their cases. Theme 19 was included to give voice to instances where the system discounted or minimized the victim's experiences with physical violence, coercive controlling behaviors, or the co-occurrence of both. This study's inclusion of Themes 17, 18, and 19 was intended to provide a more nuanced understanding of the inner connectedness between nonphysical and physical aspects of abusive relationships and the outcomes of that.

Theme 17: Interfering with a 911 call or disabling a telephone. The pattern of offenders' interference with or disabling of victims' telephones occurred in cases during both physical violence and nonphysical abuses. Women who reported offenders hiding, breaking, or taking away phones from victims or people supporting victims were coded for this theme.

Theme 18: Non-fatal strangulation. Women who reported episodes of non-fatal strangulation, choking, purposeful manipulation or squeezing of their necks, chokeholds, or choking were coded for Theme 17. Most of these victims were Category 3 cases, although some were Category 1.

Theme 19: Problematic system response. Cases were coded for Theme 19 when women's narratives reported the system's problematic response to the arrest, processing, prosecution, diversion, incarceration, or release of the offender. These spontaneous reports were noted, and the specific area of complaint was listed for each victim who reported.

Presentation of Results

The 19 themes that emerged from the analysis efforts are reported in Chapter 4. A combination of direct quotations and paraphrasing were used to identify and connect themes in each case. Victims' voices were included to illustrate and elaborate themes that address the research questions. Note that some of the reported coercive controlling behaviors represent arrestable offenses and may or may not have been included in the offenders' cases. Assessing the success or failure of the system to charge crimes is not within the scope of this study.

Chapter 4: Results

The qualitative findings presented below are organized by three major categories and 19 themes contextualizing the presence and co-occurrence of physical violence and coercive control. The three categories are physical violence only, coercive control only, and coercive control co-occurring with physical violence. Each of the three categories was supported by themes capturing the complexity of the behaviors they reference. These 16 themes are direct extensions of the Breiding et al. (2015) multifaceted conceptualization of IPV components. Each category and theme are presented with examples. Following these are three trends that emerged during thematic analysis that were included as additional themes. Themes 17 through 19 were not included in Breiding et al.'s (2015) definition of psychological aggression, so were grouped outside of the main Themes of this study.

This study departed from Breiding et al. (2015) and Breiding as it connected evidence of coercive controlling behaviors to all of those authors' nonphysical abusive behaviors. Because it appears that controlling behaviors can be present in all Breiding et al.'s nonphysical forms of IPV, this study supported elevating coercive control from a sub-subtype of IPV to a framework within which IPV occurs.

Qualitative Findings

Returning to Figure 5 above, the key findings from coding categorized the prevalence of physical or sexual violence and nonphysical abuse described by the 266 women's 581 narrative reports. Events in narratives were first coded into one of three distinct categories: physical violence without coercive control, coercive control without physical violence, and co-occurring physical violence and coercive control. Table 3 below presents the prevalence counts of three categories and 16 themes of abusive offender behaviors and three additional themes.

When interpreting these results, it is important to note that none of the three main categories is necessarily mutually exclusive to any one case with narrative in this study. Some cases contained separate events of abuse that qualified for coding into all three major categories. The focus in Table 3 is placed on prevalence, or the number of women in this sample who were affected by the behaviors captured by three categories and 19 themes. The top section of Table 3 reflects the number of times each category was represented one time in any woman's case. The bottom section represents the number of times every theme from that category was represented one time in any woman's case. Moreover, a single victim might experience multiple themes within a given category (see Category 2 and 3 as examples); thus, the sum of the themes will not necessarily equal the category total.

Table 3 first reports prevalence counts for the three main categories and 19 corresponding themes. Note that 70 of the 266 women comprising the study sample (26.3%) provided interview narratives that fit into Category 1, as they reported one or more experience which involved only physical violence. Category 2, coercive controlling behaviors without physical violence, is represented by 20 women (7.5%) who reported at least one such experience. Category 3 was the most commonly represented in the victim narratives. 191 women (71.8% reported at least one co-occurrence of coercive control with physical violence in their narratives. The results discussion to follow will focus on the prevalence of abuse categories experienced by this sample of 266 victims.

Table 3

Prevalence Counts for All Cases on Three Major Categories and 19 Themes

CATEGORY PREVALENCE COUNTS FOR ALL CASES		N=266[a]	%
Category 1	Only Physical or Sexual Violence with No Coercive Controlling Behaviors	70	26.3%
Category 2	Only Coercive Controlling Behaviors with No Physical/Sexual Violence	20	7.5%
Category 3	Co-Occurring Physical/Sexual Violence with Any Coercive Controlling Behaviors	191	71.8%
THEME PREVALENCE COUNTS FOR ALL CASES		N=266	%
Theme 1	Physical/Sexual Violence Only /Accident, No Negative Perception Reported/No Intent	70	26.3%
Theme 2	CC: Isolate, Monitor, Threats, Possessive, Econ Abuse, Tricks, Child Pawns	5	1.9%
Theme 3	CC: IPV Stalking or Harassing	5	1.9%
Theme 4	CC: Expressive Aggression	5	1.9%
Theme 5	CC: Threats of Physical Violence or Sexual Violence	4	1.5%
Theme 6	CC: Control Reproductive/Sexual Health	0	0.0%
Theme 7	CC: Exploitation of Victims' or Offenders' Vulnerabilities	0	0.0%
Theme 8	CC: Gaslighting (Mind Games)	1	0.4%
Theme 9	PV + CC: Sexual Violence: Compelled, Non-Consensual, or Sexual Abuse	19	7.1%
Theme 10	PV + CC: Isolate, Monitor, Threats, Possessive, Econ Abuse, Tricks, Child Pawns	186	69.9%
Theme 11	PV+ CC: IPV Stalking or Harassing	50	18.8%
Theme 12	PV+ CC: Expressive Aggression	107	40.2%
Theme 13	PV+ CC: Threats of Physical Violence or Sexual Violence	65	24.4%
Theme 14	PV+ CC: Control Reproductive/Sexual Health	1	0.4%
Theme 15	PV+ CC: Exploitation of Victims' or Offenders' Vulnerabilities	1	0.4%
Theme 16	PV+ CC: Gaslighting (Mind Games)	4	1.5%
Theme 17	Interfering with 911 Call/Disabling Phone	42	15.8%
Theme 18	Non-Fatal Strangulation	38	14.3%
Theme 19	Problematic System Response	30	11.3%

Note.
[a] Total exceeds 100% as 5.64% of cases were coded for experiencing behaviors in more than one category

Category One: Physical or Sexual Violence with No Coercive Control

In the narratives, 70 women (26.3%) reported physical or sexual violence with no descriptions of offenders' coercive controlling behaviors. In eight of these 70 cases, the victim was reporting *accidental harm,* so these were noted as accidents. Sixty-two of these 70 cases were coded as straightforward instances of physical or sexual violence. In many cases, there was a lack of narrative data to determine if the victim viewed the arrest incident (violence) as negative or the victim expressed no *negative perception* of an offender's use of violence. Even the briefest reports were coded as only physical or sexual violence with no coercive controlling behaviors if there was claim of an accident, no victim expression of any negative perception about the incident, or no evidence of offender's intent to control or dominate the victim.

Theme 1. Physical or sexual violence reported as accidental harm or any physical or sexual attack with no negative expression or perception was reported by 70 victims (26.3%). An example of *accidental harm follows:*

> Everything was out of anger. He came home in a bad mood. We were just wrestling over the phone, and I pulled the phone. When I pulled, he let it go and if flew back and hit me. It really was an accident. I told the police that he did it (he hit me with the phone) because I was mad, I wasn't really lying, I was just angry.

This quote comes from Case 006 involving a woman aged 19 years, who reported that no other incident had ever occurred. Notice how this victim describes a non-intentional physical confrontation but provides nothing to suggest that there was a coercive control dimension to the event.

Incidents that were coded as accidental harm may have been actual accidents. They may instead indicate interviewer bias, system bias, or impenetrably traumatized victim caution. This

harm may have resulted because of the victim's reluctance to divulge very personal information to the system, or it could have been a poorly documented episode the victim preferred to forget. It could have been that victim/offender overlap fueled the woman's reluctance, as several of these victims freely admitted having used physical violence against their partners. Several of these victims had been arrested in previous 911 calls involving the same offenders. It is possible that some purely physical incidents could indicate a failure of the offenders' grooming or coercion techniques. There was inadequate supporting data in these cases to justify any other coding choice but purely physical violence.

When any narrative described physical violence alone in a matter of fact manner, often as an argument or a single occurrence precipitating the offender's arrest, it was coded as having *no victim negative perception.* These accounts, even when short, did not include mention of controlling tactics or psychological abuse. For example, a 21-year-old woman (Case 335) said:

> Basically, it was an argument that escalated, and we just started fighting over little things. He was throwing things and pushing me. That was going on for about 10 or 20 minutes and then I went outside.

Another example of straightforward physical violence with no negative expression or perception of the offender's use of violence would be Case 316 where a 27-year-old woman noted, "There was no incident really. He just shoved me once."

Yet another example of an excerpt that was coded as *physical violence only with no apparent intent* comes from Case 333, a woman aged 27, about whom the interviewer noted "Victim was very reluctant to talk about the incident for which charges are pending. She avoided directly answering all the questions surrounding it."

> Victim: Oh, my husband was hitting me. Well, actually, we was hitting each

other.

Investigator: And then you called the police?

Victim: Yes.

Investigator: Were you guys just arguing or just…

Victim: We was arguing, and it just got out of hand.

Recall that for this study, coercive control incidents are conceptualized as meeting discrete criteria: victims' negative perceptions. The above example may seem 'threatening,' but coding for coercive control is limited to any behaviors described in Themes 2 through 16, as reported by the victim. This offender went from verbal disagreement to physical violence, without reported coercive controlling behaviors or threats.

Some narrative responses were so short that that it was not possible to discern whether the victim weighed the event negatively. Take, for instance Case 612, involving a 40-year-old woman with no prior history of calling 911. She said, "Ok. He pushed me and I hit to the floor and dislocated my shoulder."

Cases in Category 1 were coded for Theme 1 when victims reported that the arrest incident was the first occurrence and mental disability or illness was clearly in play, or when the victim perceived the incident as a purely physical attack that was unexplained. Cases where the victim's report gave no indication of the offender's intent to control were also coded for Theme 1.

An example of mental disability was Case 326 (a woman aged 39, with no relational history of violence) wherein a couple's friend had an apparent psychotic break, lied to her then forced her to go to police and file a warrant against her male partner. The friend then filed a false report against the partner. Armed police surrounded their home and proceeded to arrest the male

partner. Another example involves an offender who suffered from paranoid schizoid disorder and was experiencing a psychotic break:

> He was tripping. He was going off the deep end. When he gets drunk, he just do that and [is] out of control or something. I just can't figure out why he does it to me... He wouldn't leave me alone. After a while about 5 or 6 in the morning I couldn't take it anymore. This started about 8 or 9 o'clock that night. I couldn't take it. I didn't want to call the police, but he wouldn't leave me alone… I had called 911 and he had knocked the phone out of my hands. (Case 731, woman aged 27, who works for Goodwill's rehabilitative program).

Accidents, lack of negative perception, and no apparent intent defined Category 1 narratives' apparently purely physical incidents. Theme 1 was also coded in cases where only physical violence was reported, and victims did not report enough for me to discern any negative valence of the offender's actions. Below are examples of such responses. In Case 316, the 27-year-old-woman noted, "There was no incident. I will not call the police again." In Case 323, when asked to describe the violent incident that led to the arrest in question, the 32-year-old woman simply responded, "Nothing."

The category of physical violence without coercive control is a relatively small (26.3%) but vital collection of data in these narratives. It does occur but may be conditional on the victim's level of engagement, a failure of the offender to stimulate the victim with tactics of control, or it may indicate some violent offenders' who do not use psychological aggress to control their partners. Also, when the victim was aware of her partner's mental illness diagnosis, abuse was more likely to be characterized as simply physical.

Category Two: Coercive Control with No Physical or Sexual Violence

Following the lead of Breiding et al.'s (2015) conceptual model, narratives were next reviewed for the prevalence of events with no physical or sexual violence, or coercive controlling events beyond the 24-hours of any other events. Just 7.5% (n=20) of victim's reports were found to constitute instances of coercive control absent physical violence. Referring to Table 3 above, this study's IPV Control Framework partitions the Breiding model into Category 2's seven separate themes. As such, data analysis involved coding for the following seven themes. For each, examples are provided, as are prevalence counts based upon the full sample of 266 victims.

Theme 2. Coercive controlling behaviors including limiting victims' access to transportation, friends, family, and money, excessive monitoring and making threats to harm self, others, or things occurred in 1.9% (n=5) of cases. Case 009, that of a 30-year-old woman provides one such example. She said, "My husband had our children for the weekend, and I called to talk to them. He would not let me speak to them. He said they were both sick and I could not talk to them. I kept calling back and he just hung up on me. I was afraid for the children, so I called 911". Intentionally limiting access and purposefully alarming the victim (children were not ill) are controlling behaviors. A similar report comes from a victim aged 36 (Case 021) where the offender limited the victim: "I had called them because he took my purse and my wallet with my driver's license in it. They asked if he had it and he said no (he did though). They said that there was nothing they could do to him anyway because since we were married, what was mine was his and what was his was also." The victim could not leave or drive without identification.

Another woman, 30 years of age (Case 307), said,

> …ever since I left the house, he hasn't left me alone… I called the police to report that he was harassing me on the phone at work. He had been watching me, my comings and goings. As soon as I walked into the job, he would call me as soon as I walked into the door... Just taunting me [with] little things he was saying … was making me nervous because he knew my comings and goings.

This monitoring tactic is a common one post-abusive relationship (Stark, 2007) and in some cases rises to the standard of an IPV stalking and harassing crime. The above example was coded for both Theme 2 and Theme 3 because of the harassment the victim reported, Theme 2 includes excessive monitoring, but Theme 3 was included in this framework here to capture just such IPV stalking and harassing.

Offender's attempt to maintain control by fear-inducing communication or signals. This monitoring comes with implied threats of knowing how, when, and where to find the victim. For example, a 25-year-old victim (Case 816) explained that there was no physical violence at this point, but the offender was "Making harassing phone calls, threatening phone calls. And that's it basically. He just harassed me daily by calling me and threatening me, crying on the phone." She took out a warrant based upon his threats. Similarly, one woman, aged 30, reported two Theme 2 occurrences in one evening (Case 213). She said,

> And then there was one incident where I had went to a friend's house and he felt like I shouldn't have to go over there because this was because the girl was having problems with her boyfriend. I just went over there to listen to her. He got mad and he went over there and kept calling there all night long and leaving messages. He wanted to talk to me… The night that he went over there I had a bottle of perfume, he broke that.

In this case, the offender was socially controlling, demanding, monitoring her whereabouts and harassing her. He destroyed items valuable to her and others. Within six months he was arrested, charged, and jailed for physical domestic violence.

Theme 2 behaviors are central to coercive control but are too limited to fully capture the controlling behaviors experienced by this sample of women, who experienced many other nonphysical and harmful abuses. IPV stalking and harassment, frightening expressive aggression, explicit threats of physical or sexual violence, controlling women's reproduction and sexual health, exploiting their vulnerabilities and manipulating their reality with gaslighting are all common and destructive enough to merit inclusion in this IPV Control Framework.

Theme 3. Coercive control comprising IPV stalking or harassing without physical violence was reported with a low prevalence: just 1.9% (n=5) of victims reported such experiences. Finn's (2005) official data reveal that this study's sample included six stalking and 13 harassing communications arrests, yet these women's narratives contain only five women who volunteered IPV stalking and harassing experiences. In at least two cases, women's narratives indicated that stalking or harassment had occurred, but this behavior was not listed as one of the charges in the central arrest incident. Not all stalking is IPV, yet Proctor (2018) concluded that the dynamics of IPV stalking qualify it as a gender-based violence. Negative impact and outcomes of IPV stalking were more severe for women victims and Proctor connects this to social forces and inequities.

This study's standards for stalking or harassing follow the Georgia codes (See Appendix A). Below are sample narratives from victims who experienced being stalked or harassed by offenders. A woman of 27, Case 920, explains:

There is a harassing phone call charge pending. For a period of ten months he was calling me like 20 or 30 times a day. He would call and say that I was sleeping around with someone else. But it wasn't just me that he was harassing. He was calling and talking to my kids. Asking, where is she at? What's she doing? Finally, I called the police and reported him.

In Case 347, a 36-year-old woman describes the stalking she experienced:

Investigator: What interactions have you had, if any, with the offender since your case was completed?

Victim: Stalking, persistent phone calls.

Investigator: Were they threatening in nature?

Victim: No.

Investigator: Anything besides the phone calls? Coming over, anything like that?

Victim: Showing up where I work, places I would go.

Investigator: So, do you think he was following you?

