

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF CONTEXT  
AND DYNAMICS

by

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## **DEDICATION**

To Vickie Deveau, Roland Deveau, Adge Deveau, and Karol Miller; for your  
unconditional love and support.

To Darryl Walker; my best friend and better half.

To Remy, Mickey, Zoolie, and Penny; gone but never forgotten.

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## **ABSTRACT**

It was not until the 1970s that intimate partner violence was recognized as a significant social problem, and advocates, researchers, and the U.S. Congress worked to shed light on problems associated with intimate partner violence. Since then, research has focused on developing theories to explain the violence that occurs within the home.

Two main theoretical approaches have emerged in the literature. The first perspective, the feminist perspective, argues that violence is asymmetrical, meaning that men are the primary aggressors and women the victims in intimate partner violence situations. Second, the family violence perspective argues that violence is gender symmetrical, meaning that both males and females are using aggressive tactics with approximately the same prevalence rate.

The stark contrast between the two perspectives and the contradictory findings on gender differences in use of violence may be due to different methodological approaches used to investigate violence. Feminist research utilizes qualitative samples of female victims of violence, whereas family violence researchers primarily utilize quantitative surveys to understand violence in general population samples.

Johnson's (1995) response to these differences was to create a new typology that identifies four types of intimate partner violence: intimate terrorism, situational couple violence, violent resistance, and mutual violent control. Although his typology provides further explanation of intimate partner violence and the debate surrounding gender

symmetry, little research has been conducted to provide support that these typologies are distinct and non-overlapping forms of violence.

Despite decades of research, there is still debate regarding the role of gender in intimate partner violence situations. To date, however, studies collecting context-rich qualitative data for both males and females in the general population are non-existent. Johnson (2010) believes that in order to make distinctions among intimate partner violence types, mixed methodological approaches need to be used to study partner violence.

The current study used a mixed-methodological approach designed to illuminate the contexts within which both males and females use and sustain violence in their intimate relationships. Several similarities and differences were found in the quantitative analysis portion of this dissertation between male and female victims and offenders in the general population. The contexts and dynamics with interviewees provided further distinctions among types of partner violence.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Prior to the 1970s, there was a general lack of awareness and acceptance that intimate partner violence was a part of the family structure (Star, 1980). Early approaches to the study of intimate partner violence came from a psychiatric perspective or from data that were collected from homicide studies (Gelles, 1980, 1985; Schultz, 1960; Snell, Rosenwald, & Robey, 1964; Wolfgang, 1957). Recognition of intimate partner violence as a significant social problem did not occur until the women's movement during the 1970s (Garcia, Soria, & Hurwitz, 2007). This recognition of intimate partner violence attracted the attention of advocates, researchers, and the U.S. Congress, which eventually led to the declaration of intimate partner violence as a major health issue and culminated in the passing of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 (Garcia, Soria, & Hurwitz, 2007; Menard, 2015). The methodological approaches initially used to study partner violence shifted when partner violence was recognized as a significant problem in society. Early methodological approaches used by psychiatrists embodied small, non-representative clinical samples, failed to include control groups for comparison, and drew conclusions based on post-hoc explanations, so researchers began to develop causal models of partner violence, which helped to further define and explain intimate partner violence situations (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Gelles, 1985, 1987; Spinetta & Rigler, 1972). Over the past four decades, researchers have focused on developing theories that explain the causes and correlates of intimate partner violence. Through quantitative analyses using national surveys and through qualitative in-depth analyses, researchers have been able to discern many of the different dynamics of

intimate partner violence; however, one issue that has still not been settled among researchers is the role of gender in intimate partner violence.

Two opposing arguments seek to explain the role of gender and violence among intimate partners. The first argument, which comes from a feminist perspective, is that violence is gender asymmetrical, meaning that men are almost exclusively the perpetrators in intimate partner violence incidents, and according to Yllö (1983) occurs “where the general status of women is relatively high, husbands may feel threatened by the rapid social change and the breakdown of traditional husband-wife roles. Increased domestic conflict may be a consequence of women’s move toward equality” (p. 82). When a man feels the need to reestablish control within the relationship, violence may occur. There is a sizable body of literature that supports the idea that violence is almost exclusively committed by a male partner towards his female partner (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, Daily, 1992; Martin, 1976; Pagelow, 1981, 1984; Saunders, 1986; Walker, 1984). Other studies, using a family violence perspective (Archer, 2000; Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Gelles & Straus, 1988; Moffitt & Caspi, 1999; Straus, 1973, 1974; Straus & Gelles, 1986; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998), have found an equal amount of support for the opposing argument that violence is symmetrical. Gender symmetry in intimate partner violence means that both men and women are aggressing against each other with about equal prevalence.

Johnson (1995) addresses the apparent contradictions within the research by arguing that researchers use different methodological approaches to understand and explain intimate partner violence. He suggests that both family violence researchers and feminist researchers disagree on important issues, but this is because they are analyzing

two different phenomena, necessitating two different descriptions and explanations of partner violence. By using two unique methodologies, researchers are measuring two very different and distinct types of violence (Johnson, 1995). Those researchers who argue that violence is asymmetrical have found support for this argument by collecting context-rich qualitative data that are deeply rooted in the narratives of women from both shelter and hospital samples and who are survivors of intimate partner terrorism (Johnson, 2010). Support for the arguments proposed by feminist researchers have also been found in national victimization surveys as well. Truman and Morgan (2014), through the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics, completed a special report on nonfatal domestic violence. The researchers reported that a majority of domestic violence was committed against females (76%) compared to males (24%), providing further support for the idea that violence is asymmetrical. Opposing theorists have found equal support that violence is symmetrical by conducting quantitative survey research that includes responses from both male and female respondents from the general population (Archer, 2000; Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Gelles & Straus, 1988; McNeely & Mann, 1990; Moffitt & Caspi, 1999; Shupe, Stacy, & Hazelwood, 1987; Straus, 1973, 1974; Straus & Gelles, 1986; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980; Tjaden and Thoennes, 1998).

In response to these contradictory findings by intimate partner violence researchers, Johnson (1995) created a typology that identifies four types of intimate partner violence: intimate terrorism, situational couple violence, violent resistance, and mutual violent control. Johnson's typology of violence "has been proposed as a solution to this gender symmetry controversy, indicating that men and women are subjected to

different forms of violence based on the existing degree of control” (Nybergh, Enander, and Krantz, 2016, p. 192). Intimate terrorism and situational couple violence, Johnson’s two main types of violence, add to the explanation of both gender symmetry and asymmetry in intimate partner violence research, and while conceptually these two types align with the feminist and family violence perspectives, intimate terrorism and situational couple violence each measure distinct, non-overlapping forms of intimate partner violence (Johnson, 1995). Johnson (1995) elaborates:

The common [situational] couple violence that is assessed by the large-scale random survey methodology is in fact gender balanced, and is a product of a violence-prone culture and the privatized setting of most U.S. households. The patriarchal [intimate] terrorism that is tapped in research with the families encountered by public agencies is a pattern perpetrated almost exclusively by men, and rooted deeply in the patriarchal traditions of the Western family (p. 286).

Although Johnson’s typology of violence provides further distinctions among intimate partner violence types, only a few studies (Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2003; Jasinski, Blumenstein, & Morgan, 2014; Johnson & Leone, 2005; Johnson, Leone, & Xu, 2014; Leone, Johnson, Cohan, & Lloyd, 2004; Myhill, 2015; Nybergh et al., 2016; Piispa, 2002) have actually examined these distinctions. Johnson’s concepts of intimate terrorism and situational couple violence have shown significantly different outcomes for victims of violence, with victims of intimate partner terrorism reporting more depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, injuries, and fear (Johnson & Leone, 2005; Leone, Johnson, Cohan, & Lloyd, 2004). Piispa (2002) also found that those who reported

severe psychological abuse, most likely representing intimate terrorism, reported a greater level of fear, more difficulty concentrating, and lower self-esteem compared to women who experienced isolated incidents of violence, most likely situational couple violence. More recently, Johnson et al. (2014) found that male intimate terrorists were likely to economically entrap, frighten, and diminish their wives' self-esteem. The researchers also found that victims of intimate terrorism were more likely than victims of situational couple violence to experience depression and to sustain injuries. Although these studies highlight the differences among types of intimate partner violence, there is still very little empirical evidence to support the claim that Johnson's intimate terrorism and situational couple violence typologies of violence are distinct and non-overlapping.

Despite four decades of research on intimate partner violence, and despite the argument for the need to differentiate among intimate partner violence types, there is still a debate surrounding the role of gender in intimate partner violence. This is primarily due to the methodological approaches still used in studying intimate partner violence. Studies that have found evidence to support the idea of gender asymmetry in partner violence have generally done so through in-depth interviews with female victims of violence. Studies that have found evidence in support of the idea of gender symmetry have done so through quantitative analyses of both males and females in the general population.

To date, studies that collect context-rich qualitative data from both males and females in the general population are non-existent. In order to gain a complete understanding of the dynamics and contexts in which intimate partner violence occurs, Johnson (2010) argues that narrative analyses, qualitative interviews, and mixed-

methodological approaches need to be conducted with those who have been involved in violent situations. A mixed-methods approach will allow for a further distinction among types of intimate partner violence and help to clear up the issues surrounding the gender symmetry/asymmetry debate.

The research conducted for the present study is designed to illuminate the contexts within which both males and females use violence against their partner, as well as the contexts within which both males and females sustain violence from their partner. A mixed methodological approach is used. First, quantitative research techniques were used to identify male and female intimate partner violence victims and offenders in a general population sample. Quantitative data were used to explore the impact of gender on violent victimization, perpetration of violence, and use of nonviolent control tactics in current and past committed relationships. Qualitative research was then conducted with the self-reported victims and offenders to delineate the more detailed nuances of intimate partner violence and victimization by gender. Answers were sought for the following research questions: How are the contexts in intimate partner violence situations similar and different for both male and female victims in the general population? How are the contexts in intimate partner violence situations similar and different for males and females who are both victims and offenders in the general population? By utilizing a mixed methods approach to study intimate partner violence, further distinctions will be made among intimate partner violence types, which will help to clear up the gender symmetry/asymmetry debate.

Chapter two of this dissertation will review the empirical literature on intimate partner violence, especially the factors contributing to the debate between feminist and

family violence researchers on the role that gender plays in intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization. Chapter three will present the quantitative methodology used to investigate the research questions, describing the sample, data collection procedures, survey questions, data analysis techniques and approaches, and the results from the quantitative analysis. Next, chapter four will present the qualitative methodology used to investigate the research questions, describing the sample, data collection procedures, interview questions, data analysis techniques and approaches, and the results from the qualitative analysis. Lastly, chapter five will provide a thorough discussion of the implications of the findings for theory, policy, and future research.

## **II. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Although intimate partner violence has been on the decline in recent years (e.g. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018), statistics on partner violence are still staggeringly high. Approximately 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men are victims of intimate partner violence each year (The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). The past four decades of research on intimate partner violence has shed light on many of the problems associated with the violence that occurs between intimate partners; however, there is still a debate with regard to the role that gender plays in partner violence situations.

### **Prevalence and Incidence of Intimate Partner Violence**

Many different measurement tools are used to examine victimization and perpetration of partner violence. Surveys, such as the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the National Violence Against Women's Survey (NVAWS), and the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), have served as nationally representative sources of data on intimate partner violence victimization. Comparable nationally representative data on perpetration of intimate partner violence are scarce and limited to sources, such as the National Family Violence Survey.

### **Victimization Prevalence and Incidence**

**National Crime Victimization Survey.** The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) has provided key information regarding victimization in the U.S. since 1973 (Langton, Planty, & Lynch, 2017), and according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2019), is currently one of the primary sources of data collection on victimization to date. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2019), data are obtained from a sample of

about 135,000 households. Approximately 225,000 individuals are interviewed on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization based on several types of crimes (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019). According to Langton et al. (2017), the NCVS provides “an important picture of long- and short-term changes in the crime problem and society’s response to it” (p. 1050).

One key contribution of the NCVS is that it allows researchers to capture unreported crimes. “The demand for and the value of victimization surveys resides in their independence from official police statistics, the ability to capture the hidden or “dark figure” of unreported crime, and the fact that they are a unique source of information on rarely reported incident outcomes” (p. 1050). Data suggest that approximately half of all serious violent crimes are not reported to law enforcement; for example, only 1 in 3 rape victims and 2 in 3 intimate partner violence victims will report victimization to law enforcement authorities (Planty & Truman, 2013; Truman & Langton, 2015). According to the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office for Victims of Crime (2019), the personal nature of intimate partner violence victimizations often influences a victim’s decision to report, so many victimizations are not reported to police. The NCVS allows victims to report intimate partner violence victimizations anonymously.

In a special report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, using data from the National Crime Victimization Survey 2006-15, Reaves (2017) reports that approximately 1.3 million nonfatal domestic violence victimizations occur each year in the U.S., almost 890,000 of those victimizations are committed by an intimate partner, and slightly over 320,000 of those victimizations involved serious violence. When the victimization

involved intimate partners, the victim was more likely to report the incident to the police than when the victim-offender relationship was someone other than an intimate partner (80% v. 68%). Additionally, slightly under 390,000 individuals did not report intimate partner victimization. Reasons for not reporting victimization included: personal matters (29%), to protect the offender (19%), the crime was minor or unimportant (22%), fear of reprisal (22%), and inefficient or police bias (9%) (Reaves, 2017).

The BJS report also broke down intimate partner assaults by gender. Females (27%) were approximately 4 times as likely as males (7%) to have been victims of serious intimate partner violence. While slightly under 390,000 individuals did not reported their victimization to the police, females were slightly more likely than males (57% v. 52%) to report nonfatal victimization to the police. Females were more likely than males to cite the following reasons for not reporting their victimization: fear of reprisal (24% v. 6%) and to protect the offender (21% v. 20%). Males were more likely than females to cite the following reasons for not reporting their victimization: the crime was minor or unimportant (28% v. 17%) and they believed the violence was a personal matter (36% v. 31%) (Reaves, 2017). Although these numbers are staggeringly high, data from the 2017 National Crime Victimization Survey indicate that intimate partner violence had an overall decrease from 3.0 per 1,000 persons in 2015 to 2.4 per 1,000 persons in 2017 (Morgan and Truman, 2018).

**National Violence Against Women Survey.** Along with victimization data found in the NCVS, the National Violence Against Women Survey is another national survey that is used to collect victimization data on both women and men in the U.S. From November 1995 until May 1996, the National Violence Against Women Survey

(NVAWS), sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, began an attempt to further understand violence against women (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). According to Tjaden and Thoennes (2000). The NVAS survey sampled 8,000 U.S. men and 8,000 U.S. women by telephone to examine the prevalence and consequences of violence perpetrated against cohabiting intimate partners. The survey screened individuals for rape, stalking, and physical assault victimization.

The NVAWS found that women were far more likely (20.4%) than men (7.0%) to be physically assaulted by a current or former partner. Women were 2.9 times more likely to report being a victim of physical assault, were 22.5 times more likely to report being raped, and 8.2 times more likely to report being stalked by an intimate partner (Tjaden and Thoennes, 2000). The results of the NVAWS also found that among those individuals who reported being physically assaulted by their partners, the average frequency, or the average number of assault sustained, was significantly greater for women than for men (7.1 assaults sustained vs. 4.7 assaults sustained). Women were also significantly more likely suffer the violence for a longer period of time than men were (3.8 years vs. 3.3 years) (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). The NVAWS was conducted at only a single point in time, and, therefore, cannot be used to examine trends in intimate partner violence victimization. Another national survey, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), unlike the NVAWS, is conducted annually.

**National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey.** Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2010, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) is a national survey that assesses sexual violence,

stalking, and intimate partner violence victimization among men and women (Smith, Zhang, Basile, Merrick, Wang, Kresnow & Chen, 2018). According to Smith et al. (2018) the NISVS indicated that over 1 in 3 women will experience either sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking during their lifetime, and that 1 in 18 women had experienced sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking during the 12 months preceding the survey. Smith et al. (2018) also indicated that an estimate 19.2, or 1 in 6 women, have experienced sexual coercion in their lifetime. Similar to female victimization, the NISVS found that about 1 in 3 men experienced sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime, and that about 1 in 20 men were victimized during the 12 months preceding the survey. Smith et al. (2018) reported that approximately 10.6, or 1 in 10 men, have experienced sexual coercion in their lifetime. In regards of psychological aggression, females were only slightly more likely than males to experience psychological aggression (36.4% vs. 34.2%) by an intimate partner (Smith et al., 2018). Both women and men have been found to experience violent victimization; however, research has indicated that a greater number of women experience several types of violence. Smith and colleagues found that “1 in 5 women experience completed or attempted rape, 1 in 6 women were stalked; and 1 in 4 experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner and reported some form of intimate partner violence-related impact” (p. 11). In contrast, although men also experience the same forms of violence, the reported impact on male victims is lower where “1 in 10 experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by a partner and reported some form of intimate partner violence-related impact” (Smith et al., 2018, p. 11).

National surveys have been used to examine victimization among intimate partner violence victims. Statistics for both male and female victims of intimate partner violence are staggeringly high. Unlike the statistics generated from using national self-report survey data on victimization, however, national self-report survey data addressing the prevalence and incidence of perpetration in intimate partner violence situations is much more limited.

### **Perpetration Prevalence and Incidence**

The recognition of intimate partner violence as a significant social problem has shed light onto not only intimate partner violence victimization, but also on intimate partner violence perpetration. However, national data on partner violence perpetration is scarce. Today, there is still a debate regarding the perpetration of intimate partner violence. Many individuals continue to view intimate partner violence as an issue of male dominance, whereby violent acts are perpetrated by men against women to gain power and control over his partner; however, there is a sizable body of literature that challenges the belief that violence is only committed by males against their female partners (Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Straus, 2011).

Early surveys such as the 1975 and 1985 National Family Violence Surveys (Straus & Gelles, 1986), found that overall rates of female-to-male physical violence were higher than rates of male-to-female violence. Specifically, the rates of minor physical violence were similar for both female-on-male violence and male-on-female violence (78 per 1,000 vs. 72 per 1,000). The rate of severe physical violence was also similar for female-on-male violence and male-on-female violence (46 per 1,000 vs. 50 per 1,000 respectively). Since then, there have been over 200 studies that have examined

physical aggression within the context of interpersonal violence, but none has duplicated the nationally representative sample used by Straus and colleagues (Straus, 2011).

### **The Gender Symmetry/Asymmetry Debate**

National surveys of the general population have produced contradictory findings with regard to the role gender plays in the prevalence of intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration. In general, national surveys that focus on partner victimization have reported that women constitute a higher proportion of victims than men, although the more recent NISVS reports parity in the proportion of victims who are female versus male. On the other hand, national surveys of the general population that focus on partner violence perpetration tend to produce the finding that women are slightly more likely than men to use physical aggression against a partner than men.

Meta-analyses, systematic reviews, and syntheses of the research literature have examined hundreds of studies that have been conducted on local, non-probability and convenience samples of the general population. These reviews also tend to produce contradictory findings with regard to gender and intimate partner victimization and perpetration. Archer's (2000) pivotal meta-analysis specifically examined research on gender differences in intimate partner violence. A majority of the 82 studies included in the meta-analysis was completed during the 1980s and 1990s and consisted mostly of college or high school students who were in dating relationships. There were several surprising results in Archer's study. According to the self-reported data, women were more likely than men to commit acts of physical aggression; however, partner reports indicated that both men and women were equally likely to use physical aggression on or

towards their partners. Moreover, men were significantly more likely to injure their partners.

In a comprehensive review of previous research, Hamberger (2005) examined both men's and women's use of partner violence, specifically within clinical samples, such as those drawn from emergency rooms, treatment clinics, or primary care settings. Overall, he suggested that several generalizations can be made about partner violence, based on findings from previous research. Women in clinical samples were found to commit acts of violence at approximately the same rate as their male counterparts; however, the research shows that the patterns of victimization are not symmetrical. Females have been found to be disproportionately victimized. Males were more likely to report initiating violence, and more likely to escalate the violence in severity and frequency. Women were found to use violence more in self-defense and to retaliate against previous violence, where males were more likely to use violence to maintain control in the relationship. Hamberger (2005) also found that women were significantly more fearful than men were. While research indicates that both males and females may use violence, women are disproportionately victimized and are victimized more frequently, with greater severity, and are more fearful of violence.

Sarah Desmarais and colleagues published two separate syntheses of the research literature on partner violence, one on victimization studies and a second on perpetration studies. Their review of 249 victimization studies concluded that, overall, about 22% of people studied were victims of intimate partner violence, and that women (23.1%) were more likely than men (19.2%) to report victimization by a partner in both large and small community samples, among university or college students, and in clinical samples

(Desmarais, Reeves, Nicholls, Telford, and Fiebert, 2012a). Conversely, their review of 111 perpetration studies concluded that approximately one quarter (24.8%) of the participants reported perpetrating physical violence against their partner. Overall, females committed physical violence against their partners at a higher prevalence rate than males (28.3% vs. 21.6%), and this pattern maintained across all sample types and measures (Desmarais, Reeves, Nicholls, Telford, and Fiebert, 2012b).

The body of research on gender and intimate partner violence produced conclusions that have been subjected to a variety of interpretations. Reported findings have also generated a heated debate, often referred to as the “Gender Symmetry/Asymmetry Debate,” which has included casting aspersions on the quality of the research that produced findings dissonant to one perspective or another. Feminist scholars (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Martin, 1976; Pagelow, 1981; Saunders, 1986; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Vivian and Langhinrichesen-Rohling, 1994; Walker, 1989) have argued and found support for the idea that violence is gender asymmetrical. An equal amount of support has been found by family violence scholars (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Moffit & Caspi, 1999, Straus, 1976, Straus & Gelles, 1986) for gender symmetry in violence. To understand the genesis of this heated debate, it is useful to review two major—but often diametrically opposed—perspectives on intimate partner violence.

### **Theoretical Perspectives on the Gender Asymmetry/Symmetry Debate**

Early research on intimate partner violence highlighted issues surrounding violence among intimate partners. Over the past four decades, researchers have developed explanatory models that attempted to describe the various causes and

correlates of partner violence. Two main theoretical positions have emerged in the literature sparking the argument about who is primarily responsible for the violence that ensues among intimate partners.

### **Feminist Perspective**

In the early 1990s, feminist scholars reported that over 90% of violence reported was against females (Kernsmith, 2005). Research (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Martin, 1976; Stark & Flichtcraft, 1991) has found considerable evidence that intimate partner violence is severe, repetitive, and is part of a system of coercive control through which men can maintain their power and control over women. Early feminist researchers such as Dobash and Dobash (1979) and Pagelow (1981) argue that battering escalates in frequency and intensity. This intensity occurs when a male's partner resists control (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). There is a need to display that control over her, which leads to violence in order to subdue her and maintain power. This control and power exerted towards females stems from the ideological belief in patriarchy, a dominant system of belief throughout history.

English law established a historical context of what patriarchy looked like. Martin (1976) suggests that early settlers in America held European attitudes, thus laws were based upon old English law. These laws, according to Martin (1976), permitted wife-beating for the purpose of correcting behavior. Specifically, "English law made it lawful for a man to beat his wife, providing he used a stick no thicker than his thumb" (George, 2007, p. 9). This implied that a man could use his power to restrain a woman if she misbehaved. Dobash and Dobash (1979) argue that "in the case of marital chastisement, the husband's traditional right to beat his wife, established under English

and European law, was neither confirmed nor denied in the United States. That omission, however, was eventually remedied” (p. 4). English law permitting spousal abuse did influence U.S. laws, including a Mississippi law enacted in 1824 and was upheld by the Mississippi State Supreme Court in *Bradley v. State* (1824), which gave husbands the right to discipline their wives. These early laws supported the idea of patriarchy, which allowed men to beat their wives to maintain power and control. It was not until the 1970s when laws began to change.

Muehlenhard and Kimes (1999) helped to publicize the early construction of what battering was and helped to establish a new framework for conceptualizing wife abuse; they recognized Susan Martin’s (1976) book, *Battered Wives*, as an early contribution to the understanding of intimate partner violence. Recognition of intimate partner violence as a social problem began to occur during the women’s movement in the 1970s (Garcia, Soria, & Hurwitz, 2007). Both advocacy agencies and researchers found intimate partner violence to be much more prevalent than what was previously believed (Dutton & Nicholls, 2005). Shelters for female victims and treatment programs for male perpetrators became commonplace. Eventually, researchers examined court-mandated treatment programs for males and gathered data from women who were staying in shelters. As a result, feminism grew as one of the prevailing ideologies in perspectives on intimate partner violence (Dutton & Nicholls, 2005).

The data gathered from battered women’s shelters and male batterer treatment programs allow feminist theorists to draw conclusions about the dynamics of intimate partner relationships, specifically the power and control exerted by men who believe in a patriarchal family system (Eigenberg, 2001; Johnson and Leone, 2005). This ideological

belief system is held by many feminist scholars (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Saunders, 1986; Walker, 1984) who believe that spousal abuse is exclusively male perpetrated, gender asymmetrical, and suggests that if female violence does exist, it occurs only when self-defense is necessary (Dobash et al., 1992).

Saunders and Browne (2000) found in their homicide study that women were more likely to use violence in self-defense than men were. Other studies (Saunders; 1986; Walker, 1984) have also found that self-defense is one of the primary motives for females to commit violence against their partners. The researchers argue that female violence occurs, but unlike men's violence, it is primarily defensive in nature. Furthermore, Cascardi and Vivian (1995) found that male-to-female aggression was more coercive in nature, and women were more likely to report aggression when they were using self-defense. In a similar study, Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, and Tolin (1997) examined both female and male perpetrators of partner violence. The researchers hypothesized that female perpetrators would exhibit violent motivations related to self-defense and retaliation, while male perpetrators would exhibit motivations related to power and control, punishment, and domination. Female perpetrators cited retaliation for previous violence, self-defense, and escape from aggression as the primary reason for committing violence against her partner, whereas males cited punishment for unwanted behaviors and ignorance as the primary motivations for committing violence against partners. These findings support other research studies (Hamberger, 1997; Hamberger, Lohr, & Bonge, 1994; Saunders, 1986), that have also found that females primarily commit violence against a partner in self-defense.

The feminist perspective on intimate partner violence helped to shape the nature of the research that was conducted on it. Early qualitative studies immersed in the feminist perspective focused almost exclusively on the victims of violence, primarily female victims, allowing them to finally speak out about their victimization, primarily at the hands of men, via phone or face-to-face in-depth interviews of women seeking help in battered women's shelters, emergency rooms, doctor's offices, and similar sites (Dobash & Dobash, 1984; Saunders, 1986; Smith, 1994; Vivian & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1994). Data gathered from these early studies provided empirical support for the explanation of partner violence as an outgrowth of patriarchy. For example, studies (Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Dobash & Dobash, 1984; Ptacek, 1988) have found that men report beating up their partners when they perceive that their masculinity is threatened. Johnson (2010) argued that studies using agency samples indicate that there is a much higher rate of male perpetrated violence in heterosexual relationships. Ansara and Hindin (2010) further suggest that feminist research involves clinical samples of women and focuses on the ways in which their partners may threaten, intimidate, use force, threaten violence, use sexual coercion, verbally abuse, financially abuse, and use control against them.

The early qualitative studies allowed feminist researchers to draw conclusions about female victimization by their male partners. One of the most prominent outcomes of feminist theory and research on partner violence was the development of a model to describe and account for men's use of violence towards women in a patriarchal society in which men are permitted or even encouraged to dominate women through their exercise of power and control.

**The Duluth model: power and control wheel.** In 1981, the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) developed an intervention that could be useful to men who had abused their female partners but were not going to jail (Dutton & Corvo, 2006). This program, was developed not only to ensure safety for women who were in abusive relationships, but also to hold offenders accountable for abusive behavior. In order to help understand the cycle of intimate partner violence, DAIP developed a model examining violent behaviors called the Duluth Model. In 1984, Pence and Paymer continued to develop a framework for the Duluth Model that examined the behavior of men who had physically harmed their female partners. Many of the shelter women Pence and Paymer studied reported that constant violence was a normal part of their relationship and attributed that violence to their partner's inability to cope with stress and the need to maintain a level of dominance in the relationship. In an effort to help understand overall abuse and violent patterns in batterers, Pence and Paymer held over 30 different educational sessions in Duluth, Minnesota, examining men who batter along with individuals who were victims of intimate partner violence (DAIP, 2011). Together, with the help of over 200 battered women, Pence and Paymer developed a model outlining the cycle of intimate partner violence called the Power and Control Wheel (DAIP, 2011). The wheel itself is used to explain the most common forms of power and control exerted by men against their female partners.

According to DAIP (2011), the words "power and control" are at the center of the wheel because battering is one form of partner violence where the actions and words of one individual are used to control that individual's partner. Additionally, DAIP (2011) suggests that the spokes of the wheel are the specific behaviors that are used against a

partner, and the rim of the wheel is the physical and sexual violence. The wheel was developed for, and represents, women who have been in violent, controlling relationships. According to DAIP (2011), the wheel is not gender neutral because the wheel is used to explain the tactics used by men who batter women.

Pence and Paymer (1986) argue that physical and sexual aggression occurs infrequently; however, the implied threat of force reinforces the power of the other tactics on the wheel. The researchers suggest that men who batter always have an intention to physically harm their partners because it is ingrained in their history and cultural experiences. Pence and Paymer (1986) argue that the tactics used by batterers reflect the tactics that are used by people who are in power, and that the elements of the Power and Control Wheel are typical behaviors of individuals who use power over others. The Power and Control Model allows researchers to use a graphic representation of the patterns of general control, which are exerted by a male partner towards his female partner. It allows for the understanding that there are many tactics, not just physical violence, that are used to gain power and control over a partner (Johnson, 1995).

Dutton and Starzomski (1997) detail the eight sections included in the model. These eight sections include using: (a) intimidation; (b) emotional abuse; (c) isolation; (d) minimizing, denying, and blaming; (e) using children; (f) male privilege; (g) economic abuse; and (h) coercion and threats. The outer circle of the wheel is physical and sexual violence, which are the most extreme forms of power and control. To test whether there was a correlation between the eight different octants in the Power and Control Wheel, Dutton and Starzomski (1997) conducted a study to examine the interrelationships among the various forms of power and control within the model. They interviewed 120 court-

referred and self-referred males and 76 of their partners. The results indicated that the men who were assaultive also showed more abusive and controlling tactics than non-assaultive men for four of the eight octants. There were no differences found between those men who assaulted their partners and those who did not for three of the octants. Non-assaultive men showed a greater tendency to abuse their wives by attacking their parenting skills. There was a relationship between the assaultive group and the use of power and control tactics, where each octant was found to be correlated with each of the other octants. The highest correlated octants were emotional abuse, isolation, minimize/deny/blame, and male privilege.

Research conducted through a feminist lens has provided evidence of “gender asymmetry” in the perpetration of partner violence by interviewing women in battered women’s shelters and hospitals. Feminist scholars also use the Power and Control Wheel to present evidence of the ways male perpetrators attempt to maintain power and control within a patriarchal belief system. Even though feminist researchers have found a significant amount of evidence for the argument that violence is gender asymmetrical, or committed in self-defense, a different theoretical perspective on partner violence, which emerged about the same time as the feminist perspective, posed a challenge to these conclusions. Researchers approaching the problem of partner violence from a family violence perspective, found, instead that partner violence is “gender symmetrical,” that is, equally perpetrated by both males and females.

### **Family Violence Perspective**

The roots of the family violence perspective can be found in the writings of Murray Straus and Richard Gelles. According to Straus (1976), many people once believed that a

marriage license was also a “hitting license” and that violence between family members is as common as love and affection. Straus (1976) identified a number of factors that explain why violence within the family occurs. These include: (a) the time and risk associated with violent behavior; (b) the semi-involuntary nature of family membership; (c) the ideas about age and sex roles within the family; (d) how emotionally involved family group members are; (e) the privacy that families maintain; and (f) the stress levels in families. While much of the family structure relies on happiness, love, and affection, violence is also an inherent part of the culture and context that make up the dynamics of a family.

Before the early 1960s, family violence received little public or scientific attention. What little research on family violence that had been completed before the 1970s came from a psychiatric perspective or from data collected in homicide studies (Gelles, 1980, 1985; Schultz, 1960; Snell, Rosewald & Robey, 1964; Straus, 1976; Wolfgang, 1957). Wolfgang’s study on homicide found that 41% of women victims were killed by their husbands, and 11% of male victims were killed by their wives, leading to the suggestion that one was more likely to be killed by a spouse than by any other person (Wolfgang, 1957)

Cultural norms also seemed to legitimize family violence. Throughout history, cultural norms permitted husbands to beat their wives. Violence towards a female partner was considered a source of maintaining power and control within the relationship. It was not until the 1970s when ideological beliefs about partner violence began to shift from permissible to unacceptable. This was attributed to: (a) the lack of awareness of family

violence; (b) the general acceptance that family violence was part of the family structure; and (c) denial that violence occurred within the family (Star, 1980).

When sociological researchers finally became involved in researching violence within the family, they began to critique the methodological approaches used by the earlier psychiatric and medical models that attempted to explain family violence. This led to a number of changes. First, class action lawsuits were brought against police departments when police officers failed to protect battered women, which ultimately caused a shift in the criminal justice system and the response to intimate partner violence (Browning, 2010). Second, the women's movement of the 1970s attracted the attention of both Congress and advocates. This increased awareness of violence within the family eventually led to actions taken against those who battered their children as well as those involved in intimate partner violence. According to Garcia, Soria, and Hurwitz (2007), Heightened awareness on issues surrounding intimate partner violence initiated from the women's movement in the 1970s, which eventually led to the 1994 passing of the Violence Against Women Act, and according to Menard (2015), was the first time federal legislation recognized domestic violence as a crime. Lastly, safe houses or battered wife shelters were established, which offered researchers the ability to interview women who were victims of violence (Gelles, 1985).

Early research on spousal abuse found that family violence was difficult to measure due to the lack of a clear definition of violence (Gelles, 1985). Therefore, the first decade of research focused on defining abuse and violence, finding ways to measure family violence, assessing factors correlated with violence, and developing causal models to explain family violence (Gelles, 1985). Since then, Gelles (1985) suggests that family

violence research goes beyond the initial focus and extends beyond measurement to not only assess the consequences of family violence, but to examine the dynamics of family violence and to look at the impact of interventions. “The initial concern of those who studied family violence was to answer three questions: (a) How extensive is violence in the family? (b) What factors are related to family violence (e.g., which families are the greatest risk of being abusive)? and (c) what causes violence in the home?” (Gelles & Maynard, 1987, p. 270). Once methodological approaches shifted, family violence researchers began to find answers to the questions initially asked by early theorists.

Family violence theorists found that contentious situations do arise within the family, but maintenance of that conflict is socially acceptable (Johnson & Leone, 2005). Conflict occurs naturally and should occur diplomatically between family members. Conflict between family members is not what is harmful. What is harmful is when those conflicts become unmanageable and diplomacy no longer works to solve them. This is when violence and abuse may occur. What is harmful is the “use of coercion, including force and violence, as a tactic for resolving conflicts” (Straus, 2007, p. 190).

Straus (2007) suggests that there are two different approaches that family members may use when managing conflicts. The first is “conflict of interest” in which individuals of one social group seek to live their lives based on their own personal agendas, regardless of how small and intimate that group may be. The second, “conflict management” also called “conflict tactics” is the method used to resolve conflicts within the family (Straus, 2007).

Family violence theorists argue that conflicts are a part of the general dynamic of a family, but those conflicts become problematic when individuals are no longer able to

resolve those conflicts diplomatically. The violence that does arise between couples who are unable to resolve a conflict is equally perpetrated by both partners, and is a normal part of the structure that makes up a family (Archer, 2000; Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Gelles & Straus, 1988; Moffitt & Caspi, 1999; Straus, 1973, 1974, 1976; Straus & Gelles, 1986; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980; Tjaden and Thoennes, 1998).

In contrast to the qualitative studies conducted by feminist researchers, family violence researchers used primarily quantitative methods to examine both victimization and perpetration of violence to resolve conflicts that naturally arise within intimate relationships. Straus (1973, 1974) conducted two preliminary studies on family violence and found symmetry in the perpetration of violence between intimate partners. Straus' findings were soon supported by findings from the 1975 and the 1985 National Family Violence Surveys, discussed earlier in this chapter (Straus, 2010). Analyses from the National Family Violence Surveys found that there was almost an equal amount of violence perpetrated by both male and female partners. Husband beating was slightly higher than wife beating, but the rate of severe assaults was about the same for women and men (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Straus & Gelles, 1986, Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).

Brinkerhoff and Lupri (1988) completed a study that found similar results as those found in studies using national survey data. Using a sample of 562 couples, the researchers found that about one in five participants had threatened to hit his or her partner within the previous year. Both male and female participants were found to equally report beating up their partner (2%). The researchers also found that women were more than twice as likely (6.4%) as their male counterparts (3.2%) to complete

violent acts against their partners. These findings, along with findings by Tjaden and Thoennes (1998), Moffitt and Caspi (1999), and those in Archer's (2000) meta-analysis, support the idea that violence among intimates is gender symmetrical.

Moffitt and Caspi (1999) analyzed the results gathered from the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study. Part of the study included information on partner violence. Data were gathered over a period of 21 years and a total of 535 males and 502 females completed the study. While both partners did not recall the same acts of violence in the same way, there was a general agreement (70-80%) with the reporting of intimate partner violence. Twenty-seven percent of women and 34% of men reported that their partner had abused them. A total of 37% of the women and 22% of the men reported that they had perpetrated violence against their partners.

Straus (2011) analyzed over 200 studies and found gender symmetry among intimate partner violence situations. Straus (2011) examined literature based on two categories, which included (a) general population studies involving both male and female assaults and injuries and (b) agency cases that measure perpetration and injury by both males and females. These two categories allowed Straus (2011) to draw conclusions about the extent to which gender symmetry in perpetration of intimate partner violence applies to severe assaults, lethal injuries, and infliction of injuries. Results for severe assault in the general population studies indicated that the median percentage of men who severely assaulted a partner was 5.1%, compared to females who severely assaulted their partners in 7.1% of the cases. Findings from the studies examining injuries in the general population studies were mixed. Fourteen studies from the general population found an almost perfect correlation between the percentage of women and men who injured a

partner, while the rest reported that men were almost twice as likely to injure their partners as females were. Studies from agency samples showed higher rates of assault and injuries perpetrated by males (63%), compared to those perpetrated by females (48%), which align with the assumptions of feminist scholars (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Martin, 1976; Stark & Flichtcraft, 1991).

In 2017, Ahmadabadi, Najman, Williams, Clavarino, and Abbs completed a study examining gender differences among 2,060 young adults who had participated in the 30-year follow-up of the Mater Hospital and University of Queensland Study. Ahmadabadi et al. (2017) found several interesting differences between males and females involved in intimate partner violence. First, females who were currently in a relationship were more likely to have children and experience a lower rate of intimate partner violence than females who were not in a relationship. Males in a current relationship were more likely to be employed, have children, and were less likely to experience intimate partner violence. Second, Ahmadabadi and colleagues found that females who were cohabitating were more likely to experience victimization and emotional abuse, whereas males who were cohabitating were more likely to experience harassment. Having a child was associated with victimization in men and harassment in women. Those females who were uneducated and unemployed were more likely to experience physical abuse. Those males with a part-time job were more likely to report harassment. Lastly, both men and women who indicated that they were currently in a relationship experienced significantly less intimate partner violence than those who were not currently in a relationship. Surprisingly, men were more likely than women to report experiencing physical and emotional abuse as well as harassment. For both physical abuse and harassment, men

experienced being victimization about twice as much as women. Men currently in a relationship were also more likely to report being slapped, hit, kicked, told they were not good enough, and not allowed to socialize with friends. Women not currently in a relationship reported being pushed, thrown, shaken, told they were crazy, unwanted, and blamed for their partners' violence. Overall, the researchers found that men experience higher rates of physical and emotional abuse (Ahmadabadi et al., 2017).

Beginning with the National Family Violence Surveys of 1975 and 1985, as well as many subsequent studies, research conducted within the family violence perspective has utilized a quantitative measure of partner violence called the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS).

**Conflict Tactics Scale.** The Conflict Tactics Scale developed by Straus (1979) and the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2) developed later by Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, and Sugarman (1996) examines how individuals resolve conflict within the family. The original CTS was developed to measure the extent to which partners engage in psychological and physical attacks against each other. It also measures how individuals reason or use negotiation to deal with conflicts that arise. The scales consist of behaviors that are directed towards a partner but purposely exclude attitudes, emotions, and cognitive appraisal of the behaviors that are examined (Straus, 2007).

In family violence research, the CTS and CTS2 are the most widely used instruments to measure and identify the violence that occurs within the home (Straus, 2007). There have been three separate versions of the original CTS. According to Straus (1990), the first form (form A) was the original scale developed as a self-administered questionnaire and was initially used with a sample of college students. Form N was

developed later and was used during face-to-face interviews alongside the 1975 Family Violence Survey, and Form R was utilized as a part of the 1985 Family Violence Resurvey (Straus, 1990).

Straus (1974) suggests that there are three modes of dealing with conflict control, including: (a) the proper use of rational discussions, arguments, and reasoning among family members. This intellectual approach to violence control is examined in the “Reasoning” subscale (b) verbal and nonverbal acts used by family members to symbolically hurt others. These acts are examined in the “Verbal Aggression” subscale and (c) physical force which is used against another person. These acts are examined in the third scale called the “Violence” subscale. The subscales were developed based on these modes of measurement and “consists of a list of actions which a family member might take in a conflict with another member. The items start with those low in coerciveness...and become gradually more coercive and aggressive towards the end of the list” (Straus, 1979, p.78).

Both the behavior of the respondent and of the respondent’s partner is recorded, which is then used to measure the degree of gender symmetry or asymmetry within the violent situation (Straus, 2007). According to Straus (2007), there are various scales and subscales that measure the severity of the violence. The distinction between minor and severe assault is similar to the distinction between simple and aggravated assault, a classification that has been supported by the etiology and treatment of minor violence and repeated severe assaults (Gelles, 1991; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000).

Respondents given the Conflict Tactics Scale are asked how many times each action has occurred during the past year, with answers ranging from never to more than 20 times (Straus, 1979). For partner abuse, couples are asked to indicate how often they did each act to their spouse, and how often their spouse did each act to them over the past year (Straus, 1979). A 3 X 8 factorial design is used for analyzing the CTS scores (Straus, 1979). According to Straus (1979) the first three factors align with conflict tactics, and the 8-level factor design aligns with the nuclear family role structure. This totals 24 total CTS scores. Four role relationship scores can also be examined by combining pairs of role scores (Straus, 1979).

The CTS relies heavily on inter-rater reliability scores between spouses (Vega & O'Leary, 2007). Numerous studies (Barling, O'Leary, Jouriles, Vivian, & MacEwen, 1987; Browning & Dutton, 1986; Jouriles & O'Leary, 1985; Moffitt, Caspi, Krueger, Magdol, Margolin & Silva, 1997; Straus, 1979) have examined and found supporting evidence of the reliability of the CTS. Most researchers have found low to moderate agreement between spousal scores. According to Cohen and Cohen (1983) the guide for inter-partner agreement ranges from (.10) for a low correlation coefficient, (.30) for a medium correlation coefficient, and (.50) for a large correlation coefficient.

Browning and Dutton (1986), utilizing Pearson's correlation coefficients found scores ranging from .32 to .57 across all items except those that involved the use of a weapon. Jouriles and O'Leary (1985) found mean scores for inter-spousal ratings to be .59 in the clinical sample and .49 in the community sample. Moffitt et al.'s (1997) study also found similar coefficient scores. They used items from the CTS as well as other items from additional aggressive behavior reports. The researchers, utilizing Pearson

product-moment correlations, found scores to be .58 for male-on-female physical aggression and .53 for male-on-female psychological aggression.

Other studies assessing the internal reliability of the CTS have found that alpha coefficients are low for the Reasoning subscale, moderate for the Verbal Aggression subscale, and highest for the Violence subscale (Straus, 1990). Barling and colleagues (1987) found alpha reliability coefficients for husband-to-wife violence ranging from .50 for the Reasoning subscale, .62 for the Verbal Aggression subscale, and .88 for the Physical Aggression subscale. In Straus's (1979) study, husband-to-wife and wife-to-husband alpha scores were examined. The alpha reliability scores for husband-to-wife violence ranged from .50 to .83. Reasoning subscale alpha scores averaged .50, Verbal Aggression scores averaged .80, and Physical Aggression scores averaged .83. Wife-to-husband scores were similar (.51 for the Reasoning subscale, .79 for the Verbal Aggression subscale, and .82 for the Physical Aggression scale). When comparing the combined couples scores, all of the subscale scores increased (.76 for the Reasoning subscale, .88 for the Verbal Aggression subscale, and .88 for the Physical Aggression subscale).

Overall, across various studies measuring the reliability of the CTS, most have found that both the Violence and Verbal Aggression subscales are more reliable than the Reasoning subscale at measuring violent tactics; however, all subscales have been found to reliably measure tactics used to solve conflict among violent couples. Along with examining the reliability of the CTS, the validity of the scale has also been thoroughly examined.

Straus (2007) argues that in order to demonstrate that a scale has good content validity, questions must be developed based on qualitative interviews that are based around examples of behaviors that are being examined or measured. Straus (2007) suggests that the CTS only includes a small number of possible violent acts, so while the scales may be valid, there is no guarantee that the selected behaviors are an adequate sample of all the possible violent behaviors. Dobash and Dobash (1984) established the validity of the content found in the CTS through their qualitative study, which aimed at identifying violent acts. The list of violent acts identified in Dobash and Dobash's (1984) study aligned with the sample of violent acts used in the CTS, suggesting that the selected violent acts used in the CTS are an adequate sample of violent behaviors.

A small number of studies (Carroll, 1977; Gelles, 1974; Steinmetz, 1977; Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz, 1980), using the CTS as a measure of violence, provides evidence of construct validity. Gelles (1974) found that the CTS obtained high rates of occurrence for both verbal and physical aggression. These high rates found in Gelles' (1974) study were comparable to the high rates found in previous in-depth interview studies. Both Steinmetz (1977) and Straus et al. (1980) found consistency in the patterns of violent behaviors from one generation to the next, and the findings about familial violent behavior (Carroll, 1977).

While the CTS has been shown to be both a reliable and valid measurement tool in assessing the extent to which individuals and partners reason, negotiate, and engage in psychological and physical attacks towards each, there has been a considerable amount of criticism directed towards the utilization of the CTS when measuring intimate partner

violence. In order to address some of the criticisms of the CTS, Straus et al., (1996) revised the CTS.

**Revised Conflict Tactics Scale.** The second version of the CTS, the CTS2, was constructed by Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, and Sugarman in 1996. This version of the scale measures the violent victimization and perpetration of the three tactics that are often used in conflict between intimate partners, including physical assault, psychological aggression, and negotiation (Straus, 2007). Additional subscales were added to measure injury and sexual coercion (Straus, 2007).

Other questions have also been added to the subscales, which according to Straus et al. (1996), “enables more facets of each construct to be included in each scale and thus increases the likelihood that the scale will be valid. Additional items also tend to increase the reliability of a scale” (p. 286). According to Straus et al. (1996), the original CTS (form R) has a total of 19 items, whereas the revised version has a total of 26 items. Each of these items is presented in pairs, asking respondents to indicate how often they commit each act, and then how often their partners have carried out each action. Other changes to the scales include: (a) the rewording of questions, allowing for greater clarification of items; (b) improvement of the operationalization between minor and severe violence; and (c) a simplified format in order for individuals to complete the self-administered questionnaire (Straus et al., 1996).

After the initial revision of the CTS, Straus et al. (1996) conducted a pretest with 97 students. Sixty students were asked to give feedback on questions in the Negotiation, Psychological Aggression, Physical Assault, and Injury subscales. An additional 37 students gave feedback on all of the subscales, including Sexual Coercion. Ultimately,

Straus and his colleagues (1996) ended up with a 60-item pool of questions researchers could use for psychometric analyses. Straus et al. (1996) distributed 541 questionnaires to undergraduate and criminal justice classes in two different colleges. A total of 317 participants met the criteria for analysis. Both reliability and validity were examined in the analysis.

The initial analysis of the CTS2 reported higher alpha reliability scores than the initial CTS (Straus et al., 1996). The highest alpha coefficient (.95) was for the Injury subscale, followed by the Sexual Coercion subscale (.87), the Physical Assault and Negotiation subscales (.86), and the Psychological Aggression subscale (.86) respectively (Straus et al., 1996). All subscales were found to have good internal consistency.

Straus (2004) examined reliability of the CTS2 by measuring different aspects of dating violence among 6,774 college students across 17 different countries. Alpha coefficients across all subscales were similar to those scores found in Straus et al.'s (1996) original study. The results indicated that the Injury subscale had the highest reliability score (.89), followed by both the Assault and Negotiation subscales (.88), and the lowest reliability scores were found in the Sexual Coercion subscale (.82) and the Psychological Aggression subscale (.74). The reliability scores in Straus' (2004) study were similar to those scores found in Straus et al.'s (1996) study. Both studies found the scales to be a reliable measure of violence.

Campbell & Fiske (1959) argue that to demonstrate construct validity, measures must be associated with other theoretically meaningful variables. In order to establish that the constructs are valid, Straus et al. (1996) examined the correlations among the CTS2 and self-reports of perpetration.

Straus et al. (1996) suggest that men are more likely than women to use some form of coercion to obtain sex, so for the Psychological Aggression and Physical Assault subscales to be valid they should be more correlated with the Sexual Coercion subscale for men rather than for women. Analysis confirms this assumption. Z scores for the differences between correlations for the Psychological Aggression subscale and Sexual Coercion are .66 for men and .25 for women with a z score of 4.53 which is significant at the p .01 level. The z scores for the difference between correlations for the Physical Aggression scale and Sexual Coercion scores were also significant (.90 for men and .26 for women,  $z = 10.17$ ). The results suggest that the Sexual Coercion subscale of the CTS2 is a valid measure of sexual coercion in intimate partner relationships.

Stets and Straus (1990) previously found that physical assaults perpetrated by males towards their female partner's result in more serious injuries than when females assault their male partners. If the Physical Assault and Injury subscales are valid measures of assaults and injuries, then the correlations between the two subscales should be higher for men than for women. Straus et al. (1996) found the assumptions to be accurate. The correlation between the Physical Assault and Injury subscales were more highly correlated for men than for women (.87 v. .29,  $z = 9.10$ ). This indicates that both the Physical Assault and Injury subscales are valid. Empirical research has supported the idea that verbal aggression against a partner increases partner violence, by finding a strong association between psychological aggression and the probability that physical assault will occur (Berkowitz, 1993; Murphy & O'Leary, 1989; Straus, 1974). Both psychological aggression and physical assault should be highly correlated if the CTS2 measures are valid. Straus et al. (1996) found that both measures were highly correlated

with regards to both male (.71) and female (.67) scores, suggesting that the scales are valid measurement tools for both psychological aggression and physical aggression.

Research conducted within the family violence perspective provides quantitative data that support the conclusion of “gender symmetry” in victimization and perpetration of violence in intimate relationships. Noting the contradictions in the bodies of research generated by the feminist and family violence perspectives, proponents of each have offered blistering critiques of the methods of data collection used by the other perspective.

### **Criticisms of Feminist and Family Violence Methods**

Critiques of feminist research on intimate partner violence have centered on problems with the Duluth Model and its Power and Control Wheel. Rizza (2009) argues that there is a large amount of intimate partner violence, but that the Duluth Model, only addresses a single type of familial violence, a male-perpetrated model of violence. “The Duluth Model, in its original, pure form, proves inadequate because it addresses only a single type of family violence, while ignoring others (Rizza, 2009, p. 126). The development of the Duluth Model focused on the ideological beliefs held by feminist researchers, thus creating gendered biases. In addition to only treating male batterers, Pender (2012) suggests that the model is limited in terms of treating diverse populations. Rizza (2009) also adds that the Duluth model does not address any other possible reasons for violence, such as substance abuse, psychological problems, individual backgrounds, or the dynamics of relationships. The Duluth Model is widely criticized for the narrow scope of treatment available for those affected by intimate partner violence. While this is the case, Dutton and Corvo (2006) suggest that “It is now one of the most commonly

used court-sanctioned interventions for men convicted and having mandatory treatment conditions placed on their probation” (p. 460).

Nevertheless, researchers have found evidence that there is no significant change in violent behavior after such treatment. Studies have examined the effects of the Duluth model in treating male batterers and have found that the Duluth Model has only negligible success in reducing or eliminating violence among batterers (Babcock, Green, & Robie, 2004; Shepard, 1992). Shepard (1992) completed a study that examined recidivism rates of 100 men after they participated in the Duluth intervention program. She found that 40% of the sample were recidivist, who were either convicted of, or a suspect of, domestic assault, or had a protection order taken out against them. Similar results were found by Babcock et al., (2004). The researchers conducted a meta-analysis examining the findings of 22 studies that evaluated the efficacy of treatment programs designed for male domestic batterers. The researchers reviewed quasi-experimental and experimental studies to test the impact of several male batterer programs, including the Duluth Model. The researchers found that overall current interventions have little impact on reducing recidivism beyond the effect of being arrested. Specifically, the researchers found recidivism rates to be 35% using partner reporting data, and 21% using criminal justice arrest data.

Along with findings from studies that indicate little success in keeping male batterers from reoffending, there are several other noted criticisms. Corvo, Dutton, and Chen (2009) argue that the Duluth Model fails to consider research evidence, evidence-based practices or protocols, assessment and diagnosis, treatment plans for individuals, and appropriate treatment for clients. Pender (2012) adds to the criticism by suggesting

that that facilitators using the model are not professionals in the field; therefore, the model does not meet proper evaluation criteria.

While there are many criticisms of the Duluth Model and the use of the Power and Control Wheel to explain violent behavior among male batterers, early preliminary research by Dutton and Starzomski (1997) provides evidence that power and control tactics are used in violent situations. Although there is little research on the use of the Power and Control Wheel as a measurement tool to help determine the dynamics and contexts of power and control in intimate partner violence relationships, the Power and Control Wheel as part of the Duluth Model can be used in conjunction with other tools to help to determine the contexts in which intimate partner violence occurs.

Criticisms of family violence research methods have centered on the use of the CTS and CTS2. While there are specific strengths of using the CTS, and while it is a valid and reliable measure, some scholars view the focus on specific acts as a limitation of the scale (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). One of the criticisms of the CTS is that it does not take into account the context and meaning of the actions that are measured (Straus et al., 1996). The CTS is supposed to be used in conjunction with other measures used in individual studies or with clinical samples, so the context of each violent situation is left out (Straus et al., 1996). Feminist scholars also argue that the community samples often used by family violence researchers do not account for the extreme violence found in clinical samples (Dobash et al., 1992). The introduction statement given to each respondent excludes expressive violence; the scales emphasize only behaviors that are in response to other specified behaviors, which suggests that the CTS underestimates pure acts of violence (Straus, 1990).

Another highly criticized aspect of the CTS is the use of fixed responses. Straus (1990) argues that many individuals taking the assessment have never seen fixed response categories, which may have an impact on personal meaning. He suggests that the reasoning behind the broad questioning is because the questions refer to overt acts of violence, rather than meaning, context, attitudes, and beliefs of respondents. Straus (1990) argues that form R only lists 14 possible violence acts, when there are possibly hundreds of ways to be physically violent towards a partner. Other criticisms of the scale deal with the placement and wording of questions. Straus (1990) argues that many researchers have assumed that specific items on the scales are only counted as one act, when in fact they are two separate acts.

The results of myriad studies and subsequent meta-analyses, systematic reviews, and research syntheses (Archer, 2000; Desmarais et al., 2012a, 2012b) have prompted and perpetuated heated debates about the nature of intimate partner violence and the quality of the research that produced the contradictory findings on the role of gender in family violence research. The central question is: are males predominantly the perpetrators of partner violence and females their victims, or do males and females use physical aggression equally against each other in intimate relationships? Perhaps one of the most ambitious efforts to reconcile the contradictions and inconsistencies in the research literature was offered by Michael Johnson (1995), when he proposed a new typology of violence that expanded theory on intimate partner violence by bringing together the arguments proposed by both feminist and family violence researchers.

### **Johnson's Typology: Resolving the Debate?**

Johnson (2010) argues "that all types of intimate partner violence require attention to both partners, to their relationship, and to the broader social context" (p. 216). Research has produced immense amounts of literature and support for intimate partner terrorism. Johnson (2010) argues that this is because the literature on intimate partner violence research is deeply rooted in the narratives of women who have survived intimate partner violence, which informs conclusions drawn from the feminist perspective. Opposing theory has argued that the narratives that women give do not accurately portray all violent situations; thus researchers from a family violence framework use general surveys to delineate the violence committed by both males and females. By utilizing only one methodological approach, both main theoretical perspectives leave out valuable information regarding gender and intimate partner violence. In 1995, Johnson established the need to make further distinctions among types of intimate partner violence, so he proposed a new typology of violence, arguing that intimate partner violence differs in different contexts, and therefore, cannot be typified into just two theoretical models.

Johnson (1995) addressed the apparent contradictions among intimate partner violence researchers. He argued that both the family violence perspective and the feminist perspective use two unique sampling methodologies, which ultimately measure two different and distinct types of violence. Therefore, in response to the contradictory evidence supported by both theoretical perspectives, Johnson (1995) proposed a new typology of violence that brings together the arguments from both theoretical perspectives and includes intimate terrorism, situational couple violence, violent resistance, and mutual violent control. Johnson (1995) contended that the distinction

between the two primary types, intimate terrorism and situational couple violence, is important for a number of reasons, including: (a) public policy; (b) educational programs; and (c) the development of theories of interpersonal violence.

**Intimate terrorism.** The first of four types of intimate partner violence is intimate terrorism. Intimate terrorism is “violence deployed in the service of general control over one’s partner” (Johnson, 2008, p. 6). While some research has indicated that women do use both violence and controlling tactics against their male partner in intimate relationships (Hettrich & O’Leary, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2010, 2012), a majority of research on intimate terrorism has indicated that females are overwhelmingly victims of intimate terrorism (Jasinski, Blumenstein & Morgan, 2014; Johnson, 2008; Myhill, 2015; Nybergh et al., 2016; Stark 2010).

According to Johnson (2010), intimate terrorism is an ongoing pattern of violence and control that is meant to frighten the victim away from seeking help, likely to produce injuries, and draw attention to individuals who report the incident to the police. An intimate terrorist is a “violent perpetrator who uses the violence in combination with a variety of other coercive control tactics in order to attempt to take general control over his partner” (Johnson, 2010, p. 3). This type of violence occurs systematically in shelter samples and has been found to increase in duration and intensity (Johnson, 1995).

Many of the coercive control tactics used by perpetrators of intimate terrorism can be found in Pence and Paymer’s Power and Control Wheel (1986). An intimate terrorist may maintain control over economic resources, exert male privilege, use the children to support and maintain control, impose isolation and emotional abuse, minimize or deny his own abusive behavior, and/or use intimidation tactics. When used in conjunction with

physical violence, the perpetrator creates a pattern of violent victimization. A perpetrator of intimate terrorism will use control tactics, often more than once, over a period of time to exercise general control over a partner (Johnson, 2008).

Studies have found evidence that intimate partner terrorism is a distinct form of partner violence. Utilizing secondary data (Jasinski et al., 2014; Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Leone, 2005; Myhill, 2015), as well as other methodological techniques (Frye, Manganello, Campbell, Walton-Moss & Wilt, 2006; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2003; Nybergh et al., 2016; Stark, 2010), researchers have found support for this control-based typology of violence.

In 2005, Johnson and Leone examined data from the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS) (NVAWS: Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). They hypothesized that the negative effects of domestic violence are more severe for intimate terrorism than for situational couple violence. Specifically, the researchers hypothesized: (a) intimate terrorism involves more frequent and severe physical violence, and the violence is less likely to stop; (b) intimate terrorism does more damage to the physical health of its victims than situational couple violence does; (c) intimate terrorism does more damage to the psychological health of its victims than situational couple violence does; (d) intimate terrorism interferes more with daily activities than situational couple violence does; and (e) victims of intimate terrorism are more likely to leave their husband and seek help (Johnson & Leone, 2005, pp. 332-340).

Johnson and Leone (2005), analyzed the responses of women who were married at the time that interviews took place. This resulted in 4,967 cases used in the researcher's analysis. The specific questions analyzed by the researchers were asked only

of respondents who had reported that their husbands had committed violence against them. Whenever a question was analyzed that was asked of other respondents who did not report being a victim of violence, the researchers compared the responses of women who experienced violence with the responses of women who had never experienced violence.

Hypothesis one was confirmed. When asked how many different times the violence was done to the victim, the mean for the respondents who reported physical violence was 8.13 for intimate terrorism and 2.63 for situational couple violence. This was statistically significant at the  $p .001$  level. The researchers found that women who were subjected to intimate terrorism by their partners experienced violence more frequently than those women who had experienced situational couple violence. Victims of intimate terrorism also experienced significantly more severe violence than those victims who experienced situational couple violence. The researchers examined violence type and Severe Violence Scale scores and reported that out of a scale score of 7, the mean score for victims of intimate terrorism was 1.07 vs. .53 for those victims of situational couple violence. These results were significant at the  $p .01$  level.

Hypothesis two was also supported. The odds of being injured were 2.5 times higher for women who experienced intimate terrorism than for women who experienced situational couple violence. Violence was significantly related to injury both at the zero order and while controlling for the background characteristics of the participants, as well as, controlling for the Violence Scale Score. While the analysis showed that intimate terrorism is more likely than situational couple violence to produce injuries, the researchers argued that the relationship is mediated more by the level of violence than the

analysis suggests. The researchers argue that this is because the Violence Scale used refers to all the violence that occurs in the relationship, whereas the injury scale uses only the most recent incident.

In regards to hypothesis three, the researchers found that women who experienced intimate terrorism showed increased scores on the PTSD Symptom Scale. Women who were victims of intimate terrorism had significantly more PTSD symptoms as the level of violence increased, which did not occur among victims of situational couple violence. Victims of both intimate terrorism and situational couple violence did, however, score significantly higher on the Depression Symptoms Scale than women who did not experience violence in their relationship. Also, scores on the Violence Scale were significantly related to scores on the Depression Symptoms Scale. The researchers also examined drug use and well-being. Victims of intimate terrorism were more likely than women who were not in abusive relationships to use painkillers. The experience of situational couple violence did not increase the likelihood of using painkillers. Women who experienced intimate terrorism were three times more likely than those women who did not experience violence to use tranquilizers, whereas victims of situational couple violence did not have an increased risk of using. Regarding the use of antidepressants, both victims of intimate terrorism and situational couple violence were more likely than those who had not experienced violence in their relationship to use antidepressants.

Hypotheses four and five were also supported. Victims of intimate terrorism were more likely than victims of situational couple violence to have missed work. The researchers found, however, that the effect of violence type became weaker and was not statistically significant “when scores from the Violence Scale were considered,

suggesting that level of violence may mediate the impact of intimate terrorism on missing work” (p. 340). Johnson and Leone (2005) also found that “experiencing intimate terrorism was significantly related to the number of times the women left the violent partner” (p.344). The researchers continued to suggest that when Violence Scale scores were considered, the effects experiencing intimate terrorism decreased; however, the results were still statistically significant. When victims of intimate partner violence did finally decide to leave their abuser, victims of both intimate terrorism and situational couple violence were likely to go to family and friends to seek shelter, and that victims of intimate terrorism were more likely to acquire their own housing or go to a safe location, such as, a safe house. Overall, Johnson and Leone (2005) found support for all five of their hypotheses. Their work has sparked several other researchers to seek answers in understanding intimate terrorism and situational couple violence.

Jasinski et al. (2014) completed a secondary analysis using data from the NVAWS (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Continuing the work of Johnson and Leone (2005), they sought answers for the following questions: (a) who is more severely affected by intimate terrorism, women or men? (b) are the characteristics of intimate terrorism consistent with Johnson’s hypotheses when the victim is a man? The sample comprised 4,967 women and 5,292 men. They found that women (36%) were no more likely than men (35%) to be victims of intimate terrorism, that female victims did not suffer more frequent violence than men, and that the violence was not significantly more severe among women. Women, however, were more likely than men to report desistance from intimate terrorism than males and were more likely to suffer significantly more injuries than men were.

With regard to the second question, the researchers found that intimate terrorism as a violence type does not affect women and men the same way. Specifically, Johnson's arguments that violence in a terroristic relationship is more serious and has greater consequences on the victims only partially held true. Ordinary least square regression; showed that violence in a marriage with intimate terrorism is more frequent than situational couple violence; however, it is not more severe. There was a relationship between violence type and desistance among male victims, as well, with desistance being more likely to be reported in situational couple violence than intimate terrorism. Jasinski et al. (2014) also found that, for women, being a victim of intimate terrorism meant suffering greater injuries and PTSD symptoms but did not predict higher levels of depression. Male victims of intimate terrorism were not more likely than male victims involved in situational couple violence to report depression or to report injuries. Male victims of intimate terrorism did report more symptoms of PTSD than did male victims of situational couple violence.

In another study, Myhill (2015) used data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), to test hypotheses similar to those tested by Johnson and Leone (2005). He tested six hypotheses examining coercive control in violent relationships. Myhill (2015) found that for victims who had experienced only one abusive relationship since the age of 16, approximately a quarter (24%) was classified as coercive control. Coercive control was highly gendered where females were more likely than males (30% v. 6%) to be in an abusive relationship where coercive control was present. Victims of coercive controlling abuse were more likely to experience frequent violence and were twice as likely to report that the abuse had lasted longer than a year compared to those who

were involved in situational violence (69% v. 36%). Myhill (2015) also found support for the idea that those victims of coercive control had higher injury scores than those who were involved in situational violence, that being in a coercive controlling relationship increased the odds of having experienced mental or emotional problems, and that coercive control affects the ability of victims to take on paid employment opportunities compared to those involved in situational violence. With regard to whether a victim of coercive control was more likely to seek help or leave a partner, Myhill (2015) found that victims of coercive control were more likely to seek help than victims of situational violence, but were more likely to report that, even after the relationship ended, the abuse continued (33% v. 17%). Overall, the researcher found that victims of coercive control are most often females, and those who are involved in coercive controlling relationships are at greater risks for physical injuries, mental health or emotional problems, diminished employment opportunities, and abuse after the relationship finished.

In 2016, Nybergh et al., interviewed 20 men who self-identified as being or having been the victims of intimate partner violence. The researchers, who focused on Johnson's typology of violence, wanted to explore and interpret the men's experiences of intimate partner violence. Nybergh et al. (2016) found that many of the male participants were both subjected to violence and control and perpetrated violence and control. Specifically, interviewees reported that their partners were jealous, disliked their friends, made them pay for things, belittled them or excluded them from family activities, ridiculed them for being weak, and exercised control over them. Interviewees also described being physically threatened with weapons, slapped, kicked, hit, and shoved, all of which led to feelings of sadness, anger, fear, powerlessness, and worthlessness. While

many of the men discussed being victimized by their partners, several also reported times when they subjected their partners to different forms of violence. Interviewees indicated that they had pushed, shoved, grabbed, slapped, and thrown things at their partners. Interviewees also reported destroying property, intimidating, humiliating, and sexually coercing their partners. Based on the narratives given by male interviewees, only one same-sex case of violence fit Johnson's profile of intimate terrorism. The researchers found that when it comes to violence committed by a female perpetrator, there was no perfect fit to intimate terrorism, which aligned with Johnson's hypothesis that women rarely reach the level of terror, control, and violence over their male partners that men reach over their female partners. While many of the males indicated that their partners held some control over them, many aspects of control were absent among interviewees. Nybergh et al. (2016) concluded that both men's and women's experiences with intimate partner violence are different.

Johnson (1995) observed that intimate terrorism has been the focus of the women's movement and of research from a feminist perspective. This terror comes from the patriarchal traditions of men regarding the right to control their partners. Patriarchal terrorism allows for the advantage of keeping the focus on the perpetrator of the crime, and keeping the attention focused on the systematic nature in which the crime is committed (Johnson, 2010). Whereas the focus of the women's movement has been intimate terrorism, Johnson (1995) pointed out that the focus of family violence scholars has been the situational violence that occurs among couples.

**Situational couple violence.** Johnson's concept of situational couple violence stems from the idea that arguments between partners sometimes escalate into physical

violence; however, the arguments are not rooted in a general need for power and control in the relationship (Johnson, 2010). Johnson suggests that the dynamics among couples can vary; thus the violence will vary. Situational couple violence does not stem from the belief that violence is a product of patriarchy; instead, Johnson (1995) suggests that this type of violence is a product of the general dynamics of family life, aligning with what family violence theorists believe causes intimate partner violence.

Violence is situational and provoked by tensions or emotions from a particular event, leading in some cases to violence (Johnson, 2008). In fact, Johnson (2008) argued that many couples are satisfied with their relationship and many relationships may have only one minor argument, but even that minor argument can spiral out of control and become violent. Fifteen couples were examined in Gelles's (1972) study of marital violence. Of the couples studied, 27 percent had only experienced one violent incident and 40 percent had only experienced violence two to five times. While many couples experience only one or two incidents of violence, for others involved in situational couple violence, the violence occurs frequently and can be either minor or severe (Johnson, 2008).

Many risk factors have been identified for situational couple violence. Johnson (2008) organized risk factors for situational couple violence into three general categories, including sources of couple conflict, couple communication patterns, and background and personality factors that may impact how a situation may escalate into violence. Johnson (2008) outlines several sources of couple conflict, including: (a) relationship status; (b) money; (c) division of labor; and (d) drugs and alcohol. Along with these sources of couple conflict, communication patterns also affect the escalation of violence. Johnson

(2008) argues that “conflicts may provide the ‘opportunity’ for violence; communication patterns are probably the most important determinant of how those conflicts will be addressed” (p. 66). Johnson (2008) also suggests that individual background and personality affect escalation to violence.

Occasionally, conflicts arise between couples; these minor conflicts in some cases will lead to minor violence and, in rare cases, may lead to severe violence within the home (Johnson, 1995; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). Many factors play into the variability of the violence seen in situational couple violence. “The most compelling pattern in the evidence regarding the causes and effects of situational couple violence is that of variability” (Johnson, 2008, p. 70). The violence seen in situational couple violence may occur once or be an ongoing pattern of violence. “This form of violence can range from one incident in the decades-long history of a relationship to chronic and sometimes severe violence that becomes a central feature of the couple’s life together” (Johnson, 2008, p. 70). What distinguishes situational couple violence from intimate terrorism is the dynamic of control. While Johnson (2008) has stated that many couples involved in situational couple violence find their relationships satisfying, victims of intimate terrorism are coercively controlled by their partner over a period of time, which may lead a victim to try to resist the violence used against him or her.

**Violent resistance.** What little is known about violent resistance mostly pertains to women. This is because intimate terrorism is primarily perpetrated by men. The defining pattern “is that the resister is violent but *not* controlling and is faced with a partner who is *both* violent and controlling; i.e., he is an intimate terrorist” (Johnson, 2008, p. 10, emphasis in original). Research from shelters and other agencies suggest

that at some point, women react violently against their abusive partners (Johnson, 2008). This was not always accepted by the general public and researchers, however. In 1979, Walker theorized that victims of intimate terrorism had been abused to the point of submission where they could not even act in their own interests, a form of “learned helplessness.” The belief that victims were submissive and could not help themselves slowly began to shift when Gondolf and Fisher (1988) studied 6,612 women who entered shelters in Texas between 1984 and 1985. Contrary to the idea of “learned helplessness,” Gondolf and Fisher (1988) found that women do seek help and search for support and resources. These findings led the researchers to develop the “survivor theory,” the idea that women who are battered respond to severe abuse by seeking help and using coping strategies.

Since Gondolf and Fisher’s study (1988), it has been found that women cope with intimate terrorism in many different ways. Several studies (Burke, Gielen, McDonnell, O’Campo, & Maman, 2001; Ferraro, 1997) have identified several stages of women’s reaction to violence. Ferraro (1997) completed research by riding along with police officers, interviewing victims who had gone to shelters for help, and interviewing abusers who were in prison for killing their partners. What Ferraro (1997) found was that women generally use four strategies to cope with violence, including (a) ardor, (b) accommodation, (c) ambivalence, and (d) terror.

In the early stages of a new relationship both physical and emotional attractions may overshadow any type of negative characteristics that a potential partner possesses (Ferraro, 1997). “At the relational level, the intense physical attraction and emotional involvement that usually are part of a new intimate relationships build ardor” (Ferraro,

1997, p. 126). It is in this stage of ardor, Ferraro (1997) argues that an individual becomes bonded to the newfound relationship and only positive feelings exist, so isolation may begin to occur in this stage, but a female may not see it as abusive in nature. Ferraro (1997) continues by stating that battered women often feel deep kinship towards their partners, and contribute to a context where the violence is “perceived as a profound violation of trust and intimacy, but rarely as a justification for the outright reject of the violent man who, until then, represented her soul mate” (p. 126).

After the first act of physical violence occurs begins the transition from ardor to accommodation. Ferraro (1997) argues that most women do not want to leave an abusive partner after one incident, and they will often attempt to rationalize the violence to protect the emotional commitment they have with their partner. Often, Ferraro (1997) argues, is that batterers will reject responsibility for the violence that has occurred, making a women feel that she is responsible. Along with a diminished self-worth and isolation from others, a woman may believe that she provoked the violence. “At the rational level, women try to control their own behavior based on their historical knowledge of their partners’ violence. At the accommodation stage, women try to eliminate those conditions that have preceded violence incidents in the past” (Ferraro, 1997, p. 128).

Despite all attempts of justifying the violence that has occurred, and placing the blame on themselves, behaviors that challenge commitment can lead to what Ferraro (1997) calls ambivalence. Ambivalence occurs when “sudden increases in the severity of violence may break through a woman’s prior effort at minimization and may shock a woman into realizing the potential lethality of her partner’s actions” (Ferraro, 1997, p.

132). Ferraro (1997) continues by suggesting that a woman may begin to question the relationship when the kindness and affection diminishes or disappears completely. Where there was once self-blame, a woman may begin to focus on protection, which sometimes leads to fighting back or attempting to leaving the abusive relationship (Ferraro, 1997).

Despite all attempts to leave, in some cases an abusive partner will not let their partner leave, and in severe cases, a male partner will perpetrate severe physical or psychological violence against their partner for trying to leave moving beyond ambivalence to terror (Ferraro, 1997). “At the terror stage, women perceive their abusers as possessing superhuman power to control and destroy them” (Ferraro, 1997, p. 135). Ultimately, the terroristic threats convince women that leaving their abusive partner is more dangerous than staying, which often lead victims to turn to drugs, alcohol, and thoughts of suicide as ways to cope with the violence (Ferraro, 1997). In this stage, many women feel helpless. Many women desire police intervention Ferraro (1997) argues; however, they also believe that police involvement may lead to more violence.

In Ferraro’s (1997) study, four coping mechanisms were discussed during interviews with those women who have been abused, as well as, abusers who were in prison for killing their partners. In another study Burke et al. (2001) interviewed 78 women who were currently in an abusive relationship or had recently left an abusive relationship. The researchers found that women talked about five stages of behavior change including (a) nonrecognition, (b) acknowledgement, (c) consideration of options, (d) selection of actions, and (e) use of safety strategies to help them to remain free from abuse.

Johnson (2008) suggested that women who are victims of intimate terrorism learn to cope with the violence in their own ways, and that most women do not try to cope with violence alone. Many victims will seek help from family, friends, agencies, and law enforcement. Leone, Johnson, and Cohen (2007) found that victims of intimate terrorism had double the odds of contacting the police compared to victims of situational violence. Victims of intimate terrorism were almost four times more likely to seek medical help than victims of situational violence, especially when symptoms of PTSD and injuries were involved. Victims of intimate terrorism also had twice the odds of contacting counseling services compared to situational couple victims, and victims of intimate terrorism were more likely to contact family when there was a higher perceived social support system. After controlling for other factors, access to money doubled the odds of seeking help from family. While the researchers found that victims of intimate terrorism were more likely to seek help from law enforcement, medical personnel, and counselors, they had lower odds of reaching out to a friend or neighbor. Overall, the researchers found that victims of intimate terrorism rely on sources that provide the ability to escape. Victims of intimate terrorism find ways to resist and cope with the violence that is used against them (Leone et al., 2007). The ways women cope and resist the violence changes within the changing relationship. Johnson (2008) nicely sums up the idea by suggesting that coping strategies that women use “must be understood within that changing relationship context...the recognition that women experiencing intimate terrorism go through a process of interpreting their partners’ violence and them coping as they see fit” (p. 49).

And while victims of violence often find ways to resist and cope, in many cases they do not recognize the extent of the abusive behavior when it first happens. Johnson (2008) argued that women often do not pick up and leave the relationship after one violent incident because often the violence has occurred in what was once a loving and committed relationship. In many cases, a victim will try to change her own behavior to eliminate the violence from occurring because it is believed that the violence is a one-time occurrence, but over time a victim begins to understand that the violence is part of a system of coercive control that becomes problematic (Johnson, 2008).

After changing oneself to meet the demands of a partner and after coping with the violence or seeking help, victims of intimate terrorism may end up committing violence to escape and resist the abuse. Johnson (2008) suggested that much of the violent resistance is self-defensive. Many violent resisters resort to self-protection automatically and will use violence when a terrorist begins to physically assault her, but in many cases using violence against a terrorist partner does not stop the violence, and in some cases the violence escalates (Johnson, 2008). Pagelow (1981) found that in many cases when a woman fought back against her partner it was ineffective in ending the violence. In a later study, Bachman and Carmody (1994), using data from the National Crime Victimization Survey, found that women who fought back against their abusers were twice as likely to sustain injuries, compared to those women who did not fight back.

When use of violence against a partner in self-defense no longer works, some victims resist the violence by leaving. When women finally decide to leave, Johnson (2008) stated that they slowly gather resources needed to escape safely, such as making plans, gathering money, obtaining employment, going to support groups, and involving

law enforcement. Some victims of violence ultimately believe they cannot escape the violence and resort to murdering their partner as a form of resistance. Browne (1987) compared women who killed their partner with those who were still in abusive relationships. Browne (1987) found that there were few differences between abused women who killed their partners and abused women who did not. What was different was the behavior of the abuser. Women who killed their partner were more likely than those who did not kill their partner to experience severe injuries, more frequent attacks, sexual abuse, and threats. From changing one's own behavior to reduce the likelihood of violence from occurring to coping through use of violence, victims of intimate terrorism often fight back and resist the violence.