Victim: Oh, most definitely. He would leave things at my house outside of the door.

Non-violent coercive control in the form of stalking and harassing behavior can continue despite the end of intimate relationships. In this sample, victims could have ended their physically violent relationship with the offender and yet still be experiencing nonphysical abuse during the post-arrest period. Below are examples of the constancy of victim vulnerability to coercive controlling behaviors even after their relationships with the offender have ended. Intimate relationships result in the sharing of resources and relationships, shared vehicles, shared

housing, shared money, shared children, which must be negotiated even in volatile times. The stalking and harassing excerpts below are from narratives collected after case dispositions and six months after case dispositions. These examples were coded *'non-violent coercive control continued despite ending intimate relationships.'* In Case 024, a 29-year-old woman noted,

> He just calls continually, making threats; say that he is going to "get" me. He also calls and just doesn't say anything at all when my other two children answer the telephone. This is having a very bad effect on my 10-year-old son. He also threatens to have DFACS take our infant child away from me, suggesting that I am an unfit mother.

Notice in this example, the coercive controlling behaviors involve harassing, threats, and exploitation of this woman's mothering-related vulnerability. This report clearly includes the victim's negative perception of the offender's behaviors.

A victim, aged 30, (Case 345), reported being in a relationship for a year. She said that she, "just kept seeing a pattern and it kept getting worse, and worse, and worse." In this example of *coercive control continuing despite ending intimate relationship*, she describes the non-violent abuse that began after she decided to end the relationship,

> Well, he said that he'll get me. And that if he ever went back to jail then he would do something to go to jail for because he doesn't think he's done anything. So, I don't know what to expect when he gets out because he's so violent. I'm moving, I'm packing now. I'm trying to move and get an apartment before he moves out. My attorney told me that I need to get a restraining order but that doesn't keep him away. The reason why he hasn't tried to get in touch with me is not because of the restraining order, it's because he's in jail…First, after he moved out, he kept calling, kept calling-harassing calls, calling me

> some horrible, horrible names, threatening me, telling me that I was going to get what was coming to me.

The woman in Case 345 has experienced the instrumental intention of harassment. The offender has not contacted her because he was jailed. He reinforced his earlier violent acts with credible threats. It is unlikely that he would enact this if it had not worked for him in the past, perhaps with others. Notice that this repeated harassment seems like a campaign. Campaigns are only waged with a desired outcome as a goal.

Theme 3 connects the interwoven acts and effects of harassing threats to 'classic' coercive control and expressive aggression. The inner connectedness of these instrumental tactics is a common feature in the IPV Control Framework, even in nonphysical abuse.

Theme 4. Coercive control in the specific form of expressive aggression ("e.g., name-calling, humiliating, degrading, acting angry in a way that seems dangerous") (Breiding et al. p. 15) was coded as having a prevalence rate of 1.9% (n=5) in this sample. An example of coercive control aggressive expression comes from a woman aged 27 years (Case 325), who said:

> About one month ago, I lost my job because I was in a car accident and could not work. He was at home and standing right over me demanding his car keys. I was frightened of him, so I called the police. They didn't do anything because they said there were no physical signs of violence… They told him that domestic violence was not tolerated in Gwinnett County. He was never arrested.

In the following example, (Case 819, woman aged 28) the offender's tactics were intended to coerce the victim to sign divorce papers that would result in financial and legal danger for her. She reported,

> At that point, he was calling my voice mail leaving all kinds of threatening messages how he was going to kill me and calling me all sorts of names. To get my stuff and get out, very abusive, not using nice terms or anything like that.

Expressive aggression events were often combined with coercive controlling behaviors from other themes, as in the case where the offender used Theme 2 threats and Theme 3 harassing. Another expressive aggression victim (woman aged 30 in Case 010) explains,

> He hasn't really hurt me physically in several years. It's more verbal. He screams at me in front of our children, extreme profanity, while they just stand there and listen.

As with all expressive aggression in these cases, these offenders' behaviors were instrumental. Deciding to humiliate, degrade, or act to angrily frighten a partner comes with an expectation of advantage. Exploiting advantage yields domination, as these examples have shown. Expressive aggression is a central tactic of coercion and control.

Theme 5. Coercive control occurring as threats of physical or sexual violence was reported in only a few cases, with a prevalence of 1.5% (n=4). Threats of murder and suicide are recognized as common, high risk pattern in IPV (Buzawa et al., 2017) and these narratives support this. A victim, aged 41, (Case 745) reported that the offender "had threatened me. He had told me that if I put him out, he was going to kill me, and he was going to set the house on fire." Another example illustrates the variability of these victims' cases, in terms of coding into multiple categories. This 36-year-old woman (Case 046) stated, "No physical [violence], a lot of verbal abuse, gotten worse." This victim then continued, "Just verbal abuse and he gets so huffy" (Prior to his mode of using only verbal abuse, this offender had been arrested for strangling this victim until she lost consciousness). An arrest of this woman's partner because of a physically violent arrest incident happened about one month after the above Category 2 exclusively

coercive control event. When describing that arrest, this victim explains, “he dug his claws into my arms and backhands me across the face leaving my lips bloody.”

Narratives coded for Theme 4 abuses can also contain physical violence, in another 24-hour period. In one case with a 47-year-old victim (Case 022) family members had been unwillingly exposed to pornography and the victim had been beaten. She separated from the offender and he deescalated to nonphysical abuse: “He leaves threatening messages on my answering machine every day sometimes as many as 30 in a row. Every day, except maybe two or 3 days since we separated, he calls and leaves these threatening messages.” Finally, a 27-year-old victim (Case 317) reported, “On my birthday, he pulled me over on I-285 and he wanted to jump off the bridge with me and kill me.”

Theme 5 had relatively low prevalence in this sample. This was predictable because the sample is already system-involved. This is a more critical theme for victims whose partners have not escalated to physical violence, who have not yet come to the awareness of the system, or who have parted from the offender. Recent studies support this conclusion (Beck & Raghavan, 2010; Crossman, Hardesty, & Raffaelli, 2016), as separated, divorced, or incarcerated offenders may lack physical access for physical or sexual IPV.

Theme 6. Coercive control in the form of an offender controlling a victim’s reproductive sex or health without physical violence or sexual coercion did not occur in this study’s narratives. Spontaneous reports of such personal issues of sexuality, STD fears, fertility, or possibly pregnancy termination were not expected in this content analysis despite the fact that Finn’s (2005) results indicate that this form of coercive control was experienced to a significant degree in this sample.

Theme 7. Coercive control in the form of exploitation of either the offenders' or victims' vulnerabilities was not represented in any narrative. This theme's prevalence was 0.0%. While victims made references to immigration status vulnerability, reputation worries, loss of child custody, and their disabilities, none were clear enough to constitute Theme 7 from the Breiding et al. (2015) model.

Theme 8. Coercive control in the form of gaslighting in the absence of physical violence was reported by just 0.4%, or one, of these cases. This low prevalence reflects the rarity of either recognition of or actual use of this coercive behavior. In the sole example, a 29-year-old victim (Case 700) commented, "…he came up to my room talking about something to do with an old girlfriend. Not even a girlfriend, but something about a female person and she was pregnant, and she wanted him to be the god-daddy. He's always playing mind games." In this sample, gaslighting appeared to be a tactic of desperation, not remarkable for its use in nonphysical settings. There were spontaneous references to offenders' use of 'mind games' but these were oblique and not connected to attempts or intents to control. Simply lying does not always rise to coercive controlling gaslighting, but gaslighting always involves lying, or "presenting false information" (Breiding et al. 2015, p. 15).

Regarding prevalence rates for Category 2 on the whole, narratives were coded for any reports of coercive controlling behaviors that did not unfold simultaneously with a report of physical violence. Incidents of purely nonphysical episodes of coercive control were reported. Only 20 women in these 266 cases (7.5%) experienced at least one incident of pure coercive control without any physical or sexual violence. These same women could have also experienced and reported physical or sexual violence with no coercive control or co-occurring coercive

control with physical or sexual violence. Below are several narrative examples of these coercive control events.

In some of these narratives, the offender's physical attacks may have stopped for some period of time. In some cases, the violence continues and in some cases the violence does not recur. The temporary replacement of physical violence with coercive control is such a common phenomenon (Bendlin & Sheridan, 2019b; Dutton & Goodman, 2005; Stark, 2007) that it merits mention in both categories two and three.

The above examples illustrate the *sustaining power* of offenders' use of coercive controlling tactics without matters escalating to acts of physical violence. Notice that when offenders are wary of law enforcement and system intervention, they may use legal and invisible tactics to keep their instrumental control in effect. Although only 20 women (7.5%) were coded as having reported clear cases of purely nonphysical coercive controlling behaviors, all of them already experienced physical violence sufficiently serious to alert the system. This behavior does occur outside of physical violence in abusive relationships. This study offers a glimpse at these behaviors in cases where physical violence is known. Though these manipulative behaviors were at all the focus of interview questions, nor the court cases which were being analyzed, still the narrative yielded many reports of separate, non-physical abusive behaviors and events. Chance reports in these spontaneous narratives suggest that coercive control has a structural function in the performance of IPV.

Category Three: Co-occurring Physical or Sexual Violence with Any Coercive Controlling Behaviors

This third category is again derived from the Breiding et al. (2015) conceptualization and contains eight themes. All eight themes combine physical and nonphysical abuses in a co-

occurring fashion. The overall prevalence among these 266 women was 71.8% (n=191) for Category 3.

Theme 9. Physical or sexual violence with controlling behaviors involving sexual acts, compelled, non-consensual, sexual abuse, including exposure to pornography was reported as occurring in 7.1% (n=19) of cases in these narratives. For example, a woman aged 27 (Case 920) reported: “Two days ago, he raped me. I met him and we were going to meet and talk, to work things out. But he took me somewhere and tied me up and sexually assaulted me.” Case 920 was not a purely physical, stranger sexual assault. Under the promise of reconciliation, the offender lured the victim away from her home, exercising coercion of promised détente. Deceit should be considered the offender’s intent to dominate a victim, to trick or force her to do his will. Once she had met him willingly through his deceit, he then physically restrained and then assaulted her.

In Case 022, the victim is 47 years of age. He had exposed the family to pornography videos and when exposed in public, the offender threatened the victim with raised fist, saying "You bitch, I’d like to just knock your Mother F-ing head off. He didn’t hit me then, but he said this in front of my daughter and everyone in that store. …back home… He grabbed my arm and started calling me names and pulled my arms behind my back and dragged me over into the back of the truck trying to get the keys out of my hand.” Case 025 was a 41-year-old woman who reported, “I had stayed out late with friends and he was angry when I got home. He had been drinking and insisted on having sex. I said no and he got angry and shoved me.” He hit her the next morning. Case 046 victim, aged 35, reported: “He wanted to have sex. I said no and of course, that made him mad. I got up and went to the kitchen to clean up. He got mad and started

screaming at me. He called me back to the bedroom and before I knew it (I had my back to him) he hit me." Another Theme 9 victim, 27 years of age, (Case 047) reported:

> He got angry because he wanted to have sex and I said no. We had already signed divorce papers and I told him we were not going to do that. I just went to bed and he dragged me off the bed toward the closet as if he was going to put me in there. He hit me.

Another case was coded Theme 9, as the victim reported that the offender forced her to watch him having sex with others and allegedly exposed her to HIV. This 50-year-old victim (Case 314) shared the following:

> He came in there and went to bed and brought out his drug stuff, you know, and all this and was expecting me to lay there while he had oral sex with that girl. I couldn't do it. I got up and came in here, sat down in the chair that you're sitting in and I heard him coming after me.

This victim reports quickly leaving the house, but he soon caught her. At this point, she reports that he, "threw me in the house. … he held me down and [did] not let me breathe to where I felt like that he was gonna kill me." When his plan to dominate her into passive participation in sex failed, he beat and strangled her, non-fatally.

Theme 9 was created to accommodate Breiding et al.'s (2015) IPV Model's special attention to sexual violence within the context of IPV. This study was fortunate to capture reports from 19 women who spontaneously offered examples of this complex coercive controlling behavior. The boundary of active sexual consent is complex in normal intimate relationships, as habit and history inform behavior. Nonconsensual sexual contact, abuse, and violence are powerful tools of domination and control.

Theme 10. Physical or sexual violence with control in the form of limiting access to transportation, money, friends, and family, excessive monitoring of a person's whereabouts and communication, monitoring or interfering with electronic communication without permission, making threats to harm self, loved ones, or possessions was common in this sample. Fully 69.9% (n=186) of the cases reported having these experiences. An example of this is a 31-year-old woman (Case 003) who described isolation and monitoring meshed with physical violence:

> The first time they gave a warning to my husband, the second time they arrested him. He's too much jealous, he doesn't want me to talk to anyone else, man or woman. He likes me to talk to him only. He tells me to go ahead and then he gets mad and hits me. Then he says he does not know what happened, he is just jealous. He gets mad if anyone even talks to me. He thinks that I have told [them] about him (abusing me) and that they are telling me to do something (about him hitting me), but it is not true. I don't tell anyone my problems, I keep it to only myself, I don't tell my mother, not my father, I don't tell anyone… My brother, he doesn't help. He has seen him hit me and he left and did nothing.

Similarly, a woman aged 43, (Case 923) reported:

> …he was up and down the stairs cursing…he went through the rooms calling me and he went into the middle bathroom and when he came in, he said 'Oh, so you are hiding from me.' And then he grabbed me and pushed me down on the tub. And he started hitting my face into the tub. And I was shocked because I really never thought that he would hit me. He did a lot of talking, but I never thought that he would hit me. So, I tried to get up, and he pushed me down again and started hitting me in my face and neck.

This victim also reported that the offender threatened her and menaced her as a prelude to physical assault. It is possible that his aggressive comment about her hiding from him could be re-enacted in the future as a reminder and threat, precluding the need for subsequent physical assaults. This nonphysical threat combined with physical assault should be considered co-occurring coercive control with physical violence.

The 27-year-old victim from Case 043 provided an excellent example of bare bones reporting of co-occurring Theme 10 abuses. The offender threw something of value, frightening her son. He got angered when she confronted him and put her in a headlock: She recalled,

> It was Christmas Eve, unfortunately. I came home from shopping and my little boy said daddy threw my chocolates. I went upstairs. We were both angry. I asked him why he did that to our son. He got mad and put me in a headlock. When I got away, I called 911.

Unwanted, monitoring, controlling, and jealous combine with physical violence in Theme 10. The final example was repeated in a number of these narratives where women were partnered with men who came from quite different or foreign cultures. Case 336's victim was aged 27 and married to a man from the Czech Republic. She reports:

> See there's a big language barrier because he's Czechoslovakian and he thought I was seeing someone else which I wasn't. He went into a mad rage …he pulled my hair and he kicked me in the back. He basically wouldn't let me get out. He…hid my cell phone and unplugged the phone.

Many classic coercive controlling Category 2 Theme 2-like behaviors happened *not at the exact moment* of physical attacks but were performed within the 24-hour window of association with physical violence. These were all coded for Category 3's Theme 10. Here, all elements of classic coercive control are at play, and this theme, affecting about 70% of all

women in this study, was by far the most prevalent. However, behaviors in Themes 9,11,12,13,14,15, and 16 together were experienced by many women in this sample. There is benefit in considering this constellation of tactics as structural, beyond one type or class of violence.

Theme 11. Physical or sexual violence with IPV stalking or harassing occurred with a prevalence of about 19% (n=50) in these cases. This co-occurrence holds special potential as an extreme risk predictor for escalating violence with a higher probability of injury or fatality. Research shows that 76% of IPV fatalities had a history of offender stalking (Bendlin & Sheridan, 2019b). The 25-year-old woman identified as Case 220 stated,

> Stalking. He threatened me, threatened everyone I was with here at Applebee's. He called me names. He has followed me before, pulled out of my mother's driveway. He tried to run me off the road and started beating on my window on my car.

Note in this case that the offender performed actual crimes, yet they were unobserved, and so difficult to prove and charge. Similarly, a 29-yesr-old woman (Case 830) reported the following:

> I was over at my parent's house to go water their plants. I was outside watering their plants and a friend of mine drove by. Me and him were standing outside talking and my then at time boyfriend drove up and thought something more was going on than what it was and got upset. He kind of like pushed me back into the house. Just a lot of pushing at first and then I tried to leave and go out and get in my car and that's when he jumped in the car with me. He ended up hitting me in my eye.

Case 830 goes beyond non-IPV stalking, as her boyfriend is monitoring the victim's away-from-home activities and is privileged to know the location of her parent's home. It is important to

distinguish that the privileges of intimacy can provide offenders with inside schedule and location information that stranger stalkers would not know.

Finally, a 42-year-old victim (Case 702) recalled an incident in which the offender located this victim in Winn Dixie, as she was shopping with their children. The victim says,

> He came in the grocery store while me and my children were shopping on a Saturday afternoon. He walked up to me and started yelling and screaming and slapped me. Then he tried to take the children away from me. They ran behind me. We started walking up to the front of the store. I asked someone to call the police. But everyone was just standing there looking at me. He just stood there continuing to argue with me…The offender left before police arrived.

The witnesses to this act were her children and she was not willing to use them as witnesses. She was mid-divorce. He had previously damaged her car and was on probation for physical assault against her. Theme 11 should be considered along with the previous complex coercive controlling behaviors. The index of misery experienced by victims of this repetitive, disruptive class of acts is high as is the fatality risk. Nineteen percent prevalence takes on more weight when one considers the heightened risks correlated with violence plus stalking and harassment. These are rarely benign tactics. They can amplify the duration and impact of physical violence.

Theme 12. Physical or sexual violence with expressive aggression ("e.g., name-calling, humiliating, degrading, acting angry in a way that seems dangerous") (Breiding et al. 2015) was a commonly reported behavior with a prevalence rate of 40.2% (n=107). Case 340 provides a clear example of this co-occurrence of coercive control expressive aggression with physical violence. It was provided by a woman, aged 37, who stated that there had been no previous violence:

Victim: He grabbed me and every time he went into a fit of rage, in the past and now, he'd always yell at me to hit him. He'd say, 'Come on, hit me, hit me!' So, he grabs me and restrains me. He doesn't hit me and let me go, he grabs me so that I can't get away. And he did that this time, too.

Investigator: So, he tried to provoke you?

Victim: Yes.

Investigator: But he won't let you get away?

Victim: Right. Now, it seems like he gets so upset with himself that he gets into this behavior and instead of apologizing he gets more into a fit and in that fit will grab me, restrain me, and tell me to hit him. What he did on a prior incident; he grabbed my wrists and he was actually taking my hands and hitting himself in the face with them. He messed up this finger which the doctor I saw today said would be permanently disfigured and good chances of early arthritis with it and there's really nothing they can do. This is the second incident of where he had done something similar.

Another example is provided in the narrative for Case 342, a woman of 38 years. She describes the combined physical violence with coercive control expressive aggression of her partner as follows: "I guess, after throwing things the verbal abuse was constant." An additional report comes from Case 008, a woman aged 22, who stated she had "never told anyone" about the abuse. Expressive aggression in the form of 'cussing' escalated into severe violence:

> My mom came first. He was cussing at me then, I was crying and telling her that he was drinking too much and that's when he lunged at me. My head went through the wall and he was choking me. When the police came in, he was choking me, and they did nothing. They said he was trying to prevent me from killing myself. …They completely took my husband's side. Even though I had the remainder of two black eyes, they didn't even attempt to interrogate him. In fact, they handed my son over to him (my husband)…

Violence plus expressive aggression was the second most prevalent theme in Category 3, reported by 40.2% of women (Theme 12). These examples suggest that dominating, prevailing, or crushing the opposition seem to be the goals behind expressive aggression, Theme 12 fits neatly within the IPV Control Framework model (Figure 3 above). Frightening, humiliating, or degrading one's victim with abuse and violence may be designed to advantage the offender, resulting in control of the person, goods, or resources she would otherwise control. The outcome of these co-occurring behaviors is the best indicator of the offender's intent.

Theme 13. Physical or sexual violence with threats of physical violence and sexual violence were reported with a case prevalence rate of 24.4% (n=65). In situations with co-occurrence, the violent act is dynamic, not statically situated in its time of origin. It can persist, pulled along to the present and future by these temporally enmeshing coercive controlling behaviors. This theme is further illustrated in Case 334 that involved a 24-year-old woman who reported the following:

> We were arguing a lot and he was in my face and were just pushing each other. I kept moving to different rooms and he would follow me and stick his hands and fingers and face in my face. I even locked myself in my mom's bedroom, but he shoved the door open. He was yelling and screaming at me, being mean, and he was throwing stuff

everywhere. He was pushing me and shoving me and pointing his fingers really close in my face. My mom called his mom and he grabbed the phone and hung up on her. He pushed me down while I was holding the baby. Just screaming at me and getting my face.

This complex example shows one offender's skilled use of nonphysical and physical abuse tactics. Threats, invading a victim's personal space and autonomy, screaming, name-calling, and forcing open doors are classic co-occurrence. Theme 13 is one of threatened escalation: an offender is using physical violence itself along with threats of added physical violence. Throwing or destroying the victim's objects, mistreating her loved ones, assaulting the victim physically, verbal cruelty, and disabling a telephone all coalesce to form a kind of temporal meshing of abuse and pain for the victim. The victim representing Case 334 did an admirable job of teasing the strands of physical and nonphysical behaviors apart in her report.

Another example of this complex co-occurrence follows. This female victim was aged 18 (Case 615) who explained that she was satisfied because the system's actions "keep him as far away from me as possible." She went on to say,

> So, we were arguing back and forth, back and forth. So, I just went outside, and I was talking to my grandma on the phone and his sister just left, her and the girl just left. And then, um, we argued for a long time. So, I went through the house, I went through the back door. And he grabbed me by my shirt, and he ripped it. And then I came back to the front, I came into the front. I told his mamma and she told him to stop and I went back to the front, so I called my cousin. And he stopped, and he came back, and he had a gun and then so, I said, I started crying, I told my cousin to call the police he got a gun to my head. And he mashed the phone, he hung it up and threw it outside. He threw the phone

> and then he said, I'll kill you; do you know how much I love you; I'll take your life away and won't think nothing else about it.

This account contains threats of physical violence (gun, kill threats) simultaneous to physical violence. Physical and nonphysical acts are clearly enmeshed; the threats are interwoven.

It appears that nonphysical acts reinforce the physical violence which then support the nonphysical acts. This is illustrated in Case 748, a 29-year-old victim who reported,

> I told him that I was going to be late for work. He said don't worry about your job – you are going to lose your job today. We're arguing. I start praying but every time I started praying, he covered my mouth. The lady next door was home so I thought if I got into the kitchen and screamed loud enough, she would hear me. I don't know if she heard me or not. So, I started picking up stuff and throwing it at him. We continued to argue. He threatened to kill me and then to kill himself.

Similarly, in Case 314, a 50-year-old woman experienced strangulation with nonphysical abuse when the offender threatened to stop her from breathing while he is choking her:

> He come back and he grabbed me, pushed me down on the couch, straddled me, and kept coming up until he finally was straddling my throat and he held my hands, you know, my arms down, my hands, and I was just stretching my head, you know, trying to get him to stop and I couldn't. My legs wouldn't even work hardly, and I was moving around, and he put his hand over my nose and my mouth and was telling me he didn't care if I couldn't breathe.

This example of Theme 13 is almost wholly physical violence, but the victim's report of the offender's verbal threat justifies this classification. One of the most complex Category 3 themes,

Theme 13, could only be coded when physical or sexual violence was *combined* with coercive control in the form of threats of additional or escalated physical or sexual violence.

At first glance, Theme 13 may seem redundant as it requires threats to be delivered *while* the victim is being beaten or assaulted. The above examples show the added valence of escalating threats when victims are already in precarious situations. These behaviors are designed to warn, defeat, frighten, or brutally control victims who understand that it can *always* get worse. These behaviors are part of this study's proposed IPV Control Framework.

Theme 14. Physical or sexual violence with control of reproductive sex or health was reported in just one case narrative, with a prevalence of just 0.4%. The lone example was offered by a 50-year-old woman (Case 314) who recounted,

> The girl that he was messing around with is HIV positive. I want him to be tested for it because I've already been tested for it but if I come up with it he's the only one that I can get it from because I have not run around on him.

This female also reported that the offender had held her down and strangled her. She believed that she was dying. They were arguing because he would not give her results of his HIV test, despite him having told friends that he was HIV positive. Knowingly exposing her to HIV is arguably coercive control, but this offender combined that behavior with physical assault.

There was no mention in these narratives of offenders' refusal to use condoms, but Finn's (2005) original report does contain such data. She collected 46 positive responses (17% prevalence of N=266) to the CTS2-based statement "My partner insisted on sex without a condom (no physical force)," (Straus et al., 1996).

This particular theme may feel more sensitive or private than others and less prone to be volunteered information given verbally to interviewers. Theme 14 carries a high-risk valence for

severe injury or fatality. Offenders who are either overly controlling or dishonest and irresponsible about sexual heath or reproductive health should be flagged as high risk for endangering victims.

Theme 15. Physical or sexual violence with exploitation of either the offenders' or victims' vulnerabilities was also a rarity in terms of prevalence, reported as just 0.4%, or in only one case. This woman, aged 50 (Case 314, again), explains,

> He come back and he grabbed me, pushed me down on the couch, straddled me, and kept coming up until he finally was straddling my throat and he held my hands, you know, my arms down, my hands, and I was just stretching my head, you know, trying to get him to stop and I couldn't. My legs wouldn't even work hardly …I had my diabetic kit because I'm a diabetic and I mean I was just all to pieces but I knew something was wrong because my head was feeling really crazy and I took my sugar and it was 300-something. And I kept telling him that I wasn't faking and that I loved him and that I was not faking.

In this case, the victim was physically vulnerable and more vulnerable to physical or neurological damage because of her medical condition. The offender had threatened her, chased her around the house with threats, strangled her and denied her medical assistance when she was experiencing lightheadedness and elevated blood sugar levels.

Theme 15 is relevant to any medically fragile victim, but vulnerabilities can also be used against victims by offenders. Namely, the offenders may excuse their behaviors because of medical conditions, addictions, or their immigration status.

Theme 16. Physical or sexual violence with gaslighting was another rarely reported behavior; coding produced a prevalence of 1.5% (n=4). Playing threatening 'head games' or

gaslighting did appear in these narratives. In the following example provided by a 21-year-old victim (Case 001), the offender employs both physical harm and mind games simultaneously:

> He was threatening to take my child away to another country because he said I was a bad influence. He accused me of sleeping around. He had been drinking and he just lost it. He pulled me through the window and dragged me to the floor. He pushed me down and bit me on the back.

Another example of gaslighting was provided by Case 621, where the victim reported her partner's combined physical acts and creative gaslighting that resulted in her calling 911. The offender tried to convince her that he was placing her into the washing machine to restrain her, for her own safety. This 29-year-old woman noted:

> Um, he, actually um he shoved me into the washing machine. And he actually said he was restraining me. So, he had me wrapped around the neck, like this. And that was basically, that was basically it. The biggest part of it is just that stuff like that has happened so many times before. I was tired and just wanted to do something about it. I've hit him, you know what I mean. I'm not going to say that I've never hit him. He never retaliated on those instances. It was a lot of mental abuse and a lot of just out of the blue just grabbing me out of the blue and things like that. But, as far as any violence, and I know it could get worse, but as far as anything, it hadn't gotten to that point yet and I didn't want it to get to that point, so I went on and called the police.

The victim's level of fatigue in this narrative is noted as well as the emotional toll of the temporal meshing and strain of co-occurring physical and nonphysical incidents. What seem like random attacks to the victim are more likely instinctive but effective behavioral patterns that have worked for the offender in the past. Rather than a brilliantly orchestrated conspiracy, the

offender used instinctive tactics: intermittent reinforcement, surprise attacks, and the betrayal of gaslighting, where he insisted, he was doing something to her for her own good. This has the effect of making victims doubt their reality, and in some cases, their sanity.

Theme 16 represents pernicious emotional control, where offenders intended to alter a women's sense of reality. Offenders were already committed to abusive controlling behaviors found domination and humiliation easier when the victim began to doubt her own self-efficacy and relationship with reality. This was a rarer occurrence in this sample and was often referred to as 'mind games.' Any victim who reported this was aware that the offender was purposefully manipulating her.

Events of coercive controlling behaviors that occurred with physical or sexual violence or within 24-hours of any report that featured physical violence were included here. As such, Category 3 represents the most prevalent experience of women in this study. About 72% of women in this sample reported they had experienced one or more events of coercive control co-occurring with physical or sexual violence.

The key result from this study's Category 3 (co-occurring coercive control and physical or sexual violence) is that the nature of victims' experiences and perceptions of earlier experiences of coercive controlling behaviors sustained the effects of coercive control before, during, and after physical violence. Over 26% of all cases (Finn, 2005) reported a history of physical violence, which is predictive of future violence (Breiding et al., 2015). It is understood that a history of physical violence functions as a *tactic* of coercive control (Tanha et al., 2010). Tanha et al.'s (2010) tests showed coercive control to be a precursor or *motivation*[9] that can lead to and predict other forms of abuse, including physical violence. Dutton and Goodman (2005) explicitly included threats of harm and *actual physical harm* in their coercive control model. For

analytical and theoretical purposes, this study began by explicitly excluding physical violence from this definition of coercive controlling behaviors. This conceptualization was necessary to best distinguish and characterize the types of abuse reported.

Documenting *the temporal meshing of physical violence and coercive control during co-occurrence* is one purpose behind this study's efforts to explicitly separate these three categories of offenders' behaviors. A common characteristic of coercive controlling behaviors is their utility, across time, to *signal threats* about past or future physical violence. Many of these narratives contain reports of incidents where nonphysical abuse occurred with physical violence simultaneously or within hours or minutes.

The tangled reality of co-occurrence is well represented in these narratives. The most memorable example was of a petite victim whose abuser beat her then stuffed her into her washing machine while explaining that he was doing so for her own safety, protecting her from herself. Temporal meshing is what makes establishing bright line boundaries between nonphysical abuse and physical violence so problematic. The utility of controlling behaviors and threats can extend across time for years. Traumatized victims can be held in thrall years after the violent event.

Trends Uncovered Outside of the 16 Themes

The 16 themes detailed above constitute a strict application of the Breiding et al. (2015) conceptual model onto the narrative data analyzed in this study. However, the thematic analysis coding exercise presented several opportunities to expand upon the conceptual landscape detailed by the CDC study. During the review of narratives, two specific trends, the disabling of telephones and non-fatal strangulation, emerged as patterned characteristics of coercive control and physical violence. Additionally, one trend emerged regarding the system's problematic

response to 911 calls. Narratives contained data on offenders' interference with telephones and non-fatal strangulation (commonly reported as 'choking') of victims. Each narrative was reviewed for mention of offenders' interference with landline or cell phones that the victim or her supporters could or would have wanted to use for any sort of assistance. Each narrative was reviewed for victims' reports of attempts at strangulation, headlocks, pressing on neck or throat, suffocation, or loss of consciousness from any of the above. Narratives were also reviewed for spontaneous mentions of the victims' positive or negative report on the entire systems' handling of the call for help and arrest. These three themes were placed outside of the main Themes and Categories of this study because these specific offender and system behaviors were not included in Breiding et al.'s (2015) definition of psychological aggression.

Theme 17. Interfering with 911 calls or disabling a telephone was mentioned by forty-two (15.8% of women) in this study. Victims reported that the offender had disabled or destroyed their phone, expressly to prevent them from calling 911 for help. For example, a 32-year-old woman (Case 323) reported both the disabling of a telephone and strangulation:

> We had an altercation. We had an argument regarding him tape recording me, and I found out he was tape recording me. I went to tear up the tape recorder, the micro cassette tape, and he grabbed me and grabbed the tape recorder, demanded it back. And he punched me twice and I was fighting back trying to defend myself. He flipped me a couple of times and he put his knee on my neck. He called the police and said I was attacking him. Then he put me in a chokehold, and I tried to get the phone and dial the police myself to call them back and he ripped the phone out the wall.

It is noteworthy that this offender conducted excessive monitoring without the victim's permission, tried to place the legal blame on her, disabled the phone and tried to strangle her all

in one short, interwoven event. A similar incident happened to a 37-year-old woman (Case 321) who would not allow her partner in the house while intoxicated:

> It intensified to, at some point he grabbed for my neck and I didn't see it coming and he had his hand around my neck in kind of a chokehold kind of thing and had me against the cabinet. I ended up reaching up and pulling him by the hair and saying, Let go, let go and we struggled with that. I finally was able to pull his fingers away after what seemed like forever…At some point in time someone had gone and snatched the phone out of the wall and I went to try to call for assistance then and then it just kept escalating.

The combination of strangulation and disabling of telephones represents a potent escalation in both offender seriousness and risk to victims. Sometimes, the co-occurrence is obvious and in other cases it is less so. The system should analyze offender behaviors for the constellation of domination and control they are enacted to effect. In case this victim was unclear about this offender's plan to impose his will and control, she later discovered that, before leaving, he slashed all four of her van's tires. This victim drove for her livelihood.

Theme 18. This theme captures non-fatal strangulation**.** In Finn's (2005) survey, there was one item from the CTS2 (Straus et al., 1996) asking victims if the offender had 'choked' them. That survey item measured what this study considers strangulation. In these narrative reports, any reference to being held by the neck, throat, suffocating, holding a hand over the victims' nose and mouth, being held down with an arm over the neck, or losing consciousness from a hand to the throat were all considered strangulation actions. These narratives re-captured some of Finn's more comprehensive count of choking incidents. However, this narrative context, where the victim is not specifically prompted to mention strangulation, situates the use of this physically violent tactic in the context of the co-occurrence of physical violence and coercive

control. Strangulation is a special case, where non-fatal strangulation represents a durable, credible threat of future violence and one violent episode can command indefinite control for the offender.