**Mutual violent control.** Johnson's last type of violence, mutual violent control, is found in only a small number of cases (Johnson, 2008). This type of violence occurs when "both members of the couple are violent and controlling, each behaving in a manner that would identify him or her as an intimate terrorist if it weren't for the fact that their partner also seems to be engaged in the same sort of violent attempt to control the relationship" (Johnson, 2008, p. 12). Very little is known about the dynamics of mutual violent control. Johnson (2008) suggests that what little is known about this type of violence is that it involves mutual combat between partners. "With mutual violent control, we have the true mutuality of two people fighting for general control over the relationship" (Johnson, 2008, p. 12).

The contradictions found between the feminist and family violence perspective have been addressed by the development of Johnson's (1995) typology of violence. Johnson's distinctions between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence provide

further support that both theoretical perspectives are in fact analyzing two different phenomena and, therefore, explain intimate partner violence differently. These differences are largely due to the different methodological approaches that each perspective uses to explain violence among couples. Feminist researchers, who have found support for asymmetry in partner violence through in-depth interviews with female shelter and hospital victims, have provided many details on the context and dynamics of what Johnson identifies as intimate terrorism. Family violence researchers, who have found support for symmetry in partner violence through conducting national surveys on partner violence, appear to be studying what Johnson identifies as situational couple violence. However, due to the superficial nature of much of the quantitative data on generated by family violence research, very little is still known or understood yet about the dynamics of situational couple violence.

### **The Present Study: A Mixed Methods Approach**

Johnson (2008) observed that “there is considerable variability in the nature of situational couple violence, a variability that has not yet been explored adequately enough [sic] to allow us to make confident statements about its causes” (p. 108). He argued that it is imperative to complete narrative analysis, qualitative interviews, and mixed-methodological approaches in order to understand the dynamics and contexts in which violence occurs between both male and female victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence (Johnson, 2010).

In an effort to provide richer detail on the nature of partner violence, the present study will use a mixed-methodological approach. Quantitative research techniques, using a modified version of the CTS and an index of nonviolent coercive control tactics, will be

used first to identify both male and female intimate partner victims and offenders in a general population sample. Descriptive analysis will provide demographic characteristics of the sample, such as gender, age, and race, and cross tabulations and correlations will then be presented to examine male and female responses to both the CTS and coercive control questions. Answers will be sought for the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between gender and victimization in current and past committed relationships?
2. What is the relationship between gender and perpetration of violence in current and past committed relationships?
3. What is the relationship between gender and the reported use of nonviolent control tactics in current and past committed relationships?
4. What is the relationship between reported victimization on the CTS scale and reported victimization on the nonviolent control tactics questions?
5. What is the relationship between reported perpetration on the CTS scale and reported perpetration on the nonviolent control tactics questions?

Qualitative research will then be conducted with the self-reported victims and offenders identified in the general population sample to determine the more detailed nuances of intimate partner violence and victimization by gender. Answers will be sought for the following research questions:

1. How are the contexts in intimate partner violence situations similar and different for both male and female victims in the general population?
2. How are the contexts in intimate partner violence situations similar and different for males and females who are offenders in the general population?

By conducting a mixed-methodological approach to the study of partner violence, the role of gender in intimate partner violence can be further clarified.

### **III. QUANTITATIVE STUDY**

#### **Methods**

The research strategy used for this study was a mixed-methods approach, culminating in the collection of detail-rich qualitative data. A quantitative study was completed first in order to identify eligible participants for the qualitative component. The primary objective of the quantitative study was to identify individuals who had been involved in an intimate partner violence situation and who would be willing to participate in an in-depth interview. Additionally, however, the quantitative study aimed to explore statistical relationships among variables measuring verbal and physical aggression and measures of nonviolent control tactics used by male and female intimate partners. The quantitative study consisted a survey of 2,625 potential respondents; the survey instrument included questions from the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), contextual questions related to nonviolent control tactics appearing in the Power and Control Wheel, and demographic questions. This chapter will provide a thorough description of the quantitative methods used for this study as well as the findings of the quantitative analyses.

#### **Data Collection Procedure**

The survey was distributed to a general population sample through Amazon's Mechanical Turk program. The survey was uploaded to Mechanical Turk through an external Human Intelligence Task (HIT). HITs are the jobs, or tasks, that are offered on Mechanical Turk. All available HITs are listed together, allowing workers to browse, search, and choose among jobs. Mechanical Turk displays the HIT's title, the requestor who created the HIT, the monetary compensation, the number of HITs available, how

much time is allotted for the HIT, and when the HIT expires (Mason & Suri, 2012). For the current study, the HIT was hosted through Qualtrics, and was uploaded onto the Mechanical Turk server. By utilizing Qualtrics as the external server, data went straight from the worker to the external server managed by the researcher. This ensured that survey responses remained confidential, and that employees of Amazon's Mechanical Turk did not have access to survey responses.

Mechanical Turk is a crowdsourcing platform that allows behavioral researchers to gather data from large groups of people who are willing to complete tasks for pay. It was originally built for human computation tasks, such as data extraction, transcriptions, and filtering content. Today, Mechanical Turk employs hundreds of thousands of workers (Mason & Suri, 2012). Studies have supported the use of Mechanical Turk as a valid research platform, providing evidence that the behavior of workers on Mechanical Turk is comparable to the behavior of laboratory subjects (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Other studies have concluded that respondents drawn from the Mechanical Turk population are “often more representative of the U.S. population than in-person convenience samples” (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012, p. 351), and are as representative of the U.S. population with regard to gender, race, education, and age (Paolacci et al., 2010). Paolacci et al. (2010) also found that non-response error is less of a concern for Mechanical Turk samples than in other internet convenience samples.

The benefits of using the internet as a platform for research include the large subject pool, subject pool diversity, and the low cost required to pay workers. specifically, participants can be accessed that would not appear in a traditional subject pool drawn from small colleges and universities (Mason & Suri, 2012; Smith & Leigh,

1997). Mason and Suri (2012) elaborated on this by suggesting that Mechanical Turk offers researchers the benefit of having an existing pool of participants that remains stable overtime. Along with participant stability, there is diversity within the subject pool. Workers come from a diverse background “spanning from a wide range of age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, and country of origin”, thereby broadening the validity of studies (Mason & Suri, 2012, p. 3). Pontin (2007) reports that over 100,000 workers are on the Mechanical Turk platform. Most of the workers come from the U.S. and India (Mason & Watts, 2009; Paolacci et al., 2010; Ross, Irani, Silberman, Zaldivar, & Tomlinson, 2010). Mason and Watts (2009) and Suri and Watts (2011) completed five different studies examining the demographic information for almost 3,000 Mechanical Turk workers. They found that although 12.5% of respondents did not report their gender, of those who did report, 55% identified themselves as female and 45% identified themselves as male. Ross et al. (2010) also found that the majority of workers on Mechanical Turk reported being female. Lastly, there is low cost associated with completing research on Mechanical Turk. There is a built-in mechanism to pay workers, which reduces the difficulties of compensating individuals for participation in studies (Mason & Suri, 2010).

Crowdsourcing platforms like Mechanical Turk have ethical policies and guidelines to ensure the safety and protection of subjects (Felstiner, 2010). Mechanical Turk allows researchers to provide the consent form on a preview page that requires participants to consent before they can accept the HIT or allows the participant to accept the HIT and then consent, allowing workers to continue or return to the HIT. In order for

responses to remain confidential, surveys can be uploaded to Mechanical Turk from an external server, which is managed by the requestor (Mason & Suri, 2012).

Ethical considerations were carefully taken into account for this study. Due to Title IX regulations, university researchers are required to report information concerning assaults to the Title IX coordinator if the research participant is currently, or has ever been, affiliated with the university. In order to ensure that Title IX reporting regulations were not violated, and that participant confidentiality was upheld, participants were required to sign an affidavit stating that they are not currently, and have never been, affiliated with Texas State University. This affidavit was included as part of the consent form. Participants were required to complete a consent form prior to participation in the study. The consent form outlined the reasons why the research study was conducted, both the benefits and the potential risks to the participants in the study, how the data would be collected, how participants' privacy would be protected, the rights of participants, the incentives that would be included for participation, the contact information if participants would like to obtain a copy of the completed dissertation, and lastly contact information for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Domestic Violence Hotline were provided should participants need counseling or other local resources. See Appendix A for the complete consent form used for the quantitative survey.

Overall, Mechanical Turk provides researchers with a valid way to complete behavioral science research. Researchers benefit from the large and diverse subject pool as well as through the low-cost payouts for survey completion. For these aforementioned reasons, and to comply with Title IX regulations, the short survey was distributed to

workers through the Mechanical Turk platform. Once the survey was uploaded to Mechanical Turk, workers who identified themselves as U.S. citizens, who were over age 18, and individuals who indicated that they were not currently, and had never been, affiliated with Texas State University, were allowed to proceed to the consent form and short survey. Participants received \$0.10 for completing the online survey.

### **Sample**

A convenience sampling technique was used to sample participants on the Mechanical Turk Platform. A convenience sample is a type of non-probability sampling where members of the target population are chosen if they are easily accessible, within geographical proximity, available at a given time, and/or willing to participate in the study (Dörnyei, 2007; Given, 2008). The Mechanical Turk platform affords researchers the opportunity to obtain a sample from the population who is available and willing to participate in the study.

Surveys were administered to 2,625 potential respondents through the Mechanical Turk platform. Of the initial 2,625 respondents who participated in the survey, 500 (19.05%) participants either took the survey more than once, did not complete the survey, or did not identify their gender, thus were excluded from analysis, leaving a total sample size of 2,125 (male 35.2% v. female 64.8%).

The majority of respondents (64.8%) were female (see Table 1). Most were Caucasian/non-Hispanic (73.1%), followed by African American/non-Hispanic (8.3%), Asian or Pacific Islander (8.2%), Latino or Hispanic (5.6%), and Other (4.8%). A majority of the respondents (55.8%) were employed full-time, followed by respondents who were not employed (23.1%), or employed only part-time (21.1%). Slightly over a

third (34.0%) of the respondents indicated that their household income was between \$50,000 to \$99,000, while just under a third (32%) indicated that their household income was between \$25,000 to \$49,000, and 22.3% that their income was less than \$24,000. Only 11.7% of respondents said that their household income was \$100,000 or more. Age groups between ages 21 and 50 were fairly evenly distributed in the sample, with slightly over 22 percent of respondents indicating that they fell within the 26 to 30 category. Only 3.3% of respondents fell within the 18-20 age category; 14.6% of respondents reported an age above 50.

Along with demographic questions, respondents were asked a question about their current relationship status and whether they were in a relationship with someone of the opposite or same sex. Among the 2,125 respondents who answered the question, a total of 1,694 (79.7%) indicated that they were currently in a relationship, and of these, 54% were married or separated, 25% indicated that they were unmarried and living with a partner, and 21% indicated that they were in a relationship but were not living with a partner. A majority of respondents (92.4%) indicated that they were in a relationship with a person of the opposite sex, while slightly under eight percent indicated that they were in a relationship with a person of the same sex.

While percentages did not differ greatly between male and female respondents, both employment and relationship status showed some discrepancies between genders. Not surprisingly, males were more likely than females to report being employed full-time (66.6% vs. 49.9%). Females were more likely than males to report that they were in a relationship (82.9% vs. 73.6%) and were also more likely to be unmarried and living with a partner (27.9% vs. 19.0%).

## **Measurement of Variables Used in Quantitative Analysis**

Self-administered surveys containing questions related to both perpetration and victimization, as well as questions related to the dynamics of nonviolent control tactics, formed the basis of the survey instrument (See Appendix B).

### **Victimization and Perpetration of Aggression in Current and Past**

**Relationships.** A measure of *Perpetration of Aggression in a Current Relationship* utilized 14 items from the original CTS (Straus, 1979), plus an additional item regarding forced sexual acts. For each item, respondents were asked how often they had *used each tactic against their current partner* during a disagreement. The response categories for the 15 items were never, once, twice, 3-5 times, 6-10 times, 11-20 times, or 21 or more times. The response categories were collapsed from seven into two categories: never (coded as 0) and one or more times (coded as 1). The Overall Perpetration of Aggression index was formed by summing the recoded response categories for each respondent. Possible values ranged from 0-15, with 0 indicating that the respondent had used none of the tactics and 15 indicating that a respondent had used each and every tactic at least once against his or her partner.

Fourteen items were used from the original CTS (Straus, 1979), and an additional question regarding sexual coercion from the Revised CTS (Straus et. al, 1996) was also used. One version of the original CTS, form "R" was utilized in the 1985 Family Violence Resurvey (Straus, 1990). According to Straus et al. (1996) Form "R" consisted of four scales including: reasoning, verbal aggression, minor violence, and severe violence. No questions from the Reasoning Scale were used in the current study; however, each of the 14 questions were included in one of the other three scales. The

Overall Perpetration of Aggression index was subsequently separated into three categories based on severity level, which was determined by form “R” of the original CTS. which includes verbal aggression, minor violence, and severe violence. The sexual coercion question found as a severe violence tactic in the Revised CTS (Straus et al., 1996) was included in the severe violence category. Thus, a total of four indexes were created to measure current perpetration of aggression. Verbal Aggression included the following 6 items:

1. Insulted or swore at your partner.
2. Sulked and/or refused to talk about it.
3. Stomped out of the room or house.
4. Did or said something to spite your partner.
5. Threatened to hit/ throw something at your partner.
6. Threw, smashed, hit, or kicked something.

Minor Violence included 3 items:

7. Threw something at your partner.
8. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your partner.
9. Slapped your partner.

Severe Violence included the following 6 items:

10. Kicked, bit, or hit with your fist.
11. Hit or tried to hit with something.
12. Beat up your partner.
13. Threatened your partner with a knife or gun.
14. Used a knife or gun against your partner.

15. Forced partner to engage in sexual acts.

Finally, Overall Aggression was measured by a composite of all 15 items listed.

A similar process was followed to produce four indexes of *Perpetration of Aggression in a Past Relationship* by asking respondents how often they had *used each tactic against a past partner* during a disagreement. Comparable items from the CTS were also used to create four indexes of *Victimization in a Current Relationship*. Using content from the same 15 items of the CTS, respondents were asked how often their *current partner had used each tactic against them* during a disagreement, with response categories identical to those used to measure perpetration of aggression. Finally, a similar process was followed to produce four indexes of *Victimization in a Past Relationship* by asking respondents how often a *past partner had used each tactic against them* during a disagreement.

Initially, seven response categories were used to determine the number of times participants had used each of the 15 tactics against their partner. Response categories were then collapsed into a dichotomy. According to MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher, and Rucker (2002), variables may be dichotomized “where the distribution of a count variable is extremely highly skewed, to the extent that there is a large number of observations at the most extreme score on the distribution” (p. 38). Straus (2004) suggests that one way to score the CTS2 is to create a dichotomous variable where a score of 1 indicates that violence has been used in the past year, regardless of the number of times, and a zero indicates that no violent acts were used in the last year. Straus (2004) does argue that the scoring of the CTS2 is slightly different from the scoring of the original CTS because the original CTS did not have a response category “not in the past year, but it did happen

before”. While a majority of questions in the survey were from the original CTS, the decision was made to dichotomize the variables, often done in the scoring of the CTS2.

Once response categories were collapsed from seven into two, The Overall indexes were formed by summing the recoded response categories for each respondent. Possible values ranged from 0-15, with 0 indicating that the respondent had used none of the tactics and 15 indicating that a respondent had used each and every tactic at least once against his or her partner. A variety scale was created by dichotomizing the response categories and adding up the number of “at least once” for each tactic.

According to Bendixen, Endresen, and Olweus (2003), a variety scale measures the range or number of acts a respondent has admitted to in a specific period. Bendixen and Olweus (1999) elaborate further by suggesting that dichotomous variables are summed for each subject, and assumes that each item in the scale represents a different action. They continue by suggesting that the subject’s variety score is the summed score indicating a range of acts in a certain category. Variety scales have been constructed and used across criminal justice studies on antisocial and deviant behavior (Bendixen & Olweus, 1999; Caspi, Moffitt, Silva, Stouthamer-Loeber, Krueger, & Schmutte, 1994); Farrington, 1973). By using a variety scale in the current study, one could examine the total number of tactics perpetrated against a partner. A similar process was used to examine the tactics that a victim’s partner had used toward them.

**Non-Violent Control Tactics.** In addition to measuring use of verbal and physical aggression, the survey also asked about the use of *Non-Violent Control Tactics in Current Relationship*. This variable was measured by asking respondents whether they or their partner, in their current relationship or marriage, had used each of 11 control

tactics, adapted from those represented in the Duluth Model's Power and Control Wheel (DAIP, 2011). These items included:

1. Act in a jealous or possessive way?
2. Try to limit the other's contact with family or friends?
3. Insist on knowing where the other partner was at all times?
4. Call the other partner names or put them down in front of others?
5. Make the other partner feel inadequate?
6. Shout or swear at the other partner?
7. Prevent the other partner from knowing about or having access to the family income?
8. Prevent the other partner from working outside the home?
9. Frighten the other partner?
10. Try to provoke arguments?
11. Have a hard time seeing things from the other's point of view?

Each item had four response categories; neither of us, both of us, my partner only, and me only. Four dummy-coded variables (1 = yes, 0 = no) for each of the 11 items were created from responses to these questions. For example, a respondent who answered "neither of us" to item 1 would be coded as "1" for "Item 1/Neither", as "0" for "Item 1/Both", as "0" for "Item 1/Partner", and as "0" for "Item1/Me". Four overall indexes were then created by summing the values for the 11 "Neither" items, the 11 "Both" items, the 11 "Partner" items and the 11 "Me" items. Each index had values ranging from 0 to 11, with 0 indicating that none of the 11 control tactics had been used in the relationship and 11 indicating that each and every control tactic had been used in the relationship. For

all analyses, “Neither” was designated as the omitted category against which the other three categories were compared.

This process was repeated to measure *Non-Violent Control Tactics in Past Relationship*, where respondents were asked the same questions in reference to their most recent past relationship.

**Gender.** The survey also asked respondents to indicate whether they identified themselves as male (coded as 0) or as female (coded as 1).

### **Quantitative Data Analysis Plan**

In addition to identifying respondents who would be eligible to participate in the in-depth interviews, the quantitative study was useful in examining the relationships among gender, perpetration of aggression, victimization, and non-violent control tactics in both current and past relationships. Each measure of aggression and control was cross tabulated with gender, and a z-test for differences in means or proportions was conducted to determine if observed gender differences were statistically significant at the p .05 level. Additionally, Pearson’s correlation coefficients were examined to further explore the strength of bivariate relationships between all the variables used in the analysis. While multiple regression analysis would have indicated whether the bivariate correlation between nonviolent control and each measure of victimization and perpetration was spurious; the primary purpose of the quantitative analysis was to examine whether the use of nonviolent control tactics was common in relationships that indicated that physical violence had been used, not to explore the predictors of perpetration and victimization of violence. Thus multiple regression analysis was excluded from the quantitative analysis.

## Results

The research questions for this study focus on the differences between males and females in victimization and perpetration of violence in intimate partner violence. Family violence scholars (Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988; Gelles & Straus, 1988; Moffitt & Caspi, 1999; Straus, 1973, 1974; Straus & Gelles, 1986; Straus et al., 1980; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998) have found support through survey data that violence is symmetrical, with males and females reporting fairly equal levels of aggression toward each other. In contrast, feminist scholars (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash et al., 1992; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2000; Martin, 1976; Pagelow, 1984; Saunders, 1986; Walker, 1984) have found support through qualitative interviews and victimization data that such violence is asymmetrical, with males perpetrating more physical violence and females more likely to be victimized by an intimate partner. In order to assess whether observed gender differences in perpetration and victimization are statistically significant, a z-test for difference in means or proportions was computed for male and female responses to each item, first within the context of a current relationship and then within the context of a recent past relationship.

### **Perpetration of Aggression in a Current and Past Committed Relationship**

Table 2 examines gender differences in perpetration of aggression in current relationships. Following Straus's (1979) classification of types of aggression on Form "R," at least half the total sample (50.0 - 73.1%) reported the use of four of the six verbal aggression tactics; only a small proportion of the total sample reported threats (11.4%) or throwing something at a partner (16.6%). Nevertheless, females were significantly more likely than males (75.6% v. 67.9%) to report that they had sulked or refused to talk

during an argument and were more likely to report that they had stomped out of the room or house during an argument (56.8% v. 46.8%). For the remaining verbal aggression tactics, males and females were equally likely, or equally unlikely in some cases, to use verbal aggression tactics against their partner.

In contrast, the use of minor and severe violent tactics in a current relationship was relatively rare, with 8.0% to 11.4% of the total sample reporting the use of one of the three minor violent tactics and 2.8 to 6.6% reporting the use of a severe violent tactic against a partner. No statistically significant gender differences were observed in the use of minor violent tactics; however, males were over twice as likely as females, proportionately, to report that they had beat up their partner (6.3% vs. 2.3%) and to report that they had threatened their partner with a knife or gun (6.2% v. 2.4%) one or more times during an argument. Males were almost four times as likely as females (5.3% v. 1.6%) to report that they had used a knife or gun against their partner and were slightly over five times as likely (7.2% v. 1.9%) to report that they had forced their partner to engage in sexual acts against their will one or more times during an argument.

Table 3 presents findings with respect to perpetration of aggression in respondents' most recent past relationship. Similar to respondents currently in a relationship, a majority of respondents reported using the same four verbal aggression tactics against a partner and a substantially lower proportion reported perpetrating minor or severe violence against a partner. Females were more likely than males (74.6% v. 61.4%) to report that they had sulked or refused to talk to their partner during an argument one or more times. Females were also significantly more likely than males (54.4% v. 45.3%) to report that they had stomped out of the room or house during an

argument. Also similar to current relationships, no statistically significant gender differences were observed in the use of minor violent tactics in a past relationship. There were some differences observed when respondents reported on a past relationship compared with a current relationship. Specifically, males were significantly more likely than females (7.9% v. 3.9%) to report that they had forced a previous partner to engage in sexual acts against their will one or more times during an argument, but there were no other significant differences between males and females in reports of the use of other severe violent tactics in a past relationship.

In addition to examining the proportion of males and females reporting the use of aggression against a partner, the mean number of tactics used by males and females were also compared, for both current and past relationships. Table 4 presents these findings. Females used a greater number of verbal aggression tactics against their partner both in their current relationship ( $M_f = 2.72$  vs.  $M_m = 2.51$ ) and in their past relationship ( $M_f = 2.85$  vs.  $M_m = 2.47$ ). Males used a significantly greater number of severe violent tactics in their current relationship ( $M_f = 0.19$  vs.  $M_m = 0.37$ ) but not in their past relationship. However, the mean number of minor violent tactics used by males and females was comparatively equal in both current and past relationships.

In summary, a majority of male and female respondents, in either a current or past relationship, indicated that they had never perpetrated aggression against a partner. Female respondents were significantly more likely than males to use specific verbal aggression tactics towards their partners in a current or past relationship. Male respondents were significantly more likely to use severe violence against their female partner in a current relationship only. However, the use of minor violent tactics, though

rare in both current and past relationships, was reported relatively equally by male and female respondents in this sample.

### **Victimization in a Current and Past Committed Relationship**

Table 5 presents the results of the examination of gender differences in victimization in current relationships. More than half of the sample (52.7% - 75.1%) reported that their partner had used four of the six verbal aggression tactics against them; a small portion of the sample (15.1%) reported that their partner had threatened to hit or throw something at them, or threw, smashed, hit, or kicked them (23.8%). Nonetheless, males were significantly more likely than females (65.9% vs. 60.0) to report that their partner had insulted or swore at them, had sulked or refused to talk to them (79.8% vs. 72.9%), did or said something to spite them (57.1% vs. 50.7%), or had threatened to hit or throw something at them (20.0% vs. 12.8%). For the remaining two verbal aggression tactics, males and females were equally likely to be on the receiving end of verbal aggression.

Minor and severe violence victimization in a current relationship was relatively rare, with minor violence victimization ranging between 8.7% - 15.0% and severe violence victimization ranging from 3.0% - 8.9% for the total sample. In all three minor violence tactics used, males were significantly more likely than females to report victimization. Specifically, males were significantly more likely than females (19.1% vs. 9.6%) to report that their partner threw something at them, or pushed, grabbed, or shoved them (19.2% vs. 13.1%) one or more times during an argument. Males were also almost three times more likely than females (15.6% vs. 5.5%) to report that their partner had slapped them. With regard to the use of all six severe violence victimization tactic, males

were significantly more likely than females across all tactics to report being victimized by their partner. Males were a little less than twice as likely as females (7.0% vs. 3.9%) to report that their partner had forced sexual acts against them, and were over twice as likely as females (14.6% vs. 5.8%) to report that they had been kicked, bit, or hit with a fist, or that their partner had tried to hit or did hit them (14.3% vs. 6.4%). Males were also approximately three times more likely than females (7.4% vs. 2.6%) to report that their partner beat them, or that their partner threatened them with a knife or gun (7.0% vs. 2.2%). Surprisingly, males were almost four times more likely than females (6.1% vs. 1.6%) to report that their partner had used a knife or gun on them during an argument.

Table 6 examines gender differences in victimization in respondents' most recent past relationship. Similar to respondents currently in a relationship, a majority of respondents reported that their partner used the same four verbal aggression tactics against a partner, and a substantially lower proportion reported that their partner had used minor or severe violence against them. Unlike the results reported on victimization in a respondents' current relationship, however, only two tactics yielded significant results. Males were almost twice as likely as females (22.9 vs. 12.7%) to report that their partner had slapped them, or that their partner had kicked, bit, or hit them with a fist (20.2% vs. 11.8%).

In addition to examining the proportion of males and females reporting victimization, the mean number of tactics used against both males and females was also compared, for both current and past relationships. Table 7 presents these findings. Males had a greater number of verbal aggression tactics used against them in their current relationship ( $M_m = 2.99$  vs.  $M_f = 2.73$ ) but not in their past relationship. This also held

true with both minor violence ( $M_m = .53$  vs.  $M_f = .28$ ) and severe violence ( $M_m = .52$  vs.  $M_f = .21$ ). The mean number of verbal aggression, minor, and severe violent tactics used against the respondent in their most recent past relationship was comparatively equal.

In summary, a majority of male and female respondents, in either a current or past relationship, indicated that they had never been victimized by an intimate partner. Male respondents were significantly more likely than females to have verbal aggression, minor, and severe violent tactics used against them by their current partner. In contrast, all but two tactics (slapped and kicked, bit, or hit with fist) used against respondents in a recent past relationship were reported relatively equally by male and female respondents.

### **Non-violent Control Tactics in a Current Committed Relationship**

Johnson (2008) asserts that “[c]oercive control is the key to understanding the differences among the basic types of partner violence. Once we know that someone has been violent toward his or her partner, the next thing we need to know is whether that violence was enacted in a general context of power and control” (p. 13). Table 8 presents the extent to which respondents reported the presence of non-violent control tactics, used by either themselves, their partner, or both, in their current and past relationships.

It is important to note first that in their current relationship, a majority of participants indicated that neither they nor their partner used any of the non-violent coercive control tactics. However, at least a third of respondents reported the following control tactics present in their current relationship, that is, used by themselves, their partner, or by both: acting jealous or possessive (39%), shouting or swearing at a partner (36.6%), and insisting on knowing where the partner is at all times (33.1%). Somewhat higher proportions of respondents reported coercive control tactics in their most recent

past relationship, with a majority reporting that acting jealous or possessive (62.8%), making a partner feel inadequate (53.3%), provoking an argument (52.5%), and shouting or swearing at a partner (50.6%) were more commonly present in a past relationship.

Table 9 examines gender differences in the perpetration of non-violent control tactics in a current and past relationship, regardless whether their partner reciprocated the tactic. Although several tactics were used equally by males and females, there are some notable gender differences. Females were significantly more likely than males (30.2% vs. 25.3%) to report that they acted in a jealous or possessive way towards their current partner; conversely, for a past relationship, males were more likely than females (44.8% vs. 34.4%) to report their use of this tactic. For all other significant gender differences in non-violent control tactics, males were more likely than females to report their use in either their current or past relationship. In both current and past relationships, males were more likely than females to limit their partner's contact with family and friends (current = 8.8% vs. 5.0% and past = 13.4% vs. 5.7%), prevent access to income (current = 10.0% vs. 5.8% and past = 11.6% vs. 4.4%), and frighten their partner (current = 8.0% vs. 4.5% and past = 17.1% vs. 10.0%). In their current relationship, males were also more likely than females to prevent their partner from working outside the home (7.0% vs. 2.0%), and in their past relationship, males were more likely than females to insist on knowing where their partner is at all times (22.6% vs. 15.3%). In summary, although a majority of both male and female respondents reported that they had never used non-violent control tactics in either a current or previous relationship, when such tactics were reported, males were significantly more likely than females to make use of coercive control tactics against their partner in a relationship.

## **Correlations between CTS, Violent Perpetration, Victimization, and the Use of Non-Violent Control Tactics**

Johnson's (2008) distinction between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence is predicated on the coupling of physical aggression with the use of non-violent coercive control tactics. The extent to which perpetrators of frequent and severe violence against a partner also make use of numerous non-violent control tactics is considered the primary indicator of intimate terrorism; aggression without coercive control is the hallmark of situational couple violence. Tables 10 and 11 explore the correlations between the use of aggression and the use of non-violent control tactics within current and past relationships.

In general, the absence of non-violent control tactics (Neither NVCT) is inversely associated with all forms of victimization and perpetration of aggression in both current and past relationships. However, use of non-violent control tactics, generally speaking, is also correlated with all forms of victimization and perpetration regardless of who is using the control tactics, who is perpetrating aggression, and who is subjected to violence.

### **Discussion of Quantitative Findings**

Several interesting findings were gleaned from the quantitative component of this study; however, the results garnered from the quantitative piece of this dissertation provides support for both the feminist and family violence perspectives. As a result, there is still little that can be understood about gender differences in intimate partner violence situations.

Feminist scholars (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash et al., 1992; Martin, 1976; Pagelow, 1981; Saunders, 1986; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Vivian and Langhinrichsen-

Rohling, 1994; Walker, 1989) have argued and found support for the idea that violence is gender asymmetrical, severe, repetitive, and part of a system of coercive control as a result of patriarchy. For example, several studies (Anderson & Umberson, 2001; Dobash & Dobash, 1998; Ptacek, 1988) have found that men report beating up their partners when they perceive that their masculinity is threatened. Feminist research involving clinical samples of female victims focus on the ways their partners may threaten, intimidate, use force, threaten violence, use sexual coercion, verbally abuse, financially abuse, and use control against them (Ansara & Hindin, 2010). Hamberger's (2005) study found that males were more likely to report initiating violence, were more likely to escalate the violence in severity and frequency and were more likely to use violence to maintain control. Overall, feminist researchers have found that that females are disproportionately victims of intimate partner violence and perpetrate violence primarily in self-defense (Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Dobash et al., 1992; Saunders, 1986; Saunders & Browne, 2000; Walker, 1984).

Support for the assertions made by feminist scholars in regard to the perpetration of intimate partner violence was found in the quantitative results of this dissertation. Males were significantly more likely than females to use severe violent tactics against a partner in both a current and past relationship. Along with the use of severe violence tactics, males were also found to use more coercive control tactics against their current or most recent previous partner. Males were significantly more likely to prevent their partner from accessing income, prevent their partner from working, frighten their partner, knowing where their partner was, and limiting the contact that their partner had with others. Although females were more likely to act jealous or possessive in a current

relationship, males were significantly more likely than females to act jealous or possessive in a past relationship.

These findings align with the feminist perspective by indicating that males are more likely to use severe violent tactics and coercive control tactics against a partner. And while these findings support the feminist perspective's claim of gender asymmetry in intimate partner violence, the data in the current study also found support for the family violence perspective's arguments that violence is gender symmetrical.

Early survey research, such as the National Family Violence Survey (Straus & Gelles, 1986) found that rates of female-to-male physical violence were higher than rates of male-to-female violence. Other studies (Moffitt & Caspi, 1999; Straus, 2011) found similar results where female-to-male violence was equal or greater than male-to-female violence. Results from various studies were confirmed in Archer's (2000) meta-analysis which found that women were more likely than men to commit acts of physical aggression against a partner. More recently, Desmarais and her colleagues (2012b) also found that females committed physical violence against their partner at a higher prevalence rate than males.

In regard to victimization in the current study, the results indicated that males were victimized at a significantly higher rate than females across all three levels of aggression in a current relationship and were victimized at a significantly higher rate than females across the minor and severe tactic scales in a past relationship. Research using samples of couples may provide some insight into this finding. The literature has found that couples often disagree about their relationships and reporting events, but that

collecting data from both partners allows for more in-depth information about a couple and their relationship (Simpson & Christensen, 2005).

Gelles (1979) found that both wives and husbands are more likely to acknowledge victimization rather than perpetration of violence. Similarly, Szinovacz (1983) found that husbands tend to report less use of violence than indicated by their wives, whereas wives were more likely to admit perpetration compared to their husbands. Furthermore, wives were more likely than their husbands to acknowledge their own victimization and perpetration. Both husbands and wives reported approximately similar rates of violence for the husbands, where wives indicated more frequent use of violence by themselves than was believed by their husbands. Overall, aggregate husband-wife comparisons showed similar rates of violence, where wives report more use of violence tactics against their husbands than perceived by their husbands.

More recently, Simpson and Christenson (2005) examined couple agreement in reporting violence. Two hundred and seventy-three couples took part in the study. Respondents reported relatively low severe violence in their relationship and that any violence occurred on a mutual basis; however, a slightly lower proportion of wives (61.5% v. 63.7%) than husbands reported that they had experienced some form of violence in the past year. The researchers used t-tests to determine if there was a significant difference between husband and wife reports of aggression. Husbands reported more overall wife violence than wives reported about themselves, and wives reported more overall husband violence than husbands reported about themselves. Paired sample t-tests were conducted to see whether spouses disagreed more or less in reporting husband or wife behavior. No statistically significant differences were found between

spousal reporting except for minor and sexual coercion, where husbands reported more wife aggression than wives reported about themselves; however, wives reported less husband aggression than husbands reported about themselves. Overall, the results indicated that both husbands and wives reported that their partner committed more acts of aggression than the partners reported about themselves.

Although the current study did not use couple data to report violence within the relationship, partner differences in reporting cannot be ignored. As with the husbands in Simpson and Christenson's (2005) study, males in the current study were significantly more likely than females to report being victimized. Despite prior research indicating that females are more likely than males to report their own perpetration, the results from the current research show males reporting more minor and severe physical tactics against their female partners. In addition, Simpson and Christenson (2005) found that wives reported less husband aggression than was reported by the husbands, so it cannot be discounted that males in the current study over-reported their use of violence; however, without data from both partners, one can only examine possibilities in differences in reporting violence between males and females.

In summary, the findings from the quantitative component of this dissertation have found support for both feminist and family violence perspectives. Males were more likely than females to report that they used severe violent tactics and coercive control tactics against a partner. This aligns with arguments for gender asymmetry proposed by feminist scholars. In contrast, males were significantly more likely than females to report victimization in a current relationship, but males were equally as likely as females to

report victimization in a most recent past relationship, which aligns with the arguments family violence scholars makes regarding gender symmetry.

There have been a large number of critiques of the methods used to study intimate partner violence. Johnson (2005) argued that the two main theoretical perspectives omit valuable information by only using one methodological approach to study violence. In order to clarify the debate between the two theoretical perspectives, Johnson (2005) proposed four new types of violence, arguing that intimate partner violence differs in different contexts, and therefore, cannot be typified into just two theoretical models.

Intimate terrorism and situational couple violence, Johnson's two main types of violence, add to the explanation of the twin findings of gender symmetry and asymmetry in intimate partner violence research. Theoretically these two types align with the feminist and family violence perspectives; however, intimate terrorism and situational couple violence each measure distinct, non-overlapping forms of intimate partner violence (Johnson, 1995). The distinction between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence is based on the coupling of physical aggression with the use of non-violent coercive control tactics. The extent to which perpetrators of frequent and severe violence against a partner also make use of non-violent control tactics is considered the primary indicator of intimate terrorism; aggression without the use of coercive control is the hallmark of situational couple violence (Johnson, 2008).

The quantitative component of this research study found that males were more likely to use severe violence and coercive control tactics against a partner, but males were also significantly more likely to be victims of intimate partner violence. When examining the correlations between the use of non-violent control tactics and both perpetration and

victimization, the results indicated that the use of use of non-violent control tactics was also correlated with all forms of victimization and perpetration regardless of who is using the control tactics, who is perpetrating aggression, and who is subjected to violence.

While the results indicated a correlation between the use of non-violent control tactics, victimization, and perpetration, what has not been discerned from the quantitative component of this dissertation are the contexts and dynamics in which violence occurs involving both male and female victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence. By completing qualitative in-depth interviews with male and female victims and offenders of intimate partner violence, the variability that Johnson (2008) discusses regarding the nature of situational couple violence can be explored in order to be able to understand the differences, and provide further distinctions among types of intimate partner violence, which will help to clear up the issues surrounding the gender symmetry/asymmetry debate. The next chapter describes in detail the methodology and results of the qualitative portion of this research.