Thirty-eight of the 266 women in this study (14.3%)[10] remarked on their experiences of being choked, strangled, or suffocated in the natural retelling of their violence experience. Though many offenders perform multiple non-fatal strangulations, this act is so terrorizing that a case can be made for just one past strangulation functioning as indefinite coercive control (credible threat) indefinitely. Recently, Bendlin and Sheridan (2019a, 2019b) evaluated nonfatal strangulation as a risk factor for severe violence in IPV. Strack and Gwinn (2011) consider non-fatal strangulation a prelude to femicide, as victims are seven times more likely to be killed by their partners than victims who have not been strangled. Offenders perform these survivable abuses as credible threats. They are displaying their ability to kill (Bendlin & Sheridan, 2019a).

The following cases were coded for offender's use of strangulation, often referred to by victims as 'choking' or having been grabbed by the throat. These examples illustrate some variations victims experienced when offenders included strangulation during assaults. The 31-year-old woman in Case 007 noted,

> He choked me. To this day, I don't remember exactly what happened, but my lip was busted, and my arms and neck were all bruised. All I remember is shaking from head to toe. I was just terrified, that's all I remember.

Similarly, the 23-year-old woman identified as Case 013 stated,

> He then started to choke me and the next thing I remember, he was dragging me up the steps to my apartment. There was an hour between the time he choked me and the time he

dragged me up to my apartment, of which I have no memory. I had a gash in my head, my arms and legs had cuts and scrapes all over them and my shoes had holes in them.

In Case 314 the offender told the victim that he did not care if she suffocated. This 50-year-old woman experienced strangulation with nonphysical abuse:

> He come back and he grabbed me, pushed me down on the couch, straddled me, and kept coming up until he finally was straddling my throat and he held my hands, you know, my arms down, my hands, and I was just stretching my head, you know, trying to get him to stop and I couldn't. My legs wouldn't even work hardly, and I was moving around, and he put his hand over my nose and my mouth and was telling me he didn't care if I couldn't breathe.

Theme 18 has key importance when considering policy implications of this study. In particular, it is helpful in law enforcement's identification of primary aggressors, reveals potential for severe violence, and is a critical fatality risk factor.

Theme 19. This final theme presents the issue of problematic criminal justice system responses to victims of Category 1 and Category 3 crimes. This theme represents a departure from examining offender behavior to the looking at the behavior of system actors, but there is a connection. This study captured 191 women (71.8%) who experienced co-occurring coercive control with physical attacks. The patterned and repeated nature of coercive control with physical violence produces victims who have often overcome significant barriers just to reach out for formal help. If police do not make an effort to investigate the breadth and depth of abuse, they can unerringly support the offender's agenda. Police and the system can easily revictimize or retraumatize a vulnerable victim. Unintended consequences are no less real for lack of intent. These narratives contained valuable information about the system's response to all three

categories: physical violence only, coercive control only, and co-occurrence of the two. Victims were expressive about their feelings on the system's response to 911 calls and to them as their offender's cases were handled and closed. A woman aged 32 (Case 833) explains what happened when police arrived to find her bruised and hurt after a physical attack where the offender pulled her by the hair, kicked her and threw her against a dresser:

> I know they see a lot and are desensitized to it, but the way they acted made me feel even worse. They said that if I had to go, [to the hospital] 'we're not going to call the ambulance, you can drive yourself or have her drive you.' The Sheriff's Dept. said they were going to pull the officers names off the report, they couldn't believe the way they acted.

The system seems monolithic to some victims, and first responders may not have the time, training or inclination to leave the victims with supportive literature and no or low-cost community programs designed to help them and increase their safety. Traumatized and controlled victims may have little resilience and damaged self-efficacy, that is why specialized IPV community programs exist. For some victims, unreturned calls are enough to stall their help seeking behaviors, as happened in with a woman 57 years of age, Case 705: "I tried calling the solicitor's office and they never called me back." Until that victim was contacted by Finn's (2005) interviewer at six months after the case was closed, she felt, and so was, isolated from community or system resources. These victims are often the least likely to be system savvy. One woman, 32-years-old (Case 707) felt left out by the system's response: "She said she would get back with me and I never got a call back." And later, regarding the offender's court hearing, she reported "Nobody talked to me at all. I never got a notice even to go to court. I just was dropping

him off and went in." Note that the offender was dependent upon the victim for transportation to his family violence charge hearing.

Finn's original report (2005) provides detailed analysis and conclusions about her sample's response to system handling. (Recall that her sample of 286 included this study's sample of 266). This thematic analysis counted women's narrative reports of police or other system employees' discounting, minimizing, or damaging behaviors. A simple list of types of problematic responses was generated, and responses were listed only when victims expressed negative perceptions about these events. The prevalence counts were based on this list of behaviors (Appendix J). No effort was made to determine system actors' behavioral errors or culpability. Any victim's negative takeaway from these encounters was recorded as a problematic system response. In these narratives, some victims reported first responders' reluctance to take crimes of assault, battery, terroristic threats, strangulation, and disabling a phone as seriously as they would between two strangers. Intimate partner violence is a nuanced and complex crime, and social structures that marginalize and devalue populations and genders make managing all forms of IPV challenging for the criminal justice system.

If first responders discount victims' physical injury (in this primarily Black population, immediately visible contusions or bruises are unreliable proxy for proof of injury) they unwittingly signal acceptance to the offender. When first responders discount all but physical harms, they can be missing predictive signals of future harm and even emotional entrapment. In situations where threats, monitoring, and stalking behaviors cause a victim to call for help, victim risk assessments used by first responders are rarely adequate. Simple protocols for determining the 'primary aggressor' often mask the tools of the effective perpetrators of IPV. If first responders come to a scene where physical violence and coercive control are co-occurring in

full swing, they are trained to gravitate to the physical incident; the expediency of 'counting hits' can trump the time it takes to investigate a complex scene. Not all system responses are problematic. Some victims reported an ideal law enforcement's response. A 23-year-old woman (Case 002), whose partner had strangled her said, "They listened to both sides of the story to determine the truth and what really went on." Similarly, another victim, aged 32 from Case 329, remarked that once the case was assigned, she appreciated the helpful, respectful treatment she and the offender received by the courtroom workgroup.

Theme 19 is worthy of inclusion in this study because the system response does affect future behaviors and choices of both victim and offender. Future refinement of the IPV Control Framework should include the immediate and self-reinforcing effects of the system on future offending and victimization. Early and effective system response can interrupt the self-reinforcing nature of co-occurring abuse. Victim empowerment effects and system revictimization need to be represented as part of the control framework of IPV. System response affects victim safety, law enforcement approaches, offender behaviors, and case outcomes.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

This study's purpose was to contextualize coercive control's relationship to physical violence in intimate partner violence incidents. A collection of 581 narrative accounts from 266 female victims whose abusive partners had been arrested recounted a total of 823 incidents. Many reported more than one of 16 forms of abuse that comprise the Breiding et al.'s (2015) IPV model's psychological aggression and IPV stalking. These narrative data were sorted into three categories: physical violence without coercive control behaviors, coercive control without physical violence, and coercive control co-occurring with physical violence.

The first research question asked if these narratives provided evidence of offenders using physical violence in the absence of coercive controlling behaviors. Seventy women (26% of cases) reported this occurring. Often these narratives simply were too short and terse to be coded in any other may, as more than half (n=45) of the victims were simply abrupt or gave no sense of a victim's negative perception of what had happened. Seventeen women offered no explanation of the offender's intent or purpose, and eight women clearly explained experiences that they believed were accidental harm and had no negative valence for them. Even if all of these 70 women truly experienced physical or sexual violence with no controlling behaviors, that is still remarkable. All but one of the 266 women comprising this sample had cases where an arrest was based upon physical violence, yet only one in four reported pure physical and or sexual violence without any coercive controlling behavior. This result was anticipated because of the limitations of the original purpose of the study (Finn, 2005) and the lack of ability to ask victims specific questions about their reported physical violence only experiences.

It is possible that these 70 women were sort of toughened victims who saw these incidents as simple beatings and do not assign a special meaning or indicate a negative

perception. We do not know if this is just how a victim makes sense of it, is reluctant to express a value judgement. It is possible that these women represent their offenders' grooming failures, and these offenders are not competent to coercively control their victims with violence. These reports were often curt, factual, and unemotional. Literature suggests that coercive control as instrumental violence is challenging to detect (Day & Bowen, 2015). When a woman reports an assault as situational, that is no assurance that coercive control is not in play. These 70 women gave no indication of these experiences being other than either accidental or strictly physical, and they were counted as such. Interpretation of such events was hampered by this study's lack of ability to investigate each offender's competency in enacting control with violence (Goodman, Dutton, Weinfurt, & Cook, 2003; Weiner, 2017). The hidden or invisible nature of intimate negotiations in abusive relationships is another barrier to capturing information about the exclusive use of physical violence.

Second, this study asked if coercive controlling behaviors were evident without physical violence. This sample produced evidence of coercive controlling behaviors without any physical violence within a shared 24-hour period. Twenty women, or 7.5% of the sample, offered narratives that fit this category. Some narratives indicated that offenders who were incarcerated or had served time for their offense showed reluctance to go back to using violence against this victim. For some, this behavioral option may have been a way to secure control without risking rearrest. This sample's proportion of coercive controlling behaviors without physical violence are directly relevant only to populations where the offender has been arrested for physical violence. The low observed prevalence rate may be explained by a concept well-supported in literature (Black et al., 2011; Buzawa, Buzawa, & Stark, 2017; Stark, 2007, 2012, 2018; Tanha et al., 2010). Competent offenders' instrumental use of suggestion and reminders of past or

potential physical violence effectively controls victims, reducing the need for and sometimes the frequency of actual physical attacks. All victims in this study, by definition, already experienced one violent (or stalking or terroristic threat) episode and had reported it to the police. Their focus is understandably on the violence incident. That this study collected any evidence of legal, nonphysical abuse is a happy accident. For the small proportion of women who thought to include these mentions in their narrative, the indicators are that nonphysical abuse happened more frequently than purely physical violence happened.

Third, this study sought to carefully observe and characterize the co-occurrence of coercive controlling behaviors with physical or sexual violence. Nearly 72%, or 191 women, described at least one of these enmeshed, harmful activities. The 'centrality' (Kuennen, 2013) and pervasiveness of coercive control in intimate partner violence practice is well-documented in literature, so this outcome is no surprise.

This study's theoretical drive was to tease apart these two commonly meshed offender behaviors in intimate partner violence arrests to better understand the relationship between them. Contextualizing coercive control's connection to physical violence in intimate partner violence incidents is an important foundational endeavor. This study's objective was to use what was learned to elevate attention to these non-violent behaviors, reconceiving coercive control as the framework of control within which much IPV is performed. In the end, all but one (exploitation of victims' or offenders' vulnerabilities) of Breiding et al.'s (2015) 16 elements of psychological aggression and IPV stalking were present and co-occurred with physical violence for over 70% of the women in these system-involved cases. This high level of co-occurrence was demonstrated even though these reports were often spontaneous revelations of these co-occurring events, triggered by interview questions not focused on coercive controlling behaviors. These findings

do suggest that control and coercive controlling behaviors are not discrete 'types' of violence but are more structural, framing and supporting IPV and reciprocally being supported by IPV. This overlap may be better viewed as IPV's self-reinforcing framework or even its crucible. A baseline tenet is Walby and Towers' (2018) assertion that all violence is coercive and controlling. If this assertion is so, the reduction of coercive control to one of six forms of psychological aggression misses the point. It appears that in system-involved cases, most IPV requires coercive controlling behaviors to exist, and most IPV fuels continuing coercive control.

A better understanding of the relationship between physical attacks and their precursors (Tanha et al., 2010) requires that we develop a new structural model of how an incident-based act of physical violence may happen within the sustained effects of threatened or actual acts of coercion or harm. The model should also address the self-reinforcing nature of acts of violence and control, when IPV features control. This study's Figure 3 suggests a theoretical and terminological solution to the CDC's NISVS IPV Model (Breiding et al., 2015). That model's structure and terminology denies the role of control in IPV stalking and psychologically-aggressive behaviors. The proposed IPV Control Framework separates physical from non-physical acts of abuse but allows for clearer understanding of how *all* forms of non-physical abuse seem instrumental in the context of IPV.

Analyses for the final research question were to determine whether coercive control represents an intrinsic aspect of intimate partner violence attacks or a discrete, standalone phenomenon that can and does exist separate from the physical assaults. Dutton and Goodman (2005) Kuennen (2013), Walby, Towers, and Francis (2014, 2016), and Walby and Towers (2017, 2018) have all suggested approaches to best conceptualize and integrate understanding of nonphysical harm for practice and prosecution of IPV. The answer to this research question is

'Yes,' it is both, with a caveat. As a framework (the structural scaffolding or the architecture on which much of IPV seems to start, thrive, and prevail), coercive control is more intrinsic in that it is 'of the nature' of IPV. In this conceptualization, the offender's drive to control through nonphysical and physical acts is the framework for IPV. Whether the coercive controlling acts are part of the framework seems to depend upon the victims' response. These narratives contained situations in which instrumental behaviors were standalone events. Sometimes the events signaled the end of a woman being victimized. Sometimes they continued. Largely, this study showed that for system-involved women, coercive controlling behaviors were at play in over 75% of cases. Control is surely not present as an intention behind all IPV. This study supports Starks proposition (Stark, 2018a; Stark & Hester, 2019) that coercive control is a structural support for IPV and not just a type of violence.

Contextualizing the Current Study Findings in the Extant Literature on Coercive Control

In this sample, victim narratives suggest that physical violence can occur as a solo act, physical violence and coercive control are not always co-occurring, and coercive control does not always precede physical violence. These results relate strictly to cases where law enforcement has been called because victims or other people who called 911 expected, observed, or experienced harm. Especially in this context, coercive controlling behaviors commonly appear to be intrinsic to (or part of the nature of) physical violence against intimate partners.

Explaining why context is critical to finding whether offender behaviors rise to coercion, Dutton and Goodman (2005) reference Raven's (1992) theory of social power. They posit that "virtually all relationships involve persuasion and influence" (Dutton & Goodman, 2005, p. 747). In these cases, the personal narratives provide context. Arrest has occurred, usually because the victim crossed the lines of privacy and called for outside help. Normal relational persuasion and

influence has morphed into one partner exploiting another's vulnerabilities or escalating some sort of dispute. If physical violence has been threatened or happened one time, or even if the victim learns of her partner's previous violence, the context for coercion has been established. Most of these victims' narratives partially support Stark's recent position that coercive controlling behaviors rise above a *type* of violence. Recall that Stark's definitions (2007, 2009, and 2018a) differ from that of this study. Here, coercive control is strictly nonphysical, while for Stark it means battering as a whole. Stark conceptualizes coercive control as a structure or frame within which intimate partner violence occurs. Domination, demands, restrictions, monitoring or threats are often so interwoven with physical violence in these narratives that effort is required to tease the non-violent from the violent components. Here, the nonphysical behaviors support and reinforce the physical, and the physical support and reinforce the nonphysical. IPV seems to operate as a dynamic, self-reinforcing system. This mechanism may explain its refractory success. Offenders use coercive control to avoid, enhance, or remind victims of incidents of physical violence. This dynamic tool can operate as a supportive, structural component of physical violence crime. The physical violence can be performed as an apex event reinforcing or legitimizing past and future threats. Credible threats (Hamberger, 2017; Weiner, 2017) are the raw materials of this scaffolding or framework of control. It is more helpful to distinguish these behaviors from physical violence both for the system and for the community in order to address and interrupt this mechanism. Meshing obscures the intent and impact behind the nonphysical acts, particularly when offenders achieve a high degree of competency (Day & Bowen, 2015; Goodman et al., 2003; Weiner, 2017). This study's proposed IPV Control Framework Model situates nonphysical and physical abuse under the umbrella of control, the proposed structure and

frame for IPV. It intends to distinguish the two in order to better reveal the mechanisms of their interactions in the context of intended control.

Many unintended and harmful consequences result when the phenomena of physical violence and coercive control are enmeshed, for offenders, victims and first responders. Weiner cautioned (2017) that because first responders arrive and process at incidents with incident-oriented lenses, savvy offenders can make coercive control (and even physical assault) evaporate from view if police are passive or (in the case of the UK) resist enforcing coercive control offenses. An offender who controls a victim can use her vulnerabilities to direct his desired outcome, even manipulate her arrest as offender. The coercive control issue is best addressed as a distinct theme or force, interacting with physically violent acts. Control is the framework for these self-reinforcing, purposeful acts and behaviors.