Table 1. Description of Sample: Percentages for Gender

Variable	Total (N= 2125)	Male (N = 749)	Female (N = 1376)
Gender			
Female	64.8	-	-
Male	35.2	-	-
Race/Ethnicity			
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	73.1	71.7	73.9
African American (non-	8.3	7.3	8.8
Hispanic)	8.2	10.3	7.1
Asian or Pacific Islander	5.6	6.8	4.9
Latino or Hispanic	4.8	3.9	5.2
Other			
Employment Status			
Employed full-time	55.8	66.6	49.9
Employed part-time	21.1	18.7	22.5
Not employed	23.1	14.7	27.6
Household Income			
Less than \$24,999	22.3	24.3	21.2
\$25,000 to \$49,999	32.0	29.7	33.3
\$50,000 to \$99,999	34.0	33.6	34.3
\$100,000 or more	11.7	12.4	11.3
Age			
18-20 years	3.2	2.9	3.4
21-25 years	19.4	19.2	19.6
26-30 years	22.3	23.5	21.6
31-35 years	17.2	19.1	16.2
36-40 years	12.5	12.1	12.7
41-50 years	13.9	11.9	15.0
51-60 years	8.5	8.1	8.7
61 years or older	2.9	3.1	2.8
Current Relationship Status			
Not in a relationship	20.3	26.4	17.1
In a relationship	79.7	73.6	82.9
In a relationship			
Married, living or not living with	54.0	56.0	53.1
Unmarried, living with	25.0	19.0	27.9
Unmarried, NOT living with	21.0	25.0	19.0
Current Relationship Partner			
Opposite sex	94.2	94.7	94.0
Same sex	5.8	5.3	6.0

Table 2. Percentage Reporting Perpetration of Aggression in Current Relationship, Total and by Sex

<b>Perpetrated Against Current Partner One or More Times</b>	<b>Total (N=1643)</b>	<b>Male (n=530)</b>	<b>Female (n=1113)</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P-Value (one-tailed)</b>
<b>VERBAL AGGRESSION</b>					
Insulted/swore	61.2	58.3	62.5	-1.63	.0516
Sulked/refused to talk	73.1	67.9	75.6	-3.29	.0005
Stomped out	53.6	46.8	56.8	-3.80	.0001
Spite your partner	50.0	48.1	50.9	-1.06	.1446
Threatened to hit/throw something	11.4	12.1	11.1	0.60	.2743
Threw/smashed/hit/kicked	16.6	18.7	15.5	1.63	.0516
<b>MINOR VIOLENCE</b>					
Threw something at partner	11.4	11.5	11.4	0.06	.4761
Pushed/grabbed/shoved	11.1	11.3	11.0	0.18	.4286
Slapped your partner	8.0	9.3	7.5	1.25	.1057
<b>SEVERE VIOLENCE</b>					
Kicked, bit, or hit with fist	6.6	7.8	6.0	1.38	.0838
Hit/tried to hit	6.3	7.4	5.8	1.25	.1057
Beat up your partner	3.6	6.3	2.3	4.07	<.0001
Threatened knife or gun	3.7	6.2	2.4	3.85	.0001
Used knife or gun	2.8	5.3	1.6	4.25	<.0001
Forced sexual acts	3.6	7.2	1.9	5.38	<.0001

Table 3. Percentage Reporting Perpetration of Aggression in Past Relationship, Total and by Sex

<b>Perpetrated Against Past Partner One or More Times</b>	<b>Total (N=418)</b>	<b>Male (n=189)</b>	<b>Female (n=229)</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P-Value (one-tailed)</b>
<b>VERBAL AGGRESSION</b>					
Insulted/swore	61.4	59.8	62.7	-0.61	.2709
Sulked/refused to talk	68.6	61.4	74.6	-2.90	.0019
Stomped out	50.2	45.3	54.4	-1.85	.0322
Spite your partner	53.3	50.5	55.7	-1.06	.1446
Threatened to hit/throw something	15.3	13.2	17.0	-1.07	.1423
Threw/smashed/hit/kicked	18.9	16.8	20.5	-0.96	.1685
<b>MINOR VIOLENCE</b>					
Threw something at partner	12.6	10.5	14.4	-1.19	.1170
Pushed/grabbed/shoved	14.8	14.2	15.3	-0.32	.3745
Slapped your partner	10.0	9.0	10.9	-0.64	.2611
<b>SEVERE VIOLENCE</b>					
Kicked, bit, or hit with fist	8.9	8.5	9.2	-0.25	.4013
Hit/tried to hit	8.8	8.4	9.2	-0.29	.3859
Beat up your partner	5.5	7.4	3.9	1.56	.0593
Threatened knife or gun	4.8	6.3	3.5	1.34	.0901
Used knife or gun	4.5	5.8	3.5	1.12	.1314
Forced sexual acts	5.7	7.9	3.9	1.75	.0401

Table 4. Mean Number of Tactics Perpetrated Against Partner, Current and Past Relationship, Total and by Sex

	<b>Mean Number of Tactics Total</b>	<b>Mean Number of Tactics Males</b>	<b>Mean Number of Tactics Females</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P- Value (one- tailed)</b>
<b>Current Relationship</b>					
Total Verbal Aggression	2.65	2.51	2.72	-2.21	.0136
Total Minor Violence	0.30	0.32	0.30	0.48	.3156
Total Severe Violence	0.25	0.37	0.19	2.95	.0016
<b>Past Relationship</b>					
Total Verbal Aggression	2.68	2.47	2.85	-2.11	.0174
Total Minor Violence	0.37	0.33	0.41	-1.00	.1587
Total Severe Violence	0.37	0.42	0.33	0.69	.2451

Table 5. Percentage Reporting Victimization in Current Relationship, Total and by Sex

<b>Victimized by Current Partner One or More Times</b>	<b>Total (N=1643)</b>	<b>Male (n=530)</b>	<b>Female (n=1113)</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P-Value (one-tailed)</b>
<b>VERBAL AGGRESSION</b>					
Insulted/swore	61.9	65.9	60.0	2.30	.0107
Sulked/refused to talk	75.1	79.8	72.9	3.02	.0013
Stomped out	53.3	53.7	53.1	0.23	.4091
Spite you	52.7	57.1	50.7	2.43	.0076
Threatened to hit/throw	15.1	20.0	12.8	3.81	.0001
Threw/smashed/hit/kicked	23.8	22.5	24.4	-0.85	.1977
<b>MINOR VIOLENCE</b>					
Threw something at you	12.6	19.1	9.6	5.41	<.0001
Pushed/grabbed/shoved	15.0	19.2	13.1	3.23	.0006
Slapped you	8.7	15.6	5.5	6.77	<.0001
<b>SEVERE VIOLENCE</b>					
Kicked, bit, or hit with fist	8.6	14.6	5.8	5.94	<.0001
Hit/tried to hit	8.9	14.3	6.4	5.24	<.0001
Beat you	4.1	7.4	2.6	4.56	<.0001
Threatened knife or gun	3.8	7.0	2.2	4.79	<.0001
Used knife or gun	3.0	6.1	1.6	4.96	<.0001
Forced sexual acts	4.9	7.0	3.9	2.72	.0033

Table 6. Percentage Reporting Victimization in Past Relationship, Total and by Sex

<b>Victimized by Past Partner One or More Times</b>	<b>Total (N=418)</b>	<b>Male (n=189)</b>	<b>Female (n=229)</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P-Value (one-tailed)</b>
<b>VERBAL AGGRESSION</b>					
Insulted/swore	65.3	67.7	63.3	0.94	.1736
Sulked/refused to talk	78.5	76.8	79.9	-0.77	.2207
Stomped out	55.7	55.3	56.1	-0.16	.4364
Spite you	59.2	58.7	59.6	-0.19	.4247
Threatened to hit/throw	24.9	25.5	24.5	0.24	.4052
Threw/smashed/hit/kicked	33.0	28.0	27.1	0.21	.4168
<b>MINOR VIOLENCE</b>					
Threw something at you	19.7	19.8	19.7	0.03	.4880
Pushed/grabbed/shoved	27.0	27.5	26.6	0.21	.4168
Slapped you	17.3	22.9	12.7	2.74	.0031
<b>SEVERE VIOLENCE</b>					
Kicked, bit, or hit with fist	15.6	20.2	11.8	2.36	.0091
Hit/tried to hit	15.3	17.4	13.6	1.07	.1423
Beat you	8.8	9.4	8.3	0.40	.3446
Threatened knife or gun	8.8	10.5	7.4	1.11	.1335
Used knife or gun	6.0	7.4	4.8	1.12	.1314
Forced sexual acts	11.7	10.1	13.1	-0.95	.1711

Table 7. Mean Number of Tactics Used in Victimization by Current Partner, Current and Past Relationship, Total and by Sex

	<b>Mean Number of Tactics Total</b>	<b>Mean Number of Tactics Males</b>	<b>Mean Number of Tactics Females</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P-Value (one- tailed)</b>
<b>Current Relationship</b>					
Total Verbal Aggression	2.81	2.99	2.73	2.70	.0035
Total Minor Violence	0.36	0.53	0.28	6.25	<.0001
Total Severe Violence	0.31	0.52	0.21	4.70	<.0001
<b>Past Relationship</b>					
Total Verbal Aggression	3.16	3.10	3.21	-0.55	.2912
Total Minor Violence	0.63	0.67	0.59	0.80	.2119
Total Severe Violence	0.63	0.71	0.57	0.93	.1762

Table 8. Percentage of Current and Past Relationships in Which Non-Violent Control Tactics Were Used by One or Both Partners

<b>Non-Violent Control Tactic</b>	<b>Percent of Current Relationships Using Tactic (N=1643)</b>	<b>Percent of Past Relationships Using Tactic (N=418)</b>
Act jealous or possessive	39.0	62.8
Limit contact	14.0	27.0
Know where partner is	33.1	39.4
Names or put-downs	16.8	33.8
Make partner feel inadequate	25.1	53.3
Shout or swear at partner	36.6	50.6
Prevent access to income	12.3	20.1
Prevent working	7.1	11.9
Frighten partner	11.8	27.9
Provoke an argument	24.8	52.5
Can't see other's viewpoint	44.9	72.5

Table 9. Percentage of Males and Females Using Non-Violent Control Tactics in Current and Past Relationship

<b>Non-Violent Control Tactic</b>	<b>Males (n=530)</b>	<b>Females (n=1113)</b>	<b>Z-Score for M-F Diff</b>	<b>P-Value (one-tailed)</b>
<b>Current Relationship</b>				
Act jealous or possessive	25.3	30.2	-2.05	.0202
Limit contact	8.8	5.0	2.98	.0014
Know where partner is	22.4	22.5	-0.05	.4801
Names or put-downs	11.3	9.2	1.33	.0918
Make partner feel inadequate	14.9	14.8	0.05	.4801
Shout or swear at partner	29.9	28.7	0.50	.3085
Prevent access to income	10.0	5.8	3.09	.0010
Prevent working	7.0	2.0	5.08	<.0001
Frighten partner	8.0	4.5	2.88	.0020
Provoke an argument	15.1	15.3	-0.11	.4562
Can't see other's viewpoint	32.6	30.1	1.03	.1515
<b>Past Relationship</b>				
Act jealous or possessive	44.8	34.4	2.17	.0150
Limit contact	13.4	5.7	2.71	.0034
Know where partner is	22.6	15.3	1.91	.0281
Names or put-downs	15.9	13.2	0.78	.2177
Make partner feel inadequate	27.7	22.8	1.15	.1251
Shout or swear at partner	37.0	33.0	0.85	.1977
Prevent access to income	11.6	4.4	2.76	.0029
Prevent working	7.4	3.9	1.56	.0594
Frighten partner	17.1	10.0	2.13	.0166
Provoke an argument	25.8	26.2	-0.09	.4641
Can't see other's viewpoint	48.2	48.0	0.04	.4841

Table 10. Correlation Matrix of Non-violent Control Tactics, Victimization, Perpetration, and Gender in Current Relationship

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Female	-										
2. CTS Vic. Verbal	-.065**	-									
3. CTS Vic. Minor	-.142**	.555**	-								
4. CTS Vic. Severe	-.137**	.423**	.753**	-							
5. CTS Perp. Verbal	.055*	.709**	.427**	.336**	-						
6. CTS Perp. Minor	-.012	.443**	.654**	.640**	.508**	-					
7. CTS Perp. Severe	-.085**	.337**	.579**	.787**	.362**	.741**	-				
8. Both NVCT	-.018	.435**	.360**	.303**	.390**	.373**	.284**	-			
9. Neither NVCT	.055*	-.551**	-.541**	-.556**	-.410**	-.485**	-.495**	-.667**	-		
10. Partner NVCT	-.049	.426**	.408**	.386**	.204**	.252**	.258**	.130**	-.692**	-	
11. Me NVCT	-.033	.210**	.271**	.373**	.235**	.333**	.426**	.044	-.476**	.104**	-

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Acronym	Description
CTS	Conflict Tactics Scale
NVCT	Non-violent Control Tactics

Table 11. Correlation Matrix of Non-violent Control Tactics, Victimization, Perpetration, and Gender in Past Relationship

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Female	-										
2. CTS Vic. Verbal	.026	-									
3. CTS Vic. Minor	-.039	.638**	-								
4. CTS Vic. Severe	-.048	.528**	.792**	-							
5. CTS Perp. Verbal	.105*	.739**	.464**	.486**	-						
6. CTS Perp. Minor	.043	.447**	.629**	.678**	.555**	-					
7. CTS Perp. Severe	-.034	.351**	.553**	.798**	.445**	.766**	-				
8. Both NVCT	-.063	.485**	.343**	.290**	.561**	.412**	.249**	-			
9. Neither NVCT	-.017	-.744**	-.604**	-.546**	-.593**	-.493**	-.398**	-.563**	-		
10. Partner NVCT	.106*	.529**	.446**	.391**	.233**	.215**	.218**	-.133**	-.701**	-	
11. Me NVCT	-.096	.038	.110*	.182**	.162**	.207**	.236**	.062	-.296**	-.011	-

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Acronym	Description
CTS	Conflict Tactics Scale
NVCT	Non-violent Control Tactics

## IV. QUALITATIVE STUDY

### Methods

#### Data Collection Procedure

After the survey responses were recorded, participants that self-selected for participation in the in-depth interview were contacted through the Mechanical Turk e-mail system. Eligibility requirements included not currently in an abusive relationship, determined by responses to CTS questions on the survey about the current partner, as well as reporting aggression in their most recent past relationship, either as a victim, an offender, or both. A total of 421 participants of the original 2,625 participants were initially deemed eligible to complete an in-depth interview. Of those 421 participants, only 13 (7 males and 6 females) agreed to participate in the in-depth interview. These participants were then contacted through Mechanical Turk to set up a date and time to be interviewed. Once the participant provided a date and time they were available to interview, a follow up e-mail was then distributed to the participant confirming the scheduled interview. A day before the scheduled interview, participants were sent an e-mail reminding them of the scheduled interview, as well as a reminder to call into the phone number of a “burner phone” using \*67, which allowed their telephone numbers to remain anonymous. If the participant missed the scheduled interview time, a follow up e-mail was sent to them in an attempt to reschedule.

Each interview was conducted over the telephone in a private, locked office in order to ensure that the identity of each respondent and their interview responses remained confidential. Participants were told that the interviews would be recorded with

a telephone digital recorder. Although participants had already given consent prior to taking the online survey, a waiver of consent was read to all participants before the in-depth interview began. Verbal consent from the participant was required to complete the in-depth interview. All responses were digitally recorded once consent was given by the participant.

In order to maintain confidentiality, the consent forms and affidavit statements, as well as the in-depth interview recordings and transcripts, were kept separate from each other. All consent forms were kept on the Mechanical Turk server, which is password protected. Additionally, unique pseudonyms were assigned to each individual to further protect the identities of all participants, and all interview transcripts and analyses were kept on a password-protected computer. Once transcripts were created and analyzed in NVIVO, the original telephone recordings were destroyed to further protect participants.

In order to ensure that no harm occurred during any part of the interview, the researcher established several guidelines for interviewing participants. Research indicates that when there is sudden or immediate risk to physical safety, strategies must be available to resolve the problem (McCosker, Barnard, & Gerber, 2001). One strategy Langford (2000) used was directing all calls to an answering machine and asking participants to leave a phone number and a time when it would be safe to return the call. When Langford (2000) did return the phone call, each woman was asked if it was a good time to speak freely. Sullivan and Cain (2004) argue that it is important to ask participants if they are alone and are able to speak freely; they also suggest that initial contact should remain vague until the researcher is assured that the participant is safe to take part in the study.

For the current study, guidelines suggested in previous research were utilized. First, all e-mail correspondence between the researcher and the participant were completed through the Mechanical Turk system to maintain confidentiality. Participants were asked to call into a burner cell phone number, which was only accessible to the researcher. Participants were also asked to dial \*67 before calling in, in order for their number to remain anonymous to the researcher. A vague outgoing voicemail message was left on the burner telephone number, in order to ensure that no information about the study would be revealed. When a participant called in for an interview, the researcher verified that it was a safe and good time to talk and instructed them to call back using \*67 if the call should get disconnected, or if they felt like they could no longer speak safely. Participants who completed the in-depth telephone interview received \$5.00 and were placed in a drawing for a twenty-five-dollar bonus. All compensation for completing the in-depth interviews was provided as a bonus through Mechanical Turk.

### **Instrumentation**

Semi-structured interviews “are generally organised around a set of predetermined open--ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee/s” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315) and are most commonly conducted once for any one individual; they can last between 30 minutes to several hours. Semi-structured interviewing allows the researcher to create a guided set of questions and topics that need to be discussed during the interview; however, the researcher also has the ability to stray from those guided questions when necessary (Crabtree, 2006). This structure affords participants the opportunity to express

their narratives in their own terms, but also allows the researcher to gain insight into the topic at hand.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted by telephone with participants who were deemed eligible after the initial scoring of the online survey. Guided questions (see Appendix B) focused on the contexts and dynamics of intimate partner violence. Interview questions focused on the presence or absence of power and control within an intimate relationship. The interviews for this study ranged from approximately 28 minutes to one hour and 13 minutes.

First, interviewees were asked to describe their most recent incident that involved physical aggression. They were then asked to describe how that incident impacted them, and how that incident impacted their partner. Interviewees were then asked to describe the most severe incident that involved physical aggression and how that incident impacted both the interviewee and their partner. Johnson (2008) argues that the difference between situational couple violence and intimate terrorism is physical aggression coupled with coercive control. These questions were asked to provide a context for the physical violence that occurs in relationships. These questions also allowed the interviewee to discuss the severity of the physical violence, which allowed for further distinction among the types of violence.

Following questions related to physical aggression, interviewees were asked questions that were related to their children, if they had them. One aspect of coercive control is using the children against the victim. In an attempt to understand the dynamics of coercive control in a relationship and the impact that it has on the dynamics of a family, interviewees were asked whether the children were their biological children

and/or their partners, if their children live with them, and their perceived impact of aggression on the child.

Next, interviewees were asked questions relating to coercive control.

Interviewees were asked how long they had been in the previous committed relationship. Interviewees were then asked to describe the communication between them and their partner, and whether the nature of the communication changed over time. They were also asked to describe the treatment of each other, and whether the nature of the treatment of each other changed over time. One of the main aspects of maintaining power and control in a relationship (DAIP, 2011) is using coercion and threats, emotional abuse, and intimidation. By understanding the communication and treatment between the interviewee and their partner, and whether that communication and treatment change over time, a better understanding of coercive control and the severity of the nature of that coercive control could be examined.

Research (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Martin, 1976; Stark & Flichtcraft, 1991) has found considerable evidence that intimate partner violence is severe, repetitive, and is part of a system of coercive control through which men can maintain their power and control over women. One spoke on the power and control wheel is the use of male privilege. Lastly, interviewees were asked what role control played in their relationship, and in what ways either being a male or a female might have impacted the relationship. Depending on the respondent's answers, additional follow-up questions were asked to further examine how control and gender impacted the relationship. These questions allowed interviewees to discuss gender differences within the relationship, and how they believe their gender impacted the dynamics of the relationship.

Follow-up questions were asked when an interviewee discussed an aspect of partner violence that needed further elaboration. Overall, the contexts and dynamics of the interviewees relationship can be better understood with the in-depth questions asked, and with the follow up questions asked. The interview questions allowed for an understanding of the severity of the physical violence that occurred in the relationship coupled with the non-violent coercive control that was used.

Due to the geographical constraints of a national sample, all of the interviews were conducted over the telephone. Traditionally, telephone interviewing has been depicted as a less attractive method for completing qualitative research than face-to-face interviewing (Novick, 2011). Telephone interviews have typically been used for short (Harvey, 1998), structured interviews (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Researchers have cited various reasons why conducting telephone interviews can be disadvantageous when collecting qualitative data. Some disadvantages include a lack of telephone coverage (Carr & Worth, 2001), the absence of nonverbal cues (Garbett & McCormack, 2001), and distractions that could occur around the participant (McCoyd & Kerson, 2006). Another noted disadvantage is that telephone interviews require a shorter interview time, thus reducing the discussion between interviewee and researcher (Chapple, 1999; Creswell, 1998; Sweet, 2002). Carr and Worth (2001) argue that a disadvantage of telephone interviewing is the lack of telephone coverage. During several of the interviews, questions had to be repeated because of the lack of cell phone reception; however, this did not impact the interview process. While some have argued that there are disadvantages to conducting qualitative interviews over the telephone, there is also the argument that there are countless advantages to conducting interviews over the telephone.

Telephone interviews have both practical and administrative advantages over face-to-face interviews (Colombotos, 1969), especially when respondents are located across various locations. One consideration is the cost-effective nature of telephone interviewing compared to other types of interviews (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). Another advantage of telephone interviews is the anonymity of respondents when discussing sensitive topics. Interviewees who agree to be interviewed about sensitive topics may actually prefer the anonymity of telephone interviews (Fenig & Levanv, 1993), and some research has indicated that telephone interviews increase perceptions of anonymity (Greenfield, Midanik, & Rogers, 2000). Telephone interviewing also allows the researcher to access hard-to-reach respondents. Telephone interviewing may provide an opportunity to research populations that are difficult to attain in person (Tausig & Freeman 1988) and may allow for opinions and views to be represented that may not have been beforehand (Miller, 1995). One other advantage is that telephone interviews allow for greater security. Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) argue that social science research often focuses on deviance or socially unacceptable behavior. This can often put the researcher in danger; however, telephone interviewing allows the researcher to gather the information without putting themselves in unsafe locations.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis Plan**

Phenomenological analysis was the methodological approach that was for this research study. According to Creswell (2013) a phenomenological study “describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon” (p. 76). Creswell (2013) elaborates further by suggesting that phenomenology focuses “on describing what all participants have in common as they

experience a phenomenon” (p. 76). The purpose of phenomenology according to Van Manen (1990), is to describe an event universally, rather than individually. By doing so, researchers are able to glean information on a specific phenomenon.

Once data have been collected from those who have experienced the phenomenon, the researcher develops descriptions of the experiences, which consists of what they experience and how they experience it (Moustakas, 1994).

Creswell (2013), identifies several defining features of phenomenological research. After an emphasis is placed on a specific phenomenon being studied, the typical procedure for conducting phenomenological research is to interview 3 to 15 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon being studied. The data analysis moves from narrow significant statements, to broader meanings, eventually ending with a description of the phenomenon that discusses the essence of the experience lived by those individuals (Creswell, 2013). The defining features of phenomenological research are an important aspect of understanding the context and dynamics of intimate partner violence, and was used to in this research study to understand common experiences of individuals who are involved in interpersonal violence.

Responses were gathered through digitally recorded telephone interviews. The benefit of digitally recording each interview allows for a verbatim transcript of each interview response. According to Creswell (2013), audio recordings are essential for recording information accurately. All interviews were transcribed, capturing each participant’s statement verbatim. In order to ensure accuracy of each transcription, the researcher read and re-read each transcription while listening to the corresponding audio

file. Once all transcripts were checked for accuracy, the researcher uploaded them into NVivo software.

NVivo is a computer software program deemed one of the best available resources for conducting qualitative data analysis (Lewis, 2004). NVivo helps researchers associate codes or labels with texts, sounds, videos, and pictures; analyze those codes to find patterns; and construct classifications of codes that reflect testable models (Lewis, 2004). In the current study NVivo was used in order to analyze each interview to find existing and emerging themes related to the power and control contexts found in intimate partner violence situations and to identify additional themes not found within current empirical literature.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Drost (2011) argues that one aspect of “social science research is the quantification of behavior – that is, using measurement instruments to observe human behavior” (p. 105). Having both validity and reliability is vital for qualitative research because data can become clouded easily by a researcher’s subjectivity (Brink, 1993). Social researchers need to be sensitive to issues regarding reliability and validity, and “need to be attuned to the multiple factors that pose risk to the validity of our findings; researchers must plan and implement various strategies into each stage of the research project to avoid or weaken these threatening factors” (Brink, 1993, p. 35). There are several different methods used to help establish the validity and reliability within qualitative research. Triangulation and peer-debriefing were used to help establish the validity and reliability within this research project.

**Triangulation.** Triangulation strengthens a study by combining different methodologies including qualitative and quantitative approaches. Studies that use only one methodological approach are more prone to errors, but by utilizing multiple methods the different types of data provide a check for cross-data validity (Patton, 2002). This study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of measurement, which allowed for triangulation. The initial quantitative survey determined eligibility for the in-depth interview, then examined physical aggression and nonviolent control responses, and then themes and patterns were identified through the qualitative interviews.

**Peer Debriefing.** In order to support the credibility of the findings within a research study, some researchers argue that it is vital to use an external colleague or an expert to support the researcher's credibility (Appleton, 1995; Burnard, 2002). Krefting (1991) further suggests that through peer examination, colleagues can identify problems and solutions. Peer debriefing should not be for individual researchers to arrive at the same coding and thematic structure, but to see if there is agreement with data labels and the logical paths taken (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). This method of validation was attained by discussing each aspect of the dissertation with the researcher's dissertation committee members throughout the dissertation process.

### **Sample**

Purposive sampling is described as a type of non-probability sampling that allows the researcher to handpick cases to be included, thus creating samples that are deemed typical of the population under study (Hoyle, Harris, & Judd, 2002). When completing qualitative research using purposive sampling, information-rich cases are strategically and purposefully chosen, and there is a specific type and number of cases that are

selected (Patton, 2002). Participants for the in-depth interviews in this study were chosen based on a purposive, sub-sampling strategy. They were selected for an in-depth interview only if they indicated on the quantitative survey that they had been a victim, offender, or both, and only if they had been out of a violent relationship for at least a year. By using a purposive, sub-sampling strategy, only those who had experienced partner violence were able to participate in the in-depth interview and narrate their experiences of intimate partner violence.

When trying to determine a sample size in qualitative research Patton (2002) argues that there are no rules regarding sample size. “Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what’s at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources” (p. 244). In an attempt to understand how many qualitative interviews is enough to have sufficient data for analysis, Baker, Edwards, and Doidge (2012) gathered responses from 14 renowned social scientists and five researchers. Adler and Adler, two of the social scientists who provided a response, suggest that “Qualitative researchers generally study many fewer people, but delve more deeply into those individuals, settings, subcultures, and scenes, hoping to generate a subjective understanding of how and why people perceive, reflect, role-take, interpret, and interact” (Baker et al., 2012, p. 8). They point out that many classic studies have used only a single case to study a phenomenon and suggest that even a small number between six and a dozen participants may provide invaluable information. This is especially true for hidden or hard to access populations. The researchers suggest aiming for a medium size subject pool of about 30 participants, which “offers the advantage of penetrating beyond a very small number of people without

imposing the hardship of endless data gathering” (p. 9). Since this is a part of a larger, mixed-methods study, the participant responses are being used to triangulate the analysis with the accompanying quantitative data. Thirteen participants (7 males, 6 females) completed the in-depth telephone interview. This threshold was deemed an appropriate number due to the sensitivity of the research topic and due to the restrictions with Title IX and reporting regulations.

## **Results**

In the following section, I present my findings from the qualitative interviews. First, I present the findings from both male and female victims of violence. Next, I discuss the findings from the cases where males and females were both victims and perpetrators of violence. Last, I discuss other themes that emerged with both victims, and victims and offenders during the interview process. Quotations made by the participants are presented exactly as they were stated during the interview, with no changes to grammar. Tables 12, 13, and 14 provide the quantitative data that each interviewee reported in the survey they completed prior to the interview. Below is a brief introduction to each of the interview subjects, each of whom has been given pseudonym to protect his or her identity.

### **Introduction to Interview Subjects**

“Jason” was the youngest interviewee (age 31) and the only subject reporting on a same-sex relationship. Jason indicated that he was Caucasian, employed full-time, and making between \$25,000 to \$49,000 a year. His most recent past relationship lasted a little over a year. In that relationship, he reported using four of the six verbal aggression tactics, all three minor violence, and three out of six severe violence tactics against his

partner. He also reported that his previous partner had used all six verbal aggression tactics, all three minor violence, and all six severe violence tactics against him. All of the non-violent control tactics were used by one or the other partner within the relationship, although Jason reported that his partner was more likely to use these tactics against him.

“Adam” was 44 years of age at the time of the interview and indicated that he was Caucasian, worked part-time, and earned between \$25,000 to \$49,000 a year. His most recent past relationship had lasted a little over 5 years. Adam’s relationship involved only a minimal amount of verbal aggression; he reported no physical aggression by either partner for the duration of the relationship. However, he did report the presence of non-violent control tactics within the relationship, mostly used by his female partner.

“Matt” was 48 years old at the time of the interview and reported his race as African American. Matt worked full-time and made between \$50,000 to \$99,999 a year. In his most recent past relationship, which lasted for 14 years, he reported using four of the six verbal aggression tactics against his partner. He also reported that his partner had used three verbal aggression and one minor physical aggression tactic against him. Non-violent control tactics did not feature prominently in this relationship with only three types of tactics used by either himself or his partner.

“Mark” was 35 years old at the time of the interview and reported that he was Caucasian. He worked part-time, earning between \$25,000 to \$49,999 a year, and his most recent past relationship lasted slightly over four years. Mark reported using two verbal aggression tactics but no physically aggressive tactics against his female partner. In contrast, his partner used all six verbal aggression tactics, two minor and one severe physically violent tactics against him. Mark reported a moderate use of non-violent

control tactics by both partners in the relationship, but indicated that his partner used these tactics against him more than he did against her.

“Ben”, age 34, reported being Latino/Hispanic and worked part-time making less than \$24,999 a year. In his most recent past relationship, which lasted slightly over three years, Ben reported using only one out of six verbal aggression tactics against his female partner. In contrast, his partner used five verbal aggression, one minor, and two severe physically aggressive tactics against him. There were several reported non-violent coercive control tactics used in Ben’s relationship. He reported that he alone used three tactics against his partner and his partner used six additional non-violent control tactics against him.

“Jesse” was 35 at the time of the interview and reported being Caucasian. He worked full-time making less than \$24,999 a year. In his most recent past relationship, which lasted for over eight years, Jesse reported using three verbal aggression tactics against his partner. His partner, however, used both verbal aggression and physical tactics against him. Jesse reported that his partner used five verbal aggression tactics and two minor physical aggression tactics against him. Jesse was the only interviewee to indicate that there was no non-violent control tactics used in his previous relationship.

“John” indicated that he was 35 at the time of the interview. He reported being Caucasian, working part-time, and made between \$25,000 to \$49,999 a year. His most recent past relationship was with someone of the opposite sex, and the relationship lasted over four and a half years. John reported that he used three verbal aggression tactics against his female partner. He did not use any physical violence tactics against his partner, but he indicated that his partner had used them against him. Specifically, his

partner used all three minor physical aggression tactics and one severe physical tactic against him. He also reported that his partner had used all six verbal aggression tactics against him. John indicated only a modest amount of non-violent control tactics in his relationship.

“Elise” was 52 at the time of the interview and reported being Caucasian. She indicated that she was employed part-time and made less than \$24,999 a year. In her most recent past relationship, which lasted slightly over seven years, Elise reported very little use of aggression tactics in her previous relationship. She reported using three out of six verbal aggression tactics against her partner, but she reported no other aggression tactics used by either her or her partner. Elise reported only using one non-violent control tactic against her partner.

“Destiny”, age 51 and Caucasian, indicated that she was not employed. She was in her most recent past relationship for over 10 years. Destiny reported using four verbal aggression tactics, all three minor physical tactics, and one severe tactic against her male partner. She indicated that her partner had also used aggression tactics against her. Specifically, she reported that her partner used three verbal aggression tactics, one minor, and two severe physical tactics against her. Destiny reported that both partners used non-violent control tactics against each other.

“Laura” was 40 at the time of the interview. She reported being Caucasian, employed full-time, made between \$25,000 to \$49,999 a year, was in her most recent past relationship with her male partner for 10 years. Laura reported only that she had used two verbal aggression tactics against her partner. Her partner, however, used several tactics against her. Specifically, her partner used all six verbal aggression tactics, two

minor tactics, and one severe physical violence tactic against her. Laura did report the presence of non-violent control tactics in her relationship, used primarily by her male partner against her.

“Katheryn” was 46 years old at the time of her interview. She reported being Caucasian, not employed, and reported making less than \$24,999 a year. In her most recent past relationship she was with her male partner for 11 years. Katheryn used four verbal aggression tactics against her partner and one minor tactic against her partner. She reported that her partner also used several tactics against her. Her partner used all six verbal aggression tactics against her, as well as two minor and one severe physical violent tactic against her. Katheryn indicated that her partner had used a large number of non-violent control tactics against her.

“April”, age 48, reported her race as Mixed, worked full-time and made \$25,000 to \$49,999 a year. She was with her past male partner for over two years. In April’s relationship only verbal aggression tactics were used. April indicated that she used five verbal aggression tactics against her partner, and that her partner used three of these tactics against her. April also reported only a modest use of non-violent control tactics in her past relationship.

“Rachel” was the oldest interviewee (age 54). She reported being Caucasian, indicated that she worked part-time making less than \$24,999 a year, and was together with her most recent past male partner for 8 years. Rachel reported using all six verbal aggression tactics and one minor physical violence tactic against her partner. She also reported that her partner had used all six verbal aggression tactics, two minor, and one

physically violent tactic against her. Rachel reported a rather heavy use of non-violent control tactics in her relationship by both partners.

### **Theme 1 - The Victims of Intimate Partner Violence**

As discussed before, feminist theorists focus on the violence perpetrated against women. Johnson (2008) argues that although feminist researchers did not make explicit distinctions among types of violence, patterns of violence discussed in feminist literature are associated with intimate terrorism. At the heart of the distinctions between intimate partner violence types is the use of coercive control. Pence and Paymer's (1986) Power and Control Wheel is the widely-used graphical representation of the coercive control tactics used by an intimate terrorist to maintain power and control within the relationship. Such abuse may include maintaining control of the finances, the use of male privilege, controlling the children, isolation, emotional abuse, coercion and threats, intimidation, minimization or denial of such violence, and blame. While research from a feminist perspective has found support for the idea that females are primarily the victims of intimate terrorism, Johnson (2008) argues that there are "unquestionably some women who do terrorize their male partners" (p. 25). Below is a discussion of the responses from both female and male victims of intimate partner violence.

**Economics.** Economic abuse is one tactic often used by a perpetrator of intimate partner violence to maintain control over his or her partner. Participants were asked to describe how finances were handled in the relationship.

**Females.** Laura described how all of her money went into a joint bank account, but that some of her partner's money was withheld from her. Laura did have access to their account, but her partner controlled where and how the money was spent.

*In the beginning we had, everything was joint. It all went into our joint bank account. I didn't ever hide anything, he knew, he had seen it in the account. Now towards the end of the relationship, he was, he had a second job that he was paid cash, and he was hiding money from that job. He, I wanna say, he really tried to control the money. I never really spent much money on myself. He did somewhat complain sometimes when I would buy something for myself, but mostly when I was buying something or spending money it was on the kids. He complained about not having enough money. Like, I wasn't overspending, it was all going to bills and stuff, and raising a family and stuff, you know we weren't rich. – Laura*

Katheryn kept a separate account from her partner. Katheryn stated that her partner wanted to have a joint account, but that he had unpaid bills, so she would not get a joint account with him. She did say that she took over paying the bills.

**Males.** Ben kept a separate bank account from his partner, but he indicated that while he paid most of the bills, his partner would also give as much as she could to help with the financial obligations that they had.

*We kept our money separate. I paid for the bills, but she would periodically buy the food and things I needed, or thought I needed or whatever, but yeah... I pretty much paid most of the actual bills. – Ben*

Although Jesse and Mark did keep separate bank accounts, their partners would dictate where and how the money could be spent. Mark and Jesse recounted instances when their partner would become angry because they were not employed, or they did not make enough money.

*Well she would get on me about the job thing a lot, but I don't know if she ever actually explicitly tried to control it just always thought like a suggestion I guess, a strong suggestion. She was bothered about me not having a regular job. Maybe if I get a regular job again, maybe then she won't be as upset, make things easier for us you know. – Jesse*

*She would always yell at me, and a lot of it had to do with we were poor. She would constantly talk about how I didn't have a job, and she had to go out and work, and this and that. A lot of times she would say to me, even while we were together, she would say the words "can I borrow \$20.00, can I borrow \$200.00," whatever it was. Besides the fact that I barely ever had it, she would always use to say borrow, and I always thought that was really strange. I was always the one*

*who had a job, so all of our money went to rent and food. The last time we got into an argument actually was on May 3, 2012. She had come home really late from a bar, and she was getting in bed, and she was getting undressed. She said, "Wait can I have \$300.00." All of a sudden, she went downstairs, and she's shouting at me through the floor about how I can't give her 300.00, and literally it was like just the beginning of the month and we just had our bills paid. – Mark*

**Summary.** One way that a perpetrator of intimate partner violence may control his or her victim is by depriving them access to economic resources. Johnson (2008) argues that a victim may be denied access to bank accounts, credit cards, and may have to turn over his or her paycheck. If a victim is allowed access to finances, his or her partner may decide how the money is spent. Laura's partner controlled the finances by controlling where and how money was spent, while Kathryn paid all of the bills in her relationship. Ben's partner shared the financial obligations with him even though bank accounts were kept separate. Jesse and Mark did have separate accounts from their partners, but their partners would become angry when they were not given money, and they were often ridiculed for not making enough money. One way that the economic abuse may be justified is through the idea of male privilege.

**Male privilege.** In order to justify controlling finances a perpetrator of intimate partner violence may argue that he or she is the head of the household, and therefore, has a right to maintain control in the house (Johnson, 2008). Participants were asked to describe who took care of the household duties and who made big decisions in the house.

**Females.** Laura stated that in the beginning of her relationship household decisions and work were done mutually, but after she had her son and daughter, her husband came home from work and did not want to help with the household obligations. She went on to explain that her husband only wanted to do laundry and mow the yard.

*I was more of a stay-at-home mom, he got to where he went to work, he came home, just wanted to sit around. He basically did his laundry, mowed the yard, and all the household chores, taking care of the kids, cooking, you know taking care of the pets, everything was pretty much left up to me, even when I started working from home, these things were still left up to me, even though I was working again, it was still left up to me. – Laura*

While Laura was responsible for the housework, when it came to making big decisions that affected the family Laura was usually not included. Laura said that both she and her husband made some big decisions together, like when they bought household appliances, but then stated that when they bought a car, she did not have much say.

*But he ended up, okay, I didn't really get much say like when he went to go buy me a car, I didn't really get too much of a say in what was picked out. He felt like, I think he felt like, if oh, I have this car payment and this house payment, and all of those financial things, then I couldn't afford to leave, so if we stayed in debt then that kept me there.  
– Laura*

**Males.** Both Jesse and Mark said that their partners would make them do the work around the house, but unlike Mark, Jesse did not make any of the big decisions with his partner.

*I was the one that just cleaned stuff up. She would say that I should do, or go clean the house, or like I need to go to the store to get something. – Jesse*

*Well she would always make me do it. I did all of the cooking. I did all the cleaning. – Mark*

*I'd say she made most of the decisions. I was okay with it... it made things easier because I don't really like making decisions. – Jesse*

Ben also discussed how he had no influence when it came to making purchases.

*I think towards the end she thought she was in charge of everything, but again that was more like her dominant personality coming out. – Ben*

**Summary.** A perpetrator of intimate partner violence may believe that he or she is the head of the house, and therefore, has a right to make all the decisions in the

relationship and define the roles of each member of the household. This was the case with Laura, Jesse, and Mark. All three victims were required to do the housework. Laura and Jesse did not have a say in the big decisions that were made, neither did Ben. Along with asking participants who made the big decisions and defined the roles within the relationship, participants were also asked in what way they believed being male or female may have impacted the relationship.

**Views on gender.** The debate regarding views on gender and violence are embedded within the beliefs held by feminist and family violence researchers. While critics of the feminist theory argue that there is no relationship between attitudes on gender and intimate partner violence, Johnson (2008), argues that “individual misogyny and gender traditionalism are clearly implicated in intimate terrorism...the research that has addressed this question in fact clearly supports the position that individual men’s attitudes towards women affect the likelihood that they will be involved in intimate terrorism” (p. 106). To examine attitudes on gender, participants were asked to discuss how they believe being a male or female may have impacted the relationship. Although one female victim did indicate that her partner did not hold traditional patriarchal views; the other two female victims indicated that they believed that their partners held traditional patriarchal views. Interestingly, male victims indicated that they did not hold patriarchal views themselves, but that their partners held feminist views.

**Females.** April believed that her partner did not mind that she paid for something when they went out, but believed he often felt insecure because he did not feel masculine enough around her. This ultimately led to contention in the relationship.

*No, that was one of the things that was good about him. He was fairly feminist where sometimes he would pay for something, sometimes I would. He didn't get*

*upset by things like that. I think that a lot of the insecurity came from him not feeling masculine enough. – April*

April stated that her physical appearance threatened her partner. April indicated that her partner would become upset when she wore certain clothes. Even though April's partner would become upset when she wore certain clothes, she refused to let that determine what she wore and how she dressed. April continued to say that she came from a long line of feminists, so she was not affected by the beliefs that her partner felt.

*I come from a long feminist family, like we went to Seneca Falls, great-grandmothers, aunts, and their friends...I am not someone who would put up with any crap from him like that. You know and I think that he was having to do, feeling short, and not masculine enough. I think things like that bothered him...I grew up in a wealthy suburban area that was very, let me put it this way, any child before 11, I lived in a city where everything was cool and nobody had those conversations, and I moved to an area where women were expected to do certain things, would change their names when they got married and all sorts of things that I just kind of found appalling, and most of the local guys, because of things like that, kind of did not consider me wife material because I was too independent. – April*

While April's partner held feminist views, Katheryn and Laura had partners who held traditional patriarchal views. Laura indicated that she was a strong, independent woman, and would take care of herself even though her partner left all of the housework to her.

*Um well I think in general that the feeling is that a female can be dominated, um can be more easily belittled, um controlled, or just made to feel inferior. Um I don't really know how, how you would um, I don't know other, other just, other than just sort of making me feel muddy just by accusing me of things that I didn't even do. You know he's not going to treat another male like that. – Katheryn*

Laura and Katheryn indicated that their male partners held traditional patriarchal views because they were either required to do the housework, take care of the children, or were made to feel inferior.

**Males.** Jesse stated that he did not believe in traditional patriarchal roles. Jesse stated that he did not believe that women should have traditional roles such as staying home.

*No, I don't really hold that kind of view. Like my dad will think that the women should stay at home and have kids and everything else, but for me it's just whoever's available to do it, or whoever has the time, whoever has the money. – Jesse*

All three males did state that their partners had feminist viewpoints and were sometimes made to feel emasculated because of those views.

*You know the, the irony is she thinks or she thought at the time that she was, like there was like an old famous World War II poster, right where it shows a poster with a woman with a handkerchief across her head and giving a fist salute where she says "yes we can," and it was to make women motivated to work in factories during World War II. So, she idolized Rosie the Riveter, but the irony was, she was anything but Rosie the Riveter. It's not that she wasn't talented, or smart, or intelligent, or had the tenacity like Rosie the Riveter, but she was very I don't know weird kind of in a way like she thought that not that she was superior, but and not that I would ever imply that she was inferior in any at one point, and just kind of just like you know you don't understand because you're a man. You are not doing this because you are a man. Sure, in certain circumstances and things in life I can kind of understand that, but when you're adapting that philosophy in a person all the time it kinda becomes degrading, and after a while it was kind of like listen, if you want to feel empowerment by all means feel empowered but it doesn't give you a license to treat me like crap. She was basically trying to imply that it was all about feminism, she knew about feminism, she was a feminist. Not that she acted like I was a domineering male presence or anything, but there were some times when where like she would kind of go into this rhetoric and I'd be like what are you talking about? You know it's not that I don't understand certain things, and hey I'm all for female equal rights and empowerment, I'm for all equal rights for anybody, but it's just like it always came out of left field. – Ben*

*She did make a comment about how she was surprised I was able to hold her back.  
– Jesse*

*She was turned on because I asserted myself over the other guy that tried to take her. For the most part I felt like I, I would be just laughed at. There's no winning. Either I can't make a decision because I'm not a man, or I do make a decision and if it's not exactly perfect every single time then that one time that something is bad it is entirely my fault. – Mark*

This was especially the case when it came to intimacy. Both Ben and Jesse stated that their partners did not believe they were masculine enough.

*Well for starters she started calling me Vanilla for a while alluding to that I am vanilla or traditional in bed. – Ben*

*Well I still don't feel comfortable talking about this, but she was always more interested in sex than I was, like I never really cared about sex...I guess I felt pressure sometimes to be masculine because she wanted sex, and I just wasn't that interested in it you know. – Jesse*

**Summary.** All six victims of violence indicated that gender roles impacted their relationship. April believed that although her partner did not care about who paid the bill when going out, he often felt insecure around her because he did not feel masculine enough. April held feminist views and refused to let her partner's insecurities impact her decision to wear certain clothes. Both Katheryn and Laura had partners who believed that the female should take care of the house and take care of the children. All three male victims had partners who believed in feminist viewpoints, like April, which often left all three victims feeling insecure and emasculated. Views on gender roles, whether traditional or feminist, may be used to make a victim feel insecure, and may be used to justify control within the relationship. The idea of male privilege may also be used to not only control the victim, but also may be used to justify controlling the children.

**Using the children.** When a victim of violence resists the violence used against him or her, a perpetrator may try to use the children as a means to control the victim (Johnson, 2008). Participants were asked whether they had children. If respondents answered yes, they were asked a series of questions related to the children and were asked how they believe the incident impacted their children. Laura and Mark were the

only victims that indicated that they had children. Laura and Mark were asked to describe the perceived impact of the aggression on their children.

**Females.** Laura indicated that her children had heard the violent arguments between her and her partner and were also on the receiving end of that violence. She also stated that her partner had threatened to take the children away from her to maintain his control over her.

*They did, they were there, they have seen it, and they have heard the arguments. He was somewhat abusive to them. Yeah during the marriage one of the ways he kind of kept me in line and kind of tried to scare me into not leaving was that he would take off and run with the kids, or he won't support the kids. He has used the kids as a way to threaten me, and scare me, and control me, and I mean he has gone to court to get custody, but then when he realizes that he is not going to, then he would drop his visitation time down. He would use these visitations as a way to harass and hurt me. He uses the kids, or he tried to use the kids, as a way to control me basically. – Laura*

**Males.** Mark was the only male victim who had a child. Unlike Laura, Mark indicated that his daughter was never on the receiving end of violence; however, she had heard the arguments between him and his partner. Mark indicated that his partner often told him he was a rebound, and that she did not expect to get pregnant. After their daughter was born, Mark said that his partner continued to say things like “I should have left already, but you’re such a good dad.” Once the relationship was over, Mark alluded to the fact that his daughter relayed messages from her mom to him. Mark found out that his partner had cheated on him by his daughter.

*My daughter said, “I’m going to have a baby sister”, and I’m looking at her like what are you talking about? And it turns out, three weeks before our breakup she started seeing her current boyfriend, her fiancé. So, I found out about the pregnancy through my daughter. – Mark*

**Summary.** Today, Mark said that both he and his partner have a good relationship with each other and share custody of their daughter, but this is not always the

case. Laura's children had both heard and had been on the receiving end of violence. Her partner also threatened to take the children away from her.

**Isolation.** In some cases, all attempts of using the children fail. When all other means of control fail, a perpetrator may attempt to isolate a victim from family and friends in order to maintain control within the relationship. Participants were asked whether their partner had ever controlled who they spent time with and were asked to describe those occasions. All victims, except for Mark, discussed how they had been isolated from others during the relationship.

**Females.** Katheryn explained that she was isolated from both family and friends. Katheryn's partner installed a recording device to track her contact with others. She stated that she felt scared, trapped, and ashamed. She shut down completely.

*Um he had, I had found out he had been recording my phone conversations. He got one of his ex-girlfriends to assist him in purchasing and installing the device that was recording my phone calls. You know he, he would get angry and punishing if I spoke to or invited friends over, and if there was somebody in particular that he really didn't like he threatened to get the dogs after em. Um a lot of isolation, it just totally shut me down. It was at that point that I, I didn't go see my family. I would hardly talk to them on the phone, and friends, I mean I didn't see my family for two and a half years. – Katheryn*

After she did not see her family and friends for so long, she shut down, and became isolated in her home. She felt like she needed to tell her partner everything.

*"I told him everything, he knew, he knew where I was going, what I was doing, he knew everything. After that I just felt scared, and trapped, and ashamed, and I just shut down completely. I wasn't working, I just, just basically lazed around the house." – Katheryn*

Laura, like Katheryn, was on her own, isolated from her family and from working with others.

*During our marriage yeah, he tried to keep me away, he, it was something that I had to do on my own with the kids because he didn't ever really go around. He, there are times when my sister and I would get together, and it would make him*

*angry or whatever. I think he tried to keep me away from my family more so as a control thing, to try to control me. – Laura*

Laura had worked before she had kids, and her husband initially wanted her to obtain employment, but as soon as she did, he found reasons why she could not stay employed.

*I had worked in the past, up to that point I was working from home. In the past, he would say “oh you need to work, you need to go get a job,” and I didn’t mind working. I wanted to work. I didn’t have a problem with it, the problem was that when I went to work, or when I was working, he couldn’t handle taking care of the kids. He made it difficult for me to go to work, so I would just end up quitting. He would get me into a position where I had no choice but to quit the job. – Laura*

Although April was not isolated from family or friends, she explained that her partner did not like who she was friends with and became jealous. She explained that her partner was particularly jealous of male friends.

*I think he just didn’t like her because she was another person who wanted to take up everyone’s time and needed attention, and that was something that was competing with him. – April*

**Males.** Ben indicated that his partner did not like who he spent time with.

*She made me reluctant sometimes because she made it known usually to the people in question you know, like if I hung out with someone she didn’t necessarily care for or like, she had no problem like insulting them right to their face. – Ben*

*You know there were times when I’d try to go out and be with her and her friends, and you know she would find a way for me not to be involved in some way, where if I was there she would ignore me like I wasn’t there at all a few times. – Ben*

Jesse’s partner wanted to go out with friends, so Jesse would always stay in with the baby. Jesse stated that he stopped going out and had to be the one to take care of the baby while his partner went out.

*Maybe she felt like I was kind of controlling her a little bit because I never left the house, so maybe she felt like oh I can’t leave the house. I didn’t really do anything. I pretty much stopped hanging out with everybody I knew after I started dating her. Whenever I wasn’t at work, she would try to go out with her friends,*

*and expect me to be at home with the baby. She was physically not directly controlling me, but I believe she was physically indirectly controlling me. – Jesse*

**Summary.** Both male and female interviewees discussed how they had been isolated from others. Katheryn had not only been isolated from her friends, but also from her family. Laura was isolated from her co-workers. Jesse was isolated from his friends after his baby was born. Both Ben and April, although not isolated from their friends and family, were often told by their partners who they liked or did not like. After being isolated from friends, family, and co-workers a perpetrator of intimate partner violence may begin to emotionally abuse his or her victim.

**Emotional abuse.** Johnson (2008) suggests that once a victim is isolated, a perpetrator can begin to emotionally abuse a victim by demeaning, humiliating, making a victim feel worthless, ugly, or stupid, and letting a victim know that they cannot live without them. As participants described in detail the violence perpetrated against them they all recounted the emotional abuse that was used against them.

**Females.** After being chased down the highway, April described the humiliation that her partner put her through when she tried to get away from him.

*He yelled at me at both places...which is why it was really public. He tried to hit me. He did it in public. I said he did this in public, and a lot of people saw it. – April*

Another aspect of emotional abuse that Katheryn talked about was the mind games that her partner would play with her. Katheryn stated that her partner claimed to have read her e-mails, which according to her did not exist. She explained that she always had to be on the defensive with him.

*He just talked nonsense, and immediately just put me on the defensive. You know he would just start making his accusations. I ended up pretty much feeling like I*

*had to justify everything and beg for forgiveness and say whatever he wanted me to say to get him to stop. – Katheryn*

Katheryn continued to say that her partner was constantly calling her names, putting her down, and making her feel guilty.

*Um he always called me immature like a teenager, uh you know he'd tell other people that I was a whore and a schizophrenic which was totally not true. If he was in a mood to be mean he would just keep hurling insults at me and make false accusations. Dan just started really hassling me about how I should be ashamed getting my 80-year-old father to drive up here and just on, and on, and on. – Katheryn*

The emotional abuse that both male and female interviewees endured, led to feelings of guilt and anxiety. April said that her partner made her feel guilty by saying that she should help him more. When she did not help him, he would put her down, call her names, stomp around, scream, and cry.

*It was just stuff that he was doing to try to make me feel guilty. You know he was screaming at both places; he was just angry and embarrassed and really out of control. He would yell at me and say things, like he would just go on like a petulant child, like how everyone was against him, and that it has jaded me. He would call me a bitch, and like he would get really angry. – April*

Laura's partner knew that she was self-conscious about her body, so he knocked her down based on her appearance. Laura's partner made it seem like she would never get anyone else.

*The emotional side he put me down. He would tell me "Oh I would never find anyone better than him, and I couldn't make it on my own. I couldn't do this, that". He tried to put it into my head that I couldn't make it without him. I wouldn't find anyone better than him. – Laura*

Laura said that the emotional abuse escalated. Her partner would try to scare her into not leaving, which left her angry and scared. Katheryn also felt scared after she returned home from visiting her family. Katheryn said that she felt afraid because a male

friend was driving her, and all the earlier insults and false accusations that her partner had made against her, made Katheryn feel anxious, fearful, and guilty.

*Oh, it made me frightened. I was scared, and I was sick. I had anxiety attacks for a good while just because I felt completely violated. I was still afraid. It just made me fearful and sick to my stomach. It made me feel incredibly weak. After that I just felt scared, and trapped, and ashamed, and I just shut down completely. When I, when I went back, I was actually afraid to go home because of the friend that was bringing me back home. I was afraid for him to know who this person was. – Katheryn*

**Males.** Ben was humiliated by his partner for the way he danced and how he dressed to go out with friends. Ben also indicated that towards the end of his relationship his partner began calling him names, and continuously let him know how unattractive he was, especially in bed.

*It was all stuff that had been building up for probably a few months. I noticed in the last you know the remainder of our relationship just a lot of condescension, just being talked down to in private mostly, but a couple of times in public. You know she started telling me like people, like I really wanted to hear this who she was fantasizing about having sex with. You know it wasn't just that it wasn't just a distant fantasy that wasn't going to happen. You know a couple of times she mentioned people that I knew, and I was kind of like whoa hello this isn't some movie star, some music star, something like that. I'm sure I find other women attractive, but you know at the same time I don't have to like tell you to make you feel bad about who amongst people you know, or people you know of, that I'd like to have something more than a fantasy with. When we were fighting a lot, just I mean all kinds of vulgarities. Well for starters she started calling me Vanilla for a while alluding to that I am vanilla or traditional in bed. That's when just a lot of the negativity started to come out more and more, and it was subtle at first you know what I mean and then things just snowballed. – Ben*

Jesse indicated that he was made to feel guilt and anxiety because his partner constantly put him down for not being employed or making enough money.

*Well I'm pretty sure she was putting me down in some ways, but it might have been warranted so. I lost my job and like after I lost my job I, I have anxiety, really bad anxieties, so it was hard for me to go out and get another job again. While we never prevented each other, yeah, she was bothered about me not having a regular job. Well she would get on me about the job thing a lot, but I*

*don't know if she ever actually explicitly tried to control...like a suggestion I guess, a strong suggestion. I don't know she tried to make me feel guilty. – Jesse*

Mark's partner would also put him down for not making enough money, would constantly tell him that he needed to leave, and that she did not want to be in the relationship with him.

*All the time she would always yell at me, and a lot of it has to do with we were poor. She would constantly talk about how I didn't have a job, and she had to go out and work, and this and that. She was constantly telling me to leave. She was constantly telling me she didn't want to be with me. She was always shouting at me. – Mark*

Mark became depressed after his partner constantly yelled at him.

*I wasn't any better. I was always depressing. I was always sad or mad. I was just a rebound, she didn't expect to get pregnant, and that I was just a rebound, and after our daughter was born, she realized it, and she figured it out. It progressively got worse, but I didn't notice it, I didn't notice it until looking back. I think she saw that as a weakness.  
– Mark*

**Summary.** A victim may undergo emotional violence from his or her partner as a means for his or her partner to maintain control within the relationship. All six victims of violence indicated that they were emotionally abused. A victim may be humiliated in public, as was the case with April and Ben. Katheryn was not humiliated, but her partner did play mind games with her, which always left her on the defensive. Katheryn, Ben, April, and Laura were repetitively knocked down based on appearance, were called names, and often put down. April and Laura always felt guilty, anxious, and scared. Although none of the male interviewees indicated that they were scared, Jesse and Mark felt anxious, guilty, and became depressed after the continuous emotional abuse perpetrated against them. Once a victim becomes emotionally worn down, he or she may

start to believe that the violence is his or her fault. A perpetrator may begin to blame the victim for the violence or may minimize or deny that the violence has happened.

**Minimizing, denying, and blaming.** Participants were asked whether their partners had ever blamed them for the violence, minimized the violence that had occurred, or denied that it happened.

*Females.* April's partner chased her down a highway after she decided to break up with him, but he never acknowledged that what he did was threatening or violent. Once April's partner finished yelling and blaming her for his actions, he would act as though the violence had not occurred.

*And I can say that John did not truly understand that he was self-destructive. His own family even tried to intervene when he was exploding like that, and he thought everyone was overreacting. Like he never thought that anything he did was abnormal, over the top, or that maybe that he should possibly seek counseling. Once his tantrums were over, he didn't want to go over the problem and maybe fix it, he just wanted to forget about the argument. – April*

Some abusers will make light of the abuse by buying gifts for their partner, acting as if the violence had not taken place. Katheryn's partner would try and seek forgiveness by buying her gifts and giving the pets extra treats in an attempt to minimize the violence that had occurred.

*Once it was over, he was just all in a good mood like nothing had ever happened.... he went out and he came back and bought me something. Like there was never hardly ever an "I'm sorry," or thing like that, or statements like that, and then some token gift. He never showed any other emotion but satisfaction...just afterwards just being in a great mood like nothing ever happened...either buying me a gift or feeding them extra treats. He was always in a good mood when it was over. – Katheryn*

In other cases, an abuser will shift responsibility to his or her partner and blame him or her for the violence. April said that her partner would often place blame on her by

saying that she was not doing what she should be doing for him, not supporting him, or not believing in him.

*Yeah, he blamed me for just about anything and everything. He was, he always felt he was right and correct about something. He didn't feel that he did anything wrong. It was me, I was the one that was doing everything wrong. Everything was my fault. The divorce was my fault. Everything was my fault. He had, there was a joke that he started, that he was always right, and he was never wrong about anything, and he just, he let me know, he let me know. – April*

While Laura was blamed for the abuse, Katheryn was blamed for her partner's indiscretions.

*Um he would just accuse me of sleeping with males that I knew. He'd tell other people that I was a whore. The whole time...he'd be calling me and accusing me of things. He was filling up my cell phone with messages about "I know you're leaving. I know you're up to no good. I know you've actually gone off to go screw somebody. – Katheryn*

**Males.** To escape the violence that occurred in Mark's relationship, Mark's partner coerced him into bed.

*We were fighting during that, she was bragging about how much sex she was having with various people. We got home and we were fighting again, and she pushed me against the wall, and then, and then it was really weird. I guess because she started taking off my clothes and it just turned into something else. I don't know where it even came from, it was just a lot of physical aggression, and I guess that was just her emotional, her physical outlet, I don't know. No, well this time she was throwing me against the wall. She was pushing the bed. She was knocking all the knickknacks off the wall. She was throwing items to the ground. She was smashing a couple of cups, and then the next thing I know we were in bed. It was really weird. – Mark*

While Ben's partner did not coerce him into bed, he was blamed for his partner's indiscretions.

*We had been having some problems for a while unbeknownst to me at the time due to infidelity. Somewhere in there she had a guilty conscience about what she was doing on the side, which was having numerous affairs. She started telling me like people, like I really wanted to hear this, who she was fantasizing about having sex with. – Ben*

In one instance, Ben went on his computer to find a link to a porn site that his partner was a member of. When he confronted her, she blamed him for not realizing what was going on.

*I go on my computer and there is a link, there is a sign in page for more or less sex websites. And there was a handle which I recognized, she was born and raised here, but she was Filipino. I logged in under her account, and yeah basically I found all kinds of sexual pictures with her and multiple other people, and of course because this thing is like any social media website of any sort, it's time stamped. – Ben*

*In a couple of the conversations that we had after she kind of always was glossing over what happened. She just, no oblivious is not the right word, she basically, I don't know like not pretended that it didn't happen, but not really acknowledge it at the same time. She insinuated that I had no one else to blame but myself. At first, she was trying to insist that I knew about everything that was going on all along. She was you know kind of like almost vindictive ha, ha, sort of thing, like ha I did it, but you knew about it all along and this shouldn't be a surprise to you. – Ben*

**Summary.** It is not uncommon for a victim to be blamed for the violence that occurs within an abusive relationship. April was blamed for not supporting her partner, while Ben was blamed for his partner's indiscretions, and Laura was blamed for cheating on her partner. Katheryn was not blamed for the violence that occurred within the relationship; however, the violence was minimized when her partner would buy her and her pets gifts after a fight had occurred. Mark's partner minimized the violence by trying to coerce him into bed. When a victim does finally try to escape the violence, threats, coercion, and intimidation may be used to as a tactics to maintain control within the relationship.

**Intimidation, coercion, and threats.** When a victim does try and resist the violence used against her or him, a perpetrator may threaten, coerce, or use intimidation

to maintain control of their partner. Participants were asked to describe instances when they were threatened, coerced, or intimidated.

**Females.** April described the terrifying moment when her partner chased her down the highway when she threatened to leave.

*He never tried that before...it was leaving him that made him decide to do that really dangerous thing on the highway, and then to like actually come at me in the street. This was abnormal to chase me from one town to another...so, he went from one town, chased me down past a couple of exits on the highway, and then chased me through the other one, and then wanted to continue this at the other place. – April*

She then went on to describe that when he was angry, he would yell, scream, and threaten to kill people.

*He would have these tantrums. He would just scream and have tantrums like if he didn't get his way. Oh, he used to get very angry and say things like how he was going to kill everybody basically. – April*

Laura also described terrifying instances when her partner had threatened to kill her.

*This one particular time he ended up running through the front yard, we had a little tree that I was growing. It was like basically a stick in the yard at that point, and he drove his car over the grass that I had been growing. But that one time he had this look in his eyes, and I just remember thinking that he is going to kill me. I was really scared at that point because I had, like I said he had this look in his eyes that I had never in my life seen. He had this expression, I was scared. I thought he was going to kill me. I was scared, I mean at the time he was also breaking into the house. My kids never knew if he was going to be in the house when we went in the house. He was at that point, I'd say we changed the locks, he was breaking into the house. – Laura*

Laura and Katheryn were intimidated when their partners threw household items out of anger. Laura's partner would smash household items, such as, cups, glass, and packs of cigarettes. He would also break into the house even after they had separated and was no longer living with her and her children. Laura believed that her partner was going

to kill her. Katheryn's partner used threatening tactics to control her by coercing her into bed, and by smashing items in front of her while threatening her to keep her mouth shut.

*He would get me to have sex with him. And then of course when he's done with all that, then it's all the "oh I love you, I love you," and coerce me into bed which I didn't even want to do, but I just was in such, ah okay, I'll do whatever you want just to make you shut up. – Katheryn*

*He got one of his ex-girlfriends to assist him in purchasing and installing the device that was recording my phone calls. He put the tape recorder in front of me and smashed it and said, "let that be a lesson to keep your damn mouth shut." He smashed that device in front of me and swore at me. He could make me afraid by telling me to keep my mouth shut. – Katheryn*

*I guess he had, he had some dishes and it was one of those times he was hurling his nonsense accusations and he just said, "I'm so tired of this" and slammed the dishes into the sink and a couple of them broke. They just broke in the sink. – Katheryn*

*He would take it out on the animals. He'd threaten the dogs. He shoved one of my dogs out the window one time. He tossed a couple of them down on the ground real hard a couple of times. He would just be in one of his bruiting, angry, modes and it could be something as simple as the dog might get in his way and he would just kick him, or grab him, and sling him, and the dog would just squeal, um same thing, same thing with the cat. Luckily, luckily, I wasn't in the room when he shoved the dog out the window, but he bragged about it. – Katheryn*

When Katheryn finally decided to leave the relationship, her partner threatened to make her cat disappear.

*When I finally decided to get out, he didn't know it until the very last week because somebody accidentally slipped up and said something, but then he was threatening to make my cat disappear. He was going to take them while I was at work and take them to Tallahassee. He said he was going to take them at that time, and then just dump them in her neighborhood, and it was a bad neighborhood. – Katheryn*

Laura's partner made her fear him by threatening to take her children away from her.

*Yeah during the marriage one of the ways he kind of kept me in line and kind of tried to scare me into not leaving was that he would take off and run with the kids, or he won't support the kids. – Laura*

**Males.** Ben also described an instance when his partner threatened to kill him. Ben and his partner were having drinks one evening when she asked him to prove his dancing skills. Ben stated that she knew he did not have any and seemed to be angered by that. Ben said that he tried to talk to her and to calm her down, but she ended up threatening him.

*I kept telling her hey calm down, can't we talk this out? And then she threatened me with a knife. First, she said she would do it, and then she actually did do it. – Ben*

This was not the first time that Ben's partner had intimidated and threatened him. There were several occasions when Ben's partner would threaten to hurt him with various weapons.

*I mean yeah, she opened the knife and put it right to my throat. She told me if I didn't get out of her way, she was going to cut my throat. On one of her freak outs when she had attempted to leave, and I had just walked out to her, she had threatened to run me over. I think it was just a threat. She was already in her vehicle, but I just was trying to talk to her for a moment before she left. She told me "hey if you don't get out of my way, I am going to run over you." I had never had something where someone, let alone someone I'm romantically involved with, threaten me with a weapon. – Ben*

Ben's partner had also threatened to commit suicide on a couple of occasions.

*She threatened herself a couple of times. In one case, she was saying how depressed she was, and I'm trying to cheer her up, or at least be there for her. She went on to say that she was going to kill herself, and when she, she seemed to like dash out of my place like there was some urgency. Basically, she said that she was going to kill herself. She had talked about suicide prior. And another episode right, the one she was threatening suicide, I was just concerned about her, that she was going to run off and do something. – Ben*

Similarly, Jesse's partner also threatened to kill herself, and to hurt him as well.

*She came over to my apartment, and she was talking about killing herself, and she had several attempts. Well she said she was going to a few times, and she also actually tried a few times also. This time she came over there and we were, we were sitting on the floor for some reason, I can't remember why but and then she pulled this razor blade out of her pants pocket and she said, "now I'm going to".*

*Well she didn't say it exactly, but this is kind of basically what she said was she was going to take the blade cut her vein open or something on the back of her knee, and then she started like pulling her pants leg up putting the blade up to her flesh. I mean she had several attempts, like one time I came home and I found her with an extension cord around her neck. She tried to overdose on pills a few times. While we were on the floor that one time and she was doing that, and then she had that look like she was wanting me to try to stop her. I don't know, um, just because she was trying to kill herself right there in front of me, and it unsettled me a little bit. – Jesse*

On another occasion, Jesse and his partner were on the way to her mother's house.

During the long drive, they got into an argument. Jesse's partner got angry and threatened to run their car off of the road.

*Okay, well this other incident, this was, it might've been a couple of years later or something so there is this curvy, winding road that goes out to her house and she was driving me out there one night, and we were arguing about something, I can't remember what it is now but, and then she, I'm not sure exactly what we are saying, but she just got really angry and she just started screaming about how she was going to drive off the road right now, she hit, pushed the gas to the floor, and was going extremely fast. – Jesse*

While Ben and Jesse were both threatened with weapons, and with the threat that their partners would commit suicide, Mark, was intimidated when his partner threw household items out of anger.

*A lot of times when she would yell at me, she would pick up random stuff and throw it. She never hit me, but she threw things pretty hard. I mean I guess she was trying to not hit me because with all of the times she'd done it she would've hit me at least once. She was knocking all the knickknacks off of the wall. She was throwing them to the ground. She was smashing a couple of cups. The throwing things, she did that a lot. Whatever knickknacks were on the wall, remote controls, phones, plates, candles, yeah, and what is even worse is we didn't have carpet we had hardwood floor in some parts, and we had tile floor in others. There literally wasn't even a cushion to prevent a possible non-break. As far as her throwing things, she lost a couple phones that way, although she didn't really care because it was under my plan and I was the one buying her a new one. – Mark*

**Summary.** All six victims of intimate partner violence reported that they had been intimidated, coerced, or threatened by their partners during the course of their

relationship. April was threatened after she threatened to leave the relationship. Her partner had threatened to kill people. Laura and Ben also described terrifying occasions when their partners had threatened to kill them. On several occasions Ben's partner threatened to not only hurt him with various weapons but stated that she would also kill herself. Similarly, Jesse's partner threatened to kill herself, and threatened to kill him by running their car off the road. Mark, Laura, and Katheryn were intimidated by their partners' threats of throwing household items at them. Katheryn also described how her partner would threaten her pets if she did not keep her mouth shut and coerced her into bed. In some cases, the threat of physical violence will become actual physical violence.

**Physical violence.** All six victims of intimate partner violence indicated that they were on the receiving end of physical violence.

**Females.** Laura and Katheryn described how their partners had used their hands to perpetrate physical violence against them.

*I guess the last time was basically just manhandling me, grabbing, yanking my arms and stuff. He used to shove me around, and hit me, and throw stuff at me. He had shoved me around the room one time. His thing was grabbing me, throwing me around the room. Rarely did he ever hit me...the most severe one he actually physically hit me, just more shoving me, shoving me around the room. This is the one he ended up hitting me, he was throwing me around. When he finally threw me the last time I ended up near the phone, I had called the cops. – Laura*

*Um he shoved me a couple of times and grabbed my crotch once. – Katheryn*

In many cases a perpetrator of intimate partner violence will not only physically abuse his partner, but also will physically abuse the children. Johnson (2008) argues that “those who argue that there is a link between intimate partner violence and child abuse are generally (and tacitly) referring to intimate terrorism...everyone seems to agree that there is a link between intimate terrorism and child abuse” (p. 81). As Laura narrated her

experiences with violence, she reported that her two children had been on the receiving end of her partner's physical violence as well.

*Every now and then he would get, he would get somewhat abusive with them, there was a time when my daughter, she was a baby, he had shaken her. My son had got spanked a little too hard. – Laura*

Katheryn also noted that her partner used physical violence against their animals.

*Um he would take it out on the animals. He might kick the dog. He shoved one of the dogs out a window one time. The dog might get in his way, and he would just kick him, grab him, and sling him...the same way with the cat. He tossed a couple of them down on the ground real hard a couple of times. – Katheryn*

Katheryn then goes on to say that she had not been in the room when her pets had been victimized; however, her partner had bragged about the violence, and had used that as a tactic to maintain control over her.

*It was "don't forget I shoved your dog out the window on her head. – Katheryn*

Both children and pets can become targets of physical violence, especially when a victim tries to resist the violence. In some cases, a victim may even perpetrate violence against his or her partner trying to defend themselves.

**Males.** Both Ben and Jesse had partners who used their fists to physically assault them. Weapons were also used against Ben. Ben described the terrifying moment that his partner pulled out a knife and threatened to cut him.

*The most severe physical aggression was when she pulled her knife on me and held it to my neck insisting that I needed to move out of the way so she could leave. She opened the knife and put it right to my throat. She told me if I didn't get out of her way, she was going to cut my throat. She told me "hey if you don't get out of my way, I am going to run you over." She had threatened to run me over. – Ben*

During another argument Ben tried to calm his partner down, and she punched him.

*She punched me really hard once, but then later when she, and another episode right the one she was threatening suicide I was just concerned about her, that she*

*was going to run off and do something and I was just trying to say “hey, hey stop” you know, and she punched me two or three times in the chest area. You know she punched me pretty much in the solar plexus region, pretty swift and pretty hard as she could. She slapped me, smacked me across the face basically. I mean she hit me with her hand in the one with the knife. She more and more became aggressive. – Ben*

Jesse recounted a time when he was trying to keep his partner from hurting herself, and she went after him.

*So basically, I was trying to hold her back from doing this and we were rolling around the floor and then she was hitting me, trying to get me to stop. A few other times it might’ve been pushing or something. – Jesse*

While Ben and Jesse were both physically assaulted by a fist hitting them, Mark described being punched, and having items thrown at him.

*She changed the station, I changed it back. She punched me in the eye. Well, it hurt, physically. I think that one was the first time she actually hit me. A lot of times she would yell at me, she would pick up random stuff and throw it. She threw things pretty hard. – Mark*

On one occasion, Mark stated that his partner threw him up against a wall after he confronted her about holding another man’s hand.

*She didn’t know I was going there, and then I saw her coming in and she was holding some guy’s hand, so I grabbed her, he gets in my face, and I pushed back against the bar, and the whole place got quiet, and I grabbed my girlfriend’s wrist. And we got home, and were fighting again, and she pushed me against the wall, and then, and then it was really weird. She was pushing the bed. She was knocking knickknacks off the wall. She was throwing them to the ground. She was smashing a couple of cups. Throwing things, she did that a lot. – Mark*

**Self-defense.** One theme generated around the perpetration of violence is self-defense. None of the male victims indicated that they used violence against their partners in self-defense, but April used self-defense against her partner. After April, a victim of intimate partner violence, attempted to leave her abusive relationship, her partner chased

her down a highway. April described the moment where she was chased, and then the moment where she decided that she needed to use physical violence to defend herself.

*Like the whole highway chase was just out of a film. It was so crazy that he did something like that. The last thing I expected was that he was going to run his car and to come after me so quickly. It was leaving him that made him decide to do that really dangerous thing on the highway, and then to like actually come at me in the street. The faster I went, the faster he came after me, instead of going home which was a little further out. I went to the other club where we had friends who ran the place...So, when I got there, he was still chasing me to the place...So, I got out of the car and I just ran.*  
– April

After the chase on the highway ended, April found herself running from her car to get away from her partner. April explains that as she ran away, he caught up to her, attempting to use physical violence against her. She physically fought back.

*He caught me by the back of my shirt and he swung at me, and when I saw him do that, I swung at him, and I actually hit him. He was furious after I knocked him down...he came after me again. He was trying to punch me, and he just, I don't know he was either drunk, or high, or something, and he missed. I didn't miss him. I hit him hard enough to knock him down, which only made him scream and try to get up. – April*

**Summary.** Both male and female victims of violence described the physical abuse that was used against them. Laura and Katheryn were grabbed, yanked, and pushed around. Both Ben and Jesse were also pushed, and Ben was physically assaulted with a knife. Mark described how his partner had not only punched him, but household items were also thrown at him. Katheryn and Laura also said that not only were they on the receiving end of violence, but that their children and pets were as well. Although none of the male victims indicated that they had used physical violence in self-defense, April used physical violence to fight back against her aggressor.

**Communication and treatment of each other.** One aspect of couple violence examined by family violence researchers is communication between partners. Johnson

(2008) suggests that “communication patterns are probably the most important determinant of how those conflicts will be addressed” (p. 66). After participants were asked to narrate their experiences with intimate partner violence, they were asked to describe how communication was between them and their partner, and whether the nature of their communication changed over the course of their relationship. Participants were also asked to describe how they and their partner generally treated each other, and whether the nature of that treatment changed over time. If participants indicated that the nature of their communication or treatment of each other changed, they were asked at what point in the relationship it changed, and why they believed that it had changed.

**Females.** April believed that her partner often felt that he was cheated out of opportunities with work. She stated that he would often become angry because of it and would refuse to talk to her.

*Well he started getting angrier if he didn't get things that he wanted. It had nothing to do with me. You know he was one of those career frustration type people. Parts that he wanted that he felt he was right for, things that he felt he was cheated out of. He also felt like because he had family in the fire department that he would be able to choose his assignments, and I was like just because there's a chief in your family doesn't mean that they're going to let nepotism run wild, and he didn't like that because he expected things. He felt that something should be easy for him, and nothing was because he didn't really have good coping skills, or communication, or just dealing with disappointment. Basically, when I look at it now, he did things that were placating to me because he didn't want to keep arguing. Like once he calmed down, once his tantrums were over, he didn't want to go over the problem and maybe fix it, he just wanted to forget about the argument. It basically took time, he just had to keep venting and screaming, and getting upset about something until he basically tired himself out. He didn't want to talk about things that would make him upset, and that he would have to get into confrontations about other people. Like that was also what was strange about it because he would have these tantrums, but otherwise he was kind of nonconfrontational. – April*

Even though April said that her partner was unable to communicate well with her, she did say that when he was not frustrated with work, he could be very nice. Although he was fun to be around, she lost respect for him when he would not communicate with her.

*Well I lost respect for him when I saw that this was someone who was capable of adapting to acting like an adult. You know because this was truly the angry child tantrum...like he couldn't just get over something. It wasn't something that happened every day, but enough for me to lose patience with this, like it, like say maybe it was once a month at first and then it would be like weekly after he just wasn't getting all of the things that he was expecting to come to him. So, it wasn't like everything was bad like that, it was just like when those things happen and I saw that there was a pattern to it basically, and he couldn't seem to calm himself down and get himself back to the person that everyone liked. When he wasn't frustrating, he could be really nice. He was somebody who was funny...everybody was amused by when he was behaving himself, and he could be quite charming. – April*

Kathryn believed that she and her partner communicated well in the beginning of their relationship, but towards the end of their relationship they had little to no communication with each other.

*Um we, we, we, could, we could communicate pretty well. When he was in a good mood it was pretty good. I mean we could talk about all kinds of things, um but you know as soon as he was angry about anything it was just attack on his part and me on the total defensive cowering you know. Yea before then we, we just had a lot of talks you know just getting to know each other telling each other you know intimate details about our past. And sometimes just casual fun conversations, um but after I got into there that's when the bruited episodes would start you know, just suddenly start he would go silent for no reason. Um it, it really only changed about eight months into it, um, when I moved in with him that's when everything changed. It wasn't until like the last two months of it where I would actually fight back verbally or not respond at all which really frustrated him. – Kathryn*

Even though Kathryn and her partner did not communicate towards the end of their relationship, she did say that they treated each other well.

*Um... generally speaking... um... we were always kind of like friends with each other. But um you know it was it was mostly buddy buddy type stuff um as time went on. Um in some ways in some ways there was a lot of superficialness to it.*

*Of course, he was even more friendly and affectionate when other people were around. – Kathryn*

Laura, like Kathryn said that her and her partner communicated well in the beginning, but within the last year her partner became withdrawn. Laura also noted that she and her partner treated each other well in the beginning of the relationship; however, towards the end of the relationship she felt like she needed to walk on eggshells around her partner.

*Generally, it was good, I mean until the end it was good, nothing I mean he would get abusive every now and then, but generally speaking I could go years without him doing anything. It was good for the most part. I mean really in the beginning it was fine. We talked. We talked there was you know, I mean we talked, he was around, he was there, you know he was in the same room. We had regular communication. I would say within the last year. Because I was finding out a lot of things about him that he had hid throughout the relationship. In the end, he was withdrawn. We didn't really have any conversations. He stayed in his room, well our room became his room. He stayed up in there. Usually when we had a conversation it ended up into a fight, and it usually in the physical, so I pretty much try to stay away from him. Not really. I didn't really talk to him unless I had to talk to him. The kids and I were kind of walking on eggshells, so to speak, and I tried just to stay away from him and leave him alone, and not have any interaction with him unless I really had to. – Laura*

**Males.** Ben indicated that early in his relationship both he and his partner were able to communicate with each other, but that towards the end of the relationship they had stopped communicating.