The narratives of co-occurring (physical violence with coercive control) and standalone coercive control observed in this sample overlap with much of what has been written about the phenomenon of coercive control. This study's proposition is that careful distinctions between nonphysical and physical abuses are critical, but the IPV Control Framework (Figure 3) suggests that both are supported by the self-reinforcing and reciprocal framework provided by coercive controlling behaviors. This proposition is supported by other research, in that coercive control is emerging as more than just a sub-subtype of psychological aggression. For example, Weiner (2017) introduced the concept of coercive control as being an infrastructure, a scaffolding-in-time on which IPV is situated. Weiner's conceptualization fits well with what has been found in the study narratives. Especially when reviewing narratives full of legal and illegal behaviors, a picture of offenders as creative instrumentalists emerged. Many narratives reported offenders who peppered their physical attacks with threats, insults, and specific actions with outcomes that

reduced victim's freedoms and autonomy. Offenders seemed to use non-violent behaviors as an ominous background or context out of which violence could erupt. Not always, but frequently, these coercive behaviors supported violence like a scaffolding or skeletal infrastructure. Similarly, facets of models proposed by Dutton and Goodman's (2005) and Dutton et al. (2005) also are consistent with what was found in these narratives. Certainly, every domain of life in which Dutton and Goodman theorized offenders make demands (see Appendix D) was represented in these narratives (victims' personal activities and physical appearance, social and family support, household, job and money, health, intimacy, the law, immigration, and parenting). Their model sees violence as a power tool in intimate partner violence and sees non-violent coercive control as another set of dominance and power tools. Again, the instrumentality of coercive control was regularly suggested by these narratives. Stark positions coercive control as the context in which intimate partner violence occurs and rates these behaviors as more serious than physical violence. Relegating this structural actor to a slot as one of six sub-subtypes of psychological aggression (Figure 2) may be the result of typological theorizing about types of violence. Violence typologies have a silo-ing effect and the complex interactivity between controlling behaviors and violence needs a more nuanced conceptualization. Lifting coercive control out of its limiting typology compartment and into consideration as a structural explanation for system-involved cases of violent IPV is the purpose of the proposed IPV Control Framework. If the system chose to apply this study's reconceptualization of coercive control to law enforcement and prosecution's response to IPV cases, the cost would be minimal. It would involve only a more thorough approach to already existing investigations. Quick and useful checklists (Campbell, 2017, see Appendix F) exist. If harmful control is not apparent in system-involved cases, an investigation has been thorough, and that box has been ticked.

Fifteen years of focus on typologies in this field have produced some unproductive results for both system and community workers involved with IPV. Stark and Hester's (2019) recent declarations against typologies and promoting coercive control as a framework for understanding IPV are consistent with this arrest study's results. Many victims expressed more fear, harm, and distress over the coercion than the physical violence. Johnson's typology (2008) is only partially supported in this victim-generated data set, as these narratives are victim self-report. His typology rests on presumptions about the offenders' motives. This study focuses on the concrete behaviors of the abusers as reported by the victims. Hamberger et al.'s (2017) model is only partially consistent with these finding, as the analysis of these narratives depended heavily on the victims' negative perception of the offender's efforts to control her. Any narrative that disclosed coercive control behaviors like limiting, monitoring, or threatening was considered credible. However, for this study, Hamberger et al. (2017) falls short because of the presumptions about offenders' clear intentions, unavailable in this data set. Day and Bowen (2015) proposed that offenders' routine use of coercive control with violence in intimate relationships is instrumental, with the goal of restricting women. In these narratives, there were hundreds of incidents of women being restricted across all domains of their lives. There were multiple instances of harmful effects on victim's autonomy and health. Day and Bowen noted that we have no tool that can tell us whether one behavior or incidence of violence is a component of a program of coercive control. During analysis of these narratives, I repeatedly sought to connect the offenders' coercive behaviors with harmful, restricting outcomes that triggered a negative report from the victims. Consider again that the private, invisible, and perhaps unconscious nature of these acts affects our ability to see, count, and understand them. Any ex-post-facto analysis is informed by a sense of the burden, fear, and damage women

victims have experienced. In the end, Myhill and Hohl (2016) see coercive control as the golden thread or essential component running through intimate partner violence. Locating this component is useful when identifying and analyzing risk to victims. This study shows is that, operationally coercive control is an instrument, a tool, a tactic, frequently used in conjunction with violence. As to whether it is better or worse than physical harm, that seems a pointless contest. This study points to its value as a structure for making sense of physical violence. In these narratives it often recurs, punctuating domestic life and heralding or following physical violence. It is a close, working partner, or intrinsic part of intimate partner violence, to be sure. There is no absolute evidence for *why* it is employed, but its effectiveness for the offender, especially in situations of victim dependency, is not disputed.

The Utility of Conceptualizing Coercive Control as Intrinsic to IPV

The fourth research interest in this study was to question the *utility* of conceptualizing coercive control as *intrinsic* to intimate partner violence. The term 'intrinsic' is used here to indicate something that is part of the essence of or something which shares the nature of another thing. With effort, we can distinguish non-violent from violent behaviors, even those happening simultaneously. This study did find incidents with no apparent coercive control during incidents of physical violence, but infrequently. In principle, this should be expected since a primary focus of Finn's (2005) data collection was on the arrest incident's physical forms of abuse rather than nonphysical forms. Yet, coercive control's intrinsic relationship to most violent incidents is a useful thing, given this study's goal of elevating this element of IPV to an actual framework within which IPV is performed. Abundant research supports coercive controlling behaviors' utility as a serious risk indicator and predictor. Acknowledging coercive control as intrinsic to much IPV as experienced in the community is critical to elevating coercive control from its

current position as a sub-subtype of IPV to a framework or context within which much IPV is performed.

Concept of Temporal Meshing of Physical Violence and Coercive Control

Victims in this study regularly reported attacks with both physical and nonphysical abuses experienced simultaneously. Offenders were reported to have used whatever tools they felt most effective when they engaged in conflict with victims. Strangling a woman while threatening to strike her child, shoving a woman into a washing machine while gaslighting her by explaining that this act was protecting her from herself, and threatening her family while administering her beating were all events reported as happening in the same moment. Understanding the dimension of time as a flow or space in which these co-occurring acts happen simultaneously can help police assess the offender's crime as a pattern with a purpose. Police, prosecutors, and judges could benefit from training that explains how dynamic non-violent coercive control supports and sustains incident-based violence. Each violent incident strengthens coercive control's supportive structure. These two types of abuses seem to create a self-supporting dynamic. Women become isolated, intimidated, and controlled and this situation can be worsened each time the system fails to respond appropriately.

It may be that the dynamic of coercive control and physical violence together over time, including offenders' control over victims' time, food, money, social life, family, workplace, transport, communications, and sexuality is the critical element behind this enduring public health and criminal justice problem. When police, prosecutors, and judges elevate the importance of co-occurring coercive controlling behaviors as contributing to crimes against women, women will be safer and offenders will be more accountable.

Whether the criminal code should be altered, as has been done in the UK, (UK Home Office, 2013) to criminalize abusive acts, is a concern for a future study. The first consideration here is one of definitions. Revisiting this study's discussion of coercive control definitions (page 22), Breiding et al. (2015) chose to nest coercive control within IPV's six subcategories of psychological aggression. Nearly 90% of the narratives in this study report offender behaviors consistent with Breiding et al.'s definition of coercive control (limiting victims' access to resources, excessive monitoring and interfering with victims' communications, and threatening harm to self, victims, victims' loved ones, or victims' possessions). These narratives show that the tactics offenders used to perform coercive control included all six remaining forms of psychological aggression (expressive aggression, threat of physical or sexual violence, control of reproductive health, exploitation of victim's vulnerability, exploitation of perpetrator's vulnerability, and gaslighting). I suggest that this psychological aggression description represents a continuum of coercive controlling behaviors. To be clear, Breiding et al. (2015) note that *psychological aggression can include but is not restricted to these subcategories.* They state that we need to better measure psychological aggression and define the point at which it escalates to psychological abuse. As defined, psychological aggression is not an effective parent category for coercive control and the term coercive control with its lack of consensus definition is not a useful umbrella over psychological aggression. This study proposes that coercive control does not logically fit nested within the psychological aggression subcategory of IPV.

Neither psychological aggression nor coercive controlling behaviors are limited to the subcategories Breiding et al.'s model of IPV presents. Coercive controlling strategies can be as creative and unique as the perpetrator's imagination. By design, these are custom made terroristic strategies to control and entrap (Stark, 2018a). The combination of denying victims

access to phones with nonfatal strangulation makes two behaviors even more lethal. Opening our focusing onto an offender's *intent to control* with aggression and violence is as important as categorizing

The private nature of IPV is its cardinal characteristic. Offenders exploit their intimate access to victims' personal vulnerabilities by limiting resources, monitoring or surveilling, and making credible threats. This pattern of private domination exists on a continuum from occasional to chronic and mild to severe. The Walby and Towers (2018) framework defines all violence as coercive and controlling. Domestic violence crime is presumed to be coercive and controlling, regardless of the offender's gender or the particulars of the physical attack. This approach has promise because it moves us away from typologies and to a more nuanced understanding of intimate, interpersonal violence. This study's results show that in cases of arrest, coercive controlling behaviors presents as intrinsic to most physical IPV. If one partner is privately physically harming another, there are benefits to investigating the offenders use of non-violent tactics of control. The benefits are practical and ethical: victim safety, public safety, offender evaluation, law-enforcement effectiveness and safety, prosecution case management, offender treatment options and accountability. Today, Georgia's code (Appendix C) and the Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV, 2018a): A Model Law Enforcement Protocol for Family Violence Incidents (Appendix E) provide protocols for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges These are helpful guidelines for determining who is the primary aggressor. These protocols contain all elements necessary to competently investigate, distinguish, and prosecute combined nonphysical and physical IPV.

This study finds utility in expanding researchers', advocates', and the system's understanding of coercive control. Coercive control should not be simply function as a legal

umbrella under which IPV crime occurs. However, it can function as a 'tell,' or indicator that *serious abuse* is occurring beyond visible physical violence. In Figure 2 above, Breiding et al.'s 2015 IPV Model distinguishes physical from nonphysical IPV but pads the reality of offenders' intent to control or dominate with the term psychological aggression. Every subcategory of psychological aggression but one is featured in offenders' coercive controlling behaviors, as presented in Figure 3 and supported by this study's thematic analysis. Figure 3 elevates these behaviors from sub-subtypes to structural framework supporting IPV. Evident in *all* Category 2 and Category 3 cases (n=211), 79% of cases that came to the attention of the system featured this intrinsic behavior. Evidence supports the harmful effects of coercive controlling behaviors for victims. If we continue to ignore nonphysical abuse, we could be missing a majority of IPV. We should be acknowledging and measuring it to better address and eliminate this context or framework within which the most complex and damaging form of IPV is performed. Johnson's common couple violence or situational couple violence may indeed exist (Johnson, 2008) but in this study of system-involved cases, it was a rarity. If one accepts Walby's and Towers' (2018) conceptualization of all violence as coercive and controlling, it is a logical path to seek the presence of control throughout IPV. Walby and Towers propose that there is no superior 'type' of IPV. The durability of this unacceptable, preventive behavior and lack of progress sorting victims and offenders based on typologies suggest it is time to leave behind the academic typology-based arguments about public survey vs. community IPV rates. While coercive control's framework or context for IPV is often obscured by domestic realities and social forces, looking for it as a limited type of IPV is too narrow of a scope to be useful. The results here support elevating coercive control to a system of intimate relationship abuse featuring every tool of psychological aggression.

Implications for Policy

Quantitative studies have found significant associations between coercive controlling behaviors and higher rates of psychological, physical, and sexual intimate partner violence (Anderson, 2008; Coker, Smith, McKeown, & King, 2000; Dichter et al., 2018; Myhill, 2015; Walby et al., 2016). In this study, almost 72% of victims experienced offenders deploying a patterned combination of repeat legal abuses with criminal violence, suggesting a crime that was more of a course of conduct. As coercive controlling behaviors seemingly serve as risk indicators for escalation of physical violence over time (Walby et al., 2016), it may be prudent to review and reconsider the system's incident-assault based approach to intimate partner violence. Just as police bring a more nuanced 'course of conduct' lens to their response to and investigations of stalking cases, they can bring a trained, more vigilant approach to intimate partner violence cases. This should begin with learning and following Georgia's Commission on Family Violence's state protocol (2018a, see Appendix E), and screening for coercive control using the Danger Assessment (Campbell, 2017, see Appendix F). Community-based advocates can use more complex assessments with victims, like Lehmann, Simmons, & Pillai's (2012) checklist of controlling behaviors (CCB, see Appendix G). Matheson, Daoud, Hamilton-Wright, Borenstein, Pedersen, and O'Campo (2015) discovered that the damage to women's perceptions of mental well-being (self-identity and self-esteem) lingered after most IPV physical injuries had healed. Recovery often requires identity and self-efficacy reconstruction. Matheson and colleagues recommend that the best community and mental health programs for victims include survivors who can share their lived experiences of IPV and recovery. A handful of existing assessments and protocols already exist to improve police effectiveness in investigation, discernment, and handling of complex IPV cases. The Danger Assessment provides police with a visual portable

scale rating signs of coercive control from mild, occasional domination (limiting, monitoring, threatening) to extreme progressive entrapment. This tool could help officers identify primary aggressors, regardless of the offender's gender. Recall the victims in this study who had been strangled. If police followed the Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV, 2018b) protocol (Appendix H) when investigating non-fatal strangulation, their actions would signal to victims and offenders that the state takes this behavior seriously. This study recommends that police, prosecutors, and judges be trained to consider non-violent coercive control's intrinsic, chronic function in physically violent relationships. It is a valuable indicator and correlate of escalating and future violence.

Beginning a quarter century ago, Stark began warning against the system's simple use of incident-based physical assault as the path to improving women's safety:

> Assaultive violence is an inadequate prism through which to view the history, causes, means, dynamics, and consequences of woman battering. Laws against domestic violence fail to grasp the gravity of woman battering, particularly the deprivation of liberty that results from coercive control. (Stark, 1995, p.1026).

Still, the reality is that police are trained and respond in incident-based frameworks. Adapting what is known about offenders' limiting, monitoring/surveilling, and threatening tactics to existing guidelines for officers investigating 911 'domestic' calls is practical and doable. Implications for policy amendment or change are provided below for all three Categories and some of this study's contextual Themes.

Category 1: Physical or Sexual Violence Only, Reported as Accidental Harm, With No Negative Perception Reported by Victim, or No Apparent Intent

Regarding accidental harm, accidents do occur. First responders and investigators can reduce inappropriate arrests by more carefully approaching partners and evaluating the scene following state protocols on determining who is the primary aggressor. More than a few of this study's victims reported feeling disrespected, minimized, and blamed. These outcomes can be handled by standardized domestic scene processing. Sometimes 'domestics' *are* accidents. First responders' simple presence and patience can sometimes provide needed help (See Appendix E, GCFV A Model Law Enforcement Protocol). Regarding the victims' lack of negative perception or expression about the offender's use of violence, there are myriad reasons to account for this. This study was dedicated to respecting the victim's account. It seems equally possible that victims who reported physical violence with no negative perception were resilient and independent or that they were completely dominated. This sample did not provide data that allowed for any such definitive conclusions for Category 1 cases.

The primary policy implication of this study's findings for Category 1 is law enforcement's timely, careful interviewing of partners separately. Following protocol, police on site can determine whether victims seem resilient or seem to have been progressively dominated or entrapped (See Appendix F, Danger Assessment).

Category 2: Coercive Control with No Physical or Sexual Violence

Theme 3 covered stalking or harassing without physical violence**.** According to official records, (Finn, 2005) this sample contained just 5 stalking and 13 harassing communications criminal charging incidents that occurred in the absence of physical violence. All official charges were made in cases where physical violence had occurred in the past, according to Finn's data

and this study's narrative reports. Only 18 out of 266 arrests (6.7%) were Theme 3 incidents, On the surface, the small number of references to past staking and harassment (five cases) should not be surprising given that the interviews were focused primarily on incidents of physical abuse. Certainly, this is substantiated by the small number of mentions comprising the remaining themes in Category 2 (e.g., Themes 2, 4-8). Yet, in the rare cases where victims' cases successfully included this charge or the women felt compelled to mention these forms of nonphysical abuses during interviews, this theme disclosed the importance of encouraging victims to use this remedy. When the offender was escalating again toward physical violence, this allowed victims to reinforce the specter of accountability and punishment. For victims who chose to continue to live with the offender, awareness of this protection provided an avenue of resistance. Note that there were many other instances of stalking or harassing communications contained in the victim narratives. These incidents only led to arrest in five stalking cases and 13 harassing cases, yet over a dozen more cases reported these behaviors. Because physical violence eclipses other nonphysical abuses, charges in these cases did not lead to arrest for IPV stalking or harassing. In some of these cases, law enforcement may not have been aware of these behaviors, but in some it was, as temporary protection orders existed. When police arrest offenders for acts of physical violence, they often focus on the most serious or harmful charges, by training and habit. This is effective in the general incident-based crime-stopping approach, but that narrow practice can be counterproductive in handling IPV cases.