*When it was good it was good, when it was bad it was bad. I mean most of the time she could communicate very well. Initially we had interesting conversations, you know, and we got along pretty famously really. – Ben*

*I think it was more and more she was pursuing her extracurricular activities, because then it became more about condemnation, kind of being talked down to, that sort of thing. That's when just a lot of the negativity started to come out more and more, and it was subtle at first you know what I mean and then things just snowballed. Well to be fair it probably started like, we were together for like I said three years, so probably I'd say like the halfway point, which coincided with the multiple affairs I found out about online at the end of it. So, I think that's kind of more or less when it started when, was whenever she had started doing what*

*she was doing. But I mean, I don't know, a lot of condescending, I noticed in the last you know the remainder of our relationship just a lot of condescension, just being talked down to in private mostly, but a couple of times in public. – Ben*

Ben also said that he and his partner initially treated each other well. Ben was genuinely concerned for her safety after she had threatened to commit suicide. Ben stated that his partner was upset after she threatened him with a knife. Ben said that although they treated each other well in the beginning of the relationship when she started to have multiple affairs, she stopped communicating with him and began to treat him badly.

*Like I said initially it was very well. I mean for the most part of it. Again, in hindsight I can immediately go yeah there is one or two things that I can point out now where the relationship would end up going, but to tell you the truth we had some pretty intelligent, well thought out, fun conversations. We seem to enjoy each other's company like I think a good relationship should. You know that being paramount to most things, like I said from the day I met her we got along famously and got more and more serious to the point where she was living with me whatnot. Well, like I said she more and more became aggressive kind of condescending in ways she would talk to me even if it wasn't something necessarily negative, negativity for negativity's sake. It was never like me challenging anything towards her, or I went out of my way to make her feel guilty or anything like that, never. I mean, I think towards the end she thought she was in charge of everything, but again that was more like her dominant personality coming out. It did make me question a lot, and it did make me question my motivations, and made me doubt myself in a way. – Ben*

Jesse said that in the beginning of his relationship his partner would not communicate with him. Jesse continued to say that both he and his partner did not trust each other which affected the communication between them.

*I guess at first, she was a little more secretive about things, but later on I don't think that she was as secretive. I think it's just trust. She didn't really trust me to know all of the things that she was doing or planning and all of that. I can't really think of any specific time it just seems like it was an evolution. Well it's just because it didn't feel like she was doing things that she wouldn't tell me about, and I was okay with her doing things without me knowing, it was like sometimes she would do things and then I wouldn't find out until something bad had happened, and she would come to me for help, you know. Maybe she felt a little embarrassed. I guess I maybe lost a little trust in her. – Jesse*

Mark shared that the communication between himself and his partner actually got better after they separated.

*She was just unhappy with me. A lot of times it was up and down too. We would go for a week and everything would be fine. We could fight for a day, be fine for a couple of days, fight for a day, fine for a month, we never really knew. It progressively got worse, but I didn't notice it, I didn't notice it until looking back. Well now, now it's much better. Back then, a lot of times if we were doing something for, she ran an animal rescue, if we were doing something for that, or we were in public or whatever it was all smiles, all hugs and what not, but in private it was like flipping a switch. Some days she'll be all lovey dovey, and other days she was a storm, and I never knew which one it was going to be. I think it changed around the time that our daughter was born. Oh, it's much better, like her boyfriend, my daughter's always smiling. She likes going home to her mother. She is never sad or anything. He is a really nice guy, their kid, she likes me, I took them trick-or-treating. I went with his parents. – Mark*

**Summary.** Participants described how communication was with their partners, as well as the general treatment of each other. April indicated that there was little communication in her relationship, but that her partner did treat her well when he was not frustrated with work. Ben and Laura were able to communicate well with their partners in the beginning of their relationship; however, towards the end there was not communication. Both Ben and Laura further explained that their partners did not treat them well. Throughout Jesse's relationship there was a lack of communication between him and his partner. They did not trust each other, which ultimately affected how they communicated with each other. Mark was the only victim who said that the communication between him and his partner, as well as the treatment of each other got better after they separated. When a couple is unable to effectively communicate the nature of the relationship may be negatively impacted. Along with asking participants about the nature of their communication with each other, and about the general treatment

of each other, participants were asked how the violent incidents impacted them, and how they believed those incidents impacted their partner.

**Impact.** Participants were all asked how they believed that the violent incidents impacted them, and how the violent incidents impacted their partner. All six participants discussed how the violence impact them, and how they believed that the violence impacted their partners.

**Females.** All three female victims indicated that they believed that their partners were satisfied after violence had occurred.

*Like he never thought anything he did was abnormal. – April*

*He never showed any other emotion but satisfaction. Oh, he was quite satisfied with himself. Once it was over, he was just all in a good mood like nothing ever happened which was usually how he was um then he went out, and he came back, and he um bought me something. Just afterwards, just being in a great mood like nothing ever happened. You know he was satisfied with himself. He was always in a good mood when it was over. He wanted me, he wanted me to know that he had the power to destroy me basically. – Katheryn*

*He became more angry. He was more violent and more aggressive. – Laura*

Although all three victims of violence indicated that their partners were not impacted by the violence that had occurred and were satisfied with their ability to maintain control within the relationship, both Katheryn and Laura said that the violence used against them frightened them.

*Oh, it made me frightened. I was scared and I was sick. I had anxiety attacks for a good while just because I felt completely violated. It, it just always made me fearful and sick to my stomach. It made me, it made me feel incredibly weak. That just left a long impression you know I can still hear it. It just totally shut me down. After that I just felt scared, and trapped, and ashamed, and I just shut down completely. And anxiety big time. – Katheryn*

*I mean every incident kind of scared me somewhat, but that one time he had this look in his eyes, and I just remember thinking he is going to kill me. I fought*

*back, and so I mean I was at first, it didn't really scare me, it more irritated me and made me mad that he was doing this. – Laura*

While Katheryn and Laura were negatively impacted by the violence that occurred in their relationship, April indicated that she never became afraid of men, but she said that she did pay closer attention to signs of dysfunction.

**Males.** Ben said that his partner seemed upset and guilty for the incidents that had happened.

*It seemed to actually really bother her, as opposed to the much later incident with a knife and all that, in her later getting caught, and her fidelity being questioned where you know she really seemed, was seemingly genuinely upset that she hit me. I think really she started leading this double life and I think either, yes somewhere in there there's a person, a very small one, but she finally, she was finally coming to grips with that, and that I think reacted to it negatively when I would be around. It was a way to deal with her guilt. – Ben*

Although Ben said that his partner felt guilty and upset, he questioned his relationship with her, and questioned the abuse that he had undergone. He stated that he was initially more concerned with her because he did not want her to hurt herself.

Jesse believed that his partner felt embarrassed, and that she tried to understand why the violence occurred but would become upset when he would not react to the violence. Jesse also noted that his partner had a lot of trauma as a child, so he believed that that impacted how arguments were handled in their relationship. Jesse continued to say that he lost trust in her, and soon after he began seeing a therapist.

Mark stated that he was upset because his partner had physical assaulted him, but that his partner seemed to be happy because it led to their separation. Mark also indicated that she got upset because he would not react to the violence.

*I think a lot of times she would get upset that I would barely react...She would sometimes break down and cry and say that I obviously don't care. – Mark*

**Summary.** All six participants shared how they were impacted by the violence that occurred in their relationships. Participants were also asked how they believe that their partners were impacted. All three male victims indicated that their partners were upset and felt guilty, but all three female victims indicated that their partners were satisfied that violence had occurred because it allowed them to maintain control of their partners. Jesse lost trust in his partner and saw a therapist because of the violence that had occurred in their relationship. Mark was upset because he was physical assaulted. Both Katheryn and Laura became anxious and scared, but April said that she was not afraid after the violence had occurred.

### **Similarities and Differences Among Female and Male Victims**

All the victims of intimate partner violence experienced the use of coercive control tactics against them. There were several similarities between both female and male victims. When defining the roles that each partner would take on in the house both female and male victims were required to do the housework and did not have a say in big decisions that were made. Both female and male victims also indicated that they were isolated from family and friends and were emotionally abused by their partners. Both female and male victims indicated that they were put down based on appearance and were called names. One female victim said that she was always on the defensive, while two male victims felt anxious, guilty, and depressed. Female and male victims were blamed for indiscretions that occurred in the relationship and had partners who minimized the violence that had occurred. While communication varied within each couple, both males and females indicated that in the beginning of the relationship the communication was good; however, there was little communication during the end of the

relationship. Both males and females believed that there was a lack of trust, and that they were mistreated by their partners, which negatively impacted their relationships. All participants believed that both they and their partners were impacted by the violence, citing guilt, distrust, satisfaction, anxiety, and upset as the main reasons they were impacted by the violence.

While there were several similarities in the tactics used against both female and male victims, there were several differences as well. Regarding finances, there were several differences between male and female victims. One female victim, Laura, said that her partner controlled all of the money, while Kathryn was required to pay all of the bills. Jesse and Mark kept separate accounts from their partners, but their partners would become angry when they were not give money. Ben shared an account with his partner. Surprisingly both female and male victims believed that gender roles impacted their relationship; however, none of the male victims themselves held patriarchal views, but their partners held feminist views. One female victim believed that her partner was feminist in his thinking, but sometimes felt like he was not masculine enough. Two female victims pointed out that their partners held traditional patriarchal views, but that they themselves had feminist views and would not let the views of their partner impact decisions that were made in their relationships. Only two victims had children. Mark believed that his child was not impacted by the violence, and indicated that he shares custody of his daughter; however, this is not always the case as Laura's children heard and were on the receiving end of violence. All six victims had been intimidated, coerced, or threatened in their relationships; however, the intimidation tactics, threats, and coercion were different for female and male victims. April's partner threatened not only

her, but also other people if she left the relationship. Two of the male victims indicated that their partners threatened to kill themselves and them. Both male and female participants said that their partners would throw items at them, and one female victim indicated that her partner threatened her pets. All six victims were on the receiving end of physical violence; however, the female victims reported being hit by their partner's hands, and one victim fought back using her hands in self-defense. All three male victims reported either being hit with a fist, thrown against a wall, or being threatened with a knife.

## **Theme 2 - The Offenders of Intimate Partner Violence: Mutual Combat**

As discussed before, family violence theorists focus on the gender symmetry in partner violence. By utilizing survey data conducted with general population samples, family violence theorists have found support for the idea that both men and women almost equally perpetrate violence against each other. In order to further understand the dynamic of family violence, male and female offenders, all of whom were also victims, were interviewed. Participants were asked to narrate their personal experiences with partner violence.

**Economics.** Participants were asked, similarly to the victims of violence, to describe how finances were handled in the relationship.

**Females.** Destiny and Rachel all indicated that they kept a separate bank account from their partners; however, they did spend money on their partners. When Destiny and her partner entered into their relationship, both were already well established and had already established themselves financially. Even though Destiny and her partner kept separate bank accounts they divided the financial obligations evenly.

Rachel and her partner kept separate bank accounts, but Rachel stated that it was due to his overspending.

*When we first got married, we had joint bank accounts, but he kept draining it dry, so I finally had to get a separate account. I paid all our bills with it you know, and he would get a job making good money, but he would spend it all on junk. – Rachel*

Rachel also said that when she gave her partner money to buy their children dinner he would go out and spend it on himself.

Elise, on the other hand, said that she shared a bank account with her partner.

Although she was not denied access to money, she said that her partner did handle the money, paid the bills, and would become annoyed when she did not have cash with her.

*He handled the money, paid the bills. He would complain once in a while that I, I had bought something that maybe I shouldn't have bought. What annoyed him the most was if I didn't have any money in my pockets. – Elise*

**Males.** Adam believed that one of the reasons that he and his partner ended their relationship was due to financial hardships that occurred within their relationship. Adam had a low paying job that his partner did not approve of. Adam stated that his partner lost respect for him because she had a better job than him.

*Well at the time I did not have a very high paying job, and I needed to change careers, but I didn't know what my next step was going to be. Well she was very dismissive, she didn't respect me because of it, and I realize that was also why we broke up. – Adam*

Unlike Adam, John shared a bank account with his partner. John described how both he and his partner would argue because there was no money left after paying the bills.

*I set the budget so we wouldn't run out of money when we still had bills. It's been a few years now, it's pretty much when she wanted something, and I had to give her money for it. She just wanted to go get something like a pair of pants or at the*

*time DVDs. When we had a bill to pay, I wouldn't want to spend the money we had for it. – John*

John was living off disability and could not work, so his partner had to work more so that they could pay bills, but she did not like that.

*Well she wasn't working for several years, and when I stopped making as much money and started drawing disability she had to start working and didn't like it. I'm guessing because I was pretty much just living off disability, and I couldn't get out and work anymore, and she wanted to stay home more. – John*

Because of a limited income, John had to create a budget, which his partner did not agree with. When asked what would happen when she wanted money and a bill had to be paid, John stated that the bill would just not get paid. John continued to say that if he did not give her money, she would throw something at him like drinking glasses or the remote control. He also said that he found out that his partner took money without his knowledge. Just as the case with John, Matt had found out that his partner had also hid money from him, but Matt also stated that he had kept money from his partner as well. Matt and his partner did not live together, so they both had their own money and separate bank accounts, but they did help each other out financially.

**Summary.** While Destiny, Adam, and Rachel kept separate bank accounts from their partners, they did all share financial obligations with their partners and spent money on each other. Destiny divided the financial obligations equally with her partner. Adam and his partner would often argue about finances because they dealt with financial hardships. John and Elise had joint accounts with their partners. John's partner often wanted to spend money that they did not have, which caused contention within their relationship. Matt and his partner did keep separate bank accounts because they did not live together, but they shared the financial obligations and had a joint account set up for

their daughter. Justification for economic abuse by either one or both partners may be justified through the idea of male privilege.

**Male privilege.** Participants were asked to describe who took care of the housework, and who made the big decisions in the household.

**Females.** Destiny reported that her partner did not make any big decisions related to the household; however, he forced her into becoming his business partner even after she had told him that she did not want to.

*I really feel that it was kind of 50-50. There wasn't really any big decisions to make, as far as, because he already owned this home, and I brought my furniture, but I did feel like when he wanted something he manipulated the situation to have it regardless of what it was. I already have a job. I'm not taking on another thing. Two days later I wake up, I'm making coffee, and he tells me that he's posted an online ad for handyman services on Craigslist and wants me to read it. And sure enough it said husband-and-wife team, even though we were not married, and I had already told him that I didn't, he basically wrangled me into this. It ended up six months later I was in a full-blown business with him. I was resentful, and he was acting like some big man on campus. Like he was the boss.  
– Destiny*

After Destiny was forced into business with her partner, she decided to help him with the handyman work as part of their new business. Although her partner had forced her to go into business with him, he did not like it when she helped with the physical labor.

*I am on this worksite with him...lifting heavy things, and I'm hammering, and I'm sawing, and I'm doing these things that typically men do, and I think that it caused a problem for him. He couldn't handle the fact that I could do that and be a female or something. – Destiny*

Not only did Destiny's partner make it clear that he did not approve of her doing physical labor, but he also made it clear that he disapproved of the way that she dressed.

*So, he would make comments sometimes about us eating dinner together, or why clothes were in the same closet. Just weird things, and I was like "why does that even matter?" It mattered a lot to him. "Why can't you just wear that dress?" "Why can't you wear those high heels?" "Why can't you curl your hair?" By the*

*time this was all over, I felt like, why did he even get into a relationship with me because I am definitely not the type of female that he wanted in his life. – Destiny*

Destiny did indicate that her partner did not require her to cook or do household chores, but this was something that Rachel's partner required of her. Rachel felt like she had to serve him, or he would become angry.

*He woke up and a \$.28 cent soda that he had bought had disappeared from the refrigerator, and he was angry and started screaming, and cussing me out, and tell me "you will go get me another drink." I don't remember the exact words, but usually it was something around like "you will go get me a God Damn drink. You'll get me one right now." He would throw in a lot of mother fuckers and things like that. I said "no I won't." – Rachel*

Along with having to wait on her partner, Rachel had to cook dinner. She stated that if she did not complete the housework then it would never get done. Rachel argued that this was because her partner believed in traditional patriarchal roles within the family.

*Just the idea in society that the man is supposed to be the king of the castle and make all of the decisions, you know a stereotypical role. But still, there was this lingering idea the man is supposed to rule the roost so to speak, but it was also a lingering idea that the man makes the living, and so I felt like he wanted to take the benefit of the accepted roles and not taking his responsibility. – Rachel*

Elise narrated her accounts of violence with two different partners. In one relationship she indicated that she was a victim of violence. In that relationship she stated that she was supposed to cook and clean the house, while her husband handled the money and paid the bills. She said that her partner would become upset when she did not spend enough time with him.

*I had gotten out of the Army and was working for McDonalds at the time as a manager, and he thought it would be a good idea to hit me because I was putting in 40 and 50 hours a week, and he wasn't seeing enough of me according to him. Now I should be home more. I shouldn't be out working so much, you know he didn't like being all by himself.– Elise*

When her husband got sick, Elise said that she believed that it was her responsibility as his wife to take care of him.

**Males.** John stated that he became sick and was unable to work. John continued to state that his partner became resentful because she became responsible for the housework and also had to obtain employment.

*Uh I'm guessing because I was pretty much just living off disability, and I couldn't get out and work anymore, and she wanted to stay home more than cuz she was having to get out and work a little bit, and I'm guessing she got a little resentful of it. Well she wasn't working for several years, and when I stopped making as much money and started drawing disability she had to start working and didn't like it. She liked staying at home. She didn't want to go back to work. She would have to do like taking the trash can all the way down the driveway to the end of the street. For the longest time I couldn't do that, so she had to, didn't like it too much. – John*

Adam and Matt were not resented by their partners because of employment status; however, they indicated that they were made to feel weak because they were not strong enough.

*She needed me to be very macho a lot. She made most of the decisions...it was very subtle she made decisions without me realizing it. She was very dismissive, she didn't respect me because of it. As a man you're supposed to protect who you love not fight with them and not hurt them, and they're not supposed to hurt you. – Adam*

*Well, you know if she started arguing with somebody else, or you know if I didn't defend her, or if I didn't come to her defense right away, she would call me weak. – Matt*

**Summary.** All of the female interviewees indicated that they did not make the decisions in the household. Destiny was forced go into business with her partner, even though she was reluctant. When she did go into business with him, he did not like it when she helped with the physical labor. Rachel was forced to serve her partner and complete the housework, or he would become angry. Similarly, in one relationship Elise

was required to cook and clean, while her partner paid the bills and handled the money. Male interviewees indicated that they were made to feel weak because of the roles that their partners expected them to maintain. When John became sick and unable to work his partner became resentful because she was required to work and complete the housework as well. Adam and Matt stated that they were not resented, but they were made to feel weak because they were not strong enough. Along with asking participants who made the big decisions and defined the roles within the relationship, participants were also asked in what way they believed being male or female may have impacted the relationship.

**Views on gender.** As with victims, offenders were asked to discuss how they believe being a male or female may have impacted the relationship. Feminist researchers argue that attitudes regarding gender roles impact the use of violence, whereas family violence researchers do not believe that those attitudes impact the use of violence. Surprisingly; however, all three female participants reported that their partners held traditional patriarchal views where a male participants reported that their female partners also held traditional views on gender roles.

**Females.** Destiny believed that her partner held traditional patriarchal views.

*Once I was unwilling to let him take any type of lead or control then he started to react. He was also in many ways, he really liked the idea of the stereotypical 1950s housewife thing, and I am very opposite of that. I'm very independent and stuff, and so he would make comments sometimes about us eating dinner together, or why clothes were in the same closet. Just weird things and I was like "why does that even matter?" But it mattered a lot to him. I think that he has a viewpoint of women, like I said that's very 1950s. We should respect and be quiet, and maintain the house, and raise the kids, and that little picture that you see on TV shows about "father knows best" that's his kind of idea. And, on the flipside of that he objectified women. One of the things that I rallied against a lot that became an issue is that when we were out in the world he was constantly staring at women, and so because I am very independent and headstrong, vocal, and you*

*know very opposite of what he thinks women should be it always cause a problem because “why can’t you just wear that dress?” “Why can’t you wear those high heels?” “Why can’t you curl your hair?” By the time this was all over, I felt like why did he even get into a relationship with me because I am definitely not the type of female that he wanted in his life. – Destiny*

Even though Destiny’s partner held traditional patriarchal views, she stated that she was a strong and independent woman. She did not ever ask her partner for permission to do anything. She did what she wanted to, which made her partner upset.

*I think that, first of all I was raised in a household where if work had to be done, you did it. It didn’t matter if you’re a boy or girl. There was just me and my sister. Second of all, I think that gender is kind of a society-based role. I think men can iron just as good as women, and women can sew just as good as men depending on who they are, we don’t have to fall into those specific pink or blue stereotypes. So, I don’t have a problem with it. I am very independent. I do whatever I want to do. If I, if he wants to sew, and cook, and stuff I’m like “hell yeah that’s awesome.” I think that everybody should do whatever makes them happy regardless of what their genitals say they are you. You know?  
– Destiny*

Elise said that her partner Michael felt like he should be the one in control, and often told her that she should be at home more, and that she shouldn’t be working at much as she did. Elise continued to say that she did not hold those beliefs, but that she was the one who did cook and clean, while her partner paid the bills. Rachel’s partner also held those beliefs. Rachel stated that she and her partner would often argue over who was responsible for the household obligations.

*As far as the roles, what we had to do, if I wouldn’t have done it, it wouldn’t have gotten done. I think a female had something to do with it, I think it was more because of his lack of respect for our relationship. Oh, just that the idea in society that the man is supposed to be the king of the castle and makes all of the decisions you know a stereotypical role, and this was in Alabama. It was in South Alabama, and very conservative area now times have changed, and they weren’t as bad like that as they were when I was growing up. But still, there was this lingering idea the man is supposed to rule the roost so to speak, but it was also a lingering idea that the man makes the living, and so I felt like he wanted to take the benefit of the accepted roles and not taking his responsibility. Oh yeah we had*

*arguments about that. He told me that the man was supposed to be the head of the house and the man was supposed to be in control. – Rachel*

**Males.** Jason was the only participant who did not believe that gender played a role in the violence that occurred in all three of his relationships. Adam and Matt noted that their partners wanted them to be macho and play the role of protector.

*I was always afraid to express my real feelings. I was afraid to be vulnerable around her. She needed me to be always strong and tough. She needed me to be very macho a lot, and so any time I'd try to express the vulnerability or fear I was always challenged in a way that never helped, and whenever she expressed anything like that to I was always sarcastic or ridiculing. Well I think that had to do with the shame and guilt because I felt I was in a bad, I knew intuitively that it was a bad relationship because I wasn't being allowed to play the role of being a protector. As a man you're supposed to protect who you love not fight with them and not hurt them, and they're are not supposed to hurt you. – Adam*

*If I didn't defend her, or if I didn't come to her defense right away, she would call me weak...well you need to act like a man or stand up like a man. – Matt*

Like Adam and Matt, John said that his partner believed in traditional patriarchal roles. John said that when his partner was required to work after he went on disability, she became upset with him. John also stated that his partner deferred to him a lot on decisions that needed to be made in the house. He believed that she deferred to him because she did not want to say the wrong thing in front of him.

**Summary.** Adam and Matt both had partners who believed that they should be masculine and hold the role of protector in the relationship. Although John did not indicate that his partner thought that he needed to be the protector, he did say that she became angry when she was required to obtain employment. John also noted that she deferred to him with a lot of the household decisions that were made. Destiny, Elise, and Rachel also indicated that their partners felt that the man should be the head of the

household. In many cases male privilege may be used to justify maintaining control within the relationship. It may also be used to maintain control of the children.

**Using the children.** Only four participants who indicated that they were both perpetrators of intimate partner violence had children. Of those four participants, only Rachel and Matt had young children. Destiny's two children were adults when she dated her partner, and Elise stated that her daughter, who is now 16, had not been born when she was in her previously abusive relationships.

**Females.** Rachel indicated that she did not argue with her partner about the children; however, she did state that her partner left the children on the side of the road once so that she would have to leave work to get them. There were several occasions where Rachel's partner threatened the children, which caused conflict in their relationship.

*One time he had my son in the car with me, and he told me he was going to run the car off the cliff killing my baby. I didn't care so much about him killing himself, but I was worried about the safety of my child, so I started giving in to keep it out of the car.  
–Rachel*

She then went on to say that her partner once threatened to burn down their house and left their children alone outside so that she would have to leave work and watch them.

*He threatened to burn the house down, and he even lit a newspaper on fire...telling me "I'm going to burn it down, I'm going to burn it down." My baby wasn't far from that. My baby was in his playpen just a few feet from him, and I was trying not to react, but inside my head I was thinking what I would do if he dropped that newspaper. One morning I left the car, and then he left in the truck, and the kids in the front yard unattended, and so he caught up to my car. I wasn't a mile down the road, and I had to turn around and come home so my children wouldn't be at home unattended. – Rachel*

**Males.** Matt gave a detailed description of the conflict that occurred between him and his partner surrounding how his daughter was being raised. On one occasion Matt

and his partner went to an amusement park with their daughter. His daughter was accused of spitting on the Ferris wheel. Matt's partner became angry with him because he did not confront the person who was operating the ride. An argument ensued, and Matt was berated in front of everyone. Matt continued to recount several instances when he and his partner would argue over their daughter. In some of those cases his daughter heard the arguments.

*Well, she had a lot of issues with our daughter, and you know there were times where she would sit in the car and she cried and she'd be exasperated. There would be times where she would you know verbally scream at her at the top of her throat. I wouldn't allow her to sit there and scream at our child. Well it never really escalated into anything else there after that, but you know that it is one of those things that it was always difficult to talk about because a lot of it had to do with what was going on with our daughter because she was going through her issues, and we didn't know what was going on. My daughter was going through her issues. We were back and forth to the doctor, and I think a lot of it too when the doctor asked us to describe the history of mental illness in our family, we made a connection kind of then. Well it only caused tension when my daughter had flare-ups. Because you know it was constantly getting off work, taking off work to go to the hospital, because we had to take her to the hospital, and what I had found out after she had passed was that she was not getting her medication on a regular basis. You know without medicine it is very regimented. You have to take it with food at a certain time, and I found out later that that wasn't happening, and that is why she had the flare-ups.*  
– Matt

Matt's daughter had been diagnosed with bipolar depression. Conflicts would often arise regarding his daughter's mental illness and how that mental illness was handled.

**Summary.** The Conflicts that occurred between Matt and his partner focused on his daughter's bipolar disorder. Arguments would occur because Matt and his partner disagreed on how their daughter's illness was handled. While Matt and his partner never threatened to commit violence against their daughter, this often happened to Rachel's children. On several different occasions, Rachel's partner had threatened to kill his

children, and so she would give into his demands to make sure that her children were safe. When all attempts to use the children fail, isolation may begin to occur.

**Isolation.** Participants were asked whether they or their partner had ever controlled who each other spent time with and were asked to describe those instances.

**Females.** Rachel said that she would make up stories to appease her husband. When Rachel would go out with friends, she would tell her partner that she just ran into them at the grocery store, so that he would not get upset. Rachel's partner did get upset when she would go to work. She described how her partner isolated her from her co-workers.

*One day I was leaving for work and he disconnected the battery on my car so I couldn't go, and so I just walked and it was humiliating because somebody that I worked with would ride by and stop by and give me a ride, or I'd have to walk home from work and somebody would give me a ride. He would do things to the car, so I couldn't go anywhere. He would keep the car so I didn't have it at home to go anywhere. – Rachel*

Although Elise's partner did not physically stop her from going to work, he did become upset when she did have to work.

*Now he was angry with me because I, I had to stay on base because I was in the military at the time. He was arguing with me because I had to stay on base. Now I should be home more. I shouldn't be out working so much; you know he didn't like being all by himself. – Elise*

The second incident that took place was when Elise began working at McDonalds after retiring from the Army.

*The second incident he was angry with me because of how much I was working. I had gotten out of Army and was working for McDonalds at the time as a manager, and he thought it would be a good idea to hit me because I was putting in 40 and 50 hours a week, and he wasn't seeing enough of me according to him. – Elise*

Elise's partner always wanted her to be near him even when she had to work.

Elise also stated that her mother had lived with her and her partner for a short time.

When her mother moved out Elise's partner made sure that Elise was nowhere around the house to help pack. Elise stated that she believed her partner was afraid that she might go with her mom. Destiny also said that her partner would not let her out of his sight.

*I felt like he wouldn't let me out of his sight. It was starting to get very strange. Like he wasn't like that at the beginning, but he started getting very possessive and weird. I was just infuriated because it's like I can't even get a moment to myself, for myself. Everything has to be about him. He was always checking my Facebook to see who I was talking to, and was always including himself in conversations and situations where he wasn't included, and not because I was not trying to include him, but my friends and I would be talking about hair dye or something, and he would make a way of getting into that conversation about hair dye. I mean it was just constant. He just didn't want me out of his sight ever. He even seemed to get jealous when I would go and spend some time with my kids. – Destiny*

Destiny indicated that her partner had isolated her from others, but she also stated that she would not allow one of her partner's friends in their house.

*There was one instance where he was hanging out with a guy that was a known drug user, and I basically said you know "you could do what you want to do, but he is not allowed in the house" kind of thing. – Destiny*

**Males.** Adam and John both indicated that they were isolated from friends.

*Yeah, Yeah, I became very isolated from my friends. It was a lot of jealousy over me having friends, and so a lot of it was you know she was the only person in my life. I did talk to them, but I always felt guilty. I always felt that. She made me feel like I was a loser, and that my friends were losers, and I should be doing something else with my life and that sort of thing. – Adam*

*Yea, yea she didn't like me spending time with my friends very much. I made plans to go to a movie with my brother and a couple of friends. The day of she told me I couldn't go because she had to go out and do something, and I had to stay there. She didn't like a couple of my friends, and they didn't like her, so she didn't want me spending time with 'em. She always wanted to know what I was up to. – John*

John said that although there were times when his partner did not like him hanging out with friends, more often than not when plans were made, they would go out without any issues.

**Summary.** All but one participant who was a perpetrator of intimate partner violence indicated that they had been isolated from their family, friends, or co-workers. Adam and John were isolated from their friends. Rachel also said that she was isolated from her friends and would lie to her partner when she wanted to go out. Rachel was isolated from her co-workers as well. Although Elise's partner did not physically stop her from working, he became upset when she did have work. Destiny's partner would not let her out of his sight. Her partner isolated her from others. Even though she was isolated from others, she also said that she would not allow some of her partner's friends into their house. Along with discussing the isolation that occurred within participants' relationships, participants were asked about the emotional abuse that either they perpetrated against their partners, or that their partners had perpetrated against them.

### **Emotional abuse.**

**Females.** Elise indicated that she felt guilty after arguing with her partner. Elise was upset with her partner because he was overweight, which caused him to be hospitalized. One day before a doctor's appointment she had been arguing with him about his weight. He never came home from that appointment.

*Actually, the day he died I was angry with him. He walked out to go to his doctor's office. I knew he was coming down with another bout of congestive heart failure. I felt guilty because he never came home again. He died with me angry at him. – Elise*

Elise said that her partner Robin was a wonderful man. Elise was emotionally abusive towards him. She said that he felt scared and cried after arguments occurred between

them. While Elise was verbally abusive towards Robin, she also indicated that her partner Michael was verbally abusive towards her.

*Generally, he would tell me that I was useless, um that I was no good for anything, and that I would never last without him. Oh, he told me I was worthless. I burned dinner, or I'd mess up, and all of a sudden I was the world's worst person. – Elise*

Even though Elise was a victim of emotional abuse by her first partner, she was the perpetrator of abuse in her second relationship. Destiny indicated that she was terrified of her partner because she had been in an abusive relationship before. She stated that her partner did not call her names, but that she often called him names.

*You know I don't really remember any name calling on his part. I was, however, telling him he was psycho and had lost his mind and had gone crazy. I honestly believe that something had shifted with him. I don't know if he like misrepresented himself with holding up some sort of façade, or if something happened to him that made him go a little nuts. I don't know, but I really did think something had in him, and I'm like 'you know you've gone crazy. What the hell's wrong with you?' That kind of thing. – Destiny*

Unlike Destiny who called her partner names, Rachel was on the receiving end of verbal abuse.

*He keeps screaming and yelling, I don't remember all of the words it was just his usual cussing and carrying on. Calling me names like Bitch and stuff. He was getting pretty bad, verbally abusive. – Elise*

**Males.** Adam described one instance when he and his partner became physically aggressive with each other after discussing what direction the relationship was heading in. Both he and his partner ended up in tears. He continued to say that there was a lot of emotional abuse over the course of the relationship. Emotionally, both partners would put each other down.

*Putdowns, yeah, you know just a lot of that stuff, a lot of putdowns, a lot of toxic arguments. Like I said, was very stormy emotionally. – Adam*

Adam said that he always felt guilty because of the emotional abuse that occurred. He believed that the person who was emotionally abusive was not who he should be.

*I felt that that wasn't who I am. You know that I'm not, that was a part of me, a side of me that I didn't like. Well I had a lot of guilt. I felt a lot of guilt over this. I had very low self-esteem for a long time you know even after the relationship ended. Like I said after that I felt a lot of guilt, a lot of regret that happened. – Adam*

Not only did Adam and his partner put each other down constantly, Adam recounted times when his partner humiliated him in front of others.

*Like I said she, she was very, like she liked to shove. She liked to particularly in public, things like this, humiliating situations, you know coming up behind me kicking me in the butt, things like that. - Adam*

All of the emotional abuse left Adam with feelings of shame and guilt and left his partner with betrayal and issues with trust.

*There was no trust, I was always afraid to express my real feelings. I was afraid to be vulnerable around her. She needed me to be macho a lot, and so anytime I'd try to express the vulnerability or fear I was always challenged in a way that never helped, and whenever she expressed anything like that too I was always sarcastic or ridiculing. I think it made her angrier, and I also think that definitely a sense of betrayal. The trust was never the same. She was very dismissive, she didn't respect me because of it, and I realize that was also why we broke up. – Adam*

Just as Elise had made her partner feel guilty, John said that his partner made him feel guilty, and that she felt guilty after arguments.

John stated that when he got something, and she wanted something that she would make him feel guilty.

*Only if I had gotten something, and then she wanted something and couldn't get the money in time for it. Usually like if she would go out and get me something, and then we wouldn't have the money for something she wanted later. – John*

On one particular occasion she broke something that belonged to him.

*Well I know she felt guilty about it afterwards, but that wouldn't stop her from doing it. I know she felt guilty about it afterwards because it belonged to someone that gave it to me. – John*

John stated that he was disappointed and that it was frustrating, but she replaced the item eventually. John said that she was not the only one to blame for the arguments because he had to stop working due to his disability. He said that his partner dreaded coming home sometimes, and that she often did a lot for him, and he did not say thank you enough. He believed that he had failed her.

*I failed and did not let her know how much I appreciated it. I don't think I said thank you enough. Between the resentment and the lack of communication, me taking her for granted, yea I think it was pretty much most of it. That is probably why I did feel guilty. I was probably guilty of provoking her. I probably shouldn't have. – John*

While John felt frustrated and guilty over arguments that occurred between him and his partner, Matt and Jason felt bad, anxious, and nervous after they were called names and put down by their partners. Matt's partner would become upset and yell at him when he did not stand up for her.

*Well, you know if she started arguing with somebody else, or you know if I didn't defend her, or come to her defense right away, she would call me weak. She got mad because I didn't go over and yell at them, at the person who was operating the ride, and you know she berated me in front of everybody. Well a lot of times it happened in public. I would say 50/50 in public, in private. – Matt*

When asked what she would say in front of other people, Matt said that she would tell him that he needed to act like a man or stand up like a man. Matt's partner would not necessarily blame him for the events, but she would blame him for not acting. He continued to say that there was more verbal abuse than physical abuse. He found out later that his partner had no confidence in him.

In both of the relationships that Jason discussed during the interview, there was emotional abuse. The first partner that Jason talked about would often yell at him. Jason stated that he and his second partner would argue because of the drug problem that she had. Jason indicated that there was not only physical abuse in his relationship, but also emotional abuse.

*I don't know, he would go on and on saying he asked me to stop doing this or that, and then just ripping on me. It's just like he would fix on one thing like "I told you not to, I don't know, put your feet on the sofa." It was just like yell, and yell, and yell, and yell like that. It was strange. – Jason*

*Occasionally, yeah, liars that kind of thing, jerks that kind of thing. – Jason*

**Summary.** All seven offenders of intimate partner violence narrated accounts of emotional abuse in their relationship. Adam said that both he and his partner emotionally abused each other. They would both put each other down, and because of that Adam always felt guilty. Adam also said that his partner would humiliate him in front of others. All of the emotional abuse left him with feelings of shame and guilt. Elise also felt guilty because she was mad at her partner Robin the day he died and said that she had been emotionally abusive towards him. Elise's partner Michael was verbally abusive towards her, however. John also stated that his partner made him feel guilty after the arguments that happened between them. After John's partner would break items in the house, he became frustrated with her, and knew that she had also felt guilty about what had happened. John said that even though his partner emotionally abused him, he felt like he failed her because he did not say thank you enough to her. Matt, Jason, Rachel, and Destiny all felt bad, anxious, and nervous after they were called names and put down by their partners. Jason, a victim of emotional abuse, also indicated that he would yell and call his partners names as well. Destiny also pointed out that her partner did not call her

names, but that she would yell at him and call him names. Rachel indicated that she was on the receiving end of verbal abuse. Along with the emotional abuse that one or both partners may undergo in an abusive relationship, there may also be minimizing, denying, and blaming of the violence between one or both partners.

**Minimizing, denying, and blaming.** Participants were asked whether they had ever blamed their partners for the violence that occurred, or if their partners had ever placed blame on them for the violence that occurred. Participants were also asked whether they or their partners had ever minimized the violence or denied that violence had actually occurred.

**Females.** Rachel noted that her partner denied that there was violence in their relationship and accused her of cheating on him.

*He did deny it. He would say it didn't happen. I'd bring it up to him, and he'd say, "I did not do that, I did not say that." And really, he probably did not remember a lot of it. He would get up and be in a bad mood and cuss me out or whatever, and then he would leave, and I'd feel bad, and then when he'd come back, he'd be calm and so we wouldn't talk about it. And because he didn't do that to me, he felt like he wasn't abusive at all.*  
– Rachel

*He always accused me of having a boyfriend, which my God I had three kids, I didn't have time for that, and when I would leave to go to work I made the living for the family he would accuse me of going and cheating on him which was crazy. When I'd leave for church, he'd tell me not to go, and that I was just going to see a boyfriend. – Rachel*

Destiny's partner blamed her for the violence that he perpetrated against her.

*He told me that the reason he put his hands on me is because I got so out of control that he was just trying to calm me down and protect himself. That's what he would do. That why he said "you just get so out of control. You get so crazy. I'm just trying to calm you down, you know and protect myself because you're getting out of control." – Destiny*

**Males.** Adam said that the violence that occurred in his house was minimized.

*It was minimized yes, but nothing like that every happened again after that. It was one of those things where sometimes I would naturally defend myself from being pushed, or punched, or kicked. Even if she thought it was playful or cute. When we weren't fighting, we were just having passionate sex. I'm making, I'm minimizing what the reality was. – Adam*

Like Adam, Jason and his partners minimized the violence in their relationship and denied that violence had occurred.

*Nothing, I mean we got, I have never done anything to her. I mean we got into a food fight, but it was more comical...it was at a party, so it was a comical food fight. It wasn't an actual fight so. I did throw food at her, but it was comical. Yeah, it was in front of a lot of people. It could've been bad, but it was just more comical. It just kinda wasn't talked about anymore. – Jason*

*Two wrongs don't necessarily make a right, but they agreed with me. Sometimes they did things that were irrational, and nothing was getting through. I remember like he ignored me. He wouldn't listen, and so I broke up with him. That's what happened. Because he didn't want to confront what I had, was asking. – Jason*

John and Matt's partners did not deny that violence occurred, the blame for the violence was shifted onto them. During one violent encounter, John said that his partner threw something at him, and then blamed him for stepping into the thrown object.

*Yea, she didn't mean to hit me with it, and it hit me right in the head, and immediately she felt bad about it. I think she went to throw it next to me. For the first few minutes she said I moved into it but after that, dropped it. Well almost immediately she apologized and said she didn't mean to break that. I was probably guilty of provoking her. I probably shouldn't have. – John*

John continued to say that his partner would always lie as a way to look better.

*She would lie and say she did it the better way, kinda make herself look better. – John*

Matt's partner would not blame him for the arguments that would occur between her and other people, but she would blame him when he did not stand up for her.

*Well she wouldn't blame me, but she would blame me for not acting. In retrospect, I should have stood up for her because I knew what it was all about and why she was doing it, and so I felt bad about that because there was nothing I could say, and we didn't talk to each other for a while after that. It was probably*

*about two or three days before we talked, and she was really hurt about that. – Matt*

**Summary.** All seven offender interviewees indicated that either they or their partner had minimized the violence that had occurred, denied that the violence had actually occurred, or blamed their partner for the violence that had occurred. Adam said that in his household the violence had been minimized. Like Adam, Jason and his partner minimized the violence in their relationship and denied that it had occurred. Rachel's partner not only denied that there was violence in their relationship, but he constantly accused her of cheating on him. John, Matt, and Destiny had partners who did not deny that the violence had occurred, but their partners shifted responsibility for the violence to them. John's partner said that he walked into something that she threw across the room and would lie to make herself look better. Matt's partner would blame him for not standing up for her, while Destiny's partner would blame her for the violence perpetrated against her. When the minimization, denial, and blame no longer works threats coercion, and intimidation may be used by either one or both partners.

**Intimidation, coercion, and threats.** Participants were asked to describe instances when either they threatened, coerced, or intimidated their partners, or when their partners threatened, coerced, or intimidated them.

**Females.** Destiny described the instance when her partner threatened to kill himself. After a fight, Destiny told her partner that she was leaving. He continued to fight with her and threatened to kill himself.

*And I told him I was leaving. That I had had enough. It was over, and that is when he started a huge, huge fight. And also during that even he did tell me that if I left him he would kill himself. – Destiny*

Destiny also said that her partner would try and intimidate her when they fought.

*I'm screaming and yelling, and he is just kind of standing there bowed up like making himself look big and towering over me. Then I was worried because he was a gun owner, and I heard stories about his past and things that he had done, and so then I became terrified. – Destiny*

On several occasions Rachel's partner threatened both her and her children. She described several occasions when her partner threatened her. Rachel recounted a time that her partner told her if she called the police, then she would be physically assaulted.

*And then he told me he said, "and if you call the police, I'll smoke your beady eyes." I felt very threatened, but I didn't let him know I felt threatened because a lot of what he pulled was intimidation. Yes, well like that, he threatened to blacken both of my eyes out. – Rachel*

Rachel then went on to describe the other instances when her partner threatened and intimidated her.

*He sometimes would act like he was going to throw a punch, and right before he hit me in the face, he'd pull back, so that was just normal behavior. If he was driving and I was in the car with him, he's threatened to slam the car into the tree and kill me. One time he had my son in the car with me, and he told me he was going to run the car off the cliff killing the baby. I didn't care so much about him killing himself, but I was worried about the safety of my child, so I started giving into it keeping it out of the car. I felt threatened, and I was finding just wanting to find a way to make it stop you know and protect myself and my kids. One morning this is when we were married...he told me he said, "if you get in that car and leave when you come home that house will be burnt to the ground." I don't remember what it was, and then he threatened to burn the house down, and he even lit a newspaper on fire...telling me "I'm going to burn it down, I'm going to burn it all down. Like the next day, the neighbors came over and asked what he was doing and said, "trying to kill my wife." He had threatened to kill me a number of times. And no matter how much I felt threatened I tried to act like I didn't. I felt threatened, and I was findings just wanting to find a way to make it stop, you know, and protect myself and my kids. – Rachel*

Rachel did say that if he did hurt or mistreat her children, she would kill him.

*I did tell him if he mistreated my children, if he beat them, harmed them physical, I would kill him, and that's a threat you know. – Rachel*

Once Rachel left the relationship her partner would show up at her house. She described how intimidating it was when her partner would be there.

*It was like watching a bad movie. You know you think you got him where he'll go and leave me alone. The police are with me and he's there at the house and just that was intimidating. With just his car being there was intimidating. – Rachel*

While Destiny and Rachel were on the receiving end of threats and were intimidated by the actions of their partners, Elise said she intimidated her partner Robin.

*I came home and I was yelling, I was screaming, I started slamming cabinet doors. I think it frightened him mostly because I owned guns at the time. It made me see that my temper needs to be controlled a little more because I frighten people. – Elise*

**Males.** John indicated that his partner threatened to move out and would throw household items at him when they fought.

*She threatened to move to a few times if I'd leave. She would usually just throw something at me. Whatever was handy, sometimes a controller, sometimes a glass, a drinking glass, whatever was there. I mean I could tell she really didn't mean to, but she would break things on occasion. – John*

Adam's partner threw a chair and a nightstand at him during one of their arguments.

Matt indicated that his partner threw a broom at him, and also indicated that she had threatened to break up with him and threatened to commit suicide once.

*I would say that there was this one argument that I woke up and she was standing over the top of me with her fists balled up. I wasn't sure what she was going to do, and she walked away. There was a couple of times where I threatened to break up with her...but she threatened to break up with me. She might have threatened suicide once. – Matt*

**Summary.** After Destiny threatened to leave the relationship her partner threatened to kill himself. He also threatened her by yelling, screaming, and towering over her during an argument. John also indicated that his partner threatened to move out

and would throw items at him when they argued. Adam and Johns both had partners who threw items at them during arguments. Adam's partner also threatened to break up with him and commit suicide. Rachel's partner threatened both her and her children. Rachel's partner would also intimidate her. Rachel threatened to kill her partner if he hurt her children. Elise said that she intimidated her partner Robin by slamming cabinet doors, but that her partner Michael had threatened and intimidated her. In some cases, intimidation, coercion, and the threat of violence may become physical.

**Physical violence.** Participants were asked whether they had ever used physical violence against their partner, or whether their partner had ever used physical violence against them. All seven participants indicated that physical violence had occurred in their relationship.

**Females.** Destiny indicated that she had used physical violence against her partner and that her partner used physical violence against her.

*There had been several arguments and physical, like him grabbing me, or me pushing at him because he was very overbearing, and I felt like he wouldn't let me out of his sight. The last incident I was actually in bed reading a book and he was in the living room texting me "why don't you love me? Why won't you talk to me?" and so I went out, and said look I am just trying to read a book, then about 20 minutes later he actually came into the bedroom, and was standing at the end of the bed and started giving me all this stuff, and I hit him with the book, like I pushed it into his chest and said "leave me alone." And then he left again, and about another 20 minutes later he was texting me, so I went out and got into a big argument in the living room, and I told him I was leaving. That I had had enough. It was over, and that is when he started a huge, huge fight. So, as I was trying to pull clothes out of the closet to pack into my truck, he was pushing them back in, pushing me. I'm trying to get around him. I'm throwing shoes at him. We're both, I'm screaming and yelling, and he is just kind of standing there bowed up like making himself look big and towering over me, and he had an arm full of stuff and I tried to get around him and he stood in front of me to block me, and so I basically just went crazy, and started hitting him, smacking at him, to get beyond him, and he kept standing in front of me, and every time I would make a step he would block me again. And so, at one point I slapped him in his face, and you*

*know like got beyond him, and he followed me into the living room and grabbed my shirt until I turned around and punched him in his arm. – Destiny*

Although Elise verbally abused her partner Robin, she indicated that she never physically assaulted him; however, her partner Michael did physical assault her on a couple of occasions.

**Males.** Jason was both on the receiving end of violence, and also perpetrated violence against a partner. Jason stated that he had both a boyfriend and a girlfriend that had been physically aggressive with him. Jason said that he had been bitten and scratched on his face and arms. When his boyfriend physical attacked him, Jason would fight back. Although Jason was on the receiving end of violence, on one occasion he did punch his partner during an argument. Matt stated that on one occasion he was trying to walk away, and his partner threw something at him.

*And as I was walking out the door, she's yelling at me and I pushed her away, and I remember her throwing a broom at me. As I was walking out the door it hit me. – Matt*

John also said that he was also on the receiving end of physical aggression. John stated that his partner would throw items at him when they argued.

*She would usually just throw something at me. Whatever was handy, sometimes a controller, sometimes a glass, a drinking glass, whatever was there. She'd break things on occasion. We used to have a glass coffee table and she threw something down on it so hard it broke. I did get hit once with an ashtray, and it broke the skin on my forehead. I think she meant to hit the wall next to me, but instead hit with me it. – John*

**Self-defense.** Although Adam and Rachel indicated that they perpetrated violence against their partners, both indicated that they had used physical violence in self-defense. Adam said that at some point he reached out to his partner to embrace her and it ended in them wrestling.

*Well the relationship from the beginning it was a little bit physical. She liked to shove. No, no serious injuries other than bruises. At one point I reached out to my partner to embrace her, and she pushed me away, and then we began to grapple aggressively. It was most, it was physical, mainly just a wrestling fight. Sometimes I would naturally defend myself from being pushed, or punched, or kicked. – Adam*

*There were several times when he pushed me, and one time we were outside and he knocked me down and I didn't do anything back, but he did it a few times in the house and if he pushed me and walked off then I didn't do it back. One time he pushed me into a wall, and I had to push him to get him off of me literally that was self-defense. Oh, you know when I pushed back he'd walk off it was one day he pushed me and I pushed him back and I knocked him into the front door and then he came around to punch me. I had some self-defense training, so I covered up my head and my face and kinda balled up on the couch, and when his punch hit me, my arm blocked it so it didn't hurt at all, and then I put my feet up I was about to knock him through the front glass window, and he walked off. So, it was like he had a sense of when he knew he had gone too far. – Rachel*

**Summary.** Both offenders of intimate partner violence described the physical violence that they used against their partners, and the physical violence that their partners had used against them. Destiny, Jason, and Matt perpetrated physical violence against their partners and were also on the receiving end of violence. Elise and John did not perpetrate physical violence against their partners; however, they were both on the receiving end of physical violence. Adam and Rachel did use violence against their partners but did so in self-defense.

**Communication and treatment of each other.** After participants narrated their experiences with intimate partner violence, they were asked to describe how communication was between them and their partner, and whether the nature of their communication changed over the course of their relationship. Participants were also asked to describe how they and their partner generally treated each other, and whether the nature of that treatment changed over time. If participants indicated that the nature of

their communication or treatment of each other changed, they were asked at what point in the relationship it changed, and why they believed that it had changed.

**Females.** In the beginning of Destiny's relationship both she and her partner were able to communicate with each other.

*So that's the thing, one of the things that I liked about him when I met him was that he talked. Some men you have to draw conversation out of them, but he was very talkative, and we learned all kinds of things together. And if we were talking about something, we'd be like oh let's look this up. He was very interested and engaged in things. We exercised together, you know we were eating healthy food, we were you know having an active life. I enjoyed having conversations with him – Destiny*

Destiny said that the communication between her and her partner changed when he started to pull away from her. She believed that her partner had been hiding things from her and would avoid speaking to her.

*Yes, it did start to change. And that is when I started feeling weird because he was pulling away. And then he was hiding things from me, which I found out later. He was looking at porn and stuff. And so, he was hiding from me. My instincts kept saying something's wrong here. He stopped talking as much. He wasn't giving me face-to-face like eye-to-eye contact as much, and so I'm assuming that's when he started doing that, and then he was hiding it from me. And when it came to light, he told me he was ashamed and couldn't face me and this kind of stuff. – Destiny*

Destiny also said that she and her partner generally treated each other well in the beginning of the relationship; however, towards the end of the relationship the treatment of each other changed.

*In the beginning, I think we were both very kind and very honest with one another. He enjoyed cooking for me which was awesome, and I would paint the bathroom or throw some pillows. It was very, very lovely actually. I mean it was nice. I had no reason to ever believe that, excuse my words, that shit would hit the fan like it did. In retrospect, I believe that it's because I had become so busy that I wasn't paying enough attention to him, and he was very much about, he needed a lot of reassurance, and he needed a lot of attention, he needed to always know that he was safe in the relationship I guess. He was constantly seeking reassurance from me, and I was already resentful that he wrangled me into the handyman work, and so I probably was you know not paying much attention to*

*him at all. Partially because I was working to death and partially because I was mad.*

*– Destiny*

Like Destiny, Elise said that the communication between her and Robin was very good until he became sick. Elise stated that she and Robin saw eye-to-eye on everything. Elise said that Robin was really a wonderful guy. Robin did become upset with Elise after she argued with him, but he would talk it over with her. Both Elise and Robin generally treated each other well. Elise and Robin could laugh, talk, and joke around with each other; however, this was not the case with Elise's partner Michael. Michael and Elise were often unable to communicate with each other. Communication was sparse between them, and when they did communicate it was always about him. Elise believed that the nature of her communication changed after the incident where she pulled the gun on her partner to get away.

*After he hit me, and I pulled the gun on him his tone changed a bit. It was more like he, he realized that he was you know in danger of losing me at that point, and I think he, he tried to keep things civil so I wouldn't take off on him. – Elise*

Towards the end of their relationship, Elise stated that she was angry and would not talk to her partner. Elise did note that her partner Michael generally treated her okay, but that when he became sick his treatment of her changed. He would put her down occasionally.

*Well he got sick and as his wife it was up for me to take care of him. I was there till the bitter end. It, it changed his personality. I mean we're talking about spots on the brain, it messed him all up. Yea I think that may have been also why he uh, uh, started abusing me the way he did. I don't think he had all that much control over it but I'm not sure.*

*– Elise*

Elise did say that towards the end of her relationship her partner started to treat her better and did not try to control her as much. Although Destiny and Elise indicated that in general the communication was good between them and their partners, and that

both they and their partners generally treated each other well, Rachel believed that when her partner was calm that the communication was good, but that he would always want to disagree with her.

*You know when he was calm it was good. I would say things in a way in a way that would make him mad because he didn't know what I was saying, and he'd get mad and yell and say "quit using them big words with me." You know and a lot of times we would disagree about something and I was just happy to say "okay well we disagree" and move on you know but he couldn't let it go and he would say "no we need to talk about it," and I'd say "no we don't". – Rachel*

Rachel continued to say that when they got married the communication got increasingly worse.

*It did change from the time we got married on it got increasing worse. I think it got increasing worse because well I don't know why exactly. It's like life happened and things got more difficult, and more difficult for us, and then we had three kids and working and, and it was just tough. – Rachel*

Rachel stated that her partner did like to engage in conflict with others. Rachel indicated that in although in some cases she and her partner were able to communicate with each other, in general her partner did not treat her well.

**Males.** John and Matt said that in general they could communicate with their partners, and that both they and their partners treated each other well. John said that overall the communication between him and his partner was pretty decent. He would open up and tell her anything that she would want to know; however, he did state that when they would argue she would get whatever was bothering her out of her system and refuse to talk for a little while. John did say that sometimes he would leave after an argument, but more often than not he would stay and try to talk to his partner. On several occasions John indicated that his partner lied to him to make herself look better and that in the last four months of their relationship there was no communication. John believed

that the change of communication happened because he had to start living off disability. John believed that his partner resented it. John stated that he would try to communicate with his partner, but that she would not respond to him. John does not place all of the blame on his partner, however. John stated that he did not thank her enough and took her for granted. In general John and his partner treated each other well, but he believed that he did not treat her as well as she should have been treated for taking care of him.

*Between the resentment and the lack of communication me taking her for granted, yea I think it was pretty much most of it. – John*

Matt, like Jason, said that most of the time both he and his partner communicated well. They did live in separate cities and would communicate over the phone. Matt did say that the communication changed because of his daughter.

*It changed because of our child because we had to communicate more. We were back and forth to the doctor, and I think a lot of it too when the doctor asked us to describe the history of mental illness in our family, we made a connection kind of then. – Matt*

When Matt did get into an argument with his partner, he stated that they did not talk about it afterwards. Matt did say that towards the end of their relationship his partner was going to move in with him, but she passed away the week before she was going to move in with him. Matt believed that the arguments that he and his partner had did not really impact the relationship. Matt also stated that they did treat each other very well.

*We were good to each other. Like I said we had the military flare-ups but you know, but we shared a lot of laughs together, and we went out a lot together. The week before she passed you know we went out a lot. – Matt*

Matt did say that a lot of their arguments had to do not only with their daughter, but also with their financial situation.

Unlike John and Matt, who could openly communicate with their partners, Adam and Jason indicated that the communication in their relationship was poor. Although Adam indicated that his relationship was shallow, Jason indicated that generally speaking the three relationships that he was in were good. Adam said that the communication between him and his partner was poor.

*It was poor. There was no trust. I was always afraid to express my real feelings. I was afraid to be vulnerable around her. She needed me to be very macho a lot, and so anytime I'd try to express the vulnerability or fear, I was always challenged in a way that never helped, and whenever she expressed anything like that to, I was always sarcastic or ridiculing. – Adam*

Adam believed that the communication changed because she got tired of her relationship with him. Adam's partner did not tell him that but started to avoid him. Both Adam and his partner started to spend time with other friends and would avoid each other. Adam also stated that his partner would not let him have a say in decisions that were made and that he wanted to discuss big decisions, but she would not let that happen. Adam believed that his relationship was shallow and that he and his partner did not treat each other well.

*It was highly sexual. It was kind of a shallow relationship. It was very, very sexual and passionate I guess you call it. I guess it did change. Again, I think that it was maybe that thing our values weren't the same, and like I said it was kind of shallow when we weren't fighting, we were just having passionate sex. I'm making, I'm minimizing what the reality was. – Adam*

Although Adam indicated that the communication was poor between him and his partner, Jason said that in all of his relationships the communication was average. Jason believed that in all but one of his relationships, he and his partners were able to have discussions with each other. Jason's boyfriend did ignore him and would not listen to him, so they broke up.

*Oh, I remember like he ignored me. He wouldn't listen, and so I broke up with him. That's what happened. He basically didn't want to face the fact that I was going to break up with him so he ran away, wouldn't answer my calls, and then I broke up with him. Yeah it was good and that it was bad, and then it turned to be bad. Because he didn't want to confront what I had, was asking. – Jason*

Jason said that he and his girlfriend were friends from high school. They often argued because of her drug problem. Jason stated, that when he confronted his partner, she would not listen to him. Jason's partner ended up calling the police on him, and that is when they stopped communication and he left the relationship. With his most recent partner, Jason said that they were able to communicate well. Jason's partner would listen to him more, and over time the communication between them improved. Jason did state when one of his partners physically assaulted him that it hurt, but overall, in all three of his relationships both he and his partners treated each other well, although in one relationship he did say that he treated his partner better than his partner had treated him.

**Summary.** All three female offenders of intimate partner violence said that both they and their partners had trouble communicating with each other. For Destiny and Elise, communication was good in the beginning of their relationships; however, communication changed towards the end of their relationships. Rachel also believed that communication was good when her partner was calm, but when he was not calm there was no communication. This, Rachel said, happened after they got married. At that time communication was difficult for her and her partner. Both John and Matt said that communication was good for the most part in their relationships. Although John did indicate that his partner would refuse to talk after an argument, for the most part he said that they could openly talk with one another. He stated that it changed because he had to live off of disability, and that she resented it, and resented him. Matt and his partner

would communicate primarily over the phone, but they were able to effectively communicate with each other. Matt's daughter was what changed his and his partner's communication. Generally speaking, communication was okay in Jason's relationship, where in all but one of his relationships he and his partners could openly discuss concerns. The one partner Jason could not effectively communicate with ended with a break-up. Adam was the only offender who believed that communication was poor between him and his partner. Adam believed the relationship was shallow and that he and his partner did not treat each other well. Along with asking participants about the nature of their communication with each other, and about the general treatment of each other, participants were asked how the violence impacted them, and how they believed that the violence impacted their partners.

**Impact.** All seven participants discussed how the violence impacted them and their partners.

**Females.** Destiny became terrified of her partner, and she was also furious with him.

*Well, I was furious and I was terrified. Well first of all I was struggling. I don't think I've ever been that angry. Just livid. I mean, and I know this sounds horrible but if I could have, I would've just beat him up and left him in a ball on the floor because it was awful. I mean every time I try to move, he just got in front of me and he was a big guy so it would like bounce my body back, and I can't move. Just infuriating me. I was worried because he was a gun owner, and I had heard stories about his past and things that he had done, and so then I became terrified.*  
– Destiny

Destiny also believed that the violence had greatly impacted her partner as well.

*I think that even though he had all these issues, he is not an animal. He is a sensitive person, and I believe that he really did care about me on some level. It hurt him very much. He didn't want to be alone, so, I think it affected him greatly. I think that he just wanted what he wanted, the way he wanted it. – Destiny*

Elise believed that she was impacted by both abusive relationships. Elise said that she realized that she frightened people and needed to control her temper more. She also felt guilty because her partner died with her mad at him. Elise believed that Robin was mad at her, and afraid that she would do something she regretted. Elise said that she was impacted most by the incident involving a gun with her partner Michael.

*The incident with the gun impacted me the most because it made me realize that I wasn't worthless, and I didn't have to put up with that nonsense. – Elise*

Elise did believe that her partner Michal was also impacted by the incident of the gun because she believed that when she pulled the gun out in self-defense that it scared him. Like Destiny and Elise, Rachel indicated that the violence impacted her because she was terrified of her partner and felt constantly threatened by him.

*I learned at one point that if I stayed calm then my children would stay calm, so no matter how upset I was, I tried to stay calm. During I felt threatened, and I was finding just want to find a way to make it stop you know... and protect myself and my kids. But it made me nervous. I held a lot of anxiety for years...it had really taken me years to kind of calm down and realize and be more general with people. By the time I got away from it, uh, I don't know, I was in kind of bad shape as far as how I felt. – Rachel*

Rachel also noted that it was hard to work because her mind was constantly on the violence that had occurred. When Rachel's partner stalked her, she felt nervous because he was always around her house.

*I remember being in my front yard and shaking and thinking that I was shaking because I was cold, but after I thought about it later it was the middle of summer it wasn't cold it was well it wasn't in the middle of summer, but it wasn't cold and I realized it was just nerves that had me shaking. – Rachel*

Rachel did not believe that any of the violence impacted her partner. Rachel did indicate that her partner had seen his father abuse his mother, which may have impacted him.

Rachel also said that her partner had a drug addiction, and that is what she believed impacted him the most.

*He was he was not a stable individual um a lot of it was because of the drug abuse, and he had grown up in an abusive environment where he saw his mother get physically beat up. I mean get beaten so bad she had broken bones. I don't know, what impacted him the most was his drug addiction, his drug addiction was a contributor to all of the chaos. – Rachel*

**Males.** Jason said that his partner did not seem to care that arguments occurred in their relationship.

*She didn't seem to care. I think she really didn't think about it. – Jason*

Jason did state that his other partner agreed with the break-up and agreed with him.

Jason did say that he was impacted by the violence that he had witnessed and endured as a child.

*Well when I was a child, I was a victim. I had had a boyfriend who once was aggressive, I had a girlfriend who's been aggressive. When I was a child it was mostly, they've all been about one or two incidents romantically, but as a child it was more prolonged.  
– Jason*

Jason noted that his partner made him feel bad, and that he became stronger when he was able to fight back. Jason continued to say that as a child he was unable to fight back and that it impacted him greatly.

John stated that his partner felt guilty afterwards, but that it would not stop her from committing violence. John believed that his partner felt guilty and that impacted her. While his partner was impacted by the violence that she perpetrated against him, John said that he was quick to forget that violence had occurred, and that the violence did not impact him greatly. Unlike John, Matt was impacted by the violence in his

relationship. What really impacted him was what was going on with his daughter. Matt did feel that he should have helped his partner more and stood up for her.

*You know when I think about it, now that she's gone, every once in a while, I'll think about it. I felt myself thinking a lot of the bad stuff that happened when she passed away, and I am just not trying to shake it off. I should have stood up for her because I knew what it was all about, and why she was doing it, and so I felt bad about that because there was nothing I could say. – Matt*

Matt also indicated that his partner had seen her father beat her mother and that she had been impacted by the abuse she had seen as a child. Like Matt's partner, Adam's partner came from an abusive home, and he believed that she had been impacted by that.

*She came from a pretty abusive home, and I think she was very used to that. She was used to that from other men, and I think from her father as well. – Adam*

Adam said that while his partner was impacted by the abuse by her father, he felt guilty about the violence that had occurred. Adam also felt remorseful.

**Summary.** All seven participants discussed how they and their partners were impacted by the violence that had occurred. Destiny and Rachel were terrified by their partner's actions and both felt fear and anxiety. Elise realized that she instilled fear in people, but that she was not worthless like her partner Michael had made her feel. Jason believed that being a child victim of violence impacted him the most. Matt and Adam also thought that their partners were affected by the abuse that they endured as a child. Overall, there were many similarities found between both male and female victims and offenders. While there were many similarities, there were also many differences between male and female respondents.

### **Summary of the Similarities and Differences**

All the perpetrators of intimate partner violence experienced the use of control tactics outlined in the Power and Control Wheel (Pence and Paymer, 1986). Just as with

the victims of intimate partner violence, there were several similarities between both female and male offenders.

All but one perpetrator indicated that they were isolated from family, friends, or co-workers. All seven participants were either on the receiving end of emotional abuse, or emotionally abused their partner. One male participant said that he and his partner abused each other, and that he always felt shame and guilt because of it. One female participant was emotionally abusive towards one of her partners, but she was emotionally abused by another. Both male and female participants felt anxious, guilty, bad, and nervous after they were called names and put down by their partners. None of the participants indicated that coercion was used during the course of their relationships, but both male and female participants had either threatened their partners or that they were threatened. Specifically, similar threats by both males and females were carried out, such as, threatening to move out, making threats to kill themselves, or hurt the children. There were also threats to throw items, and in some cases they did. Both male and female participants were not only on the receiving end of violence, but that they also perpetrated violence as well. Two participants, one male and one female, used violence in self-defense. All participants believed that both they and their partners were impacted by the violence citing fear, anxiety, and being the victim of violence as a child as the main reasons they were impacted by the violence.

While there were several similarities in the control tactics used against both female and male perpetrators of intimate partner violence, there were several differences as well. Regarding finances, there were several differences between male and female participants. Two male, and two female participants kept separate bank accounts from

their partners, even though they shared financial obligations with their partner. One male and one female participant shared a bank account with their partner, and only one male participant identified finances as a point of contention within the relationship.

The experiences of both male and female participants were different regarding the idea of male privilege within the relationship. All of the female participants did not make any big decisions over the course of their relationship and were forced to do all of the housework. While none of the males were forced to complete housework, one male participant indicated that his partner resented him because he could not work or complete any housework. While none of the females specified how being forced to do all of the work made them feel, the male interviewees indicated that their partners wanted a strong male and were often made to feel weak when they did not live up to their partner's expectations. Only one male participant did not feel that gender roles impacted the relationship. Four participants had children; however, of the four, one participant had adult children and one had a child with another partner years later. While one male participant and his partner would argue about his daughter, one female participant said that her partner threatened to kill his children so that his partner would give into his demands. All seven offenders indicated that either they or their partner had minimized, denied, or blamed one another for the violence; however, male and female experiences differed. Male participants argued that their partners either minimized the violence or blamed them for the violence, where the partners of the female participants denied or shifted the responsibility of the violence to them. One female participant also said that her partner accused her of cheating on him. While communication varied for each couple, all three female participants had trouble communicating with their partner. One

female participant believed that communication was good in the beginning, but it changed towards the end of their relationship. Although one male indicated that his partner would refuse to talk with him sometimes, he and another male participant said that they were able to effectively communicate with their partners. One male participant could not communicate with his partner, which led them to break off the relationship, and one male participant indicated that there was little communication between him and his partner.

### **Emerging Themes**

**Drug use.** One theme that has emerged in the study of situational couple violence is drug use. Studies (Coker, Smith, McKeown, & King, 2000; Fals-Stewart, 2003; Fals-Stewart, Golden, & Schumacher, 2003; Kernsmith & Craun, 2008; Kraanen, Scholing, & Emmelkamp; 2010; Leonard & Senchak, 1996) have revealed that using drugs and alcohol increases the likelihood that that violence may occur during an intimate partner relationship. Both victims and offenders discussed the use of drugs and/or alcohol and the perceived impact on violence in the relationship.

***Females.*** April, a victim of violence, said that her partner used drugs as a crutch.

*He had done a lot of coke, and I didn't realize it at the time. He was the one who used them basically as a crutch. You know and it was, coke makes people confident. – April*

Destiny' partner had a past history of heavy drug use and alcoholism, and he would occasionally drink. Destiny also stated that her partner was friends with known drug users. Rachel argued that her partner would often become unpredictable because of his drug problem.

*It was always drugs. It was crack, OxyContin. It was very unpredictable because he had a drug problem. He was addicted to drugs. He has since died from*

*complications related to drug addiction. What impacted him the most was his drug addiction, his drug addiction was a contributor to all of the chaos. – Rachel*

**Males.** Jason believed that drugs and alcohol impacted a couple of relationships that he had been in. In one relationship, Jason and his partner argued over drug use.

*We were arguing over their drug use. She called the police on me when she was drunk. It got dismissed, there was no reason so. She didn't want to listen to me to tell her to stop drinking. – Jason*

Jason's other partner was an alcoholic. Both Jason and his partner would argue over it.

*He was an alcoholic so there is that. And we were just arguing over, honestly it was just that, probably just arguing over stuff like that, and then he would get upset over something really minor and take it way too far. – Jason*

Jesse, a male victim of intimate partner violence, said that his partner tried to overdose on pills a couple of times.

*I don't know this guy she was with had some pills or something, so I guess they had taken a bunch of pills or something, and she couldn't remember what happened. – Jesse*

Although Ben did not indicate that his partner was an alcoholic, he did say that before he and his partner got into an argument, they had a drink or two.

**Summary.** April, Destiny, Rachel, Jason, and Jesse all indicated that their partners had either used drugs or were under the influence of alcohol. Ben indicated that both he and his partner had been drinking right before the violent incident took place. Participants believed that the use of drugs and alcohol impacted the violence that occurred within the home. Specifically, participants felt that the use of drugs and alcohol impacted predictability within the relationship and was often a source of contention within the relationship. Along with drug and alcohol abuse, emerged the theme of stalking.

**Stalking.** Johnson (2008) argues that “much postseparation violence and stalking are essentially a continuation of intimate terrorism after the abuser has lost the easy access afforded by living with his victim” (p. 103). When a victim of violence finally does decide to resist the violence and leave the relationship, he or she may become a victim of stalking. Feminist scholars argue that women in particular are at an increased risk of violence when trying to leave the relationship (Johnson, 2008). A number of studies (Acquadro, Maran, & Varetto, 2018; Burgess, Baker, Greening, Hartman, Burgess, Douglas, & Halloran, 1997; Coleman, 1997; Douglas, & Dutton, 2001; Dutton, Van Ginkel, & Landolt, 1996; Spitzberg & Rhea, 1999) have found evidence that supports the idea that violence can extend beyond the finality of a relationship, leading to stalking behavior. Johnson (2008) argues “Attempts to retain or regain control after a partner leaves often goes beyond the use of violence, involving many of the same tactics that were used within the relationship to monitor and control the partner before she left” (p. 103).

Three female participants discussed stalking by their previous partner.

Rachel identified herself as both a victim and offender. After her husband had threatened to kill one of her babies, she threatened to kill him if he hurt her child. On one occasion Rachel’s partner told a neighbor that he was going to kill her. As Rachel discussed how the violence impacted her, she indicated that when she finally decided to leave the relationship and divorce her partner, he decided to stalk her at her place of employment.

*I thought of one this is when we were split up and basically, he was stalking me across from my job. Uh this was one night. It wasn’t physical aggression, but I’ll tell you I had been talking to a friend of mine and she said her mom had told her that she needed to change up her routine because she was just too predictable to*

*other people. I thought you know I don't have to do that, and so that day when it comes time for me to leave work I decided to stay longer just to change my routine, and at one point it's like this little feeling said "okay you can go now". I went into my office and was changing out of my work boots, and my phone rang and it was the day shift guard I would have not normally been there, he wouldn't have normally been there, and he said that he had ridden by the plant where we worked and saw him sitting across the street. He uh and he said he knew I wouldn't normally be there but just in case he thought he'd stop and call me, and when he stopped and went into the guard shack to call me the guard said he had been sitting out there for three hours. I, I called the police and the police came down there, and when he saw the police he pulled off and they stopped him and he told the police he just wanted to talk to me so the police came back to me and said "he just wants to talk to you". I said, "then he should have picked up a phone". That doesn't make sense you know, it's like the police didn't have a sense of domestic violence issues. Well, he wasn't trying to contact me he was just lying to them he had not tried to call me or anything. I do not know what he was gonna do, and so the police agreed to give me an escort home. When I got to my house my husband was already sitting there. – Rachel*

While Rachel only discussed this one incident of stalking, she did indicate that her partner threatened to kill her on several occasions after she had moved out and divorced him. When Laura was going through her divorce the violence escalated as well.

*Towards the end there was times throughout our marriage, it wasn't very often, he could go months or years without throwing something at me or mostly he shoved me very rarely did he ever hit me because he knew he would go to jail if he left any marks on me. So, his thing was grabbing me, throwing me around the room and stuff. I mean towards the end when he knew our relationship was over, and that I was going to leave that's when it really started picking up and it was pretty constant. It became at least several times a week and that was because I had gotten to where I was taking his control away. – Laura*

Laura also reported that her husband broke into their house on a number of occasions after they had separated, causing fear and anxiety.

*My kids we never knew if he was going to be in the house when we went in the house. I was having to walk in the house with two kids clinging to my leg, and I would have to search the entire house so I could say "okay he is not in here". He was at that point, I'd say we changed the locks, he was breaking into the house. I was really scared he was escalating. I was scared you know because he was escalating. – Laura*

As with Laura, violence escalated when Destiny left her relationship.

*No, this escalated, and he was stalking me. I ended up having to get a few friends to come back to the house when he was at work to retrieve all of my belongings, and then he kept texting, and calling, and emailing me, and at one time he would say “you’re the love of my life, I can’t let you go” and the next time he would say “you’re never going to get away from me”. It’s like every time I turned around he was there, and he wouldn’t leave me alone. I moved into an apartment. He showed up at the apartment. He just kept away on and on. I ended up having to move to a different city which is like three hours where my son and daughter-in-law live, and he kept calling. I blocked his calls. Then he would email, and then when I blocked those, then he would email my kids, or get a hold of them on Facebook. So, I eventually ended up moving six states away.  
– Destiny*

Destiny continued to explain what her partner would do after their relationship ended.

*Well he was calling constantly my phone. My phone was constantly ringing. He was texting me constantly. He would email. He would show up. He would you know contact my kids. I also had a friend that he, they were friends on Facebook, he contacted her. Sent her this message “I don’t know what to do. “I really love her.” he never, so when I moved out of his house, I moved into an apartment that was pretty close to his house, and he showed up there. And I saw him drive by a couple of times. When I actually moved to the different city three hours away, he never showed up there, but he just continued to call and stuff like that. – Destiny*

Rachel, Laura, and Destiny experienced stalking behavior from their partner.

Rachel was stalked at her place of employment, while Laura’s partner would break into their house after they separated. Destiny ended up having to move several states away because her partner continued to show up at her house and try to correspond with her through friends, texts, e-mails, and phone calls.

Both male and female victims and male and female offenders narrated their experiences with intimate partner violence. All thirteen participants narrated experiences where either they or their partner had used non-violent coercive control; however, the violence that occurred in each relationship was unique to each participant. Below is a

discussion of the findings of the study, implications for both theory and policy, limitations of the research, as well as suggestions for future research.

### **Discussion of Qualitative Findings**

Qualitative interviews were conducted to delve into context and dynamics in an attempt to explore the nature of violence in intimate partner relationships. Participants were asked to describe their most recent acts of physical violence, their most severe violent physical acts, how they were impacted by that violence, and how their partners were impacted. Participants were also asked questions related to their children, coercive control within the relationship, the communication between both they and their partner, and also the nature and treatment of each other.

**Female victims.** Study results found that female victims reported that their partner perpetrated both minor and severe violence against them over time. Specifically, female victims reported that physical violence occurred on more than one occasion, and often included both minor and severe tactics, such as, grabbing, yanking, shoving, and physically hitting. Female victims also reported children and pets being subjected to physical violence. Along with the physical violence, interviewees were also asked questions about control within the relationship. Control questions were meant to tap into the eight spokes identified as control tactics by Pence and Paymer (1986). Johnson (2008), argues that these important characteristics of control cannot be looked at solely, but rather must be examined as a collective group of tactics used to exert general control over one's partner. The coercive control tactics used to maintain violence and control within the relationship impacted each female victim. In response to the isolation, female victims noted feeling scared, trapped, ashamed, self-conscious, angry, fearful, anxious,

and guilty. Although female victims were physically beaten and controlled by their male partners, they indicated that it had not always been that way. In fact, all three female victims indicated that in the beginning of their relationship, both they and their partner treated each other well and were able to communicate their needs to each other; however, that changed over the course of their relationship. Many of the decisions that were made in the household were made by their male partners. Females believed that this was due to the patriarchal beliefs that their partners held. Most female interviewees indicated that their male partners believed in the traditional patriarchal ideologies outlined by feminist scholars (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash et al., 1992; Martin, 1976; Pagelow, 1981, 1984; Saunders, 1986; Walker, 1984); however, it was noted that female victims believed in gender equality and were not affected by their partner's patriarchal beliefs.

**Male victims.** As with female victims, male participants reported that their partners perpetrated severe physical aggression against them. Males reported being subjected to both minor and severe violence. Male interviewees indicated that they had either been hit, threatened to be stabbed with a knife, or threatened to be run over by a car.

Along with the use of physical violence, male participants indicated that several coercive control tactics had been used against them in an attempt to gain control. As with females, males were subject to financial control. Male victims also experienced isolation; however, their partners did not force them to stay away from friends, family, and co-workers, rather their partners let them know how they felt about their friends. Unlike females, males reported being humiliated and emasculated. Part of the humiliation that males experienced had to do with a lack of money, employment status, or their performance in bed. Males also described the minimization, denial, and blame placed on

them by their partners. One interviewee was blamed for his partner's indiscretions, while another was coerced into bed to minimize the violence that had actually occurred.

Another interviewee suggested that on several occasions his partner threatened to hurt him with various weapons, threatened to kill him, and threatened to kill herself. These threats were not uncommon, as two out of the three victims spoke of their partner's threats to commit suicide.