The policy implication of Category 2 is that any case that comes to the attention of the system is very much worth investigating for previous isolation; monitoring; threats of harm to self, others, things; threats of sexual violence; resource limiting; stalking; or harassing. These behaviors cooccur so frequently with physical violence that every 911 IPV callout should be

investigated for nonphysical abuses. It is more likely than not that nonphysical controlling behaviors have occurred. Victims' safety is undermined by these frequently invisible harms. It is not safe for the system to rely on spontaneously offered reports from often traumatized victims who may be focused on the worst physical attacks.

Category 3: Co-occurring Physical or Sexual Violence with Coercive Control

In this sample Themes 10, 11,12, and 13 especially revealed the ubiquity of combined coercive controlling behaviors with physical violence. Theme 10 combined physical or sexual violence with what are considered the classic coercive controlling behaviors. Almost 72% of women reported at least one experience of this range of domineering or controlling behaviors.

Physical or sexual violence with exploitation of either the offenders' or victims' vulnerabilities (Theme 15) yielded one case but deserves mention because it can so easily elude investigators and can result in severe damage or death when it escalates. Pregnant, separated, divorced women (or those who have ended intimate relationships) are at a high risk for legal, nonphysical abuse. Literature shows that stalkers with previous physical violence, obsessed with victim and who are experiencing strong negative emotions have the highest risk for performing future violent attacks (Morrison, 2001). Careful questioning and police use of Danger Assessments (Campbell, 2017) can determine which victims could be helped by civil restraining orders and which have experienced behaviors or threats which rise to the level of police intervention.

The policy implication from this study's Category 3 findings is that co-occurring physical violence with coercive controlling behavior is the gold standard for male offenders intending to dominate their partners and overcome their partner's will and capacity. Stark understands coercive control to be a liberty crime (Stark, 2007, 2018a). In these cases, victims' agency and

freedom can be easily manipulated by an offender. Her choices and safety may be reduced by the shared intimacy, domicile and children. Policies should account for the invisibility of this non-violent harm experienced largely by women and performed by men. Policies should account for the social forces which can privilege males over females and prejudice this system against women.

Additional Substantive Themes

All three of these additional themes could lend emphasis to the system's commitment to protect victims. Offenders' tactic of combining physical/sexual violence with phone disabling should be universally investigated during IPV 911 responses. The additional to violence signals the offender's intent to control the victim's access to authority and protection. As an add-on misdemeanor, a phone disabling charge elevates the system's disapproval of IPV, telling offenders to keep their hands off of victims' bodies and phones. Forty-two women (15.8%) reported phone disabling or destruction, and no formal charges were filed on these illegal acts. This behavior occurred during all three categories: physical violence only, coercive controlling events only, and co-occurring physical violence and coercive controlling incidents. Sometimes the phones were taken from the victim, sometimes from their children, sometimes from other family members. In almost every case, the person with the phone was calling 911 for help. Victims often were able to escape and use a friend or neighbor's phone and sometimes they were not.

The policy relevance of this study's findings on phone disabling has practical support in Georgia's code. More than fifteen other states have similar misdemeanor laws, and at least three of those states will charge these acts as felonies if the disabling of a phone being used for an emergency call was an intentional act (O'Connell, 2002). Georgia has addressed situations of

phone disabling, though the common practice of charging and prosecuting only the most serious legal infractions undermines offender, victim, and public understanding of this as a misdemeanor. This law was enacted in Georgia in 1998 and was in force when this study was conducted. People convicted of this may face a $1,000 fine or one-year imprisonment:

> 16-10-24.3: Any person who verbally or physically obstructs, prevents, or hinders another person with intent to cause or allow physical harm or injury to another person from making or completing a 911 telephone call or a call to any law enforcement agency to request police protection or to report the commission of a crime is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not to exceed $1,000.00 or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months, or both. (The Official Code of Georgia Annotated, O.C.G.A. §19-13-1 et seq. Title 16, 1998).

The Georgia Domestic Violence Benchbook (Prittie & Hunter, 2015) mentions phone disabling just once. Yes, this constitutes property damage, but today this act signals so much more. Cell phones have become extensions of the self to some people, and often are critical to victims' job and social support. Cell phone access should increase the portability of reaching emergency services, which increases the threat to offenders. The lack of attention to this source of victim vulnerability could result in compromised victim autonomy and safety. Police, prosecutors, judges, and the public need to have their consciousness raised about these personal possessions, victims' vulnerability and right to call for emergency help. Policy protections specific to these extensions of self, job, and safety are needed.

Since 2008, researchers have known that the risk of homicide is seven times higher for victims who have previously experienced nonfatal strangulation than those who have not (Bendlin & Sheridan, 2019a; Glass Laughton, Campbell, Block, Hanson, Sharps & Taliaferro,

2008). This study's notice of the trend of strangulation highlights a special case of co-occurring non-violent and violent behaviors. Scholars, advocates, and policymakers have acted quickly based on evidence about this tactic. National expert Casey Gwinn explains that prosecutors and attorneys are now learning what victims and offenders have known: perpetrators strangle IPV and sexual assault victims to signal that they can kill them at any point. An intentional effort to put pressure on the neck to affect air flow or blood flow is a plausible strangulation assault. Non-fatal strangulations are best understood as completed criminal acts, not failed assault attempts (Gwinn, 2013). This former prosecutor states that if prosecutors lead, treating strangulation cases as serious felonies, then law enforcement, medical staff, advocates and survivors will follow.

In this study of misdemeanors, victim narratives contained 38 cases (14.3%) reporting non-fatal strangulation, including and outside of the central arrest. In July 2014, House Bill 911 raised strangulation from misdemeanor simple battery to felony aggravated assault in Georgia code (The Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 16, O.C.G.A. § 16.5.21, 2014). It is now punishable by a prison term of up to 20 years. This code change signals the system's increasing understanding of the seriousness of this threat to victims' lives following targeted community advocacy and fatality review findings (Georgia Commission on Family Violence and Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2018). This code change occurred years after these narratives were collected and suggests that Georgia has been responsive to this issue and its threat to public safety. In 2012, the Georgia State Plan for Ending Domestic Violence (Georgia Coalition on Family Violence, 2018) had no mention of strangulation, neither did the Georgia judges' Domestic Violence Benchbook (Prittie, 2011). By 2014, advocates' campaign to alter the state code to raise strangulation to felony status was successful and the Domestic Violence

Benchbook (Prittie & Hunter, 2015) includes five pages on strangulation in domestic violence cases.

Thomas, Joshi, and Sorenson (2013) studied victim strangulation as coercive control, identifying it as a uniquely gendered type of nonfatal intimate partner violence, affecting 10 times as many women as men (p.124). Their study of 17 shelter residents who had survived (mostly multiple) strangulations revealed victims' intense feelings of vulnerability as they experienced how easily their partners could have killed them. This tactic, which victims understood as their partners' show of power, is often invisible to first responders, as over 50% of victims lacked physical marks of assault. Performed even once, non-fatal strangulation *reinforces* all elements of entrapment and domination understood as coercive control (Dutton & Goodman, 2005; Dutton et al., 2005; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2007).

Non-fatal strangulation's usefulness and danger are seated in gendered or biological strengths differentials. A 2017 qualitative study of female strangulation survivors (Vella, Miller, Lambert, & Morgan, p. 181) revealed two key themes "Betrayal and violence altered view of self and others" and "Fear of death, fear in daily life." In this study, I coded any mention or sustained response to a choking, neck grab, suffocation, or strangulation as co-occurring. Prior strangulation is an ideal example of the sustained, complex meshing of past violence and non-violence with all subsequent physical attacks.

A 2007 study suggests that male offenders have a particular advantage over female victims in strangulation incidents. A study of fit, healthy males and females from ages 20-25 compared maximal isometric hand-grip strength between the sexes and found expected correlations dependent upon hand dimensions (Leyk, Gorges, Ridder, Wonderlich, Rüther, Sievert, & Essfeld, 2007). What was unexpected was the sex-related differences in hand-grip

strength. In this limited, hand-grip strength test, chances were greater than 85% that females had less hand-grip strength than males. Researchers also tested a sample of highly trained judo and handball female athletes (n=60) and even they reached only the 25th percentile of the non-elite males. One woman out of the entire sample (n=533) approached the 33rd percentile of men who were measured (n=1654). Hand-grip strength was predicted by lean body mass. Multivariate regression modeling showed no correlation between body height and hand-grip strength. Certainly, a woman's particular muscle strength in other body parts figures into their ability to resist strangulation. Yet, these employment task-relevant differences were far larger than previous measurements. This was not a strangulation study but is relevant. Tall, strong women might presume their ability to fend off a strangling offender, but these numbers tell a story of women's (yet more) biological vulnerability. A female advanced judo champion might hope to untangle the choking grip of a male violent intimate partner, but she may have just one-third the hand grip strength than her attacker. Messing, Thomas, Ward-Asher, and Brewer (2018) looked at the extent to which police reports differ when identifying same-sex versus different-sex strangulation and coercive control. While 61 to 68% of women in shelter populations stated they had experienced strangulation by an intimate partner, just 10% of women responding to the NISVS reported the same (Black et al., 2011; Messing, Patch, Wilson, Kelen, & Campbell, 2018; Smith, Chen, Basile, Gilbert, Merrick, Patel, Walling, & Jain, 2017). Nonfatal strangulation is considered an effective tactic of coercive control (Thomas et al., 2013) and a history of strangulation (reported or not) earned coding for presence of coercive control in this study. But Messing et al.'s 2018 study showed that same-sex related system marginalization and police anti-gay biases disadvantages this population. Police are understandably misidentifying non-fatal strangulation across all populations.

Policies educating Georgia's public about the dangers of strangulation along with Georgia's serious legal consequences could raise attention levels and understanding. Death can occur in a matter of seconds in some cases, and lasting damage can be devastating. Glass et al.'s 2008 study of nearly 23,000 IPV cases found that non-fatal strangulation occurred in 45% of attempted homicides of women and 43% of homicides of women. Scholars have found that strangulation is a specialty behavior which most frequently occurs later in abusive relationships. This hints at strangulation's usefulness to offenders as a tool for escalating control. Connecting this abuse to coercive controlling behaviors could improve reporting and intervention.

Problematic system response to IPV victims from law enforcement, civil court protection order workgroups, prosecutors, community diversion programs, and corrections can result in harms ranging from slight to victim and offender fatalities in IPV cases. The first police interaction at an IPV scene can provide critical predictors of serious, invisible harms (Bendlin & Sheridan, 2019b; Robinson, Myhill et al., 2018, Robinson, Pinchevsky et al., 2018). Leone, Lape, and Xu showed that women's decisions not to contact police or other formal helping agencies are related to the offender's threats and outcomes from previous calls for help. If police can presume that many victims have overcome serious fears and system mistrust to make that call for help, they can handle IPV calls more effectively. The implications for policy are perhaps strongest for first responders. These narratives reported procedural and discretion-based errors committed by law enforcement, ranging from minor to serious. Victims reported being doubted, dismissed, shown disrespect, and minimized by police. Victims also reported error, oversights, and perceived slights by community-based advocates, civil court protection order workgroups, courtroom advocates, prosecutors, judges, corrections and diversion program staff. They also revealed positive actions by all of the above. As these arrests often begin with a 911dispatcher

going directly to law enforcement, these workers can benefit from a more nuanced understanding of the problem. If any of the first points of contact fail to hear what the victim wants or needs, immediate problems follow. Multiple women interviewed stated they would never again call 911, often because of the disrespect they experienced, and this result is already well documented in related research (Epstein & Goodman, 2019).

Law enforcement is unfairly burdened with this public health problem and, until this changes, they will be challenged to address each new case with fresh eyes. Roll call and other continuous short-form trainings are available in Georgia. These trainings combat system minimization of victims which can begin with first responders. A statewide skill-building initiative that elevates coercive controlling behaviors as intrinsic to most system-involved IPV could focus on better identification of this complex problem.

Reality of New Technologies

New technologies exist which may increase victims' abilities to communicate with the system and community support agencies. Technologies may be used to reduce physical violence and co-occurring abuse incidents. This study suggests that access to phone communication is a critical concern for victims. Personal technologies that assess victims' risks, connect victims with local resources, and offer disguised one-click emergency calls for help are already available at no cost to victims, like One Love's myPlan App, Sojourner Peace App, and Aspire News App (See Appendix I, Victim Support & Safety Applications). The above section of this study detailing policy implications addressed new, free cell phone technologies that could reduce assaults on victims. Training law enforcement and local community advocates in the utility and advantages of these tools requires careful program development and evaluation. Research on practices for police-friendly, community-wide deployment of personal technology tools for victims is needed.

Enhanced Community Outreach

Victims and first responders experience trauma when facing repeated acts of abuse and violence. Better secondary trauma treatment protocols for system workers could mitigate future compassion fatigue which can lead to victim-blaming and bias. Community victim outreach that is non-judgmental and non-biased could help victims see the entirety of their abusive situations and their possible options for help and change.

Community-based IPV victim advocates are dedicated to helping protect and defend victims. They may be located at local domestic violence programs (formerly called shelters), within police departments, and at civil and criminal courts. They are often well-trained in the recognition of offenders' dominating and controlling behavior patterns and can be valuable training partners for law enforcement. Rural communities need special attention regarding training and support of advocates in recognizing and training others to recognize coercive control as an infrastructure upon which IPV dangerously thrives. Rural communities represent increased vulnerability for female victims, as isolation combines with restricted resources to advantage a controlling offender (Dekeseredy, 2015; DeKeseredy, Sanchez, Dragiewicz, & Rennison, 2016; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2009). Community-based advocates need the support of researchers who can provide tools like Dutton & Goodman's (2005) comprehensive coercive behavior scales, Hamberger et al.'s measurement scales for coercive behaviors, and Lehmann et al.'s (2012) checklist of controlling behaviors (CCB) which is available in the public domain. Overall, the system could be changed to embrace performing simple yet nuanced checks for the presence of partner domination at every level and treat such cases with more care.

Implications for Future Research

IPV is a highly injurious category of violent victimization. It is understandable that the system is structured to focus strictly on incidents of physical harm. That focus seems a significant obstacle to the development and deployment of more inclusive and effective interventions. It has been common in the literature, before and after Johnson (2008), to frame IPV theorizing and research according to typologies. As Walby and Towers (2018) suggested, current IPV typologies lack the internal stability that rigorous testing requires. If, instead, researchers focus on the context or framework within which physical violence is performed, they can go beyond just typing IPV. Walby and Towers' identified the victims' economic status as the primary predictor of IPV frequency and seriousness. Tanha et al. (2010) found evidence coercive controlling behaviors as precursor or motivation for later abuse or for physical violence. The understanding of tactical or instrumental use of nonphysical coercive controlling behaviors (Black et al., 2011; Buzawa et al., 2017; Day & Bowen, 2015; Stark, 2007, 2012, 2018a) situates these behaviors beyond any type of violence, into a complex model accounting for the use of control for (conscious or unconscious) intention and motivation. These behaviors, whether in concert with or without physical violence, comprise a performance framework for IPV.

Any advantage offenders have over vulnerable partners, economics being key (Walby & Towers, 2018), can be exploited as tools of domination and coercion. Overall, the common co-occurrence of physical violence with nonphysical harming behaviors in this study of arrest cases suggests that the unaddressed intrinsic component, coercive control, deserves more research and systemwide attention. Moving away from typologies to a more inclusive model of IPV accounting for intentions of controlling behaviors could help law enforcement and courtroom workgroups save victims and hold offenders accountable. The Georgia Domestic Violence

Benchbook (Prittie & Hunter, 2015, pp. I.A8) asks and answers this question: "Most other forms of abuse aren't criminal acts. As a judge, why should I be concerned?" *Indeed, police, judges, and prosecutors should all be concerned because these behaviors (limiting or isolating, monitoring, and threatening victims) can serve as more effective indicators of danger, conflict, and distress than physical violence* (Beck & Raghavan, 2010, Campbell, Webster, Koziol-McLain, Block, Campbell, Curry, … Wilt et al., 2003; Day & Bowen, 2015; Dutton & Goodman, 2005; DeKeseredy, 2016; DeKeseredy, Dragiewicz, & Schwartz, 2017).

This study does not suggest a change in the criminal code, rather more research on the effectiveness of rigorous application of existing code by police, prosecutors, and judges. Moreover, data collection instruments should explicitly solicit victim accounts of physical abuse, nonphysical abuse, and the co-occurrence of the two. Future research should examine whether diligent investigation of, charging and convictions for offender's crimes of strangulation and phone disabling reduce subsequent arrests for physical violence. Further, data collection instruments should explicitly solicit victim accounts of physical abuse, nonphysical abuse, and the co-occurrence of the two. Future longitudinal studies should measure the effects of increased attention to offenders' high-risk coercive controlling behaviors. Primary goals should be increased victim safety and reduced perpetrator reoffending. Finally, carefully designed time-series analysis of the co-occurrence of physically violent and coercive controlling behaviors (before, during, and after violent episodes) could elevate our understanding of what appears *to be an intrinsic element* in the majority of cases of arrest.