The coercive control tactics used to maintain violence and control within the relationship impacted each male victim. The humiliation and degradation often made male victims feel guilt, anxiety, and depressed. As with females, males also reported that violence had not always been used in their relationship, and that although they did not make any big decisions in their relationship, both they and their partner, generally treated each other well. Over the course of their relationship the treatment and communication changed, males were belittled and ridiculed by their partners who held feminist beliefs of gender equality. The male victims did not hold traditional patriarchal views, but indicated that their female partners held feminist views, and thus were occasionally made to feel emasculated especially with regards to money and sex. These findings align with Nybergh et al.'s (2015) study, where men described how their partners ridiculed them for what Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have explained as hegemonic masculinity, meaning that men were scorned for not making enough money and for being weak.

**Female victim/offenders.** Similar to male and female victims of violence, there were several notable differences between male and female offenders of intimate partner violence. As with female victims, the study results found that female offenders reported the use of physical violence in their relationships. Specifically, severe mutual violence

was used by one couple and involved both parties grabbing, pushing, throwing items, hitting, and slapping each other during an argument. One interviewee indicated that her partner was the only one to assault her by using a knife against her. One interviewee reported using violence against her partner but was doing so to get away from him in self-defense.

Along with the physical violence, interviewees also reported on the use of control tactics in their relationship. None of the female perpetrators reported that their partner had subjected them to financial control, and while finances were not controlled, interviewees described being isolated from family, friends, and co-workers. Females also reported both the perpetration and victimization by several other forms of control including emotional abuse, intimidation, threats, minimization, denial, and blaming of violence. Some of the control tactics used against female interviewees were being blamed for the violence that had occurred, being accused of cheating on their partners, denying that the violence had occurred, threatening suicide, threatening to hurt either them or their children, threatening physical violence if authorities became involved, and using intimidating stances as a threat. Females who indicated that they had used control tactics on their partners had intimidated their partners and threatened them back. One female interviewee did indicate that she had used intimidation to threaten her partner, and one reported threatening to kill her partner if he hurt their children.

The coercive control tactics use within the relationship impacted both interviewees and their partners. In response to the perpetration of emotional abuse, one interviewee said her partner felt scared and cried, and that she felt guilty for subjecting him to it. As with the victims of violence, female offenders reported that the violence

had not always occurred within their relationship. All female interviewees felt that they and their partner could communicate their needs to each other in the beginning of the relationship, and generally treated each other well; however, over the course of their relationship, the communication changed, and the treatment of each other also changed. Although big decisions were made by both female and male interviewees, two female interviewees were made to do all of the household chores. They believe that this was due to their partner's patriarchal beliefs. Most female interviewees indicated that their male partners believed in the traditional patriarchal ideologies outlined by feminist scholars (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash et al., 1992; Martin, 1976; Pagelow, 1981, 1984; Saunders, 1986; Walker, 1984); however, it was noted that female victims believed in gender equality and were not affected by their partner's patriarchal beliefs.

**Male victim/offenders.** Male perpetrators also reported using and being on the receiving end of physical violence. Specifically, one interviewee reported severe mutual violence, involved punching, scratching, and being bitten. Interviewees also discussed being on the receiving end of thrown items. One interviewee indicated that while he did use physical violence against his partner, it was in self-defense.

Along with the physical violence, interviews also reported on the use of control tactics in their relationship. Unlike with female interviewees, financial control was used by male interviewees and their partners. Specifically, participants reported that their partners would become angry due to the lack of finances and become aggressive with them. On the other hand, male participants also reported hiding money from their partners. Along with financial control participants reported that they were often isolated from friends, but none of the interviewees isolated their partners. Males also indicated

that several other forms of coercive control were used. Males reported that there were many toxic arguments and that they put down their partners. They also reported their partners had also put them down, humiliated them, did not respect them, denied that the violence occurred, blamed them for the violence, threatened to move out, threw household items out of intimidation, and threatened suicide.

The coercive control tactics use within the relationship impacted both interviewees and their partners. Feelings of disappointment, low self-esteem, guilt, anxiety, nervousness, and frustration were felt among male interviewees, and they believed that their partners also felt guilty for the violence that occurred. In response to the perpetration of emotional abuse, one interviewee said that both partners ended up in tears. Another interviewee felt shame and guilt over arguing with his partner.

Two male interviewees did indicate that generally they could communicate with their partners, and that they treated each other well; however, when arguments did arise they were unable to communicate with their partner, who would subsequently leave. What did affect the communication, one interviewee discussed, was the lying that his partner did. Another indicated that communication changed when he went on disability. The two other male interviewees believed that the communication in their relationship was poor, partly because there was a lack of trust, and partly because they were unable to make decisions together. All but one male participant believed that their relationship was impacted by gender roles within the relationship. While male participants did not indicate how they felt about gender roles, they believed that their partners felt that they should be taken care of and should be the protectors within the house. Interviewees

believed that these beliefs impacted the communication and treatment of each other within the relationship.

Table 12. Demographic Characteristics of Qualitative Sample, by Interview Subject

	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Employment Status	Household Income	Past Relationship Partner	Past Relationship Length in Years
<b>Victim</b>						
Ben	34	Latino/ Hispanic	Part-time	Less than \$24,999	Opposite Sex	3.17
Mark	35	Caucasian	Part-time	\$25,000 to \$49,999	Opposite Sex	4.17
Jesse	35	Caucasian	Full-time	Less than \$24,999	Opposite Sex	8.25
Laura	40	Caucasian	Full-time	\$25,000 to \$49,999	Opposite Sex	10.00
Katheryn	46	Caucasian	Not Employed	Less than \$24,999	Opposite Sex	11.00
April	48	Mixed	Full-time	\$25,000 to \$49,999	Opposite Sex	2.25
<b>Offender/ Victim</b>						
Jason	31	Caucasian	Full-time	\$25,000 to \$49,999	Same Sex	1.17
Adam	44	Caucasian	Part-time	\$25,000 to \$49,999	Opposite Sex	5.08
John	35	Caucasian	Part-time	\$25,000 to \$49,999	Opposite Sex	4.58
Matt	48	African American	Full-time	\$50,000 to \$99,999	Opposite Sex	14.00
Destiny	51	Caucasian	Not Employed	Less than \$24,999	Opposite Sex	10.17
Elise	52	Caucasian	Part-time	Less than \$24,999	Opposite Sex	7.33
Rachel	54	Caucasian	Part-time	Less than \$24,999	Opposite Sex	8.00

Table 13. Survey Responses on Perpetration and Victimization, Number of Items in Each Scale Occurring Once or More in Past Relationship, by Interview Subject

	<b>Verbal Aggression Perpetration (6 items total)</b>	<b>Minor Physical Perpetration (3 items total)</b>	<b>Severe Physical Perpetration (6 items total)</b>	<b>Verbal Aggression Victimization (6 items total)</b>	<b>Minor Physical Victimization (3 items total)</b>	<b>Severe Physical Victimization (6 items total)</b>
<b>Victims</b>						
Ben	1	0	0	5	1	2
Mark	2	0	0	6	2	1
Jesse	3	0	0	5	2	0
Laura	2	0	0	6	2	1
Katheryn	4	1	0	6	2	1
April	5	0	0	3	0	0
<b>Offender /Victims</b>						
Jason	4	3	3	6	3	6
Adam	1	0	0	1	0	0
John	3	0	0	6	3	1
Matt	4	0	0	3	1	0
Destiny	4	3	1	3	1	2
Elise	3	0	0	0	0	0
Rachel	6	1	0	6	2	1

Table 14. Survey Responses on 11 Non-Violent Control Tactics, Number of Tactics Used in Past Relationship, by Interview Subject

	<b>NVC Tactics Used by Subject Only</b>	<b>NVC Tactics Used by Partner Only</b>	<b>NVC Tactics Used by Both Partners</b>	<b>Total NVC Tactics Used by Either Partner</b>
<b>Victims</b>				
Ben	3	6	0	9
Mark	1	4	1	6
Jesse	0	0	0	0
Laura	0	6	2	8
Katheryn	0	9	1	10
April	1	1	2	4
<b>Offender /Victims</b>				
Jason	1	6	4	11
Adam	1	3	0	4
John	0	2	1	3
Matt	0	1	2	3
Destiny	1	0	4	5
Elise	1	0	0	1
Rachel	0	6	5	11

## V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to illuminate the contexts within which males and females either use violence against their partner or sustain violence from their partner. A mixed methodological approach revealed important gender distinctions, providing additional insight into the gender symmetry/asymmetry debate. First, quantitative analysis was used to explore the impact of gender on perpetration, victimization, and the use of nonviolent control tactics. Second, qualitative interviews were then conducted to delineate the detailed nuances of perpetration and victimization in an intimate violence situation by gender. This chapter will summarize the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative components of this study, discuss the implications for theory and policy, describe the methodological limitations of the current research, and conclude by offering suggestions for future research.

### **Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings**

One way to cross-check for validity in research is by utilizing different methodological approaches (Patton 2002). Quantitative and qualitative data analyses were employed in this study as a way to cross-check the study's validity. There were several notable similarities and differences in the quantitative and qualitative data between male and female perpetrators and victims of intimate partner violence. In the quantitative sample, the overall reported income was higher than for the interview sample. Similarly, in the quantitative sample, the majority of participants were under 35 years of age; however, in the qualitative sample a majority of participants were 35 years or older. In both the survey and interview samples, females and males were equally as likely, or unlikely, to use verbal aggression against their partners. Moreover, although the

quantitative study found that males were more likely to commit severe physical acts of violence against their partners, in the qualitative sample use of severe violent tactics was rare for both males and females. Additionally, females in the interview sample were more likely than the males to have used minor physical tactics against their partner. Finally, the quantitative results showed a significant difference between male and female victimization, with male respondents reporting significantly higher rates of victimization across all aggression tactics, whether verbal, minor, or severe in a current relationship. In the interview sample, by contrast, although males were similarly more likely than females to have been victimized by minor violence, the female interviewees reported more severe forms of violent victimization. Although these victimization data are consistent with family violence research, one cannot discount the notion of females using violence in self-defense rather than for purposive victimization of a partner. Several studies (Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Saunders, 1986; Saunders & Browne, 2000; Walker, 1984) have found that when females perpetrate violence against a partner, it is due to self-defense.

An examination of the differences between males and females in the use of non-violent coercive control tactics allowed for further investigation into Johnson's (1995) two main types of IPV, intimate terrorism and situational couple violence. Consistent with other research (Ahmadabadi et al., 2017; Ansara & Hindin, 2010; Cascardi & Vivian, 1995; Hamberger, 2005; Jasinski et al., 2014; Johnson, 2008, 2014; Myhill, 2015; Nybergh et al., 2016; Piispa, 2002; Stark, 2010), the survey found that it was relatively rare to use non-violent control within a relationship. In contrast, among those interviewed, non-violent control tactics used by either partner were quite common in the

relationships on which they reported. The quantitative study revealed that males were significantly more likely than females to use non-violent control tactics against their partner. Specifically, males were more likely than females to limit their partner's access to family income, limit their partner's access to family and friends, frighten their partner, prevent their partner from working outside the home, and insist on knowing where their partner was at all times. These findings are also reflected in the interview sample; males were slightly more likely than females to have used control tactics in their relationship. Further, although females were more likely to be involved in relationships in which the use of control tactics was mutual, females were subjected to a greater number of control tactics than were males in the sample.

Johnson's (2008) distinction between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence is predicated on the coupling of physical aggression with the use of non-violent coercive control tactics. If there is a true distinction between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence, as suggested (Johnson, 1995), then there should be a correlation between the use of aggressive tactics and the use of non-violent control tactics. The results from the quantitative survey found support for this assertion; however, the correlations held regardless which partner was using these tactics and which was on the receiving end. Specifically, partners who used non-violent control tactics were just as likely to be victims of aggression as they were to be perpetrators of aggression in their relationships. These quantitative findings do not support Johnson's (1995) model of predominately male-perpetrated intimate terrorism.

In the qualitative study, all interview participants, whether male or female, indicated the use of physical violence and control in their relationship; however, the

degree of physical abuse and the nature of coercive control used by male and female partners differed significantly. Females indicated that their male partners used coercive control tactics, along with physical violence, to keep them from leaving the relationship. Males in the interview sample indicated that their female partners used control tactics and physical violence simply to maintain control within the relationship; some even mentioned that their female partner espoused feminist views.

Female participants indicated that several coercive control tactics had been used against them in an attempt to gain control. Females were subjected to financial control by their partners and described being isolated from family, friends, and co-workers. Some of their partners humiliated them in public, played mind games with them, accused them of committing indiscretions, blamed, denied, or minimized the violence, threatened to kill them or their pets, or threatened to take away their children. Females were also put down, called names, and threatened with violence by having items thrown around or near them.

Male participants reported comparatively fewer types of control tactics used against them. Consistent with Nybergh et al.'s (2016) study, male interviewees indicated that their partners isolated them from friends, denied that violence had occurred, and threatened them. Significantly, they also reported that their partners would humiliate, belittle them, and call them names. Males were made to feel emasculated because of their lack of money, employment status, or their performance in bed. These latter control tactics do not appear in the Power and Control Wheel and thus were not included in the survey instrument for this study. This omission should be addressed in future survey

research on gender differences in the use of non-violent control tactics in intimate relationships.

The interviewees and their partners were affected by the violence. Female victims reported feeling self-conscious, angry, fearful, scared, anxious, and guilty. These findings align Johnson et al.'s research (2014), which found that male intimate terrorists were likely to economically entrap, frighten, and diminish their wives' self-esteem. Female perpetrators of aggression believed that their partners felt scared when the violence happened, and that they themselves felt guilt and humiliation over their use of violence. Male victims and perpetrators reported similar feelings of guilt and humiliation as well. Generally, both male and female interviewees believed that the communication and treatment of each other was good in the beginning but changed due to the beliefs that their partners had regarding who should maintain control within the relationship.

### **Do the Data Fit Johnson's Typology?**

Johnson's (2008) distinction between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence is predicated on the coupling of physical aggression with the use of non-violent coercive control tactics. The extent to which perpetrators of frequent and severe violence against a partner also make use of numerous non-violent control tactics is considered the primary indicator of intimate terrorism; aggression without coercive control is the hallmark of situational couple violence. The purpose of this study was to examine the contexts and dynamics within which both males and females use violence against their partner, as well as the contexts within which both males and females sustain violence from their partner. By examining the distinctions among partner violence with victims

and victims and offenders, one could determine whether Johnson's typologies of violence are in fact distinct and non-overlapping forms of violence.

In this study there were two straightforward cases of intimate partner terrorism. These findings align with previous research (Jasinski et al. 2014; Johnson, 2008; Myhill, 2015) suggesting that females are more likely to be victims of intimate terrorism. Both of these female interviewees' partners exercised extensive minor and severe violence against them, along with using multiple control tactics against them in order to maintain control over them. These women noted feeling scared, trapped, ashamed, self-conscious, angry, fearful, anxious, and guilty. While there were two straightforward cases of females being victims of intimate terrorism, one male victim also fit the profile of a victim of intimate terrorism. Although this male interviewee did not require hospitalization or shelter services, his female partner did perpetrate severe physical violence against him, terrorized him with threats of violence, and used several control tactics against him in order to maintain control within the relationship, which are hallmark indicators of intimate partner violence (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000).

Both female and male victims and offenders of violence were classified as experiencing situational couple violence, as were three participants who classified themselves as being victims only. Although one participant did perpetrate physical violence and control over his partner, and was on the receiving end of both, he argued that it was due to the abuse of drugs and alcohol and was not a display of systematic control to maintain power within the relationship. Some control tactics were used within the relationships that were deemed cases of situational couple violence, but these control

tactics were not coupled with minor and severe violence, a clear distinction between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence (Johnson, 2008).

One case in which the female interviewee identified herself as a victim and offender was clearly a case of violent resistance. This interviewee's partner systematically terrorized her, going as far as threatening to kill her and the children and threatening to burn down their house. In response to those threats, she threatened to hurt him. Once she was able finally leave the relationship, her partner would show up. Even with police presence he would frighten her by stalking her. She did not threaten violence in order to control her partner; instead, she did so to protect her family from the violence that they had experienced.

One aspect of control that all male interviewees experienced was the use of some form of emotional control over them including humiliation and belittlement. Males reported being humiliated and emasculated. Part of the emasculation that males experienced had to do with a lack of money, employment status, or their performance in bed, which made male victims feel guilt, anxiety, and depression. In this study the overwhelming control tactics that were used involved emotional abuse. Nybergh et al. (2016) make the argument that these types of control tactics are intentional and would be "difficult to refer to them as instances of SCV, in which this type of control is absent" (p. 196).

Because control is often measured by the tactics outlined on the power and control wheel (Pence & Paymer, 1986) the wheel is highly gendered, and while Hoff (2002) designed an inverted model to examine female perpetrated male violence both models leave out valuable types of control used in relationships. Specifically, both

models leave out the emotionally controlling tactic of emasculation and belittlement, which was described by all male interviewees as occurring. If in fact one important aspect of gender differences between males and females focuses on the beliefs held by males to maintain control, it would be important to understand and recognize the beliefs that females hold regarding patriarchal and feminist views, and how those beliefs impact control tactics such as humiliation, belittlement, and emasculation.

Overall, this study provides further support for the idea that intimate terrorism and situational couple violence are distinct and non-overlapping forms of violence; however, there are a small number of cases of violence that may not be a perfect fit. This was particularly true for males who experienced control by their female partners, but only indicated a very small amount of physical violence in their relationships. It is also important to make distinctions within cases of violent resistance as well. In the one case that violent resistance occurred, the female interviewee believed that she was a victim and offender of violence, when she was only using violence in order to escape her violent partner.

### **Implications for Theory and Policy**

Several theoretical and practical implications can be derived from this research. First, findings from this study suggest that that females are not the only victims terrified by their male partners. Although only one case of female perpetrated intimate terrorism was identified, health care workers, shelter workers, and social workers need to be sensitive to the possibility that a male seeking treatment may have experienced intimate terrorism. Male victims may fear being viewed as perpetrators rather than victims of violence when seeking help (Migliaccio, 2002).

Second, a theoretical framework needs to be developed examining the use of gender-neutral control tactics, as both the Power and Control Wheel and the inverted Power and Control Wheel used gender biased language. This especially important for same-sex couples experiencing physical and coercive control within their relationship.

### **Methodological Limitations**

There are several methodological limitations associated with this dissertation research. Generally, qualitative interviewing presents challenges regarding instrumentation and the potential for biases (Chenail, 2011). Specifically, this research study was susceptible to both social desirability and recall biases. There were also limitations regarding the methods used to collect both the quantitative and qualitative data. These limitations will be discussed below.

Researchers rely on the truthfulness of responses that are provided by participants in their research studies. In some cases, respondents become unwilling or unable to accurately report information and this can lead to data that are biased toward what respondents believe is socially acceptable (Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954). Moreover, when sensitive questions are asked of participants, they are more likely to respond in a socially desirable manner (Fisher, 1993). Participants in this study were asked sensitive questions regarding violent interactions within their intimate relationships. It is possible that respondents over-reported the violence used against them, and under-reported the actions they committed against their partner, providing what was believed to be a socially desirable response. One way that a researcher can reduce a socially desirable response is to ensure anonymity, thus allowing the participant to feel comfortable answering sensitive questions. Kelman (1961) argues that removing anonymity may increase

pressure put on respondents to answer in a desirable way. In order to reduce the potential for socially desirable responses, subjects were required to call into a burner phone using \*67 to block their phone number, and pseudonyms were used in order to ensure that they remained anonymous. These measures were taken to reduce the likelihood that socially desirability occurred in the study.

Raphael (1987) argues that there is a potential for recall biases when “historical self-report information is elicited from respondents” (p. 167). Research on intimate partner violence relies mostly on self-reports, which declines as the recall period increases; this is a major challenge in domestic violence research (Yoshihama, Clum, Crampton, & Gillespie, 2002). To protect the safety of participants, interviews were only conducted with those individuals who had been out of a relationship for at least a year, which could have led to potential recall bias from participants. One approach researchers suggest that can be used to help with recall bias is to use a data collection format that would allow for better recall to occur (Yoshihama & Gillespie, 2002). This can be achieved by using systematic and focused efforts to enhance recall (Yoshihama & Gillespie, 2002). Every effort was made to format the questions in a systematic and focused way in order to help respondents accurately recall their experiences with partner violence.

### **Quantitative Surveys**

Some methodological issues are associated with the quantitative survey. The survey was distributed over the Mechanical Turk Platform. The researcher could not verify that participants were over the age of 18, were from the United States, or that they were not affiliated with Texas State University. Having participants sign the consent and

affidavit form helped to ensure that participants met the qualifications to participate in the study.

There are some limitations associated with using a convenience sampling method. Marshall (1996) argues that a convenience sample is the least costly and timely method of collecting data, but the data may be of poor quality and lacking in credibility. Mackey and Gass (2005) reports that a disadvantage of convenience sampling is that it is prone to biases and therefore should not be generalizable to the population; however, for this study a convenience sample was most appropriate. Due to Title IX reporting requirements on assault, Texas State students were not eligible to participate in the study. Alternatively, the Mechanical Turk platform was chosen to obtain a convenience sample of individuals willing to participate in the short survey. While a convenience sampling strategy has often been criticized for a lack of credibility, poor quality of the results, and the inability to generalize to the larger population, research (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012; Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011) has found that samples gathered from the Mechanical Turk platform are representative of the population, and are comparable to samples from other subject pools.

There were limitations in the methodologies used in both the quantitative and qualitative components of the research study. To alleviate some of issues associated with the methodological limitations a mixed-methods approach was used. Using just one methodological technique is inadequate for addressing complex topics (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative data has been criticized for lacking generalizability; however, the issue of generalizability can be addressed by also including a quantitative component consisting of a larger sample population.

## **Qualitative Interviews**

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research has been labeled as unscientific because its findings cannot be generalized to the population (Bailey, White, & Pain, 1999). Often non-probability sampling is the chosen method for qualitative research, which can lead to the belief that findings are not generalizable. Sarma (2015) argues that many believe qualitative research focuses on storytelling “full of anecdotes and personal impressions” (p. 176), which has led to the belief that the quality of qualitative research is inferior to other methods (Groth, 2010). Although qualitative research primarily uses non-probability sampling, it is the most appropriate methodology to capture the narratives of those involved in intimate partner violence situations. The goal of this research study was to understand the contexts and dynamics of intimate partner violence through the understanding of those who have experienced it. While the findings from the in-depth interviews may not be generalizable to the general population, the generalizability does increase by utilizing both qualitative interviews and surveys to understand partner violence. Furthermore, the results of the qualitative interviews can be used to further inform quantitative methods of data collection.

There is still a debate surrounding the role of gender and intimate partner violence. Researchers disagree on the role that gender plays in violent situations. Because there has been a limited amount of prior research examining the narratives of both male and female victims and offenders of intimate partner violence, a mixed-methods approach was deemed most appropriate for this study, because it allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the role of gender in intimate partner violence situations. By using a mixed-methods approach the limitations associated with

this research study, specifically with quantitative and qualitative data analysis, were reduced. Other limitations outlined above were reduced by using anonymity with subjects participating in the in-depth interview, which helped to reduce the potential for social desirability biases, the careful formatting of the questions to reduce recall bias, triangulation, peer debriefing, and using inter-coder agreement. Overall, the methodological techniques used in this study were justifiable, and measures were taken to address the potential limitations of the research.

### **Future Research**

This study provided insight into the context and dynamics of intimate partner violence. And while distinctions were made between types of violence, specifically intimate terrorism and situational couple violence, there were a few cases that did not directly fit into one category or the other. One area of future research would be to explore female perpetrators of intimate terrorism. While one case in this study did fit indicators of intimate terrorism, further exploration of the tactics used by female intimate terrorists need to be explored.

Several emerging themes were explored within this research study. First is the use of drugs and alcohol. A couple of participants who were involved in situational couple violence indicated that drugs and alcohol had been used over the course of their relationship, impacting the level of violence used in their relationship. Studies (Coker, Smith, McKeown, & King, 2000; Fals-Stewart, 2003; Fals-Stewart, Golden, & Schumacher, 2003; Kernsmith & Craun, 2008; Kraanen et al., 2010; Leonard & Senchak, 1996) have found that drug and alcohol use impact the likelihood of violence, but what has not been explored is how drug use impacts individuals experiencing different types of

violence. Future research should explore the impact of drug and alcohol use in relation to types of violence.

The second emerging theme involved stalking. Three female victims indicated that they were stalked after leaving the violent relationship. Feminist scholars argue that women in particular are at an increased risk of violence when trying to leave the relationship (Johnson, 2008). A number of studies (Acquadro et al., 2018; Burgess et al., 1997; Coleman, 1997; Douglas, & Dutton, 2001; Dutton et al., 1996; Spitzberg & Rhea, 1999) have found evidence that supports the idea that violence can extend beyond the finality of a relationship, leading to stalking behavior. Future research should continue to explore stalking after resisting the violence, as well as stalking behaviors of women who perpetrated severe violence against a male partner.

Next, across all male victims, females did use emotional control tactics to belittle and emasculate their male partners. Models (Pence & Paymer, 1986; Hoff, 2002) identifying control tactics have not explored these tactics and still remain gender-biased, thus future research should continue to examine the control tactics use by both males and females, subsequently creating a gender-neutral model of tactics used by both male and female victims and offender of intimate partner violence.

Third, a framework of gender-neutral control tactics should be developed examining all types of control used by both males and females of violence. Use of surveys within general population studies should also explore general neutral questioning.

Lastly, as suggested by Johnson (2010) there needs to be continued research focusing on the distinctions between intimate violence typologies. While this study did

find some support for Johnson's typology of violence, more research needs to be conducted on men who are victims of intimate terrorism and violent resistance. Research needs to continue to focus on using a mixed methodology to study larger samples of both males and females from the general population. One methodological limitation in this study was inability to interview offenders who had not also been victimized by their partner. Much more can be learned by interviewing females especially who perpetrate violence but are not victims within their relationship. These mixed-methods studies also need to explore violence among same-sex couples, as few (Baker, Buick, Kim, Moniz, & Nava, 2013; Franklin & Brown, 2014; Stanley, Bartholomew, Taylor, Oram, & Landolt, 2006) have examined typologies of violence among same-sex couples.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, support for both a feminist and family violence perspective were found with quantitative survey data with a general population sample. Distinctions were also made between Johnson's typology of violence. Males and females were found to experience different forms of violence; however, there were a small number of cases that did not fit perfectly into any category of violence. Further research needs to be conducted to examine female perpetrated intimate terrorism, which will help define new control tactics used in violence. This will allow for further distinctions to be made in violent situations.

## APPENDIX SECTION

### APPENDIX A

#### Survey Instrument

<b>Important Message</b>	
<p><i>This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this research study is being conducted and why you are being invited to participate. It will also describe what you will need to do to participate as well as any known risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that you may experience while participating in this study. I encourage you to ask questions at any time. By clicking on the survey, you are agreeing to participate. You may print a copy of this form for your records.</i></p>	

RESEARCH TITLE	Intimate partner violence: An in-depth analysis of context and dynamics
NAME OF RESEARCHER	Lindsay Deveau
FACULTY ADVISORS	Dr. Christine Sellers and Dr. Mark Stafford
AFFLIATION	Texas State University
TELEPHONE	(512) 745-1410
E-MAIL	<a href="mailto:Lnd12@txstate.edu">Lnd12@txstate.edu</a>

<b>Why is this research being conducted?</b>
<p>This research study is being conducted in order to understand the contexts within which both males and females engage in conflict with their partners. This research study will help us determine whether males and females require different interventions when such conflict escalates.</p>

<b>Risks/Discomforts</b>
<p>While there are minimal risks associated with this research study, it is possible that you will be asked to recall distressing events related to your experiences, and some short-term suffering may occur. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering any questions on the survey, you may leave them blank. Should you experience any serious discomfort, resources such as MentalHealth.gov (<a href="https://www.mentalhealth.gov/index.html">https://www.mentalhealth.gov/index.html</a>) or the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) can provide confidential assistance, local resources, and other information as needed.</p>

<b>Benefits/alternatives</b>
<p>Although you may not directly benefit from this study, your responses may help researchers better understand of the context and dynamics surrounding conflict that occurs between intimate partners.</p>

<b>Extent of Confidentiality</b>
----------------------------------

Reasonable efforts will be made to keep the personal information you provide private and confidential. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. The researcher along with the Texas State University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) may access the data. The ORC monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants. Your name will not be used in any written reports or publications that result from this research. Due to federal regulations, data will be kept for three years after the study is completed and then destroyed.

#### **Payment/Compensation**

You will receive \$0.10 for participating in this survey, which will be distributed directly to you through your online Mechanical Turk account.

#### **Participation is Voluntary**

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw from it at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

#### **Affidavit Statement**

Under Title IX regulations, all researchers are required to report all incidents of assault committed by or towards any individual affiliated with Texas State University. This includes all individuals who are currently, or have ever been, affiliated with the University in any capacity. By signing the consent form below, you the participant understand the above statement, and in compliance with Title IX regulations agree that you are not currently, or have never been, affiliated with Texas State University in any capacity.

#### **Questions**

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, you may contact the principal investigator, Lindsay Deveau: (512) 745-1410 or [lnd12@txstate.edu](mailto:lnd12@txstate.edu). This project (2017131) was approved by the Texas State IRB on (11/21/2016). Pertinent questions or concerns about the research, research participants' rights, and/or research-related injuries to participants should be directed to the IRB Chair, Dr. Jon Lasser (512) 245-3413 – ([lasser@txstate.edu](mailto:lasser@txstate.edu)) or to Monica Gonzales, IRB Regulatory Manager (512) 245-2314 – ([meg201@txstate.edu](mailto:meg201@txstate.edu)).

#### **Documentation of Consent**

I have read this form and have decided that I will participate in the project described above. Its general purposes, the particulars of involvement, and possible risks have been explained to my satisfaction. I understand I can withdraw at any time.

If you would prefer not to participate, please do not fill out a survey.

If you consent to participate, please complete the survey.

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your current age?

How many committed relationships have you ever had?

Are you currently in a committed relationship?

- No
- Yes, I am married and living with my partner
- Yes, I am married but NOT living with my partner
- Yes, I am in an unmarried relationship and living with my partner
- Yes, I am in an unmarried relationship but NOT living with my partner

How long was your most recent past committed relationship or marriage?

	Years	Months
Please indicate how long your previous relationship was in years and months.		

Was your most recent past committed relationship or marriage with:

- Someone of the opposite sex?
- Someone of the same sex?

In your most recent past committed relationship or marriage, did anyone:

	Neither of us	Both of us	My partner only	Me Only	I prefer not to answer
Act in a jealous or possessive way?	<input type="radio"/>				
Try to limit the other's contact with family or friends?	<input type="radio"/>				
Insist on knowing where the other partner was at all times?	<input type="radio"/>				
Call the other partner names or put them down in front of others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Make the other partner feel inadequate?	<input type="radio"/>				
Shout or swear at the other partner?	<input type="radio"/>				
Prevent the other partner from knowing about or having access to the family income?	<input type="radio"/>				

Prevent the other partner from working outside the home?	<input type="radio"/>				
Frighten the other partner?	<input type="radio"/>				
Try to provoke arguments?	<input type="radio"/>				
Have a hard time seeing things from the other's point of view?	<input type="radio"/>				

No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed, or just have fights for various reasons. They also use many different ways of trying to settle their differences. In your most recent past committed relationship or marriage, HOW OFTEN DID YOUR PARTNER do any of the following things TO YOU during a disagreement?

	Never	Once	Twice	3-5 Times	6-10 Times	11-20 Times	21+ Times	I prefer not to answer
Insulted or swore at your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Sulked and/or refused to talk about it.	<input type="radio"/>							
Stomped out of the room or house.	<input type="radio"/>							
Did or said something to spite your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threatened to hit/throw something at your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threw, smashed, hit, or kicked something.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threw something at your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							

Slapped your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Kicked, bit, or hit with your fist.	<input type="radio"/>							
Hit or tried to hit with something.	<input type="radio"/>							
Beat up your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threatened your partner with a knife or gun.	<input type="radio"/>							
Used a knife or gun against your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Forced partner to engage in sexual acts.	<input type="radio"/>							

How long have you been in your current relationship or marriage?

	Years	Months
Please indicate how long you have been in your current relationship in years and months.		

Is your current committed relationship or marriage with:

- Someone of the opposite sex?
- Someone of the same sex?

In your current relationship or marriage, does anyone:

	Neither of us	Both of us	My partner only	Me only	I prefer not to answer
Act in a jealous or possessive way?	<input type="radio"/>				
Try to limit the other's contact with family or friends?	<input type="radio"/>				
Insist on knowing where the other partner is at all times?	<input type="radio"/>				
Call the other partner names or puts them down in front of others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Make the other partner feel inadequate?	<input type="radio"/>				
Shout or swear at the other partner?	<input type="radio"/>				
Prevent the other partner from knowing about or having access to the family income?	<input type="radio"/>				

Prevent the other partner from working outside the home?	<input type="radio"/>				
Frighten the other partner?	<input type="radio"/>				
Try to provoke arguments?	<input type="radio"/>				
Has a hard time seeing things from the other's point of view?	<input type="radio"/>				

No matter how well a couple gets along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed, or just have fights for various reasons. They also use many different ways of trying to settle their differences. In thinking about your current committed relationship or marriage, HOW MANY TIMES HAS YOUR PARTNER DONE any of the following things TO YOU in the past year during a disagreement?

	Never	Once	Twice	3-5 Times	6-10 Times	11-20 Times	21+ Times	I prefer not to answer
Insulted or swore at you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Sulked and/or refused to talk about it.	<input type="radio"/>							
Stomped out of the room or house.	<input type="radio"/>							
Did or said something to spite you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threatened to hit/throw something at you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threw, smashed, hit, or kicked something.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threw something at you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Pushed, grabbed, or shoved you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Slapped you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Kicked, bit, or hit you.	<input type="radio"/>							

Hit or tried to hit you with something.	<input type="radio"/>							
Beat you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threatened you with a knife or gun.	<input type="radio"/>							
Used a knife or gun against you.	<input type="radio"/>							
Forced you to engage in sexual acts against your will.	<input type="radio"/>							

In thinking about your current committed relationship or marriage, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU DONE any of the following TO YOUR PARTNER in the past year during a disagreement?

	Never	Once	Twice	3-5 Times	6-10 Times	11-20 Times	21+ Times	I prefer not to answer
Insulted or swore at your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Sulked and/or refused to talk about it.	<input type="radio"/>							
Stomped out of the room or house.	<input type="radio"/>							
Did or said something to spite your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threatened to hit/throw something at your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threw, smashed, hit, or kicked something.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threw something at your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							

Slapped your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Kicked, bit, or hit with your fist.	<input type="radio"/>							
Hit or tried to hit with something.	<input type="radio"/>							
Beat up your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Threatened your partner with a knife or gun.	<input type="radio"/>							
Used a knife or gun against your partner.	<input type="radio"/>							
Forced partner to engage in sexual acts.	<input type="radio"/>							

With which racial or ethnic group(s) do you most identify?

- Caucasian (non-Hispanic)
- African American (non-Hispanic)
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Latino or Hispanic
- Mixed
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What is your employment status?

- Employed part-time
- Employed full-time
- Not employed

What category best describes your annual household income?

- Less than \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

If you have any additional comments you would like to add, please do so below.

Based on your survey results, you may qualify for a follow up in-depth telephone interview. If you are chosen to participate, you will receive an additional \$5.00 and will be placed in a drawing for a \$25.00 bonus. May we contact you for a follow up interview through the Mechanical Turk e-mail system?

	Yes	No
Click to write Statement 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Protocol

ID Number:

Interviewer Name:

Offender/Victim Status:

Date:

#### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

You have indicated on the short online survey that you have either used physically aggressive tactics against your partner in a past relationship, or your partner used physically aggressive tactics against you in a past relationship. For this interview, I will be asking you some follow-up questions related to the dynamics within that past relationship. You are not required to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable and you can end the interview at any time. Please remember that I, the researcher, am required by law to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. If at any time you feel unsafe during the interview, please use the safe words “Thank you, have a nice day” which will indicate to me, the researcher, that you no longer feel safe to continue the interview. If this does occur, I, the researcher, will immediately hang up and call back at another time to continue the interview.

1. Please describe the most recent incident that involved physical aggression with your partner.

1.1. How did this incident impact you?

1.2. How did this incident impact your partner?

2. Please describe the most severe incident that involved physical aggression with your partner

2.1. How did this incident impact your partner?

2.2. How did this incident impact you?

3. Please describe the incident involving physical aggression with your partner that impacted you the most?

3.1. How did this incident impact you?

3.2. How did this incident impact your partner?

Remember you can ask to skip any question that you do not want to answer.

4. Do you have children?

4.1. What are the genders of your children?

- 4.2. What are the ages of your children?
- 4.3. If you and/or your partner have children, do they live with you and/or your partner?
- 4.4. Are these your partner's biological children, and/or are they your biological children?
- 4.5. Do you perceive any impact of the aggression on your children? If so, please describe.
5. How would you describe communication between you and your partner, generally speaking?
  - 5.1. Did the nature of your communication between you and your partner change over the course of your relationship? If so when did it change? Why do you think it changed?
6. How would you describe your treatment of each other, generally speaking?
  - 6.1. What was the length of your relationship?
  - 6.2. Did the nature of your treatment of each other change over the course of your relationship? If so when did it change? Why do you think it changed?
7. What role did you feel "control" played in your relationship? Please provide examples.
8. In what way do you feel being a (male/female) might have impacted your relationship?
9. Is there anything else you would like to add that I did not bring up in my questions?

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Consent Form

#### VERBAL CONSENT

**Study Title: Intimate partner violence: An in-depth analysis of context and dynamics**

**Principal Investigator: Lindsay Deveau**

**Co-Investigator/Faculty Advisor: Christine Sellers/Mark Stafford**

My name is Lindsay Deveau, and I am a graduate student at Texas State University. I am doing this study because I would like to examine the contexts within which both males and females engage in conflict in their intimate partner relationships. I hope to clear up some of the issues surrounding the role that gender plays in these situations.

I am asking you to take part because you indicated on the short online survey that you had either used or been on the receiving end of physical aggression, or both in a past relationship. I'm going to tell you a little bit about the study so you can decide if you want to be in it or not.

During this interview, I will ask you several questions about your experiences with physical aggression in your previous relationship. I will be asking you questions related to the context of this aggression and the dynamics within your relationship. You are not required to answer any question or questions that make you uncomfortable. Please remember that I, the researcher, as required by law, must report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. If at any time you feel unsafe during the interview, please use the safe words "Thank you, have a nice day" which will indicate to me, the researcher, that you no longer feel safe to continue the interview. If this does occur, I, the researcher, will immediately hang up and call back at another time to continue the interview.

A telephone recorder will be used in order to record your responses accurately. I will also be taking notes during the interview. This interview will take approximately 1 hour to complete. You may be asked to recall potentially distressing events related to your experience, which may lead to flashbacks of uncomfortable situations, reactivation of fears, unhappy thoughts associated with these experiences, or even nightmares. At the end of this interview I will provide you with contact information should you need assistance with any of these potential outcomes. For participating in this study, an additional \$5.00 will be distributed to your Mechanical Turk account. You will also be placed in a drawing for an additional bonus of \$25.00. If you are chosen as the winner, the \$25.00 will be distributed to your Mechanical Turk account. If you wish to be in this study, you can stop at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Do you have any questions for me?

Do you want to be in the study?  
Do you understand what was said to you?

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