The above section of this study detailing policy implications addressed new, free cell phone technologies which could reduce assaults on victims. Training law enforcement and local community advocates in the utility and advantages of these tools requires careful program

development and evaluation. Research on practices for police-friendly, community-wide deployment of personal technology tools for victims is needed.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. This sample consisted of victims of offenders who had been arrested for physical violence in two southern suburban jurisdictions, the majority of whom were African American. The findings of this qualitative study cannot be generalized to other populations outside of those included in this sample. Because the victims in this study were all system-involved, these finding cannot be generalized to populations who were not known to the system. Also, victim self-report is the source of these narratives, so inaccuracy and bias could be present. This study is also limited by the use of victim narratives gathered for another research purpose. As noted above, the interview questions used to collect narrative data were not designed to carefully distinguish physical from nonphysical acts of abuse. Twice in interviews, victims were asked to 'describe the incident' and these open-ended questions yielded hundreds of unique responses, driven by possibly traumatized victims' recall and priorities. Victims were not asked directly about the subject of this study: the nature of co-occurring nonphysical abuse and physical violence. It is possible that direct questions about this co-occurrence would have generated fewer Category 1 cases, more Category 2 cases, and perhaps more Category 3 cases. Moreover, this is not a time-ordered analysis, as victims were not specifically asked about exact times or duration of non-violent or violent portions of incidents. This analysis required extracting or teasing out relevant experiences that were not the explicit focus of the original data collection. That said, these narrative reports often provided context for information distinguishing nonphysical harm from physical violence these victims experienced. They also contained

valuable data and implications for improvement in intimate partner violence measurement, first responder practices, system response, and policy change.

This data was collected starting in 2001. Most recently, data suggests that reported and unreported IPV crime rates (excluding homicides) per 1000 people in the U.S. have increased since 2016 (Morgan & Oudekerk, 2019). It seems possible that if this study were replicated today, findings could change because of the expansion of cell phone use, social media engagement, GPS tracking technology and increased ease of tracking and monitoring people through shared social media applications.

Conclusion: Why Appropriating all of Breiding et al.'s Nonphysical Abuse Categories for *The IPV Control Framework* (Figure 3) Works

In this study of misdemeanor arrests, most physical IPV reported in narratives co-occurred with coercive controlling behaviors. Despite the lack of direct questioning about nonphysical forms of abuse noted above, these reports contained *all* of Breiding et al.'s (2015) eight forms of psychological aggression when combined with physical violence (i.e., Themes 9-16). The same was not the case for the strictly physical violence items, as two of the six of Breiding et al.'s framework-based themes showed no presence in the sample, and the remaining five showed very low prevalence levels. Moreover, Breiding et al.'s (2015) forms of psychological aggression addressed all of Dutton et al.'s (2005) list of coercive controlling behaviors identified across their subscales or domains of domestic life (see Appendix D). Their Surveillance Items scale (see Appendix D) also contain many items Breiding et al. (2015) ascribe to psychological aggression. The CDC's NISVS (Breiding, Chen et al., 2014, Breiding, Smith et al., 2014) surveys and reports crucial data on IPV in the United States. *The present study recommends elevating coercive control from its position as a type of IPV up to the status of the*

framework within which much of system identified IPV is performed. If system identified IPV cases are shown to have no elements of coercive control, there will be little downside to this discovery. Alerting and training first responders and courtroom work groups to investigate and identify this instrumental framework can only improve the safety-based goals of the system response. When a victim presents to the system with no apparent control-based behaviors from the offender, the system has simply responded to an IPV call prudently. This study's interest is in the structural framework which allows or supports IPV on the institutional, social, and individual levels. There are advantages to grouping the NISVS' other six elements of psychological aggression with IPV stalking to illustrate this study's proposed IPV Control Framework within which all of these damaging behaviors seem to happen.

The IPV Control Framework presented in Figure 3 usefully includes all coercive control and physical violence behaviors, where they naturally occur, as shown in this study of system-involved cases. Training using this framework model could be less value-laden than the Duluth Model (Pence & Paymar, 1993), less victim-focused and more specifically aimed at holding offenders more accountable. In effect, this model could provide better boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable offender behaviors.

This study used research from the fields of public health, sociology, medicine, mental health, offender science, substance abuse, social work and applied physiology. Moving forward, research that penetrates and extends beyond the silos containing field-specific results could yield more effective and inclusive problem-focused models and frameworks. Bronfenbrenner's (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) ecologically nested model situates victims and offenders in their micro and macro social contexts and considers the community as part and parcel of the big picture. Theory building and testing using ecologically based models (like Dutton & Goodman's

2005 model) could further our understanding and solution-building for the entire complex challenge.

Research has provided significant connections between coercive controlling behaviors and repeated and more serious physical violence, yet first responders may not be looking for this potentially predictive factor in domestics. Our lack of certainty about the causes of intimate partner violence should not condition our readiness to use this recognized, common and integral element which so commonly attends physical violence.

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Footnotes

[1] Serious violence includes "sexual violence injuries, gunshots, knife wounds, internal injuries, unconsciousness, and broken bones," according to Truman, J. L., & Morgan, R. E. (2014, p.8.). Nonfatal Domestic Violence, 2003-2012, NCJ244697. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ndv0312.pdf.

[2] "Approximately 15% of married or cohabiting women and as many as 60% of battered women are raped at least once by their partners, " (Howard, Riger, Campbell, & Wasco, 2003, p. 717).

[3] "Sexual assault includes a range of victimizations and is separate from rape or attempted rape. Sexual assault includes attacks or threatened attacks involving unwanted sexual contact between victim and offender, with or without force; grabbing or fondling; and verbal threats," (Morgan & Oudekerk, 2019, p. 6)

[4] Psychological aggression is the "use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to: a) harm another person mentally or emotionally, and/or b) exert control over another person." (Breiding et al. 2015, p.15).

[5] Not all cases in this study contained females who were exclusively victims. Several narratives were contributed by women who had been arrested on misdemeanor domestic violence charges against their partners. One case, number 329, is that of a 32-year-old woman who was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. She was arrested for violence against her male partner during an episode of psychosis. Another, case 624, was arrested with her partner, apparently because police experienced a lack of respect from both partners. In case 012, a 30-year-old woman and her husband were both arrested because she had bitten him on the back while he was restraining and beating her. In case 221, the 40-year-old woman and her partner

were both arrested because he broke into her home and spat in her face and then she spit at him. He was arrested on criminal trespassing and she was arrested on disorderly conduct. The woman in case 226 (37-years old) was arrested because her partner made a false accusation against her, claiming that she had hit him. Then they arrested him and subsequently released her. Case 735 also involved a reversal of arrest for the woman (aged 22) whose ex had claimed she had cut him.

[6] "An increasing body of research suggests that coercive control may be a more accurate measure of conflict, distress, and danger to victims than is the presence of physical abuse. Because custody/parenting time mediation is conducted with clients who are in conflict and have high rates of IPV/A, there are several reasons why measuring coercive control, in addition to other types of physical, sexual and psychological abuse in the mediation context is important, namely fear of arrest, concerns of safety for victims and basic fairness of the mediation process." (Beck & Raghavan, 2010, p. 556).

[7] This term was used by Kuennen (2013) in her article on analyzing the impact of coercion on domestic violence victims. She used this commonly used legal term when discussing how problematic the "physical/nonphysical test" (p. 15) when it comes to quantifying particular events as being "just" physical violence or coercive control with violence. For the purposes of this study, I did categorize many incidents as strictly physical or strictly coercive with no physical violence. Kuennen's term was helpful, while I acknowledge her premise that such a subjective, contextual phenomenon makes it a challenge to capture, measure, and quantity coercive control.

[8] Referring to the offender in question, these survey items asked the victim to report the number of times they experienced each form of abuse. Finn's original coding for each item was

as follows: “0= never happened, 1 = once in past six months, 2= twice in past six months, 4 = 3 to 5 times in past six months, 8 = 6 to 10 times in past six months, 15 = 11 to 20 times in past six months, and 25 = more than 20 times in the past six months” (Finn, 2013, pp. 22-23).

[9] Tanha, Beck, Figueredo and Raghavan proposed in 2010 that coercive control works as a motivation for intimate partner violence. They studied the direct effect of coercive control on their latent variable they called “victimization.” This latent variable included the manifest variables of sexual assault, psychological abuse, coercion and intimidation. Their structural equation model showed support for their hypothesis that coercive control motivated physical violence. Dutton and Goodman’s (2005) careful model and theory of coercive control between dating couples and found significant support for the offender’s tactical use of physical violence as a reinforcer of victims’ compliance to their demands.

[10] Analyzing this sample’s N=266 using Finn’s (2005) CTS2 results, eight women reported choking or non-fatal strangulation occurring once in the previous six months, twelve women said they had experienced this 3-5 times, eight women reported 6-10 events, and seven reported this happening between 11 to 20 times. Six women reported having experienced this coercive controlling behavior over 20 times. In this way, Finn’s (2005) quantitative data for this sample yielded an incident range count of 194 to 311 choking or strangulation events.

Appendix A

IPV Stalking (Breiding et al., 2015, p.14)

- Repeated and unwanted phone calls, voice messages, text messages, pages, and hang-ups
- Repeated and unwanted emails, instant messages, or messages through websites (e.g., Instagram, Tinder, Facebook)
- Leaving cards, letters, flowers, or presents when the victim doesn't want them
- Watching or following from a distance
- Spying with a listening device, camera, or global positioning system (GPS)
- Approaching or showing up in places (e.g., home, work, school) when the victim does not want to see them
- Leaving strange or potentially threatening items for the victim to find
- Sneaking into the victim's home or car and doing things to scare the victim by letting them know they (perpetrator) had been there
- Damaging the victim's personal property, pets or belongings
- Harming or threatening to harm the victim's pet
- Making threats to physically harm the victim

Criteria for stalking victimization: Victim must have experienced multiple stalking tactics or a single stalking tactic multiple times by the same perpetrator and:

- felt fearful or
- believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed as a result of the perpetrator's behavior

Appendix B

Table 1

Results of Chi-Square T-Test Analysis for Descriptive Variable Subgroup Type

	COMPLETERS[a] n=139					PARTIAL-COMPLETERS[b] n=127						
Demographic Variable	**n**	**% or $\bar{x}$**	**SD**	**min**	**max**	**n**	**% or $\bar{x}$**	**SD**	**min**	**max**	***df***	***X^2 or T-test***
Black	138	57%	0.496	0	1	126	68%	0.46	0	1	1	3.405
Never Married	138	42%	0.490	0	1	126	39%	0.49	0	1	1	0.150
Worked in 12 Mos. Before Intake	138	87%	0.340	0	1	126	89%	0.31	0	1	1	0.472
Annual Income $21,000 and over[3]	133	46%	0.500	0	1	124	49%	0.50	1	13	1	0.171
Age at Intake	138	32.47	9.120	18	57	126	33.60	9.626	18	59	262	-0.981
Number of Children at Home	138	01.50	1.210	0	5	126	1.35	1.580	0	5	262	1.336
Times Married	138	00.76	0.078	1	3	126	0.87	0.857	1	3	262	-0.946
Highest Year of School Completed	138	13.29	2.000	8	19	126	2.22	12.952	8	8	262	1.326

Notes.
[a] Completers – Subgroup 1 (n = 139) completed narratives at all three time points.
[b] Partial-Completers – Subgroup 2 (n = 127) completed narratives at only one or two time points.
[c] Monthly median income was estimated at $1750. Median annual income was transformed to reflect 2020 levels by applying the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020) CPI inflation Calculator, yielding 2020 annual income estimate of $30,956. CPI Calculation is based on comparative buying power.

Appendix B continued

Table 2

T-test Comparison of this Study's Subgroup 1 (n=139) to Subgroup 2 (n=127) on Data Finn Collected on 27 CTS2 Variables (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996)

Finns Survey 6 Months Post Disposition	Completed All 3 Narratives n=139					Completed 1-2 Narratives n=127					t	p
CTS2 Variables	**N**	**$\bar{x}$**	**S.D.**	**min**	**max**	**N**	**$\bar{x}$**	**S.D.**	**min**	**max**		
Psychological aggression												
1. Insulted or swore at me	138	8.391	9.53	0	25	123	7.813	8.64	0	25	0.511	0.610
2. Shouted at me	138	10.18	9.41	0	25	125	8.488	8.71	0	25	1.51	0.132
3. Stomped out of room/house	138	4.377	6.44	0	25	125	4.176	6.07	0	25	0.26	0.795
4. Threat to hit, throw thing at me	138	3.203	6.12	0	25	125	2.632	4.96	0	25	0.826	0.41
5. Destroyed thing of mine	138	2.246	4.12	0	25	125	2.248	3.65	0	25	-0.003	0.997
6. Did/said thing to spite me	138	7.21	8.04	0	25	125	6.496	8.19	0	25	0.713	0.476
7. Called me fat or ugly	138	2.022	4.95	0	25	124	2.444	5.26	0	25	-0.668	0.505
8. Called me lousy lover	138	1.536	4.52	0	25	125	0.704	1.97	0	15	1.901	0.058
Physical assault												
1. Kicked, bit, or punched me	138	0.862	2.49	0	25	124	0.935	2.87	0	25	-0.219	0.082
2. Slapped me	137	1.358	3.05	0	15	125	1.536	3.64	0	25	-0.431	0.667
3. Beat me up	138	1.152	2.9	0	25	125	1.304	3.19	0	25	-0.404	0.687
4. Hit me with something	138	1.457	3.93	0	25	124	1.645	3.26	0	25	-0.42	0.675
5. Choked me	138	1.225	3.33	0	25	125	1.136	2.4	0	15	0.245	0.806
6. Slammed me against wall	138	1.478	3.75	0	25	125	1.36	2.97	0	25	0.281	0.779
7. Grabbed me	137	3.124	5.24	0	25	125	3.112	4.36	0	25	0.02	0.984

Appendix B continued

Table 2 continued

Finn's Survey 6 Mos. Post Dispo.	Completed All 3 Narratives n=139					Completed 1-2 Narratives n=127					t	p
CTS2 Variables	**N**	**$\bar{x}$**	**S.D.**	**min**	**max**	**N**	**$\bar{x}$**	**S.D.**	**min**	**max**		
Physical assault continued												
8. Threw thing that could hurt	138	1.659	3.35	0	25	124	1.694	3.26	0	25	-0.083	0.934
9. Used knife or gun on me	137	0.102	0.44	0	4	124	0.242	0.67	0	4	-2.012	0.045
10.Pushed or shoved me	138	3.362	5.21	0	25	124	3.653	4.94	0	25	-0.462	0.644
11.Twisted my arm or hair	137	1.971	3.89	0	25	125	1.968	3.31	0	25	0.006	0.995
12. Burned/scalded on purpose	137	0.204	2.14	0	25	125	0.12	0.82	0	8	0.414	0.680
Sexual coercion												
1. Force to make me have sex	136	0.419	1.5	0	8	125	0.808	2.96	0	25	-1.356	0.176
2. Threats to forec anal sex	137	0.109	0.6	0	4	124	0.274	2.27	0	25	-0.819	0.414
3. Forced me to have anal sex	137	0.35	1.6	0	15	124	0.927	3.6	0	25	-1.698	0.091
4. Insisted on anal sex (no force)	138	0.956	6.11	0	25	125	0.496	3.92	0	25	1.303	0.194
5.Threat to force sex	137	1.109	4.13	0	25	125	0.824	2.97	0	25	0.636	0.525
6. Insisted on sex (no force)	137	2.652	3.18	0	25	125	1.784	2.45	0	25	1.355	0.176
7. Insisted on sex w/no condom (no force)	138	1.406	4.59	0	25	125	1.528	4.59	0	25	-0.216	0.829

Appendix C

The Official Code of Georgia Annotated Title 16: § 16-5-21 (2017)

(a) A person commits the offense of aggravated assault when he or she assaults:

(5) With intent to murder, to rape, or to rob;

(6) With a deadly weapon or with any object, device, or instrument which, when used offensively against a person, is likely to or actually does result in serious bodily injury;

(7) With any object, device, or instrument which, when used offensively against a person, is likely to or actually does result in strangulation; or

(8) A person or persons without legal justification by discharging a firearm from within a motor vehicle toward a person or persons.

(b) Except as provided in subsections (c) through (k) of this Code section, a person convicted of the offense of aggravated assault shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than 20 years.

Exhibit 2: The Official Code of Georgia Annotated Title 19. The Family Violence Act, §19-13-1 et seq

Exhibit 3: The Official Code of Georgia Annotated Title 16. Crimes and Offenses § 16-10-24.3

“Any person who verbally or physically obstructs, prevents, or hinders another person with intent to cause or allow physical harm or injury to another person from making or completing a 911 telephone call or a call to any law enforcement agency to request police protection or to report the commission of a crime is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not to exceed $1,000.00 or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months, or both."

Appendix D

Coercive Control Demand Items (Dutton, Goodman, & Schmidt, 2005, p.14)

DEMAND ITEMS, BY SUBSCALE	
Subscales [Domains of Domestic Life]	**Demand Items**
Personal Activities/Appearance	Leaving the house (e.g. not want you to leave)
	Eating
	Sleeping in certain places or at certain times
	Wearing certain clothes
	Maintaining a certain weight
	Using TV, radio, or the internet
	Viewing sexually explicit material
	Bathing or using the bathroom
	Answering the phone
	Reading certain things
Support/Social Life/Family	Talking on the phone
	Spending time with friends or family members
	Going to church, school, other community activities
	Talking to a counselor, clergy, or someone else about personal or family matters
	Taking care of dependent relatives
	Taking care of pets
Household	Taking care of the house
	Buying or preparing foods
	Living in certain places
Work/Economic/Resources	Spending money, using credit cards, bank accounts
	Learning another language
	Going to school
	Using the car or truck
Health	Using street drugs
	Using alcohol
	Going to the doctor
	Going to the doctor
	Using alcohol
	Taking medication or prescriptions drugs
	Going to the doctor
Intimate Relationship	Talking to your partner
	Spending time with your partner
	Separating or leaving the relationship
	Having sex
	Using birth control/condoms

Appendix D continued

Coercive Control Demand Items (Dutton, Goodman, & Schmidt, 2005, p.14) continued

Intimate Relationship continued	Doing certain sexual behaviors
	Having sex in exchange for money, drugs, other things
	Photographing you while having sex
Legal	Talking to police or lawyer
	Doing things that are against the law
	Carrying a gun or knife
	Talking to child protective services
	Talking to landlord or housing authorities
Immigration	Filing citizenship papers
	Talking to immigration authorities
	Immigration sponsorship
Children/Parenting	Taking care of children
	Disciplining the children
	Making everyday decisions about the children
	Making important decisions about the children

Coercive Control Surveillance Items (Dutton, Goodman, & Schmidt, 2005, p.15)

SURVEILLANCE ITEMS
Checked or opened your mail or personal papers/journal
Kept track of telephone/cell phone use
Called you on the phone
Told you to carry a cell phone/pager
Checked your clothing
Checked the house
Checked receipts/checkbook/bank statement
Checked the car (odometer, GPS, where parked)
Asked the children, neighbors, friends, family, or coworkers
Told you to report your behavior to him/her
Used audio or video tape recorder
Spied on, followed, or stalked you
Your partner did not need to check; your partner just acted like he/she knew

Appendix E

Georgia Commission on Family Violence: A Model Law Enforcement Protocol for Family Violence Incidents Protocol for Identifying Primary Aggressor

1. Preliminary investigation

   a. Interview all victims, suspects, children, and other witnesses separately. Children will be interviewed in a manner appropriate for their ages and in a non-threatening environment.

   b. Ask all victims and suspects if they have injuries or any pain, even if there are no visible injuries.

   c. Document the victims' and suspects' condition. This will include, but is not limited to, torn clothing, disheveled appearances, evidence of injury, and a disarray in the housed.

   d. Determine which of the parties involved was the primary aggressor by investigating the following:

      1.Prior family violence involving either party.

      2.The relative severity of the injuries inflicted on each person.

      3.The potential for future injury.

      4.Whether one of the parties acted in self-defense. It is important to understand signs or 'red flags' that typically indicate defensive injuries:

         - Defensive injuries are often left by the victim on the body of the attacker and are often manifested as: scratches on the attacker's arms -bite marks on the attacker's arms, chest, ankles or legs

Appendix E continued

Georgia Commission on Family Violence: A Model Law Enforcement Protocol for Family Violence Incidents Protocol for Identifying Primary Aggressor continued

- Defensive injuries on the victim tend to appear as: bruises on the back of arms, legs, or hands -bruises on the back of buttocks and lower back because the victim will often curl into a fetal position to escape injury

(https://gcfv.georgia.gov/sites/gcfv.georgia.gov/files/related_files/site_page/Law%20Enforcement%20Protocol%20for%20Family%20Violence.pdf)

Appendix F

Danger Assessment

DANGER ASSESSMENT

Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Ph.D., R.N. Copyright, 2003; update 2019; www.dangerassessment.com

Several risk factors have been associated with increased risk of homicides (murders) of women and men in violent relationships. We cannot predict what will happen in your case, but we would like you to be aware of the danger of homicide in situations of abuse and for you to see how many of the risk factors apply to your situation.

Using the calendar, please mark the approximate dates during the past year when you were abused by your partner or ex-partner. Write on that date how bad the incident was according to the following scale:

1. Slapping, pushing; no injuries and/or lasting pain
2. Punching, kicking; bruises, cuts, and/or continuing pain
3. "Beating up"; severe contusions, burns, broken bones
4. Threat to use weapon; head injury, internal injury, permanent injury, miscarriage or choking* (use a © in the date to indicate choking/strangulation/cut off your breathing- example 4©)
5. Use of weapon; wounds from weapon

(If **any** of the descriptions for the higher number apply, use the higher number.)

Mark **Yes** or **No** for each of the following. ("He" refers to your husband, partner, ex-husband, ex-partner, or whoever is currently physically hurting you.)

_____ 1. Has the physical violence increased in severity or frequency over the past year?
_____ 2. Does he own a gun?
_____ 3. Have you left him after living together during the past year?
3a. (If you have *never* lived with him, check here: __)
_____ 4. Is he unemployed?
_____ 5. Has he ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a lethal weapon? (If yes, was the weapon a gun? check here: __)
_____ 6. Does he threaten to kill you?
_____ 7. Has he avoided being arrested for domestic violence?
_____ 8. Do you have a child that is not his?
_____ 9. Has he ever forced you to have sex when you did not wish to do so?
_____ 10. Does he ever try to choke/strangle you or cut off your breathing?
10a. (If yes, has he done it more than once, or did it make you pass out or black out or make you dizzy? check here: __)
_____ 11. Does he use illegal drugs? By drugs, I mean "uppers" or amphetamines, "meth", speed, angel dust, cocaine, "crack", street drugs or mixtures.
_____ 12. Is he an alcoholic or problem drinker?
_____ 13. Does he control most or all of your daily activities? For instance, does he tell you who you can be friends with, when you can see your family, how much money you can use, or when you can take the car? (If he tries, but you do not let him, check here: __)
_____ 14. Is he violently and constantly jealous of you? (For instance, does he say: "If I can't have you, no one can.")
_____ 15. Have you ever been beaten by him while you were pregnant? (If you have never been pregnant by him, check here: __)
_____ 16. Has he ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
_____ 17. Does he threaten to harm your children?
_____ 18. Do you believe he is capable of killing you?
_____ 19. Does he follow or spy on you, leave threatening notes or messages, destroy your property, or call you when you don't want him to?
_____ 20. Have you ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?

_____ Total "Yes" Answers

Thank you. Please talk to your nurse, advocate, or counselor about what the Danger Assessment means in your situation.

Appendix G

Lehmann et al.'s Checklist of Controlling Behaviors (CCB, 2017)

The Checklist of Controlling Behaviors (CCB) is available on the public domain and may be used or reproduced without additional permission. As a courtesy, researchers are encouraged to share their findings with the instrument authors.

Checklist of Controlling Behaviors

Instructions: For each of the statements below, please circle in the number that best explains the abusive behavior that you or your partner may have experienced within the relationship that has brought you here today.

Physical abuse	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
1. Threw something at me.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
2. Pushed or grabbed me.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
3. Pulled my hair.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
4. Choked me.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
5. Pinned me to the wall, floor, bed.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. Hit, kicked, or punched me...	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
7. Hit or tried to hit me with something.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
8. Threatened me with a knife, gun, or other weapon.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
9. Spit at me.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
10. Tried to block me from leaving.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--

Sexual abuse	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
1. Physical forced me to have sexual intercourse	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
2. Pressured me to have sex when I said no.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
3. Pressured or forced me into other unwanted sexual acts (oral, anal, etc.).....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
4. Treated me like a sex object..	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
5. Inflicted pain on me during sex.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. Pressured me to have sex after a fight.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--

(continued)

Appendix G continued

Lehmann et al.'s Checklist of Controlling Behaviors (CCB, 2017) continued

Sexual abuse	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
7. Was insensitive to my sexual needs.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
8. Made jokes about parts of my body.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
9. Blames me because others found me attractive.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
Emotional abuse	**Never**	**Rarely**	**Occasionally**	**Frequently**	**Very frequently**
1. Insulted me in front of others.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
2. Put down my sexual attractiveness.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
3. Made out I was stupid.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
4. Criticized my care of children or home.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
5. Swore at me.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. Told me I was crazy.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
7. Told me I was irrational.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
8. Blamed me for his problems..	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
9. Made untrue accusations.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
Economic abuse	**Never**	**Rarely**	**Occasionally**	**Frequently**	**Very frequently**
1. Did not allow me equal access to the family money...	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
2. Told me or acted as if it was "his money, his house, his car, etc.".....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
3. Threatened to withhold money from me.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
4. Made me ask for money for the basic necessities.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
5. Used my fear of not having access to money to control my behavior.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. Made me account for the money I spent.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
7. Tried to keep me dependant on him for money.	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--

(continued)

Lehmann et al.'s Checklist of Controlling Behaviors (CCB, 2017) continued

Appendix G continued

Lehmann et al.'s Checklist of Controlling Behaviors (CCB, 2017) continued

Blaming	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
5. It "takes two to tango".....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. I hurt him first.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
7. I asked/dared him to hit me..	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
Isolation	**Never**	**Rarely**	**Occasionally**	**Frequently**	**Very frequently**
1. Told me I couldn't do something.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
2. Forbade or stopped me from seeing someone...	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
3. Monitored my time or made me account for where I was.	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
4. Restricted my use of the car.	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
5. Restricted my use of the telephone.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. Listened to my telephone conversations.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
7. Pressures me to stop contacting my family or friends.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
8. Made it difficult for me to get a job or pursue a vocation.	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
9. Kept me from getting medical attention.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
10. Tried to turn people against me..	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
Male privilege	**Never**	**Rarely**	**Occasionally**	**Frequently**	**Very frequently**
1. Demanded obedience.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
2. Treated me like a servant.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
3. Treat me like an inferior.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
4. Expected me to meet his sexual needs regardless of my needs.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
5. Treated me like I was helpless or incapable.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
6. Told me I couldn't get along without him.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
7. Had or demanded the final say in decisions.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
8. Did not allow me to do the things that he thought he had a right to do because he was a man.....	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--
9. Treated me like a servant...	--1--	--2--	--3--	--4--	--5--

Appendix G continued

Lehmann et al.'s Checklist of Controlling Behaviors (CCB, 2017) continued

CCB Scoring Sheet

CCB Scoring Chart: To score the CCB, calculate score for each subscale and compare with the chart below.

	Reported Score	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Physical Abuse Scale		10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50
Sexual Abuse Scale		9	10-18	19-27	28-36	37-45
Emotional Abuse Scale		9	10-18	19-27	28-36	37-45
Economic abuse		7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35
Intimidation		7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35
Threats		7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35
Minimizing & denying		7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35
Blaming		7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35
Isolation		10	10-20	21-30	31-40	41-50
Male privilege		9	10-18	19-27	28-36	37-45
CCB Sum		82	83-164	165-246	247-328	327-410

Appendix H

A Model Law Enforcement Protocol for Family Violence Incidents

Recognizing and Investigating Strangulation

2. Preliminary investigation

5. Officers should also be trained on the signs and symptoms of strangling/ choking.

Officers should look for and ask about:

- Scratches that may have been inflicted by the assailant or the victim who is trying to release the chokehold.
- Bruises that may be delayed in presentation.
- Spots on the face and/or neck due to blood vessels that may have burst from the pressure of a chokehold.
- Blood-red eyes due to capillary rupture in the white portion of the eyes.
- Rope or cord burns, or other linear injuries caused by an object used to throttle the victim.
- Neck swelling.
- Raspy breath.

Victim Interview Protocol:

file:///C:/Users/nancy.000/Downloads/Recognizing%20and%20Investigating%20Strangulation%20(2).pdf

Appendix I

Victim Support and Safety Apps

- One Love's myPlan App: Available from https://www.joinonelove.org/get-help/#myplan
- Sojourner Peace App: Available from https://familypeacecenter.org/resources/online-resources/sojourner-peace-app/
- Aspire News App: Available from https://www.whengeorgiasmiled.org/aspire-news-app/

Appendix J

Problematic System Response

1. Community not holding offender accountable for diversion classes
2. Corrections failure to notify victim of offender's release
3. Court disrespecting victim
4. Court failure to notify victim of court date
5. Court ignored offender's previous assaults
6. Court ignored potential danger to children
7. Court not holding offender accountable for diversion classes
8. Judge ignored request for drug treatment
9. Judge ignored request for Family Violence Intervention Program
10. Police did not follow up to cite or arrest offender
11. Police discounting victim's experience
12. Police ignoring victim's wishes regarding arrest of offender
13. Police showing disrespect to victim
14. Police showing disrespect to victim's family at scene
15. Police showing disrespect to victim's property at scene
16. Police doubting victim's report
17. Police giving offender only a warning after physical violence
18. Police asking offender to leave for the night after physical violence
19. Police ignoring civil court temporary protective order
20. Police ignored car disabling
21. Police ignored non-custodial offender taking children

Appendix J continued

Problematic System Response continued

22. Police ignored obvious assault
23. Police ignored phone disabling
24. Police ignored reliable witnesses
25. Police ignored strangulation
26. Police minimizing victim's injury
27. Police minimizing victim's pain
28. Police minimizing victim's responsibility for children
29. Police not arresting offender
30. Police not verifying offender's report
31. Prosecutor ignored non-custodial offender taking children
32. Prosecutor not verifying offender's report

VITA

Nancy Dickinson was born in Los Angeles, California. In 1976 she graduated with honors from the University of California, Davis with a B.S. degree in Religious Studies. Her area of interest was East Asian Religions. She began graduate study at Stanford University's Department of Religious Studies in 1978. Nancy also established an illustration and design studio focused on the design and illustration of books and periodicals. During her 26 years as a marketing and communications creative director, her client group included Fortune 100 and 500 companies and technology start-ups. Her experience as a presenter and trainer in strategic communications informs her work framing criminal justice research products for effective public consumption.

In 2007 Nancy enrolled in Georgia State University and was awarded a Master of Social Work and LMSW licensing in 2009. One year later she joined Georgia State University's inaugural Ph.D. cohort in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology. This dissertation represents her completion of that program. Nancy was awarded her Ph.D. in May 2020.

While studying for her MSW, Nancy developed a database of every profit and nonprofit substance abuse treatment and recovery program in Georgia with cooperation from the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. As a master social work intern at Grady Hospital, she received clinical training as a medical case social worker. She was responsible for patients with HIV, advanced AIDS and tuberculosis. A portion of her patients received treatment at Grady while in the custody of Georgia jails and prisons. During service intake interviews she noticed that a disproportionate number of patients, both from heteronormal and LGBT and Q communities, had experienced intimate partner violence, including sexual violence. Many patients were active sex workers. Patients' lack of stable housing was a primary problem for Grady to address before people could be safely released. Serving as an intern for Georgia's Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Nancy was introduced to domestic violence fatality reviews and went on to design, write, edit, and co-produce four annual Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project reports.

During her doctoral studies, Nancy was involved in several independent initiatives. With assistance from the Department of Natural Resources, she tracked the prevalence and incidence of system-involved people cited and arrested for illegal hunting, fishing, and trapping (poaching) in Georgia. She also developed a survey instrument designed to capture people's concepts and beliefs about illegal hunting, fishing, and trapping. Nancy conducted a program evaluation for Georgia's largest provider of female offender family violence intervention programs (FVIPs). Nancy presented to Social Work conventions on intimate partner violence and related fatalities in Georgia. From 2015 to 2019 she was a board member of the Lumpkin County Domestic Violence Task Force (GCFV's Task Force of the Year in 2016), planning bi-monthly meetings and materials designed to animate, support, and connect local helping agencies. She has served on social work ethics boards and a local non-profit children's home board. Finally, she received an outstanding doctoral graduate student award and taught in-person and asynchronous online undergraduate courses in juvenile offending, family violence, and ethics.

Nancy's current research interests are intimate partner violence (IPV), coercive control, femicide, primary prevention of intimate partner abuse, framing criminal justice data for presentation, and IPV community diversion and victim support program evaluation. Nancy may be contacted at nancydickinson@att.net.